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# Crafting Your Advocacy Message for the Media

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and

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# Advocacy

-  The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal
-  The act of taking the problems that one faces day to day and pursuing their resolution outside their usual place of presentation
-  Advocacy seeks to change upstream factors
  - laws, regulations, policies, and institutional practices



# Media Advocacy

 Disseminating  
advocacy relevant  
information through the  
media

 Print

 Online

 Radio

 Television

 Aims

 Affect action

 Increase awareness

 Change or affect  
policy decisions

 Provide a different  
perspective

 Highlight issues and  
solutions






# Types of Planned Media Advocacy

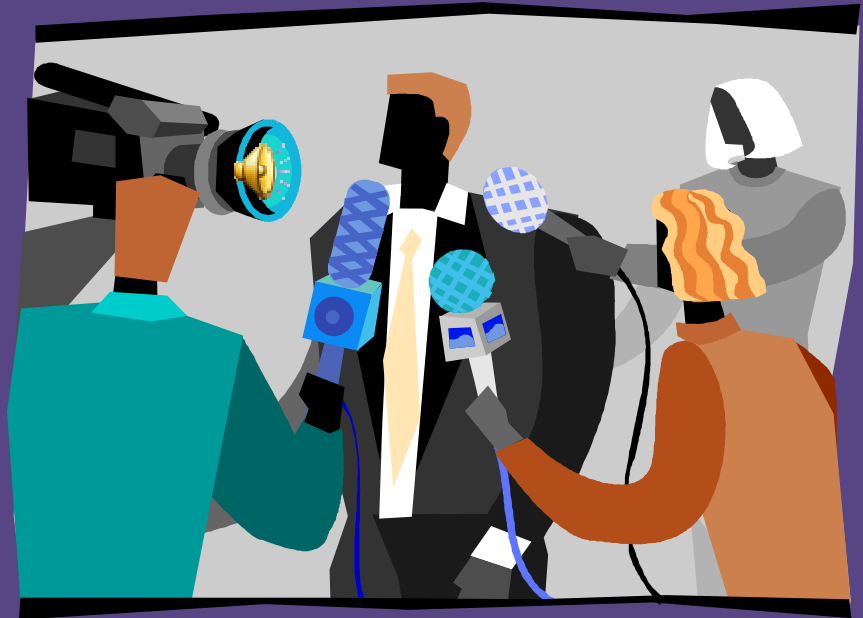
-  Press Releases
-  Letters to the Editor
-  Commentaries
-  Opinion pieces
-  Interviews
-  Email blasts
-  Web postings





# Types of Unplanned Media Advocacy

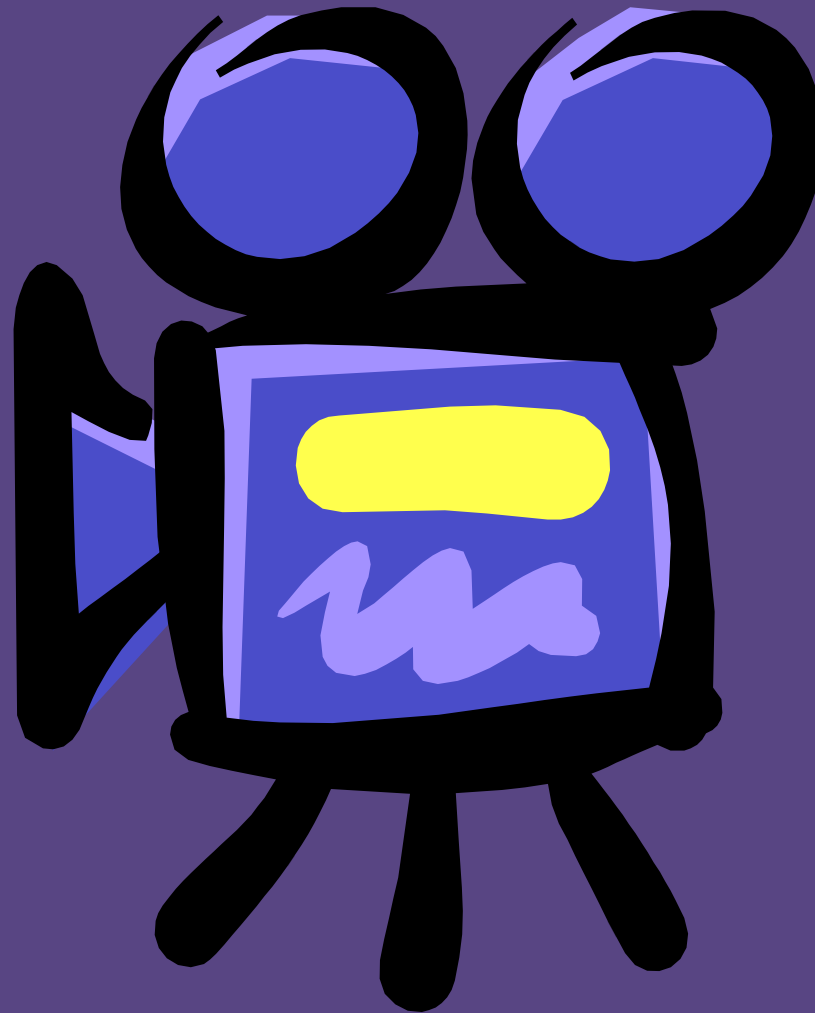
-  Commentating on a breaking story
-  Providing expert information
-  Being asked to give a statement











