



A Reporter is On Line 2

MALPH

August 25, 2022

What we will cover

- What media can and cannot do
- What reporters really want
- How to work with the media
- Differences between broadcast and print
- How to prepare for interviews
- Managing the interview
- When to do an interview – when to duck an interview

What public relations can do working with traditional, earned media

- Earned media benefits
 - Free
 - Boosts name recognition and agency reputation
 - Messages shared immediately
 - Builds awareness of programs
 - Use to enhance paid or self-generated content
 - Enhances agency credibility

What public relations
CANNOT do
working with
media

- Solve or correct basic structural and organization problems within an organization



Social media benefits

- Timely updates
- Provides unfiltered, accurate information
- Engages public with your agency
- Official health information
- Counters misinformation on social and traditional media



Myths/truths about reporters

- They're out to sell papers/advertising
- They are trying their best
- They write headlines and place stories
- They know as much as you do about the subject
- They are interested in learning
- The media landscape has changed!
- They have understanding editors who allow them to take as much time as needed for the interview and write/broadcast as much as necessary to tell the story





<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5DIPpioyuqI>

Why people hate interviews



- You feel you have no sense of control
- Reporters always seem to miss the point
- Reporters make you look, or sound, stupid
- You are misquoted, or comments are taken out of context
- You don't like to have your picture taken



“Five minutes before the party is not the time to learn to dance.”

- Snoopy

Understanding the process

- Types of news stories
 - breaking news
 - breaking news – local angle
 - informational
 - feature
 - investigative

Understanding the process

Similarities and differences

- Weekly newspapers
- Daily newspapers
- Radio
- Television

What are
reporters
looking for?



Managing the interview



- The initial inquiry
 - Engage the reporter in discussion
 - Learn what's prompting the inquiry
 - Learn what the reporter wants to accomplish
 - Determine what the reporter wants from you
 - Ask who else will be interviewed

Managing the interview

- Before you say yes, ask yourself...
 - can I contribute?
 - is it beneficial to my organization?
 - is ours the right organization to comment?
 - what points do I want to make?
 - is there anything I want to avoid?
 - am I the right person?

Managing the interview

- Don't be ambushed!
 - Reporter shows up...
- It is OK not to know
- Tell the truth (always!)
- Know the reporter is venue to public (your true audience)
- Stay on message
- Short and sweet (12-15 second soundbites)
- This is your interview; you're the expert

Prepare yourself for the interview

- Check your schedule
- Set a time
- Look in the mirror
- Don't wear all white or busy clothing, jewelry
- Think visual
- Scrutinize interview location/background
- Review your topic
- Do your research
- Remember reporter's audience, motive
- Prepare 3-5 written key talking points
 - issues you want to get across regardless of questions asked

Do's and don'ts of working with the media

Do's

- do your homework
- relax; help interviewer by building rapport
- make positive statements
- open your face...smile
- stand erect, hands at quietly at your sides
- use gestures – natural ones
- speak as an individual
- vary pitch and rate of your voice
- pause to figure out question or ask for clarification
- always tell the truth and acknowledge problems
- respect deadlines
- treat each reporter equally
- rehearse



Do's and don'ts of working with the media

Don'ts

- avoid “off the record”
- do not respond defensively
- avoid buzz words, jargon, too many facts/statistics
- while pausing, don't say uh-uh-uh
- don't lie; if you don't know the answer, say so
- don't talk until your mind is ready
- avoid the “fig leaf” or “royal” stance
- don't get angry



Pitching your story to the media

- Pitch a story, **not** a product
- Create a relationship with media
- Explain why your story is unique
- Make your pitch interesting, exciting
- Sell it!

Types of media pitches:

- Cold media pitch
- Pitch to established contact
- Personalized pitch
- Follow up pitch

Pitching your story via Media Advisory

Media Advisory – October Events

Thursday, Oct. 17, 4-5:30 p.m., **Lights on Afterschool** (flyer attached)

Who: Join students enrolled in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers afterschool program and their family members in this fun event. Attendees will be from Boyne City, Boyne Falls, Beaver Island, Central Lake and Pellston

What: The theme is Get Physical and Stay Healthy and events will include ping pong, air hockey, foosball, Wii Fit, and agility tests, as well flu shots, oral health checks, scoliosis testing, student finger printing and more. Parents can also visit booths to learn more about the Affordable Care Act, winter heating and utility bill assistance, nutritional advice and more.

When: 4-5:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17

Where: Boyne City Middle School

Contact: Dianne Litzenburger, Director of Communication Services, 231.330.2444 or litzenburgerd@charemisd.org
Day of event contact is Christy Cloud-Webb, 21st CCLC coordinator.

Wednesday, Oct. 23, **STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) Tour** (flyer attached)

Who: Students in grades 10, 11 and 12 are invited to hear firsthand how using their Science, Technology, Engineering and Math interests can be beneficial in choosing their career choice.

What: Ferris State University and Char-Em ISD representatives will be present for this hands-on event.

When/where: Two locations:

- Petoskey High School, 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon. *Best time to attend is 10:45-11:45 a.m.*
- Ellsworth High School, 1-2:30 p.m. *Best time to attend is 1:15-2:15 p.m.*

Contact: Dianne Litzenburger, Director of Communication Services, 231.330.2444 or litzenburgerd@charemisd.org
Day of event contact is Gretchen Spedowske Char-Em ISD Career/College Readiness Consultant

Tuesday, Oct. 29 and Wed., Oct. 30 **TEA Workshop for Young Women** (see attached flyer)

Who: Char-Em ISD will open the world of technology and engineering to female high school students and a female mentor/mother/grandmother.

What: The Technology Engineering Aptitude or TEA workshops offer 9-12th grade girls a tremendous opportunity to complete hands-on activities and interact with an engineering professional to learn about valuable, high-wage opportunities in the engineering industry.

When/Where: Tuesday, Oct. 29, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Charlevoix High School

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Petoskey High School

The best time to attend will be between 9:30-11:30 a.m. The girls and their mentor/mother/grandmother will be doing educational – and cool – things such as:

- *Engineering and designing a catapult to throw a large marshmallow two meters away*
- *Engineering and designing a hydraulic crane to pick up a paperclip*
- *Hearing from the Director at Ferris State University in the College of Engineering Technology about great opportunities for women in the field of engineering and technology!*

Contact: Dianne Litzenburger, Director of Communication Services, 231.330.2444 or litzenburgerd@charemisd.org
Day of event contact is Gretchen Spedowske, Char-Em ISD Career/College Readiness Consultant

Managing the interview



- Don't repeat negatives or their accusation (when did you stop beating your wife?)
- Keep it short
- Stay on topic
- Redirect question to your point
- Remember, the camera/microphone/pen is never "off"
- Keep a professional relationship
- Don't wander or tell stories
- Don't assume anything
- If you need to provide additional information, ask about deadline – and meet it!
- Ask when the story will run

Why we do interviews



- We are experts
- We can help our customers/organization
- You scratch my back, I'll...
- You have no control if you don't cooperate
- Avoid no comment

When to duck an interview

- You've nothing to say
- You've nothing to add
- You're not the right person
- You're the wrong organization
- Someone else in your organization is assigned to do interviews



Correcting mistakes by the media

- Recognize we all make mistakes
- Pick your battles
- Correction vs. awareness
- Don't pester
- Be nice!



Mock interviews

- Baby formula shortage
- PFAS contamination
- COVID-19 children's vaccine



What
questions may
you have?

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