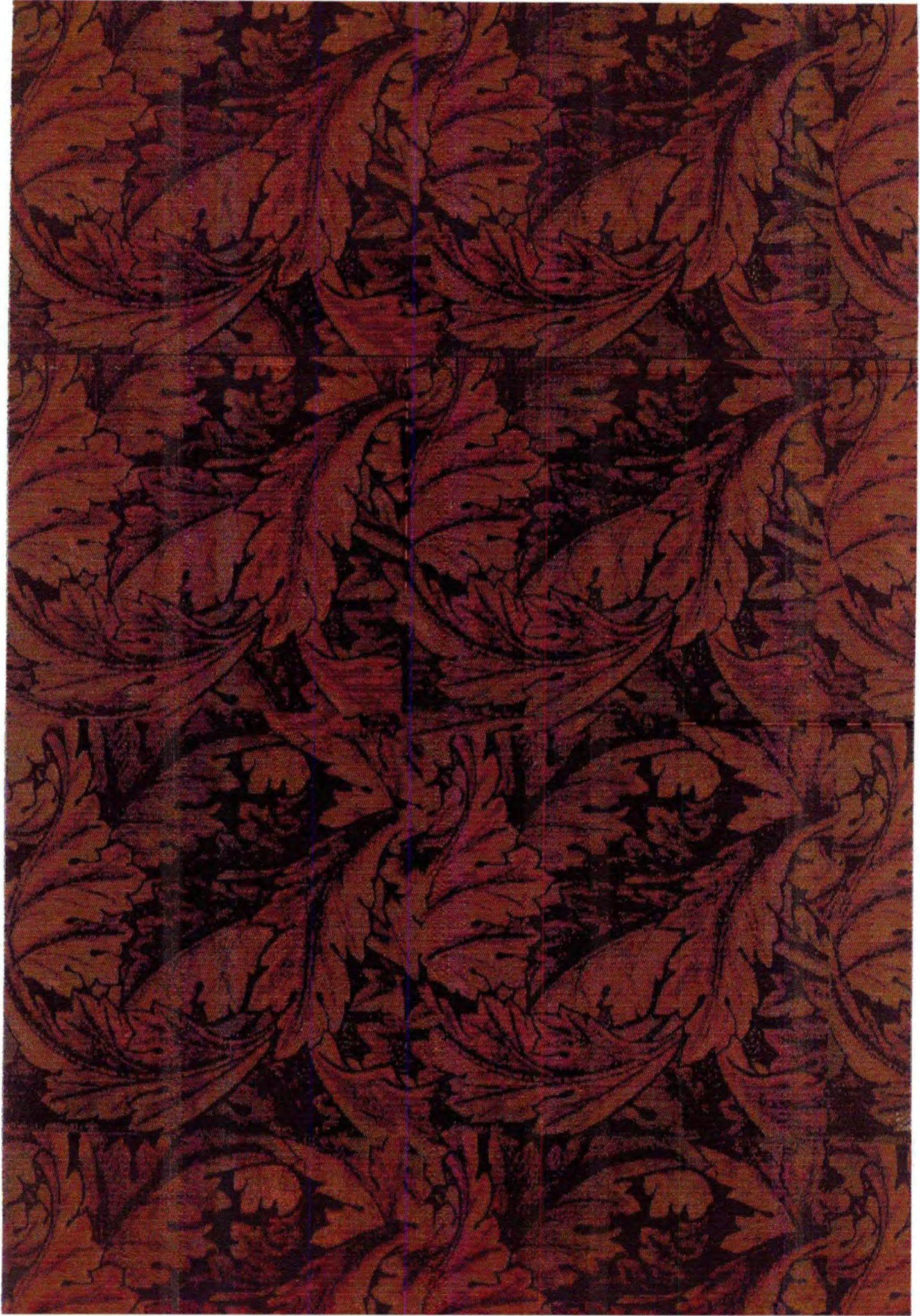


LM DRAFT 2/3/95

FOREWORD FOR USIA MEDIA GUIDEBOOK FOR WOMEN

Freedom and progress are not borne of silence. This guidebook represents an unprecedented effort by the United States Information Agency to help women around the world tell their stories and share their experiences with audiences far beyond their own borders. Only by making their voices heard, advocating their causes, and expressing their opinions can women become full participants in society. This guidebook will be an invaluable resource in encouraging women throughout the world to have a greater say in the matters that most affect their lives.



PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

Jan 25, 1995

Dear Melanne,

I think most of the guidebook is self explanatory. However, I think it might be helpful for Mrs. Clinton to know that the book was produced at the direction of Dr. Duffey in an effort to encourage the USIA Public Affairs Officers at 140 Posts to identify women's organizations or individuals who were working to make a difference in their own cultures. The guidebook is presently being translated into french, spanish, arabic, portuguese, and chinese, but we expect that once distributed, worldwide, it will be translated into other languages as well.

The next step will be to have USIA Public Affairs Officers, throughout the world, identify at least one person at each Post who will be responsible for the training.

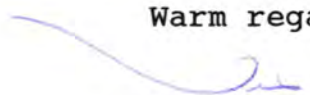
This has been an especially exciting project since the book has been an Agency wide cooperative effort. In addition, this is a continuing process. For example each Post has been asked to add culturally relevant anecdotes and examples and to look for new opportunities and resources.

What we would like in the forward Mrs. Clinton will author is her view of why it is important for women to find a public voice. (Or anything else she wants to do.)

In order to make this effort as useful as possible we want to distribute it to the Posts as soon as we can.

Thanks for all your help.

Warm regards,


Iris Burnett

*MV/ Please to be asked -
ability of this*

*Help women tell their stories
and advocate their causes*

FINDING
YOUR
PUBLIC
VOICE

*A
Media
Guidebook
for
Women*

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Finding Your Public Voice

A MEDIA GUIDEBOOK FOR WOMEN

United States Information Agency
1995

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INTRODUCTION

This guidebook, although intended primarily for women who have not had experience in working with the media, is designed for anyone who wants to become more familiar and skilled in dealing with the media. It can be used by women living in small rural communities as well as by those living in larger metropolitan areas. Because we hope it will be used in many different cultures, we encourage you to adapt the contents to the needs of the people with whom you are working. By adding specific examples and concrete experiences, you can greatly enhance the usefulness of this handbook.

