



# Media Spokesperson

# Session Objectives

By end of this session participants able to :

- ❑ Understand the media and policy context
- ❑ Understand the role of a spokesperson
- ❑ Understand and explain the tactics
- ❑ Way to become a good spokesperson

# Spokesperson

A trusted spokesperson is one of the most effective tools for any organization, cause or public relations, campaign or policy advocacy. Generally speaking, people relate better to people than they do, say, to corporate missives, memos or fact sheets.





If want to be a good spokesperson, you need to be willing to tell your story and understand media members' needs.

If not, someone else will tell your story...and you may not like what they say.

# Understanding the Media

1. News as they define it \*
2. A credible news source they can trust
3. A source who responds in time to meet their deadlines
4. Answers to their questions: Not "No Comment"
5. For radio: a spokesperson who can summarize and speak in "sound bites"
6. For TV: a visual background, preferably with action
7. A quick, smooth response to questions and answers in complete sentences (Not a lot of reporter prodding required)
8. Layperson terminology that doesn't require translation
9. A contact person who really is available and accessible
10. To know when they've made a mistake and a chance to make it right

\* Discussed in day-2

# Role of a spokesperson

- ▶ Deliver presentations and keynotes
- ▶ Proactively seek media coverage
- ▶ Respond to media inquiries
- ▶ Build and maintain relationships with media and policymakers
- ▶ Lead internal and external communications



# Traits and Tactics of an Effective Spokesperson

- ▶ **Be knowledgeable and conversant**
- ▶ **Be available**
- ▶ **Have a plan**
- ▶ **Be prepared for hard questions**
- ▶ **Walk people across the bridge**
- ▶ **Be genuine**

# **tips for media spokesperson**

- ▶ **Know what you want**
- ▶ **Preparation**
- ▶ **Who, What, Where**
- ▶ **Get it right the first time**
- ▶ **Be a good spokesperson**





# Character sticks of Spokesperson

- ▶ **Knows the audience**
- ▶ **Captures attention**
- ▶ **Adjusts**
- ▶ **Speaks to the issue**
- ▶ **Stay on your issue**
- ▶ **Use Real-World examples**
- ▶ **Closes**

# An Interview

## Body Language

- ▶ Your posture, expression and approachability – speaks louder than words.
- ▶ Be natural with your hands, move them as you do in normal conversation, without putting hands in pockets, clasping them in front of you or hiding them behind you.
- ▶ Be expressive when talking, to add emphasis and to show interest/passion in your subject matter.
- ▶ Avoid tilting your head, nodding too much or touching your hair, glasses or face. This can make you appear scatterbrained or distracted.

## Verbal Cues

- Speaking intentionally will allow you to project the friendly and accessible aspects of your personality – while showing you have an honest interest in communicating your message.
- If you're nervous, you are likely to speak softer and flatter than usual. Compensate in advance by speaking with more energy and range than usual.
- Replace uh, um, ah, you know, and okays with a pause.
- Never start a statement with "Look" or "Listen" – it's always off-putting and condescending.

## Bridging

- By using bridging techniques, you can refocus or redirect the interview to what is most important, relevant and critical. If done well, bridging significantly increases the probability that your key messages will appear in the final news story. Sample bridging statements include:
  - Let me emphasize...
  - This is an important point because...
  - And the one thing that is important to remember is...
  - I can't address that, but I can say

# Build Relationships With The News Media

## Be a source

Reporters need expert sources. You're a subject matter expert and can provide a necessary component for a story even if it's not about you. Build relationships with reporters who cover your sector. By being proactive and managing your media presence, you can join the ongoing conversations about what you do

## Be available

A 24-hour news cycle, along with social media, has created an environment where people expect news instantaneously. Reporters are under more pressure than ever to get stories together quickly. It's important to remain accessible and respond to requests as soon as possible.

## Be trustworthy

When you are seen as the expert source and are accessible to reporters, you build goodwill and trust with the media. When you educate the public on an issue and are transparent with your information, you build goodwill and trust with the audience. Both can reap dividends for your cause

