



Media training checklist

Ralf van Veen

1. Preparation

Goal: Understand the purpose and context of the media interaction.

☐ Know Your Audience:

- Who will consume this content? (e.g., general public, industry professionals).
- Tailor your message to resonate with them.

☐ Understand the Outlet:

- Research the journalist, media outlet, and their audience.
- Familiarize yourself with their tone, style, and typical questions.

☐ Define Your Key Messages:

- Prepare 2–3 main points you want to convey.
- Ensure they are clear, concise, and aligned with your goals.

☐ Anticipate Questions:

- List potential questions, including challenging or negative ones.
- Prepare thoughtful, accurate responses for each.

☐ Rehearse:

- Practice your answers aloud to ensure confidence and clarity.
- Record yourself and review for tone, pace, and body language.

2. Appearance and Presentation

Goal: Present yourself professionally and confidently.

☐ Dress Appropriately:

- Choose attire that aligns with the event or brand image.
- Avoid distracting patterns, bright colors, or noisy accessories.

☐ Body Language:

- Sit or stand up straight and maintain good posture.
- Use natural hand gestures to emphasize key points.
- Avoid crossing arms or fidgeting.

☐ Eye Contact:

- Look directly at the interviewer or camera to build trust.

☐ Smile and Stay Relaxed:

- A warm, genuine expression makes you more relatable.

3. During the Interview

Goal: Deliver your message effectively and remain in control.

☐ **Stick to Your Key Messages:**

- Redirect questions back to your main points when necessary.
- Use bridging phrases like:
 - “What’s most important to note is...”
 - “That’s a good question. Here’s what I can tell you...”

☐ **Be Concise:**

- Keep answers clear and to the point (30–60 seconds per response).
- Avoid overloading with too much information.

☐ **Avoid Jargon:**

- Use simple, relatable language for a broader audience.

☐ **Stay Calm Under Pressure:**

- If faced with a tough question, take a deep breath before responding.
- Avoid defensive or confrontational language.

☐ **Fact-Check on the Spot:**

- If unsure, say: “Let me verify that and get back to you,” instead of guessing.

4. Handling Difficult Questions

Goal: Maintain professionalism while steering the conversation positively.

☐ **Stay On Message:**

- Use bridging techniques to return to your key points.

☐ **Acknowledge Concerns:**

- Show empathy for the questioner’s perspective before providing your response.

☐ **Don’t Speculate:**

- Stick to facts and avoid answering hypothetical questions.

☐ **Pause if Needed:**

- It’s okay to take a moment to formulate your thoughts.



5. Post-Interview Actions

Goal: Reflect on performance and follow up if necessary.

☐ Thank the Journalist:

- Show appreciation for the opportunity, either in person or via email.

☐ Review Coverage:

- Analyze the published piece or broadcast to evaluate how your message was portrayed.

☐ Learn and Improve:

- Identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.
- Consider additional training if needed.

☐ Follow Up if Necessary:

- Provide any promised details or clarifications promptly.

Bonus Tips for Success

1. Know Your Rights:

- Understand what's on the record and off the record.
- Clarify terms with the journalist beforehand if needed.

2. Be Authentic:

- Speak naturally and let your personality shine through.

3. Practice Frequently:

- Regular mock interviews help build confidence and polish delivery.

4. Use Media-Friendly Soundbites:

- Short, memorable statements are more likely to be quoted.

"Always frame your answers constructively, even when addressing challenges."

