

A Guide to Being Interviewed

EFFECTIVE CALLS TO TALK RADIO

- Familiarise yourself with the program before calling in.
- Speak in the language and tone of the listeners
- Focus on one main message.
- A compelling story is more powerful than facts.
- Know your sources. Use a source that is reliable and credible
- Practice your short pitch out loud. Repeat until you can do it
- Be concise and direct. Prepare to make your best case quickly.
- Direct people to your preferred source for more information
- Articulate it clearly. If not well known, repeat it if possible.
- Close with a clear call to action
- Using a calm, confident tone can attract people to your side
- Avoid long pauses. Hosts hate “dead air”.
- Focus on the message you want the listeners to take with them
- Don’t get caught in trying to “win” an argument with the host.
- Really listen to the host after you speak.
- Look for opportunities, rather than just preparing a counterpoint.
- Befriend the host.

BEING INTERVIEWED

OFF THE RECORD

If asked for a general chat, make it absolutely clear you are speaking off the record, or they may quote you.

KEY INFORMATION

- Know what organisation is doing the interview
- What the interview is for
- Who is doing the interview
- Find out the topic and angle of the interview.
- How will the interview be used - for a news story, a current affairs feature or an entertainment piece?

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- You have a choice about being interviewed and the way the interview is done
- You have a perfect right to determine what you will, or will not, talk about.

KNOW WHAT YOUR MAIN MESSAGE IS

- Think about your main messages
- Identify your core argument: "What do I care most about?"
- Have two or three points to want to make
- Think about likely questions
- Think about audience
- Be brief and clear
- Weave your message(s) into several of your answers.

DO

- Make your messages clear: Start with the conclusion. Then explain it.
- Keep it simple: Speak in short, concise sentences.
- Be positive. Don't appear negative or confrontational. Keep calm.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, say so
- If you don't want to answer a question, say so
- Have notes and key points already prepared
- Print out basic biography or relevant information

DO NOT

- Do not comment on opinion of other groups you do not belong to
- Do not be pressured into supporting one side or another
- Do not respond if the interviewer tries to put words in your mouth
- Avoid general criticisms about the awfulness of the media.