

Meeting the Media, Made Painless

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MEDIA PARTNERS



What We'll Discuss Today

- Media realities in 2019
- Tips to prepare for & conduct a media interview
- Developing Key Messages



Media Realities

- The “news cycle” is 24/7
- Shrinking news staffs & budgets
- Pack journalism



Different Formats and Settings



On the scene



Satellite interviews



Multiple interviews



Skype



Phone & print



VIP event

What The Media Wants from You

- Accessible
- Reliable
- Credible



What The Media Wants from You

- Faster! –
short deadlines
- Quicker! –
10 min. vs. an hour
- Cheaper! –
easy access equals less
cost
- Graphics –
provide a visual



Why Do We Bother ?

Media are:

- An essential partner in getting the message out
- Important information & education source
- Not the enemy



“AP is on the line..”

Now what?



Prepare for the Interview

- Frame the story
- Create “The Message”
- Remember, an interview is a performance



Frame The Story

- Make the topic easy for your audience to understand
- Consider the elements of good storytelling
 - Characters
 - Conflict or drama
 - Visualization



Creating the Key Messages

- Main thing you want to say – clear and concise.
- What's the one sentence you want the reporter to walk away knowing?
- The “why should I care” or “how does it affect me” information.



Creating the Key Messages

- No jargon !
- Speak to the 5th grade level

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho \mathbf{v}) &= 0 \\ \rho \frac{\partial \mathbf{v}}{\partial t} + (\rho \mathbf{v} \cdot \nabla) \mathbf{v} &= -\nabla \left(P + \frac{B^2}{8\pi} \right) - \rho \nabla \Phi + \left(\frac{\mathbf{B}}{4\pi} \cdot \nabla \right) \mathbf{B} \\ \frac{\partial \rho \epsilon}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho \epsilon \mathbf{v}) &= -P \nabla \cdot \mathbf{v} \\ \frac{\partial \mathbf{B}}{\partial t} &= \nabla \times (\mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{B})\end{aligned}$$

Creating the Key Messages

- Key Messages on NHC Tropical Cyclone Discussion
- Highlight essential points about hazards and forecast uncertainty.
- Use them as Key Messages for your interview.

...st-tropical portion of the track and intensity forecast is based on guidance provided by the Ocean Prediction Center.

Key Messages:

1. Michael is forecast to be a dangerous major hurricane when it reaches the northeastern Gulf Coast on Wednesday, and life-threatening storm surge is possible along portions of the Florida Gulf Coast regardless of the storm's exact track or intensity. Residents in the storm surge and hurricane watch areas should follow any advice given by local officials, as storm surge and hurricane warnings will likely be issued later today.
2. Heavy rainfall from Michael could produce life-threatening flash flooding from the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend region into portions of the Carolinas through Thursday.
3. Hurricane conditions will spread over portions of western Cuba this afternoon, where a hurricane warning is now in effect. Tropical storm conditions are expected over the northeastern Yucatan Peninsula and the Isle of Youth today.
4. Michael is expected to produce heavy rainfall and flash flooding over portions of western Cuba and the northeastern Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico during the next couple of days.



Key Messages for Hurricane Michael

Advisory 8: 11:00 AM EDT Mon Oct 08, 2018



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For more information go to hurricanes.gov

Delivering the Message



How do you prepare?

- Do you tailor message for different types of interviews?
- Can you re-do questions or entire interview?

Delivering the Message



How do you prepare?

- Do you tailor message for different types of interviews?

No!

- Can you re-do questions or entire interview?

Probably not!

Delivering the Message

What to do with your body
– eyes, hands, if you're
standing or sitting?



Delivering the Message



What to do with your body – eyes, hands, if you’re standing or sitting?

