

BUILDING A BRIDGE TO COMMUNICATION

59th Annual Traffic and Safety Conference

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Columbia, Missouri

Overview

- ▣ Approaching the Media
- ▣ When the Media Approaches You
- ▣ Deadlines
- ▣ Interviews and Soundbites
- ▣ Examples
- ▣ Building Relationships

Approaching the Media

- ▣ Contacting the Correct People
 - Assignment Editor is typically the point person
 - Update contact information annually
- ▣ Timing Counts
 - Send press releases two weeks in advance, if possible
 - Send press releases via e-mail and fax
 - Editorial meetings are typically held in the morning and early afternoon
- ▣ The Information We Need
 - 5W's & H
 - Who will be available for comment?
 - Who and/or what does this impact?

When the Media Approaches You

- ▣ Ensure We Know Who to Contact
- ▣ Be Flexible
 - Have options on when you're available to interview
 - Have another person who can act as a spokesperson
- ▣ Talk About the Story
- ▣ Television is an Audio-visual Medium
- ▣ Bring Supplemental Information
- ▣ Bring Business Cards

Deadlines

- ▣ Deadlines Vary
- ▣ Story Process
 - Assignments given in editorial meeting
 - Interviews set up
 - Shooting
 - Writing
 - Editing
- ▣ Breaking Stories
 - Contact Person at the Scene=Availability
 - Mini Press Conferences=Everyone on the Same Page

Interviews and Soundbites

- ▣ Take a Deep Breath!
- ▣ Don't Look at the Camera
- ▣ How Much is Too Much?
 - Soundbites usually don't exceed 15 seconds
 - DO Provide Clarifying Details
 - Information for the Masses, Keep It Simple
 - Trust Your Gut
- ▣ It IS Okay to Correct a Reporter
- ▣ It IS Okay to Correct Yourself
- ▣ Bring Notes, Just Don't Read Them

Examples

- ▣ Question and Answer:
 - Q: What factors into bridge ratings in Missouri?
 - Too Much Detail: “We typically inspect the deck, superstructure, and substructure, we also look at scour ratings to determine the wear and tear.”
 - Better Soundbite: “We look at what drivers see first, the top of the bridge and the driving surface, but we also look at the supports, and the underbelly of a bridge to tell which areas are seeing the most wear and tear.”
- ▣ Bridge Investigation Story

Building Relationships

- ▣ Keep In Touch
- ▣ Be Politely Persistent
- ▣ Have A Good Understanding of the Media's Role
- ▣ Business Cards
- ▣ KMIZ/KQFX
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