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LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 12-16 | WASHINGTON HILTON | WASHINGTON, D.C.



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Working With the Media: Strategies to Effectively Tell Your County's Story

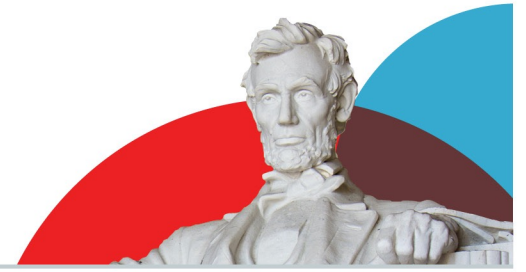
Speakers

Cragin Mosteller

Director of External Affairs
Florida Association of Counties

Jennifer Finch

Public Information Officer
Weld County, Colo.

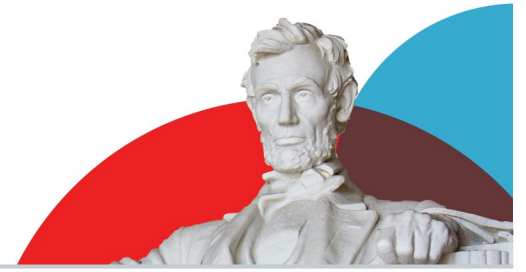


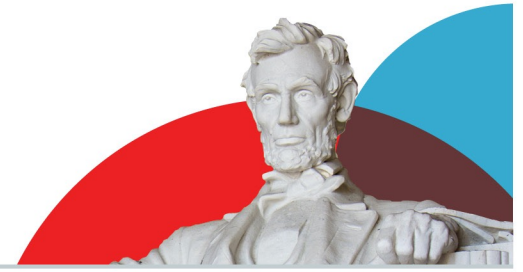
Working with the Media: Strategies to Effectively Tell Your County's Story



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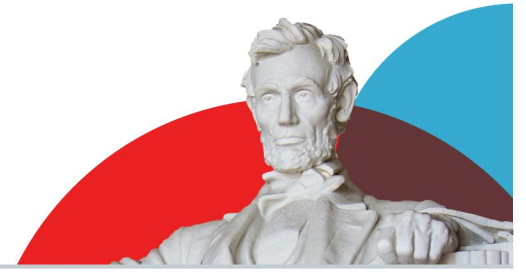




What brings you here today?

- You want to learn tips about “handling” the media because of a poor or negative experience
- You’re not confident in your communication strategy or maybe you don’t even have one





