



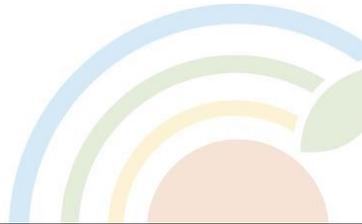
Good afternoon and welcome to the final webinar in the Fundamentals of Media Relations lunch and learn webinar series presented by the *Network for a Healthy California* and Citizen Relations.

Today we're going to tackle what many consider the most daunting part of media relations – pitching media and securing coverage. Our presentation is designed to break this down in a way that will help calm any anxiety you have around talking with media. We'll start by getting to know who's on the other end of the line or email and understand what they are looking for in a pitch. We'll also talk more about self-publishing your news through online and social media.

Gaining media interest is only half the battle. You need to also have a great interview in order to get your message out to your audience. We'll conclude our presentation today with information on how to handle interviews, including selecting and preparing your spokespeople.

What have we learned so far?

- Definition of media is changing
- Traditional channels are contracting and morphing while new channels are emerging
- Media relations is storytelling
- You have the ability to tell your own story



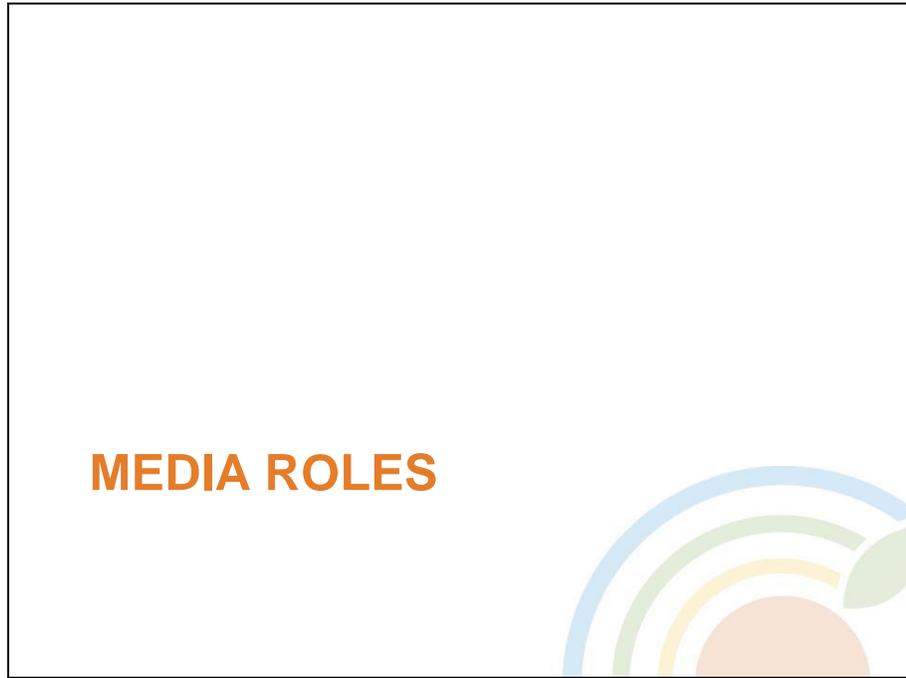
First, let's put pitching and interviewing in context of what we've learned so far in this webinar series.

We know that the media is rapidly changing. Traditional channels like newspapers are shrinking and/or transforming in the digital age.

People are getting their news through new communication channels like online and social media.

The people delivering the news are changing too. We still have trained journalists, but we also have citizen journalists and our friends and families who are increasingly becoming a primary source of news.

This evolution presents great opportunities for communicators. While we still want to work with traditional news media to help tell our story, we can also conduct our own storytelling through a variety of mediums. Technology has provided us the tools to capture our news in words, photos and videos and then push those directly to our audiences.



Let's take a look at how a TV newsroom works.

Behind the News



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CFDbvd2lwqk&feature=related>



Traditional Media Roles



Newspaper
 Section Desk
 General Assignment Reporter
 Beat Reporter
 Photographer
 Columnist
 Editor
 Managing Editor



TV
 Assignment Desk
 News Director
 Field Reporter
 Camera Operator
 Anchors
 Hosts
 Producers
 Web Producers



Radio
 News Director
 Producer
 Reporter
 Host

•When you pitch a newspaper, you either call the section desk or an individual reporter. If you are pitching a local event, the City Desk might be the best option. The City Desk editor will decide if your story will be covered and by whom. They can give it to a general assignment reporter or a beat reporter, a reporter who covers specific topics. They may also choose to send a photographer with or without a reporter. When a story is filed, the editor will determine the headline and will also edit the story. Larger publications have copy editors who will do this. The managing editor oversees the content of the entire publication and will make decisions about which page the story will appear on, whether a photo or art will be included, or they may decide to cut it due to space limitations. Columnists are different from reporters in that they determine their own content, which may include covering a specific topic or providing general commentary or opinion. For this reason, columnists are very influential with readers.

