# Speakers Bureau Do’s and Don’ts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’ts</th>
<th>Do’s</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Don’t try to convince each person of the total truth and righteousness of our cause in this conversation.</td>
<td>• Remember our goals: to provide information, to present a human face, to begin a dialogue and relationship.</td>
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<td>• Reflexively answer each question with your stock response.</td>
<td>• Listen to the actual question, its nuances and pay attention to the questioner [body language, tone, demeanor];</td>
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<td>• Take time to think about your response if necessary;</td>
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<td>• Probe the questioner if you suspect there’s a question behind the question. e.g. “Does your concern/question come out of a particular experience you’ve had?”</td>
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<td>• Try to give “facts” that you are not sure about.</td>
<td>• Acknowledge the query as a factual question which you’ll need to find out more information;</td>
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<td>• Promise to get back to the person and be sure to follow up.</td>
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<td>Try to contradict the questioner’s own experience of local opposition of a particular development.</td>
<td>Put the experience in context; Acknowledge that you aren’t familiar with all of the facts of that situation; Acknowledge that developers (like everyone else) do make mistakes sometimes.</td>
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<td>Present yourself as an expert on every issue related to affordable housing.</td>
<td>Explicitly acknowledge the complexity and long history of the field; Give yourself permission to say “That’s a good question. I don’t know the answer now.”</td>
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<td>• Claim that every affordable housing development is well-designed, professionally managed, contributes to the neighborhood, and works perfectly.</td>
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<td>• Refer vaguely to all developers or all developments.</td>
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<td>• Let the education stop with this presentation.</td>
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<th>• Acknowledge that the affordable housing movement has learned many lessons over the past decade, including on the importance of good design and quality management;</th>
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<td>• Acknowledge that not all developers have the same level of experience, expertise and funding to do everything they and the community might want them to do;</td>
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<td>• Explain that groups such as EBHO are trying to continually improve the work of housing developers.</td>
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<td>• Speak from your own experience and about particular developments that you know.</td>
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<td>• At every opportunity encourage them to go on a housing tour as the best way to understand affordable housing.</td>
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