

Do's and Don'ts for Media Interviews

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Do: Clarify the purpose of the interview with the reporter, and if it will be TV, radio or print.

Do: Find a quiet location to hold the interview and a good cell signal or WiFi signal; ethernet is preferred for video calls.

Don't: Take an interview from the car or over a Bluetooth connection.

Don't: Be nervous! This is just a conversation, and 99% of interviews are recorded so you can restart if you mess up.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Do: Focus on your message. Make it relevant and personal.

Do: Assume everything is on the record, including emails and texts.

Do: Smile, relax, be confident and friendly.

Do: Steer to your talking points and other relevant information.

Do: Offer to send sources or additional data to the reporter.

Don't: Answer a question you are uncomfortable with or don't know the answer to.

Don't: Use shorthand, jargon or abbreviations.

Don't: Talk too fast or too slow.

Don't: Try to fill silence.

Don't: Be intimidated or argue with the reporter.

AFTER AN INTERVIEW

Do: Follow up with the reporter.

Do: Send the interview to TNA when it's online.

Do: Share the final interview on social media.

Don't: Get upset if there's a mistake in the piece. Politely ask the reporter to issue a correction.

Don't: Publicly bash or deride a reporter or others in the story.

CREATE SOUNDBITES

Condense your message to one sentence, and practice saying it out loud. Have four or five sentences ready to support your primary message. Answer the reporter with full sentences. For example:

Reporter: Do nurses in Texas support this bill?

Nurse: Texas nurses are in favor of this bill because it will....

LOOK GOOD ON CAMERA

- Choose clothing that makes you feel confident!
 - Pick conservative cuts in solid colors, except all white or black.
 - Avoid small patterns, including on ties and socks.
 - Keep jewelry small and discreet.
- Create an appropriate background or setting.
- Use makeup to avoid shine. People who regularly wear makeup may want to go heavier on eyeliner, blush and lipstick. People who prefer not to wear makeup can use a translucent powder to reduce shine.