

TIPS FOR APPEARING ON TV

When appearing as a guest on a news show, it's important to remember that you will often be competing with other guests for time to deliver your message.

A good host will ensure that each participant has time to talk; unfortunately, that is not always the case.

In certain instances, if you are not asked a question directly, you will need to be assertive and jump into the conversation in order to get your point across.



KEEP IT SHORT AND REPEAT

Regardless of how long the conversation is, most viewers will only remember a few points (or even just one). TV attention spans are short and the average sound bite is less than 10 seconds. You will be most effective if you repeat your points.



USE BRIDGING LANGUAGE

Even when the conversation veers off topic – in fact especially when it veers off topic – you should use bridging language to get back to your main messages. A few examples of bridging language:

>>> “I don’t know about that, but what I can tell you is...”

>>> “I think we’re missing the real point, which is...”

>>> “I can tell you from my own experience...”



ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR TV INTERVIEWS

- >>> Be prepared. Practice and do not use notes!
- >>> Smile and maintain a pleasant demeanor: The camera is always on.
- >>> Try not to wear bold patterns or heavy jewelry.
- >>> Accept makeup if it is offered. The light will make your face shine without it.
- >>> Be brief. Stick to your three key messages and keep coming back to them.
- >>> Opt for simple, direct language and avoid jargon.
- >>> Look at the host or other guests, not at the camera (unless you're in a remote studio).
- >>> Humor and warmth can be an asset; make sure to smile, even when you're not talking. TV cameras flatten your emotions and you will look like you're scowling if you don't.
- >>> Sit slightly forward in an approachable manner.
- >>> Speak at a natural volume and gesture naturally.
- >>> Use hand gestures sparingly; too much can be distracting.
- >>> Try not to repeat the language from the question in your answer.
- >>> Sometimes you'll have a chance for a closing remark or the last question you'll get is "Do you have anything else to add?" Resist the urge to say no. This is a perfect opportunity to restate your message clearly and concisely.

