

# Media Pitfalls & Opportunities

Women in Government

Mimi Bliss

Bliss Communications

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# Agenda

- On-the-spot.
- Your role as a spokesperson.
- Working with the media.
- Interview tips.
- On-camera interview demonstration.



# On-the-Spot

You walk out of your office and a TV crew is waiting in the hallway.

The reporter says “Senator So-and-So was arrested last night for drunk driving. What’s your response? Are you surprised?”

You know nothing about the situation.

What do you say and do?



# Your Role as a Spokesperson

- Reliable, credible and accessible source of information.
- Being open and responsive can blunt criticism.
- Think before you speak. Your words are magnified and archived on the Internet.



# Working with the Media

- Don't wing-it. Take a few minutes to prepare.
- Establish procedures for handling media calls.
- Designate staff person as media contact.
- Train receptionist to take reporter messages.
- Build relationships with reporters.



# Interview Demonstration

- Rep. Joan Brady of South Carolina.
- Interview with local TV reporter.
- Topic: Electing more women to state legislature.
- DON'T version of interview.
- DO version of interview.



# Interview DON'Ts

- Don't repeat negatives.
- Don't guess, speculate, answer hypothetical questions, or speak for others.
- Don't say "no comment."
- Don't wait for the perfect question. Bridge to your message.



# Interview DOs

- Prepare.
- Tell the truth.
- Concise.
- Pause before responding to questions.
- Use examples.



# Interview DOs

- Acknowledge problems, focus on solutions.
- Use flags to make your points.
- Understand differences between TV, print, radio and online.
- Fact sheets, news releases and online info.



# Tips for TV

- TV frames your face.
- Look at interviewer, not camera.
- Sit-up or stand-up straight.
- Assume camera and mic are turned-on.
- Avoid chairs with wheels.
- Location that's comfortable for you.



# Q&A



# Mimi Bliss, Bliss Communications

- mimibliss.com
- [mimi@blisscommunications.net](mailto:mimi@blisscommunications.net)
- 615-297-3656

