

Media Spotlight: From Crafting the Perfect Pitch to Acing the Interview



Pitch Perfect: How to Capture Media Attention for Your Stories

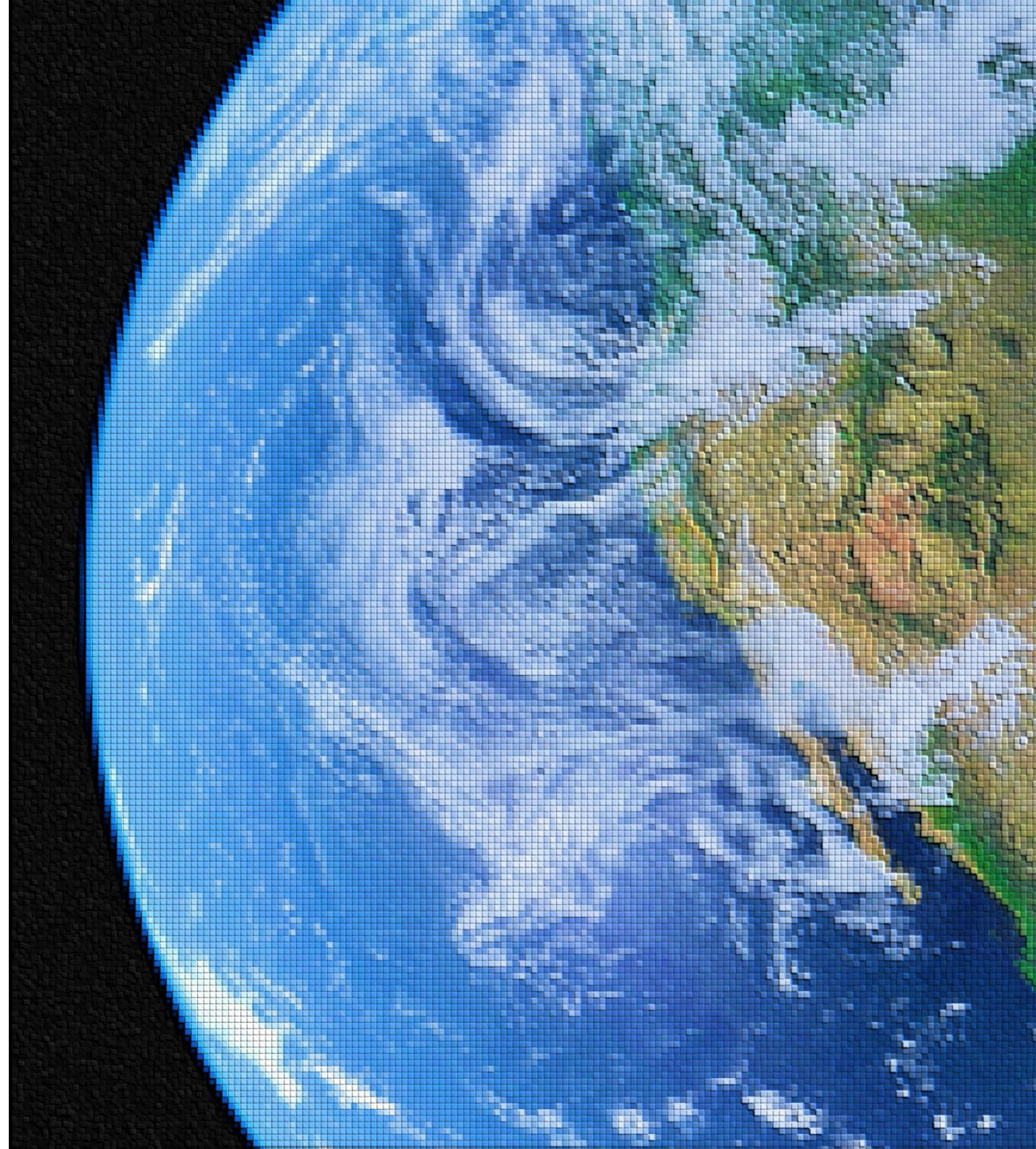






Local, Regional, National Media

- Local media - easier to access; community-focused stories
- Regional media - stories with multi-city impact
- National media - requires a compelling, high-level story with widespread relevance



Distribution

ALL MEDIA	ONE OUTLET
Major announcement	Exclusive feature
Public interest stories	Deeper story
Crisis communications	Specific to media outlet
Government/policy-related	Building a rapport
Event open to public	

Who to Direct Your Pitch to

- Spend time reading the news and analyzing news coverage
- Know the journalists and their beats
- Get to know the decision makers





An aerial photograph of a city street, likely in New York City, showing a wide parkway with trees and a dense urban skyline in the background. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

Downtown Project Moving Forward

Exciting Changes Coming to Downtown!

