

THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT THE MEDIA

- Journalists need stories
- Media coverage (particularly in ‘earned’ media) has a lot of influence on your profile and on your reputation
- Previous positive news put you in a better position if/when negative news happens
- Don’t forget to flag up good and bad news to your comms team
- Reporters are doing a job. They are not friends or enemies
- Mainstream media pick up stories from social media
- They will cover big or controversial stories whether you talk to them or not
- They will get information from wherever they can (staff, unions etc)
- **Deadlines** can be almost immediate
- If you don’t fill the “news vacuum” someone else will. So be prepared
- In negative situations, *occasionally* the best tactic is to decline an interview, as it means the media have less material and may run less or nothing at all. But each case needs to be judged very carefully (take advice from your comms team)

NOW THE MEDIA WANT TO DO AN INTERVIEW....

- It is as much your interview as theirs. Every interview is an opportunity to promote your organisation
- But the media are not there to do your PR. They are looking for stories to gain readers/ listeners/ viewers (clickbait)
- Think about **why** you are doing the interview. What is your objective?
- Only do interviews that have a **benefit** to you. Or ones that if you don’t do them would make you look bad
- Journalists need you to be a good interviewee. The media need you to be credible and informative. It is unusual for them to want to make you look stupid
- Be respectful and co-operative and have something to say
- Journalists are doing the interview to: find out **information (the what, who, when, where, why and how?)**, get a **soundbite**, get a **headline** and/or **entertain**
- But primarily to **fill space** and pull in readers/ listeners/ viewers
- They may ask a **curve ball question**
- Remember - they may just be looking for a ‘**soundbite**’
- Remember people can’t take in too much information
- Remember the audience is usually not specialist or captive
- So, stick to key messages
- The media is not the place to have an in-depth discussion
- Be careful with jargon. How much will the audience understand?

KEY MESSAGES ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- People (including journalists) don’t remember very much of what you say
- Any part of an interview can be edited