Traffic Incident Management
Media Training 101

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Purpose of This Training

You’ve seen how we’ve adapted the TIM messages throughout the TIM Tools…

Now we’ll take you through a Media Training 101 that will help equip you with tools & techniques to use these messages effectively during media interviews.

Visit the TIM Toolbox at: http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/eto_tim_pse/timtoolbox/
First and Foremost: Securing a Media Interview
Media Outreach

• Once you have a campaign with a good story, you should conduct media outreach to spread your story.

• Tips on connecting with media:
  › Develop a local media list – search for reporters with the right “beat”
  › Draft your pitch email (explain your story to the reporter)
    ▪ Hook – A timely/newsworthy element (ex: recent study or news article)
    ▪ Your Story – About your campaign
    ▪ Why your story is relevant for that publication’s readership
  › Follow up with a phone call
    ▪ Create 3 talking points from your email pitch using local or national stats (from the Talking Points Framework)
    ▪ Convince the reporter that the topic is one his/her readers value – this is a story that will make your readers and their families safer.
  › Schedule an interview time

Once Secured – What you Always Need to Know

• Who the reporter is – know the reporter’s beat and level of understanding

• What the reporter wants to talk about – it’s perfectly fine to ask what they’re most interested in discussing

• Where and when – specifically the location, length of time, etc.
Tailoring Content
Methodology for Effective Message Delivery

- Focused content
- Clear call to action
- Inspiring presentation

= Memorable speaking engagement that changes perception/behavior

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Message Math: The Rule of Three

3 messages delivered 3 times = Memorable
9 messages delivered 1 time = Forgettable
Key Message Methodology

Use this format for each of your 3 key messages

- **HEADLINE**: Overarching statement
- **PROOF-POINTS**: Validating statements of facts, data, anecdotes, examples, etc.
- **BOTTOM LINE**: Rephrase/summarize the headline

Steering the Interview
The Do’s and Don’ts

**Do...**

- Act friendly toward the reporter
- Maintain eye contact
- Project command of your messages with confidence and passion
- State your campaign name often
- Always end on a positive note
- End with a call to action for the audience

**Don’t...**

- Say “no comment”
- Go off the record
- Take an interview cold/on the fly
- Repeat a negative comment or question

Prepare for Every Question

• Treat every question as an **opportunity** to get your messages across

• Have confidence in knowing that there’s always a way to bridge back to your messages

• Prepare exactly how to answer the questions that you don’t want to be asked, as much as practicing messages.

• We’ll show you how…

Take a Bridge…

• Let me put this in perspective…
• One question I’m often asked…
• The biggest issue for our customers is really…
• What it boils down to is…
• That’s a good point, but…

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How to Build a Bridge

Negative Question
A local community is complaining about an influx of traffic congestion due to more traffic incidents. What’s being done about this?

Brief Answer
I am not aware of that.

Bridge
What I can tell about is…

Positive Answer / Message Points
We’re educating the public on the Move It/Move Over laws, which will decrease congestion and protect responders and motorists.

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Getting Your Sound Bite: Flagging

• The most important thing is…
• The heart of the issue is…
• What we are really excited about is…
• If I could leave you with one thing today, it would be…
• This is paramount…

Our favorite question:
*Do you have anything else to add?*
On Your Own Time…
Practice, Practice, Practice!

• Practice in front of a mirror, spouse, colleague or friend
• Record yourself speaking to get used to hearing your own voice
• After interviews, be receptive of feedback
• Commit to being a life long learner

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