**INTERVIEW PLANNING SHEET**

**Why am I doing this interview?**

Are there clear benefits to it? (You don’t have to do it.)

List the benefits in participating in this interview.

1.

2.

3.

List the potential downsides in participating in this interview.

1.

2.

3.

If you do an interview, set yourself an objective: for example, I want to make sure the journalist really gets my reasons for x,y,z; I want people to attend my event

Who am I talking to?

Use appropriate language; be careful with jargon and technical terms.

Write down your key audiences.

Write down the audiences that the media (who requested the interview) will deliver to.

My Key Messages?

You will need key messages to cover various subjects and expected questions. Key messages usually give a position statement, and some evidence or analogy.

Take time to get them right and they’re in your own words - especially if you have some talking points prepared by someone else. Think about having:

* a killer ‘factoid’ to use (eg a major impact of your topic with a ‘big’ figure)
* referencing the credibility of another party (eg govt or scientific report)
* a colourful analogy to help make your point (eg more chance of being monstered by a butterfly)

Key messages should take no more than 9 to 12 seconds each to deliver. List your key messages –

1.

2.

3.

Use bridging phrases - they give you thinking time and a route back to your topic:

* “The most important point is this…” or “another thing to remember is…”
* “What it all boils down to is…” or “what’s important to remember, however, is….”
* “Let me put that in perspective…” or “the big picture is…” or “when seen in the context of…”
* “Let me just add…” or “that’s not my area of expertise, but what I can tell you is…”
* “What your listeners/readers should be aware of is ….”

Three Most Difficult Questions?

Prior to interview, list the most difficult questions a journalist could ask, and compose the answers, being sure to work in key messages and bridging phrases. Be aware of the reporter and the style of media you are dealing with (eg preparing for the local paper is different to that for a national daily or ABC radio).

1. Q.

A.

2.Q.

A.

3.Q.

A.

## Tips for a positive media experience

* be prepared
* use positive language, body language and attitude
* be in control of the situation (location, time, observers), your emotions and the interview
* use questions as an opportunity to get your messages across
* don’t take offence to questions or the interviewer’s attitude (It’s not personal, it’s just a debate)
* be as precise and clear as you can, if you don’t think the reporter ‘gets it’ try saying it another way (analogies are useful), avoid jargon
* know when and how to deflect a question to someone else

## Final Checklist

1. I know why I am doing this interview
2. I know who the audiences are
3. I have developed 3 clear, succinct, positive key messages
4. I will use bridging phrases to get back to my key messages
5. I have anticipated difficult questions
6. I am comfortable with the time and location of the interview
7. I will mention the 3 key messages by the time the interview is concluded