

Connecticut Partnership for Public Health Workforce Development

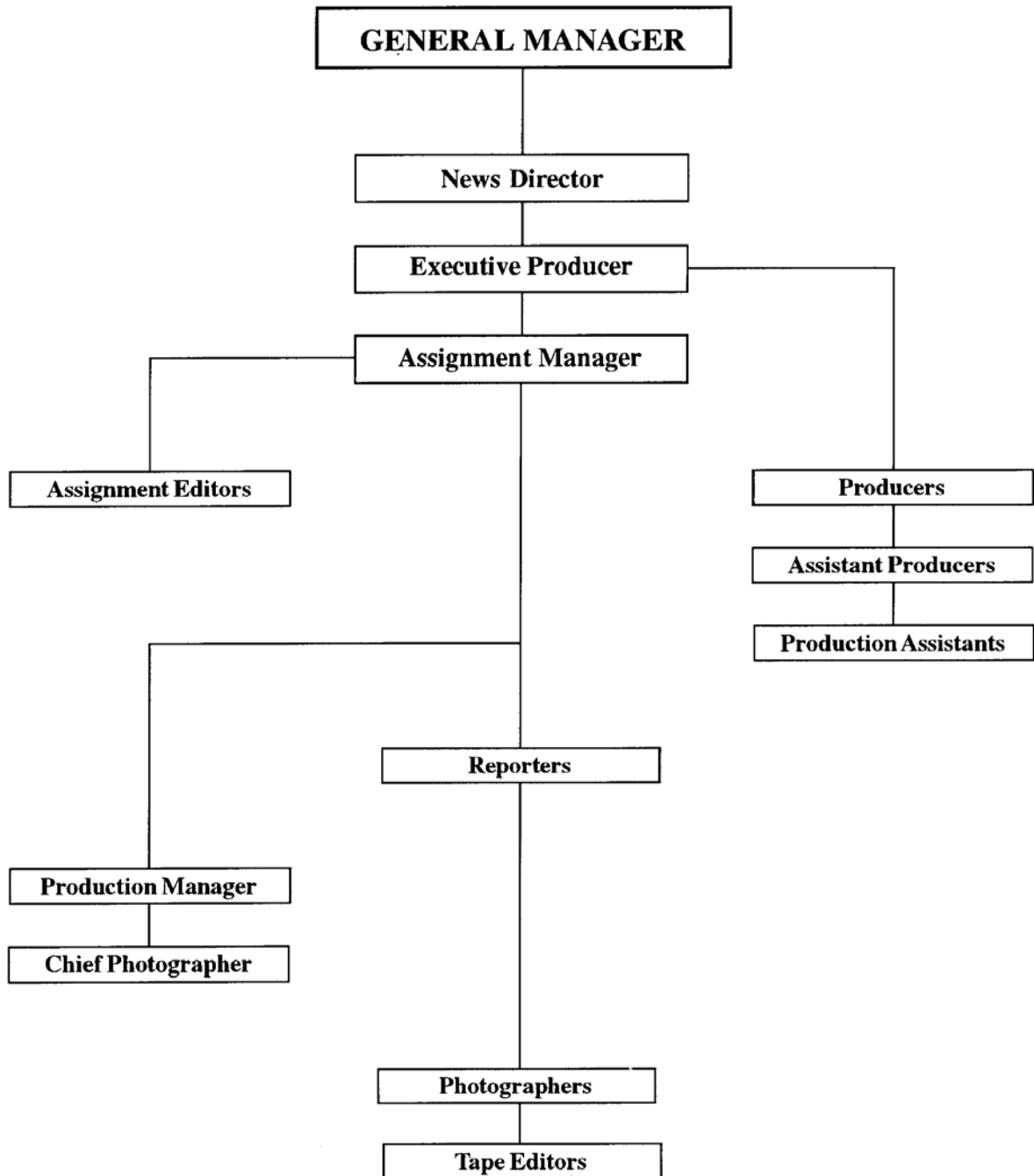
Media Training

Seminar

NEWSROOMS

TELEVISION NEWSROOM

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



TELEVISION NEWSROOMS

DAILY PROCEDURE

- 7:45 AM Telephone Conference Production Meeting
- 9:30 A.M. Review overnight news (wire services and local, regional and national newspapers), review press releases, review VIP list daily schedules, and beat calls begin.
- 10:00 A.M. Production Meeting - news director, assignment editors, producer and reporters.

