

MEDIA PROTOCOLS

Quick Reference Guide

It never fails; the media calls and you are not ready. While you can't control whether the media will call you, you can control the process to help increase your chances of a positive experience. If contacted by the media, direct the inquiry to the company spokesperson(s). If they are unavailable:

1. Delay the conversation.

"Thank you so much for your call and for your interest in speaking. I am/they are just about to head into a meeting, so could I ask a few questions to make sure I have everything you need?"

- *What is your name, media outlet, phone number and email?*
- *What is the story about? What do you hope to learn from me?*
- *What is your deadline?*
- *How long do you need, and will it be in person or by phone?*
- *Will this be live or taped? (If radio or TV)*
- *What other kinds of experts do you think might be helpful for you to speak with?*

Do not engage in any chit-chat. Listen carefully and take notes.

2. Commit to having someone call them back.

Based on the reporter's answers to the questions above, give an estimated time that you plan to follow up, even if it will not be you. Make sure you follow through.

3. Immediately notify company spokesperson(s). Consider the following:

- *Facts and context of the issue, situation or story*
- *Strategies for responding (who will speak, where they will speak, etc.)*
- *Messages and key points you wish to get across (be concrete and write them down)*
- *"Framing" your most important point ("What's really important here is...")*
- *What you would ask on this topic (think through the larger context)*

4. Company spokesperson: Be helpful.

It's important to maintain a conversation that is helpful and makes good use of the reporter's time. If you note that the reporter does not have a grasp on the larger story or situation, use this opportunity to educate them on the larger context and provide some of your additional messages.

5. Company spokesperson: Follow up.

- *Circle back with reporter to make sure they received all the information they needed*
- *Ask when the story or segment will run*
- *Monitor for accuracy*
- *Send a thank you note*

6. Final notes.

- *Consider everything is on the record*
- *It's OK to say "I don't know"*
- *Do not say "no comment"*