• As you saw in the previous video, at TV stations, the story often begins with the assignment desk. The assignment desk identifies possible stories to cover. The assignment desk, news director and reporters will meet to make final decisions and delegate assignments. Sometimes only a cameraman will be sent to capture “b-roll” of the event and then copy is taken from the press release for the anchor to read over the footage. Field reporters are out in the streets covering stories. They may have specific beats such as health or government or they may cover “general assignments.” Anchors also have a hand in stories, particularly breaking news. Anchors have topic areas of interest and may submit special or investigative reports. Anchors and reporters are also often blogging to supplement their on-air pieces.

• Radio news programming depends on the station format. News talk stations have hourly segments that may be local or syndicated. Think of these programs like a column in a newspaper – they may have commentary, opinion or many times a significant bias. The host and the producer work together to decide content and guests. News talk stations also have news updates, which can include local and national headlines with a few quick sound bites. The news director will pull headlines from online news sources, wire services and press releases. Radio stations with music formats either have scheduled news updates or only cut into music programming for breaking news. Most radio stations will have guests during their morning and afternoon programs. Larger stations have “bookers” for such guests, but for most stations the show’s producer is the point of contact.

New Media

Patch
Online News Outlets

Corporate Blogs

BlogHer
Life well said

momversation
PARENTING FOOD HOME STYLE LIVING

Mamá Latina TIPS

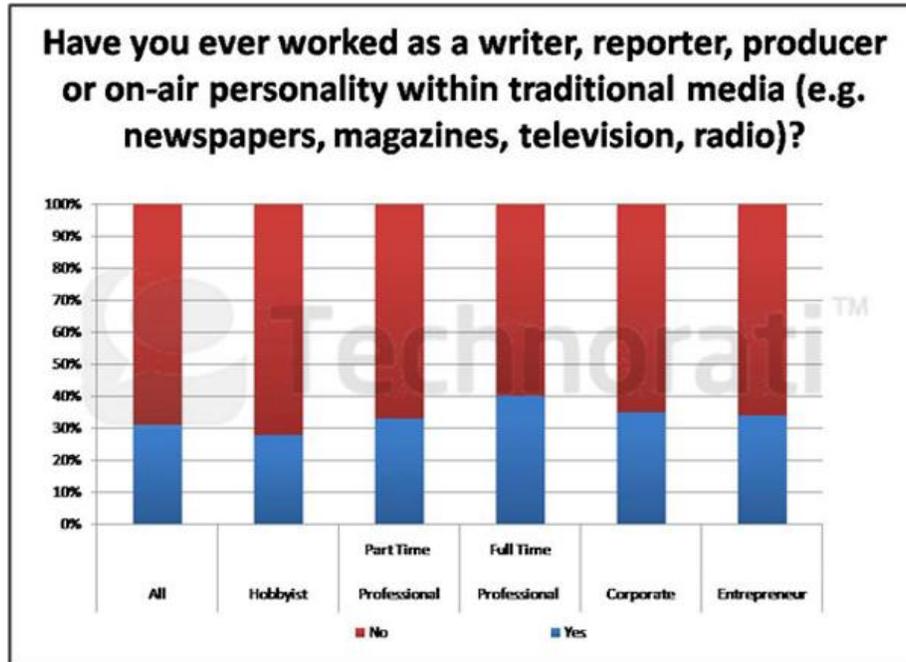
Pear mama

Sweatpantsmom

Individual Parent Blogs (Hobbyists and Entrepreneurs)



New Media Roles



“We continue to see a very large overlap between bloggers and traditional media. Almost one third of bloggers have worked for the traditional media, with a monthly magazine being the most common form (41%). 55% of Professional Full Timers and half of all Corporate bloggers have worked for a monthly magazine in the past. Of those who have worked with traditional media, 24% are still employed and blog separately.”

Sources for Story Ideas



- So, exactly how are media getting their story ideas? Media get their stories from a range of sources from other media outlets, PR practitioners to online searches. To extend on its coverage, it's not uncommon to hear one media outlet quote another outlet when reporting a story. For example, on your morning commute while listening to NPR, you may hear CBS news cited as a source for a major breaking news story. In the case of the manhunt for the former LAPD officer, it was common to hear various sources cited by other outlets during their coverage since the search was wide and far. This allowed the media to keep their viewers and readers informed on the rapidly changing story.
- Assignment editors in a print or TV newsroom are constantly monitoring wire services, reading and watching news in and on other outlets and answering reader and viewer calls. As you saw in the behind-the-news video, newsrooms are busy! They have the busy buzz of the stock trading room on Wall Street.
- When reading or watching local news, you will often notice these outlets will take a national news story and localize it to demonstrate how the issue or story affects their readers and/or viewers. When obesity issues make national news, this is one example where you may get called on to comment.
- Even social networking sites like Twitter are a tool for media as they "follow" other media professionals. Within the quickly changing media landscape, blogs are also common sources as are traditional practices such as annual reports.

