

# Workshop Handout

## Getting the Word Out: Promoting your Organization

**Thursday, May 24, 2007**

6:30 PM - 9:00 PM

4415 NE 87th Ave. at Sandy Blvd.

Central NE Neighbors, Community Meeting Room

Trainer:

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[www.portlandonline.com/oni](http://www.portlandonline.com/oni)

# Getting Started: Is Your Organization Ready with a Communication Strategy?

## **STEP ONE: Securing Organizational Commitment**

- ❑ Set aside time at a board meeting to discuss.
- ❑ Be clear about what your communication goals and messages are for the year or specific timeframe for a specific campaign.
- ❑ Once the leadership is in support, identify a lead board member to set up an ad-hoc or ongoing communication committee to recommend a plan.
- ❑ Work with your District Coalition. Some are developing coalition-wide strategies.

## **Step TWO: Forming a Communications Committee**

- ❑ Recruit several people to be part of a team effort. If only one person volunteers that's telling you you're not setting realistic expectations.
- ❑ Write simple volunteer job descriptions for editors, web masters, distribution coordinators, etc. Have committee members agree to realistic expectations based upon skill level of volunteers.
- ❑ Delegate tasks, don't overburden one person. Avoid burnout.
- ❑ Set timelines to get material in, do follow-up calls and emails to remind committee members of their commitments.

## **Step THREE: Knowing who your audience is**

- ❑ Consider an informal survey of active members, How do you like to receive information?
- ❑ Review existing data to better understand your community, membership or audience, for example: census data, membership lists, interview long-time members or residents.

## **Step FOUR: Establishing a communications strategy**

- ❑ Develop a simple written communications plan and review with your board or leadership. Agreement is important so everyone is on message and keeping on budget.
- ❑ Questions to consider:
  - What information do you want to get out?
  - Who are you trying to reach, your audience?

- Is this to support internal communication to your existing membership or is it about reaching out to new audiences and non-active members?
  - Do your expectations match the volunteer skills and capacities?
  - What is the best media/format to fit your needs? (phone trees, fliers, newsletters, door-to-door fliers, email, websites, paid or free media, etc.)
  - What resources do we have to invest in lists, software or hardware?
  - How will your info be distributed - print, electronically, by foot person-to-person?
  - What is the commitment from your group's leadership/board?
- Set regularly recurring but realistic schedules for sending info out. People like consistency.

### **Step Five: Know what your resources are**

- Establish realistic goals for how many bells and whistles to create. If resources are limited pursue one strategy, i.e. setting up an email list serve, and do it well.
- Consider investing upfront in design software or mailing systems if you know what you want, for example:
  - Internet Service Provider accounts that meet your needs
  - Content Management Systems for websites
  - Email lists subscriptions managers like Constant Contact
  - Database software like E-base or Access
  - Carrier route lists for postal mailings
  - Budget for photocopying or printing fliers and newsletters

# **Developing a low-cost communication strategy that fits your organization**

The sky's the limit when it comes to publicizing your group, event, or issue. Be creative! The ideas you come up with may make the difference in the success of your organization.

There are many ways to reach people. Here are only a few ideas.

- Fliers distributed door-to-door
- Survey via mail, phone, or Door-to-door
- Telephone tree with membership, neighbors, friends
- Websites
- Blogs
- Newsgroups, newsforums
- Email list serves, subscription services
- Organizational newsletter
- Monthly community newspapers
- Free (earned) media via TV or radio
- Cable TV – public community stations
- Schools, churches, club newsletters
- Fliers, bulletins, notices, pamphlets, posters
- Tabling booths at special events, neighborhood fairs and festivals
- Speakers bureau to give presentations to community groups
- Lawn signs
- Letters to the editors
- Opinion editorials

# **Communication Policies for Neighborhood Association**

Minimum communication policies have been developed by citizen committee in the Standards for Neighborhood Associations. They apply to every neighborhood association for their print and electronic media. Violations may result in a district office refusing to pay for the printing and mailing of your newsletter as well as de-recognition of the association by the City.

