

Working with the Media: Maximize Your Message Impact

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Why We're Here

- Learn how reporters think, approach stories
- Craft, deliver powerful messages
- Gain greater control over interviews

- **Prepare, Practice, Perform**

What a Media Interview Is and Isn't

Is NOT

- ~~Presentation~~
- ~~Reporter Education Session~~

Is

- Delivery of focused messages
- Large audience
- Brief amount of time

Reporter is conduit to deliver key messages to the audience

Or as Henry Kissinger Used to Say...



**What questions
do you have for
my answers?**

How Reporters Think, Approach Stories

- Inverted Pyramid — conclusion comes first
- Focused on public
- “Two Sides to Every Story”
- Controversy/Drama are compelling
- Media is a competitive business
- Social media focuses on “conversations”



How Reporters Think, Approach Stories

- Stories can be slanted—
consider proactive approach
- Story elements may include
Health, Heart, Pocketbook,
Environment,
Villain/Victim/Hero
- Reporters are always
on deadline (but you can
buy 30 minutes to prepare
for interview!)



The First P - PREPARE

5 W's to Ask Reporters Prior to Interviews:

- Who referred you to me?
- When is your deadline?
- What is the format (live? taped?)
- Where will the interview take place? (in studio, in my office, on location?)
- Who else have you spoken to?

Buy yourself 30 minutes, contact your professional association(s) for help

The First P - PREPARE

- **Determine Your Communications Objective:** Persuade? Educate? Reassure?
- **Develop 3 Compelling Key Messages** (what's in it for your audience?)
- **Bridge to Your Messages:** It isn't enough to simply answer questions
- **Anticipate/Prepare for Tough Issues**
- **Stay Calm:** You'll lose credibility if you become defensive or angry.

The First P – PREPARE

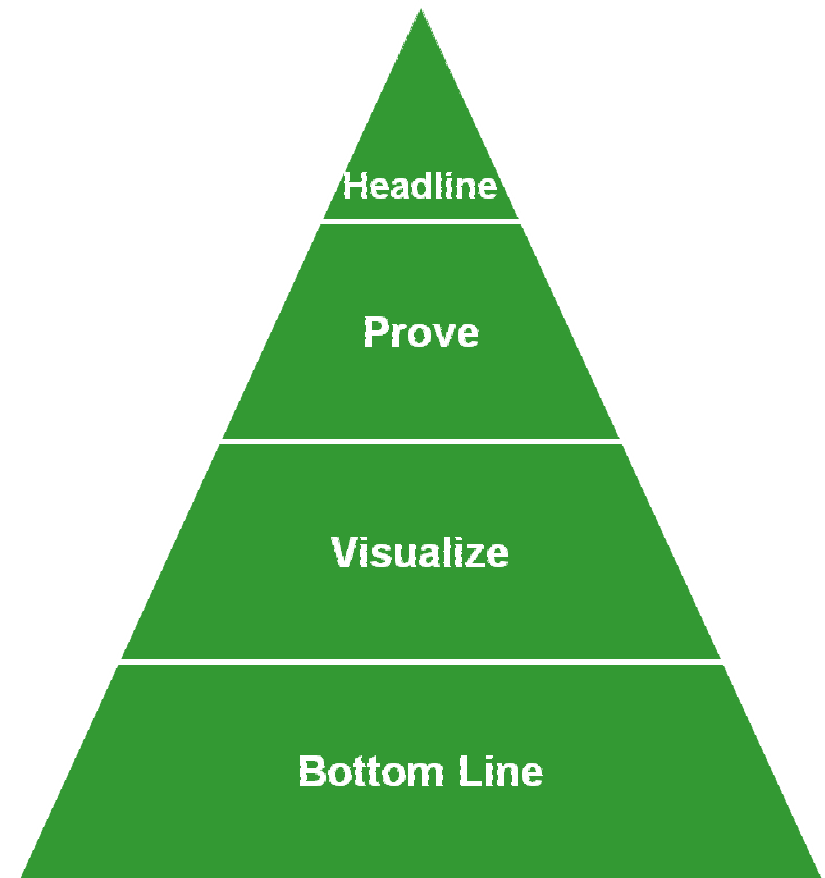
Craft Powerful Messages

- Fill a page with everything you *might* want to cover
- Search the Internet, know what others say, ask people what matters to them on the issue
- Prioritize, winnow
- What will resonate with your audience?
- Crystallize it to 3 key messages
- Support each key message with 2-3 points

