



Flag it Down and Bridge the Gap

During media interviews, two of the most helpful tactics for you or your executive to know are **flagging** and **bridging**.

Flagging is like sending up a verbal flare announcing that what you're going to say next is **important or a key point**. When you use a flag, you should make sure what you say next is succinct, clear and prepared. These are the statements you want the reporter to use as a quote or sound bite.

Some examples of flagging include:

"Basically, what it boils down to is ..."

"The most important thing to remember is ..."

"After all ..."

"What we need to remember is this ..."

"Here's where we stand ..."

"The main point is ..."

Even more helpful – some might argue the **most helpful** – to an interviewee is the bridge. Bridging is a tactic that allows you to take an interviewer's question, whatever it may be, and **lead it back to your key messages**.

Bridges are especially helpful when you're asked a negative or challenging question. They allow you to acknowledge the question briefly and then bring it back into safer territory.

Popular bridge phrases to use are:

"Even more important ..."

"In spite of that ..."

"That's why ..."

"For that reason ..."

Here are some examples of how to bridge when asked a question:

Q: "There's been talk about workers at your plant going on strike. Do you think that will happen?"

*A: "We have a fantastic, dedicated group of employees at our plants. **That's why** we're currently working on improved compensation contracts across all shifts to help keep an open dialogue as we work towards an agreement."*

Q: "After the recall on your X product, are customers hesitant to buy other products from you?"

*A: "We are dedicated to addressing quality concerns. **For that reason**, we've just implemented a new quality control test procedure that I'm excited to tell you about."*