Info at: <http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/index.cfm?c=40257>

The following policies apply to District Coalitions and Neighborhood Association sanctioned communications including print and electronic media:

1. Neighborhood Associations and District Coalitions are responsible for the content of their respective communications.
2. All positions taken or recommendations voted on are matters of record and may be reported in newsletters or reflected in official communications.
3. Neighborhood Associations shall not take positions in support of or opposition to any political candidate or party. They may take positions on ballot measures and referendums.
4. Neither City supplied funds nor shall private funds be used for communications in support of or in opposition to any political candidate. City supplied funds may not be used for communications in support or in opposition to ballot measures or referendum. Private funds, however, may be utilized regarding ballot measures and referendums.
5. Communications presenting personal opinions of a citizen must be identified as such and the name of the author must be included.
6. Communications should not include statements that could be considered libelous or defamatory.
7. A copy of each District Coalition or Neighborhood Association newsletter should be on file at the respective District Coalition. Neighborhood Associations not affiliated with a District Coalition should file a copy of each newsletter with the Office of Neighborhood Involvement.
8. Mailing and membership lists are the property of the Neighborhood Association and are not subject to public records requests.

# Canvassing Person-to-Person

## Definitions, Advantages and Disadvantages

**Canvassing :** The act of going from door-to-door in a given area to create direct person-to-person contact for a given purpose.

**Phone bank :** The act of phoning to create direct person to person contact for a given purpose.

**Literature Drop:** The act of leaving literature at properties in a given area to inform a given group of people.

### Advantages to canvassing:

- ❑ Most personal contact.
- ❑ Answers specific questions.
- ❑ Easy to be very area-specific.
- ❑ Creates articulate and invested advocates deep in the community.
- ❑ Most effective response rate.
- ❑ Can really target a population.

### Disadvantages to canvassing:

- ❑ Some people/cultures find invasive.
- ❑ Not appropriate if trying to reach some populations (e.g. Property owners of rentals)
- ❑ Sometimes a conversation is not needed.
- ❑ Time consuming.

### Tips for canvassing:

- ❑ Best to organize volunteers to canvass on pre-established date and time (Saturdays best)
- ❑ Make reminder calls 1-3 days before.
- ❑ Have check-in at beginning and end to fire up the team, review safety, and give out maps.
- ❑ Provide walking lists, maps of neighborhood with streets outlined in yellow for volunteer to cover.

# Tree Committee Canvass Timeline

<u>May</u> <u>1<sup>st</sup></u> <u>15<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>June</u> <u>1<sup>st</sup></u> <u>15<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>July</u> <u>1<sup>st</sup></u> <u>15<sup>th</sup></u>	<u>Aug</u> <u>1<sup>st</sup></u> <u>15<sup>th</sup></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Strategize</li><li>♦ Design flyers</li><li>♦ Newsletter art. Needing vols.</li><li>♦ Gather names for volunteers<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Scout neighborhood</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Recruit Volunteers (throughout month)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Print Flyers</li><li>♦ Reminder call for training</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Training</li><li>♦ Newsletter announcing trees.</li><li>♦ Reminder/ check- in<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Deadline for canvass</li><li>♦ Recruit for cleanup</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>♦ Clean up.</li></ul>

## **Example Rap: Downspout Disconnection**

While this is an example from a City program, it shows the core components of a persuasive door-to-door canvas. And it's been an incredibly effective strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** Hi, I'm \_\_\_\_\_. I'm from the City of Portland. I'm out here in the neighborhood to encourage homeowners to participate in a City project called the Downspout Disconnection Program. You should have received information about the program in the mail.

**THE PROBLEM:** Every year Billions of gallons of raw sewage mixes with rainwater and overflows into the Willamette. When runoff from your roof drains into Portland's combined sewer system it contributes to the problem. A 1,500 sq/ft house contributes as much as 22,000 gallons of rain water every year.

