MEDIA INTERVIEW GUIDE

Brand Promise:
Community Corrections is vital to the safety and health of communities.

Pillars:
How we deliver on our promise—
• Monitoring behavior
• Helping people turn their lives around
• Results-driven management
• Specialization
• Technology
• Strong cost/value proposition
• Accountability
• Peace officer status

Personality:         Benefits:
• Strong
• Dedicated
• Results-driven
• Knowledgeable
• Caring
• Ethical
• Innovative
• Progressive
• Safer communities
• Return to productivity
• Healthy families
• Lower costs
• Better long-term solution

Before the interview:
• Know the reporter, analyst, and your audience.
• Know your goals/objectives for the briefing.
• Know what you want to say: Review your “key messages/proof points.”
• Jot down likely questions, appropriate answers.

Rules of engagement:
• Speak in “headlines:” Offer conclusion first, briefly and directly, and back it with facts or “proof points.”
• Don’t over-answer. Short answers are better than long ones.

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• Don’t be fixated by the question. “Bridge” to a related point you want to make.
• Asked about a problem? Talk about a solution.
• Don’t let false charges, facts, or figures offered by a reporter or an analyst stand uncorrected.
• Don’t repeat a reporter’s negative statements or slurs. Frame your reply as a positive statement.
• Speak clearly. Avoid jargon and bureaucratese.
• Be engaging, likable.
• Don’t know the answer? Don’t fake it. Assure the reporter you will find and provide the needed information in a timely manner.
• Keep cool. Don’t be provoked.
• Never lie to a reporter.

For telephone interviews:
• Buy preparation time by asking to call the reporter back, if deadline allows.
• Establish a time limit before the interview begins, and keep it.
• Have key messages handy for easy reference.
• Ask questions in order to gain feedback.
• For radio, speak visually – use words to paint pictures.

For television interviews:
• For men, a dark suit and blue shirt works best. For women, avoid solid black or white, or busy patterns. Bright colors are fine.
• Don’t wear large, shiny, or noisy jewelry.
• Sit erect, but not ramrod-straight, slightly forward in the chair. Unbutton suit jacket when seated.
• Resist the urge to shout into the microphone. Speak and gesture naturally.
• Talk to the reporter/interviewer, not the camera.
• Keep a pleasant expression; smile when appropriate.