There is nothing mysterious about working with the media. In fact, you probably already know everything you need to know to educate the media about your issue or organization. This book is primarily about how to help you develop the skills you already possess.

To develop these skills takes time and effort. It takes courage to stand in front of a large group of people or before a television camera. Everyone, for example, is nervous before giving an interview or delivering a speech. One objective of this handbook is to enable you to give a meaningful interview or deliver an inspiring speech; in short, to get the recognition in media for your cause. We cannot let either nervousness or inexperience prevent us from speaking. Women's voices should be heard.

One of the most precious, hard-won freedoms is the freedom to speak and express our opinions in public. Among the voices now being heard in societies around the world are the voices of women who in previous generations were silent. It is a time for women who are knowledgeable about the media to share their experiences with women who are just beginning to find their public voices.

As always, we have much to learn from each other.

MEDIA STRATEGY

How you will go about developing a media strategy will depend upon the answers to several key questions:

1. What is your organization's function? How well established is it?
2. Are you working with others or alone?
3. What resources are available to you?
4. Do you or people you know have media contacts?
5. Ask yourself the following questions: What do you want to do and how?
6. What do you want the media to tell the public about you and your organization?

D E F I N E Y O U R M E S S A G E

1. **Get others involved**

Form a committee of the people you want to work with you to develop your media campaign. Try to include people with different skills. Be as inclusive as you can be, allowing people to contribute to the work.

2. **Determine your goals and objectives**

Define your organization and its goals. You need a clear understanding of what you want to accomplish before you start.

3. **Create the message**

Draft talking points that will answer basic questions about your issue. Make sure that everyone from your organization is using these succinct and quotable talking points. You want one clear, direct, and simple message.

Identify your target audience

Who is the audience you want to reach through the media? Abba Al-Nowais, chief editor *Zahrat Alkhaleej*, a weekly women's magazine in the United Arab Emirates, says: "It is very important to know the intellectual level, social background and nature of the audience you are addressing."

Try to think like the audience you want to reach. The media is just the vehicle. If possible, ask a member of your target audience or group to listen to you so you can test the message of your campaign.

Analyze and assess your media outlets and opportunities

Which type of media will help you to reach your target audience?

List your resources

These might include, but not be limited to the following: money, in-kind donations of material, the time and talents of involved individuals, outside or related events that you can use to highlight your efforts.

Remain flexible

Revise your plans if circumstances or resources change, or if parts of your plan are not working. Stick with what works!

BASICS OF A MEDIA PLAN

Some basic points to address before you develop your media plan are:

1. How do the media function in your city, state and country? Read the paper, watch TV and listen to the radio. Learn about whatever media are available.
2. Determine what will fall into hard news, or feature stories.
3. Which reporters are covering issues similar to yours and are they reporting positively or negatively.

From Rina Jimenez David of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, we got the following advice:

Women's groups should look towards establishing long-term relationships with friendly people in the media, rather than one-shot transactions aimed at gaining short-term publicity. Establishing a relationship -- through regular contacts, subscriptions to newsletters and other published materials, and invitations to training and educational opportunities -- means you gain not just a friend, but even a partner and champion in the media.

Why do we need a media campaign?

1. To influence public opinion.
2. To persuade opinion leaders.
3. To generate debate.

PRESS RELEASES

What is a press release?

A press release provides information about your organization that is prepared and presented in a standardized format. It is usually one page in length, but no more than two pages. The purpose is to announce an issue of importance for which you want media attention, whether print, electronic or both. A press release should be brief and to the point.

What information should be included in a press release?

A good press release answers the "5 W's" in the first paragraph: Who? What? Where? When? and Why?

Who: Who is the subject of the story? They should be identified and described. The "who" might be a person, group, event or activity.

What: What is happening that the media should know about. The goal is to get the reader's attention, so that your release will be read and your issue reported.

Where: If it is an event or a press conference, where is it going to take place? Be specific about the address to the location -- and include a map with directions. Include information about where to park a car or if there is public transportation. Make it as easy as possible for the reporters covering your event.

When: The date, day of the week, and specific time must be very clear. No approximations, specific information.

Why: The reason for your press release should be compelling. Why is this so important? Be specific. Remember, the lead or headline should be written to hook the person into reading the rest of your release.

What is the best writing style for press releases?

Use quotes. Sentences and paragraphs and sentences should be short. You want the reader's eye to move quickly and easily down the page.

Start with the lead, expand upon your opening with more information and detail in decreasing order of importance. In other words, write the press release in the same classic "pyramid" style as a straight news story.

How will I know if the lead or headline is a good one?

Often you will not know until you see your story in print. If you put the most important information in the headline, follow the 5 W's, explain the specifics, and elaborate on the points that are most compelling; you have a good chance of success. Remember, a story is often printed right from your press release, with the newspaper editing the release from the top and working down.

After you have written the entire press release, go back and revise and revise until you have what you think is the most

compelling lead. Do not be afraid to change the lead. Always check to make sure you have the 5 W's answered. It is possible to get so involved with trying to make the press release exciting and dramatic that important facts slip out of the final copy.

How do I get the press release to the right person?

Make sure you have the names of the person or persons who should receive it printed clearly on the release. If you are sending it to a newspaper, get the name of the editor, the correct spelling and title. This makes your approach more personal and more appealing.

What if there is no specific reporter?

You can send the release to the attention of the editor. At the same time, you should be collecting information about media outlets. The following questions help you to gather the information:

- Who decides what news will be covered? Name, title.
- Who decides in that person's absence? Name, title.
- Is there a reporter who specializes in your issue? Name.
- What time of day/week/month/are story decisions made?
- How far in advance of an event does this outlet like to be notified?
- What type of material does this outlet like to receive with a release? Do they want background information, photographs, color slides, audio tapes, video tapes. What else would be helpful?