Decision Process

- Does this fit my beat/point of view?
- Is this “breaking” now? Or how timely is this?
- Is this something people want/need to know about?
- Will this help people make decisions about how to live their lives?
- What else is happening?
- Is this a credible source?
- Does this support/impact another story?
- Is this exclusive?
- Who else has the story?
- Can I tell the whole story right now?

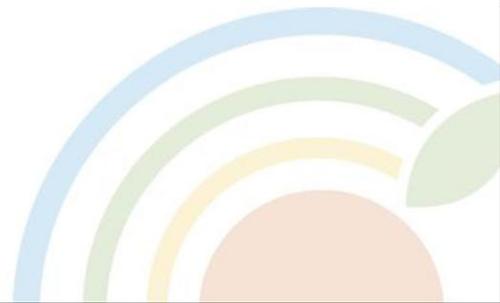


- These are just a few of the questions the assignment desk, editor or producer will consider when reading or hearing your pitch. Don't wait to be asked. Anticipate the ones that you can and include the answers in your pitch.
- An important factor in the decision-making process is whether or not they have resources available to cover the story. Newspapers, particularly local papers, have very small staffs and can't always cover an event in-person. TV stations may only have one or two camera crews and will prioritize stories. It's possible that a good story won't get coverage simply due to resources.
- Another consideration for media is whether or not you have spokespeople who relates to their audience or who speaks the language in which their story would be broadcast. As an example, Spanish-language media prefer to have spokespeople who speak Spanish. Though the lack of a Spanish-speaking spokesperson may not necessarily prevent them from covering a story, having one may increase your chances of coverage or help build a more in-depth story.

Pitch Process

Prepare

- Create a media list
- Know media outlet
- Target right desk editor, reporter or producer
- Know who you are talking to
- Time it right



- Each time you have a story to pitch, go back through the media list you created in the planning process and determine your targets. Consider which outlets are the most appropriate to cover the story. Do you have visuals? Pitch TV. Is this a very local story? It might not be right for radio, which has large geographic reach.
- If you aren't familiar with a media outlet on the list, take the time to read the publication online, watch a news broadcast or listen to the radio station. Each outlet has its own personality and it's important to know what that personality is to be able to customize your pitch.
- Translate your materials (if appropriate), including your media advisory, press release and pitches. Whenever possible, try to offer culturally-relevant resources for Spanish-speaking readers/viewers. This can include testimonials from Latina Champion Moms and quotes from *Latino Campaign* spokespeople. Statistics and/or reports pertaining to the Latino community are useful, too.
- Make sure you are targeting the right section, editor or reporter. Read past articles to see how they cover topics. For example, the media list may say a reporter is a health reporter, but that might mean he/she covers pharmaceutical companies or medical research or family health.
- Look on the media outlet's website for a bio on the reporter. Personal information is sometimes very important. Does the reporter have a particular interest area? Do they support certain nonprofits? Do they have children? All of this will influence how you talk to them. Include these notes in your overall media list.
- For the smaller papers, often times they post their staff and their beats online. And don't forget to pick up the phone and call. Sometimes your best resource is the receptionist!

Reporters are People

Tami Dennis

Tami Dennis, who takes the word "skeptical" to previously uncharted territory, is arbiter of all things "health" for the Tribune Co. She sometimes uses sunscreen; she has yet to be convinced that any particular food will prevent, or cure, a disease; and, because she's an adult, refuses to use the words "veggies," "tummy" and "yummy." She's not especially keen on "riff" as a verb either.

Melissa Healy

Melissa Healy is a staff writer for the Health section reporting from Washington D.C. Healy's a veteran of The Times' National staff, having covered the Pentagon, Congress, poverty and social welfare, the environment, and the White House before shifting to Health in 2003. She writes frequently about mental health and human behavior, about federal health policy, prescription medication and ethics in medicine. More wonk than wellness freak, Healy chooses to believe in the health benefits of coffee and wine, and considers water a better work-out medium than beverage.

Karen Kaplan

Karen Kaplan covers genetics, stem cells and cloning. She and colleague Thomas H. Maugh II comprise about 25% of the unofficial MIT-Alumni-in-Journalism Club, and she is proud to have taken more math (5) than English (0) courses in college. Her contributions to *Booster Shots* will, she hopes, appear more frequently than postings to her mommy blog.

Amina Khan

Amina Khan is a science writer who occasionally covers health stories, but she's perhaps best known for her repeated and brutal attacks on the office snack table. If it involves bizarre plants, celestial bodies or cute furry creatures, she'll try to write about it.