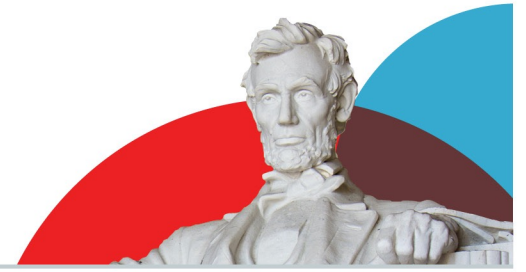
TIP

Flying under the radar
is not a
communication strategy



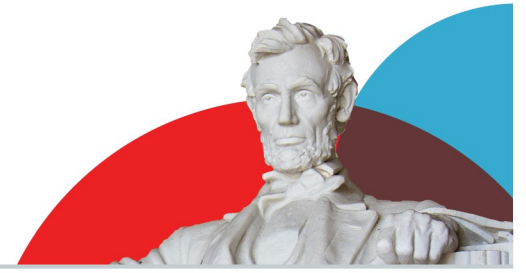
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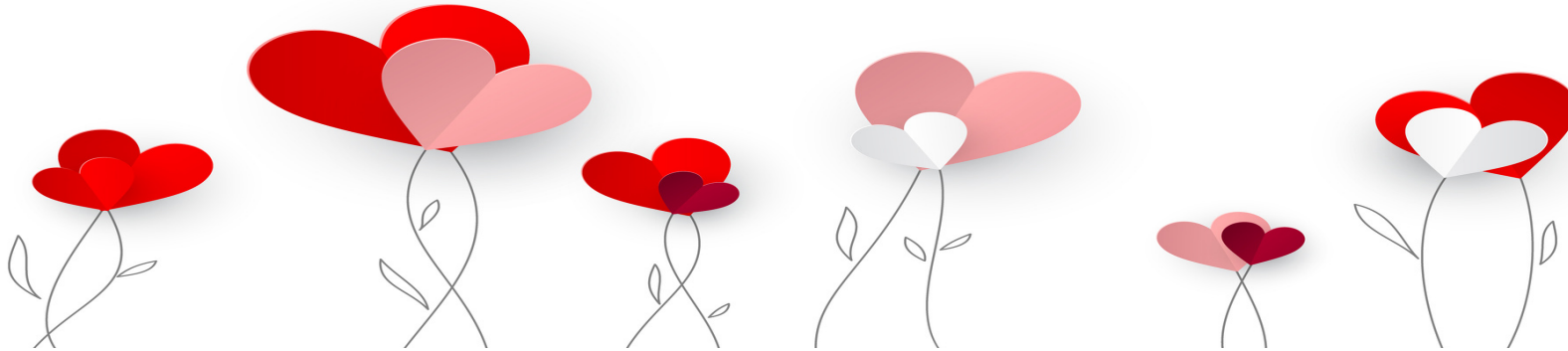


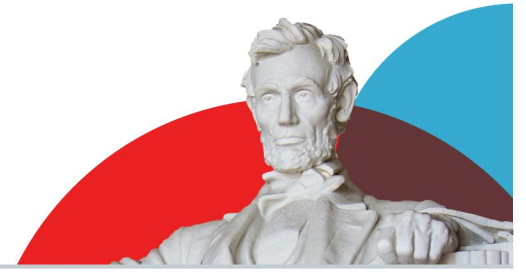
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RELATIONSHIPS



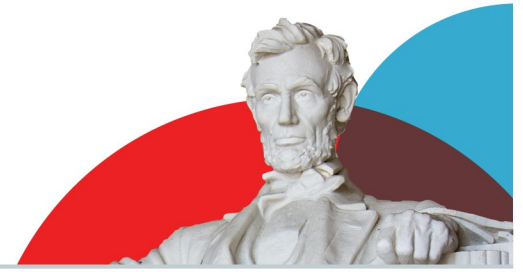


DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR DEPARTMENTS

- Find your news (or make your news)
 - *Community service*
- Efficiencies within your office
- Honors or awards
- Reminders for deadlines, public notices

You have information about things the public wants to know about – trust me

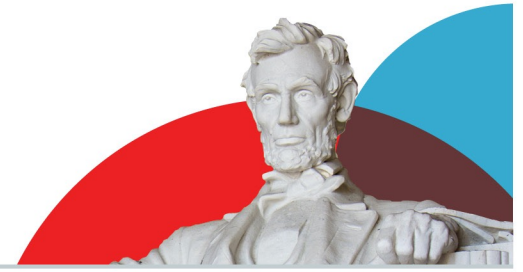




DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH TECHNOLOGY



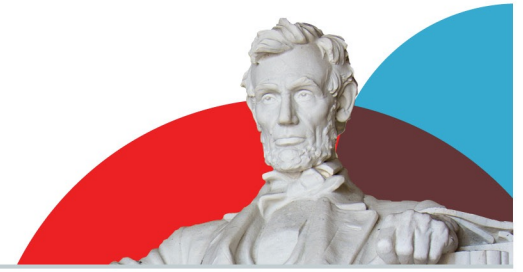
- Email
- Websites
- Social Media
- Newsletters



DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH RESIDENTS

- Find out what they want to know
 - *Survey*
- Share information you have that helps them in their daily lives
- Celebrate your residents and community
- Community Partners