City Approves Revitalization Plan

Local BIA Announces New Initiative

Good Subject Lines

- Clear and Concise \$5M Downtown Revitalization Project Begins This Summer
- Relevance What This Downtown Makeover Means for Local Businesses and Shoppers
- Newsworthy Historic Downtown Set for Biggest Revamp in 50 Years
- Attention-Grabbing From Vacant to Vibrant: The Plan to Transform Downtown
- Uniqueness A Pedestrian-Only Plaza? The Bold Plan to Revive Downtown
- Actionable See the Future of Downtown: Join Us for a Sneak Peek
- Exclusive Exclusive: First Look at Renderings for Downtown Revitalization

The Pitch

- Should be less than 200 words
- Directed to the appropriate person
- Have a compelling hook / angle
 - Local
 - Unique
 - Impactful
 - Human story
 - Timely /newsworthy
- Include the basics (the 5 Ws)



Make it Easy



- Make it understandable – short, jargon-free
- Don't oversell
- Human connection
- Additional elements (quotes, data, Visuals for TV)



Dear Sir or Madam,

I'm reaching out to let you know that our community is moving forward with a downtown revitalization project. This is an exciting one-of-a-kind initiative that will help improve our downtown and make it a better place for everyone.

The project includes various upgrades and changes, which we believe will have a positive impact on local businesses and residents. We would love for you to cover this story and share it with your audience.

Please let me know if you're interested. I'd be happy to set up an interview.

Best,

Monica





Dear Sir or Madam,

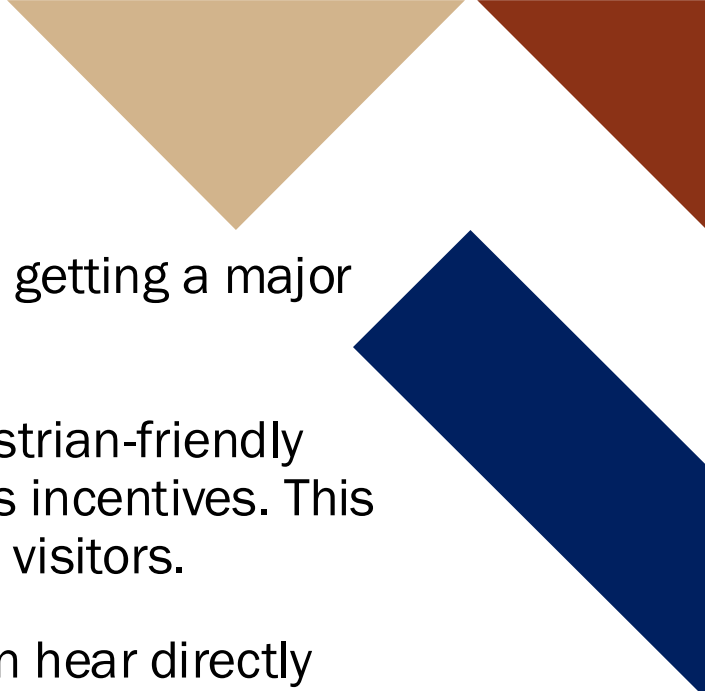
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Dear Tammy,

After years of vacant storefronts and declining foot traffic, downtown Port is getting a major makeover—and we'd love to give you an exclusive first look.

Our \$5 million revitalization project will transform downtown with new pedestrian-friendly spaces, restored historic buildings, enhanced public art, and small business incentives. This isn't just a facelift—it's a game-changer for local businesses, residents, and visitors.

We're hosting a groundbreaking ceremony on April 18, 2025, where you can hear directly from city officials, business owners, and community members about what this project means for our downtown's future. We'd be happy to arrange interviews or provide a sneak peek at the project renderings.

Would you be interested in covering this story? Let me know, and I'd be happy to coordinate an interview or provide additional details.

Looking forward to hearing your thoughts!