Los Angeles Times



- These are examples of journalists' bios on the *Los Angeles Times* website.
- Reading through, you will see that these four journalists are all considered health reporters; however they have distinct areas of interest.
- These bios also give clues to their personalities and what stories they are or are not interested in.

Pitch Process

Prepare

- Create a media list
- Know media outlet
- Target right desk editor or reporter
- Know who you are talking to
- Time it right



Deliver

- Contact through their preferred method
- Grab attention with a strong headline
- Get to the point, fast
- Focus on the story
- Be compelling



- We talked earlier about roles in the newsroom. Be sure to send the pitch to the right person at that media outlet.
- When preparing to pitch, check your media list for the editor or reporter's preference on how to be contacted. Most reporters prefer e-mail first and then a follow-up call. Also make sure it's a good time to speak with them.
- When sending an e-mail, make the subject line the headline.
- In an e-mail or a follow-up call, it's important to get to the point fast. They'll decide if they want to learn more after two or three sentences.
- Use compelling language in your pitch. Focus on how their audience will benefit from hearing this story. Also, point out the ways that you can bring the story to life through visuals, spokespeople, demonstrations, etc.
- When pitching multicultural media, be sure to have spokespeople who are representative of the community and/or culture and who speak the language (if appropriate). Tell the reporter about the spokespeople in the pitch.
- Focus on the story, not the issue. In other words, emphasize the "what." The story is the people and places that are impacted or that are making an impact. The story is the set-back, breakthrough, development or solution.

Connecting with Media

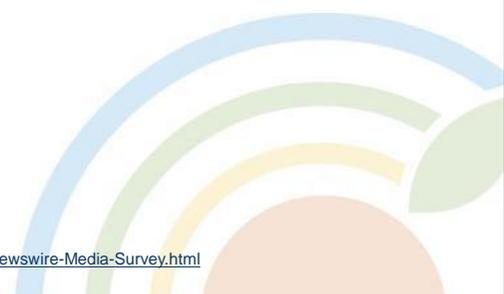
- *84 percent of journalists like to get pitched via email. In addition to email, these journalists also use Facebook (79 percent), LinkedIn (64 percent), and Twitter (58 percent) to search out potential stories.*

LinkedIn®

facebook

twitter

<http://www.prnewswire.com/knowledge-center/white-papers/White-Paper-2010-PRWeekPR-Newswire-Media-Survey.html>





•And the reason many journalists like to be contacted through Twitter is because it makes information easy to retweet (or share with their followers). This is a great backup if the reporter deems your story newsworthy and timely, but doesn't have the time or ability to include in their newspaper or broadcast.

Pitch Process

Prepare

- Create a media list
- Know media outlet
- Target right desk editor or reporter
- Know who you are talking to
- Time it right



Deliver

- Contact through their preferred method
- Grab attention with a strong headline
- Get to the point, fast
- Focus on the story
- Be compelling



Reinforce

- Link to breaking news
- Connect to trends, studies, legislation
- Illustrate impact to media's audience
- Provide "in the trenches" access
- Offer credible, captivating and quotable spokespeople



•Some other ways to create a compelling pitch include:

- Linking it to breaking news, especially if you can localize the story.
- Connecting to trends, studies or legislation (e.g., the recession, stimulus bill, etc.) Let the reporter know how your experts can help people further understand impact.
- Providing "in-the-trenches" or "behind-the-scenes" access. Remember, media want something that their viewers haven't seen before (and their competitors haven't covered.)
- Offering credible, captivating and quotable spokespeople. Media will return to you again and again if you give them articulate and engaging spokespeople for their stories.

Timing is Everything



- It's important to know when your publication goes to print. It's highly recommended that you avoid calling the reporter when they are on deadline.
- Dailies usually go to print between 4-5 p.m. Weekly papers and special sections of daily newspapers print on one specific day each week, so check your local papers to find out which day.
- If calling the assignment desk of a TV station, be aware if their local news will go on-air soon. If it's 5:45 p.m. and they have their live newscast at 6 p.m. they might not want to be bothered. So, if you can avoid calling right before they go live on-air, it's best to do so.
- Also, TV stations have planning meetings in the morning – usually 8 or 9 a.m. This is when they assign the tasks for the day. Most TV stations will conduct another meeting in the afternoon at 2 p.m. to plan their evening broadcasts – this will include assignment editors and anchors, but may not include reporters if they are still out collecting their story.