**THE SOLUTION:** Disconnecting your downspouts significantly reduces the combined sewage that goes into the rivers. The City will disconnect your downspouts for free!

**URGENCY:** 35,000 homes are already disconnected, removing over 650 million gallons of water from the combined sewer. But it is important for you to join in now, because nearly every time that it rains, combined sewer overflows still threaten the health and beauty of our rivers.

**THE ASK:** Would you like to sign-up?

### **Points to remember about the rap:**

- You don't have to memorize the rap word-for-word. Remember the outline: the Problem, the Solution and Urgency, using the words that you are comfortable with.
- Keep your rap short. Think of the rap as an introduction to a conversation rather than a speech. The purpose of the rap is to introduce the concept and convey urgency to act on your issue. As soon as you finish this introduction it opens the conversation up for the resident to ask questions that are most pressing to them.
- Relax and remember to have fun. You're building community.



# **Safety and Security Issues for Canvassing**

## **Personal safety of canvassers:**

- ❑ Do not enter private homes. Going inside removes an individual's ability to escape. Residents could also claim that something was stolen, putting the organization and volunteer in an awkward position.
- ❑ Canvass in pairs, or across the street from one another. If not possible, set canvassers in areas right next to each other. Ensure that people know where others are canvassing.
- ❑ Give canvassers an emergency number to call. Ensure that the emergency number is staffed while canvassers are out. If possible supply cell phones.
- ❑ Advise canvassers that, if followed, to go to a house and call the police or ask the emergency contact to pick them up.
- ❑ Tell canvassers to skip a home if they don't feel safe going to it for whatever reason.
- ❑ Have canvassers check in at a specific time after finished. This lets them debrief and flags your attention if they don't return.
- ❑ If you are picking up and dropping off canvassers make sure that meeting sites are well lit, busy corners. Make sure that pick up times are arranged in such a way that no one is standing in one place alone. Be on time to pick them up.
- ❑ Tell canvassers not to escalate if a person tries to argue with them.
- ❑ If a person becomes agitated about a topic, use a calm voice and neutral language.
- ❑ If a person displays drunken or drug-related behavior shorten your conversation and remove yourself from the site.

## **Dogs:**

- ❑ Balance the importance of sharing the following tips with volunteers without instilling unnecessary fears. Uncontrolled fear is dangerous when dealing with dogs.
- ❑ Rattle all cages, whistle or shout and look for signs of a dog before entering a property.
- ❑ Do not stick hands through a fence to test whether a dog is friendly. Rather talk to the dog in a friendly voice.
- ❑ If you are petting a seemingly friendly dog, pet below the chin, not on top of the head.
- ❑ Don't enter a yard with a loose dog or a sign that says "Beware of Dog".
- ❑ Don't blindly trust the owner's belief that the dog is friendly.
- ❑ Middle and high school volunteers tend to run out into the street if they are afraid of a barking dog. This puts them at risk of being hit by a car. Let

- them know that they are safer if they grab a hold of each other. Dogs will rarely attack multiple people.
- ❑ If you come onto a barking dog when you are already on the porch or walkway do not turn around. Back off of the property and away from the area. Do not let the dog see your back. Turn away only when the dog has stopped pursuing you and you are at a good distance from the dog even if you are well down the driveway. Dogs will usually stop pursuing as soon as they feel you are not on what they consider their domain. Some dog's domains are larger than others.
  - ❑ Give an approaching dog firm commands. "No." "Sit." "Stay."
  - ❑ Don't panic. Uncontrolled fear feeds the dog's fear.
  - ❑ Use a clipboard to the forehead of a pouncing dog with a firm "down" or "no".
  - ❑ The City of Portland has a policy of **not** letting City employees carry mace when visiting private property. You may want to discuss the pro's and con's to such a policy for your organization
  - ❑ If the dog does bite and break skin have the injury attended to by a professional.

