

Communicating Risk

TV Interview

A national TV discussion programme has decided to do run an episode on what climate change means for the natural disaster risk in the country. You've been asked to speak on the programme as a (scientist / government official).

As a government official, you'll be asked what steps you're taking to do something about it. As a scientist, you'll be asked about what the risks are.

You both (the scientist and policy maker) have a good relationship so you decide to prepare for the interview together to make sure your comments are complementary.

The audience is a balanced mix of the population in general – not too conservative, not too liberal, and not highly educated.

The interviewer is not well informed about climate change and may ask well-intentioned but unhelpful questions. However, the media channel and journalist hosting the programme follow the highest professional and editorial standards so you don't need to worry about being ambushed or misrepresented.

So, you do need to be prepared for the interview and discussion. Plan what you want to get across and what you want to achieve (and know why). Ideally, you will plan to complement each other's contribution so you'll want to consult each other about what you'll say.

Preparing for an interview

BEFORE:

- Understand the interviewer's purpose
- Make sure the interviewer / programme producers has all they need to prepare
- Define the parameters of the interview
- Identify key points you would like to communicate
- Suggest angles that might be helpful for the audience before the interview

DURING:

- Focus on providing solutions / practical / useful information for the audience
- Insert your pre-prepared important points where you can: ABC
 - o Acknowledge/Answer the question asked
 - o Bridge – from the question to your topic
 - o Control / Communicate your point
- Avoid jargon
- Be certain of the answer you give
- Be honest about what you don't know