Best,

[Your Name][Your Contact Info][Your Organization]

The Timing



- Time of day
- Breaking news/world events
- Holiday period

Following Up



- Check the news cycle
- Build relationships
- Show understanding

Make Connections



- Build genuine relationships (in person, over the phone)
- Be accessible
- Say “yes” to requests
- Don’t take it personal

Handling Rejection



- Accept the rejection gracefully
- Ask for feedback; maybe try again
- Pitch to a different outlet
- Maintain the relationship
- “Not today” doesn’t mean “never”



If all else fails ...



- Create your own buzz - Create and share content on your own social media channels
- Pay for it

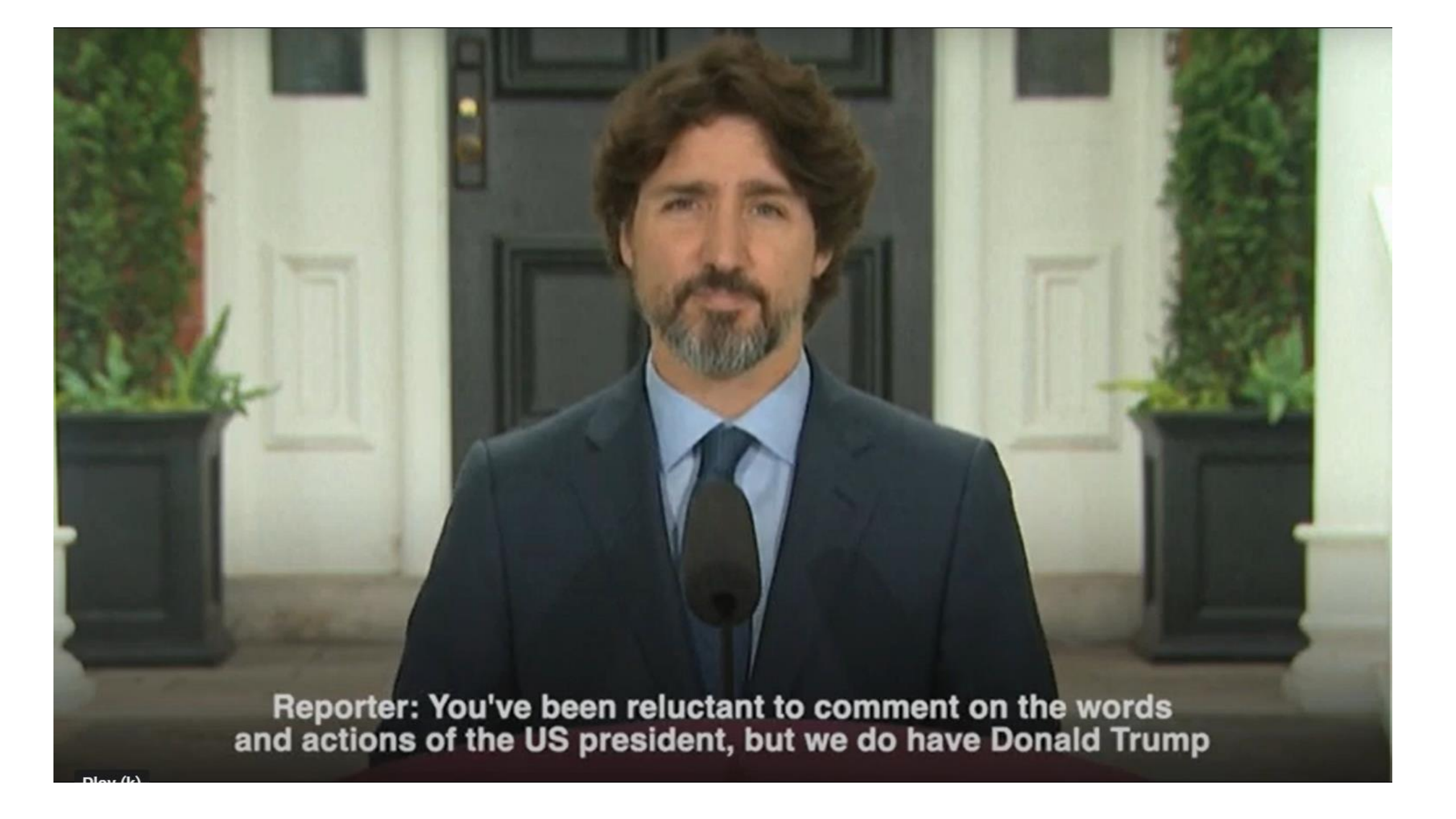


From Pitch to Performance: Acing Your Media Interview

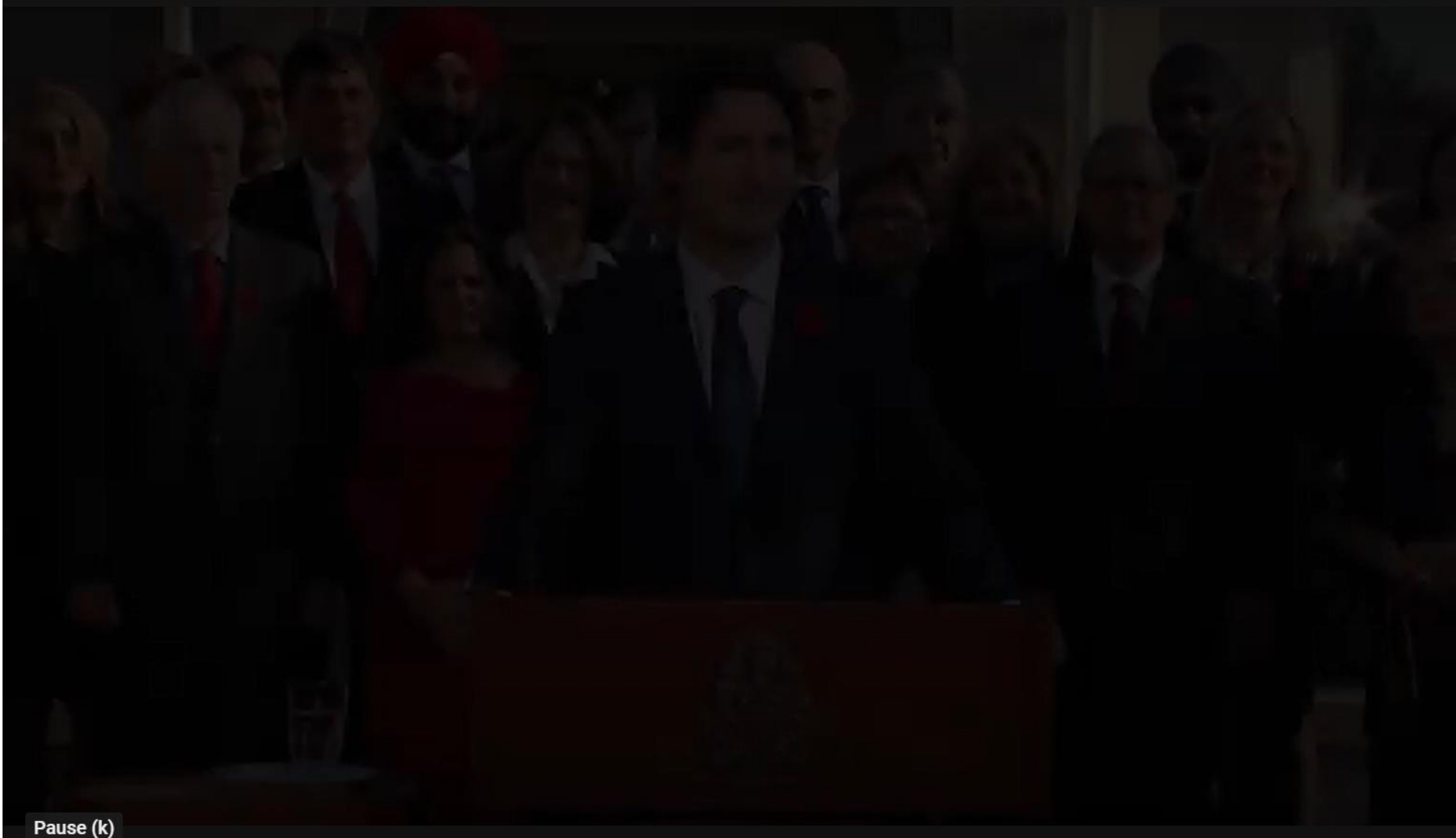
TROUBLE.CO.UK

THE FRESH PRINCE



A medium shot of Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, speaking at a podium. He has dark, wavy hair and a beard, and is wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue shirt, and a dark tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background shows a white building with a dark door and some greenery in planters.

