



# What to Say to the Media When You Are in Business

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

## Published

January 10th, 2011

I frequently get calls from the media when they are in a hurry to finish a story that they are working on. They want me to make comments or provide information on the topic so that readers or viewers will be more interested and informed. When you agree to talk with journalists, however, they take what you have to say and edit it to suit their purposes and it might not always be the way you would like it to be.

There are several things that you can do to protect yourself and your reputation as a businessperson:

1. Don't agree to do an interview if you are uncomfortable with the topic or don't feel that you can offer anything with expertise.
2. Remember that the media is usually in a hurry so they will want an immediate reply. Don't make their crisis your crisis. If you cannot prepare adequately let them interview someone else.
3. Develop relationships with media personnel who you can trust. I usually visit a bit with the person who is going to do the interview and develop some rapport with them. When you have a conversation with someone you trust, they will most often present your best comments or portray you better than someone who is just out to sensationalize a story without respect for the interviewee.
4. Prepare for the interview by writing down a few points that you would really like to cover in the interview. Thinking and planning will produce a better interview. I usually even rehearse out loud to myself so that I can hear how my sentences flow and then make any adjustments that would sound better before the interview begins.
5. Make sure that the person who is interviewing you has a business card so that they can present your credentials appropriately.
6. Make any corrections to statements immediately and ask the interviewer not to print or broadcast the error.
7. Keep copies of the articles or video links that have you featured as these are excellent promotional materials for your business.

It can be very frustrating to do a media interview and find that you have been misquoted or misrepresented. If you begin developing a good relationship with media personnel, however, and are sure that you have correct information to offer them, you will likely benefit from the promotion that you receive without having to pay for advertising costs. There's no guarantee, of course, but I am sure that you will begin seeing a positive difference in the very near future.