Field reporters and photographers dispatched to assignment coverage.
- 12:00 P.M. Newscast (those stations without an early afternoon newscast are watching the competition for story ideas).
- 12:45 P.M. Field crews report into newsroom regarding content of their assignments. During this briefing, the field reporters vie for placement - based on visuals and news/informational content.
- 1:30 P.M. Producer outlines newscast rundown - based on early afternoon conversation with reporters, taking into consideration news worthiness, timeliness and logistics.
- 3:00 P.M. Decisions made on which crews will go live and which reporters will return to base and "package" their reports.

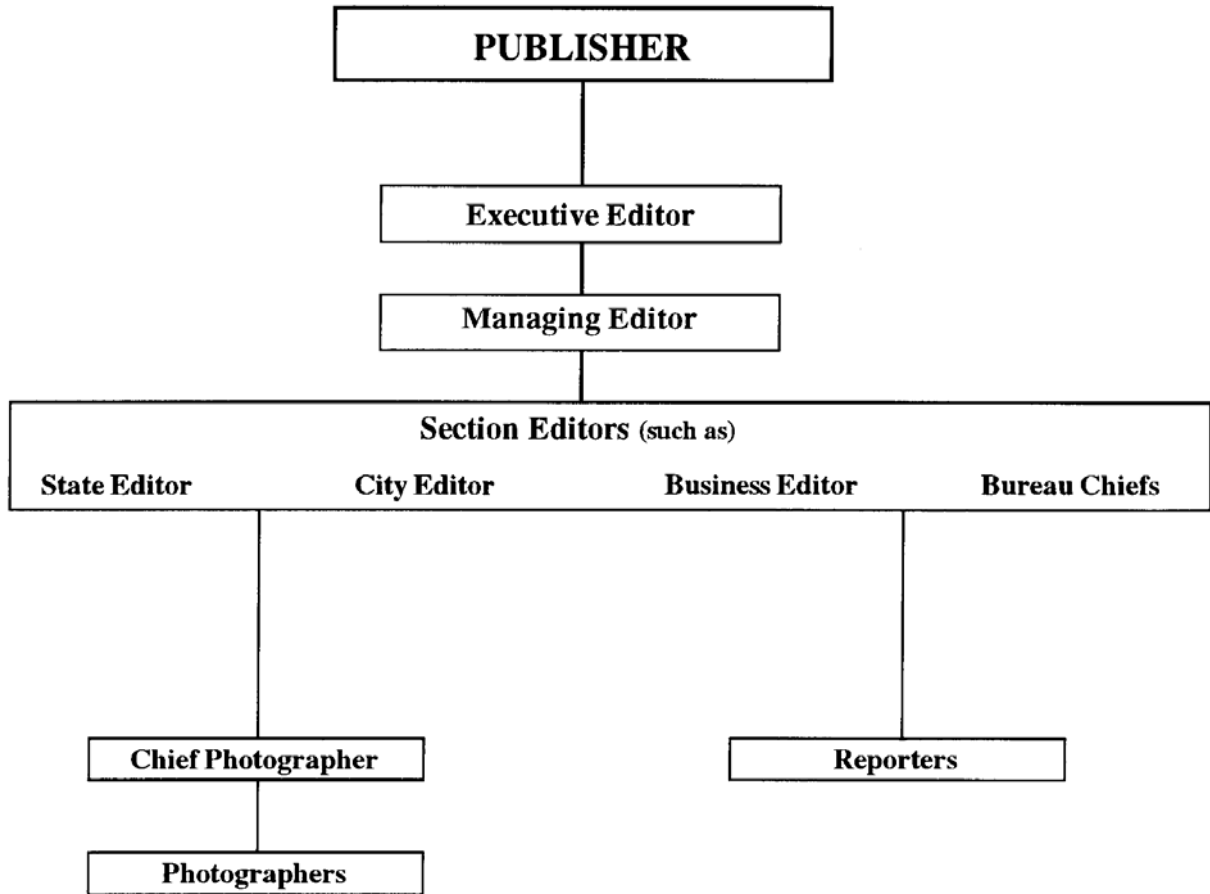
Whether a live field report or prepackaged story, final checks begin to confirm, update and change story content. Videotape is reviewed for sound bites and B-roll footage. Reporters begin to write their story for program producer approval, which is based on content and time allocation.

