



There's a Reporter on the Line: 10 Tips to Maximize a Media Interview

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Meet Janet Falk

- ▶ **Public Relations and Marketing Communications professional**

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- ▶ **30 + years experience**

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- ▶ **Independent consultant advising attorneys, business executives, consultants**

Rules of Professional Conduct and Model Rules

- ▶ Rules on Advertising: 7.1 - 7.4
- ▶ Model Rules 1.0, 1.6, 3.6

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1. **Best interest of client**

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 1. Best interest of client
 2. **Confidentiality of information**

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 1. Best interest of client
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 3. **Limits do not apply when seeking information or people who may exonerate the client**

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 1. Best interest of client
 2. Confidentiality of information
 3. Limits do not apply when seeking information or people who may exonerate the client
 4. **Limits do not apply when attorney or firm is not involved in case**

Phone Interview

1. A reporter is **NOT** your friend

Phone Interview

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Anything you say can be used in print and recordings

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Anything you say can be used in print and recordings

On-the-record, off-the record, background, deep background, not-for-attribution

Phone Interview

1. A reporter is NOT your friend

Anything you say can be used in print and recordings

On-the-record, off-the record, background, deep background, not-for-attribution

Agreement about the discussion up front

Phone Interview



2. PREPARE

Phone Interview

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A media interview is a bad time to have an original thought

Phone Interview

2. PREPARE

Make a list of THREE important points

Phone Interview

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Make a list of THREE important points

Print it in **16 point** font

Phone Interview

3. Create memorable examples of the three points

Phone Interview

3. Create memorable examples of the three points

Acronym

Phone Interview

3. Create memorable examples of the three points

Acronym

Analogy

Phone Interview

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Anecdote

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Visual image

Phone Interview

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Word play and Reference to Pop Culture

Examples in the Time of Corona

3. Create memorable examples of the three points

Acronym: COVID-19 Corona Virus Disease 2019

Examples in the Time of Corona

3. Create memorable examples of the three points

Acronym: WFH Work from Home

Examples in the Time of Corona

3. Create memorable examples of the three points

Analogy: “It’s going to disappear, one day, *it’s like a miracle*, it will disappear.”

Examples in the Time of Corona

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Anecdote: A friend is in a coma

Examples in the Time of Corona

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Alliteration: Stay Safe

Examples in the Time of Corona

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Rhyme, Word Play, Pop Culture: My Corona/My Sharona

Examples in the Time of Corona

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Visual image: Sweet Caroline (hands washing hands)

Examples in the Time of Corona

3. Create memorable examples of the three points

Acronym: **COVID-19 Corona Virus Disease 2019**

Acronym: **WFH Work from Home**

Analogy: “It’s going to disappear, one day, *it’s like a miracle*, it will disappear.”

Anecdote: A friend is in a coma

Alliteration: **Stay Safe**

Rhyme, Word Play, Reference to Pop Culture: **My Corona/My Sharona**

Visual image: **Sweet Caroline (hands washing hands)**

Phone Interview

4. Answer the difficult question as briefly as possible and stop talking

Phone Interview

**5. When a reporter tries to put words in your mouth,
CLOSE YOUR LIPS AND SWALLOW**

Phone Interview

5. When a reporter tries to put words in your mouth, CLOSE YOUR LIPS AND SWALLOW

Do not repeat the negative words asked in the question

Phone Interview

6. Plan for an escape

Phone Interview

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If the interview gets away from you, excuse yourself politely and end the conversation

Phone Interview

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If the interview gets away from you, excuse yourself politely and end the conversation

Offer an opportunity to help later

Phone Interview

7. Confirm you have the correct spelling of the reporter's name, plus email and phone number

Phone Interview

7. Confirm you have the correct spelling of the reporter's name, plus email and phone number

Send additional information you offered or an idea that escaped you in the moment

Phone Interview

8. Do NOT ask for, nor expect to receive, an advance look at your quote or the article

Phone Interview

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Offer to help; be available for follow-up questions

Phone Interview

9. DO ask when the article will be published

Phone Interview

9. DO ask when the article will be published

Say that you will promote it on your social media and website

Phone Interview

10. Be prepared for the unexpected call

Phone Interview

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 - **The reporter knows something you do not know YET**

Phone Interview

10. Be prepared for the unexpected call

- The reporter knows something you do not know YET
- **The reporter knows something you are *not* authorized to talk about YET**

Phone Interview

10. Be prepared for the unexpected call

- The reporter knows something you do not know YET
- The reporter knows something you are *not authorized* to talk about YET

Tactfully delay for 30 minutes

Unexpected phone call

DELAY

Someone in the office now

Unexpected phone call

DELAY

Someone in the office now

Get the reporter's name, phone and email

Script to delay response to an unexpected phone call

DELAY

Someone in the office now

Get the reporter's name, phone and email

In case I need to gather additional information, please let me know EXACTLY what you'd like to discuss, so that I can be MORE HELPFUL to you

I'll call you back in 30 minutes

You have 30 minutes

PREPARE

Call the client and get approval to talk to the press

You have 30 minutes

PREPARE

Call the client and get approval to talk to the press

Find out what happened

You have 30 minutes

PREPARE

Make a list of **THREE** important points

Print it in **16 point** font

You have 30 minutes

Create memorable examples of the three points

Acronym

Analogy

Anecdote

Alliteration

Rhyme

Visual image

Word play, Reference to Pop Culture

You have 30 minutes

Call the reporter back

You have 30 minutes

Call the reporter back

**Answer the difficult question as briefly as possible
and stop talking**

You have 30 minutes

Call the reporter back

Answer the difficult question as briefly as possible
and stop talking

**Do not repeat the negative words asked in the
question**

You have 30 minutes

Call the reporter back

Answer the difficult question as briefly as possible and stop talking

Do not repeat the negative words asked in the question

Answer the question the same way until it goes away

You have 30 minutes

Call the reporter back

If the question involves confidential or proprietary information or it is against company policy to comment on personnel matters, say so

Phone interview

1. Reporter is NOT your friend
2. Prepare a list of THREE bullet points in LARGE font
3. Use memorable examples
4. Answer the difficult question briefly, stop talking
5. When a reporter puts words in your mouth, close your lips and swallow
6. Plan for an escape

Phone interview

7. **Get the reporter's contact information**
8. **Do not ask for an advance look at the article**
9. **Ask when the article will be published**
10. **Be prepared for the unexpected call**

Bonus

Is there anything you'd like to add?

Bonus

Is there anything you'd like to add?

Take the opportunity to mention any point that did not get discussed

Bonus

Is there anything you'd like to add

Take the opportunity to mention any point that did not get discussed

Repeat and clarify any technical or complex aspect

Why Do You Want to Be in the News?

- ▶ Attract clients
- ▶ Be top of mind with referral sources
- ▶ Put pressure on opposing counsel
- ▶ Build reputation and brand
- ▶ Maintain contact with current and lapsed clients
- ▶ Keep in touch
- ▶ Recruit employees
- ▶ Advocate for an issue

Who, What, When, Where and Why

- ▶ Who do you want to read the news story
- ▶ What idea will they read about
- ▶ When: Is it time-sensitive
- ▶ Where do they look for news
- ▶ Why will they care

Contact

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Monthly newsletter

E-book: How YOU Can Be the Attorney Reporters Call

FREE 30-minute consultation