



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

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COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

# WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

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CFAES Marketing and Communications

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**Introductory video: A funny look at a terrible interviewee**

**Robert Kennedy with Martin Short as Nathan Thurm, attorney, Big Oil, Inc.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWomk2yt-C8&list=PLeiZc\\_UnxwiD-5Z7CjaM\\_\\_IRJCecxDdxl&index=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWomk2yt-C8&list=PLeiZc_UnxwiD-5Z7CjaM__IRJCecxDdxl&index=1)

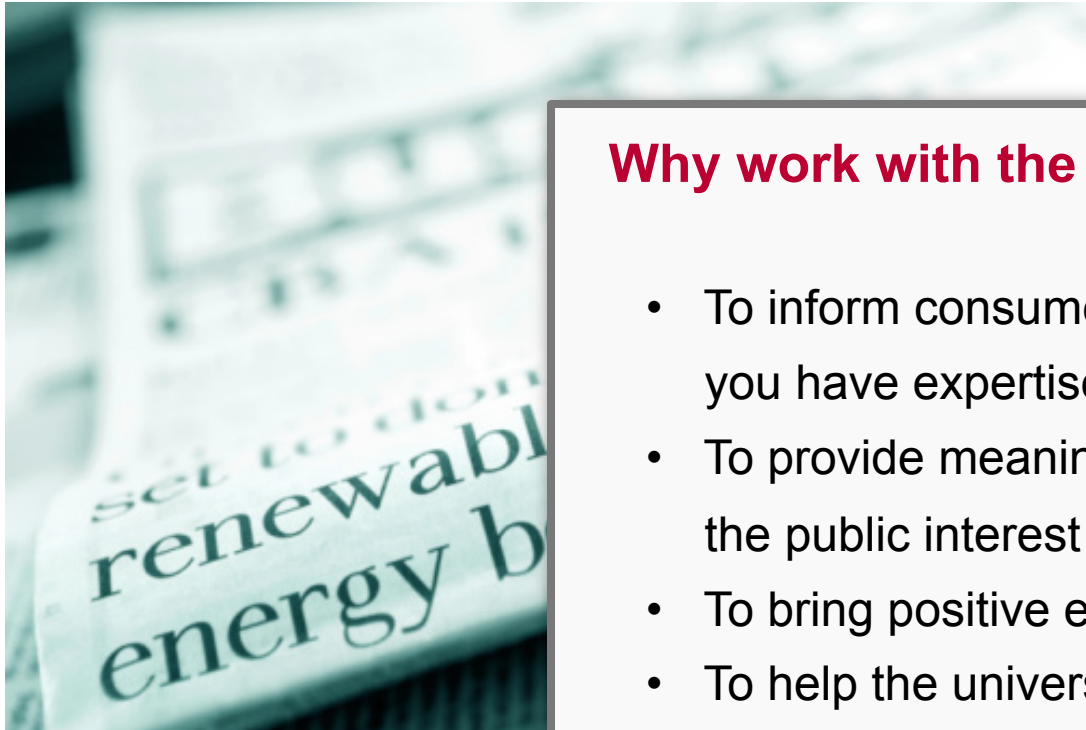


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**WHY**

**WORK WITH THE  
MEDIA?**



## Why work with the media

- To inform consumers about important issues that you have expertise on
- To provide meaningful context to issues that are in the public interest
- To bring positive exposure to the college
- To help the university fulfill its land-grant mission
- To establish yourself as an expert voice in your field
- To help taxpayers and legislators understand why it's important to continue to fund public institutions



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**WHAT DO THEY  
WANT?**



“The central purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with accurate and reliable information they need to function in a free society.”

