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

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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
Why talk to the media?

1. Provide expert perspective
2. Raise awareness
3. Change attitudes
4. Build trust
5. Build brand
6. Manage reputation
7. Increase employee morale/retention, public msg.
8. Provide expert perspective
9. Or more of...

Today's talk

• Dave's 7 rules of interviewing
• Interview mechanics
• Your mindset
• Message metaphor
• Dave's 7 rules of interviewing

Imagine Your Headline
Dave Thompson
Dave's 7 Rules of Interviewing

1. Tell the truth
2. Credibility is personal: It's yours to lose
3. Communicate clearly
4. Everything is on the record
5. Talk about what you know
6. "No comment" means the hat you're wearing
7. Be prepared

"Imagine Your Headline" Dave Thompson
Communicate clearly

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

Talk about what you know

Talk about what you know

Corollary: DON'T talk about what you don't know

Communicate clearly
Imagine Your Headline

Dave Thompson

Talk about what you know

"because that's not my subject expertise."

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

I don't know…

Remember the hat you're wearing

Explain "no comment"

"I'm guilty"

—or—

"I'm lying"

"I can't or won't answer…"

Talk about what you know

"I don't know."

"Tell me more about that, and I'll find out" would be appropriate to say.
Explain “no comment”
Imagine Your Headline  Dave Thompson

Place

• In-studio
• Split-screen
• At the scene

Kind

• Live
• Live on tape
• Taped

Action

• Stationary
• Walk & Talk
• Acting

Today’s assumption

Interview mechanics

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

How to breathe

Diaphragm
How to dress

- Business uniform
- Appropriate
- No distractions!

It depends!

Common sense; situation appropriate

How to use your hands, arms

- Except when they distract
- However, you normally would.

How to stand
Imagine Your Headline

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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
- Here's how it's different
- "...and here's how it's something else."

Flag & Bridge

- Make your point first, foremost & last
- Live in the moment
- "Here's how it's the same as...
...and here's how it's different."

The key issue is

- What is important
- Flag & bridge

Look at the question

Where to look

ask the question
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 OITIA 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:
“(...) 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 telegraph is not. The wireless telegraph is not.”

Alfie Ehrenpreis (1998):
Metaphor cautions

- Keep them simple, to the point
- Are they good analogies?
- Are they easily understood?
- Keep them simple, 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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