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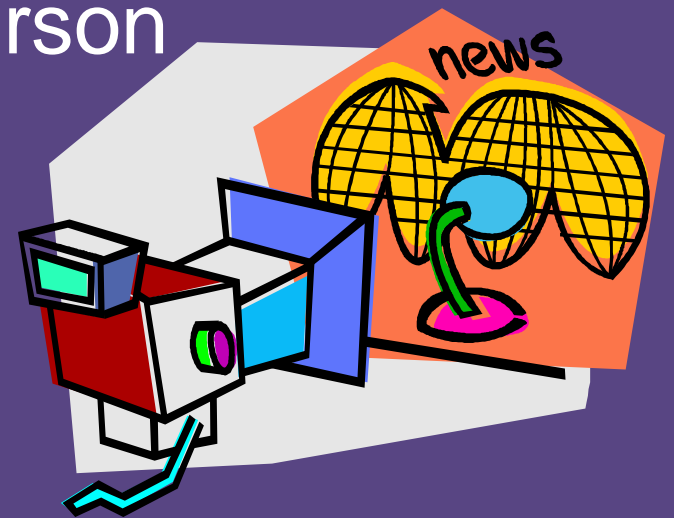
# You Can Be an Advocacy Star





# Media Advocacy Steps


-  Make sure your issue is newsworthy
-  Choose the right venue
-  Frame your message
-  Create media material
-  Prepare the media spokesperson
-  Engage the media












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# Newsworthy

 Follow current events to determine what the community and news agencies are interested in

 Ask yourself






-  Does my issue seem relevant to the community?
-  Do I have a hook?
-  Can I put a human face on my issue?
-  Who and how many people are impacted?
-  How does my issue relate to current events?
-  What is new and interesting about my issue?
-  Is there conflict, intrigue or opposition to my issue?



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# The Right Venue



-  The message
-  Your resources
-  Experience
-  Comfort
-  Target audience



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# Framing Your Message





- 🚼 First, know how the media has been framing your issue
- 🚼 Then, identify how you can shed new light on the issue
- 🚼 Offer solutions
- 🚼 Use sound bites
  - 🐻 Short and catchy
  - 🐻 1-2 sentences
  - 🐻 Gets the point across
  - 🐻 Helps identify the most important point





# Create Media Materials

## The Press Packet

-  The issue
-  The perspective
-  The solution
-  Your organization

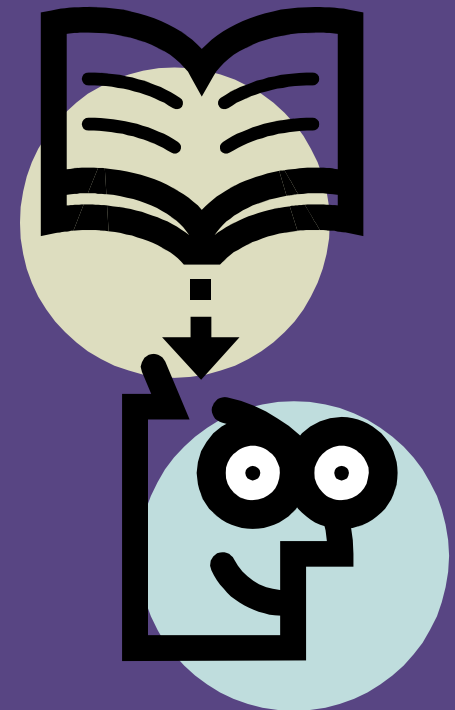


## Fact Sheets

## Business cards

## Photos and bios

## Important research





# The Right Person for the Job



The spokesperson needs to



Be well versed in the content



Know the sound bites and important points



Cool under pressure



Be able to highlight the community connection



Speak clearly



Be able to handle questions under pressure



Be skilled at reframing









Utilize people's strengths



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# Engage the Media

-  Don't wait for the media to contact you
-  Establish a relationship with your institution's media representative
-  Make the first contact
-  Have information in hand to pass along
-  Offer to comment on current issues
-  Offer a different or unique perspective to the one that dominates in the media



