



## Communications & the Media

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2015 Elected Officials Seminars



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### The Media: A Fact of Life

*“For a politician to complain about the press is like a ship's captain complaining about the sea.”*

Enoch Powell



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### The Media: A Fact of Life

*“If one morning I walked on top of the water across the Potomac River, the headline that afternoon would read: ‘President Can’t Swim.’*

President Lyndon Johnson



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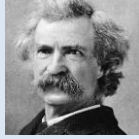
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### The Media: A Fact of Life

*"Never pick a fight with people who buy ink by the barrel."*

Mark Twain



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### Question 1

*Where do people get their news these days?*



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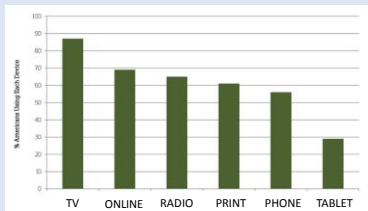
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### Where People Get the News



Source: AmericanPressInstitute.org



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**Question 2**

*Who covers the news the best?*

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**Finding the Most Interesting News**



Canadian Media Research Consortium

- The Net (50%)
- Television (27%)
- Newspapers (15%)
- Radio (6%)

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**Question 3**

*What stories do the media like to do?  
How do I appeal to them to cover my story?*

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### Hot Button Topics



- Health and well-being
- Safety and security
- Personal finances; management of public funds
- All are impacted by government

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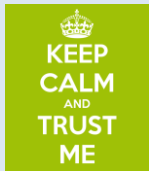
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### Building Trust with the Media & the Public



#### "Least Trusted" Survey – Reader's Digest

- |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Telemarketers      | 6. CEOs               |
| 2. Car salespeople    | 7. Real estate agents |
| 3. Psychics           | 8. Car mechanics      |
| <b>4. Politicians</b> | 9. Actors             |
| 5. Bloggers           | 10. Lawyers           |

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SO, WHAT DO YOU DO?  
When the Media Come to Call

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### How to Keep Control of Any Interview



- Create key messages
- Stay on message
- "Bridge back" to your key messages
- Never "guess" when answering

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### Getting Ready for Your Interview



- Know something about the media
- Negotiate terms of the interview
- Provide background information

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### Getting Ready for Your Interview



- Understand your target audience
- Your three key messages
- The positive angle
- Who, What, When, Where, Why, How, and How much?

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### Getting Ready for Your Interview



- Answer with your key messages
- Practice, Practice, Practice
- Judge your performance; be tough on yourself

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### You're On! The Interview



- You're always on; no such thing as "off the record"
- Bring your props
- Responsible for the answers, not the questions

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### You're On! The Interview



- Keep answers short: 15-20 second "sound bites"
- State your message at the beginning, weave into interview
- Say it with enthusiasm

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### You're On! The Interview



- Create word pictures
- Use "trap" questions to bridge and refocus your key message
- Never repeat the negative: "I am not a thief"

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### VIDEO EXAMPLE Staying on Message



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### Wrap it Up. The Interview's Over



- Clarify outstanding issues, correct any factual errors
- Provide additional background material if valuable
- Would you believe you?

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### So, How Do I Look?



- Perception is important
- Professional & well groomed, but not stuffy
- Nothing that distracts the audience

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**VIDEO EXAMPLE**  
How Do You Want to be Perceived?



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**So, How Do I Look?**



- Be natural
- Find a comfortable position
- Look at the reporter, not the TV camera. Don't nod your head
- Address the public perspective - demonstrate concern, be empathetic



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## VIDEO EXAMPLE Sincerity Must Be Real



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### I Know My Limit



- Know the style of the show and interviewer's style
- Stick to the facts - don't get into someone else's area of expertise
- Don't speculate



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## I Know My Limit



- Bridge from reporter's questions to refocus on your answers
- Don't lose your temper, it's not about you
- Restrict use of statistics and numbers

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## A Bridge Too Far...Not Quite



- "Let's look at it from a broader perspective..."*
- "Clearly, there's another, more important concern/issue and that is..."*
- "The underlying problem is really..."*
- "That is not the real issue, the real issue is..."*
- "When everything is said and done, this is really about..."*

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**The Final Word**  
Don't let this happen to you



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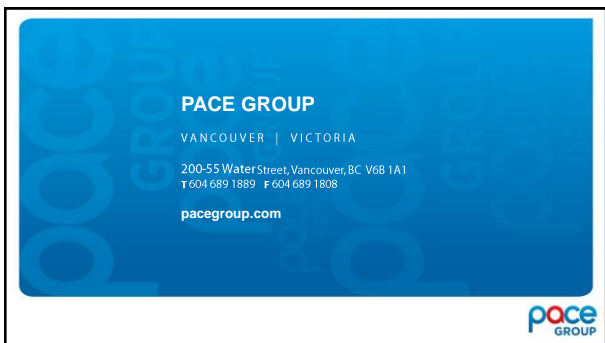
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