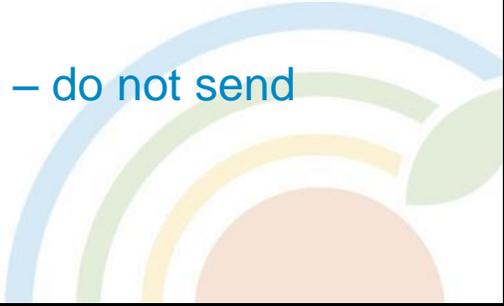
Timing

Ideally, 6-8 weeks prior

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Send calendar release			1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	Send media advisory to weeklies and columns	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	Send media advisory to dailies and broadcast	27 Make follow-up calls	28 Make follow-up calls	Send press release to all media	30	

- Send calendar releases six to eight weeks prior to your event. This will give media time to get the event on the community calendar.
- Send media advisories to weeklies and columns one or two weeks prior to the event. Contact target media in advance to learn how much notice they need to cover events.
- Send media advisories to dailies and broadcast media two or three days prior to the event.
- Press releases are distributed to media at the event and e-mailed or faxed to all target media immediately following the event. Include photos with captions if possible.
- It's important to follow-up by phone and e-mail after you send materials to make sure they have been received and to "pitch" the story.

E-mail Pitching Tips

- Keep pitch to 250 words or less
 - Put the headline in the email subject
 - Personalize the pitch
 - Reference reporter's previous stories
 - Appeal to current events, trends, their interests, etc.
 - Focus on the benefit
 - Bullet important information
 - Hyperlink to outside sources – do not send attachments
- 

- Here are some general tips when preparing your e-mail pitch or phone pitch script:
- Your pitch should be brief and highlight important information.
- Use the subject line for your headline – again, make it brief and attention-grabbing.
- Avoid mass emails. Address the email to the reporter. Personalize the pitch by referencing their previous articles that relate to your subject.
- Do your homework on the reporter and the media outlet and include that knowledge in your pitch.
- Make it easy to find the most important information by putting it in bullet point format.
- Never send attachments in your email. Instead, include hyperlinks to your website, sources and other useful information.

Sample Email Pitch

From: Sandra Levy [mailto:smlevy@pobox.com]
Sent: Tuesday, July 31, 2012 10:12 AM
To: 'news@ksby.com'
Subject: Local Tie-In to Olympics -- Santa Barbara-Area Youth Log More Than 750,000 Minutes of Activity This Summer!
Importance: High

Hi Madeline,

Just in time for any coverage needs you might have of local Olympians in training, this week there will be four back-to-back opportunities to get some great visuals!

Local kids will be recognized in Olympics-themed closing ceremonies for the work they have done this summer logging more than 750,000 minutes of physical activity to keep active and beat the obesity epidemic.

This week's events will be loaded with terrific visuals, so if you can send a crew out you'll get lots of great footage!

Please feel free to contact me either by email at smlevy@pobox.com, or by phone at [562-391-1516](tel:562-391-1516) with any questions or for more information.

- Last week, we shared materials from last year's Power Up Your Summer campaign. The pitch examples we'll show you today are also from that campaign so you can see how these tie back to key messages and written materials.
- This is an email pitch that resulted in media coverage in the Santa Barbara area.
- Note the key elements of this pitch.
- The headline shares an impressive number. Remember how we talked last week about how numbers draw in readers? Also, the headline ties to current news – the Olympics, which were underway at the time this was sent.

Phone Pitching Tips

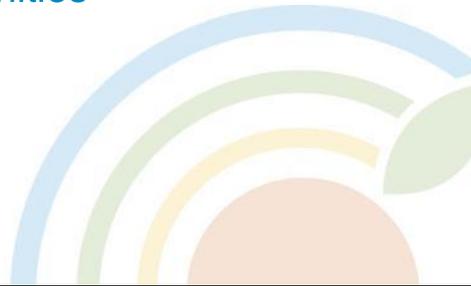
- Ask if it is a good time to talk
- Listen carefully to pick up on style and mood; react accordingly
- Speak with confidence
- Don't take "no" for an answer; offer alternatives
- Be persistent, yet respectful
- Share your follow-up plan



- It is always a good idea to follow-up your email pitch by phone. Here are quick tips for your phone calls:
- No matter what time you are calling, it's important that you be mindful of the reporter. It's a good thing to always ask "Is this a good time to talk?" or "Are you available for a quick pitch?" This way, the reporter is aware that you are cognizant of their time, too.
- Don't be rattled if they say that it isn't a good time. It doesn't mean they don't want to hear what you have to say. Just find out a good time to call back or send them a follow-up email.
- Remember when you place your follow-up calls; your voice is critical so convey confidence. Your energy will come across. If you don't care, why should they?
- If a reporter cannot attend your event, ask if you can send information, photos, etc. after the event. If you are comfortable, it is also okay to ask them why the story isn't right for them. Reporters will often tell you if your story doesn't fit their beat or if their outlet doesn't cover a particular type of story or event. Includes notes from your conversation in your media list for future reference.
- Also, it's important to know that there is a fine line between informing and irritating. It's good to follow up with reporters but don't leave multiple messages on their answering machines. A good takeaway is leaving a message once. After that, try to get them live on the phone.
- To end the call, reiterate your next steps, such as resending your pitch email.

