



It is always a risk to  
speak to the press:  
they are likely to report  
what you say." ~ Hubert  
Humphrey U.S. Vice President  
(1965-1969)

# Media Spokesperson Training

May 2022

# Tools of The Trade

- Press Releases
- Press Advisories
- Backgrounders
- Op-Ed
- Letters to the Editor
- Press Conferences
- Photography and Video
- Television
- Radio

# Types of Messages

1. **The Fact/Result:** Spells out the link between a fact and its implication
2. **The Problem/Solution:** Message describes the problem then provides a solution
3. **Advocacy or Call to Action:** Provides audience with a specific call to action
4. **Benefits:** Focuses on selling points

## Preparing for a Media Interview

- Do your research!
  - Ask about the interview
  - Live or pre-recorded
  - Who else will be interviewed
  - What is the story about
  - What topics will the reporter likely discuss
- Media outlets are tools, the means through which you address your public.
- It is the responsibility of the media to extract as much information as they can.
- Not your job to educate the media—just deliver your message.

## Preparing for a Media Interview

- Develop Your Message: Media interviews are not the time to “wing it”
  - Know your audience (\*hint, it’s not the media)
  - Define your goal
  - Identify your main points (\*3 maximum)
    - BLUF: Bottom Line Up Front
  - Use evidence and emotion
  - Practice, refine, practice, refine, practice refine

## Gettysburg Address:

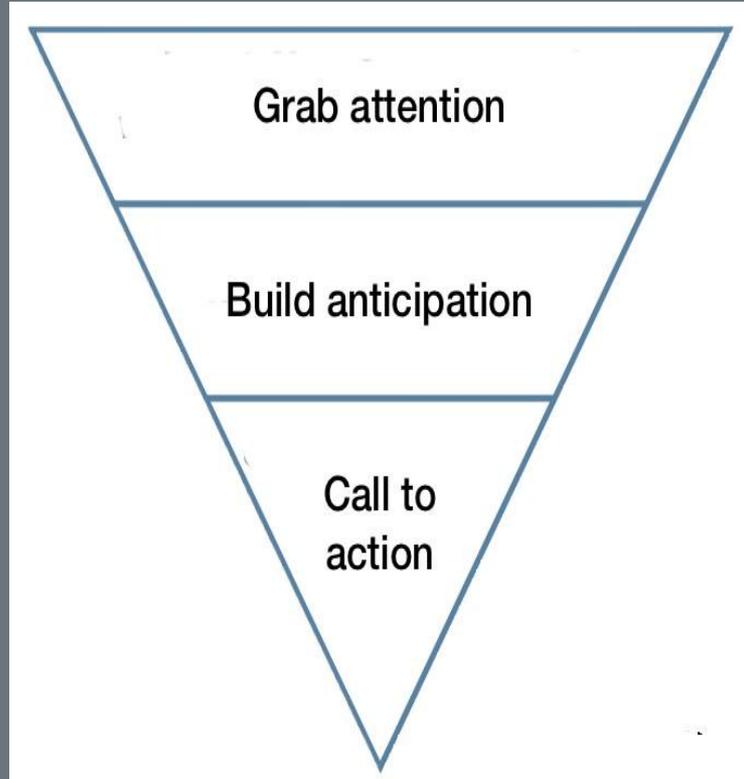
**272 Words**

**2 minutes to deliver**

**“The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do.” Thomas Jefferson**

## Preparing for a Media Interview

- Practice:
  - Don't feel rushed
  - Remain relaxed and friendly
  - Listen to the question
  - Pausing
  - Speaking slowly and deliberately
  - Refocusing the conversation to the message you want to deliver



## Practice Techniques for a Media Interview

- **Pivot & Bridge:** Use when faced with surprise or difficult Qs during media interviews, or when the interview has gotten off topic
- **Pause:** Pausing helps you listen to yourself. Pausing also helps slow down your pace of speech and aids in finding exactly the right words. As a result, they use fewer filler words like um's and ah's.
- **Blocking:** Used during an interview when a reporter asks a question the spokesperson can't or won't answer.
- **Flagging:** signals to the reporter that what the spokesperson is about to say is important.

### □ **Pivot & Bridge:**

- "I feel the important thing we need to focus on is..."
- "Thanks for bringing that up; however, it's also important to emphasize..."

### □ **Pause:**

- Stop speaking once you have answered the question so your message is not lost.
- *Pause and breathe* before and after your main points, and you will frame them up for the audience.

### □ **Block:**

- "I can't answer that, but what I can tell you is..."

### □ **Flagging:**

- "It's important to remember..."

## What is Lobbying

- All lobbying is advocacy, but not all advocacy is lobbying.
- Lobbying indicates an opinion about specific legislative change (e.g., particular changes to specific laws).
- Government funding is strictly prohibited from being used for lobbying
- Lobbying is always allowed as a private citizen. Governmental employees, board and council members should be cautious about using resources (e.g., paid time, grant funded travel) to lobby while in their professional capacity.



# Advocacy vs. Lobbying: What is the Difference?

Is the Work Supporting a Position & Referencing Specific Existing Legislation?

No



## General Advocacy

- Sharing best practices and success stories, including model legislation
- Making available nonpartisan analysis, study or research
- Examining or discussing broad, social, economic and similar problems
- Updating an organization's members on the status of legislation, without a call to action
- Providing comments or research on administrative/agency rules or regulations
- Providing technical assistance or public advice to legislative body in response to a written request (e.g., hearings)

Yes



## Lobbying

- Attempting to influence specific legislation
- Advocating for the adoption or rejection of legislation
- Writing lobbying materials that support a position or specific recommendation
- Preparing arguments in support of your position
- Contacting legislative staff in support or opposition to specific
- Urging the public to contact legislative staff in support or opposition to specific legislation (i.e., grassroots lobbying)

**The DWS Communications Team  
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questions or help you need.**

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