The standard form for a press release is as follows:

1. Press releases are written on plain white paper, usually 8 1/2" x 11" or A4, whatever is the standard size business paper where you live. If you have plain printed letterhead stationery, use the letterhead paper. This will help identify your organization as the source of the press release.
2. The margins around the edges of the text of the press release should be about 1 1/2 inches wide. This gives the editor or reporter room to make notes in the margins of the press release.
3. If your address is not on the paper you are using, then type your complete address in the upper left-hand corner of the page.
4. THE RELEASE DATE: This information is typed in BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS in the top upper right-hand corner of the page just slightly lower than the address on the top left-hand side of the page.
5. The name of the contact person is typed just under the release date, and the telephone contact number, if available, beneath it. In most businesses and nongovernment organizations in North America, an after-hours contact number is also given for the contact person.
6. THE COPY: the actual text of the press release begins about one-third of the way down the page.
7. Start with a headline. It is typed flush to the left-hand margin below the address information and before the copy of the release. The title is written IN ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.

8. The copy of the release is always double spaced.
9. Paragraphs may be indented at the first line. Standard spacing is used between paragraphs.
10. If the release is longer than one page, the word "- more -" should be typed on the bottom of the first page.
11. It is always best to keep the press release to one or two pages at the most.

Press Releases: Questions and Answers

Is there anything else I can do after issuing a press release?

Follow up with telephone calls. The first time you call, introduce yourself by name and organization. If you want to have a conversation be sure to ask if the person is "on deadline." If a reporter is on a deadline and trying to complete a story, ask the best time to call back and hang up as quickly as possible without being rude.

If the person is not working against a deadline, then ask if she received your press release. Ask if you can provide any more information. Would they like to talk to someone. Try to have a short conversation to gauge his/her reaction to the material you sent. If the answers are not encouraging, thank the person for taking the time to speak with you. Remember, you will be speaking with that person again, and there will be a time when the answer is "yes, we are excited about covering your event and looking forward to meeting with you."

What is meant by the release date?

The release date is the date you will allow the information in the press release to be published. Most journalists will not publish the information before an accepted date. This is often referred to as a "press embargo." For example, when an international nonprofit organization holds a press conference to publicize a new special report, it often releases the document with the restriction that it is embargoed until a specific date. This gives the journalists plenty of time to read the document and write their reports. It also allows the nonprofit organization to make "news" on the day of their press conference.

Can I include additional material with a press release?

Yes, you may want to add background material about the issue such as a brochure or examples of previous press releases. There are a myriad of ways you might want to "personalize" or be creative with the release. If you are announcing the start-up of a company, for example, you could send a small product with your release. We heard of one woman who sent chocolate chip cookies! Just be careful that any additional material does not distract from the news you want to have published.

TIPS ON PASTE-UP OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES

What should I do with the original article?

The easiest way to make sure you will always have copies of the article is to prepare the original for reproduction. Then make sure that the original is put in a file folder or notebook which will keep it neat and safe. You may need to use it again in the future.

How do I prepare the article for future use?

Use standard business-size paper. This may be 8 1/2 x 11 inches, or A4, or whatever the standard size is where you live. It should be plain, white, unlined paper.

Cut the article from the paper or magazine, leaving as much margin as possible around the article. Do not cut too close to actual lettering, as this will make it more difficult to photocopy.

Cut the name of the newspaper or magazine from the front of the paper. Use the "logo" or recognizable typeface paper of that paper. This will be in larger print than the rest of the paper. If it is too large to fit on your paper and you have the photocopying facility to shrink the lettering, do so. If you cannot shrink the lettering, you may type the name of the paper at the top of each sheet of the paper.

Cut the date of the article from the paper. If the article appears in a section with a heading -- Letters to the Editor,

Opinion Page, International News, National News -- cut out that heading too.

How do I assemble all the pieces?

Assemble ALL the pieces on the paper. Generally, you will want to place the name of the paper from the front page at the top center of the page. The date of the paper will be centered underneath the name. The section of the paper, if available, will then be centered under the date.

If the article doesn't fit on the page, you may need to cut it and arrange it until it does fit. Remember to keep it as close to the original format as possible, making sure that one paragraph follows the one directly preceding it. Be VERY careful about this as it is easy to get confused if you are placing a very long article.

If the article has to be continued on a second sheet of paper make sure you include the following information on each sheet of paper: Name of the newspaper, date of publication, section of the paper in which it was published.

When you are sure that you like the way the article looks, you will be ready to paste up. Don't try to rush this first stage; how the article looks when you photocopy it will be very important. This will be the way most people will be reading the article, probably many more than saw it in the original publication.

STOP! There is something very important to do before you paste up the article. **WASH YOUR HANDS.** This is very important because if you have been handling any kind of newsprint, your hands will be covered with newsprint! If you begin to paste up with sticky tape or glue, you will almost certainly leave dark fingerprints and smudges on the paper. These smudges will be included in every photocopy that you make of the article!

Using double sided tape (sticky on both sides), or a very small amount of glue, paste up the article as you have arranged it. It is best not to use regular cellophane tape, as the edges of the tape will show in the photocopies. The sticky double-sided tape will always be between the article and the paper, and it will not show up when the paper is photocopied. If you are using glue, remember to use the smallest amount possible just so the article sticks to the paper. As most newspapers are printed on very thin paper, and newsprint often bleeds or runs, too much glue will leave you with an unreadable original, impossible to copy.

One of the many advantages in having people know about the issues that are important to you is that often friends will send you originals of the articles to make sure you, too, have read them. Keep several originals if you have them. Newspaper print often turns yellow and darkens with age and becomes more difficult to photocopy.

Finally, file the originals in an envelope, file folder or notebook. Keep them where you can easily find them when needed.

Also be sure to keep several good copies of the article with the original, just in case the original becomes impossible to photocopy.

NEW TECHNOLOGY (to come)

1. Use of Internet.
2. Use of VCRs.

INTERVIEWS

No matter what the media (radio, television, or newspaper), and no matter who the interviewer, the key principle is that you must always remain in control of the interview situation.

Gather all the information you developed when planning your media strategy and review the important elements before putting yourself in an interview situation. Decide what you want to achieve through the interview. Decide who is the audience. Understand the kind of interviewing that is done by each media outlet. Remember that although you will prepare differently for a television interview than for a radio interview, the key is simply to be prepared.

