

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR MEDIA IMAGE

David Schwartz

University of Iowa School of
Journalism and Mass Communication

COLD STORY-
PITCH
EXERCISE

First let's get
one thing out
of the way ...

You are not in control (at least not entirely)

The media landscape has changed significantly.

Other groups not in total control include:

- Media
- Management
- Labor
- Public

So who is in control?

- Everyone, and no one

Steps for gaining control

Gaining control is a process. You need to have a strategy, and stick to that strategy. The main components:

- Understanding Do's and Don'ts when dealing with media
- Preparing your message
- Preparing for interviews and handling tough questions
- Earning attention of news producers and editors

Understanding media

1. Media do not care as much as you do
2. Media do not understand the issues the way you do. It needs to be educated
3. Media need help
4. Media hate to be deceived, and if you deceive them, or if you attempt to BS them, they will never trust you. Ever
5. Know when to approach. Know when to back off

Do's

1. Be accessible
2. Be honest
3. Provide accurate information
4. Be patient, but be mindful of deadline
5. Make them understand you will hold them accountable, but be subtle (“Would you like to read my quotes back to me to make sure you’ve quoted me accurately?”)
6. Humanize

Don'ts

1. Don't tell media how to do their job. They hate that – probably more than anything
2. Don't deceive or BS
3. Don't be a “crazy”
4. DON'T USE EXCLAMATION POINTS!!!!!!
5. Don't make unsubstantiated judgments. Use facts, conclusions, and persuasive communication to help lead to where you'd like them to go
6. Don't immediately follow up an emailed or faxed release with a phone call to confirm receipt

COLD STORY-
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Preparing your message

1. It's not about issues. It's about human beings
2. It's not about issues. It's about human beings
3. It's not about issues. It's about human beings
4. And make it digestible
5. Write and/or speak clearly. Grammar matters more than most people understand
6. Be aware of your tone, your word choice, and the length at which you speak

Preparing your message



The wrong message

“In what is truly a shocking decision, Grocery Inc. LLC, PLC chief negotiating officer John Doe removes accidental death and disability contributions from the negotiating table during heated talks with UFCW Local 655.

“In what is just another example of corporate strong-arming, hard-working laborers effected on the job will have less contributions from GI.”

The right message

“Grocery Inc. warehouse worker Linda Thompson lost the ability to work last year when a crate of canned goods slipped from a faulty forklift and crushed all her bones in both feet. Grocery Inc. wants to stop paying benefits to part-time workers, which would mean injured workers such as Thompson and others would be forced to work in the warehouse at their own risk, and would be financially stranded in cases such as the faulty forklift.”

The wrong message

“UFCW 655 offered four dates to meet for negotiations. Grocery Inc. turned down all the dates! It is a clear sign they will not negotiate in good faith and intend to lock out all 655 employees when the current contract expires.”

The right message

“Rich Erker’s wife will begin working double shifts next week. That’s when the contract between UFCW 655 and Grocery Inc. expires and Erker’s paychecks stop. 655 has proposed multiple dates for negotiating sessions with GI, but GI has turned them all down and appears poised to lock out all 655 employees and cut off their income until they agree to cut all benefits to part-time employees and their 145 children.”

COLD STORY-
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EXERCISE

Interviews / tough questions

The first time you think about a question should not be the first time it's asked:

- Anticipate. What are they going to ask you?
- Prepare your answers. Practice them
- Where could you be wrong? And how do you counteract that? (Editorial writing)
- Practice with a co-worker, friend, or relative, and record the session. How do you sound when you play it back?
- Learning calming techniques. Deep breaths

Interviews / tough questions

The first time you think about a question should not be the first time it's asked:

- Make some notes before the interview begins. What are the 1-3 most important issues you want the reporter or editor to understand. It's OK to have an agenda
- What can you offer the reporter? (And, no, I don't mean a bribe)
- At the end of the interview, ask the reporter if she/he has any follow-up questions. "Does everything make sense? Here's my personal cell # if you have any questions."

LET'S INTERVIEW

OK, now that you're prepared ...

It's time to build
relationships
and get (useful)
attention.

Earning attention

Rule #



Get to know media
BEFORE you pitch
them a story, or ask
them to become
involved.

Why?

Emotional
investment!

Homework assignment



Earning attention

Tips:

- Writing: Make it clean, make it brief, and make it to the point

Writing

Headline: Grocery Inc. proposes suspension of health benefits for 178 Des Moines families

Or ...

