



30 EASY & QUICK MEDIA TIPS FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS

By Jackie Lapin

When authors and leaders initially find themselves as the focus of the media may they experience some their discomfort before getting on air. Frequently, in their unease in front of the mic or the camera, they will often lose track of the key reason that they are in speaking to the media in the first place—to effectively sell their books and products.

There are a few things you can do to ensure a positive and effective media appearance on radio or on camera. The following media training tips have been proven to be of great value to everyone from celebrity spokespeople to corporate leaders—and, of course, for transformational leaders.

1. If possible, show up for interviews a bit early to ask questions, meet the host and get the “lay of the land.” It also releases any anxiety about getting to the location or on the right phone or internet lines –so be early to avoid complications.
2. Develop three or more key messages prior to an interview. Prepare your messages and rehearse.
3. Stick to your area of expertise. Refer questions to others when venturing into unfamiliar or sensitive territory.
4. Be enthusiastic and energetic-- if you don't care why should anyone else?
5. Never say ANYTHING to a reporter that you wouldn't want to see in print! Nothing is ever “off the record.”
6. Know to whom you are speaking—what kind of reporter and who is her/his audience? Tailor you answers to your audience's viewpoint.
7. Determine the general direction of the story.
8. Do not be surprised if the reporter is not prepared for the interview. Instead, look at it as an excellent opportunity to take control of the interview.
9. Ask the reporter how much time he/she has and if he/she is working under deadline. Know much time you have to hit your key messages.
10. Tell your story with the headline first; follow with your key message; add in supporting details.

11. If a reporter's question does not directly address the issues you want to address, bring up those issues yourself. Bring up points you want covered.
12. Turn the conversation away from irrelevant or general topics and over to the message/product/service by either using a transition (noted below) or simply answering a different question from the one asked.
13. Never refer to "the program" when you can use its full name. The same goes for using your company name in place of "us," "we," or "our."
14. Don't be afraid to pause or ask for clarification of a question. Pausing is a good technique to buy time and decide how best to phrase something.
15. Never be afraid to say "I don't know." A good way to transition is to offer to get back to the reporter with an answer or refer the reporter to someone else.
16. If a reporter asks for details that you are unsure about, don't guess.
17. Beware of getting bogged down in details. Keep it simple. Think in soundbites.
18. Avoid jargon and acronyms; speak in layman's terms.
19. Use complete sentences to make your points.
20. How you say it is as important as what you say; voice and intonation are critical -- convey confidence and authority, but not arrogance.
21. Introduce yourself to the host, be flexible and accommodating, friendly and warm.
22. Listen to the interviewer. Sometimes you may become so caught up in delivering your messages that you may be distracted; pay attention.
23. Don't repeat negative words/issues or raise them yourself.
24. Reporters may ask several questions in one. Either answer both, or select the one which you prefer to answer.
25. Have several "tips" for the reporter/audience in case you are asked.
26. Nicely correct any misstatements and misinformation during an interview by being informative, not confrontational.
27. Even though a reporter may ask dumb questions do not be condescending and impatient.
28. You may be dead tired, and tired of answering the same questions, but remember: the reporter is only doing his/her job and each reporter represents a new audience that you have yet to reach.
29. Physical points to remember if on camera:

- a. Don't wear sunglasses or light-sensitive glasses.
- b. If you are in a swivel chair, don't swivel back and forth; don't rock back. Consider the chair locked in the direction of the host.
- c. Sit comfortably, but do not slouch or lean to either side. Keep your back straight, with a slight lean forward toward your interviewer.
- d. Try not to fidget.
- e. Look at the interviewer, not the camera, unless otherwise directed.
- f. Smile! Let your personality be visible.
- g. If you have difficulty seeing because of sun or hearing because of noise, please ask the reporter if you can make a slight adjustment in the angle or positioning.
- h. You are the expert. Project that at all times.

30. Thank the reporter.

Transitions

A few ways to transition the conversation to preferred messages:

- Yes..... and in addition Your Message
- No..... let me explain Your Message
- I don't know that but I do know Your Message
- That's a good point but you should also know Your Message

For more on how to deliver your message to a wider audience seeking solutions to life's challenges and personal or global transformation, contact Jackie Lapin at ConsciousMediaRelations.com