

MEDIA TRAINING

MANUAL



LIVE WIRE
STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

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GROUP SESSION

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A photograph of three business professionals in an office setting. A man with glasses and a grey suit stands in the background, smiling. In the foreground, a woman with blonde hair in a light blue shirt and a man with dark curly hair in a dark blue suit are looking at a tablet. The man is pointing at the screen. A white coffee cup is on the table. A semi-transparent grey diagonal band runs across the image, containing the text 'GROUP SESSION' in white, italicized, sans-serif font.

GROUP SESSION

01 AN EVOLVING MEDIA LANDSCAPE

The media landscape has evolved drastically over the years and the demand for up-to-the-minute news is more important than ever.

With access to more distribution channels than previously imaginable and a 24/7 news cycle driven by AI, algorithms, and influencers, news is now connected to every aspect of our daily lives.

These factors create significant challenges for reporters, who are required to compete against social media personalities for a reader's attention on multiple platforms.

As a result, they often cannot dedicate significant time and resources to research and detail. That is why it is imperative for you to deliver your messaging in clear, concise soundbites. The more complicated or unfocused your message is, the greater the likelihood a busy reporter will disregard or mis-represent what you are trying to say, or a video clip will be edited and appear online without your full explanation. To ensure your message doesn't get drowned out or manipulated, you must figure out how to leverage today's media landscape.





How Do You Fit in Today's Media Landscape?

Defining your role in today's media landscape is the essential first step in developing your message.

Do you want to move the needle on an existing narrative? Or are you working to kill a story that could be potentially harmful? These are the types of questions you need to answer to determine the role your messaging will play in the media.





Recognizing Reporters' Needs

In today's world of rapid-fire news cycles, the needs of reporters are drastically different than in previous eras. By learning to recognize a reporter's needs, you can establish yourself as a valuable source and increase the chances you will become one of the reporter's preferred contacts.

- Respond quickly to requests for interviews – always assume that a reporter is reaching out to multiple sources simultaneously and you are competing for a spot in a story – a fast “no” is better for maintaining a relationship with a reporter than saying “yes” long after a deadline passes.
- To help accommodate a reporter, be flexible about where, how, and when an interview can take place.
- Be mindful of the reporter's time – unless it's an in-depth feature, it's likely the reporter will want to schedule and conduct the interview quickly.
- Follow-up on the interview by providing background information on your company or organization and on the topic covered in the interview – this helps ensure that the reporter will get the story right.

Different Types of Interviews

Understanding the context for your engagement with a reporter is a critical first step for a successful interview. Typically, reporters will request interviews for one of three reasons:

- **Feature:** The reporter is responding to a proactive pitch you or your company/organization has distributed with the goal of having the reporter publish a feature story centered around your project, initiative, or announcement.
- **Expert Source:** The reporter is working on a story about a trending news topic and thinks that your expertise or insights could be featured alongside other experts in the piece.
- **Reactive/Crisis:** The reporter is conducting an investigation related to you or your company/organization, and is providing you with an opportunity to respond to their findings.

	FEATURE	EXPERT SOURCE	REACTIVE/CRISIS
CONSIDERATION	■ What is FUBO (First, Unique, Best, Only) about you/your message? ■ Who is the reporter's audience? What about your story is going to resonate best with that audience?	■ What unique perspective can you bring to the story? Is there an angle or insight that is unique to you? What makes you the best source on this topic? ■ At the end of most interviews, a reporter will ask "Is there anything else you want to add?" This is your opportunity to be proactive and share your message with the reporter – come prepared.	■ Respond as quickly as possible. Avoiding media inquiries will not make a problem go away and will be perceived with suspicion. ■ Engage with the reporter as much as possible before the interview to get a sense of what information they already have and the angle they are taking with their story. ■ Listen to the reporter's questions, but don't accept their narrative. Identify opportunities to bridge and pivot to positive or constructive messaging.
MESSAGE OBJECTIVE	■ Actively trying to push your narrative or shape the story. This is your opportunity to "mold the ball of clay".	■ Providing clear, concise responses to the reporter's questions to maximize the likelihood that your quotes will be prominently featured in the final piece. ■ Showcasing your knowledge and expertise on a specific topic. Establishing yourself as a thought leader in the media landscape.	■ Come prepared with facts to actively address a controversy or problem in a manner that either ends the discussion or prevents the situation from worsening.