

# It's All About the Message!

Getting More Press For Your MRC Program



# Benefits of Publicity

Recruiting and Retention

Educating Partners and Stakeholders

Funding

Public Response

# Objectives

Identify various forms of media and key features of each medium

Describe newsworthiness and apply it to news releases and other dissemination tools

# Objectives

Recognize key components of crisis and emergency risk communications

List the “dos and don’ts” of being an effective spokesperson

# Media

- Newspapers
- Radio
- Television
- Internet and Others



# Newsworthiness

- Proximity
- Prominence
- Timeliness
- Impact
- Conflict
- Controversy

# Newsworthiness

- Uniqueness
- Human Interest
- Suspense
- Updates
- Available Sound and Visuals

# Preparing The Message

- Know your audiences
- Develop 3 key points
- Use the appropriate tools
- Use "Inverted Pyramid"

# Crisis/Risk Communications

- Panic comes from mixed messages

# Successful Communications

**Accuracy of  
Information**

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**Speed of  
Release**

**Empathy**

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**Openness**

**Credibility  
and  
Trust**

# Crisis/Risk Communications

- Panic comes from mixed messages
- Short, concise, focussed
- Give action steps in positives
- Repeat the message

# **CRISIS EMERGENCY RISK COMMUNICATION**

## **Build Trust and Credibility by Expressing:**

- + Empathy and caring
- + Competence and expertise
- + Honesty and openness
- + Commitment and dedication

## **Top Tips**

- + Don't over reassure.
- + Acknowledge uncertainty.
- + Express wishes ("I wish I had answers").
- + Explain the process in place to find answers.
- + Acknowledge people's fear.
- + Give people things to do.
- + Ask more of people (share risk).

## **As a Spokesman**

- + Know your organization's policies.
- + Stay within the scope of responsibilities.
- + Tell the truth. Be transparent.
- + Embody your agency's identity.

**BE FIRST. BE RIGHT. BE CREDIBLE.**

## **Prepare to Answer These Questions:**

- + Are my family and I safe?
- + What can I do to protect myself and my family?
- + Who is in charge here?
- + What can we expect?
- + Why did this happen?
- + Were you forewarned?
- + Why wasn't this prevented?
- + What else can go wrong?
- + When did you begin working on this?
- + What does this information mean?

## **Stay on Message**

- + "What's important is to remember..."
- + "I can't answer that question, but I can tell you..."
- + "Before I forget, I want to tell your viewers..."
- + "Let me put that in perspective..."

**CONSISTENT MESSAGES ARE VITAL**



# Interviews



# Dos and Don'ts

- Do: Prepare!
- Don't: Allow yourself to be ambushed
- Do: Anticipate questions
- Don't: Speak before listening and thinking

# Dos and Don'ts

- Do: Be honest
- Don't: Speculate, speak for other agencies or give your opinion
- Do: Say "I don't know"
- Don't: Say "No comment"

# Dos and Don'ts

- Do: Control the interview
- Don't: Use jargon or acronyms
- Do: Say only what you want quoted

# Resources

- Public Information Officers from health and other partner agencies
- National MRC Program Office
- Homeland Security Classes
- CDC CERC Courses
- PIO Associations, Etc.

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