

# Media Training

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Communications Officer, CUNA*

*Vicki Christner, Senior Media Relations  
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# Agenda

## Session 1

- Media guidelines and interview tactics
  - Effective media relations and outreach

## Session 2

- Mock interviews
  - Review and critique interviews

# Who We Are

**Douglas Kiker**  
*Chief Strategic  
Communications  
Officer*

- Joined CUNA in 2015 from Kekst and Company, a leading strategic, corporate, and financial communications firm
- Leads all external and internal communications functions on behalf of CUNA
- Prior career includes journalist working for CBS News' "60 Minutes," The Associated Press and Fox News Channel

**Vicki Christner**  
*Senior Media  
Relations  
Manager*

- Joined CUNA in 2014 from LMG, Inc., a boutique public affairs firm
- Leads all external communications through media relations, oversees social media and video production
- Prior experience working in Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI) office
- Proud University of Michigan alum – 'Go Blue!'

# The New Information Landscape

# Media continues to change

## ***THEN***



- Personal, 1:1
- Longer lead times
- Deadlines & “timeouts”
- Local

## ***NOW***

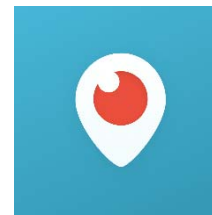


- Real time, 24/7 news
- Global reporting
- Bystanders as reporters

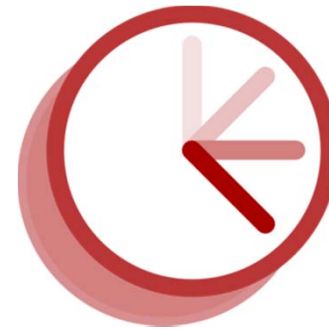
# Cluttered Information Landscape



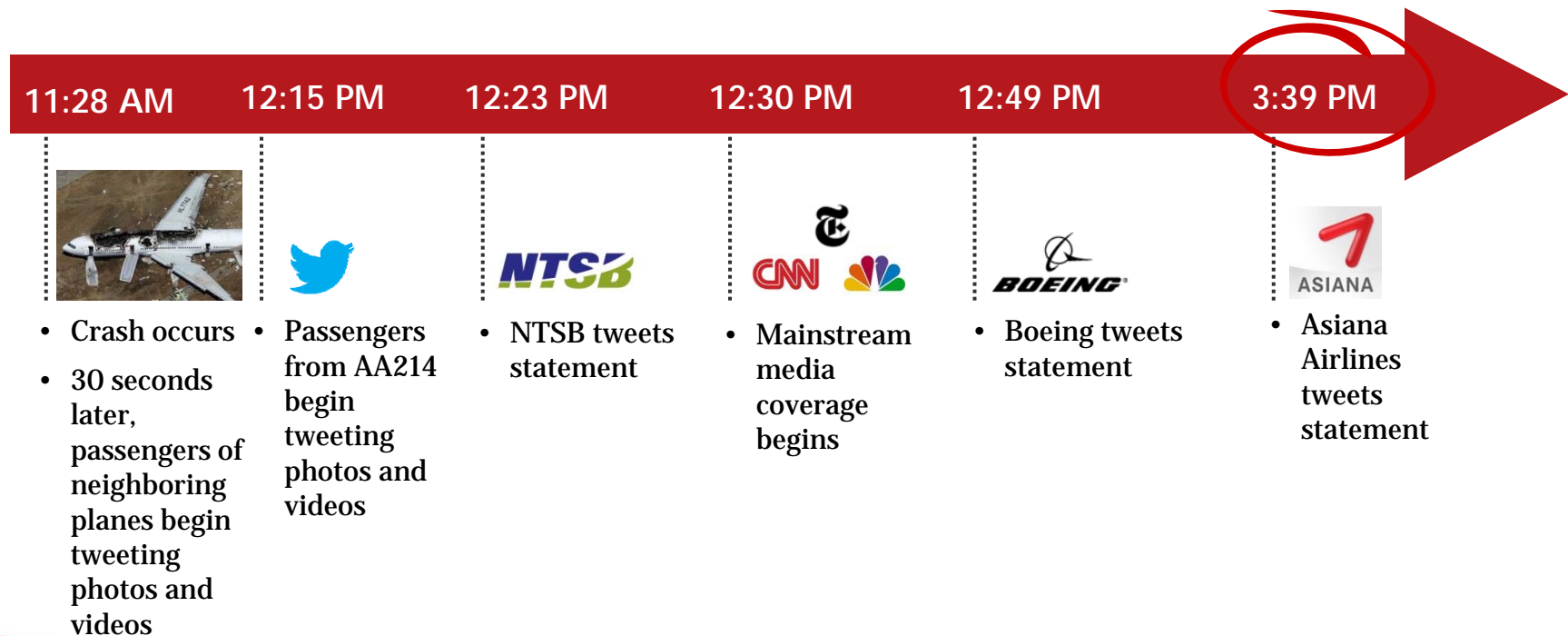
- Everyone is potentially a “journalist”
  - Recordings posted immediately
- Coverage, commentary & conversation in real time, around the clock and world
- New social channels to break news



