

WORKING WITH MEDIA


#GAUKConf

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WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

Tips for small organisations by Vivienne Parry

Social media *v* *Conventional* *Media*


- Each has its place
 - Use one to leverage the other
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Rule 1
Don't contact
the media
unless you
know what to
say and why

- What do you want to achieve now or in the next year?
 - Can you say what your condition is and what you do in a phrase
 - Have you got back up materials; for instance information, images or graphics
 - Have you got access to a helpful expert
 - Think about collaboration with rare disease allies
 - Have you got enough real case studies (ie prepared to be photographed and named)
 - Think about potential news hooks (anniversary?)
 - Who is your audience
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Rule 2

Smart Bomb

- Forget press releases, go for smart bombing
 - Use Twitter to follow journalists, programmes and websites
 - Use the outlet appropriate to your preferred audience, eg Pulse for GPs, HSJ for policy makers, Daily Mail for campaigns
 - Know the difference between news (immediate, short, needs a hook) and features (longer, more story led)
 - Provide regular Twitter updates (not too many)
 - Be highly selective in your 'asks'
 - Be exclusive and don't ask a journalist to repeat a story
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Rule 3

Be ready

- Know that journalists operate in a different time zone
 - Is your mobile phone on?
 - Return calls quickly – within 10 minutes
 - Do you have images/contact numbers readily available on a mobile device
 - Have you facts and figures to hand?
 - Do you know when your case studies are contactable. If they are not contactable, don't use them!
 - Events make news. Prepare to act quickly if a potential hook appears (new study? Celeb comes out with a similar condition etc)
 - Make your own news – surveys, fury about services etc
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Rule 4

Give the media what it wants


- Human stories
 - Triumph over tragedy
 - Controversy
 - Something new
 - Counter factual (eg dog bites man)
 - Intriguing
 - A celeb
 - And do it simply, quickly and clearly
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Rule 5

Say what you want to say

- Write down the three things that you want to get out of an encounter with the media
 - Make sure that you say them
 - Use phrases like 'the most important thing for us is..' to highlight what's important to you
 - Don't use acronyms or medical terms unless you explain them
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Rule 6
Know some
tricks of the
trade
a) Print

- Write down the name and contact details of the journalist
 - Make sure you say your three things
 - Ask them to read back quotes
 - If something is complex, for instance the science of the condition, ask them to explain it back to you once you've explained it
 - No, you never have copy approval
 - Know journalists rarely write headlines
 - Know pieces get subbed down or even ditched if there's a lot of news
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Rule 6

Tricks of the trade


b) radio

- Always say yes to radio – it's a great place to start and to build confidence and has a terrific audience
 - Local radio is hungry for content
 - Know whether the programme is news or features
 - Ask roughly how long the interview will last
 - Ask roughly what the angle will be (but don't expect questions in advance)
 - Turn your mobile off!
 - Don't wear clinking bracelets or heavy watches that bang the table
 - Don't take in notes – if there's something you think you will forget, write it on your hand
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Rule 6

Tricks of the trade

c) TV


- Is it news or features, outside broadcast, studio
 - Wear appropriate clothes – no all white, all black or small checks, no décolleté, v short skirts or dangly earrings, what do you look like when you sit down?
 - Bright block colours work best (check studio colour)
 - A white shirt under darker jacket is the most flattering
 - You don't get make up unless you are in a studio. Otherwise, slap it on thick yourself, brush your hair and check in a mirror for spinach
 - Powder is really important
 - NEVER EVER LOOK AT THE CAMERA OR MONITOR – keep your eyes glued on the interviewer unless told otherwise
 - There should always be an appearance fee for BBC. At the very least, get them to organise transport
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Rule 7
Make
yourself
sound
fabulous


- To stop yourself squeaking, breathe out before you speak
 - Tell a story but keep it short and simple
 - Vary the tone and speed of what you say and don't speak too quickly
 - On TV don't flap your hands too much or sway about
 - On radio, have a glass of water before you go in the studio
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Rule 8

Watch yourself back

- Health Warning – you will think its hideous
 - Do this on your own, with a large drink
 - Note your 'tic', the thing you do when you are nervous that you never knew you did until now
 - Try and keep it under control next time
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Rule 9
Practice
makes
perfect

- Practise with someone you don't know
 - Practise with kids
 - Practise with friends
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Rule 10
You are
always
better than
you think

- Be passionate, enthusiastic, helpful
- Be nice to everyone

And you'll be fabulous
darling



WORKSHOP ROOMS

Managing online communities

Action Room 2 (off auditorium)

Building a strong case for support

Conference Room (Mezzanine level)

Working with Media

Auditorium

Do you need a patient registry?

Garfield Weston Action Room (off auditorium)

Producing patient information and leaflets

Annex Room (Lower Ground floor)