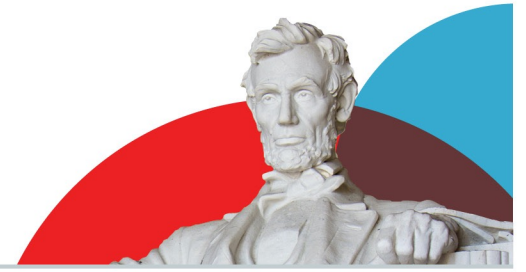




DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MEDIA



- Explain your office, tasks, responsibilities
- Give them background/information on what your office does
- Offer to be an SME for them
- Understand the reporter's job and position / Understand what the public is interested in learning about or has questions about

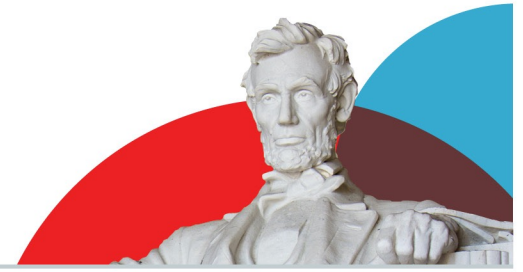


DOES IT MATTER? REPORTERS GET IT WRONG ANYWAY.

- *Reporters are people too*
- *Want to report accurately*

THAT SAID, MISTAKES DO HAPPEN

- *There is a difference between not liking a story and story that is factually wrong*
 - *Factually correct = good story. Even if you don't like it.*



Example: New Roundabout Project

Relationship with the Departments: Roundabout project (2nd for the county); begin this spring; impact commuters and employees.

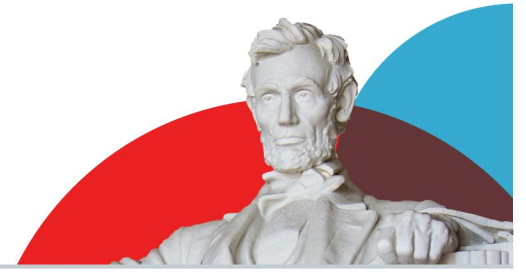
Relationship with Technology: website, social media, newsletter w/ subscribers; ability to implement emailed update alerts to a different set of subscribers.

Relationship with Residents: Roundabouts are polarizing; new to the county and to county drivers; begin this spring; impact commuters and employees.

Goal: Introduce roundabouts to county drivers and help them understand why they will start seeing more roundabouts in WC.

Message: Roundabouts are safer than stoplights and signs; they save taxpayer dollars, and residents' time, better for environment (than a stop light or stop sign when traffic numbers are high).

Strategy: Proactively start this discussion before we start a big project; acknowledge the newness of this traffic control device and share in their frustration – build a bond of commonality and “get through this together”.



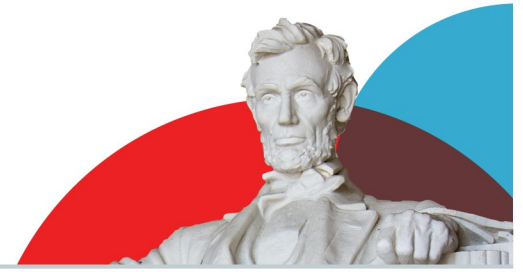
Example: New Roundabout Project

Relationship with the Media: Send release alerting them to the project start and the communication plan.

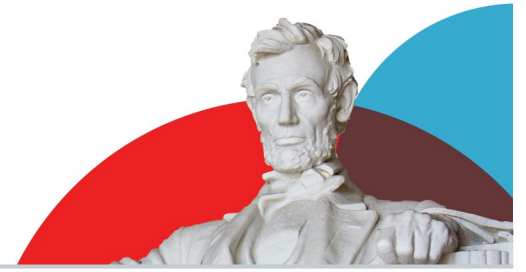
Work with community partners and the municipality to share information about the project as well.