– [journalism.org](http://journalism.org)



**Understand media's interests:**  
***Accuracy***

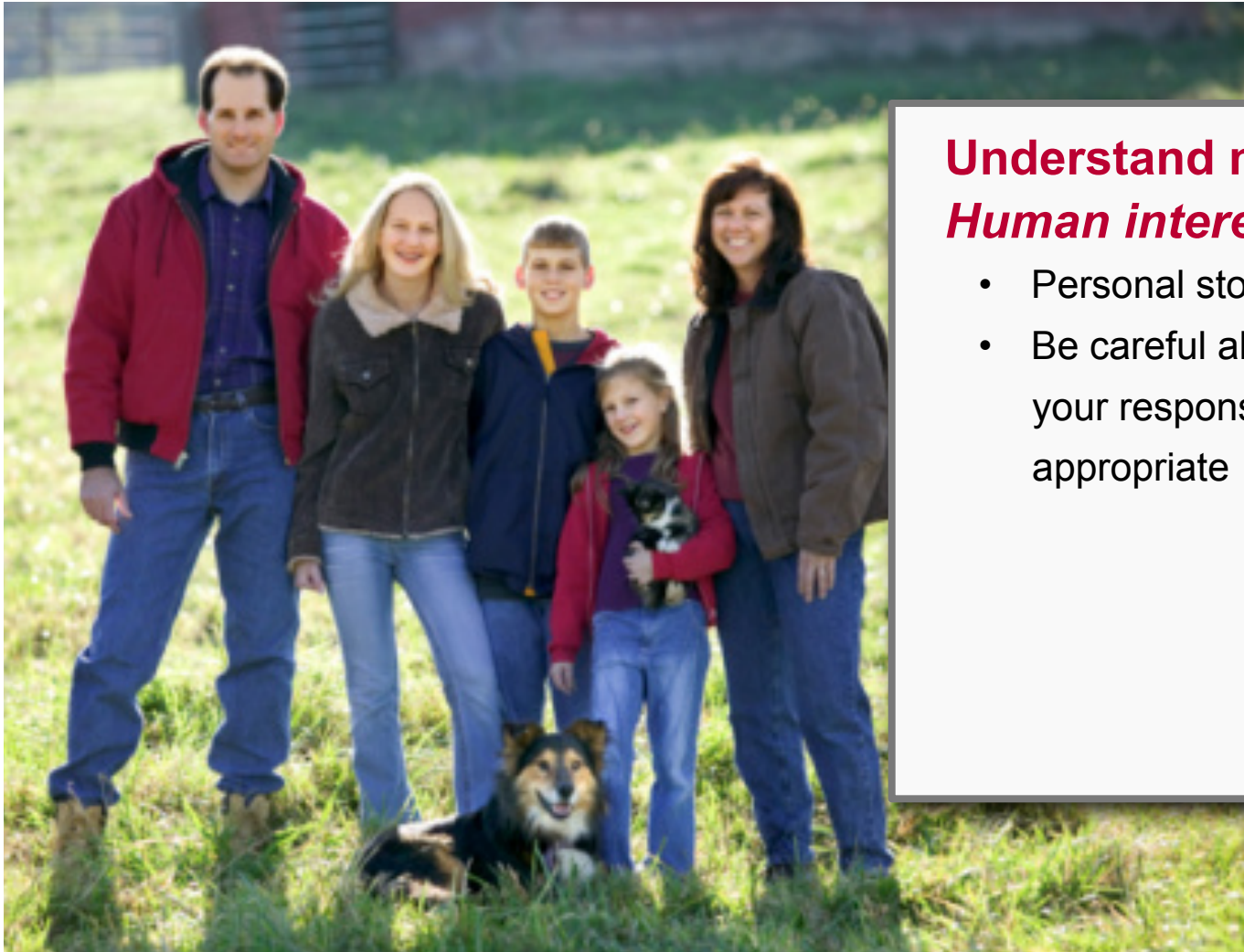
- Accuracy is the No. 1 value of journalists
- No hiding from mistakes: Avoid at all costs



## **Understand media's interests: *Balance***

- Reporters tend to cover viewpoints, not "truths"
- They strive for balance, in which opposing viewpoints each get some coverage