Reporter: You've been reluctant to comment on the words and actions of the US president, but we do have Donald Trump



Pause (k)

Before the Interview Starts

**Get details
from the
reporter**

**Brainstorm
key messages
& potential
questions**

**Draft solid
answers**

**Practice.
Practice.
Practice.**



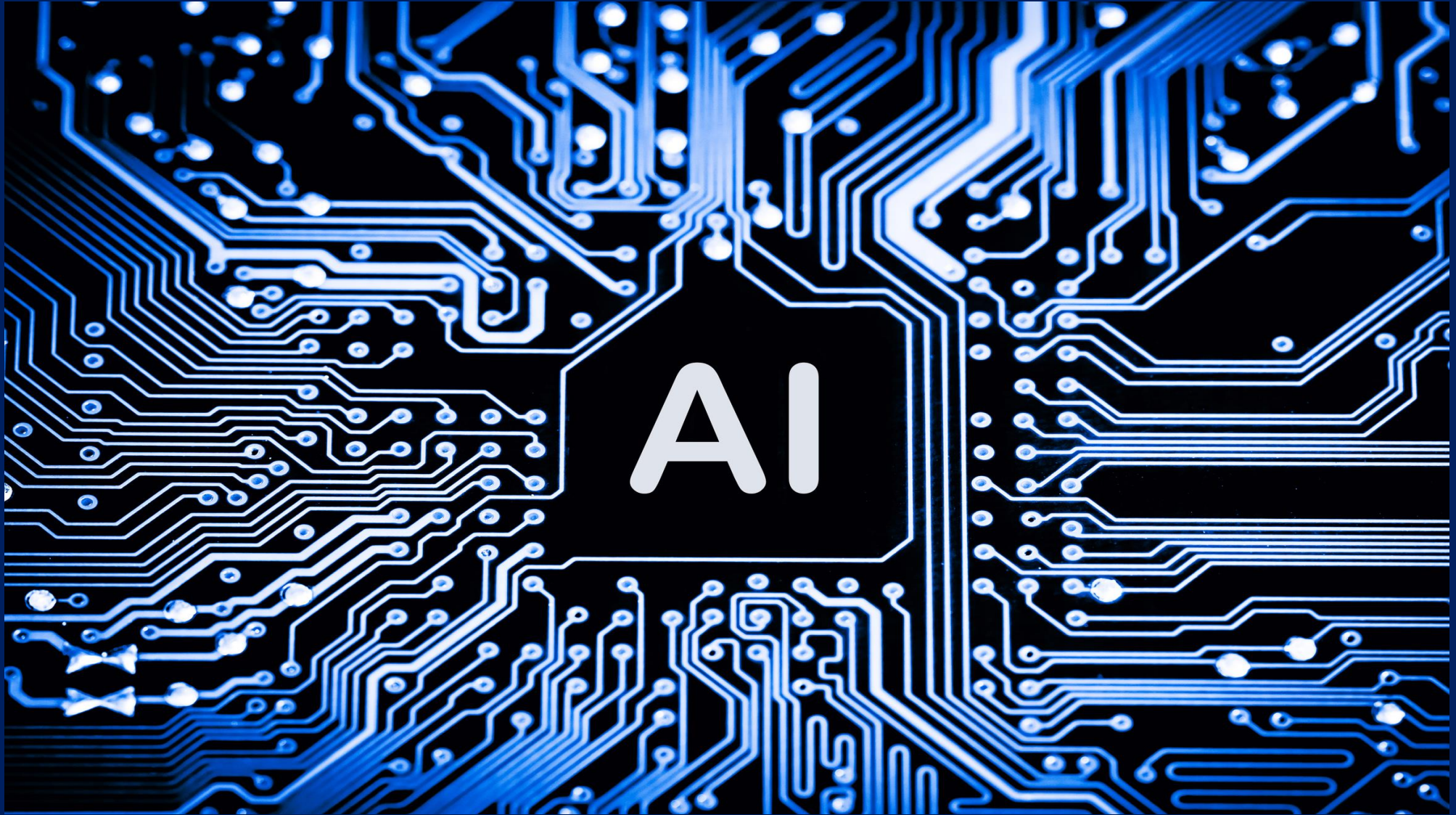
Key Messages

Information an association wants their audience to hear, understand, and most importantly, remember.



Brainstorming Questions

- Story focus
- Other interviewees
- Audience concerns
- Looking beyond
- Elephant in the room



The Solid Soundbite

Brevity

Clarity

Emotion
and Impact

Quotability

Relevance

Brevity

“Our downtown revitalization plan includes a number of initiatives designed to bring more people into the core and support local businesses over the coming years.”

