Working with the Media

Motor-Grader Operator Boot Camp April 24 & 25, 2017 Bismarck, ND

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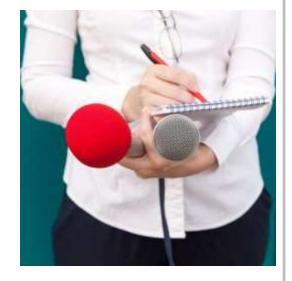
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Why bother?

Awareness and education

Advocacy and positioning

• Accountability



Awareness and education

- People need reliable information
- Programs benefit from publicity
- News can educate
- Help set the social agenda

Advocacy and positioning

- You need to be an advocate: for your county, its people and their needs.
- Strategic communication affects change helps you reach the people you care about.
- Reputation counts.

Accountability



- Public's right to know
- Impact

What is news? The compelling C's

- Crisis
- Catastrophe
- Crime
- Conflict
- Corruption

- Change
- Color (human interest)

What is news?

- Timely, immediate not history.
- Affects many people in some way.
- Innovative what we can do now that we couldn't before
- Interesting unique look at life or new angle on old story
- What journalists decide is news

Who are journalists



- Short on time.
- Friendly people who are not necessarily your friend.
- Smarter than you think.
- And less knowledgeable.

What do journalists want?

- A good story as may of the elements as they can capture.
- Good quotes.
- The feeling that they understand the issue after 20 minutes as well as you do after two years.

What do journalists want

- Your respect, not necessarily your affection
- Recognition
- You to be open and honest
- To catch you in a lie

What do reporters **really** want?



What's not news

- Most grant and award stories are not news
 although they may make your local paper
- Agency cooperation and people working together are not normally news.

What's your news?

- What's your expertise?
- Why would anyone care about this?
- Can you tie it to a newsworthy issue?

How do you get in the news?

- News releases
- Pitches
- Reporter queries
- Periodicals

How do you get in the news?

- Usually not with a press conference
- When to call a press conference?
 - Complex issue
 - Time-sensitive concerns

Get to Know the Media

Building relationships for more effective media relations

Why build relationships

- It's an exchange of value. You want part of their publication or broadcast.
- Good relationship = better communication with your ultimate audience.

Do your homework

- Watch/listen to the news and learn about special programs.
- Read the paper and identify special sections or columns you can tap.
- Learn the names of local reporters and the subjects they cover.

Who is the reporter

- Don't assume the reporters know the subject matter or background.
- There is competition for the reporter's time and attention.
- Get to know other reporters.

The first meeting

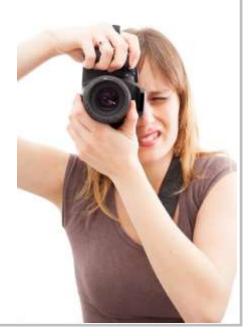
- Find out how a reporter likes to get news and tips.
- Tell reporters how you can help them.
- Bring resources.
- No agenda (story pitching) the first time.

Follow up

- The best gift: call with story tips
- Invite reporters to an event where they can make contacts or get story ideas.
- Comment on a story they've written/produced.

Products that add value

- Contacts in your county with areas of expertise.
- Fact sheets with basic background info.
- Photos or ideas for illustrating the story.



Adding value

Consider inviting the reporter to an event or demonstration that highlights new technology, equipment or management.



Professional courtesies

- Offer story ideas, rather than waiting for reporters to come to you.
- Learn the best time to call: newspapers, TV stations and radio stations differ.
- Honor exclusivity or advance notice agreements.
- Consider all remarks "on the record."

Make yourself media savvy

- Listen, read and watch.
- Find out what stories are being covered so you can offer related stories.
- When you see a story you can comment on, call to get into follow-up articles.

Different kinds of Media

- TV Magazines
- Newspaper

- Websites

Radio

Social media

How to prepare

- Prepare
- Is this controversial? What will critics say.
- Gather background for reporters.
- Think visual photos, video, graphics.

Buy some time

- It's OK to say you can't talk this minute.
- Arrange a time to call back within 15 minutes
- Use the time to prep make a list of key points, prepare background.

Your message -- know it, hone it

- You can't tell 'em everything.
- Honing a message takes discipline.
- What do you want people to know.
- If you don't know your key messages, your audience won't.

Material for this presentation was adapted from

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