Wichowski | Egov

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**Tips: How to deliver public statements/ interviews with little to no prep time**

**IN ADVANCE**

1. Know your goals: Whether specific or background info, know your primary message
2. Prepare: Even if you don’t know details, you know the general topic area. Write out talking points; ask your advisor for facts, stats, key points
3. Be specific: Prepare to open with your primary message, then specifics (“how” “what” “where” “when” and “why”).

**IN THE MOMENT**

1. Relax: Clear your mind. To think on your feet, you must be present. Deep breaths!
2. Be professional: Take it seriously. A speech / interview is not a conversation (even if the atmosphere feels casual). Quotations from even “small” OTR events could be cited for years
3. Record the interview: Ensure you have an accurate record as insurance against misquotes
4. Slow down. Pause (silently) and think: Pauses will feel longer to you than the audience. Collect your thoughts. Don’t ramble or fill the silence with word soup
5. Take charge: Questioners sometimes deliberately provoke or mislead with word choice. If you think this is so, clarify. Set your own frame
6. Be diplomatic: Don’t make accusations or negative characterizations (unless planned)
7. Offer facts and figures: Evidence strengthens your answers
8. Avoid jargon: Speak simply. Don’t assume questioner has technical knowledge
9. Be honest, be real: Your credibility is a key part of your career. If you don’t know an answer, admit it; offer to get back to the reporter with specifics later
10. Answer the question you want: It’s ok to reframe occasionally. Acknowledge you’ve heard your questioner then pivot (eg “I understand you’re asking about X. If I may, I have a related comment about Y I have to address first…”)

**BODY LANGUAGE**

Do’s

* Stand tall
* Stand straight
* Look confident (even if you don’t feel it)
* Appear open
* Move your gaze
* Make eye contact (or the nose trick)
* Use occasional hand gestures
* Go with the flow (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zG9hZ66TA4E)

Don’t’s

* Fidget
* Giggle
* Play with your hair
* Pick at your clothes
* Use excessive hand gestures