We’re turning downtown into a destination—where people want to live, shop, and stay.

Clarity

“We are leveraging multi-tiered funding models to enhance pedestrian-centric economic activity.”

We're investing in walkable streets so local businesses thrive.

Emotion and Impact

“This initiative is part of our long-term urban planning strategy to increase foot traffic and support local economic growth.”

A decade ago, this street was full of empty shops. Soon, it'll be the heart of our city again.

Quotability

“This revitalization project involves multiple phases of infrastructure and economic development improvements, aiming to enhance the downtown experience for businesses and residents alike.”

This isn't just a facelift—
it's a comeback.



“Stop, Look and Listen”

“Father, Son and Holy Spirit”

The “Government of the people,
by the people, for the people”
- Gettysburg Address

“The good, the bad and
the ugly”

“Veni, vidi, vici” (I came, I saw, I
conquered)
– Julius Caesar

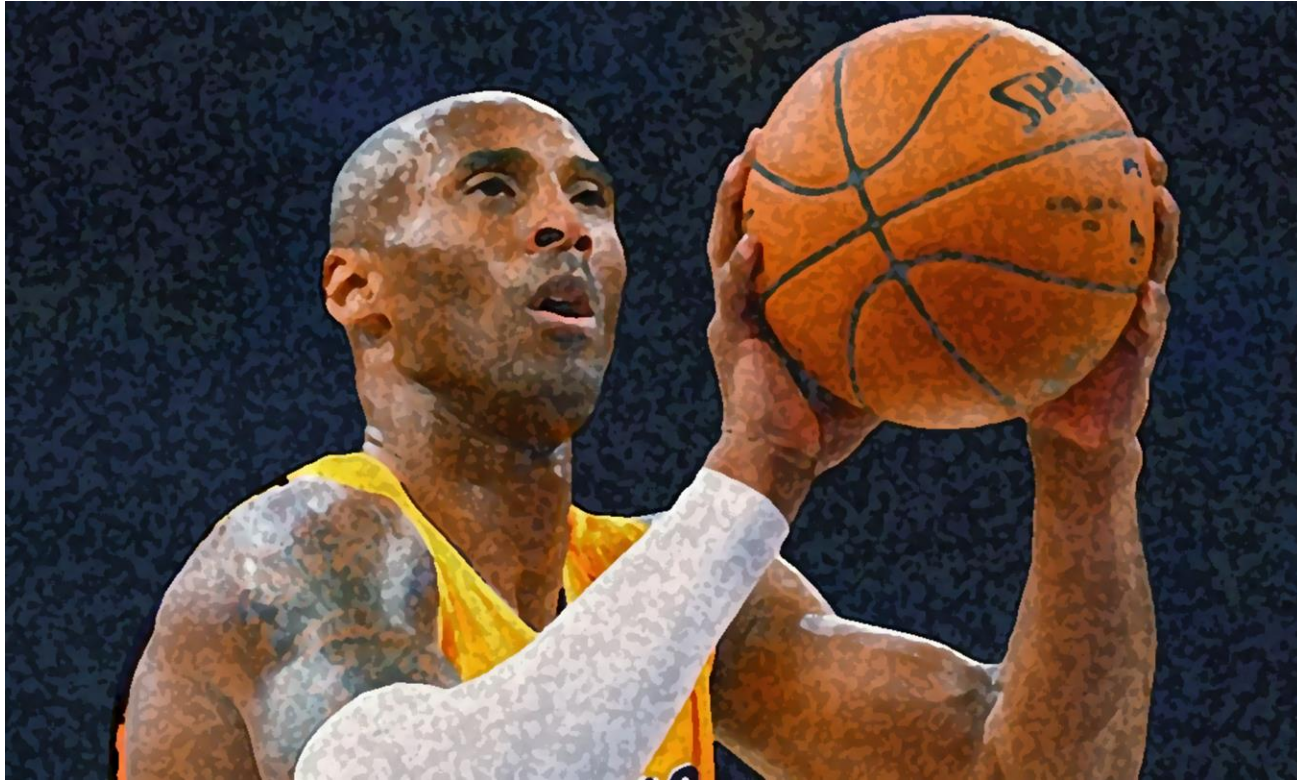
And with Apple Pay, you can
unlock an entire world of
online shopping that’s fast,
convenient, and secure.
- Apple

Relevance

“Our plan aligns with the city’s master framework and strategic priorities for urban renewal.”