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- Subscribers
- Facebook followers
- Twitter followers
- Website
- County Intranet
- News Release (media, municipalities and other PIOs)

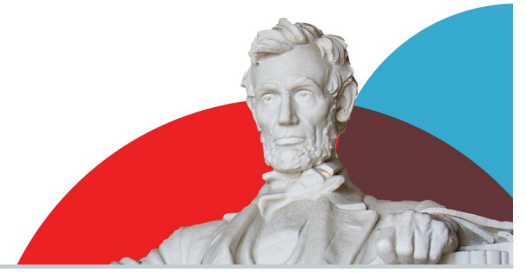


Working with the Media: Strategies to Effectively Tell Your County's Story

- Mine your stories; your county is working on projects the public would love to know about
- Find your message, your key points, your “why”
- Know your tools and understand how to use them
- Know your audience, who are they and how they receive information
- Each story you tell has a different communication strategy...but your communication foundation (the goals, the tools, the approach) is the same.
- And most importantly, remember it's all about...

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Working with the Media: Strategies to Effectively Tell Your County's Story

RELATIONSHIPS





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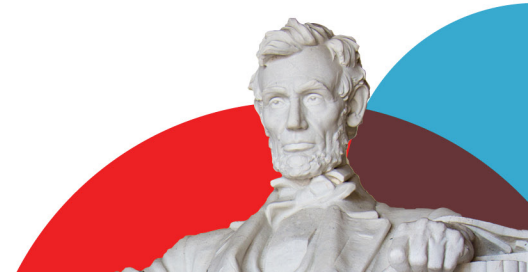
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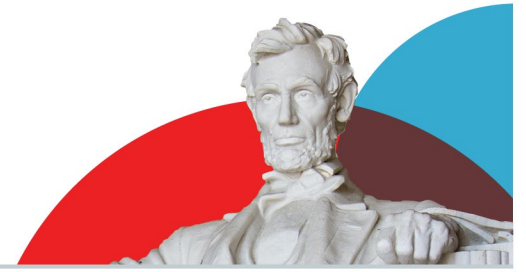


When a reporter calls.....



Keep calm. You've got a plan.





Before you answer questions. **ASK** them.

What to do when a reporter calls...

- What is their deadline?
- Who else are they talking to?
- What is the format? (TV, print, podcast)
- What type of story is it? (News, profile, investigative)
- What is the angle?

Before doing an interview, you need to know two things:

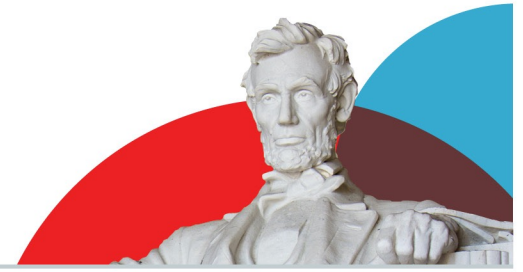
1. The Impact 2. The Message



- *It advances your priorities*
- *A chance to deliver YOUR message*
- *Tell YOUR side first – WINNING*
- *Be helpful/relationship development*



- *Doesn't benefit you*
- *You don't know the answers*
- *It doesn't reach your audience*
- *If you could go to jail*



PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE.

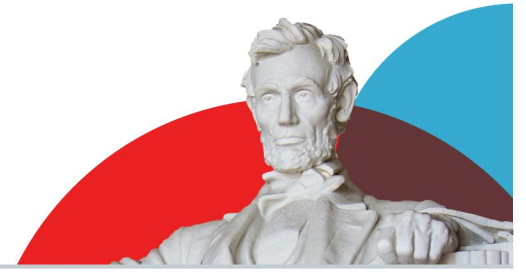
- Know it. Don't Wing it.
- Say it out loud – hear it.
- Test it.
- Be Authentic.



Louis Howe: Newspaper man & closest and longest advisor to Franklin and Elinor Roosevelt

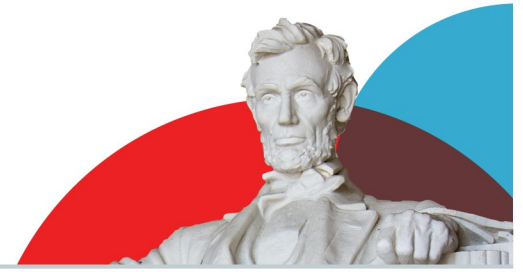
***"Have something to say.
Say it.
And sit down."
-Louis Howe***

Want to be quoted? Be quotable.