# Speed of stories



## Asiana Airline crash at San Francisco Airport



# The Essentials



# The Essentials

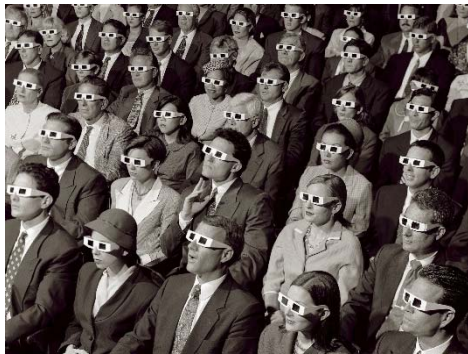
## Message is Essential



- Media interviews and presentations are **NOT CONVERSATIONS**
- **ALL** interviews have a **purpose** and a **target audience**
- Be completely comfortable with delivering an “**elevator speech**”
  - **C**oncise
  - **C**onsistent
  - **C**ompelling
- Edward Everett vs. Abraham Lincoln

# The Essentials

Make  
Audiences  
Remember



- Audiences (and reporters) don't remember much
  - 40% forgotten after 30 minutes
  - 60% forgotten after one day
  - 90% forgotten within one week
- Repetition = Retention
- Edward R. Murrow Principle
  - "Tell them what you are going to tell them ... tell them ... and tell them what you told them"
- $9 \times 1 = 0$ ; but  $3 \times 3 = 1$

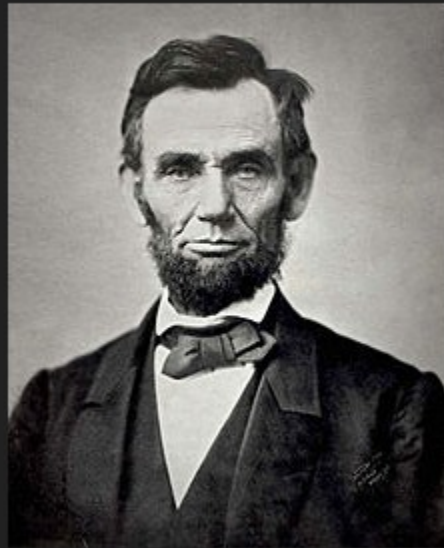
# The Essentials

## Rules of the Road



- Reporters are neither your friends nor your enemies
- You can answer “no”
- Don’t assume reporters understand subject matter as deeply as you do
- Conversely, do not assume [young] reporters are clueless
- Remember your target audience and cater to them ... Members? Leagues? Consumers? Regulators?

# The Essentials: Prepare



Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.

(Abraham Lincoln)

# Good vs. bad messages



**GOOD**



**BAD**

Clarity

Focus

Repetition

Proximity

Defensive

Complicated

Excessive

Irrelevant

# Interview Dos and Don'ts

# Interview Dos

## How to Deliver

- Be confident – you are the reporter’s source
- State your message early and get the ball rolling yourself
- When answering questions, **always lead with your conclusion**
- Think like a reporter (or his editor)
  - Headline
  - Sub-heads
  - Supporting points

# A Headline to Remember





# Interview Dos

## How to Deliver

- Use short, complete sentences
- Be thoughtful – pause before **every** answer
- Be energetic and smile during interview
- Be prepared for the “blood soaked memo” question
- Beware the “softball” question
- Always leave on high note or summary

# Why do you want to be President?



# Bridging



***“Does anyone have any questions for my answers?”***

***- Henry Kissinger***

# Interview Dos

## Bridging

- ✓ Mindset is critical  
Move from their questions to your answers  
Find “bridge”: the logical path

- ✓ A-T-M
  - Answer
  - Transition
  - Message

- ✓ Examples
  - “Not everyone who applies for a loan is perfect on paper. That is part of what makes credit unions so different from other financial institutions...”
  - “We don’t support that proposal because we addressed this issue and already have in place...”
  - “That’s incorrect. But I think it’s important for you to understand why...”

