

MEDIA INTERVIEW GUIDE

Brand Promise:

Community Corrections is vital to the safety and health of communities.

Pillars:

How we deliver on our promise—

- Monitoring behavior
- Helping people turn their lives around
- Results-driven management
- Specialization
- Technology
- Strong cost/value proposition
- Accountability
- Peace officer status

Personality:

- Strong
- Dedicated
- Results-driven
- Knowledgeable
- Caring
- Ethical
- Innovative
- Progressive

Benefits:

- Safer communities
- Return to productivity
- Healthy families
- Lower costs
- Better long-term solution

Before the interview:

- Know the reporter, analyst, and your audience.
- Know your goals/objectives for the briefing.
- Know what you want to say: Review your “key messages/proof points.”
- Jot down likely questions, appropriate answers.

Rules of engagement:

- Speak in “headlines:” Offer conclusion first, briefly and directly, and back it with facts or “proof points.”
- Don’t over-answer. Short answers are better than long ones.

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- Don't be fixated by the question. "Bridge" to a related point you want to make.
- Asked about a problem? Talk about a solution.
- Don't let false charges, facts, or figures offered by a reporter or an analyst stand uncorrected.
- Don't repeat a reporter's negative statements or slurs. Frame your reply as a positive statement.
- Speak clearly. Avoid jargon and bureaucratese.
- Be engaging, likable.
- Don't know the answer? Don't fake it. Assure the reporter you will find and provide the needed information in a timely manner.
- Don't overlap the interviewer's question; begin your answer when the reporter is finished.
- Keep cool. Don't be provoked.
- Never lie to a reporter.

For telephone interviews:

- Buy preparation time by asking to call the reporter back, if deadline allows.
- Establish a time limit before the interview begins, and keep it.
- Have key messages handy for easy reference.
- Ask questions in order to gain feedback.
- For radio, speak visually – use words to paint pictures.

For television interviews:

- For men, a dark suit and blue shirt works best. For women, avoid solid black or white, or busy patterns. Bright colors are fine.
- Don't wear large, shiny, or noisy jewelry.
- Sit erect, but not ramrod-straight, slightly forward in the chair. Unbutton suit jacket when seated.
- Resist the urge to shout into the microphone. Speak and gesture naturally.
- Talk to the reporter/interviewer, not the camera.
- Keep a pleasant expression; smile when appropriate.

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