Once approved, the story's audiotracks are recorded by the reporter. The audio, along with the story script is brought to the photographer and/or tape editor to add visuals to the story. The producer is called with the final story run-time and a suggested anchor lead-in script.

Afternoon crews arrive for evening assignments. When the day's top stories require continuing coverage the afternoon crews are dispatched to relieve early crews.

5:00 P.M. Newscast 5:30 P.M. Newscast 6 P.M. Newscast
- 6:30 P.M. Newscast(s) pro-mortuum – review of content and performance of the station's newscast and how their newscast compared to the competition.
- 7:00 P.M. Description of 3:00 P.M. breakdown repeats for late-night newscast. Late-night newscast.

NEWSPAPER
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



NEWSPAPER DAILY PROCEDURE

GENERAL

10:00 A.M.	Discussion of developing stories
2.:00 P.M.	Budget submitted (summary by reporters of their stories)
4:00 P.M.	Placement of stories Front page - Top story Connecticut page - Secondary location Cover of Local sections – Zoned Cover of Interest Sections – All zones

REPORTERS

Morning	"Organization" Editors – Discuss stories with reporters
2:00 P.M.	Reporters submit budget summary
Deadlines	Vary with editions
Stories	Ideas generated by regular coverage of "beat," tips, mandatory and enterprise stories

DEADLINES

Newspapers, television news programs and radio news programs have diverse deadlines. These deadlines are based on production constraints and quantity of news programs, or the number of zoned editions for newspapers. It is best to acquaint yourself with the individual deadlines of the news organizations and keep them handy before you need them. It is difficult to commit everything to memory or remember these specific details when you are in the midst of a breaking news story.

TELEVISION

WFSB-TV, for example has a noon, 5 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 6:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. newscast as well as an early morning news program.

WTIC-TV, on the other hand, has only a one hour news program at 10:00 p.m.

RADIO

While in the Greater Hartford area, there has been a decline in the number of local radio reporters in the field, it is important to become familiar with all media. Radio news programs run hourly, putting more pressure on the reporter to come up with "fresh" information more often.

NEWSPAPERS

At a morning newspaper like The Hartford Courant, deadlines are generally at the end of the day and are staggered depending on the production of the 10 editions in which the story is to run.

The deadline for non-breaking news is 6:00 p.m.

A breaking news story has a deadline of midnight.

WHAT IS NEWS?

WHAT IS MEDIA COVERAGE?

PRINT

- **Coming Events** – Items in the newspaper that tell readers you have an upcoming event. It provides a short description of the event, the time, date and location and possibly a contact name and telephone number. These items are submitted to the newspaper by event organizers and are quite easy to get published
- **Briefs** – The term to describe a short article. It usually contains a little over 100 words and it may contain one “quote” or sentence attributed to a source. Typically, the reporter’s name is not attached to a brief and it is on a page with a number of other similarly short items. Typically, the information is submitted to the newspaper for publication
- **News Story** – An article that typically contains at least 300 words. It has a byline or the reporter’s name at the beginning. It also usually contains at least two quotes or attributions from people that the reporter interviewed. Typically, a reporter gathers the information used in a story by attending your event.

