



Keeping a Level Head: A Crash Course in Leadership Media Relations

**Sunday, March 7, 2010
4:30 - 5:45 p.m.**

Content Leader:

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Crash Course in Leadership Media Relations© March 7, 2010



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Connecting Great Ideas and Great People

Why Media Training?

- Protect you
- Protect the brand
- Communicate YOUR message
- Stay out of trouble - take control
- Build confidence
- Create an image



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No Surprises, Ever!



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Five Commandments of Media Training

- Prepare (McGinly's Three Golden Rules - You have to be present to get them)
- Have a message
- Know how to communicate it
- Know when to stop
- Learn to recognize trouble



You Have Rights

- The right to be prepared
- The right to be comfortable
- The right to be treated fairly
- The right to know what the interview is about
- The right not to have all the answers
- The right not to know
- The right not to be interrupted



Stay In Control



What Do Reporters Want?

- News their readers crave - audience appeal
- Increasingly, to “entertain”
- Beat their competition
- Speedy response to meet tight deadlines



What Do Reporters Want?

- Be respected - educated
- Develop sources
- Facts and specifics (no fluff or filler)



We Need Each Other



First Things First - Have a Message

- Write your headline
- Create three message points that support your position
 - What would you like to see printed?
 - If you can't say it in 15 words...it's too long
 - Make sure the readers care
 - Use repetition to drive home the point



Be sure it's newsworthy....
and keep it simple



Support Your Message Points

- Use sound bites
- Include facts, examples, statistics as appropriate for that audience
- Use quotes, personal examples, references, analogies
- Tell stories
- Avoid acronyms!



Be Memorable!



How to Be Interviewed...Three 'Ps': Preparation, Practice, Performance

- Be prepared
- Stay focused
- Learn how to bridge



Remember: You bring something they need ... information and credibility



Stay Focused

- NO multi-tasking
- Listen, take notes, think ahead
- Minimize friendly chit chat, the reporter is not your buddy
- Don't take any calls or accept distractions during an interview
- Prepare notes with key points and data
- NOTHING is off the record



Be Prepared

- Review your briefing notes before any interview...practice your key points
- Learn the purpose of the interview and who else is being interviewed
- Know the issues
- Know the length of the interview
- Know what you can about the reporter
- Write down what you know you might not remember
- Practice...mock interview



Employ Bridging Techniques

- No matter what the question, get back to your key messages
- The key bridging lines
- How not to say, "I don't know"
- Deflect negatives or reinforce messages...NEVER repeat a negative
 "I'm not a crook"
- Admit what you are responsible for as necessary



Control the Interview



Getting Back to Your Message Points

- Answer question properly, but get back to your messages and support points by bridging...
 - That's not the way I see it, what I do see is...
 - The more important issue is...
 - What is critical here is...
 - But you know, the key point is...
 - Let's step back...
- Turn negatives into positives; Use Transitions
 - Actually...In Fact...On the Contrary...
 - The facts reflect...



How Not to Say "I Don't Know"

- That's a good question, let me check on that and I'll get back to you
- I don't have that information with me...I'll get back to you
- That's not my direct area of responsibility, let me find out who can answer your questions
- We actually do not disclose that information
- That's not something we would comment on one way or the other
- I wouldn't begin to speculate



Deflect Negatives

- NEVER repeat a negative
- Use bridging lines... "that's not the way I see it..."
- Respond with a positive



Types of Interviews

Print

- Usually by phone
- Sometimes recorded...ask if it concerns you
- Tips for success:
 - Keep your notes in front of you
 - Pretend you're on camera -- smile
 - Stay animated and passionate
 - Avoid multi-tasking -- prepare and rehearse



Radio (Less Frequent)

- 10-15 second sound bites



Types of Interviews

Television

- Often by satellite hook-up - sometimes in a studio with reporter
- Tips for success:
 - Look sharp, sit on your coat, lean forward, listen actively
 - When gesturing, do it close to your face
 - Make your points in 6 - 10 second sound bites
 - Avoid "industry-only" language, quality and technical jargon
 - Take advantage of negative questions to bridge to positive messages



In *satellite* interviews look into the camera lens --
in-studio look at interviewer



Avoid Talking About...

- Rumors
- Competitors
- Travel plans of employees
- Specific security measures
- Speculations of any kind - predictions
- Random analysis of world events
- Proprietary numbers from internal business plans
- Governmental actions/pending lawsuits
- Your personal life (with some exceptions)



Reporter Interview Techniques

- Flattery
 - You're smart, you're a visionary, you're so articulate...
- Silence
 - You answer, the reporter says nothing, you feel uncomfortable and start talking...remember, when you're done, stop
- Pre and Post-Interview Chit Chat
 - Everything is on the record, be careful



Reporter Interview Techniques

- Strawman
 - The reporter offers up some absurd comment or hypothesis to see what you'll say
- The Deadline
 - Most reporters are on deadline, but sometimes use this urgency to get you to talk when you're not prepared
- "Is there anything else you'd like to say?"
 - The final reporter question can be used to reprise your key message points
 - Do not introduce new points



Pitfalls, Potholes and Perils

- Being unprepared
- Repeating a negative
- Having a casual conversation with a reporter
- Guessing, speculating and supposing



Being Persuasive Means...

- Getting back to reporters promptly
- Creating an opinion rather than trying to change one
- Getting others to speak well about you
- Providing conclusions, not just facts
- Being truly helpful and keeping it simple



Summary and Recap

If you only remember 5 things...

1. Be Prepared
2. Have Clear, Short Messages
3. Use Key Bridging Lines...and Practice
4. Control the Interview
5. Be Cordial



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