Post-Event Pitching

- Take the opportunity to provide:
 - Press release
 - Results/achievements
 - Photos
 - Footage
 - Follow-up interviews
 - Behind-the-scenes opportunities



• Pre-event pitching isn't your only opportunity to secure coverage. You still have an opportunity following the event to provide information and photos, and you can also pitch post-event interviews.

• With shrinking newsroom staff, media outlets are finding it harder and harder to cover the many important stories happening in the community every day. Plan ahead to have the information and items they need to run a story following your event. (Review list and provide examples.)

• Using a digital camera or a smart phone with a good camera, you can easily capture the photos that tell the story of your event. You can then easily share these photos, sample captions, and an event press release. By nicely packaging the elements of the story for the media, you make the editor's job easy to either run the photos on the station or paper's website or in the publication.



- Remember, the digital age has provided access and reach to where we don't have to count on other people to tell our stories. We can do the storytelling through digital media, blogs and social media. As noted in the last webinar, we can use Facebook and Twitter to link back to press materials and stories available on our website or other media coverage. Many outlets will also accept packaged stories from citizen journalists or i-reporters for their own websites.

Tips from the Pros

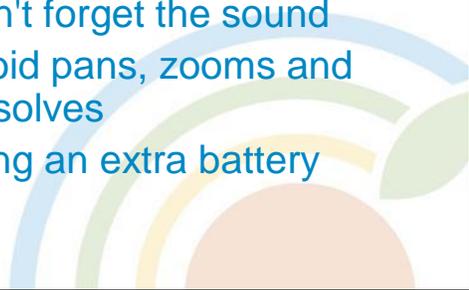
Photos

- Get a variety of shots
- Use the rule of thirds
- Know how to use your flash
- Check the background
- Keep it steady
- Frame your elements
- Light it up
- Map out the story

Videos

- Get plenty of material
- Use the rule of thirds
- Use a tripod
- Hold your shot
- Always consider the lighting
- Don't forget the sound
- Avoid pans, zooms and dissolves
- Bring an extra battery

<http://ireport.cnn.com/toolkit-photo.jspsa>



•Remember in our previous webinar we talked about the high impact photos can have on our audience? One great photo can tell a powerful story and is easy to share digitally.

• When taking photos, it's important to remember that your photos need to TELL a story.

• You can also do the same with using video. Using a digital camera and/or a newer smart phone you can tell the *Network's* story. One way of doing this is through i-reporting. You may be familiar with this term from CNN i-report. I am going to briefly touch on this, but i-reporting allows YOU to tell the story. You capture the story on video and narrate it. A good example where you can use this is interviewing a Champion Mom about her story or showing a food demo. During a food demo, your subject is on camera and you ask the questions like a reporter. A good, well-told i-report tells and SHOWS the story.

•These stories should be no more than two minutes. It's important to remember these stories are told in plain, simple language, flow and have a point of significance. Before starting an i-report or any other kind of writing, remember to lay out a plan. What's your story, who is going to be part of it and how will you visually tell it. Your i-report stories can be submitted through a newspapers website and/or shared on social media, for those of you who can use social media. We have included a link to the i-report toolkit where you can learn more about how to be an i-reporter for the *Network*.



Example: Rule of thirds

- On the previous slide you saw a bullet that encouraged you to use the rule of thirds and in the i-report there are other recommendations on techniques to take engaging photos. Here are a few examples from past *Network* events that show these techniques in play.



Example: Symmetry



Example: Depth, Framing



Example: Rule of thirds, Emotion

HANDLING THE INTERVIEW



You've successfully pitched a reporter and they have requested an interview. Now what?

The Interview

- A business transaction
- A friendly, engaging conversation
- An opportunity to message
- An opportunity to message
- An opportunity to message!



• Think of your interview as an exchange of goods and services. News organizations strive to bring the most up-to-the-minute, relevant and important information to their viewers, readers or listeners. You have that new information and need the help of the news organization to get it to your target audiences.

• As a business exchange, most media interviews are friendly conversations, not interrogations. The reporter is aiming to get the compelling and accurate information their audience wants and/or needs. You can make the interview easier for them – and for yourself – by getting straight to the point.

• Maximize the opportunity that the news organization is providing and message, message, message!

Getting Ready

- Do your homework
 - Research the reporter
 - Ask for the story angle
 - Review previous coverage
 - Learn about the audience
- Choose your spokesperson



• Do your homework. Preparing for your interview begins with getting to know more about the reporter you will speak with and their news outlet. Quick research might include reading their bio, reading past articles and talking with others in your organization who have worked with that reporter or news outlet.

