



TIPS ON DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

MEDIA AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO TELL YOUR STORY!

THE MEDIA ENVIRONMENT – AN OPPORTUNITY



OPPORTUNITY

Media are identified as a potential distraction for athletes at the Olympic games – important to practice/rehearse dealing with members of the media.

RAISING OUR PROFILE

Media are our partners! They will help raise our profile and the profile of our athletes.

PLAN

Effective media management is planned, rehearsed and practiced in advance, just like training for competition.

**THE MEDIA ARE STORY
TELLERS.**

**THEY SHARE OUR
STORIES WITH ALL
CANADIANS.**

**LET'S HELP THEM TELL
OUR STORY.**

TIPS ON DEALING WITH THE MEDIA



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO DEAL WITH THE MEDIA?

An organization looking to attract fans, viewers, sponsors and participants needs to get its message out.

Athletes are the most credible spokespeople. Media are genuinely interested in your stories.

Don't see it as a distraction. See it as an opportunity to tell your story to your fans.



BLOCKING AND BRIDGING

KNOW YOUR KEY MESSAGES (WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY), AND “BRIDGE” TO THEM

BRIDGE BETWEEN THE ANSWER AND THE POINT YOU ARE GOING TO MAKE:

Always answer the question with an answer: “Yes”, “No”, “I do”, “I don’t...”, and then bridge to your key message.

BRIDGING WORDS

- “ACTUALLY...”
- “THE REAL ISSUE HERE IS...”
- “THAT SPEAKS TO A BIGGER POINT...”
- “LET’S LOOK AT THAT ANOTHER WAY...”
- “IF I’M UNDERSTANDING, THE ISSUE IS...”
- “ON THE CONTRARY...”

MORE TIPS



RELAX AND PAUSE

Don't feel rushed, take your time to think, and answer.

SOME MEDIA MAY NOT KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT SPORT

Some won't know sport or even the top athletes - be patient with basic questions, as some media may not have a firm grasp on sport; they are covering all sports at the games and may need your help.

CHERISH THE OPPORTUNITY

Dealing with the media can be stressful but you should never treat it like a chore. Use the opportunity to talk about the team, the games, the organization.

BRING THEM INTO YOUR WORLD

Bridge from the question to take them into your world. Example if a question is asked on transport, say it's going well so far, and you are focused on your competition.

NEGATIVE QUESTIONS



NEGATIVE QUESTIONS SHOULD NOT BE AVOIDED.

When answering a negative question, do not repeat the negative phrase!

Respond with a positive statement that can start with “in fact...” or “on the contrary..”

FOR EXAMPLE: “WOW... TRANSPORTATION IS A DISASTER.”

BAD ANSWER: “IT’S NOT A DISASTER.”

GOOD ANSWER: “WE’VE BEEN GETTING TO OUR COMPETITIONS ON TIME.”

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS



Internal disputes should never be played out in the media. It just hurts you, your organization, and the sport. And it makes potential partners stay away.

Also, the media will focus on this negative story, and ignore the wonderful stories that we could be sharing.

If you have an issue, there is always a way to discuss it. Reach out to someone who you trust and discuss potential ways to resolve the situation.

NO COMMENT



AVOID USING “NO COMMENT”.

- The term implies that you are hiding something.
- Share what you can.
- “Off the record” does not exist. If you say something casually to a journalist in a non-working environment (restaurant, bar, etc.), he or she can still use it!

SHOW PERSONALITY

- Media love dealing with athletes and spokespersons who are friendly.
- Don’t treat the interview like a chore, even if you’ve answered the same question before
- Speak in short sentences (sound bytes), especially with broadcast media

INTERVIEW TIPS



NEVER SPECULATE

- Don't speculate or answer hypothetical situations
- Tell the reporter what is going on instead: "I can't speculate, but what I can tell you is..."
- If you think a question is better answered by someone else, i.e., your NSO or someone else within the Canadian Olympic Committee, say so.

SILENT SPOTS

- Avoid trying to fill in the silent spots
- Natural tendencies are to try and "fill in" and keep talking - don't do this, say your piece, then pause.

NO BAD QUESTIONS



THERE ARE NO BAD QUESTIONS

- Questions are opportunities, not threats
- Avoid confrontation
- Don't repeat negative questions
- Expect surprises
- Tell your story: you have a goal, see it through
- *If you dread it, expect it*

KEY MESSAGES



KNOW YOUR KEY MESSAGES

PREPARE AND USE THESE KEY MESSAGES.

HOWEVER, REMEMBER TO:

- Answer questions directly and honestly before thinking about key messages
- Only use key messages in context
- Share your key messages with all spokespersons
- Sports and athletes have their own key messages as well



TIME FOR PRACTICE

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAY ABOUT YOURSELF?

Sometimes, media ask you questions, but you wish they'd ask you something else, because you want to say something different about yourself.

List down 5 things you would like media to ask you; you're in control of the interview!

- What are the top 5 things fans should know about you? And write it down.
- When and how you started competing?
- Who was your sport idol growing up and why?
- What was the biggest obstacle you overcame in your career? Etc.

THAT BECOMES YOUR « NARRATIVE ». KNOW YOUR STORY WELL, TELL IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN. THAT WILL BECOME YOUR CORE MESSAGING, YOUR PERSONAL BRAND MESSAGING. WILL MAKE IT EASIER TO « SELL » YOURSELF!



**THANK YOU
MERCI**