

Making Your Point: A Media Relations Checklist

- **Do you know whom you are talking to?**

Ask the reporter questions to determine whom you're talking to and what he or she needs. Get the name, employer and phone number. Clarify what information the reporter wants from you.

- **Does the reporter need the information right away?**

Ask the reporter when his or her deadline is. Can you call back later, at a time that's more convenient for you? Can you buy yourself some time to compose your thoughts into talking points and anticipate questions? If you promise to call back, do so by the agreed upon time.

- **Are you knowledgeable enough to provide an expert opinion?**

If so, gather your thoughts and respond. If not, don't be afraid to say so – and point the reporter to an individual (preferably within Extension) who might be able to help. Always avoid personal views or speculation.

- **Have you clearly identified yourself?**

Does the reporter have your name, your title and your company or agency name?

- **Have you made your three key points?**

If you have time to prepare to respond, identify three main points you want to make and, during the interview, make sure you emphasize those points. It will help if you've prepared key points that are 20 seconds or less.

- **Can you provide anything in writing that will help the reporter understand your points?**

If possible, try following up with a brief email restating your main talking points or pass along an appropriate fact sheet or publication.

- **Remember the Department of Communication Services is a resource.**

Professionals in the department are available to guide you in working with the media.

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