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# Maintain Your Media Relationship

## Follow up

 Send a thank you note

 Business cards

 Fact Sheets

 Offer your services for the future

 Pass along relevant information to your media contact

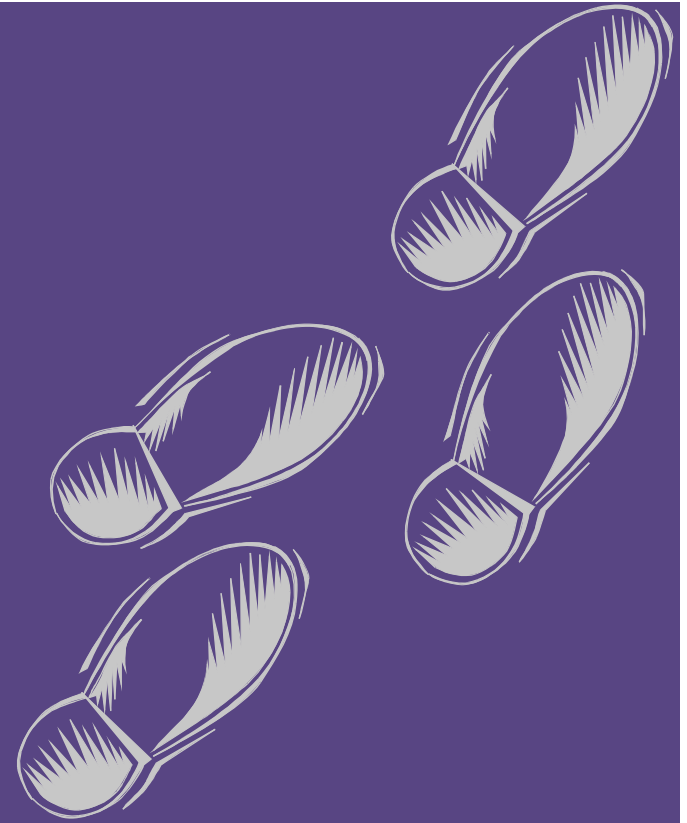
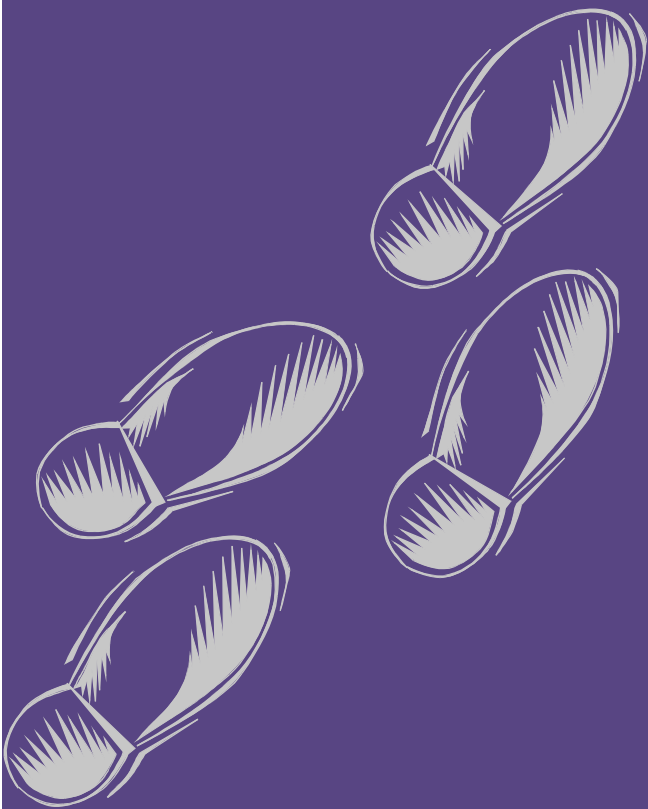
 Be seen as the expert





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# Media Advocacy





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# Media Advocacy Venues

 Press Release

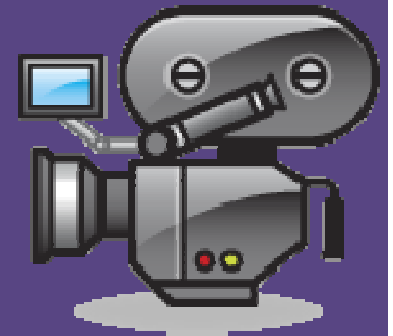
 Letter to the Editor

 Opinion Piece

 Commentary

 Interview –print, radio, television

 Internet and e-mail





# Press Releases

 Gives reporters and editors the basics of who, what, where, when and why

 Standard format

 Organization's name

 Contact information

 Release date

 Headline

 Body

-  First paragraph should be the most powerful

-  Use quotes






-  Keep it simple

-  Use a tag at the end



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# Letter to the Editor

-  Simple and effective
-  Keep it short –within the typical length (250-300 words) of what the paper published to keep it from getting tossed or slashed
-  Refer to other articles in the paper
-  Be concise
-  Give contact information










