

# MEDIA TRAINING GUIDEBOOK



**VOLUME 3**

 **Access  
Intelligence**

# PRNews

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Published weekly by Access Intelligence, LLC  
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## PUBLISHER'S LETTER

### Sweat the Small Stuff In Media Training

#### Who. What. Where. When. Why.

As a former journalist, I have ingrained those 5W's in my head. If there's a breaking news story, a crisis or a noteworthy event, I instinctively want to know who's affected, what's affected, where is this taking place, when did it occur and why did this happen. And I want to know now. Fortunately (though some PR pros would differ on this), with social media and the 24/7 news environment, we can get a lot of answers quickly. And the media remains the most trusted conduit for getting your message heard.

PR people need to think like journalists but perform like reputation gatekeepers. The sound bite from your key executive during a crisis can make *the* difference in many performance metrics: sales, stock price, employee morale, overall media coverage, to name a few. How your spokesperson looks on camera, or what he says in his blog, or how she responds to a "trick question" from the press is up to you, the gatekeeper and driver of the message.

Media training is not just about the 10-second pithy response (though you need to keep it short and succinct). And it's not just about the right makeup and color of your outfit (though blue works well on TV). Media training is often misunderstood as "show time" for spokespeople. In fact, it's all the research and due diligence about the issue at hand, the reporter asking the question, the goal of the interview—*prior* to meeting the media—that will make all the difference in tone of story coverage and your organization's reputation.

This third volume of the *PR News Media Training Guidebook* is an instructional guide to being media savvy. That quote about success/genius being 10% luck and 90% perspiration holds true for media trainers—you need to sweat the small stuff. This guide is not for slackers—there's some work involved in being a media trainer, whether it's full time for you or just a part of your job. You'll find that the gleanings from this guidebook will make you a better communicator and more effective PR professional.

We have reached out to dozens of media training experts to share their case studies and lessons learned in media relations and messaging. You'll read amazing accounts of crisis management and the role smart messaging played in the outcome. And you'll learn Do's and Don'ts of preparing for an interview and bridging the discussion with journalists to your advantage.

We have asked all our contributors to give us lists and checklists because at *PR News* we are list fanatics. With nearly every article you'll see a checklist that will help steer you in the right direction. And you'll discover ways to get positive coverage and learn real-world tactics for being the go-to person in your organization for reputation strategy.

Good luck with your media relations efforts, and keep me posted on your successes.

Sincerely,

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