The experience common to everyone who is preparing for an interview is feeling nervous. There are many techniques that you can use to make yourself more comfortable and less anxious when you are being interviewed, but do not expect the nervousness to go away. The best way to overcome nervousness is to be thoroughly prepared. Not only should you be familiar with the information you want to convey, you should find creative ways to use the information. You might practice restating your goals in colorful ways by using interesting analogies, vivid language, unusual examples and illustrations, or uncomplicated data. You should consider a variety of ways to stress the most important points you want to make, to eliminate any misperceptions about what you are trying to achieve, and to offer a clear view of your

vision for the future of the issue or the organization. The only thing you should not do is let the nervousness stop you from participating in an interview.

To prepare further, there are several good points to check when the interview is scheduled.

1. Know the date and time of the interview.
2. Where will the interview be held? Make sure you have exact directions if you are not familiar with the location. Find out if you will need a pass or security clearance?
3. What are the ground rules? Most of your interviews will be **on the record**. You are giving the interview because you want the media to be a conduit to the public. You want the media to quote you or your colleagues and you want them to use the information you have given to them. But there are other kinds of interviews and different ground rules for these. For example, is the interview **off the record**? That is, you want the reporter to have the information but not to quote you. Or is it, **on background**? In this case the information is not to be attributed to you, and not to be used to confirm or deny what anyone else has said. Is it **not for attribution** (When you want the reporter to use the information but not to mention who was the source?)
4. What is the full name of the interviewer? If you do not know the interviewer, make sure to listen to a program or read articles by that reporter. It is important to get familiar with the format of the program and style of the reporter interviewing you.

5. Know why you have been chosen for the interview. What is expected of you?
6. Will the interview be live or taped? When will the program be on the air?
7. Will you be interviewed alone or as part of a panel? How many will there be? If there will be a panel, who else will be speaking? What will the format be? How long will each person get to speak?
8. How long will the interview be?
9. Give the exact spelling of your name and how you want your organization listed for identification on radio or in "CHYRON" if TV (names on screen for identification)

How do I prepare for an interview?

The most important part of the interview begins with the preparation. You will want to WRITE an ideal interview. The interview may be scheduled for literally a few seconds, or you may have five minutes, or you may have longer. Regardless of the length of time, you should limit yourself to the THREE most important points that you want to make. Do not try to get more than three main points across in any interview, no matter how much time you have.

PRACTICE. PRACTICE. PRACTICE.

Write the three positive points that you want to make in the interview. Prepare a brief example or story to illustrate each point. Use as few numbers as possible. People are easily bored with hearing statistics.

Learn the points. Learn each example or story. No notes. You should practice with a colleague who will act as the interviewer. If you know the reporter's format duplicate it during practice. Practice all the possible questions. NO NOTES.

What are some of the things to know when the interview is with a television reporter?

Always look directly at the person who is asking you the questions. Never look at the camera or television monitor. Don't worry about the camera. A professional is responsible for the camera -- you don't have to worry about it! Try not to look away when you are thinking of an answer. Maintain eye contact with the person asking the questions.

Where do I look if I am in a studio being interviewed by a satellite connection?

Interviews by television satellite will be different than interviews with a reporter in person. If you are in a studio, being interviewed by a reporter in another studio, you should look DIRECTLY AT THE CAMERA. In this case, the camera IS the person you are talking to. Even if that person is in another country, you should imagine that they are the camera in front of you.

This is often a bit more uncomfortable for a first-time interview -- but don't let it stop you! Everything else will be the same - it is just that the person won't be sitting across

from you. You will have to imagine the camera in front of you is a friendly smiling face!

How do I start?

Start by making the points you consider most important. In most cases, you will have a few minutes before the interview to talk with the reporter. As background, you should send some information ahead of the interview. Most important, make sure your first answer includes one of the three points that you want to make in the interview.

What if the interviewer keeps moving away from the points I want to make?

Be polite, but firmly bring the interview back to the points you want to make by using "bridges," beginning your answers by saying, "well, it seems the real issue is..." and then state one of the points you want to make. Some of the following comments are useful "bridges" to get you the opportunity to make the points you want to make:

- Let me add...
- I'm often asked...
- That's not my area of expertise but I do know that...
- It seems the most important issue is...

What if the reporter asks a question I don't want to answer?

Swim back to an "island of safety." Use a story to illustrate one of the three points you prepared in advance. People remember stories. Think of interviews you have listened to and you will probably most easily remember a story that someone told to illustrate what was said.

What if the reporter asks negative questions?

Do not repeat the negative! Your job is to make your three positive points. Don't get upset. Correct any misinformation quickly and then go on to state one of your positive points. STAY POSITIVE. Don't be defensive. If it is a harsh criticism, you can say, "I'm glad you asked me that, many people might have that misconception but the truth is"...and then get back to one of your three positive points.

This is where your prior practice will really be valuable. Remember you will have practiced several "negative" and difficult questions and you will have these answers ready. Most important. STAY POSITIVE. Remember your three points and treat them as "islands of safety" -- places you will always be able to go back to during the interview.

What if the reporter keeps interrupting me with questions?

Let the reporter interrupt. You may say, "you've asked me several questions" and then go on to answer the question you want to answer with one of your three points. If the interruptions

are far from the points you were making and you want to get back, you may say "as I was saying" and then continue your answer with one of your three points.

What if there is a long silence?

Stay silent. Do not volunteer unnecessary information. Do not be afraid of the silence. The interviewer is responsible for that time. If the interview is slightly confrontational, this is often a method that an interviewer may use to get a person to volunteer unnecessary information.

What if I'm asked to add more or say more than I want to say?

Go back, always, to your "islands of safety," the three points you want to make. They are important enough to elaborate on and repeat, possibly with different stories or examples to illustrate the points.

What if I don't know the answer to a question?

Be honest. If you don't know the answer, say so. "I'm sorry, I don't have that information, but I'll be happy to get back to you with it." When you say that, make sure you do get the information to the reporter.

How long should my answers to questions be?

