Managing the Media:

Media Training Tips & Techniques

Christi Dixon
Nuffield International CSC
Today’s Agenda

The Media
Landscape

How to
Be a Spokesperson

Interview
Techniques and Tips
Outcomes We are Striving for:
• Shape the narrative about modern agriculture through meaningful, proactive media engagements to reach broader society
• Balance and expand our industry’s share of voice in earned media
• Create opportunities for storytelling with accurate information

How We Can Engage:
• Develop compelling content and messages (with you)
• Leverage current news trends
• Strengthen media relationships through open-door policy with media – site visits, interviews, 1:1 meetings, events, editorial board visits and deskside briefings (sometimes with you!)
• Equip and empower spokespeople (with you, if you’re willing)

What We Need:
• YOUR WILLINGNESS
• Diverse voices and stories
• Show & tell
• Fast facts
• Video content
• Access to you and your operation
UNDERSTANDING “NEWS”

// Hard news vs. features
// Lots of competition for coverage
// Journalists are storytellers

INFORMATION NEEDED QUICKLY

// Resources, facts, figures

TRADITIONAL NEWS REALITIES

// Understaffed
// Busy
// Younger

INSTANTANEOUS NEWS CYCLE

CANNOT CONTROL NEWS

// That’s why we manage our message

Source: Mike Arauz, Thoughts on New Media and Assorted Links
Media is Social Media

REPORTERS ARE ONLINE, GATHERING AND COMMENTING
  // Cameras are everywhere
  // Consumers as reporters
  // Reverse media relations

CAN EXTEND COVERAGE WHAT YOU CAN DO
  // Know some of your communities
  // Listen
  // Engage when appropriate

Source: Mike Arauz, Thoughts on New Media and Assorted Links
The Six Cs of News

1. Crisis
2. Conflict
3. Contradiction
4. Controversy
5. Consequence
6. Characters
How to Be a Spokesperson
Your Key Message

A short, concise statement that could be your headline, your quote or your final words

Central to a Message Map

Safe to repeat

27/9/3

Should have your OWN personal stories – no contradictions!
Prepare Appropriately

Who’s requesting the interview? / What’s the media outlet? / Who is the audience? What are they concerned about? / What’s the story or angle?

The reporter is not your friend: you each have a job to do

Remember WII-FM
C = A + B

Instead of  \( A + B = C \)
Responsibilities

- Share information in advance
- Drive the discussion

Be “AKA-Compliant”
- Articulate
- Knowledgeable (avoid jargon)
- Accessible

- Deliver Home Base early and often
- Counter false statements or incorrect points
- Win the battle, not the war
Interview Techniques
Spokesperson

Don’ts

- Asking for interview questions in advance (accept if offered)
- Demandig specific conditions for the interview
- Faking the answer if you don’t know it
- Asking to review/approve the article (accept if offered)
- Attempting to dictate when or where the story will appear
- Repeating negatives, interviewers’ questions or opponents’ views
- Saying anything else you don’t want public
Do

STOP TALKING.
// Remember, they can only quote what you say
// If you don’t think you should say it, don’t
// Let them ask for clarification
// Helps you stay on message
How to answer a question

01 DIRECTLY (WHAT/WHY)

02 I DON’T KNOW …
  // But I’ll find out for you and …
  // Actually, I’m not the best person to talk to about that, I’d suggest you follow up with …

03 I’D LIKE TO ELABORATE, BUT …
  // We respect the privacy of our …
  // For confidentiality reasons …

04 WHAT I CAN TELL YOU IS …
Types of questions

- False premise
- Hypothetical
- Multi-question
- Persistent question

"Anything you want to add?"

*Be aware of cultural nuances
bridging

BRIDGING
(redirect)

// Answer the question
// Make the bridge
// Communicate your message
FLAGGING
(close/highlight)

// “The most important thing is to …”
// “First, next, last …”
// “For example …”
AVOIDING AN UNDESIRABLE OR UNPRODUCTIVE QUESTION

// “The real issue is…”
// “It’s important to understand…”
// “What I’m most excited about…”
Body Language

- Eye contact is critical
- Keep hands free
- Use natural gestures at the waist
- Watch for ring twirling/key jingling
- Decide on standing vs. sitting
- Keep your energy level high
- Women should try to be equal height or above their audience
Is it

Over?!

// Is the microphone off?
// Has the reporter left the building?
// Has the phone been hung up?

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS
// Did you promise anything?
// Photos or video?

SELF EVALUATION
Doing it Well

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kcJreQpVpek
"Now can we have it as a sound bite?"