

MEDIA TRAINING

Sound Bites | Tips And Tricks | Communicating In A Crisis

HOW TO PREPARE FOR MEDIA INTERVIEWS

- Designate spokesperson/s
- Develop key messages
- Anticipate tough questions and prepare answers
- Practice and fine tune



— AVOID — INTERVIEW — TRAPS —

- Hypothetical
- A or B dilemma or multiple choice
- **Cast-iron guarantee** (Example: Can you guarantee your students' safety from now on?)
- **False premise** (Example: Why aren't your trips always conducted in safe areas?)
- **Leading** (Example: So you're saying that you're not responsible for injuries that occur during your trips?)
- Irrelevant issue

Crafting SOUND BITES

HEADLINE
(truth, position)

SUPPORTING FACTS
(context, evidence)

DETAILS
(explanation)

EXAMPLE

Q: Why did student X get seriously injured under your watch?

A: We sincerely regret this accident, and our thoughts are with student X as he/she recovers. Student safety is our top priority (**headline**). This is the first time that something like this has happened in the 10 years that we have offered this course (**context**). The accident occurred... (**details**).

COMMUNICATIONS PRIORITIES

When a crisis is imminent, always do a **PANTCHEK**.

You don't want to get "caught with your pants down" in a crisis.

- P**ublic welfare is the first priority.
- A**ll bad news out at once.
- N**o blame, no speculation, no repeating of charges.
- T**ell your side of the story, first and with facts, or **T**ake responsibility if you are in the wrong.
- C**are and concern for affected audiences.
- H**igh-level organization spokesperson must be accessible and responsive.
- E**nsure measures are in place to decrease future risk.
- K**eept separate plan for moving ahead.

COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE

INTERVIEW **DO'S**

- Tell the truth and be genuine
- Listen carefully to the entire question
- Be concise
- Correct mistakes on the spot

TIP

Say what you want to say and nothing more. "Dead air" is the reporter's problem, not yours.

INTERVIEW **DONT'S**

- Don't repeat the charge
- Don't ramble or fill the silence
- Don't fake an answer
- Don't say "no comment"
- Don't lose your cool
- Don't forget to take off the microphone

TIP

Don't use sarcasm. Tone rarely translates.