Guidelines for *Getting the Media’s Attention*

...or, be careful what you wish for – in 13 easy steps

1. What is your goal? What does a win look like? Be realistic. Who is your audience?

2. Do you have facts, or just hopes? Are you ‘selling’ a story or ‘telling’ it? Is this a story of substance and impact, or one that is self-serving and promotional? Is it **news**?

3. Is this a news release story or a news conference story? How to tell the difference?

4. Is this an all-media story, or select? Print only. TV only? Radio and TV?

5. Do you understand the media’s cycles, deadlines and busy times? If this is a slam dunk, leads at 6, A1 story, how do you ‘play’ the media for best results?

6. If the story is truly worth telling, and to all media, do you have a picture in mind for print and web? Or a good video or audio opportunity for TV, web or radio?
7. Is the story’s principal media trained? Did he/she practice for the interview? Do they have three key messages? How have they performed in past interviews? Have you practiced answering ‘tough’ questions?

8. If a story will be in the media, have you told your stakeholders, employees, funders, executives about it in advance? Have you set their expectations realistically?

9. If you are pitching a story to traditional media, do you have a parallel social media component and plan?

10. How do you avoid a media agenda suffocating the story you want to tell?

11. How will the credibility you build or lose on this story affect you and your organization the next time you call the media?

12. If there are mistakes in the story, what should you do? When? How?

13. When the story comes out, what will you do with it to maximize its impact?