

BREAKING NEWS

Strategies for Effectively Communicating with Media

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• LIVE



Breaking News!

Session Overview / Learning Objectives

01
**TIPS FOR A GOOD
PRESENTATION
DURING MEDIA
INTERVIEWS**

02
**GETTING
“YOUR MESSAGE”
ACROSS DURING
INTERVIEWS**



03
**AVOIDING
COMMON
MISTAKES WITH
THE MEDIA**

04
**UNDERSTANDING
SOCIAL MEDIA
'IS' MEDIA**

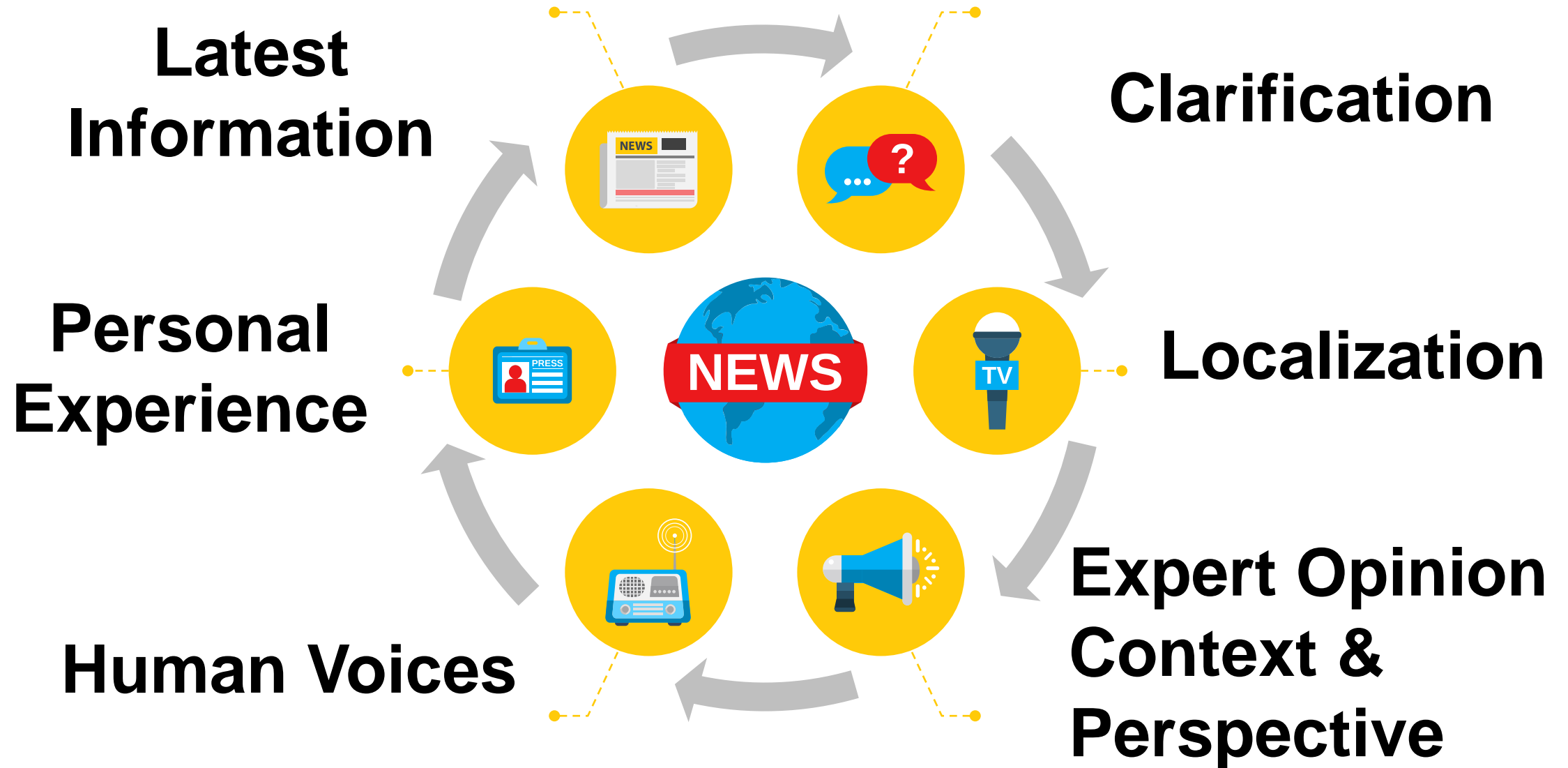
What is a media interview?