### **Safety of Community you are visiting**

- ❑ Screen volunteers.
- ❑ Make sure that all canvassers have good identification and literature that proves they are from your organization. Consider making ID even if it just says, "Volunteer" and shows your Logo and a phone number. Picture ID's for ongoing projects are even better.
- ❑ Groups larger than pairs are not suggested, because residents can feel overwhelmed.
- ❑ It is against Federal law to place anything in a mailbox. Tell canvassers alternative places to hang flyers (such as the door handle or in the screen.)
- ❑ The walkway to the front door is an area where strangers can walk without permission of the resident. All other property is trespassing.
- ❑ Use open friendly body language. Keep arms in an open gesture. Don't move toward a person quickly.
- ❑ Don't open a screen door to knock on the door.

# **Newsletters**

Newsletters are a great way for communicating with your neighbors, but because of the expense, as well as the time and energy it takes to produce a newsletter, not all neighborhood associations choose to publish newsletters each month.

Currently there are several different types of neighborhood newsletters produced throughout the City. When launching your own newsletter, check out assorted existing newsletters to see what style best meets your own needs. Assistance in producing newsletters is available through your district office.

Some options include:

- Quarterly or annual newsletter
- Flyers
- Column in a neighborhood newspaper
- Column in a district newsletter
- Private donations to support monthly newsletter
- Once-a-year occupant newsletter
- Hand distribution

## **Budgets for printing and mailing**

Each District office has a budget specifically earmarked for printing and mailing neighborhood association newsletters and flyers. Since funds for neighborhood communications are limited, check with your district office to determine exactly what kind of support services and funds are available. Then make a plan for your neighborhood's newsletter production schedule. District coalition Boards are responsible for setting their own policies regarding newsletter funding and publication.

## **Advertising**

Some neighborhood associations supplement their newsletter budget by providing space for neighborhood business advertisements. This sponsorship can be an important resource for your newsletter, but the association may also be responsible for paying taxes on this income. Your district office staff can provide guidance if you are considering adding advertising to your newsletter.

- ❑ Set a goal for percentage of production costs to be met by advertising
- ❑ Solicit active members who own a business
- ❑ Network with local business associations
- ❑ Create a marketing flier highlighting quantity of residences you'll reach and frequency
- ❑ Be aware of 501(c)3 rules on advertising

## **Production**

Producing a newsletter requires a team effort. Editors who try to do it all become quickly discouraged because of the amount of work involved.

One good system is to have an editor (coordinator) and one or more persons to help gather news. A production team to put the paper together and get it ready for mailing might also be helpful.

The following ideas may make your newsletter easier to produce:

- ❑ Beats: Decide on areas of interest and who will cover them.
- ❑ These issues should be covered regularly: Meeting agendas and minutes from last meeting. Important issues (projects of interest to your neighborhood association), especially land use or other issues which affect your entire neighborhood.
- ❑ Lighter news, features, volunteer recognition, businesses and neighbors.
- ❑ Events and meetings; (what happened, upcoming events). It's important to provide adequate notice of meetings and topics under consideration.
- ❑ Networking news from other organizations in your area or other neighborhood associations.
- ❑ List of board members and contact information.
- ❑ Simple map showing boundary of neighborhood association.
- ❑ When preparing the copy for the printer, use a good word processor and printer. If one is not available, call your district office for access to computers for use in producing newsletters.

## **Deadline**

Establish a deadline and keep to it! To find the appropriate deadline or day, count backwards from the day when you want the newsletter in people's homes:

- Subtract one or two days to edit and prepare the copy for the printer.
- Subtract three to five days for production, printing and preparing (labeling, sorting by zip code, and delivering it to the post office).
- Subtract at least ten days for the post office to deliver.
- A good rule of thumb is to set a deadline at least three weeks before you want it to be delivered. This allows time for things to go wrong.

# **Flyers**

For many activities a simple flyer announcing the activity, location, date and time is sufficient. Flyers are often the backbone of neighborhood association communications. They are the least expensive, the simplest to create and require no ongoing time commitment from neighborhood volunteers. Flyers are often used in conjunction with other forms of publicity.

