

# COMMUNICATIONS AND THE MEDIA

The Art of Media Relations

**Local Government Leadership  
Academy**

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## Communications and The Media

***“The greatest problem in communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished.”***

***George Bernard Shaw***



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## What We'll Cover Today

- Why Communicate?
- Communications Options.
- Investing in Media Relations.
- The ROI of Media Relations.
- The Art of Media Relations.
- The Art of MR for Elected reps.
- The Art of MR for Administrative reps.
- Top Tips For Successful Media Relations.
- Q&A and Discussion.



## Why Communicate?

- Local Government Act
- Community Charter
- Taxpayer expectation
- Resident Awareness
- Resident Education
- Resident Action



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# Resident Awareness



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# Resident Education



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# Resident Action



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## Communications Options

- Local Government Website
- Webcast of meetings
- Social Media – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube & more
- Newsletters
- Open Houses
- Facilitated Engagement Sessions



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## Investing in Media Relations

- In the end...you will still need to work with the local, regional, provincial and national media.
- The good news is that you have the ability to plan and prepare!



## Investing in Media Relations

- Many citizens still turn to traditional media for news and information.
- Local newspapers, radio and television still very influential in shaping public opinion.
- Elder citizens rely more on traditional media than social or 'new' media...but this is changing and you need to adapt.
- Include Media Relations as a key part of your Communications Plan.

## The ROI of Media Relations

- Make development and maintenance of good working relationships with the media a priority.
- Assign a staff person to manage relationships with the media.
- Relationships with the media as important as relationships with governments, First Nations, taxpayers and others.

## The ROI of Media Relations

- You will only get out of relationships with the media what you are prepared to invest!
- The relationships can be positive or negative depending on your approach.
- Show some interest! Get to know the media as much as you want them to get to know local government.

## The Art of Media Relations

- Approximately 50% fewer Journalists since 1980s.
- Heavier workloads, pressures and demands.
- Internet and social media requires faster filing of stories.
- Almost 'zero' research time.
- Now filling websites along with newscasts and column inches.
- 24-hour news cycles.
- Inexperienced reporters and high turnover rates.
- Resulting in more mistakes (Toronto Star published 328 corrections in 2010)



# The Art of Media Relations

- The result is more media are looking for stories.
- This spells 'opportunities' for local governments.
- The media will take more stories from those they trust.
- Allows local governments to get more 'earned' media.
- Allows local governments to get more accurate stories.
- More stories in the media results in greater connection with residents and taxpayers.
- Manage the relationships well and increase the ROI.





## The Art of MR for Elected Representatives

- Very clear distinction between media roles for elected and administrative representatives.
- Elected Reps deal with vision and policies required to achieve the vision.
- Administrative Reps speak to processes and procedures required to implement the policies and vision.
- Mayors/Chairs usually act as principle spokesperson for their local governments.
- Councillors/Directors are often sought for their views.
- How those views are reflected often depends on political perspectives.



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## The Art of MR for Administrative Representatives

- Understand clear distinction between media roles for elected and administrative reps.
- Administrative role is to help media and public understand the processes and procedures used by local government to conduct its business.
- Admin role is to help media and public understand how council decisions will be implemented not debate those decisions.
- CAO is often the principle spokesperson for Administration but Dept. Managers can be designated to speak as well.



## Top Tips for Successful Media Relations

- Open, transparent communication is the foundation on which to build excellent working relationships.
- Embrace communication and it will lead to informed and involved citizens.
- Use effective communications to create awareness in the community, educate citizens and encourage positive actions.
- Make effective media relations a priority.
- Invest in good working relationships with the media.



## Top Tips for Successful Media Relations

- Develop policies and procedures for defining success in media relations.
- Critical for Elected and Admin Reps to understand respective MR roles.
- Review annually your Media Relations Policy and procedures.
- Measure your success in media relations.
- Adjust media relations strategies based on analysis of relationships with the media.
- Maximize the ROI by maximizing the invest in media relations.