A story can come in a number of formats:

- Standard news – the reporting of a planned event
 - Breaking news – an unexpected event
 - A feature or Profile – an overview of a person, place or thing
 - Explanatory – an overview of a situation or issue
- **Photo** – If your event is visually interesting, but not newsworthy, sometimes newspapers will send a photographer. The newspaper editor will then publish this picture with a short caption (also known as cut line) below the picture
 - **Op-Ed** – An (opinion editorial) is an opinion piece written by the reader of a newspaper, magazine, or other source, on a topic relevant to the publication’s audience. It should contain roughly between 400- 600 words.
 - **Letter to the Editor** – This is a short letter sent to the editor of a publication or periodical. The subject of the letter should be related to a story or issue that appeared in the publication.

BROADCAST

Broadcast outlets follow the same guidelines in theory for determining news coverage. The advent of cable however has made competition for viewers tougher than ever, so attention in the decision making of daily coverage is given to the location of story and how it fits into the “mix” of the days news.

Television News

Terms to know

- **News Story** – A full news story is called a package and is typically 1:10 minutes.
- **VOSOT** – This means the news anchor reads the introduction (Voice Over) and there is a “soundbite” (an electronic quote) attached. It is typically :30 –: 40 seconds.
- **VO** – This means the news anchor reads the information over the tape. This is typically :20 seconds

Radio

News

Radio newscasts air every half hour. News stories are repeated frequently and are typically :25 - :30 seconds in length.

Talk Shows

Interviews are typically 10 minutes in length. Topics depend on hosts “brand”. They all however usually vary between human-interest stories, controversy and connecting a local story to a national issue or story.

How news outlets decided on covering a story

Once the media outlets receive the press release or news advisory, they will determine to give you a story or no coverage at all.

A report or an editor determines whether to give you a story based on these very important factors. Those factors are timeliness, proximity, impact and controversy.

Timeliness

Timeliness means that your information is news. A reporter wants to know that one of your students won an award as soon as you find out – three weeks after the fact; it's no longer news.

Timeliness can also mean that a story has links to a timely or high profile current event. For example, students often travel, and that's not newsworthy in and of itself. But if a group of students were going to Iraq or New Orleans, that might make for a good story because those locations have been currently in the news. Meanwhile a group of students going to Tampa, Florida, would have less news value by comparison.

Proximity

Proximity is a simple geographical concept. It means that the item you are trying to get a reporter to write about has a relationship to the readership in the town, county or state in which the reporter's media outlet is seen or read.

For example, a West Hartford newspaper would not publish a story about a spelling bee in Plainville.

However, if the winner of the spelling bee is attending a local magnet school in West Hartford, even though he lives in Plainville, then there is a local angle.

Impact

Impact is the factor most frequently overlooked by people who are attempting to get the media interested in their story.

Impact means that a story has:

1. Significance and will affect or has affected the lives of many people, or

2. a prominent or famous person, place or thing, or
3. an event, person, place or thing that is unique or unusual, or
4. a controversial person, place or thing

When a story scores high in terms of impact, reporters or editors often describe it as “sexy” story. Even if your story has timeliness and proximity, it will not be covered or end up being little more than a brief unless it has impact. Remember, reporters are inundated with press release every day, and they are looking through the pile for the ones that are going to lead to high-impact stories.

Significant – Is your event open to the public or just a few students? How many people did your student beat for a prize? Will your new program affect people in a wide region or just in one neighborhood?

Prominence – Does your event or service involve a well-known person or someone of high stature? Can you invite a prominent person to speak? Can you find a reason to give the person an award or you can use his or her name in connection with your event?

Uniqueness – In the news industry this is often called the “Man Bites Dog Story” or a “Hey, Martha.”

Controversy – Dissension, violence and conflict make for good drama. Every good story has a protagonist and an antagonist. You often see these stories framed as good versus evil, us against the, David versus Goliath, the big corporation versus the little guy or government versus the people.

