

# TRAILblazer

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## PR Tips—The Media Interview

Andy Warhol said everybody gets 15 minutes of fame. If you and your company practice good media relations you're almost guaranteed to get yours, and then some. That's why I offer my clients media training. It pays to be ready when the news media call. Whether it's a follow-up to a media release, or reaction to an industry trend, the interview is a good opportunity for your business to make headlines and put your best foot forward.

Here's some advice I give my clients before they go into an interview:

**Who are you dealing with?** Know something about the media doing the interview. Listen and watch the shows on which you are going to be interviewed. What kind of questions will you be asked?

**Identify predictable questions.** Who, What, When, Where, Why, How, and How much.

You can **negotiate the terms of the interview**, including the general scope of questions, other people who may be present and so on.

**Know your three key messages.** Identify the positive angle and make sure you include it in answers that employ your key messages. Practice them on tape if you can, then review and repeat.

**Keep your answers short.** 15 – 20 second sound bites are all you need.

**Stay away from statistics and numbers.** People don't relate and will tune out. Practice telling a good story in plain language, in your words.

**How do I look?** On television, perception is important and your appearance can say more than your words.

**Dress the part.** Look professional, well groomed, but not stuffy. Make sure your clothes fit the story. Remember, no flashy accessories. Avoid big jewelry, patterned clothes or ties.

Finally, remember **you're responsible for the answers**, not the questions.



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