Never ever say no comment - EVER

- On the record, Off the record (no such thing) & on background
- Print vs Video
- Quote vs Attribution
- What to do if you flub it up



You've decided to do the interview...



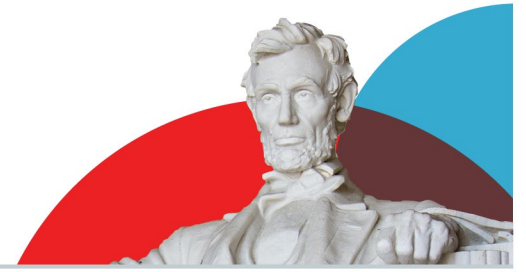
Does anyone have any
questions for my answers?
— Henry Kissinger

The interview isn't about answering
questions

—

it is about accomplishing your
objectives.

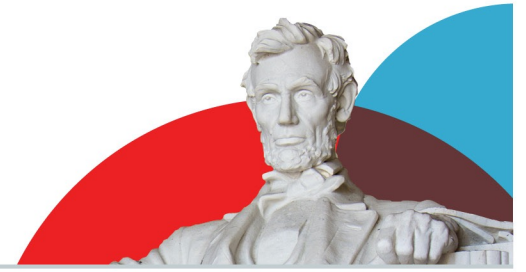
PERIOD.



