

# Handling Difficult Media Questions

(and getting leaders to prepare properly)



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#AskCCG

# Why It Matters

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Even the  
Best Practice

# Topics

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- Messages that Survive
- Preparing for Difficult Questions
- Getting Senior Management Buy-In for Formal Coaching
- Your Questions

# The Art Of The Sound Bite

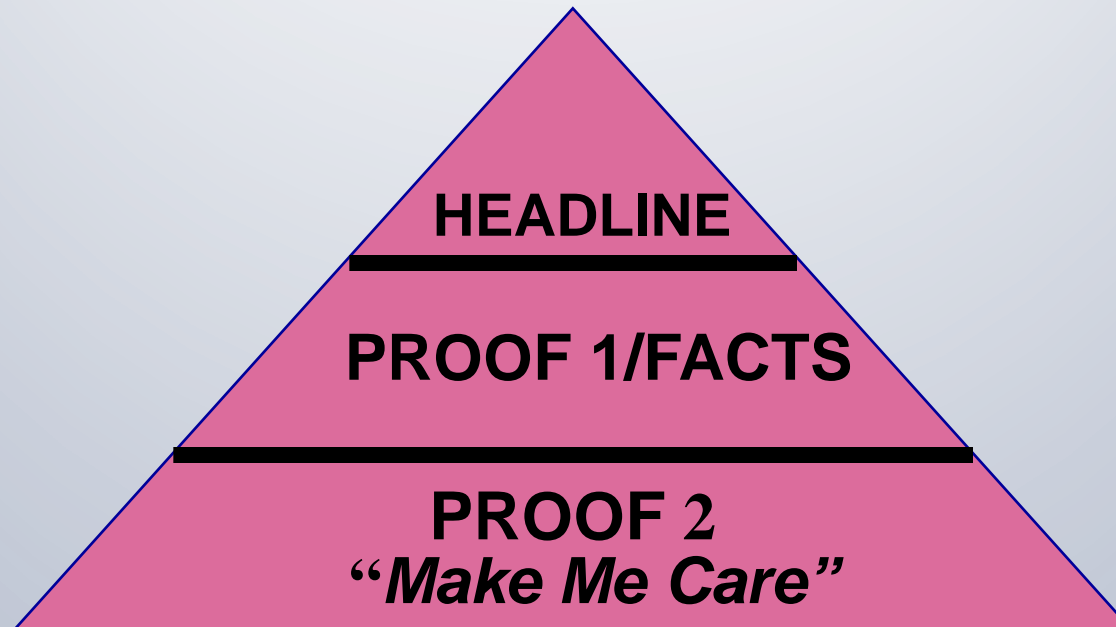
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- Relatable
- Visual
- 'Portable'



# The Art Of The Sound Bite

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## **Proofs:**

1. Anecdotes, Examples, Testimonials
2. Third Party Endorsements
3. Analogies

# The Art of the Soundbite: Consumer/Utility Industry Example

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## **GE Energy Smart Grid Solutions, like having Google Earth for your utility grid network**

- Real time grid diagnostics
- Preventing outages saves utility \$1 million/min
- Cuts costs of “truck roll” by as much as 50%

***Hurricane Sandy***  
A Smart Meter’s “Last Gasp”

# The Art of the Soundbite: Health Industry Example

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**A new combination of skin cancer drugs that fight  
the malignancy and the inevitable resistance**

- **Endpoints, p-values and hazard ratios**
- **Granted FDA Accelerated & Priority Review**
- **Global, Phase III, double-blind, placebo-controlled studies**

**Stopping a thief trying to escape  
down the highway**





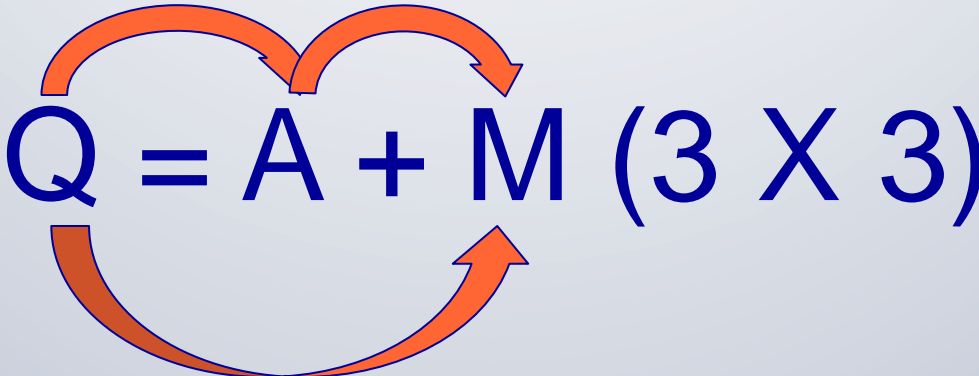
# C-Levels & the Two Cs

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Concession and Concision

[PLACEHOLDER FOR  
ADOBE CEO VIDEO]

# Bridging that Safeguards Credibility

$$Q = A + M \quad (3 \times 3)$$


Fair, Compliant & Credible



Subjective & Biased



# Bridging

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- - -

+ + +

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Content:

Key Messages:

Technique/Format:

A/B False Choice

“IF”

Unknown Facts

Bash-Goadng

Negative Words/Tone

# PepsiCo – Great Stories



# Blocking Before Bridging

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## Blocks are Better than Repeats

- No/Not at all
- Actually
- I cannot predict
- I disagree
- That hasn't been our experience
- Let me put that in perspective
- That's not the data we've seen

# Getting Senior Management Buy In on Coaching

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- Wide Applicability of Media Skills
- ~~TRAINING~~ – Re-name it
- Peer Pressure
- Modeling for Direct Reports
- Makes for More Productive Time with Reporters

Note: Fear is Risky – (Only Works in Washington?!)

# CEO Must Don'ts

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- Never say “No Comment”
- Don't go beyond your expertise
- Don't speculate
- Don't bash the competition
- Avoid using or repeating “negatives”
- Don't go off the record

Note: Every constituent is a reporter...

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