Media Training Takeaways

Should you have questions, want further support on media training, or if you would like to be included in our Experts Directory, please contact your media trainer directly or email the Media Relations team at media.relations@ubc.ca.

Below outlines a few of the key tips and techniques shared in our training session.

**Interview tips**
- Don’t underestimate the importance of your opening statement - prepare it in advance and find a way to share it, no matter what the first question
- Have your key messages (three key points) close by, and stick to them
- Watch your jargon
- For all interviews, think in sound-bites - keep it short, impactful, to the point
- If you need more time to consider a response:
  - Ask for clarification
  - Pause
  - Repeat question
- For radio or TV, dead air is okay - it’s the reporter’s problem
- Apply bridging techniques when you need to steer back to a key message and away from a no-go or less relevant topic
- Use active vs. passive tense
- Illustrate points with examples, statistics, stories - anything that’s memorable, impactful and interesting
- Look for opportunities to sum up key points
- Only speak on your area of expertise and don’t speculate. If you don’t know the answer to a question, say so and explain why. anything you say to a reporter could be quoted

**Interview pitfalls**
- For topics of an institutional nature, be aware of facts vs opinion. What’s the institutional response vs what’s your opinion?
- Don’t be controlled by questions
- Don’t try to answer a question that’s not in your area of expertise
- Avoid tangents and rambling
- Be aware of leading questions
- Be aware of “umms”, "you know", “I think”, “maybe”, “kind of”
- Be human! Don’t sound too technical, robotic, inauthentic
- Nothing is ever off the record.

**Bridging**
Bridging is an effective technique that allows you to steer away from a question or topic you don’t want to address and back to a key message.

Examples of bridging statements include:
- What I can say is…
- The facts are…
- Let’s look at the proper context…
- The real issue is…
- It’s important to take a step back and consider first…

**Key messaging**
Key messages are central points you wish to convey in a media interview. Typically, we recommend you have 3-4 and keep finding ways to come back to them throughout the interview.

This will ensure you achieve the greatest clarity and impact.

When crafting your messages, consider the following points:
- Who is your audience? What do they need to know?
- You key points should include:
  - What happened
  - Impact and implications
  - What’s next / how can you ensure this doesn’t happen again
- Messaging should be short, simple, impactful
- Frame your messaging in a positive way
- Illustrate key points with examples, stats, trends, anecdotes
- Consider whether you have a call to action
- Prepare your opening statement