Daily News



A **media interview** is a call or meeting with a reporter or editor for print, online, radio or television news.

Purpose of Media Interviews





- **Be Concise**
- **Be Clear**
- **Be Persuasive**
- **Be Relevant**
- **Be Consistent**
- **Repeat**

Key Points for Addressing the Media



- ✓ **An interview should be a two-way conversation. Do not cut off a reporter, and make sure s/he can digest everything you have said.**
- ✓ **On or 'off' the record, be cautious of what you tell a reporter. Never say anything you would not want to see in print.**

Key Points for Addressing the Media

PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS

01

Find out the background of the interviewer.

02

Find out the interviewer's deadline.

03

Find out the context.

04

Understand your audience.

Prepare to discuss your story. Gather supporting elements.



PREPARING FOR INTERVIEWS

05

Think of clear, non-technical ways to present the information.

06

Think of short, lively talking points to present your main messages.

07

Know your message. Have key talking points but be natural. Stay concise.





- ✓ **Arrive on time.**
- ✓ **Dress the role and be aware of your body language.**
- ✓ **Project confidence. It adds to your credibility.**
- ✓ **Use clear language and avoid jargon.**
- ✓ **Speak with enthusiasm and conviction.**

BEGINNING THE INTERVIEW



✓ **Stop for a few seconds to think before continuing. Keep your speech at an even rate. Take a breather.**

(Helps with editing)

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Remaining quiet is hard to do...

Most are programmed to respond immediately – especially when adrenaline pumps! (Adrenaline is your friend...It's OK)

An immediate response can cause errors in facts, rambling, and “uhhhs” (more on this later)

IF YOU ARE ON LIVE T.V. OR RADIO.... Let the reporter finish the question before you begin to speak.



DURING THE INTERVIEW



- ✓ **Offer to be available (for example, by phone or e-mail) if additional questions arise later.**
- ✓ **Identify written materials (online or other) to provide or recommend. If possible, provide or recommend them in advance.**
- ✓ **You may ask to review your quote for accuracy, but most will not let you review the complete article.**

DURING THE INTERVIEW



- ✓ **Stay on message.** Talk about what you are prepared to talk about. Have answers prepared for the most obvious questions.
- ✓ **Breaking the ice (small talk) helps** relieves nervousness.
- ✓ **BRIDGE** Back. Even when reporters ask a question that is off course, bring the conversation back to what you are prepared to talk about.

DURING THE INTERVIEW



- ✓ **You:** “Alabama has made tremendous strides on educational achievement in the past 10 years.”
- ✓ **Reporter:** “Why is it that people say Alabama is near the bottom in assessments?”
- ✓ **You:** “People are entitled to their opinions; however, what I can tell you is that Alabama outpaced....(have a standard set of facts in mind)

DURING THE INTERVIEW

Avoid saying, “I Don’t Know”



If asked a question you do not know the answer to, BRIDGE back to what you do know.

Reporter: “How are school systems going to fix their funding problems?”

You: “That’s unclear, but what I can tell you is that many teachers are working hard to...”

If asked a question that would require you to speculate, BRIDGE back to what you do know.



Reporter: “So what’s the bottom line? Is the education budget going to pass as is ?”

(Guessing YES or NO could come back to haunt you. Instead say something like...)

You: “Although I won’t speculate, there’s broad support for the budget, and we are hopeful that we can get it passed...”



Think about what it is that you REALLY hope someone gets from your 30 seconds (if you're lucky) of comments

They should be easy to digest ideas. Remember, the story will be 90 seconds, 500 words in print, and your 'direct' quote about 18 seconds... if you're lucky!

DURING THE INTERVIEW

● LIVE

Be mindful of articulation and verbal fillers...

**Um, uhh, um... ya know... um
(Again, articulated pauses are ok)**

Body language – Speak with energy!