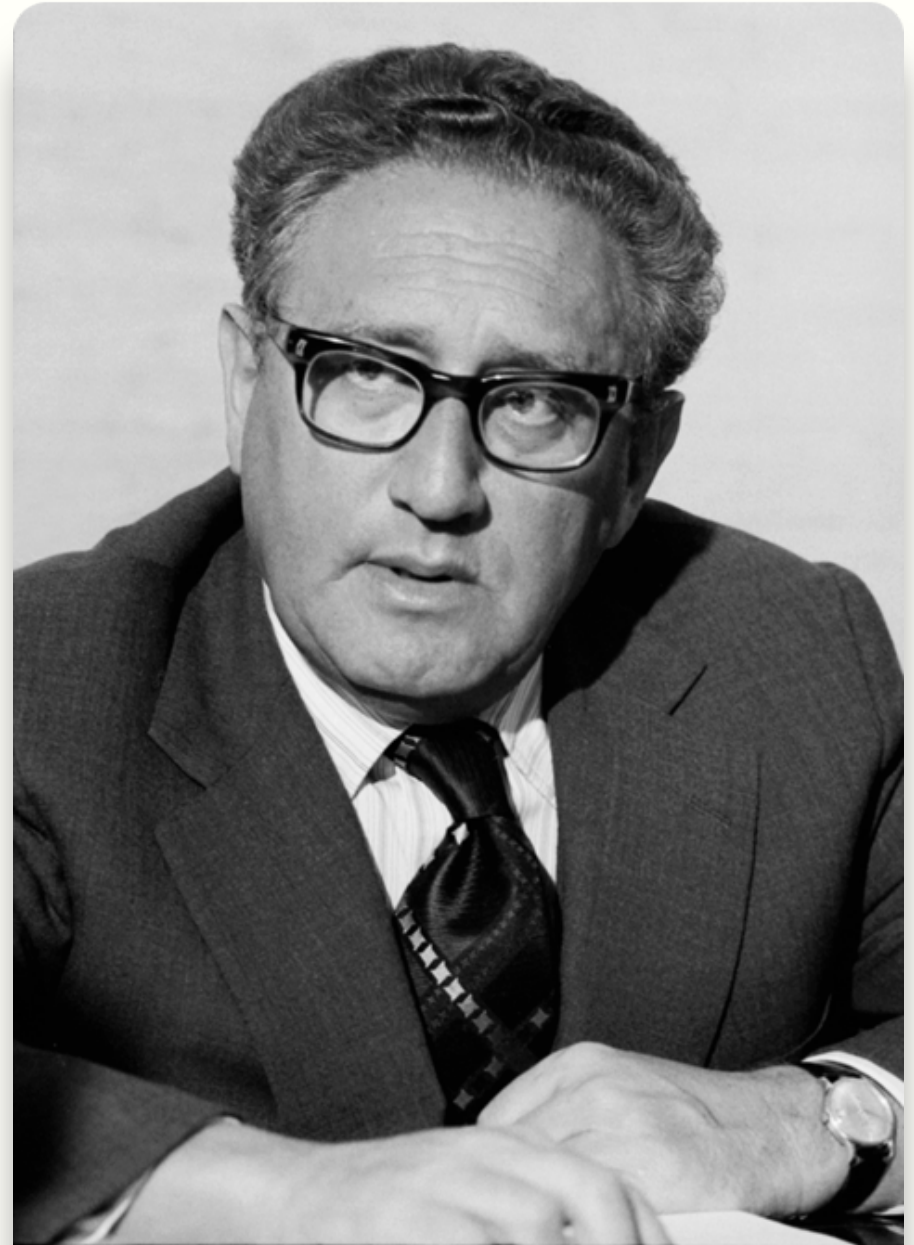


“Has anyone got  
any questions for  
my answers.”

- Henry Kissinger



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**THANK YOU!**

***Q&A and Discussion***



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