The First P - PREPARE

Key Messages – Remember to KISS

- **Headline it** – One Engaging Sentence
- **Prove it** – Facts, data
- **Visualize it** – Stories
- **Bottom line it** – Rephrase the headline



Crafting Key Messages – Be Quotable

Headline

- As a dentist and a parent it would break my heart if our community stopped water fluoridation. To me, it would be like going back to the dark ages.

Visualize

- My grandma kept her teeth in a glass by her bed. Today, thanks in large part to fluoride, more of us than ever before will keep our teeth and our smiles all our lives

Prove It

- Nearly 3 out of 4 people on public water systems enjoy the benefits of fluoridated water. The Centers for Disease Control hails water fluoridation as one of 10 great public health achievements

Bottom Line It

- Water fluoridation is one of the best things our community can do to help prevent cavities.

The Second P - PRACTICE

Craft Powerful Messages

- Reporters produce stories – so become a good *storyteller*
- Develop personal, patient examples to bring story to life
- Use third party recognition
- Use analogies (like adding vitamin D to milk)
- Practice out loud with mirror, flipcam or people



The Third P - PERFORM

Deliver Your Messages

- Use gestures, props, graphs, tooth diagram
- Avoid jargon – cavities, not “caries”
- Use statistics sparingly
- Convey emotion, inflection
- Have a friendly face
- Maintain eye contact



The Third P - PERFORM

Effective Communications – 7 C's

- **Clear** – use simple terms, not jargon
- **Convincing** – persuade your audience
- **Correct** – don't answer if you don't know
- **Conversational** – talk as you would to a patient
- **Compassionate** – convey warmth and understanding for people
- **Credible** – you are an expert!
- **Concise** – (soundbytes are 7-10 seconds)

The Third P - PERFORM

Avoid Reporters' Traps:

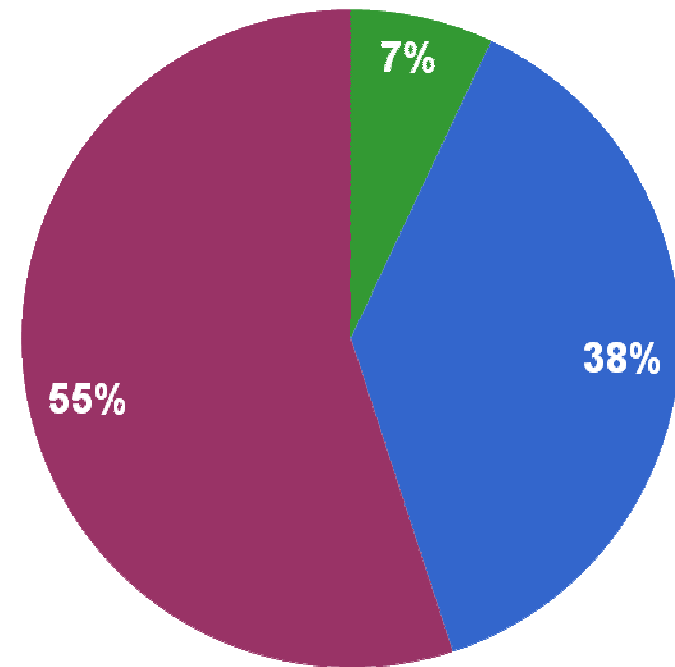
- Don't repeat the negative from a reporter's questions (remember "I am not a crook" quote?)
- Don't let reporters put words in your mouth
- Don't speak for anyone else
- Don't ever say anything "off the record."
- Always stay on message even if you think the interview is over

How Audiences Perceive Messages

HOW you say it is important

- Content – Message: 7%
- Verbal – Voice/Tone/
Rate of Speech: 38%
- Non Verbal – Body
Language: 55%

