Do:

- Emphasize facts
- Cite credible sources
- Name and shame

Don’t:

- Focus on myths
- Use negations
- “He said,” “she said”
Joe Arpaio on Obama's birth certificate: It may be fake

By: Tim Mak
March 2, 2012 06:42 AM EDT

Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio said Thursday that his investigation has found there is reason to believe that President Barack Obama’s birth certificate, released by the White House last year, was a forgery, according to reports.

The results of the probe, conducted by volunteers, is that Obama’s long-form birth certificate may be a computer-generated forgery, the sheriff said at a press conference. Arpaio added that he believed Obama’s selective-service card, filled out in 1980 in Hawaii, was also most likely a forgery.

“We don’t know who the perpetrators are of these documents,” Arpaio said, according to The Associated Press, noting that he didn’t think the president himself forged the documents.

Arpaio said there needed to be a criminal investigation into the matter but doubted that Hawaii officials could do it.

“Will they do an independent investigation, fair, honest, professional?” Arpaio asked, according to The Tucson Citizen. “I don’t know.”

Arpaio’s probe comes after the Justice Department accused the sheriff of violating constitutional and civil rights in a “pattern of misconduct” that involved targeting and mistreating Latinos. A DOJ investigation released in December found that there was “reasonable cause” to believe Arpaio was involved in discriminatory policing practices, such as unlawful stops, detentions and arrests of Hispanics.

Although objections to the authenticity of the president’s birth certificate have been widely debunked, some conservatives continue to make the country of the president’s birth an issue.

The president’s new Facebook account seems to poke fun at these so-called “birthers” — if one clicks on where Obama is born, it reads “Made in the USA,” according to MSN.
CNN Poll: Quarter doubt Obama was born in U.S.

President Obama’s birth certificate (left) has been certified authentic by the Republican governor of Hawaii. His birth announcement (right) appeared in print in 1961. (PHOTO CREDIT: State of Hawaii)

Washington (CNN) - It’s surely not what the leader of the free world wants for his birthday. But, for a stubborn group of Americans, conspiracy theories about President Obama’s birthplace are the gifts that keep on giving.

The president celebrates his 40th birthday Wednesday. On the same day, a new national poll indicates some Americans continue to doubt the president
WASHINGTON -- Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) has what he says is an informed explanation for why Mitt Romney refuses to release additional tax returns. According to a Bain Investor, Reid charged, Romney didn't pay any taxes for 10 years.

In a wide-ranging interview with The Huffington Post from his office on Capitol Hill, Reid saved some of his toughest words for the presumptive Republican presidential nominee. Romney couldn't make it through a Senate confirmation process as a mere Cabinet nominee, the majority leader insisted, owing to the opaqueness of his personal finances.

"His poor father must be so embarrassed about his son," Reid said, in reference to George Romney's standard-setting decision to turn over 12 years of tax returns when he ran for president in the late 1960s.

Saying he had "no problem with somebody being really, really wealthy," Reid sat up in his chair a bit before stirring the pot further. A month or so ago, he said, a person who had invested with Bain Capital called his office.

"Harry, he didn't pay any taxes for 10 years," Reid recounted the person as saying.

"He didn't pay taxes for 10 years! Now, do I know that that's true? Well, I'm not certain," said Reid. "But obviously he can't release those tax returns. How would it look?"

"You guys have said his wealth is $250 million," Reid went on. "Not a chance in the world. It's a lot more than that. I mean, you do pretty well if you don't pay taxes for 10 years when you're making millions and millions of dollars."

The highest ranked Democrat in Congress, Reid is known more as a back room brawler than a public flamethrower. So his willingness to throw this private conversation into the media frenzy over Romney's taxes underscores the low opinion he has of the Republican candidate.

Tellingly, neither Reid nor his office would reveal who the investor was, making it impossible to verify if the accusation is true. And as his quote makes clear, he's uncertain if the information is accurate. The Romney campaign's press secretary, Andrea Saul, has previously denied rumors that Romney didn't pay "any taxes at all."

But there is limited political downside to the type of open speculation that Reid is making, so long as Romney refuses to budge on the issue of his tax returns. Increasingly, other Democrats are growing more assertive in their goodling. In an appearance at the Center for American Progress on Tuesday, former Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland argued that he could openly speculate as to whether Romney is a "tax avoider" or "cheat" because "his behavior invites such speculation."

Romney recently told ABC News that he couldn't recall if there were years when he paid below the 13.9 percent tax rate that he paid in 2010. Although he said he was "happy to go back and look," his campaign declined to do just that.