RELAX

- Keep hands near navel
- Don’t flail arms
- Keep eyes trained on the interviewer (or camera if remote)
- Don’t sway/swivel

Delivering the Message

- Get the message out in an animated way such that the reporter follows you
- Show energy & compassion
- Stay in relative control of the interview



Some Examples



CBS Early Show Sept. 22, 2005



CBS Early Show Sept. 22, 2005



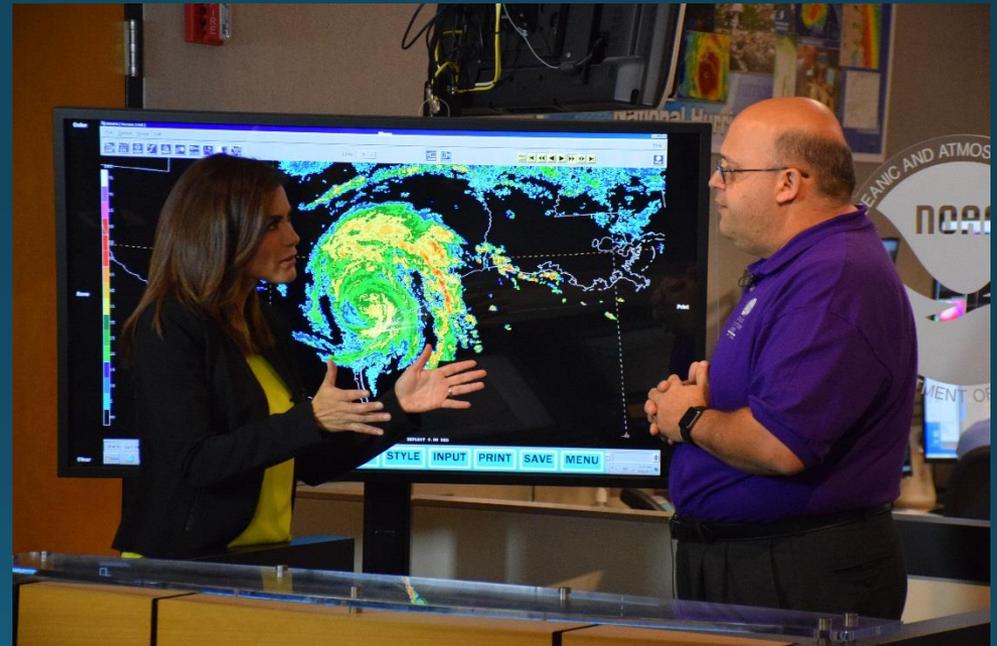
Preparation: The Bridge



- Bridge Lines:
 - The point is ...
 - The important thing is ...
 - The thing to keep in mind is ...
 - What's key here is ...
- **CORRECT THE REPORTER:**
 - *The fact is ...
 - *The truth of the matter is...
 - *The real question is ...
 - *The real focus should be

Steering the Story

- Reporter knows what occurred, but not how
- Preconceived notions
- Separate fact from fiction



CBS Early Show – Mar. 24, 2004



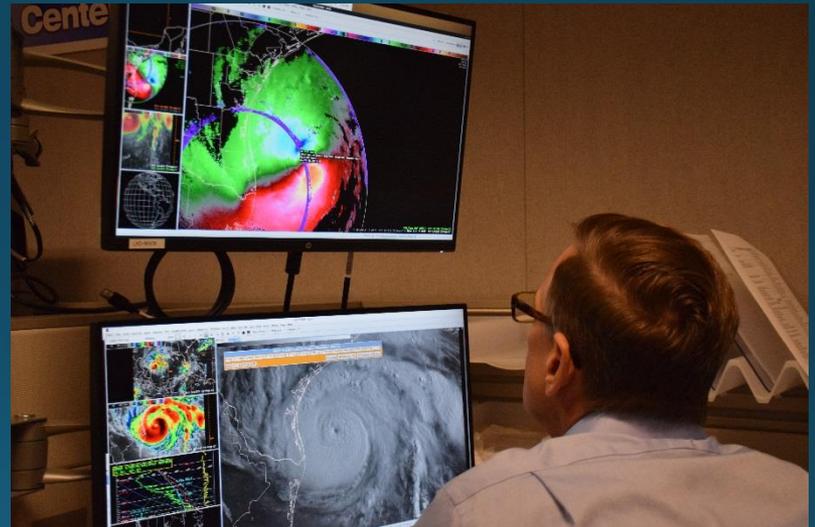
CBS Early Show – Mar. 24, 2004



What if I don't know?