## **Visual graphics**

Nice artwork or graphics is a plus for a flyer. But in a pinch or if your group lacks artistic expertise, don't fret. A simple flyer with the correct information will suffice.

A simple trick for nice flyers is to cut out artwork that you find from other sources and paste it onto your flyer. (Be careful not to reproduce art that has been copyrighted). You can do this with a photocopier, or with desktop publishing clip art. There are also lots of clip art books that have page after page of pictures and designs for this purpose. Your district office may have these books or disks of art for your use.

## **When writing a flyer include:**

- Name of organization
- Event you are announcing
- Date
- Time
- Location
- Phone number for contact person. If someone wants to get involved at a later date or simply wants more information, there should be a number to call.

## **Distribution methods for print media**

Some neighborhood associations publish one newsletter or flier each month, others publish quarterly (four per year), or even less infrequently. Each district office varies in its policy regarding assistance with newsletter printing and distribution. Check with your district office.

Three options for distributing newsletters or flyers are listed below:

### **Hand Delivery**

This is the quickest and may be most effective. It can be done up to the day of a meeting, but should be completed in time to let people plan to attend. Since it is not necessary to have a complete mailing list, hand delivery can get to the greatest number of residents in a neighborhood association area.

Hand delivery can be done in a variety of ways:

- ❑ Deliver to homes, door-to-door. It is illegal to put them in mailboxes. Leave them in the door instead.
- ❑ Deliver through local schools. Check first with the principal to see if they can be sent home with the students.
- ❑ Deliver through churches, etc.
- ❑ Leave stacks of newsletters at neighborhood stores.
- ❑ Develop a system of distribution utilizing a block leader networking system, such as Neighborhood Watch networks.
- ❑ Use a business which delivers door-to-door. This is usually less expensive than postage.

### **Mailing Lists**

To qualify for bulk, nonprofit mail permit rates, the neighborhood association needs at least 200 addresses. In addition to neighborhood residents, you can include local organizations, churches, schools, businesses, City officials, and the media on your list. It is essential to periodically update the mailing list to ensure that those on it are still residing at the address you have.

Note: Each neighborhood association is responsible for keeping their mailing lists updated. You can save postage money by eliminating duplication and by not sending information to people who are no longer living in the area. Your district office can assist with keeping a database of your mailing list. A great free database software is E-Base at <http://www.ebase.org/>

## **Occupant Mailings (Carrier Routes)**

An occupant mailing goes to everyone in the neighborhood is called a carrier route mailing. They are expensive but effective. Some coalitions have purchased carrier routes. Carrier routes do not necessarily match up with neighborhood association boundaries. Where they do this can be a very effective method for reaching all households perhaps once a year. For those associations with circuitous boundaries, this may not be a wise strategy.

In order to be effective, a newsletter must get to people's homes before meetings. Using the special bulk mail rate, the post office requires up to ten days for delivery. Factor this amount of time into the lead time required for notifying residents about upcoming events. Contact your district coalition for information about bulk mail rates, regulations and procedures.

## **Typical places to post in public**

Brainstorm with your group where are communal gathering spots in your neighborhood or business district. Identify and create a list of locations with community announcement boards or window postings with permission. Mark up a map with a distribution route. Recruit volunteer(s) to distribute on regular basis. Great opportunity for high school students.

- Businesses (locally owned more likely)
  - Coffeeshops and bakeries
  - Grocery stores
  - Video and music stores
  - Restaurants and taverns
  - Bike repair stores
  - Large corporation offices
  
- Community Centers
- Libraries
- Elementary and High Schools (PTA boards)
- Community Colleges and Universities
- Park or public square kiosks
- Hospitals and clinics
- Churches and temples
- Community Development Corp. offices (CDC's)
- Senior or group home housing
- Large apartment complexes



# **INFLUENCING THE NEWS:** **AN 11-STEP PROCESS**

1. IDENTIFY YOUR GOALS
2. PLAN FOR YOUR MEDIA
3. DEFINE YOUR NEWS
4. FRAME ISSUE
5. FORM KEY MESSAGES
6. TRAIN SPOKESPERSONS
7. IDENTIFY AND PITCH REPORTERS
8. HOST MEDIA BRIEFINGS
9. STAGE MEDIA EVENTS
10. DROP OP EDS AND LETTER
11. SPIN!