Your answers should be brief. Try to be able to state each one of your positive points in approximately 20 seconds shorter if the interview is on radio, longer for print.

What about how I look and sound (for TV and radio)

More than 90 percent of communication is nonverbal, so how you look and sound will be very important. Be enthusiastic and energetic -- both radio and TV tend to "flatten" people, make a person less exciting and more "bland" -- so you will want to be honest, emotional and excited about what you are saying. This is where it will be very helpful to videotape and review your practice sessions. You will probably find that you have to go past your "comfort" point to show emotion when being interviewed for television broadcast. If your interview is for television, you should follow some simple guidelines. Wear solid colors, light but not white. Do not wear flashy, or shiny fabric. Do not over accessorize. Apply normal makeup and look in the mirror before you go on.

What will the first few minutes in the studio be like?

A sound engineer will usually ask you for a voice level, so they can make sure the microphone levels are correct. In answer to a request for a voice level, state your name, spell your last name, the name of your organization, your title if you have one, and the subject of the interview. This gives vital information they will need, as well as the correct pronunciation of your name and organization.

Can I say something to a reporter and expect it not to be used?

Never. Always assume the microphone or recorder is on. Always. Many well-known people have been embarrassed by comments made when they thought the microphone was turned off. Assume that anything you say to a reporter at any time will be used. And never say "no comment" as that will usually give the impression that you have something to hide. A reporter is always working and there is no "off the record." Never say anything you don't want to read in print or hear on radio or television.

Radio News and Interviews

An estimated 15 percent of Americans get their news from listening to the radio. Radio "talk shows" are becoming an increasingly popular tool for individuals to express their political and social opinions. Most radio stations have news segments throughout the day. Many radio stations get their information from news syndicates, and larger stations have their own operations. How you approach the radio will depend on the structure of the operation of that station.

You may be able to call in your news directly. You may also have the opportunity to telephone a "talk show." Some smaller stations also do interviews in their own radio studios. You will have to research the radio in your area to determine the best way to approach the station.

Will the same tools apply for radio interviews as for TV interviews?

Yes. And the expression and content of what you say will be even more important when there is no visual image.

What if I get an impromptu call from a reporter who wants to do an interview on the telephone immediately?

If at all possible, ask for the name, telephone number and deadline and ask if you may call the person back in a few minutes. Take those few minutes to compose yourself... and remember your three positive points. Practice the "interview" out loud. Do any quick research you can on the reporter, the news organization he/she represents and the audience you will be addressing. Then, relax, and call the reporter right back.

What if I have to use technical terms and statistics in my answers?

Use as few numbers and statistics as possible. Instead, create word pictures. If you hear someone say "47,000 square feet" does that make more of an impression on you than if someone said "about the size of a football or soccer field."

Which can you picture more easily? Many international development organizations use the statistic that 35,000 children die needlessly every day. This doesn't make the headlines because it happens every day -- UNICEF refers to this as the "silent emergency" which is the equivalent of 100 jumbo jets with

350 children aboard crashing every day. Can you see how much more vivid that imagery is and how clearly that word picture of 100 jumbo jets crashing with 350 children aboard brings the number 35,000 into a sharper, clearer focus. Try to take the statistics you need to use in your three positive points and make a word picture out of them too.

If you have to use technical terms, make sure you define them as simply as possible. Avoid using any kind of jargon. Make sure the words you use are easy to understand and in common usage for the audience you are addressing. This will be especially important if you are speaking to people of different nationalities, and all the greater reason to make sure you define any terms that are not in common usage.

May I make an audiotape of the interview?

Discuss this with the reporter interviewing you. Most likely, you will be able to make an audiotape, and it is not unusual for a person being interviewed to make this request. This way, you will have an accurate record of the interview. You can play back the recording later and coach yourself to improve for your next interview.

This will also give those people working with you who may not have a chance to hear the broadcast the opportunity to review the interview later. If at all possible, practice before a camera and/or a live tape recorder.

PRINT TOOLS

There are many different methods and outlets for implementing your media strategy. Following are descriptions of outlets available to you in newspapers, newsletters and magazines.

Newspapers

Depending upon the size of the community in which you live and the proximity to a large city, you may have access to a nationally or internationally circulated daily newspaper, a local daily, or possibly a weekly local paper. You will have become familiar with the newspaper by following how it covers the issue of interest to you. If you know a reporter is interested in the issue, you can contact her or him directly. On a smaller paper, you may contact the news editor for your news story. At different times, you will be sending all these people press releases and press kits.

News Stories

You will need to send a press release giving the specific information that you think is newsworthy. This should be sent to a person by name, if possible. Remember that many people are competing to get the editor's attention, and you will need to help the reporter you are contacting to "pitch" your story to the paper's editor. You will have background briefing material supplied with your press release, giving the reporter names of

people and contacts who can provide further information. You need to make it as easy as possible for the reporter to write a story about your issue.

Feature Stories

This is an opportunity to be more personal in approach and explain how the issue affects individuals. You can deal with more conceptual information in a feature story, not just the facts in the news. If the newspaper you are contacting is not large enough to have a features editor, you may wish to write a story yourself and submit it for publication. Try to include good photographs with your copy.

The Op-Ed Piece

Many major newspapers have a page opposite the editorial page where they print opinion pieces (Op-Eds), usually commenting on the news. An Op-Ed article is usually about 750 words in length. Anyone may submit an Op-Ed piece to the Editor of a paper. If you can, it is a good idea to call the Editor to ask for specific Op-Ed requirements for that paper. Generally, the Editor will ask for an exclusive, meaning you will not send the article anywhere else if their paper agrees to print the Op-Ed. The policy for opinion pieces differs with various newspapers. On the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*, is the following:

Note to Readers -- The Op-Ed page welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. Because of the volume of submissions, however, we regret that we cannot acknowledge an article or return it

unless it is accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. If manuscripts are accepted for publication, authors will be notified within two weeks.