Are you trying to break a barrier? Are you fighting with local leaders or the state for something that will help children and families? Are you trying to change a stereotype? These battles are fodder for great stories.

INTERVIEWS

ATTITUDE plus **BEHAVIOR** plus **CANDOR**
EQUALS
CREDIBILITY

**Credibility is defined as a "source of honor."
Credibility is personal.
Having credibility means that you are believable,
trustworthy and reliable.**

**Trust is nontransferable.
Trust speaks to your integrity.**

**When others have confidence in you
they are open to your influence.**

GOT THE MESSAGE

GET THE MESSAGE

What is your key message?

What is the background and history of that message?

What is the best way to get the message out?

Focus on your organization's key messages.

A successful public relations and marketing campaign requires a specific and detailed plan.

Getting your message out to the public takes work.

Getting your message understood by the public takes a lot more work.

Before you can expect the general public to understand your organization's message,
that message needs to be understood internally.

Be familiar with your communications material.

More importantly, be comfortable with the material!

BEING INTERVIEWED

TELEVISION & RADIO INTERVIEWS

Radio is a medium of sound - only sound. You must be particularly careful of how you sound. Speak clearly but keep the pace fast and practice eliminating the "ums" and "uh's" from your speech.

Television and radio news stories use a "cut or soundbite" which is taken from your responses - usually not longer than 20 seconds in length. It's up to the reporter to choose which statement you've made will make the story.

A "good interview" knows how to speak in 20-second soundbites, careful to leave pauses between statements so broadcast quotes can be easily "lifted" by the tape editor.

On a television or radio talk show, there is more time for detailed answers and talk - but even on a talk show, you should be careful not to appear too loose with information. Know when to stop talking! While always attempting to be brief in your answers, never get to the point of answering with a simple yes or no.

PRINT INTERVIEWS

The low-key interview with a print reporter may be the most dangerous of all interview situations. The atmosphere is usually friendly. Often times you forget that you are being interviewed and get involved in "conversation." Be sure that you understand that in a print story versus a broadcast story, more of what you say can, and usually will be printed.

Chances are you know why the reporter has requested to interview you, so the answers to some of the tougher questions should be thought out in advance of the interview. Generally, the responses should not be memorized. When possible, memorable, catchy phrases that capture the essence of your position should be devised. Bridging techniques should be a standard tool in your tool-kit, ready for you to make key points.

Complete, honest answers should be the norm. It is the reporter's job to distill comments made in the interviews. Complete responses give the reporter confidence in the depth of your knowledge. Practice summing-up complex answers and repeating key points.

SENSITIVE INTERVIEWS

There are a number of guidelines for dealing with media in possible unfriendly situations that apply discipline to the reporter by establishing that there will be a basis for accountability.

1. In an interview, establish at the beginning that you recognize the importance of a clear and responsible exchange. Indicate that you will tape the interview so everything can be checked, use a tape recorder or have someone take notes; if it's for television, make a videotape of the entire interview.

2. Ask the reporter how the facts will be checked. Make it part of the record that you expect facts to be verified and that the reporter indicates he or she would go to responsible sources.

3. If any of the sources the reporter mentions he or she will check do not have your facts or position, have them provided to those sources immediately - not to thwart the reporter but to be sure the source can have the benefit of your input.

MEDIA INTERVIEW FORMATS

TELEVISION

Usually on scene or home turf

Be brief

May involve several reporters

Answer each question

Avoid negative images

Divide time and attention

Maintain your space

Look at the reporter

Watch for live microphones and cameras

OFFICE INTERVIEWS

Sanitize the environment

Allow time for setup

Watch for live microphones and cameras

Think in terms of soundbites

Avoid stiff and bureaucratic setting

Be prepared for B-roll, lights

AMBUSH INTERVIEWS

Take control

Control pacing, questions

Avoid strong emotional reactions

Know when to stop answering questions

PREPARING FOR MEDIA INTERVIEWS

PRE-INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

REQUEST INTERVIEW PARTICULARS

- What is the Topic of the interview?
- Where is the Location of the interview?
- Who will be the Interviewer?
- Who are the other Guests?
- What will be the Interview Format?
- Is the interview Live or Taped?
- Will there be telephone Call-in's?