Asked for a response to Reid's latest comments, Romney campaign adviser Kevin Madden said his candidate had "gone above and beyond the disclosure requirements by releasing two years of personal tax returns in addition to the hundreds of pages of personal financial disclosure documents he has provided to the FEC and made public."

Madden added that it was "troubling and disappointing that Senator Reid would cite Governor Romney's father, George, as part of a personal attack against the governor. We have many substantive disagreements with the senator and his policies, but using insults about a father-son relationship is a step too far."
Reid's tax charges irresponsible, analysts say

By William Douglas | McClatchy Newspapers

WASHINGTON —

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid repeated his unsubstantiated charge Thursday that Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney hasn't paid taxes in 10 years, a claim that political watchdogs blasted as irresponsible hearsay.

Reid took to the Senate floor Thursday and proclaimed, "The word's out that he (Romney) hasn't paid any taxes for 10 years."

But it was Reid, a Nevada Democrat, who initially put the unproven word out. He told The Huffington Post that an unidentified Bain Capital investor told him that Romney didn't pay taxes for 10 years.

"Let him prove that he hasn't paid taxes, because he hasn't," Reid said on the Senate floor Thursday.

Reid, who refuses to release his own tax returns, has refused to provide proof of his Romney tax claim and hasn't revealed the identity of the person who allegedly gave him the information. Nor did he explain how someone who invested in Bain, which was Romney's firm, would know the details of Romney's personal income taxes.

In a radio interview with Fox News' Sean Hannity on Thursday, Romney said it's time for Reid to "put up or shut up."

"Harry's going to have to describe who it is he spoke with because, of course, that's totally and completely wrong," Romney said. "It's untrue, dishonest and inaccurate. So I'm looking forward to have Harry reveal his sources and we'll probably find out it's the White House."

Some experts on political language and civility said they were aghast that someone in the political leadership of the country — not a bomb-throwing back-bencher — would level such a serious charge without providing any proof.

"He shouldn't be making statements like that in public. If you do, produce the evidence or produce the person (who provided the information) in public," said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, director of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center and co-founder of FactCheck.org, a political fact-checking website.

"We need a new category to define inappropriate content. 'Hearsay' is good. What he (Reid) said would not be admissible in court as evidence," she said.

While Jamieson criticized Reid's remarks, she said, "There's a legitimate public interest in Romney releasing his tax returns, because his tax plan could affect people like him."

Romney has released his 2011 tax returns and an estimate of his 2012 returns with a promise to release the final return when it is filed.

Carolyn Lukesmeyer, executive director of the nonpartisan National Institute for Civil Discourse at the University of Arizona, said Reid's remarks are indicative of "a level of insinuating character assassination" that's becoming all too common in today's politics.

"We're actually degrading our institutions," she said. "It's incumbent on the political parties to back up what they said."

Romney's campaign Thursday likened Reid's statements to 1950s anti-communist scare tactics employed by the late Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

"This reminds me of the McCarthy hearings back in the 1950s," Romney adviser Eric Fehrnstrom told Fox News on Thursday. "And it was another son from Massachusetts, Joseph Welch, who finally asked the question that should be asked of Harry Reid, which is, 'Have you no sense of decency, sir? Is there nothing that you won't do in the name of dirty politics? I think it's just shameful.'"

Reid aides said he has no intentions of amending or walking back his Romney remarks.

"He stands 100 percent by his comments," Reid spokesman Adam Jentleson said. He added that Romney is breaking a precedent set by his father, the late Gov. George Romney, R-Mich., who released 12 years worth of personal tax information when he ran for president in 1968.

"It's a legitimate question about what he's trying to hide," Jentleson said.
Rick Santorum repeats inaccurate welfare attack on Obama
Experts Debunk Health Care Reform Bill's 'Death Panel' Rule

Doctors Agree Health Bill Has No 'Death Panel' Requirement for the Elderly

By KATE SNOW, JOHN GEVER and DAN CHILDS
In Collaboration With MedPage Today

Aug. 11, 2009 —

Accusations that the health care reform bill now pending in the House of Representatives would use "death panels" to deny care to sick seniors and children with birth defects have taken center stage in the health care debate, giving the Obama administration even more of an uphill climb in getting the measures enacted into law.

But health care experts – even those who do not support the version of the health care reform bill now being discussed – note that these accusations are shocking, inflammatory and incorrect.