Letters to the Editor

This is one of the most widely read sections of a newspaper. It is a wonderful opportunity for you to express yourself about an issue of great concern to you. Most important, even if your letter isn't printed, it is great practice for you to compose your thoughts in as clear and concise a manner as possible. You will have the best chance for getting your letter printed if you comment directly on an article. Letters to the Editor need to be written immediately after the article you are commenting on appears. Do not wait! Write immediately! Be as brief as possible. Refer to the article by title, date of publication, and reporter. If you have information to add to what was printed, be sure to include it. Sign your letter with your complete name and the name of an organization if it associates you with the issue. Ideally a letter to the Editor is about 200 words in length. If you need to write a longer article, consider preparing an Op-Ed piece.

Newsletters

Many nongovernment organizations (NGOs) publish newsletters and magazines. If your issue relates to the work of an NGO, they may be interested in publishing something about you or your organization in their newsletter. The local library or NGO

representative can give you details on how to contact the NGO newsletter or magazine editor. Many NGOs have a large international membership and their newsletters are widely circulated.

An example of how the newsletter of an international organization can be a part of your overall media strategy is illustrated in Figure xx, "The Path of a Newsletter Article." A woman living in an African country is working to improve the educational opportunities for young girls. She meets with a local representative of an NGO. Her article is published in the newsletter and read by thousands of people who are members or supporters of the NGO. Major newspapers pick up the story, supported by the public relations and media department of the NGO. A member of a European parliament quotes the article. The writer has become one of the "experts" on the issue of improving educational opportunities for young girls in rural Africa. A television producer selects the writer to be interviewed for a segment rural educational opportunities for African girls.

Magazines

There are thousands of magazines published in the world today. The local library or U.S. Information Service will have a reference section giving you information on magazines. The best way to start your research is at your local news agent checking on the magazines available in your country.

Each magazine will have a page with a masthead -- the listing

of names and titles of those working on that magazine. It will also give the frequency of publication: weekly, biweekly, monthly, bimonthly. It will also list the magazine's departments. If your issue is covered by a department, you may write directly to the editor listed for that department. If there isn't a close fit, you can send the material, personally addressed by name, to the Managing Editor. If there is enough interest, the story would then be assigned to a staff member to cover the issue. It may take several attempts before you get a response. Use every communication as an opportunity to develop a relationship with the editors and staff. Magazines usually keep files of information for future reference to generate story ideas. Since they usually can't publish breaking news, magazines can develop stories with a longer time line.

The "lead time" (the time between when the article has to be received and when the magazine goes to print) will vary with every magazine. You will need to know what it is for each publication in which you are interested.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Television and Radio

Today, most major cities in the world have access by satellite communication to international television news networks such as VOA, CNN or the BBC World Service. Large parts of the world, however, especially in rural areas, still rely heavily on radio for world news. For some, the choices of channels number in the hundreds; for others, there is one state-controlled radio/television link. In short, the access to information varies tremendously. On the other hand, communications technology is growing exponentially, and it is vital that you are aware of future trends in electronic communications as well as present-day media opportunities.

How do I start?

First, become familiar with the radio and television programs that are available where you live. The local library or U.S. Information Service Center should have media guides. There may also be international networks with bureaus covering the region in which you live. Stringers -- freelance reporters who work for different media outlets -- are often another important source of news coverage. Make a list of all the television programs that broadcast news and feature stories. Note the type of program for each station: news, documentaries, interviews, panel discussions (talk shows) -- and the appropriate contact person listed for each program.

What if I have a news item I want to be reported on television?

Contact the assignment editor or news editor. Remember, it is your job to try and "sell" the story to the reporter. If the story has a local or national connection, or you have an exciting visual, your chances of coverage by television will be greatly enhanced. When you think about television, you need to think about what the cameras will "see" when they come to cover your story.

Over and over again, news editors, and assignment editors will tell you that, although they will read press releases and reports, what they really want you to do is tell them a story -- one that is as visual as possible. The elements to look for in a story are human interest, a local angle, national importance, or a connection to an earlier news story.

How do I get a feature story if I don't have breaking news?

The approach to a feature story is similar to the one you use in a news story, although timeliness is not as critical a factor. For a feature story, you will have more of an opportunity to identify which reporters are interested in your issue. You can begin by sending written material. Include any articles you have already had published. If there isn't a particular reporter, you can again send the information to the assignment editor. Explain why viewers would be interested in this issue.

What about possibilities on the radio?

"Talk" radio programs are growing in popularity in the United States. Hosts of these programs now command attention and influence large numbers of people to take political action. If you know the host of the radio interview program, you may contact him or her directly. You should also contact the producer of the program to see what information might help in preparation for the interview.

What are some of the similarities in dealing with all the various media outlets, print and electronic?

In every case, you will be "telling your story." A key to success will be preparation and the ability to speak on the issue. The written materials you have will be important. The most critical element is developing the relationships with the reporters, editors, producers and other media personnel with whom you will be in contact over time. These relationships will always be changing but will always be of key importance.

PRESS CONFERENCES

You will only want to organize a press conference if you have something important to announce. It costs a great deal of time, money and energy to organize a press conference. In addition, journalists don't have the time to go to press conferences that aren't going to produce new stories.

If you do hold press conference, thorough planning and preparation are essential.

1. Decide on the **location** for the press conference. It should be easily accessible, convenient and visually attractive. If electronic media are invited, make sure that the power and electrical facilities are adequate.
2. Decide on the **time** of the press conference. This will depend upon the media you are trying to reach. Mornings are usually best.
3. Check with similar organizations to make sure the **date** you select does not conflict with any other important events. If there is a huge national celebration in your country on a particular day, that might not be the best time to schedule a news conference. If you know another organization traditionally has an event planned for a specific date, try to schedule your event for another day. Getting a story in the news means you are competing with other people who are also trying to get their story into the news!

You have now selected a location, a date and a time.

4. Determine **who will be invited** from the listing of media personnel that you have compiled. Supporters of your organization should also be present, as well as people -- such as celebrities -- whom you know can help bring media to an event.

5. Outline the **content** of the press conference and prepare the press release. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is there going to be one special person hosting the conference?
- Do you have a panel of speakers who are going to brief the press?

6. Decide **who is going to speak**. You will need to make sure that you leave plenty of time for the press to ask questions. You may want to have the questions answered by a specific person.