**You are the Representatives for a passionate
career field, let that enthusiasm show!**



YOUR PERFORMANCE

● LIVE



Eye Contact: In person, it is natural to scan the room. During interviews, your interviewer gets **ALL** your attention. Lack of eye contact comes off as nervous, evasive or defensive in interviews.

Try to keep eye -or camera- contact. Most people look away to retrieve information. Try not to do that.

YOUR PERFORMANCE

● LIVE

Gestures: Gestures actually help other people remember more of what you say.

According to body language experts Allan & Barbara Pease, “Using hand gestures grabs attention, increases the impact of communication, and helps individuals retain more of the information they are hearing.”



YOUR PERFORMANCE

For standing interviews, keep your arms by your side or, even better, in front of your torso. Avoid hugging your body in any way and resist the temptation to place your hands in your pockets.

Whether standing or sitting, lean forward – project energy!

Unless you're a naturally loud speaking person, increase your voice volume by about 20%. It'll help you feel and sound confident.

● LIVE



YOUR PERFORMANCE

● LIVE



When doing radio interviews - stand up and smile when appropriate. Of course they can't see you, but it presents itself in your tone. People tend to project with more authority if they are standing.

Evaluate yourself. Be smart and honest.

Keep and offer a high resolution picture of yourself.

YOUR PERFORMANCE



Consider what went well and what could be improved in future interviews.

Consider following up if the story has serious problems.

Consider following up if the story is especially good.

Consider contacting the reporter if you later think of possible topics for other stories.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Tell the story – otherwise someone else will tell it for you (the way they want to).

If a conversation/debate is rooted in FACT you usually have a fighting chance.

It is VERY difficult to correct misperceptions and misinformation once they are in the public arena.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Be credible – it keeps them coming back again and again.... And when they come to you, you get to tell the story.

- ✓ **Be responsive**
- ✓ **Timely response**
- ✓ **All reporter questions are legitimate**



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Anticipate trouble.

No matter how reasonable you are, there are “hot button” issues that can sidetrack your message.

YOUR JOB... watch and listen for things intended to arouse emotion and derail your message.

When angry – less is more.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Chose your words wisely.

Always treat the person interviewing you with respect – regardless of how they act.

Never use the “C” word (crazy) – it’s dismissive and reduces your credibility

**Find common ground, but stand yours...
Example: “We may disagree on _____, but we both have a desire to make sure our children receive a quality education.”**



You Have No Personal Opinion



When you are identified as a spokesperson for a company, group, or organization, there's no such thing as a personal opinion. The media will identify you as a representative of your organization. Period.

OFF THE RECORD

**NOTHING IS
EVER... EVER ...
OFF THE RECORD.**



Journalists have different interpretations of what “OFF THE RECORD” means.

- **Attribution**
- **Overruling Editors**
- **Unenforceable**

THINGS TO AVOID



01

The interview begins when you and the reporter meet and ends when one of you has left the building (avoid negative casual small talk).

02

“No Comment” is a COMMENT.

03

Don't FEAR SILENCE. When you're done, be quiet.

04

Avoid personal views on politics, religion, etc. If you comment stay objective .

DID I SAY THAT?

Being misquoted **STINKS!** Here are ways to help **AVOID** not recognizing yourself in Sunday's paper.

Give them the facts:
Frankly, most people get misquoted because they talk too much. Stick to the script.



Click, Clack, Repeat:
When doing phone interviews, listen for typing on the other end. Slow down and repeat what you just said.

(Same is true with reporters scribbling in pads)

DID I SAY THAT?

Click, Clack, Send:
When possible, especially on sensitive or complex subjects, send your response in writing. This helps with accountability and accuracy.



Don't over-rely on writing responses as you are trying to build your confidence with reporters.

**Finally...
Record it!**

BLOGGERS SOCIAL MEDIA ARE NOW MEDIA...

Social Media: Opportunity and a potential trap. More of what you say is likely to be published to their blog, which can be good...but bad if you say something you regret.

Blog/social media content is immediately on the record, searchable and permanent.

Build relationships with bloggers by keeping them posted on key developments, offering access to experts and sharing your opinions on the news of the day.



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QUESTIONS / THANK YOU!!!