

# Media: Friend or Foe

by Weber Shandwick, a leading PR agency in Singapore

Ask a room full of people for their views on media and chances are you will hear a wide-ranging set of opinions – many will perhaps say interactions with media are a daunting task while others are likely to talk about the ease of media interviews.

Regardless of which of the two popular opinions you might side with, it always helps to treat media interactions like you would your school exam. And how well or poorly you do really depends on you and the preparation you put in beforehand.

So here are some golden rules for interacting with the media

## Do's:

- **Speak clearly:** Tell a story that is short, simple and easy to understand. Where possible, give the journalist some background and context of what you are sharing
- **Make a point:** Get to the point first then give the reason and example of the point you are making. Never ramble
- **Treat the journalist like a human being:** Be friendly and forthcoming. Your demeanour during an interaction can make a big difference
- **Be firm, not aggressive:** If the journalist doesn't agree with you or asks you the same question repeatedly try and change your approach
- **Always be respectful of their time and deadline:** Don't promise them something (a quote, some data or information) that you might not be able to deliver
- **Be prepared:** Some of the best speakers are those who rehearse beforehand
- **Data or visuals:** Have data or slides? Keep them handy so you can use that to illustrate your point. Journalists like nothing more than having valid data that they can use

## Don'ts:

- **Don't speak in medical jargon:** Remember the ultimate recipient of this story is the man on the street who does not have the same medical knowledge as you
- **Don't be afraid to ask for details:** Journalists always welcome questions so feel free to ask them for details about the story and angle they are working on
- **Don't do an interview in a hurry or when you are distracted:** Never do an interview over the phone in the middle of a busy clinic day or when driving. If you find yourself in such a situation, politely ask to speak to them at a later date or time or ask for their contact details. You can also opt to do an email interview by providing written responses or meet them in-person for an interview
- **Don't share information that has no local context:** The journalists in Singapore cover stories about Singapore or the region. So even if there's an interesting development in Europe or America, chances are they will not be interested in it unless it has an impact on their readers here
- **Don't chase journalists on when the story will appear:** The job of a journalist is to work on a story and file it. The ultimate decision on whether a story will be published or not rests with the editor. Sometimes your interview may be pushed or dropped altogether because something urgent came up or there's an advertisement to be placed

The job of a journalist is to inform and educate the public and as doctors you play an important role in ensuring their stories have factual and relevant information that will ultimately benefit patients and the masses.

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# Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016

By Edwin Liang, NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine (Class of 2017), on behalf of the Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016 Organizing Team



(Left) Full group shot with our experienced speakers and satisfied participants in NUS MD6, LT35

*the* Family Medicine Extravaganza 2016 was held on 24th August 2016 at the National University of Singapore (MD6) for the third year running. Featuring the theme of Family Medicine in various healthcare settings, this event aims to shed light on what Family Medicine entails and its increasingly important

role in the future of Singapore's healthcare, catered for medical students and junior doctors.

Medical students from all three medical schools in Singapore

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