Tips for the interview



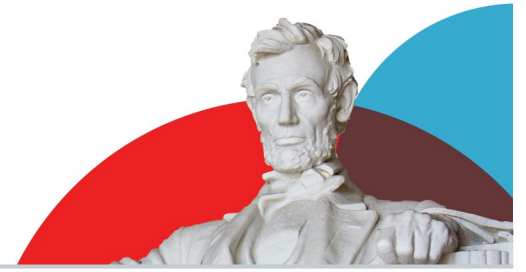
Respect
deadlines



Tips for the interview



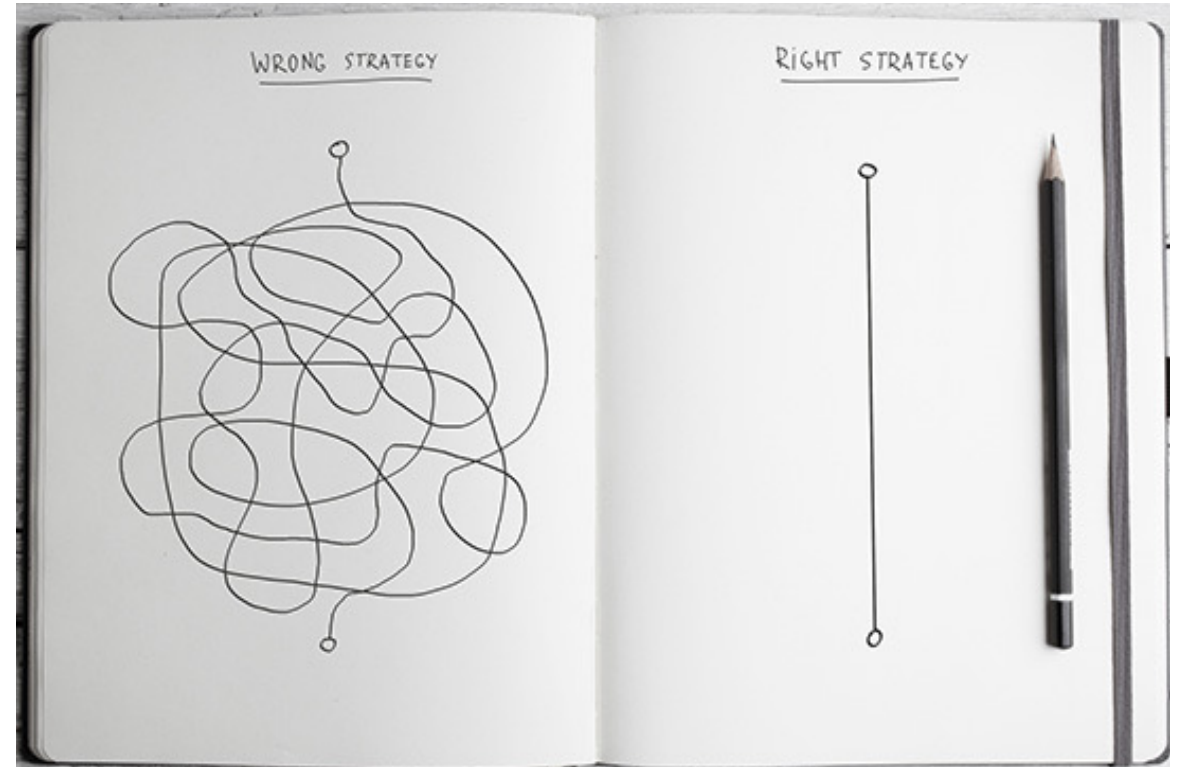
Not too long
Not too short

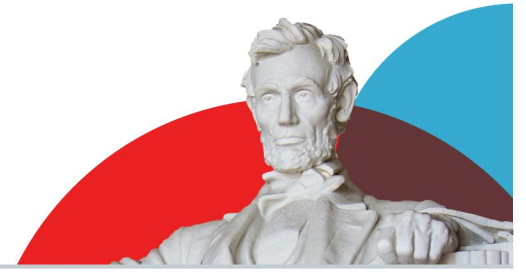


Tips for the interview

K. I. S. S.

Keep It Simple Stupid

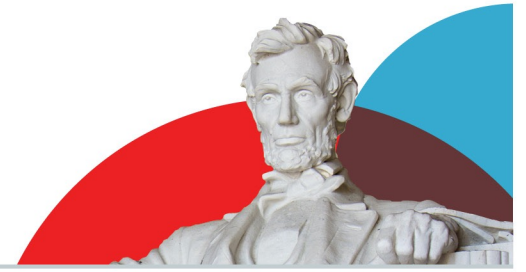




Tips for the interview

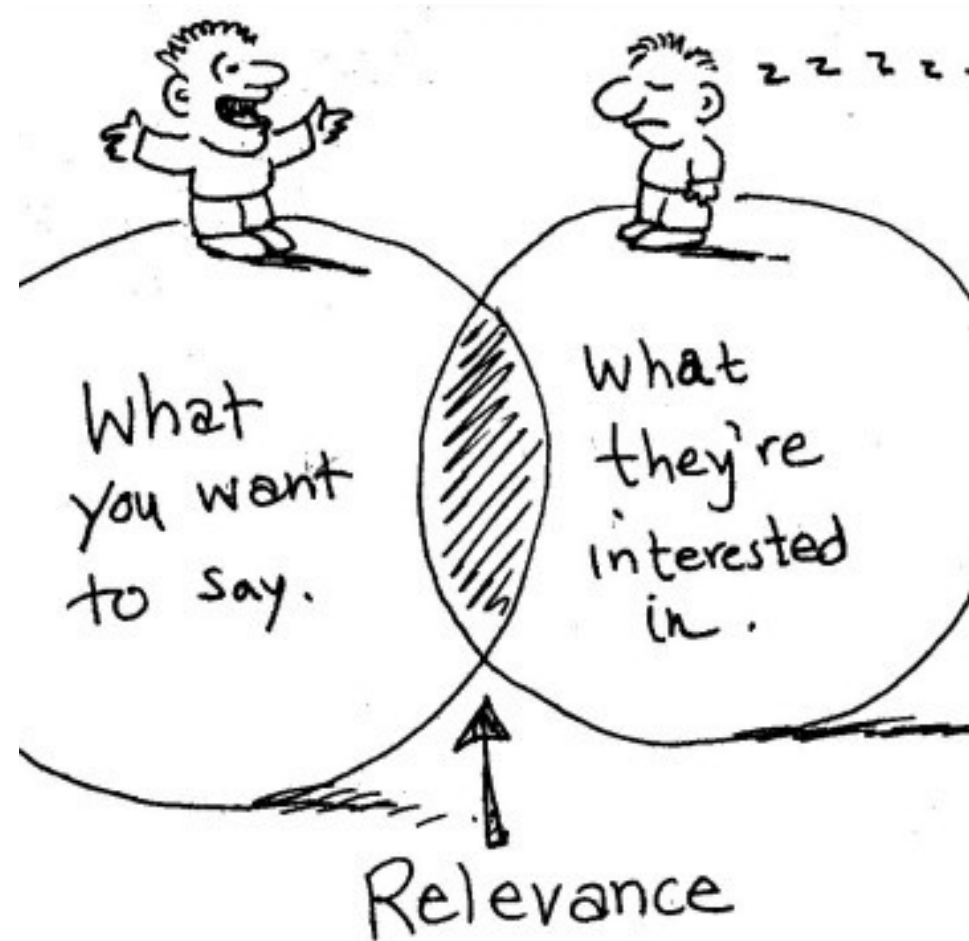


Don't repeat the
negative



Tips for the interview

Know who you
are talking to



Know how to bridge...

- I can't speak to THIS case, but what I can say is..
- I wouldn't want to speculate, but what I can say is...
- The important thing to remember is..
- We remain hopeful.
- We are cautiously optimistic.
