



## Acing Media Interviews

Strategies for Spokespersons



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### Objectives

- **Spokesperson's role** in elevating an organization's core messages
- **Prepare and deliver** great media interviews
- **Practice** and receive feedback



### Session Overview

- Role of the Spokesperson
- Pre-Interview
- During the Interview
- Post-Interview
- Q + A
- Practice ☺
- Final Thoughts



### SPOKESPERSON'S ROLE

### Spokesperson's Role

- Elevate key **messages and positions**
- Serve as a **brand ambassador**
- **Humanize** an issue
- Elevate **local and diverse voices impacted** by an issue

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### Spokesperson's Role

***A spokesperson helps put a face to an organization or issue.***

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### Spokesperson in Action

**Deirdre MacNab**  
President,  
LWV Florida

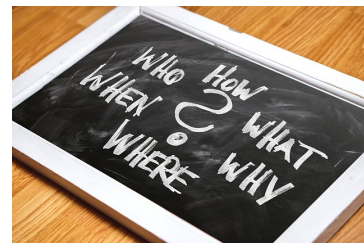
PRE-INTERVIEW: PREPARE

### Prepare

1. Research
2. Develop talking points
3. Practice (again and again and again)

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### Research



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### Research: Who. What. Why.

- **Audience**
  - Reporter
  - Outlet
  - Viewers/Readers
- **Angle/Perspective**
  - Angle
  - Deadline
- **Format**
  - Live
  - 1:1 or group

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### Rules of Engagement

- **On the record** — Anything you say can be attributed to you
- **On Background** — Information you provide may be included in the story, but you will not be quoted
- **Off the record** — There is no such thing as off the record

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### Talking Points



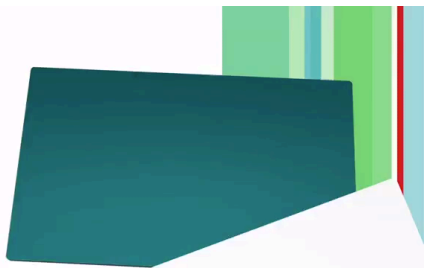
### Sound Bites

- Simple
- Short
- Memorable

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### Mission-centric Sound Bite

Sharon  
Alexander  
Co-President,  
LWV Chattanooga,  
Tennessee



### MISSION STATEMENT

*The League of Women Voters of the United States **encourages informed and active participation in government**, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.*

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**Practice!**



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**And practice some more!**



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**Practice**

- Role playing
- Predicate and tough questions
- Practice, again!

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**DURING THE INTERVIEW: DELIVER**

**Showtime!**



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**You're Live!**

- Establish trust
- Establish your expertise early
- Pivot with grace

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**Pivot with Grace**



Wendy Weiser  
Director,  
Democracy  
Program,  
Brennan Center

**Pivots & Bridge Statements**

- What's **more important** is...
- Another thing to **remember**...
- The **most important thing to remember** is...
- What it **boils down to** is...
- That's not my area of expertise, but **what I can tell you** is...

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**How NOT to Pivot**

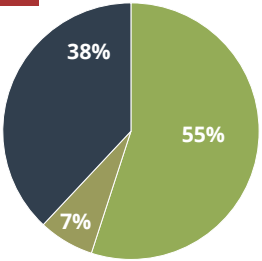
- **Don't pivot.** You allow your opponent to suck you into their argument
- **Overshare.** You say what you don't mean to say
- **Lie.** You pretend to know when you don't

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**Nonverbal Communication**

**Elements of Personal Communication**

- **7%** spoken words
- **38%** voice, tone
- **55%** body language



Source: Dr. Albert Mehrabian, UCLA


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**The Other Half of Communication**

- Body Language
- Tone
- Appearance

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**A Professional Look, Feel, and Sound!**



Andrea Kaminski  
Executive Director,  
LWW Wisconsin

wpt.org

## POST-INTERVIEW: FOLLOW UP

### Breathe!

- **Relax**
- **Reflect**
- **Follow up** (for print interviews)
  - Who
  - When

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## QUESTIONS?

## PRACTICE

### Your turn!

1. **Pair up** with the person next to you
2. **Role play** being the interviewer and interviewee
3. **Record** yourselves role-playing
4. **Switch** roles so each partner has a chance to practice responding to questions
5. **Debrief** the experience with your partner
6. **Fill out** the evaluation form

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### Reach out to us!

**Practice (and preparation) makes perfect.**

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