

# Dealing Effectively With The Media

How To Work Well With Reporters

# WHAT IS NEWS?

- Whatever effects and interests people
- Whatever the media determines you need to know
- An aberration
- Negative occurrences
- Positive occurrences

# MEDIA

- Newspapers
- Radio
- Television
- The Internet
- Magazines
- Books

# Media Organization

## Newspapers

- Source
- Editor
- Reporter or Photographer
- Copy Desk
- Composing
- Printing
- Your Front Porch

# News Organization Television

- Source
- Assignment Editor
- Reporter and Photographer
- Producer
- Executive Producer
- News Anchor
- ON THE AIR!

# The Importance of Communication

- An essential part of your job
- Increasingly important in the information age
- Types of communication
- YOU are the strongest communication link

# Dealing With The News Media

- Realize you and the reporter have different goals
- Reporters want facts
- Give them the information
- Include a fact sheet
- Never say “no comment”
- Never go “off the record”

# Dealing With The News Media

- Reporters usually cooperate with a legitimate request
- Simple friendliness pays dividends
- When you should complain
- When you should not complain
- Take time to think
- Consider the viewer and reader benefits



# Dealing With The News Media

- Keep a safe distance
- Be prepared
- Keep a perspective
- Tell it like it is
- Take the bitter with the sweet
- Be fair with all the media
- Become an expert for media inquiries

# Dealing With The News Media

- Practice your responses
- Treat every microphone as live
- Treat every camera as on
- Treat every reporter as if they are taking notes
- Establish and maintain control
- Make sure you understand the question

# Dealing With The News Media

- Defuse volatile questions
- Examine documentation
- Know reporter deadlines
- Ask for help from the public
- Avoid company jargon
- Predict the future
- Critique your performance

# Dealing With The News Media

Be accessible and tell the truth

# The Interview

- Think about the audience
- Determine specific messages
- Anticipate all the questions
- Plan and rehearse your answers

# The Interview

- Don't exaggerate the facts
- Don't duck the questions
- Don't be rushed
- It's natural to be nervous

# The Interview

- Admit mistakes – offer solutions
- If necessary apologize
- Show genuine concern
- Learn to “take the bridge”

# Bridging

- Getting you where you want to go
- Transitional phrases that carry you there



# Bridging Phrases

- Yes, but...
- No, but...
- Let me answer your question this way...
- Our primary focus is...
- That's a good question but perhaps more importantly...
- That may be a good point but I believe...

# David Pryor's Favorite Bridge

- “If you don't remember anything else I say today please remember this..”

# Develop Key Messages

A key message is a specific distinctive quality, characteristic or concern you wish to emphasize.

# Key Message

Example:

Safety and Concern

# Key Messages

- Key messages may change
- Use interviews to play the messages
- Every answer can be a “mini-speech”
- A key message can be a ready made answer
- Know your key messages before the interview

# Reporter Techniques

- Silent treatment
- Interruption
- Rapid fire questions
- Vocabulary test
- Rephrasing
- Needling
- Hypothetical questions

# Reporter Techniques

- Playing dumb
- Baiting

# Dressing for the Interview

## Men

- Conservative is best
- Wear a tailored suit or sports coat
- Avoid tight stripes or plaids
- Dress to fit the story
- Avoid shiny lapel pins or shiny watch bands
- Wear long socks



# Dressing for the Interview

## Women

- Wear normal make-up
- Avoid stripes or plaids
- Avoid hats
- Soft and simple hairstyle
- Don't wear new clothes
- Avoid large or bright jewelry

# The News Conference

- Make sure the announcement is a major one
- Mid-morning is best
- Check the news calendar
- Prepare an outline
- Think visually
- Prepare a press kit
- Hold the conference in a familiar place

# Summary

- Public has a “right to know”
- Don't fear the media
- Take the bitter with the sweet
- Don't hunker down
- Develop media relationships
- You be the source
- Perception is reality

# Summary

“Be accessible and tell the truth.”