- We are disappointed in the outcome, but
- We look forward to reviewing the suggestions, but



Owning an ambush.....

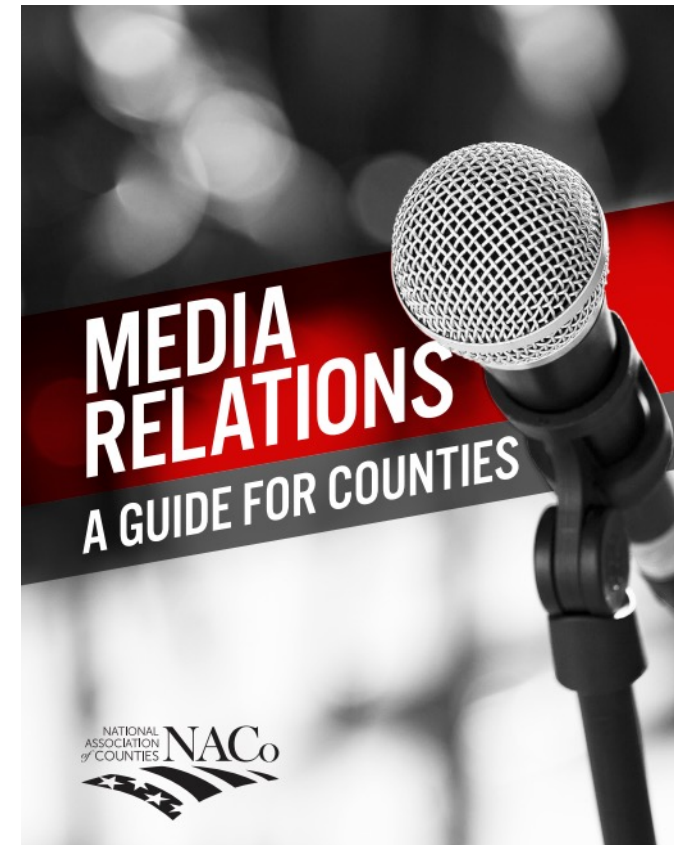
1. Prepare
2. Stop.
 - Looking for the dramatic shot – don't give it.
3. Catch your breath. Collect yourself.
4. Remove barriers – car doors, sunglasses
5. Watch your body language
 - It should be open and transparent
6. Delay Delay Delay or
 - *Remember your bridge*
 - What I can tell you is....
7. Short & Honest





NACo Media Relations: A Guide for Counties

- To learn more download NACo's Media Relations Guide at www.naco.org/media





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Questions?



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