

## **Tips for Media Relations Success from ISU News Service**

### **Working with the media is often an opportunity, not a threat.**

Stories are generally better told with your perspective than without it.

### **Know your story.**

Do your research. Don't guess or speculate. Don't be afraid to ask for help.

### **What does the reporter want to know? Why is she calling you?**

It's okay to ask what questions she has. This will help you to prepare and determine whether you're the appropriate source. If you aren't the expert, refer the reporter to someone who is.

### **The reporter's questions may be vague. Be ready to respond effectively anyway.**

"Bring us up to speed on the latest."

"Do you have an update?"

"So, what should people know about this initiative?"

### **Develop your message(s) and key supporting points. Boil them down.**

### **Tell your story well. Then tell it again.**

Have a clear, concise, colorful message, communicated to a targeted audience. Your quotes should stand out, not blend in. Don't be afraid to repeat your message to help bring the reporter up to speed and emphasize the most important parts of your story.

### **Loop format: a) Listen. b) Acknowledge the question. c) Respond d) Bridge.**

### **Don't repeat (or parrot) the negative language in any question.**

Unless it's a live interview, the audience will never know the question you were asked. Why take on that negative language in your response?

### **Be confident and direct. Don't over-answer (that can get you into trouble).**

### **Be yourself. Be human. Be likeable.**

### **Be available. Respond quickly and respect deadlines.**

### **What's in it for the reporter? What makes this news?**

Who-what-when-where-why-how and WHO CARES?

### **No, you can't review/approve the story.**

But you can ask the reporter to read back attributable information (your quotes). On occasion, you may have the opportunity to fact-check.

### **The closing question: "Is there anything else you'd like to add?"**

YES – OF COURSE THERE IS!

### **There's no such thing as off-the-record.**

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