QUICK FACTS

News media tip sheet

- **Be respectful of the reporter's deadline but don't agree to the interview until you understand the nature of the story.**
- **Check with your AE/IR regarding participation and determining who is your spokesperson.**
- **When accepting an interview, ask 10 questions:**
  - What is your deadline?
  - What is the topic of the story?
  - When is the interview?
  - Who is the interviewer?
  - Why am I being interviewed?
  - How long will the interview be?
  - Will I be interviewed alone or on a panel?
  - Is it live or taped?
  - When will the interview air?
  - What is the source of the inquiry?
- **Be prepared for every interview you participate in.** (Do your homework first.)
- **Create three major points to emphasize.**
- **Have answers prepared for the most likely questions as well as the toughest ones using bridge statement.**
- **Rehearse in the mirror and with others if you have time.**
- **Remember in broadcast interviews (radio or television) they are looking for sound bites (10-15 second answers) and brief responses.**
- **Some television interviews are now being done via Zoom/Skype so be aware of your background.**
- **Avoid real estate jargon and media buzz words.** Remember you are speaking to your friends, neighbors and clients – not just the reporter.
- **Answer questions directly but do not restate a negative question, rephrase it in a positive.**
- **Don't say "no comment."** Explain why you cannot discuss the matter (not your area of expertise, not relevant, a legal matter, etc).
- **Don't talk "off the record" or on background.** When you speak to a reporter say only what you expect to see in the story.
- **Don't attempt to bluff your way through an answer.** Admit your lack of knowledge. Indicate you'll find the information and get back to the reporter. Always follow up.
- **Watch your nonverbal behavior.** Look at the reporter 100 percent of the time. Don't nod unless you are in total agreement with what the reporter is saying.
- **Don't feel you have to fill silence.** You may say something you'll regret.
- **Don't argue with reporters or be defensive.** Don't ask to see the story before it's published.
- **Make sure the reporter has your name, title and affiliations correct.**

Controlling the interview

Openers – scene setters

- Let me first say...
- Allow me to sketch out the bigger picture...
- Before I address that ...

Closers – wrap up

- The bottom line is...
- It all boils down to...
- We see this resulting in...

Emphasize a point (flagging)

- The most important point is...
- What most people don't realize...
- In all of this, one thing really stands out, and that is...

Steering – redirect focus (bridging)

- The real issue is...
- What this is really about is...
- It's important to finish this point..

Been misquoted? Bad headline?

Misquoted

- Take a breath...
- Don't vow never to talk to reporters again
- Set record straight — don't beat up reporter

Paraphrasing errors

- Morgue files/Web/AI
- Set the record straight

Headline misleading/inaccurate

- They rarely correct but still call to set the record straight
- The reporter who interviewed you didn't write the headline