*From Robert Bray, SPIN Project, [www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)*

# **FRAMING A STORY**

**Frame:** How stories are made, what pieces of info are selected and organized to produce stories; how an issue is defined.

- Who are the good guys and bad guys?
- What is your point of view?
- Signifier of importance: which of the day's many events will get covered?

## **Frame The News:**

- What is the issue?
- What is your objective?
- Who is responsible?
- What is the solution?
- Who is the audience?
- What symbols carry the frame:
  - Metaphors
  - Visual images
  - Historical examples
  - Soundbites

# KEY MESSAGES

An effective message includes:

1.                    **PROBLEM:**        The situation you want to change. You want to turn vague problem statements into clearly defined issues.
2.                    **SOLUTION:**        A clearly defined issue and reasonable action step targeted at the person or constituency who can resolve the problem.
3.    **CALL TO ACTION:**    What do you want your audience to do.

Other things to keep in mind:

- Condense your issue into two or three strategic key messages.
- Messages capture action, advocacy, political or cultural positions.
- Repeat the messages over and over.
- Respond to reporter's questions with key messages.
- Use messages to maintain control and direct the interview.
- Discipline the message, stay "on message"
- Many messengers, on message

*Adapted from Robert Bray, SPIN Project, [www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)*

## **BEING A BETTER SPOKESPERSON**

- Remember: you have something important to say and people must listen. Build up your self-confidence.
- Image is 90% of the game. Appear poised, in command. Take a deep breath and ground yourself; try to relax.
- Have key messages in your mind before the interview.
- Don't be thrown off by the question; "discipline" the message.
- Turn the question around back to the messages.
- Don't try to explain everything: stay on your key messages.
- If you goof, that's OK. Ask the reporter to go again (unless it's live).
- Don't worry, the movement will not collapse if you mess up your soundbite!

*Adapted from Robert Bray, SPIN Project, [www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)*

# **PRESS PLAN**

*Make your press plan reasonable and do-able!*

## **The basic components of a press plan are:**

- Define messages and “frame”
- Train spokes persons (“Talking Points”)
- Produce press kit, other materials
- Update list of reporters
- Schedule and stage media events
- Write and release media advisory conduct media briefings  
write and place opinion
- Editorials
- Submit letters to the editor
- Book appearances on radio/TV talk shows
- Follow-up/track media coverage

*from Robert Bray, SPIN Project, [www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)*

## **MEDIA DO'S AND DON'TS**

- ❑ NEVER LIE TO A REPORTER
- ❑ RESPECT REPORTER'S PROFESSIONALISM
- ❑ NEVER WING IT
- ❑ DON'T PRESUME REPORTER KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT
- ❑ DO SPEAK IN SOUND BITES
- ❑ ALWAYS RETURN REPORTER'S CALLS
- ❑ MEET REPORTER'S DEADLINES
- ❑ ALWAYS APPEAR MORE REASONABLE THAN YOUR OPPONENTS
- ❑ THREE IS A TREND
- ❑ IF IT BLEEDS IT LEADS; CRIES IT FLIES
- ❑ VISUALIZE A STORY FOR TELEVISION
- ❑ PERSONALIZE STORES
- ❑ THINK STRATEGICALLY
- ❑ DO'T ANSWER REPORTER'S QUESTIONS, RESPOND TO REPORTER'S QUESTIONS

*From Robert Bray, SPIN Project, [www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)*

# **IDENTIFYING NEWS:** **WHAT MAKES GOOD COPY?**

## **News must be “New”**

- ❑ New announcement (bigger, better, faster)
- ❑ Localize national story
- ❑ Dramatic human interest
- ❑ Controversy
- ❑ Fresh angle on old story
- ❑ Milestone
- ❑ Calendar hook
- ❑ Profiles and personnel
- ❑ Special event
- ❑ Respond and react
- ❑ Celebrity

*From Robert Bray, SPIN Project, [www.spinproject.org](http://www.spinproject.org)*

## **THE PITCH TO THE MEDIA**

Pitching you news or event to reporters, editors or producers is imperative for getting good coverage. Don't just fax and mail them the media advisory, call and pitch them!