## **Understand media's interests:** *Human interest*

- Personal stories are more interesting
- Be careful about over-personalizing your responses: It's often not appropriate



Giving back is central to this business / 12  
Ancient buildings continue to vex Cleveland / 13  
Some boomers finding it difficult to retire / 10

# Business

Section 1 • The Columbus Dispatch • Sunday, Nov. 23, 2014



Some farmers are increasingly supporting the move to cage-free eggs. These chickens roam outside cages at Hillshire's Hatchery Farm, a family business in Columbus, Ohio.

## Cages on way out?

With consumers, restaurants leading the way, egg producers may turn to cage-free methods

By JD Mahon • **W**elcome to the world of cage-free eggs. • Consumers, food producers and restaurants are increasingly concerned about where their food comes from and how it's produced. That's resulted in a huge increase in demand for cage-free eggs — and the egg industry is looking to answer the call. • Ohio is home to the second-largest egg industry in the U.S., with more than 30 million chickens laying more than 8 billion eggs a year. Any shift in egg supply will affect Ohio's farms. • Conventional cages, about 80 square inches, have been banned in California and Michigan. Ohio

prohibits new farms in Ohio from housing chickens in cages, although labeling laws do vary on who conventional producers. • "The possible change in birds could mean a lot to cages, birds are more to be sold," said Mike Lohman, producer of animal science at Ohio State University and an expert on poultry. • "The public

black friday cyber monday weekend sales event



### Holidays to test app couriers

By Leon Stalder

ATLANTA — The delivery vehicle that pulls up to the house this year may be a little more than just a truck. • These apps that crash people to test couriers that can use to business delivery people — many want why when couriers are not the drivers — are not so good because of holiday shopping season. • Atlanta-based Kiva Media are two of the new ventures in the "necessary" where

### Sam deliv a ch

## Understand media's interests: *Brevity*

- Most news stories are short: Time, space is money
- During interview, get to the point



## **Understand media's interests: *Deadlines***

- A reporter's day different than yours:  
Much more hectic, deadline-oriented
- To get your perspective into a story,  
you must meet a reporter's deadline





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# **WORKING WITH THE MEDIA**



# **Respond quickly** to a reporter's contact





**Ask questions** to clarify what the reporter is looking for





**Know your key messages** before the interview even starts





**Redirect questions** when necessary to respond with your talking points







## Sample redirect statements

- “I can’t really address that, but what I can tell you is....”
- “What’s really important is....”
- “I’m not sure where you’re going with that, but something I’d like your audience to know is...”
- “The larger question is...”
- “Our first concern is always...”
- “The real issue is...”
- “It’s important to point out...”
- “Let’s not lose sight of...”
- “From a broader perspective...”



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# **Know** your reporters





**Expect “stupid” questions.** Reporters don't have your expertise. You're the expert.





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***Never say* “No comment.”**





**Don't ask to review the story.** Most news organizations have policies that don't allow this.





**Be cautious.** Reporters can be friendly, but they are not your friends. Watch what you say. Do not rely on “Off the record.”





**Don't fall for the “silent treatment.”** Just stay silent during pauses in conversation.







**Respond with grace to abrasive questions.**  
It's a reporter's job is to ask hard questions.







**Watch out for Jekyll and Hyde.** Be prepared and be professional, no matter what.





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**The interview is not over 'til it's over**





## When you feel like you're on the spot

- **Breathe.** Keep your response to three or four short sentences. Talk slowly.
- **Don't** dwell too much on the question. Your goal is NOT to ANSWER the media's question, but to ADDRESS the question and then respond with your perspective.
- **Never** portray anger, aggravation or defensiveness





**Reiterate your main points** at the end of the interview.





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# **RESOURCES**

## **FROM MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**



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## communications.cfaes.ohio-state.edu

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# QUESTIONS?





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# CONTACT US

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