

# *Effective Media Relations*



A Presentation to the  
Manitoba Safety Council  
Occupational Health and Safety  
Conference

# *Agenda*

- Why we need to deal with the media—in case anyone was wondering
- Communication Planning
- Preparing for an Interview
- Interview Time—things to do, and not do, in media interviews

# *The Not So New Reality*



- You're in a fish bowl
  - Public is cynical
  - Little trust in public and private organizations
  - A need to assign fault/blame

# *The Media Reality*



- The media is a fact of life
- The media is a link to the public
- The media can and does deliver information to the public

# *Why Deal With the Media ?*

- Media raise issues on the public agenda
- Media drive responses
- Media affect outcomes
- Effective media relations builds credibility
- Effective media relations helps build desirable outcomes

# *And if that's not enough...*



- Perception is reality
  - Your credibility
  - Your image
  - Your reputation

# *The Media are Just Like You!*



- They have a job to do
- They have deadlines
- Their bosses expect them to deliver the goods
- They are in a competitive environment

# *Do I really have to talk to them?*

- Choice #1—YES
- Tell your organization's story
- Have some influence over the result
- Choice #2—NO
- Let someone else, perhaps your critic, tell your story—they'll be delighted
- Give up any influence over the result



# *The Choice is Yours*



- Tell your story, or
- Let someone else tell it for you

# *The Media Relationship*



An opportunity to de-mystify your  
organization

# *The Media Relationship*

- In Good Times
  - Explain what you do
  - Develop understanding
  - Maintain open communication
- In Bad Times
  - The media already knows what you do
  - Lines of communication are open
  - There's an opportunity to tell your story

# *Communication Planning*

- Why you should develop a plan
  - The planning process forces you to fully analyze the situation—think about what you’re going to do, and why!
  - Opportunities are often identified
  - Provides defensible conclusions
  - Its also a good budgeting tool

# *The Communication Plan*



- Introduction & background
- Objectives
- Target audiences and stakeholders
- Challenges
- Opportunities
- Messaging
- External strategies
- Internal strategies
- Budget
- Evaluation

*For further information about  
Communication Planning*



Contact

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# *The Media Interview*



Preparation is the key

# *Preparation is the key*

- Who should do the interview?
- Interview the Reporter
- Remember your target audiences. What do you want them to know?
- Assemble the facts
- Prepare for the worst



# *The Medium Makes a Difference*



Is it Print, Radio, or Television?



## *Print*

- Lots of detail
- Background information
- Many points of view may be expressed
- Usually a single deadline

# *Radio*



- Immediate
- Often live
- Well suited to small pieces of, time-sensitive, information
- Talk shows present opposing points of view in dramatic fashion—entertainment value

# *Television*



- Visual
- Emotional
- Words should support the pictures
- Location becomes important

# *Remember the Plan*



- Who are you talking to?  
(Audiences)
- What do you want them to know?  
(Messaging)
- Illustrate and support what you're saying  
(Examples, description, comparison)

# *Its Interview Time*

- Think **BEFORE** you speak
- Be brief
- No jargon please
- Don't answer hypothetical questions
- Don't repeat "buzzwords"—you do and you own them
- Never say "No Comment"
- If you don't know say so, but you'll find out
- Always tell the truth
- **NEVER** go "off the record"
- Stay calm—don't get angry

# *Interview Time*

- For television interviews
  - Interview location is important—don't use your office—do the interview in a place where the visuals support your message
  - Check for visual problems—rude slogans, pictures—anything that detracts from your message
  - Look at the reporter—not the camera
  - Posture is important

*And finally—remember...*

- Who you're talking to—your target audiences
- What you want them to know—your messages
- **Its all in your Communication Plan**



# *Contact Information*



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