When a reporter calls
If a reporter calls, don’t feel you must respond immediately. Ask what the interview is about; what information the reporter needs; the news affiliation of the interviewer; the location, time, if it is for a television interview; the reporter’s phone number; and the deadline. Ask if you can call them back and take the time to prepare for the interview.

Preparing for the interview
- Know your story
- Use figures
- Use quotable language
- Create three message points
- Anticipate!

Take control
- Turn negatives into positives
- Avoid professional buzzwords/acronyms
- Beware of “Off the record”
- Transition or bridge to your points

An interview is not a conversation; it is a highly structured situation
- Remember the objective
- Prepare and practice (out loud)
- Simplify
- Place your most important points at the beginning of each response
- Do not let your guard down
- Respond to negatives with positives
- Use examples
- Be sure your messages reinforce your organization’s overall branding
- Do not guess; do not be embarrassed if you do not know something
- Do not let the reporter answer the question for you/put words in your mouth
- Look for the hidden agenda
- Avoid jargon
- Repeat your company name several times during the interview
What to wear for a television interview?
- Always look professional
- Blue (or orange) preferred choice
- Avoid extremes
- No busy patterns, stripes
- Sparse jewelry
- Remove the chewing gum
- Watch the tan lines and five o’clock shadows
- No excessive make-up
- If necessary - use a little powder to control perspiration on the head

The camera magnifies whatever it sees
- Act naturally
- No wild gestures
- Do not roll eyes while thinking about how to answer a question
- No Gum
- No Soda
- Always include your main point in every answer – right up front
- Assume you are on-air all the time you are with the reporter

Interview No-No
- Do not ask to review the story in advance
- Do not tell broadcasters that 30 seconds is not long enough to tell your story
- Do not tell the reporter you will provide written answers to their questions if they will email them to you

Handling Factual Errors
- Consult with OSU Communications
- Determine if it is really incorrect
- Do nothing
- Contact the reporter and request a record correction
- Write a letter to the editor
- Ask for a correction
- Post a correction on your website
- Remember, yesterday’s news is today’s bird cage liner

Contact OSU Communications (405.744.6260) if you need assistance with the media.

Gary Shutt -- Office 405.744.4800  Cell 405.612.5757  gary.shutt@okstate.edu
Carrie Hulsey-Greene -- Office 405.744.9081  Cell 405.742.0419 carrie.hulsey_greene@okstate.edu

Once an interview is complete, please email us a brief summary. Please include the reporter’s name, media outlet and estimated day the story will run.