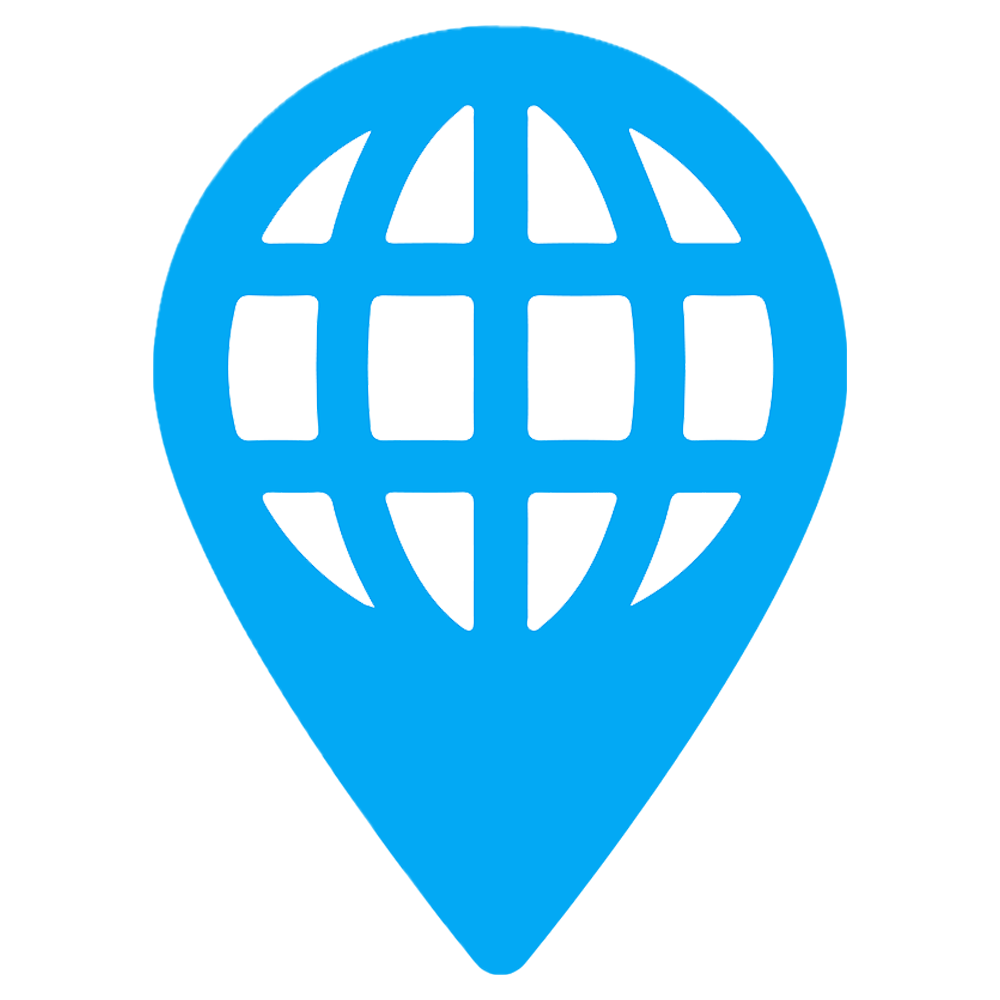
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**Media training checklist**

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.