Headline: 145 local children to lose health benefits at midnight Wednesday

Writing

Make sure all correspondence has your contact information in an easy-to-find place at the top of your release:

- Phone
- Alternate phone
- Email address
- Mailing address

Earning attention

Tips:

- Writing: Make it clean, make it brief, and make it to the point
- Phone calls: Get to the point. Don't chit-chat. Tell the writer, editor, or producer in 20 seconds or less why your story matters to their listeners and viewers

Phone calls

Editor: Hello.

Union rep: Hi, my name is John Doe, I'm calling from the XXX Union.

Editor: Uh huh.

Union rep: I'm calling because Grocery Inc., where 72% of your readers shop, has proposed cutting off health benefits to 178 local families. Are you interested in learning more?

Editor: Go on ...

Earning attention

Tips:

- Writing: Make it clean, make it brief, and make it to the point
- Phone calls: Get to the point. Don't chit-chat. Tell the writer, editor, or producer in 20 seconds or less why your story matters to their listeners and viewers
- Blogs: Have one for your shop and make local media aware of it. Embrace them through Facebook, Twitter, and other social media. Use it to connect with your members

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IBEW

Organization

Description

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers** (IBEW) is a labor union which represents workers in the electrical industry in the United States, Canada, Panama and several Caribbean island nations; particularly electricians, or Inside Wiremen, in the construction industry and linemen and other employees of public utilities. The union also represents some workers in the computer, telecommunications, broadcasting, and other fields related to electrical work. It was founded in 1891 shortly after homes and businesses in the United States began receiving electricity. Its international president is Ed Hill. The IBEW is affiliated with the AFL-CIO.

The beginnings of the IBEW were in the **Electrical Wiremen and Linemen's Union** No. 5221, founded in St. Louis, Missouri in 1890. By 1891, after sufficient interest was shown in a national union, a convention was held on November 21, 1891 in St. Louis. At the convention, the IBEW, then known as the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (NBEW), was officially formed. The **American Federation of Labor** gave the NBEW a charter as an AFL affiliate on December 7, 1891. The union's official journal, *The Electrical Worker*, was first published on January 15, 1893, and has been published ever since. At the 1899 convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the union's name was officially changed to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

Source

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www.aflcio.org

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The AFL-CIO is a federation of 56 national & international labor unions. We...

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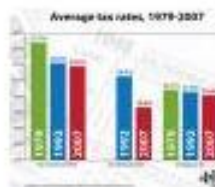
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Just in time for April 15, new data shows that since 1979, the nation's overall average tax rate—the share of income paid in taxes—has fallen slightly, but for those at the top of the earnings ladder this share has fallen dramatically.



Taxes Go Down for the Wealthy, Income Gap Worsens | AFL-CIO NOW BLOG
blog.aflcio.org

11 hours ago · Share

53 people like this.

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Bert Estrada The Medieval States of America – The serfs break their backs to pay the wealthy land owners who do nothing, pay nothing and clamor for recognition for their supposed philanthropy.

6 hours ago · 1 person



Leroy Jackson Again, the problem is messaging. The more



UFCW

RT @amybdean: Walker Admits Union-Busting Provision 'Doesn't Save Any' Money For #WI (via @thinkprogress)
<http://bit.ly/eGzC5F> #WIunion

about 9 hours ago via HootSuite

Name UFCW

Location Washington, DC

Bio The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union represents 1.3 million workers in the U.S. and Canada.

367

following

2,070

followers

183

listed

Tweets

1,393

Favorites

Lists

@UFCW/ufcw-paper-8

@UFCW/ufcw-employers



jakobschiller Jakob Schiller

 Follow



New Mexico-based multimedia and photo journalist.

American Studies PhD student, telemark skier, happily married. I also have the best dog in the world.



TobyChaudhuri Toby Chaudhuri

 Follow



Works with political campaigns, labor and progressive groups and people in public office to communicate with the public and influence public policy.



rsamuels Rich Samuels

 Follow



Chicago-based tv journalist & classical music host on Madison Wisconsin's WORT (89.9 fm), amateur radio operator (KF9KV) & curator of <http://richsamuels.com>

OK, let's try this from the beginning ...

Recap

- Build relationships
- Be honest / do not BS
- Humanize EVERYTHING
- Be quick and concise
- Reciprocate / make it worth their while
- Educate them
- Engage social media, but not exclusively
- Be accessible
- Provide a service to their “audience”