

NFIB Media Webinar: Driving the Story



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Review: The Background for Media Coverage



Understand the Reporter's Situation

- Must get a story, and get it first
- Wants to include key points of view
- Uses controversy to heighten the drama
- Frequently is not an expert



Two Ways to Get Media Coverage

1) Make news

- Do or say something significant

2) Exploit news

- Comment on what's in the news
- Show an unnoticed side of the story
- Represent a key stakeholder group

Prepare for the Interview



Focus on Your Audience

- Who does the media outlet reach?
- Make sure they will understand
- The reporter is not “the audience”



Know the Story You Want to Tell

- Focus on three key messages
 - Easy to grasp, easy to remember
- Back up with numbers
- Illustrate with examples, analogies, personal stories
- Be brief, be quotable

Tell your story!

Focus on **3 key messages**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Giving the Interview



Don't Just Answer Questions – Tell Your Story!

- Use the Basic Techniques
 - Bridging
 - Flagging
 - Front-load the messages

The Process in a Nutshell

- Listen to the question
- Answer or address
- Bridge or Flag to a key message point

Things to Remember



- Don't repeat negative language
- Turn negatives into positives: Bridge
- Avoid professional jargon
 - If it's not understandable, it's not reportable
- If you don't know, say so
- Don't argue or debate: You can't win

Television Interviews



Key Issues for TV

- Viewers believe what they see before what they hear
- Medium is intimate and personal
- People don't watch very closely
- Time is highly compressed

Body Language Is Critical

- Sit or stand comfortably erect
- When sitting, lean slightly toward the reporter
- Make steady eye contact
- Feet on floor, or legs crossed
- Gesture to show involvement



Be Yourself: Natural, Conversational

- Talk as if to a friend
- Have a comfortable conversation
- Be friendly, be enthusiastic
- Don't speculate: Stick to what you know

Use Your Voice Effectively

- Sitting up straight keeps the air flowing
- Breathe naturally
- Keep the neck and throat relaxed
- Use vocal variety



Bridge to Messages Quickly

- Front-loading critical
- Help the reporter
- Live TV: 30 – 40 seconds per answer
- Edited TV: 12 – 15 second “sound bites”

A Word About Social Media

- Traditional outlets accounted for 80% of all linked items on blogs
 - About 1/3 on Twitter
- Vast majority of links went to straight reporting
 - 85% on Twitter
 - 83% on blogs
- Source: Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism

NFIB Quick Tips for Successful Media Interviews

Don't just answer questions – tell your small business story!

Understand the *reporter's* situation

- Must get story **fast** & get it **first**
- Include key points of view
- Controversy — negatives make news
- Often not an expert in your industry

Pick *how* you'll get media coverage

1. **Make news:** do or say something significant
or
2. **Exploit news:** offer commentary, new side to story or represent a key stakeholder group

Focus on your *audience*

- Who does the media outlet reach?
- Make sure they will understand
- Remember, the reporter is not the audience

Answer questions this way

- **Listen** to the question
- **Answer** or address
- **Bridge** or flag to a key message

Return to your key messages

- **Bridging:** tie back to 1 of your 3 points
- **Flagging:** the real issue here is..., What's important here is...
- **Front-load messages:** get your points in early

Do's & Don'ts

- **Don't repeat negative** language
- Turn negatives **into positives:** bridge
- **Avoid industry jargon**
- **If you don't know, say so**
- **Don't argue** or debate: you can't win

Tell your story!

Focus on **3 key messages**

- ✓ Back up with *numbers*
- ✓ Illustrate with *examples*, analogies, personal stories
- ✓ Be brief & *quotable*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Questions & Answers



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Thank you

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