

Tips for Holding a Great Interview

- **Treat reporters courteously.**

If you are asked to make contact with a reporter, please do so in a timely manner, as most reporters work on tight deadlines. Tell the reporter who you are, where you are calling from and how much time you have available for an interview. If the interview is interrupted or your schedule changes, ask the reporter to reschedule.

- **Prepare and rehearse.**

Make sure you understand the interview topic and are well-versed in responding to questions about that topic. If you would like additional information about the interview, ask the reporter at the start of the interview to explain his/her goal for the interview and general discussion topics. Anticipate questions that may be sensitive or controversial, and determine in advance how you will respond to these questions.

- **What to say.**

Make sure you are familiar EMS issues in your state and at the national level. For national issues, review the Advocacy section on NAEMT's website. Familiarize yourself with NAEMT's positions on issues. Use NAEMT's Capwiz tool to review pending federal legislation impacting EMS. Try to develop (at least) three messages or 'sound bytes' that you want to deliver during the interview; write them down and memorize them. Try to keep your answers concise. Short and interesting comments are more likely to be used in their entirety. Support your statements with facts and figures, anecdotes, expert opinions or examples.

- **What not to say.**

Avoid saying "no comment," but don't be afraid to admit that you do not know the answer to a particular question. Never lie, be misleading or evasive. It's better to simply decline to answer a question. Keep interruptions to a minimum, yet don't get so carried away that you offer too much information about the topic.

- **Follow up.**

Be sure to follow up with the reporter to provide any additional information or photos they may have requested. If you have access to the television station or print publication that will publish your interview, please keep an eye out for the article and send us a copy at NAEMT Headquarters. If you know when the story will air or the article will be published, please advise our office so the interview can be archived.