3-7-2014

10 Tips to Tell Your Story in a Thought-Provoking and Technically Truthful Way

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Recommended Citation

Johnson, Dave, "10 Tips to Tell Your Story in a Thought-Provoking and Technically Truthful Way" (2014). TREC Friday Seminar Series. 53.
http://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/trec_seminar/53

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Imagine your HEADLINE

Tell your story
in a thought-provoking
and technically truthful way

Oregon Transportation Research and Education Consortium
Friday Transportation Seminar Series
3/7/2014

Dave Thompson, APR
"Imagine Your Headline" Dave Thompson
3/7/2014

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Why talk to the media?

1 or more of...

- Increase employee morale/reputation, public image
- Manage reputation
- Build brand
- Build trust
- Change attitudes
- Raise awareness
- Provide expert perspective
- 10 more of...

Why talk to the media?

"Where we get our news..."
1. Tell the truth

Credibility is personal: It's yours to lose

2. Everything is on the record

If you don't want it quoted… Don't say it

3. Communicate clearly

4. Talk about what you know

5. Remember the hat you're wearing

6. Explain "no comment"

7. Communicate clearly

8. Everything is on the record

9. Tell the truth

10. Be prepared

Dave's 7 Rules of Interviewing
Communicate clearly

- Active voice
- Short sentences
- 1 thought = 1 sentence

Talk about what you know

Corollary: Don't talk about what you don't know
Talk about what you know.

Remember the hat you're wearing:

• You're speaking for your organization...
• DON'T speak for any other organization...

Explain "no comment":

- I'm guilty — or — I'm lying
- I can't or won't answer...

"I don't know..."

"I can't or won't answer..."

"No comment."

"I'll find out and get back to you."

"Talk about what you know."

"You're speaking for your organization..."

"Don't speak for any other organization..."
Explain "no comment"

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Objective
Audience
Message

Remember your desired outcomes
Practice speaking your key messages
Imagine your headline

Be prepared

Explain "no comment"

"..." can't answer that
What if we...
Just kidding.
"Because we follow a fair process. Here's how it works..."
“Imagine Your Headline” Dave Thompson

How to Breathe

• Place
  • In-studio
  • Split-screen
  • At the scene
• Kind
  • Live
  • Live on tape
  • Taped
• Action
  • Stationary
  • Walk & Talk
  • Acting

Today’s assumption

Interview mechanics

• Where to look
  • Dress
  • Use your hands, arms
  • Stand
  • Breathe
  • How to

How to breathe

Diaphragm

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How to breathe

Diaphragm
How to stand

How to dress

How to use your hands, arms

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Where to look

Look at the person asking the questions

Your mindset

• Live in the moment
• Make your point first, foremost & last
• Flag & bridge

Message metaphor

• Paint a picture in my mind
• Compare; then contrast
• Here’s how it’s the same as something else...
• ...and here’s how it’s different
• Here’s how it’s the same as...
• ...and here’s how it’s different.

The key issue is

Flag & bridge

• Make your point first, foremost & last
• Live in the moment

Your mindset

Where to look

Checking the questions

Look at the person asking the questions
Metaphor example 1

Albert Einstein (1938):

"The wireless telegraph is not difficult to understand. The ordinary telegraph is like a very long cat. You pull the tail in New York, and it meows in Los Angeles. The wireless is the same, only without the cat."

Metaphor example 2

ODOT OITI III highway bridge program:

"If these bridges were people, we’d be throwing retirement parties for them. Instead, we’re asking them to carry more vehicles at higher speeds and heavier weights."

Metaphor example 3

Traffic congestion and metering:

WASHINGTON DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION

www.youtube.com/watch?v=8G7ViTTuwno
Metaphor cautions

• Keep them simple, to the point
  – Are they good analogies?
  – Are they easily understood?
  – Are they easy to the point

Tell your story!

Resources

• Ann Wylie, writing coach
  http://www.wyliecomm.com/
• Brad Phillips, “Mr. Media Training”
  www.MrMediaTraining.com
• Dave Thompson, APR
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