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10 Biggest Myths about the Media

1. **They're out to get you!** Though it may seem like that at times, reporters really are simply trying to do their job.
2. **They just shouldn't be trusted.** Certainly the notion of trusting a reporter you do not know well should be approached cautiously, but a trusting relationship is exactly what you should strive for.
3. **All they're looking for is a negative story.** Though some media outlets can certainly be pegged to be biased on particular issues, you should not assume they are ALWAYS looking for the negative when it comes to you or your issue.
4. **They don't care about misquoting you or taking your comments out of context.** They do not want to report incorrectly any more than you would not like them to.
5. **They should just take your word on the issue.** The trust issue is a two-way street; do not assume they will take your word for it without verifying what you tell them with another source.
6. **They'll write good, positive stories if they're your friend(s).** Reporters have a profession to uphold, and, for the most part, would not appreciate it if you would consider your friendship to be influence on their profession, even if you are close.
7. **They're required to fully know and understand the topic they cover.** The opposite is usually true! Papers and broadcast outlets are fluid businesses; reporters change from beat to beat and are often forced to cover a variety of topics that change frequently. Take the time to educate them on the topic important to you; they will appreciate it!
8. **They need to be told EVERYTHING.** Telling them everything is not only a waste of time, it dilutes the REAL messages you want to get across. K.I.S.S. is usually a good rule to follow with a news reporter.
9. **They should all be dealt with the same way.** As with anyone else you encounter on a professional or personal basis, each reporter is different and has a different agenda. Learn the circumstance of each individual reporter and opportunity and treat the opportunity accordingly.
10. **They're completely influenced by advertising dollars.** While there are exceptions to every rule, this is a huge myth for news media, and members of the news media will, in fact, take offense if you assume such.