• Ask the reporter about his/her angle. The angle is the message the reporter aims to communicate to the audience with the content in his/her article. The angle dictates the reporter's approach to reporting the story and impacts the way he or she conducts the interview. For example, one reporter's angle could be looking at the financial aspect of the obesity epidemic while another reporter might pursue trends around the issue.

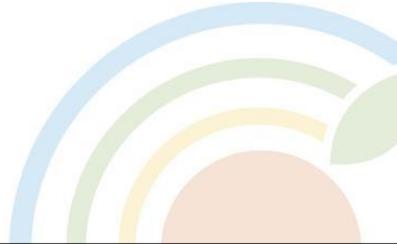
• If you are not familiar with the news outlet, read articles or watch/listen to a broadcast to learn the point of view of the outlet and program (i.e., investigative, community-oriented, science-based, etc.).

• Learn more about the readers/viewers/listeners that you'll be reaching through the interview. If you can't find information online, the sales department of the media outlet can be helpful since they regularly provide that information to advertisers.

• With the background work done, it's time to choose your spokesperson for the interview.

Spokesperson Characteristics

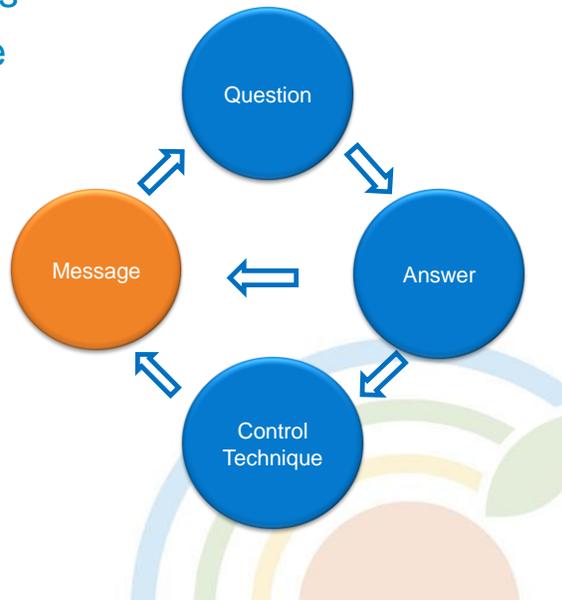
- Authorized
- Credible
- Relatable
- Accessible
- Articulate
- Confident



- When selecting your spokesperson, of course the first thing you want to determine is who is authorized to speak on behalf of your organization. In some organizations there is a designated public information officer, while in others the responsibility is with senior staff. It's always a good idea to create this list when you aren't working on a story so you have it available when you go to pitch or when the media calls.
- Not everyone is meant to be a spokesperson. It does take special characteristics to be successful in an interview, especially for TV and radio. Here are some additional characteristics you are looking for in your spokespeople.
- If you have the opportunity to choose from several spokespeople, the next thing you will want to consider is who is the most credible person for the story based on title, credentials or experience.
- It's also important that your spokesperson be relatable to the media outlet's audience. As an example, for a story about healthy changes that a family can make together, one of the Champion Moms may be the best spokesperson to deliver key messages.
- Interview opportunities don't just come from our proactive pitching. Often media will contact us to get a spokesperson for a story they are working on related to our topic. Be sure that you know how to access your spokespeople at all times. On your spokesperson list, include their work schedule and note times when they can and cannot speak with media. If you are in the midst of a media outreach effort, alert your spokespeople in an advance that you may call on them for interviews.
- Spokespeople must be able to articulate your key messages. As we've discussed, the point of the interview is to message, message, message. You are looking for a spokesperson that can deliver the message in a way they audience will understand.
- The word confident here is a bigger concept about presence and poise. Your spokesperson should convey confidence in their voice and in their body language.

Interview Preparation

- Review key messages
- Set an agenda for the conversation
- Anticipate questions and prepare answers
- Rehearse interview
- Practice control techniques



- Review your key messages and use them to set your agenda. Taking into account what you have learned about the reporter and media outlet, combined with your understanding of their audience, select two or three key messages that you want to be sure to say in your interview.
- Eliminate the fear of the unknown by anticipating some of the questions the reporter might ask. Write down some questions you think they might have for you and then jot down what your answers will be based on your agenda.
- It's a good idea to practice how the interview will go. Prepare your spokesperson by playing the reporter and running through the questions they will likely be asked. Provide constructive criticism through this process to help strengthen their delivery.
- The interview itself should be a circular process. A successful answer will prompt follow-up questions and create interesting and engaging dialogue.
- But it's important to also prepare spokespeople for unexpected or tough questions. During this practice time, be sure to throw in some questions like this to give the spokesperson a chance to practice control techniques.
- The techniques we are about to share with you will help your spokespeople smoothly and swiftly transition from a difficult question back to a key message.