DETERMINE THE REPORTER'S ANGLE

SELECT THE ORGANIZATION'S BEST SPOKESPERSON

PREPARE

- Set objectives
- Analyze your prime audience
- Know the interviewer
- Know the material
- Rehearse
- Use of visuals

SET GROUND RULES AND STICK TO THEM!

MEDIA INTERVIEW

PRACTICAL POINTERS

- ☛ **ALWAYS** be prepared with relevant facts and information and attempt to narrow the specific area of interest to be covered by the interview. If possible inquire of the interviewer about the particular areas to be covered in the interview and possibly suggest newsworthy and important subjects to be considered.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** keep your answers reasonably short and responsive to the question, especially for radio and television. For all media, plan ahead to use a particular quote or phrase, which captures the essence of what you want to emphasize. Avoid rambling about matter not covered by the question.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** provide fairly simple answers and phraseology, even though the subject area may be very complex. Use analogies or simple metaphors to make it comprehensible. Remember, you will be reaching the "man and woman on the street."
- ☛ **ALWAYS** say it uniquely when possible. A colorful quote is far more likely to make the news broadcast or into print than something that is dry or "profound." Before the interview, jot down on paper certain remarks that you feel have a certain "ring" and relevance to the subject area.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** be yourself and try to feel natural and comfortable. It pays to relax, smile occasionally, and avoid distracting body language.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** welcome naive or seemingly hostile questions. Don't belittle a seemingly innocent or hostile question. Receive the query graciously and turn the moment in your favor. The question that seems hostile may be due to lack of knowledge by the interviewer, but it probably represents a perspective that many of the readers, listeners, or viewers may hold, and you need to enlighten them through such an opportunity.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** state the facts and back up general statements as much as possible.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** avoid "off the record" statements. Assume everything that you say will be held against you or in your favor. Some reporters may not honor "off the record" remarks, and it can become confusing for both you and the reporter to keep tabs of what is "on" or "off the record."
- ☛ **ALWAYS** tell the truth. If you don't know the answer to particular question, say so. If for some reason, it is not possible to answer a question, try to explain why in friendly and reasonable terms. Never use "no comment" or the excuse that the information is too sensitive for release to the media.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** politely request that the interviewer maintain clarity in questioning and ask for a clarification when needed. Often, questions can be convolutedly vague, or not clearly thought out by the interviewer, and you deserve to have a clear understanding of what is meant or intended by a particular question.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** slow down your response when faced with a barrage of questions from one or more reporters - especially when the question is of a hostile nature. Slow down your response and answer very deliberately while maintaining eye contact. The pace of the interview can have an effect on the interviewers. Media representatives have their own techniques for attempting to catch you off guard. Above all, don't let your ego get in the way. Stand firm on the facts and the line of thought you are trying to get across.
- ☛ **ALWAYS** rehearse your interview beforehand. When possible, use a videotape or audio tape recorder to practice logical questions and answers. Have someone in your family or office pose pointed questions and rehearse your answers. Play back the tape and judge for yourself how well you did. Of course, it might be helpful to get the opinion of others as well.

MEDIA INTERVIEW NEVERS

NEVER! NEVER! NEVER!

- ☞ **NEVER** talk about things you know nothing about.

- ☞ **NEVER** bluff or lie.

- ☞ **NEVER** be afraid to admit you don't know the answer to a question.

- ☞ **NEVER** give the interviewer ammunition. Think about what you're about to say, then think about it again, before you say it.

- ☞ **NEVER** go off the record.

- ☞ **NEVER** editorialize.

- ☞ **NEVER** get angry.

- ☞ **NEVER** offer personal opinion. You are representing your organization.

- ☞ **NEVER** use "No Comment." The viewer thinks this means that you are guilty.