People shop online for convenience, but they come downtown for the experience—and we’re making sure it’s worth the trip.

Practice. Practice. Practice.



**The confidence
comes from
preparation.**



If a reporter asks for an 'off-the-record' interview, say yes.



You only need to be concerned about what you say/do when the television camera starts rolling. Before or after doesn't matter.



As soon as the reporter asks their question, answer immediately.



Don't take your notes to the interview with you.



It's okay to say "No comment".



If you don't understand the reporter's question, ask for it to be repeated.



**If you make a mistake in the interview,
correct it right away.**



In a taped interview (not live), it's okay to ask to restart your answer.

Bridging

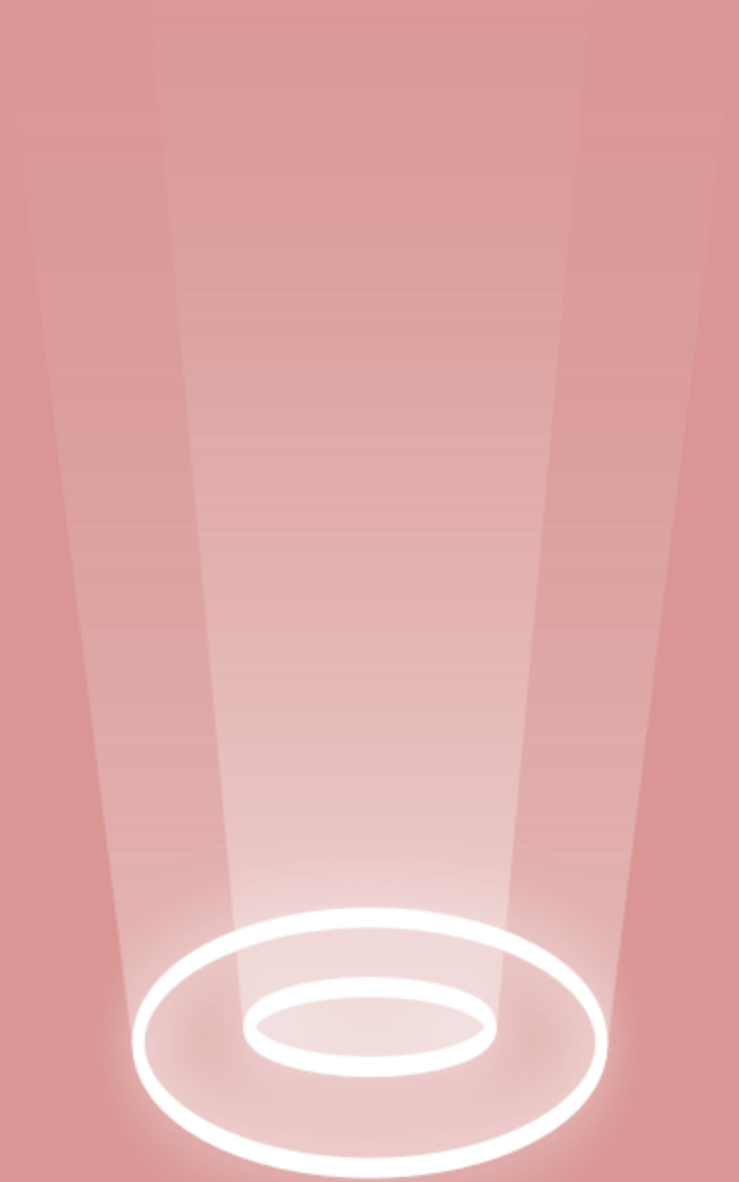


A statement that allows you to acknowledge the reporter's question and then transition back to the message you want the audience to remember ..

- “Yes. And another important issue is ...”
- “Your question relates to the issue of ...”
- “First, let me tell you what the policy is ...”
- “I don’t have a simple answer to that. What I do know is ...”

Flagging

- The real issue is ...
- The main point I want to stress is ...
- What's important ...
- What I really want to talk about is ...
- The bottom line is ...
- Basically, what it boils down to is ...
- What we need to remember is ...



The Silence Tactic



Stay Calm



- The interview is NOT a conversation
- Remain calm, concise, clear and confident
- Pause before responding
- Look at your notes if you must
- Never respond with NO comment
- If make a mistake, correct it
- Repeat messages and stick to the script
- Don't speak 'off the record'



Some Fundamentals

Thank you!

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