# Bridging



# Interview Dos

## How to Deliver



### Use signal phrases

- “What’s important here...”
- “I want to stress...”
- “To summarize...”

### Rule of threes

- “Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”
- “Government of the people, by the people and for the people”
- “Friends...Romans...Countrymen”

# Things to Avoid

# Don't ignore the media





# Interview Don'ts

Do **not** repeat negative or "loaded" questions /language

Do **not** accept hypothetical questions or reply with hypothetical answers

What **NOT** to do

Do **not** attempt to answer questions on behalf of other people or organizations

Do **not** comment on unfamiliar matters or allegations

# Don't try to fake an answer



## Interviewer tricks

Machine Gunner

- Rapidly fires a series of questions
  - Trap: Trying to answer all the questions
  - *Technique: Choose the question that you will answer to seize control and deliver your message*

Paraphraser

- Puts words in your mouth, tries to get you to agree to a misinterpretation or exaggeration
  - Trap: Misquoted or taken out of context
  - *Technique: Restate your message in your own words*

Pauser

- Silent when you finish, hopes you will feel obliged to fill the void
  - Trap: Misquoted or taken out of context
  - *Technique: Restate your message in your own words*

## Interviewer tricks

### Disarmer

- Lulls you into thinking reporter is your friend
  - Trap: Overconfidence and too relaxed, you can become careless and too revealing
  - *Technique: Anticipate that an interview can turn hostile or tricky at any time. Stay on message.*

### Hypothesizer

- Tries to get you to speculate
  - Trap: Your answer is taken out of context or is at odds with CU
  - *Technique: Tell the reporter it's inappropriate to speculate and bridge to positive message*

### Repeater

- Repeats questions, sometimes in various forms, hoping to get variation in answers
  - Trap: Your answers vary or get angry at perceived aggressiveness
  - *Technique: Answer consistently but at some point you can say: "I have answered, let's move on."*

# How To Pitch Stories

# Effective Pitches

- Present story wrapped in a bow to reporter
- Know the reporter
  - Reference body of work
  - Know background
- Understand readership of publication



# CUNA Regulatory Burden Study

*Leagues localize study in media*

# Credit Union Association of New Mexico

## Credit unions contest Dodd-Frank

By Steve Sinovic / Journal Staff Writer

Published: Monday, March 28th, 2016 at 12:02am

Updated: Sunday, March 27th, 2016 at 10:16pm





# The Credit Union Association of the Dakotas

Grand Forks  
**Herald**

The Bismarck  
**Tribune**  
[www.bismarcktribune.com](http://www.bismarcktribune.com)

**Minot**  
Daily News

 Rapid City  
**Journal**

# Questions & Comments?

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# Appendix: Interview Tips

# Interview Tips: On Camera



## What to wear:

- Wear what makes you comfortable
- Avoid thinly striped shirts and busy-patterned jackets; they can appear to bloom or distort on TV
- Dress appropriate to the event — no need to be overly formal, but show some personality

## Where to look:

- Always ask whether you should look directly at the camera or at the correspondent
- Live interviews typically look at the camera; for taped interviews, you will often look off camera at a producer/reporter
- Keep eye contact consistent; avoid looking around the room or at the ceiling



## Body language is very important:

- Smile—if/when appropriate—look relaxed, confident
- Don't nod your head
- Gesture, don't grip armrests

# Interview Tips: Print



- Don't mistake unusual personalities for lack of knowledge: print reporters can be quirky
- Don't sit behind a desk
- Be personable, engaging, energetic, maintain eye contact, and undistracted
- Speak in short, complete sentences... eliminate the need for the reporter to contextualize quotes, perhaps inaccurately
- Give quotable quotes that will help ensure inclusion in the finished story

# Interview Tips: Radio/Phone



- Energy level is critical
- Stand during interview
  - *Increases energy level and often results in better enunciation*
- Make polite small talk at the start
- Use the interviewer's name occasionally
- Eliminate distractions: avoid computer, desk, BlackBerry
- Ask / tell how much time you have
- Few key messages in writing fine, but no narrative notes
- Don't forget you're on-air when calling in remotely
- Don't use a speakerphone or mobile phone, if possible
- Don't fill the silence