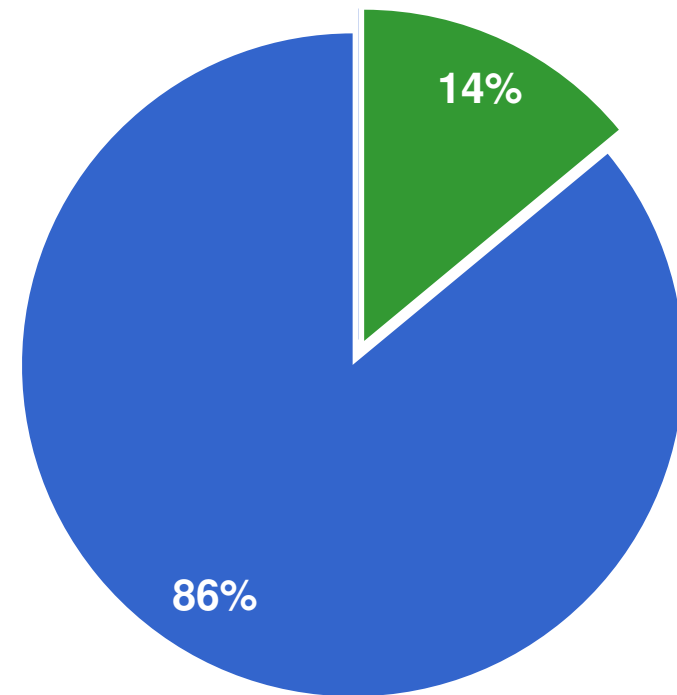
Television Interview



How Audiences Perceive Messages

- Content – Message: 14%
- Verbal – Voice/Tone/Rate of Speech: 86%
- Non Verbal – Body Language: 0%

Phone Interview



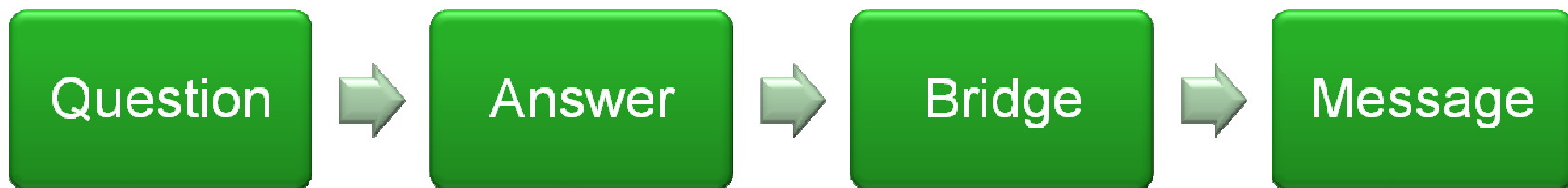
ABC's of Q & A

- A: Answer the question
- B: Bridge to your message
- C: Conclude on a positive note



Formula for a Soundbyte

How do you deliver messages?



No matter what the question is, find a way to bridge to one of your key messages

Use Bridging and Flagging

Bridging phrases move you from answer to **MESSAGE**

Some bridging phrases:

- In fact ...
- Let me put this in perspective ...
- What you need to remember is ...



Use Bridging and Flagging

Flagging Signals Reporter this is **IMPORTANT**

Examples of Flags include:

- The most important thing to is...
- The bottom line is...
- What's most exciting is...



Are You Ready for Your Close Up?

Dress and Posture Tips

Sit facing interviewer, do not use back of chair

Men:

- No “busy” ties or patterned suit coat
- Long Socks
- Avoid white dress shirt

Women:

- Solid colors (jewel tones) are best
- Watch your skirt length
- Wear makeup

The Three P's of Media Interviews

- **Prepare** – develop 3 key messages, anticipate reporter's questions and how to bridge to your messages
- **Practice** – in front of a mirror to polish non-verbal skills...gestures, use of props, etc.
- **Perform** – engage reporter; use verbal, non-verbal skills; consider dress and props for visual interviews



Mock Media Interviews