- ❑ Target your reporter
- ❑ Be timely, not obnoxious
- ❑ Be friendly, sensitive
- ❑ Reference prior work of reporter
- ❑ Express enthusiasm
- ❑ Who, What, Where, When, Why
- ❑ Hooks galore
- ❑ Answer questions
- ❑ Have one or two back-up pitches
- ❑ Close the deal

## **PRESS RELEASES, MEDIA ADVISORIES**

- ❑ Who, what, where, when, why
- ❑ Catchy headline
- ❑ Contact name and number
- ❑ Punchy direct lead
- ❑ "Hook" at beginning
- ❑ Short sentences, paragraphs
- ❑ No manifestos, no jargon
- ❑ Correct dates, no typos
- ❑ "For Immediate Release" or "Embargoed"
- ❑ List of speaker at event
- ❑ Sound bite quote (press releases)

Sending out the media advisory:

- ❑ 10 days out by mail
- ❑ 3-4 days out by fax (don't forget daybooks)
- ❑ 1-2 days out by phone



## **PRESS KIT**

- Right Pocket: Press release, statement(s), report/research, fact sheet on issue, bio of speakers.
- Left Pocket: Statements of support, press clips, fact sheet on organization, photo.

## **PRESS CONFERENCES /MEDIA EVENTS**

- Hold only when you have news
- Timing (mid-morning, mid-week)
- Competing events happening?
- Duration: Between 15-45 minutes
- Location: appropriate, convenient, A./V compatible, directions
- Check on press kit distribution
- Speakers Line Up:
- Limit to 3-4 people
- 5 minutes max each
- Moderator, expert, testifiers
- Diversity
- Decorate tastefully and appropriately
- Hold questions to the end
- Spin and Schmooze
- Aggressive follow-up (courier press kit)

## **LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

- ❑ Short and concise (150-200 words)
- ❑ Three short paragraphs, three lines per paragraph, max
- ❑ Respond to specific issue/reference
- ❑ Personalize it!
- ❑ Name, Date and location
- ❑ Sent to Letter Editor
- ❑ Follow-up

## **OPINION EDITORIALS**

- ❑ More personal
- ❑ Concise (500-800 words)
- ❑ First person, second person
- ❑ State specific point of view clearly
- ❑ Timely
- ❑ Send with cover letter and /or pitch before
- ❑ Target editorial page editor

## **RADIO/TV TALK SHOW INTERVIEWS**

- All heat, no light
- Be prepared
- Be yourself,, poised, comfortable and confident
- Be brief
- Use humor, sincerity, harm
- Be enthusiastic
- Personalize
- Respond, don't react
- Focus on key messages

## **SIMLE, YOU'RE ON CAMERA!**

- Wear grays, blues and browns, not black or white, with pastel shades for shirts/bloused; No patterns, plaids, florals, checks, stripes or dots. No big jewelry, buttons, slogans
- Use make-up if necessary
- Natural hand gestures that don't distract
- Every "blink," "uh" "twitch" is magnified
- Relax, ground yourself, breathe
- If you make a mistake, stop and start over
- Add personal inflection
- Don't look at camera, look at reporter
- Don't be distracted by reporter, crew
- Don't repeat question in your answer
- Respond with key messages/sound bites

- Remember: Audience is target, not reporter

## **WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS:**

### **MOVING THE MEDIA**

- Organize letters to the editor campaign
- Organize informational picket
- Write op-ed pieces
- Provide ongoing documentation
- Publish your study