# Opinion Piece

-  For the opinion editorial page of paper
  -  Op-ed
-  Opportunity to provide an extended argument or rationale
-  Need to be timely, topical and focused for the readership
-  Obtain the paper's guidelines
  -  Usually 700-800 words
-  Meet with the editor
  -  Be ready to sell your issue and yourself







# Commentary

-  Written commentary for journals is usually requested/solicited
  -  Opportunity to take the readership past the results presented in the study
  -  Can frame the issue and highlight the importance of certain aspects of the research
  -  Format dictated by the journal
-  Shorter commentaries can take the form of a letter to the editor










# Interviews

-  Familiarize your local options – morning and evening news shows, talk shows, local papers and radio stations
-  Make the first contact to the host or producer
-  Prepare for live versus taped interviews and find out if there will be call in questions or whether you will get the questions in advance
-  Prepare prepare prepare



# Keys to a Good Interview



-  Assume that everything is on the record
-  Speak in a clear and audible tone
-  Don't get defensive
-  Be concise
-  Avoid jargon
-  State your main points first
-  Reiterate the important points





# Keys to a Good Interview





## Dress the part

-  Avoid solid black or white and/or loud or striped clothing
-  Consider wearing a lab coat if that is what you wear to work

## Look at the interviewer

-  Don't stare into the camera unless instructed to do so

## Avoid excess body movements

-  Sit upright
-  Use facial expressions
-  Limit hand movements
-  Don't rock or wiggle



# The Internet

## Email

-  List-serves

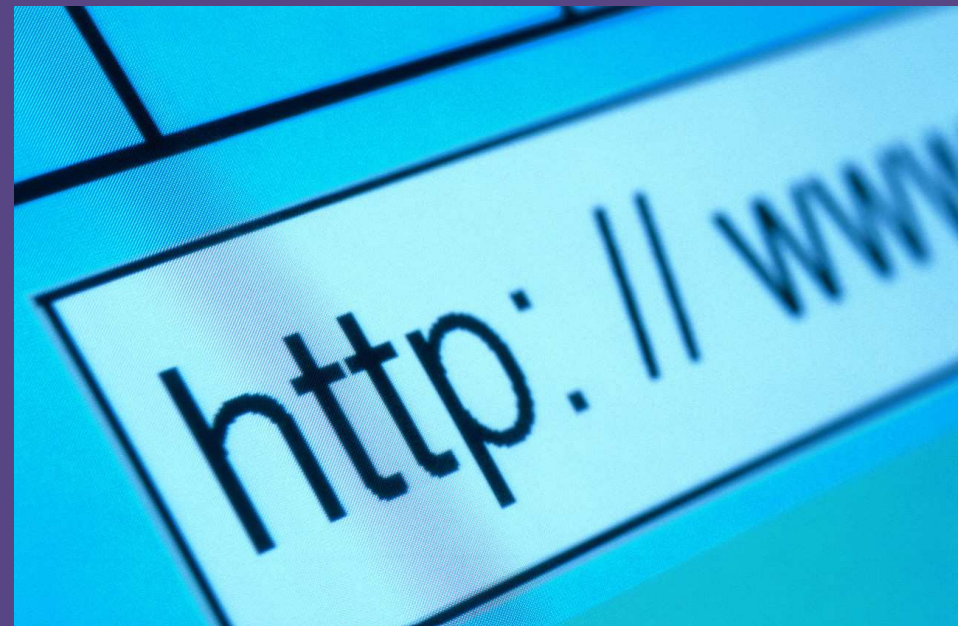
-  Information on email signature

## A vast frontier

-  Blogs

-  Online news agencies

-  Fast and breaking news





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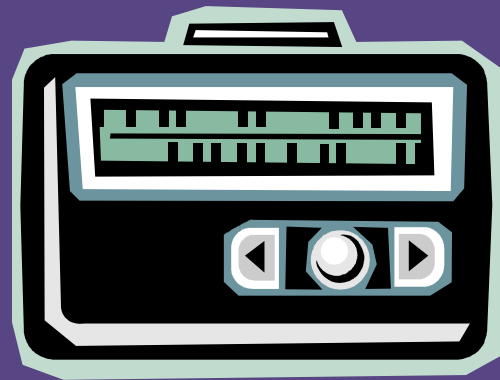
*“If you don’t exist in  
the media, for all  
practical purposes,  
you don’t exist.”*

Daniel Schorr

National Public Radio



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