- ☞ **NEVER** beat around the bush. Open with the point you want to make.

- ☞ **NEVER** get trapped into statistics.

- ☞ **NEVER** look at the monitor if one is present during interview.

- ☞ **NEVER** speculate.

- ☞ **NEVER** use technical jargon or stilted language.

PERSONAL STYLE

PERSONAL COMMUNICATIONS

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE FOREVER!

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Body Language: The novice speaker is usually unsure of what to do with their body while giving a presentation. Some will pace from one end of the platform - then back again. Some inexperienced speakers look to be in an involuntary state of perpetual motion - shifting their weight from side to side, or bobbing their head, or fidgeting with their notes, or jingling the coins in their pockets. Others will turn rigid, standing expressionless for the entire presentation. Practice does make perfect... or at least much better than without practice. Rehearse your presentation in front of a mirror, or even better, your home videotape recorder. First, find a standing position that feels most natural. Once comfortable standing and talking, add a few mannerisms - such as leaning slightly forward on a key point.

Gestures: Hand gestures are used to emphasize a specific point in your presentation. To that end, always remember that "less is more." Keep your on-stage movements simple. When in doubt? Hold onto your script cards at the podium - or when working without notes, keep your arms relaxed at your side. Be careful that your hand and arm movements don't get in the way of your message.

Eye Contact: Our eyes can express no emotion. Yet by manipulating your eyes, and the eyelids and eyebrows, we are able to convey intricate nonverbal messages. Establishing strong eye contact is essential to establishing the communication bond between the presenter and the audience.

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Be Your Own Best Critic: Record yourself as you "run through" your presentation. Listening to yourself will allow you to identify not only the rough spots in your material - but also the rough spots in your verbalization. You can rephrase items, find a more comfortable framework to work within, or determine which method of delivery will make your message more memorable. Varying your rate, pitch and volume of speech (and utilizing pauses) you will be able to clearly emphasize your message.

Volume: Electronic amplification allows even the soft spoken to be heard in any setting. On the occasion when you speak without a microphone, be sure to adjust your voice to the acoustics for the room, the size of the audience and the level of background noise.

Pitch is the range of the presenter's voice. In presentation pitch can affect the meaning of words or sounds. These inflections give your voice luster, warmth and vitality. Your inflections can make you sound happy or sad, angry or pleased, dynamic or listless, tense or relaxed, interested or bored.

Rate refers to the speed at which a person speaks. There is no uniform rate for effective presentation skills. However, research suggests that in most situations, listeners will find a speaker with a slightly faster rate than normal to be more competent and more persuasive than a speaker with a lower rate.

Pauses can make a dramatic statement! Learning when and how to pause is a major challenge for most beginning speakers. A moment of silence can seem like an eternity. As you gain more poise and confidence, however, you will discover how useful the pause can be. It can signal the end of a thought, give an idea time to sink in and lend dramatic impact to a statement.

Pronunciation and diction are both attributes that are essential to a positive presentation. A good speaker must practice - being sensitive to any possible speech problems. Many times people don't realize they are mispronouncing a word, otherwise they would say the word correctly.

Slang & Worse: Unless utilizing a particular slang word or phrase to make a point refrain from all forms of slang. Also avoid "uhs" "umns", "like" and every other fractured form of the English language.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

STRATEGIES FOR CRISIS COMMUNICATION

TAKE CONTROL

- ☞ Be aggressive and take control of the situation.
- ☞ Use the media as a tool to dispel any rumors, dire predictions and prevent public unrest.
- ☞ Never speculate on the cause, cost or future ramifications of a crisis.
- ☞ Firmly establish the spokesperson during a crisis.
- ☞ The most effective and decisive thing you can do is respond immediately, even if that response is nothing more than an acknowledgment of the facts.

PREVENT PANIC

- ☞ Understanding human nature is important.
- ☞ Panic increases exponentially the longer people must deal with uncertainty.
- ☞ Respond immediately.
- ☞ Gear your statements to the most basic human needs first