Talking about a subject that is outside your area of expertise

- “I don't know” is an acceptable answer
- Refer reporter to another person or organization
- Don't answer “what if” questions, avoid speculating
- You are an EXPERT and know more than reporter



Everything is on the record

Reporter is in the house – avoid getting too comfortable

- No jokes and sarcasm
- Don't get lulled into saying something you shouldn't
- Never assume microphone is off
- Stay calm and relaxed, but not too relaxed



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If you don't want to see it in print, in a tweet, hear it on the radio or watch it on TV – don't say it!

The Golden Ticket

“Anything else you’d like to add?”



Skype Interview Tips



S-K-Y-P-E

- **S** – Shine a light!
- We need to see your face clearly
- Avoid back lighting
- Avoid shadows from a light above or below you
- Think about background – add a logo
- Dress appropriately



S-K-Y-P-E



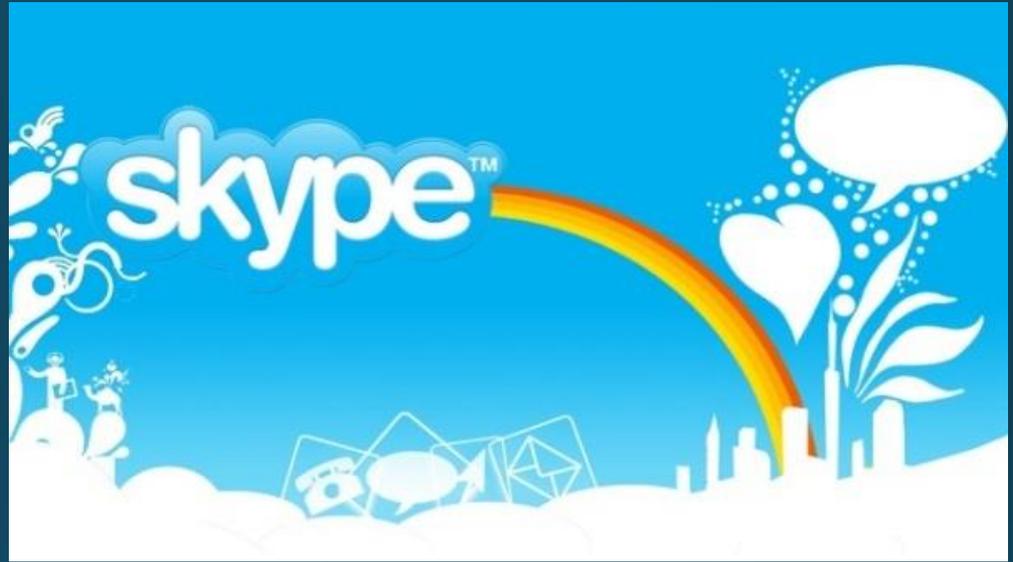
- **K** – keep focused on the camera!
 - Talk to the camera like it's a person.
 - Even when the reporter is asking a question, you are on camera.
 - Avoid funny faces, scowling. Try to look “engaged,” practice active listening

S-K-Y-P-E

- **Y** – Yes. Or No.
 - Your answers should be more than just “yes” or “no.”
 - And your answers should be short – 10-15 seconds.



S-K-Y-P-E



- **P** – Plan what you want to say.
 - Have talking points.
 - Focus on key messages.
 - Plan how to bridge back to your talking points if they ask you something out of the blue.

