MEDIA LANDSCAPE

**Traditional Media is on the decline:**
- Traditional newsrooms at a local and national level are shrinking
- There are less reporters, and these reporters are covering more beats
  - They are swamped, have less time, resources, etc.
- But, placements in traditional media are still really valuable
  - Gives us the ability to reach an influential audience
    - Voters, journalists, policymakers
  - Allows you to build your credibility up as an expert or a thought leader on your issue

**Digital Media is on the rise:**
- Digital publications are growing rapidly
- These outlets are trying to cultivate a very niche, particular audiences (e.g., ThinkProgress, Vox)
- Though they are often perceived as less authoritative than traditional outlets, getting a placement in these publications is still extremely valuable
  - Allows you to reach a targeted audience (e.g., progressives who read Think Progress)
  - Allows you to build your credibility up as an expert among that audience, among journalists, and even policy makers
  - Digital content has the potential to go viral and reach hundreds and thousands of people through social media and other peer-to-peer sharing mediums
- It’s also still extremely valuable to get placements in hyper-local, small, digital outlets, and for the same reasons as listed above

**WHAT TO DO WHEN A REPORTER CALLS**

**Ask questions:**
- What is the reporter’s name and who do they represent? Get the reporter’s contact information.
- What is the topic of the story? What angle is the reporter pursuing?
- What is the reporter’s deadline?
- Will the interview be broadcast? Live or taped?
- It’s OK to ask for time to get your thoughts together before the interview and call the reporter back.

**Before you say yes to the interview:**
- What is your goal for doing the interview?
- What messages do you want to get across? Write down 3-5 concise messages.
- Are you the right spokesperson for the issue?
• Research the reporter’s recent stories. Search for the reporter’s Twitter account to gauge his or her interests.

If you decide to say no to the interview:
• Cultivate the relationship by giving them a resource—another spokesperson to go to or some background information in writing.
• Inform the Communications Team; we keep data on media inquiries.
• In some circumstances, consider issuing a press statement in lieu of doing an interview.

If you decide to say yes to the interview:
• What are the 3-5 concise, impactful messages that you want to deliver in the interview? Write them down.
• The Communications Team can help you frame key messages for your programs and initiatives.
• Prepare answers for questions that you don’t want to be asked.

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

Bridging
Answer the question, then bridge or transition into your key message using phrases like:
• But perhaps an equally important issue here is….
• A more useful way to look it is…
• Keep in mind that…
• More importantly…
• That’s not the issue. The issue is….

Flagging
Call attention to your message and flag important information with phrases like:
• The four most important things about this study are:
• Our bill looks at three key policies…
• The key thing to remember is…
• At the end, it’s critical we focus on…

Hooking
Bait the reporter into asking you about something, hook them in, or tease them with phrases like:
• You won’t believe what we have coming up next year..
• We like this policy but it’s nothing compared to an even more inclusive bill we’re working on…
• On the horizon, we are looking at a new….

INTERVIEW TIPS BY MEDIUM

Print
- Eliminate distractions. Turn off your mobile phone, shut your office door.
- Practice with a colleague in advance to build your confidence and empower yourself to take control of the interview from the very first question.
- Have your key messages written down in front of you.
- Sit up straight. Good posture will ensure that you sound authoritative.
- It’s OK to ask the reporter if he or she will send questions or themes in advance of the interview.
- It’s OK to follow up with additional resources.

Radio
- Ask if there will be listener call-ins
- Stay focused
- Warm up your voice
- Speak clearly

TV
- Look at the reporter, not the camera
- Don’t get burned by a hot mic
- Give concise, conversational answers
- Avoid vocal fillers, fidgeting and hand gesticulation
- Wear solid colors, no black/white or busy prints

Web
- Frame the shot beforehand and make sure your head and shoulders are in the shot; it’s always good to do a run through beforehand
  - Make sure you’re not looking at the screen from an unflattering angle
  - Make sure there aren’t any problematic images in the background
- Make sure there aren’t any other distractions in the background
- Look at the camera, not the monitor
- Treat this like you would any other interview—that is, be sure to utilize the tips the other interview tips!

INTERVIEW 101
Research the reporter
Keep your guard up
Know your talking points
Speak in sound bites