7. You will have to **organize the site** of the conference so there is room for broadcast equipment, cameras, microphones, lighting equipment and chairs. There should be a table near the entrance on which you will have the following:

- Press kits and other information to hand out;
- Sign- in sheets for the press;
- Sign-in for visitors and guests from other organizations; and
- Any additional information you have, such as posters or give-a-aways.

8. Ideally, you should have a person assigned to assist the press attending the conference. This person will make sure each member

of the press has all the information she needs. If there is a reporter with whom you have spoken in the past, or have sent material to, make sure you introduce yourself and your colleagues. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet people and develop ongoing relationships.

9. Follow up the press release with telephone calls. Try to remember that, even though the work you are doing is vital to you, you are competing with others in equally important organizations who are also trying to get the attention of the media.

10. If you have a facsimile machine, it is a good idea to fax a reminder two or three days before the press conference. You should also telephone two or three days before the conference to ask again if the journalist will be attending, and ask if there is any additional information the person might need.

11. Check the list of press in attendance. If someone important is not at the conference, you can send her a press kit.

12. On the day of the conference, make sure you arrive very early to be able to handle any last minute problems that might develop. Check the microphones and make sure everything is in good working order. Try to begin the news conference at the designated starting time. You really do not want to begin a news conference any later than ten minutes after the scheduled starting time.

PRESS KITS

It will be helpful for you to make up a list of the things that should go into a press kit. Generally, a press kit includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. A list of the contents of the kit.
2. A press release.
3. A short welcoming letter, which gives basic information: name, address and telephone number of the contact person for journalists with any questions.
4. A "backgrounder" or "fact sheet." A short narrative paper that gives in-depth information about the issue. The purpose is to anticipate and answer any questions the journalist may ask.

Following is a general format for a backgrounder:

- Start with a concise statement about the issue or subject of the press release.

- Provide, in few paragraphs, an overview or history of the issue. What important events led up to today's situation? Remember, you are giving information so a journalist can write about the issue with greater depth and perspective.

- The major portion of the paper explains, in detail, the current situation. It should be factual, add substance to the press release, and deal with the key issues. It might include comments from other people supporting your actions.

- Try to limit your backgrounder to four or five pages in length. It can be double- or single-spaced. Subheads on each

paragraph to make it easier for the reader to follow the information. You should define any technical terms.

5. Press clippings about your organization, issue or individuals who work with the group.

6. Visuals: pictures, graphs, maps, charts -- whatever you have that helps convey the importance of the issue.

7. Speeches, reports, outlines of reports and summaries of reports. Be careful not to overwhelm the reader. The idea is to give enough information to interest the journalist and allow her to write or produce a piece of importance to the goal of the organization.

8. Include a brochure about the organization. If you do not have this kind of a document, a short summary of your work is a good substitute. It should include what you have done and what your goals and vision are for the future.

9. If the press kit involves more than one person, include a brief biography of each person involved in the press conference. Also include copies of the texts of their presentations or speeches.

10. If the kit is being used at a press conference, include an agenda for the press conference.

11. Make a list of the names of the people to whom you have sent press kits. It is a good idea to call and make sure the press kit was received, and to find out if any journalist wrote an article based on the material in it. Write thank-you notes when appropriate.

SPEECHES AND PRESENTATIONS

It usually takes more than three weeks to prepare a good impromptu speech. - Mark Twain

The work of preparing to give a speech or presentation can be divided into 10 steps.

1. **Define the purpose of the speech or presentation.** Do you want to persuade the audience to do something, or do you want to educate them on an issue? Do you want the people to take a specific action after they have heard you speak? Do you want to inspire them, or convince them about something?
2. **Define your audience.** Do they know anything about your subject? Are they interested in your subject? Are they friendly toward your subject?
3. **Become familiar and comfortable with the subject about which you are speaking.**
4. **What do you want your audience to know, to remember, to learn?**

Write out in approximately 25 words or less the objective of your speech. A woman from Argentina makes a good point when she says:

It is vital that women remember that dialogue (discourse) is also an important tool for gaining power. Yet, when we prepare our verbal and written opinions, we do not always dedicate enough time to finding a style that fits our specific objectives. Equally as important as writing a speech are the strategies that enable the thought to reach the public, through the mass media and/or through our public appearances.

5. **List the three main points you want to make** in your speech. Illustrate each point with at least one example -- a story, or anecdote -- which will create a picture in the minds of the listeners in your audience.
6. **Outline the substance of the presentation** using quotes, statistics, examples, and other interesting information.
7. **Write the opening or "attention getting" statement** of your speech.
8. **Write the closing sentence of your speech.** You should aim for a strong finish. It should be a stirring statement in which you will issue your call to action, predict the future, make a declaration, refer to your opening comments, summarize your main goal.
9. **Know the program where you will be speaking.** Are you the only speaker? What is the order of appearance? Will you be the first, or last speaker if there are several speakers? Will there be a panel of speakers?
10. **Be aware of the time for questions and answers.** How much of the time allotted to you will be reserved for questions and answers?

There are a few other items you should remember in planning a public speaking engagement:

1. **Your introduction to the audience.** Your introduction to the audience by the sponsor is very important. Write it yourself and send it ahead of time, but take an extra copy with you too. Decide how you want to be introduced and what you want them to know about you. Keep it warm and personal.

2. **Check the room and equipment.** Make sure that the audio visual equipment you will need is available and in good working order at the site. Arrange to bring your own equipment if that is necessary. Try to visit the site of your speech before the event. If that is not possible, get there early enough to make sure the setting is satisfactory. Make your request for equipment (microphone, projector, podium, etc.) when you accept the invitation to give the speech. Be prepared for something not to work properly -- and to give a brilliant speech anyway.

3. **Preparing the speech.** You have decided to whom you will be talking to and what you want them to know. The maximum number of major points that you will deliver is three. An average speech will take approximately 20 minutes. Your sentences should be brief, about 20 words or less per sentence. The shorter and simpler the better. In general, your speech will be about seven to 10 typed pages. A general rule of thumb is that 12 typed lines equal about

one minute of speaking. One double-spaced typed page is about two minutes; five pages doubled-spaced will be about ten minutes. There will be differences in some other languages, of course.