S-K-Y-P-E

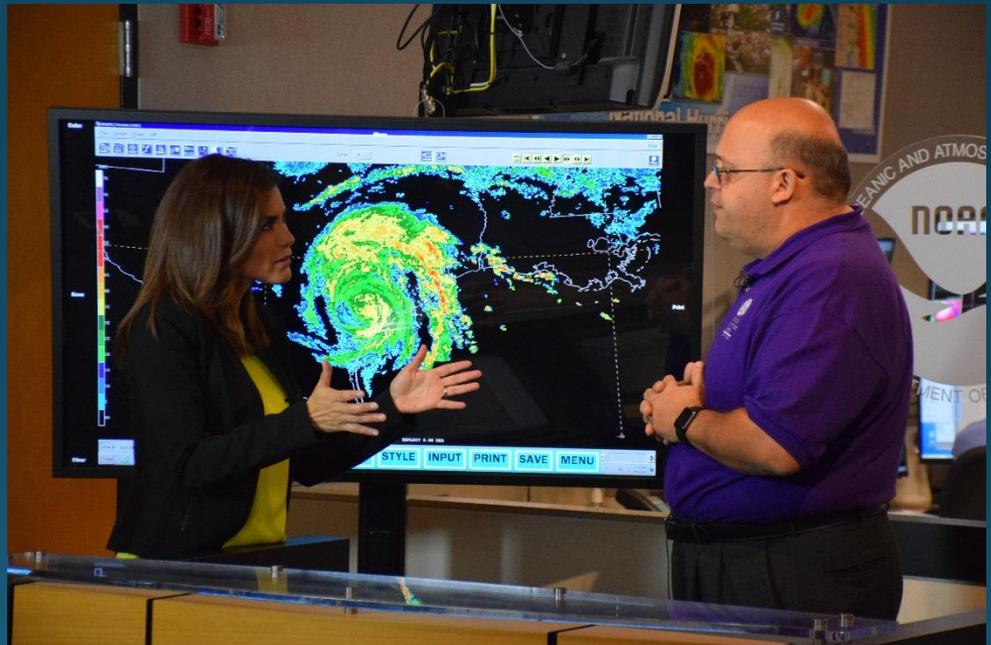
- **E** – End it smoothly.
 - When the reporter says “thank you” respond with something short and simple like “my pleasure.”
 - SMILE
 - Keep your eye on the camera until the light is off!



DO NOT say
ANYTHING off topic
until you know the
microphone is OFF!

Remember to ...

- Be responsive to the reporter
- Know what you're going to say, stay on track
- Stick to what you know
- Be 100% consistent



Remember to..

- Stay “on the record”
- Stick to the reason for the interview
- Be engaging



Remember not to...

- Recite a laundry list of details or facts
- Assume mic or camera is off
- Speculate
- Feel obligated to fill silences
- Show frustration
- Use humor



Key Interview Devices

- Steering / Bridging
- Takeaway
- Anything else you'd like to add?



A word about “Branding”

“WeatherReady Nation”

Use in preparedness messaging
!

Do not use it an operational
interview!



Sometimes, you're the story...

National Hurricane Center S. x
www.nbc.com/news/National-Hurricane-Center-Spokesman-on-Furlough-While-Forecasting-Operations-Remain-Normal-During-Government-Shutdown-226154921.html

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW FOR THE 2014 HURRICANE SEASON

NEWS

National Hurricane Center Spokesman on Furlough, Forecasting Operations Normal During Shutdown

Forecasting staff has not been affected by the shutdown, officials said.

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END OF MONTH

https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&ct=ic&cd=source=words&cd=10&ved=0C7KQ3A1&url=http://34.102.76.201/www.nbc.com/news/National-Hurricane-Center-Spokesman-on-Furlough-While-Forecasting-Operations-Remain-Normal-During-Government-Shutdown-226154921.html&usq=ATQCEVg2iH43u7p

...com/story/2013/10/tropical-storm-karen-louisiana-florida-97788.html?hp=r9

POLITICO Pro Learn more >

Hurricane Center recalls two furloughed officials as storm forms

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Karen is expected to be at least a strong tropical storm at landfall Saturday. | AP Photo

By **BOB KING** and **DARREN SAMUELSOHN** | 10/3/13 9:36 AM EDT Updated: 10/4/13 12:05 AM EDT

The National Hurricane Center and FEMA called employees back on the job after Tropical Storm Karen formed Thursday morning off the Yucatan Peninsula, with predictions that it will become a hurricane shortly before bearing down on the U.S. Gulf Coast on Saturday.

Karen is expected to be at least a strong tropical storm when it makes landfall somewhere between eastern Louisiana and the Florida Panhandle. That will offer a test of the nation's ability to mount a hurricane response during a government shutdown that has locked agency doors, shuttered websites and furloughed 800,000 federal workers while forcing "essential" employees

Just remember...

- The camera never blinks.
- Steer the conversation
- Stay on message
- Keep it simple, short, factual.
- If you don't know the answer, say so.



FINAL EXAM

- Media arrives! I need a spokesperson!

