

QUESTIONS TO ASK A REPORTER ON INITIAL CONTACT

- 1) Your name again? What media outlet do you represent?
- 2) What is the story about?
- 3) What particular aspect are you focusing on? What triggered this story?
- 4) Are you speaking to other sources? To whom?
- 5) How much do you know about *(insert interview topic)?*
- 6) What is your deadline?
- 7) May I call you back in 30 minutes? *(allow time to contact local promotion group, review key messages, determine if you're the best source to conduct an interview.)*
- 8) How long will the interview last?
- 9) What is your phone number?

REMEMBER THE S-S-S-S

STATEMENT: FIRST SENTENCE
Answer with a "yes" or "no" if appropriate and/or bridge to the key message.

SUPPORT: SECOND SENTENCE
Support your key message.

SUPPORT: THIRD SENTENCE
More support for your key message.

SUMMARIZE: FOURTH SENTENCE
Rephrase/summarize your key message.

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COMMUNICATION TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Use this card to help you prepare for a media interview or presentation.

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COMMUNICATION TIPS

- **DO** maintain eye contact.
- **DO** listen for both content and intent.
- **DO** acknowledge or repeat the question.
- **DO** ask for clarification.
- **DO** answer clearly, specifically and briefly.
- **DO** tell personal stories and anecdotes.
- **DO** recognize question traps and treat them as such.
- **DO** admit when you don't know the answer and offer to find it.
- **DON'T** argue with the questioner.
- **DON'T** repeat a negative.
- **DON'T** answer a question with a question, unless it's for clarification.
- **DON'T** speculate.
- **DON'T** use jargon.
- **DON'T** fill in silence. Ask if there are more questions.
- **DON'T** speak off the record.
- **DON'T** say, "No comment."

BRIDGING TO SUCCESS

Below are tips for handling question traps by answering honestly and respectfully, and then transitioning to the points you want to make.

- "Let's look at it from a broader perspective ..."
- "Yes, and in addition ..."
- "That used to be the focus. What has evolved is ..."
- "I don't know the answer to that specifically, but what I do know is ..."
- "No, let me explain ..."
- "In the past that was true, but today ..."
- "In fact, the opposite is true ..."
- "That is not my area of expertise, but what I can tell you is ..."

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FIVE POINTS ON FIVE-STAR COMMUNICATIONS

- ★ Be prepared, so you're in control.
- ★ Be relaxed.
- ★ Be conversational in tone.
- ★ Be enthusiastic.
- ★ Be honest.



6" x 3.5" flat
2" x 3.5" folded
2 color (pantone 293 blue, black)