# THE HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SPOKESPEOPLE

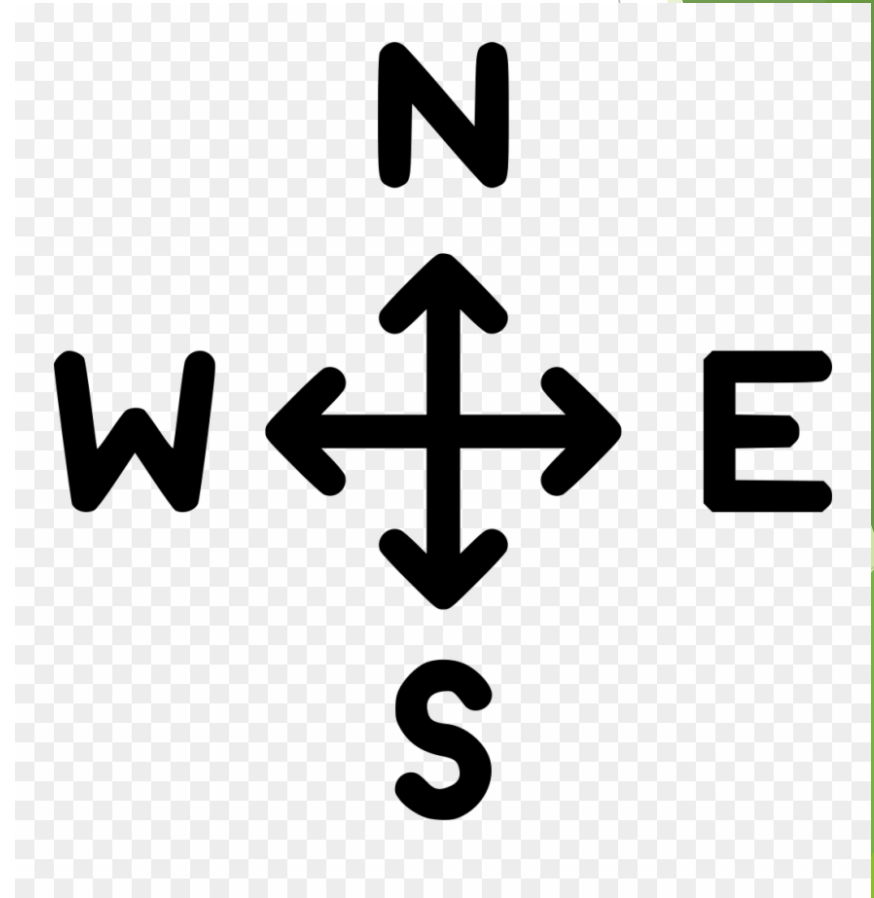


- ▶ **Be Prepared**
- ▶ **Collect the data**
- ▶ **Know Your Audience**
- ▶ **Build Rapport**
- ▶ **Speak in Sound Bites**
- ▶ **Be Yourself, Sort Of**
- ▶ **Amplify Your Message**
- ▶ **Practice, Practice, Practice!**

# Media Interview

Interview preparation can be broken down into three elements:

- ▶ **Key messages**
- ▶ **Back grounding and**
- ▶ **Practice.**



## Key Messages

- ▶ The goal of a media interview is to focus the reporter on a few key messages that are accurate, clear, concise and memorable.

### **Some helpful tips for writing key messages include:**

- ▶ Use brief, positive, active language
- ▶ Use language appropriate for your audience
- ▶ Prepare support points for each of the three key messages
- ▶ Revisit your support points as frequently as you can in the flow of the interview
- ▶ Speak from your heart

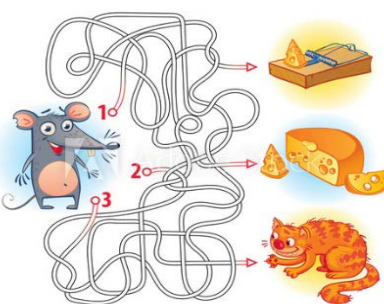


## **Back grounding**

- ▶ You live with your subject matter. Unless they specifically cover your organization, they likely will not be experts about your organization's issues, services or program. Provide concise information and emphasize and repeat key messages to a reporter. Avoid jargon, if possible, and if you must use technical terms, take the time to fully explain them.

## **Practice**

- ▶ Take time to anticipate all questions a reporter might ask – even the most strange or difficult – and prepare answers to each. Brainstorm with colleagues to decide the best way to handle potential questions and prepare responds to them.
- ▶ Practice can prevent you from being caught off guard and giving a quote you and your organization might regret. Taking time to wordsmith in advance allows you to be more relaxed during the interview. Don't worry about memorizing your responses. You'll do fine if you are knowledgeable, prepared and relaxed.

# Pivot Phrases in Action: A Guide for Family Planning Interviews

<i>Type of Question</i>	<i>You are asked:</i>	<i>You answer:</i>
 <p>The misdirect</p>	Isn't it really the parents' responsibility to make sure their teenage daughters don't get pregnant?	Ensuring that teenagers can stay in school and pursue a career is the responsibility of everyone. [Go on to your policy solution]
 <p>The abnormal example</p>	What do you say to critics who say that if Jane Smith can overcome this problem without government support, everyone should?	Jane is one example, but most women have a different experience. [Cite statistics, go on to your policy solution]
 <p>Two equally bad options</p>	Does our politicians not care enough about their constituents, or are health workers not working hard enough to get to women in need?	For us, the issue is about _____ [insert your policy solution].





The “wolf in sheep’s clothing”  
[usually phrased in a sympathetic way]

It must be very hard for you to get things done on this issue when so many religious leaders are against you. Your coalition is the only one willing to take a stand.

Actually, our coalition includes religious leaders who have spoken out about this issue, and we all feel that... [Go on to your policy solution.]



The conspiracy theory

Critics say that population control is a new form of colonialism and a western-driven agenda. Why are they telling us how many children we should have?

Our programs do not impose on the number of children one should have. Family planning is about enabling people to decide whether, when, and how many children to have.

There is evidence that when a family has the number of children they can care for, those children thrive and become successful, which has a ripple effect on economic development of a country.

Our own leaders have committed to \_\_\_\_\_  
[cite local buy-in to family planning, go on to your policy solution].

# ▶ Role Play