4. **Check to see how long you will speak.** Be sure to inquire whether there will be time for a question-and-answer session after you speak. Use simple words. The American humorist Mark Twain probably said it best: "By hard honest labor, I've dug all the large words out of my vocabulary. I never write metropolis for seven cents because I can get city for the same price."

5. **Minimize the use of numbers or statistics.** Use word pictures to illustrate numbers whenever you can. If there are important statistics, it is best to hand them out at the end of your presentation.

6. **Practice your entire speech repeatedly before the presentation.** Be thoroughly familiar with it, but do not memorize it. Try to practice with another person who can give you helpful comments. Try giving the speech in front of a mirror while also timing it.

7. **Underline the parts of the speech you want to emphasize.** Mark the places where you want to pause. Make sure you are comfortable with the phrasing and that you are not using too many "ums" in your presentation.

8. **Do not read your speech.** If you read your speech, you risk boredom. You want to be natural, enthusiastic and excited about the presentation. You want to talk to your audience, not at them. It is best to write an outline, with key words or phrases on 3 x 5 cards, and then practice giving the speech. That way you will be comfortable with the information without reading it. Try to maintain eye contact with the audience 90 percent of the time. Eye contact during the first and last few minutes will help to hold their attention and emphasize your main points.

9. **What can I do to stop being so nervous?** Being nervous is normal. Try as much as possible to channel the nervous energy into enthusiasm and excitement. Just before the speech, practice taking some deep breathes to calm yourself. Focus your attention on your key phrases. Don't feel you have to hold your hands in place, gesture as you would in normal conversation.

Following are guidelines for dealing with questions and answers:

1. Be sure to take questions from the whole audience and not just the people sitting in one section of the audience.
2. Listen to each question carefully, without reaction.
3. Treat each question equally.
4. Repeat all the positive questions so everyone in the audience can hear the question being asked. If the questioner asks a negative question, rephrase it in as positive a way as possible when repeating it.

5. Maintain eye contact with the whole audience when answering, not just the questioner.
6. Don't get into a "one-on-one" with any questioner or let one questioner dominate the audience.
7. Respond as simply and directly as possible.
8. If you don't know the answer to a question, say "I don't know" and either promise to get back to them with information, or invite them to contact you at a later date for the answer.
9. Don't ask if you've answered their question. When you feel you have completed, the answer go on to the next questioner.
10. Don't announce that "this is the last question." You will keep control of the audience by deciding yourself which is the last question. Always leave yourself a minute to sum up what you have said. In the final words, you will emphasize the positive message you want your audience to have as they leave the room.
11. Give out any handouts at the end of the speech, not the beginning.
12. Try to remember to enjoy yourself. If you are smiling and friendly, enthusiastic and excited to be there, your audience will be too. If you are uncomfortable or bored, they will be too.

Audiovisual Aids

Audiovisual aids can be very helpful in a speech. People remember about 40 percent of what they see and hear. Rehearse with these aids before giving your speech. You will need to check the electric outlet availability if you are using a slide projector or overhead projector. Make sure plugs and equipment are compatible.

If you are using slides, you should be able to use them with the lights on. Test this beforehand as you do not want to turn off the lights unless you absolutely have to. If you are using video, again make sure that all the equipment is compatible. The video should be no longer than five minutes.

Overhead projectors take practice to use effectively. You can't spend time straightening each transparency. If you are using an overhead, then put a ruler on the machine and PRACTICE alignment many times before the actual speech.

Try not to use chalkboards as they can be very messy and difficult to read from a distance. You also do not want to have your back to the audience, which happens when you are using chalkboards.

If you are using a flip chart, again practice many times before the event to make sure you know the order of the sheets. Turn the page with your face to the audience, and do not speak while you are flipping the pages.

Public Speaking Checklist

The following provides a checklist, or outline, for developing and delivering a public speech. You should use this form in evaluation sessions after each individual speech performance.

Topic

Was the substance...

- Adequately adapted to the audience
- Appropriate for the occasion

Content

Did the substance of the speech include...

- Interesting ideas
- Factual information

Was the substance of the speech...

- Adapted to the purpose of the speech
- Appropriate to the interest and level of the audience
- Adequate with regard to knowledge of the subject

Organization

Did the speech include...

- An attention-getting introduction
- Sentence transitions which were smooth and clear
- A strong and memorable conclusion

Delivery

Did the speaker...

- Project their voice
- Use clear phrases
- Use correct grammar

- Use gestures that were natural but not distracting
pace their presentation
- Articulate sounds with clarity
remain enthusiastic
- Use eye contact with the audience
- Have good posture
- Appear poised and confident
- Have any distracting habits
- Use vocal variety (as opposed to monotone)

Topic

- Adapted to audience
- Appropriate for occasion

NEXT STEPS

Your article, Op-Ed, letter to the editor or the editorial has been published! Now, what do you do?

Press or media attention becomes an important part of your media strategy. This is a good time to review your campaign and decide where you need to put more effort. It's a wonderful time to meet with organization people or other people you trust to have a brainstorming session. Use this as an opportunity to ask questions and suggest ideas for the next step.

Endless Possibilities

If you have not done so before, this is a good time to meet with your local government representatives. In addition, ask yourself: Are there people locally, or at the national level, or internationally who need to learn more about the issue discussed in the published material?

Consider how you can use your media attention to help with the cost of your campaign. If you have been avoiding doing the fundraising necessary to sustain your work, now might be a good time to consider it. Think about whether there are individuals, companies, or organizations who might contribute to help if they had more information about the work you are doing?

Have people been generous in helping you with your work? A way of thanking and acknowledging their support would be to send them copies of this article.

Remember, focus on your media campaign. Make sure the follow-up action you take is in line with the long-term goals of your work.

The individuals compiling this guidebook received valuable information and advice from many women. From a group of women in France came the following: "Be prepared to put in much energy for small or no immediate returns. Understanding and recognition of important issues don't happen overnight."

It is important to keep reminding ourselves that this work is a process. That process will continue until we reach our goals.

End



PHOTOCOPY
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