Media Training

Douglas Kiker, Chief Strategic Communications Officer, CUNA

Vicki Christner, Senior Media Relations Manager, CUNA
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

11:28 AM
- Crash occurs

12:15 PM
- Passengers from AA214 begin tweeting photos and videos

12:23 PM
- NTSB tweets statement

12:30 PM
- Mainstream media coverage begins

12:49 PM
- Boeing tweets statement

3:39 PM
- Asiana Airlines tweets statement
The Essentials
The Essentials

- Media interviews and presentations are **NOT CONVERSATIONS**

**Message is Essential**

- **ALL** interviews have a **purpose** and a **target audience**

- Be completely comfortable with delivering an “**elevator speech**”
  - **Concise**
  - **Consistent**
  - **Compelling**

- 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 X 1 = 0; but 3 X 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**
- Clarity
- Focus
- Repetition
- Proximity

**BAD**
- 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

- 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”

How to Deliver
Things to Avoid
Don’t ignore the media
Interview Don’ts

What NOT to do

✗ Do **not** repeat negative or “loaded” questions/language

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

✗ 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
- 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

- 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

- 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
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The Credit Union Association of the Dakotas
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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