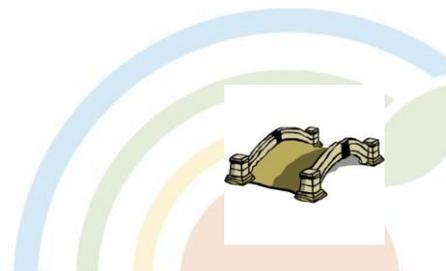
ABCs of Communication

Answer	Bridge	Communicate
Yes, that's right... →	And keep in mind... →	Key Message
No, that's incorrect... →	As an expert... →	Key Message
That's outside my area of expertise... →	What I can tell you is... →	Key Message

- The first control technique is called bridging. To help you remember the concept, just think of the ABCs of communication.
- With this technique, you initially respond to the interviewer's question, then "bridge" to your own message point. This way, the interviewer's question is answered and your message is communicated. Virtually every question asked can be bridged to one or all of your message points. It's your job to find a link between the reporter's question and your message.

Bridging Phrases

- What's important to remember, however, is ...
- Let me put this into perspective ...
- As an expert, let me add ...
- It's an interesting question that reminds me ...
- Our real focus is ...
- That's not my area of expertise, but what I can say ...



- Here are some common bridges.
- We suggest that you choose two or three bridging statements that you are most comfortable with and keep them top-of-mind to use in your interview.

Flagging Phrases

- Let me emphasize ...
- Many people ask ...
- A key thing to remember is ...
- I've said it before ...
- What I'm most excited about ...
- That's a very important question you've asked...



- Flagging is another technique you can use to draw attention to important information, perhaps something you haven't been able to provide at another point in the interview, or a point that you want to repeat for emphasis.
- Think of flagging as raising your hand with excitement to let the reporter know that the next thing you're going to say is something important.
- Particularly during print interviews, which can be longer and include more questions than broadcast interviews, reporters and editors look for what they feel might be the most important and newsworthy information. As the expert on your topic, you can help the reporter by flagging the key points you want the audience to understand. Like all of us, reporters tend to use information that they have heard repeated often.
- Here are some common flags that can be used to emphasize your main points.

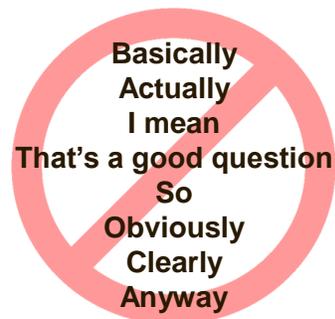
Delivery Do's and Don'ts

Don't:	Instead:
Speculate or lie	Admit you don't know the answer and offer to find the correct information
Use jargon or big words	Keep to a fifth-grade level
Try to fill silences	Provide your answer and wait for the next question
Talk too fast or slow	Keep an even pace, pause after key points and sound bites
Be negative	Be positive and friendly
Offer more information than necessary	Deliver your message, support your point (if appropriate) and wait for the next question
Say anything you wouldn't want in print	Remember, nothing is off the record!

- Here are some basic things you should remember when giving interviews.
- Don't lie or speculate if you don't know the answer. Just offer to find the correct information to get back to the reporter.
- Don't use big words or jargon. Remember, the viewers, readers and listeners can include young children to older adults and everyone in between. We want to make sure everyone clearly understands our message.
- Don't try to fill silences. A reporter might be silent because they are writing your answer down or thinking about their next questions. If you try to fill in the silence you can often say too much. A good answer is usually three to four sentences. If you've done that, you can stop and wait for the next question.
- Don't talk too fast or too slowly. Pause effectively to emphasize key thoughts. Also, consider how your quote will be used. If you talk too fast without breaks, it may be difficult for a TV reporter to edit your comments to fit their story.
- Be positive and friendly during interviews. The reporter is your ally in reaching your target audience.
- Remember that nothing is "off the record" so don't say anything you wouldn't want to see in print or hear on TV.

Delivery Tips

- Start your answer by rephrasing the question, but don't repeat anything negative
- Avoid these non-starters:



- Keep answers between 15 and 30 seconds
- Use your organization's full name every time
- Be patient while being questioned
- Watch for cues from the interviewer



•Train yourself or your spokesperson to answer questions in 15 to 30 seconds. This will require you to distill key messages into phrases and sound bites that you can easily deliver. And it will also reduce the need to edit your quotes, thereby increasing the chances that what you see in print or on TV will match what you said.

Resources

- Must read from CNN on i-reporting
 - <http://files.meetup.com/4456132/iReport%20Interview%20Tips.pdf>
- CNN's comprehensive i-reporting tool kit
 - <http://www.cnn.com/exchange/ireports/toolkit/index.html>



Q&A

