



PRACTICE
MASTERY
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POWER STRATEGIES

Essential Marketing Strategies
for Extraordinary Practice Success



YOUR MARKETING ALCHEMY PUBLIC RELATIONS MANUAL

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What can be said but not practiced...
is better not said.

What can be practiced but not spoken of...
is better not done.

[So] ultimately [you] will be able to speak without
trouble and act without disgrace.

– *Thomas Cleary*

Keep it with faith.

Practice it with keenness.

Perfect it with faithfulness...

then, though the task be great, you shall surely succeed.

— Thomas Cleary

POWER STRATEGIES



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PUBLIC RELATIONS

POWER STRATEGIES: PUBLIC RELATIONS

“When your circus comes to town and you put up a sign, that’s advertising.

If you put the sign on the back of an elephant, and you march the elephant through town, that’s sales promotion.

If the elephant, with the sign still on his back, tramples through the mayor’s flower garden and the paper reports it, that’s publicity.

If you can get the mayor to laugh about it and forgive the elephant and ride in the circus with no hard feelings, then you’ve mastered the art of public relations.”

– Raleigh Pinskey, *The Zen of Hype*

The primary way to get the word out about your products and services are:

1. Advertising... this is the most expensive method.
2. Direct marketing... this is the second most expensive form of advertising.
3. *Public relations*... perhaps the least expensive, though most time-consuming.

Public relations, or PR, relates to promotions intended to create goodwill or exposure into the community of a business, product or service or idea for a person, practice or business. Public relations incorporates and includes communications by a person, practice or company, often in the form of news distributed by a newspaper, magazine, radio, television or the internet for which the person, practice or organisation does not pay.

A significant element of PR is for the purpose of creating a favourable public image, positive community sentiment, as well as public awareness... while also constituting an important aspect of a marketing campaign.

In essence, any marketing activity or event that helps create a favourable relationship between the practice and their clients or potential clients; or activities that influence the press or media to print stories and promote a favourable image of the practice, its products and/or services is considered public relations.

DEEPENING THE PUBLIC RELATIONS DEFINITION

Tony Greener, in his book, *The Secrets of Successful Public Relations and Image Making*, defines public relations as, “The positive presentation of an organisation to all its publics.”

Greener explains that public relations is not the words and pictures about your organisation that you have paid for in newspapers, magazines, radio or TV; that it isn’t the brochures, leaflets, posters or displays that make up your marketing or point of sale materials; nor is it the image that you portray or the leadership of your organisation... and while it can, and often does, embody all of these areas, public relations is a great deal more.

In this way, public relations is, “Controlling the way in which you present yourself — and are presented — in order to influence the way in which people think of you.”

Greener also advises that public relations’ influence does not limit itself to external bodies, it also means employees, business suppliers, associates and partners, the media, trade networks, industry watchdogs and financial backers, as well as a whole host of influential groups of people known in the PR industry as “target audiences.”

And what is it that public relations specifically can do for an organisation?

Greener provides the following 5-point checklist:

1. Build reputations of companies and organisations.
2. Build reputations of individuals as experts in their chosen field.
3. Increase awareness of the products or services and of the organisation which provides them.
4. Enhance credibility of a public position or a company’s worth.
5. Mount a campaign aimed at achieving a specific objective.

And while a public relations campaign may include any marketing endeavours, including newspaper advertising, radio, brochures, magazines and seminars or presentations, Greener states that it becomes primarily public relations, “...persuading third parties to write or comment favourably to lend support from quarters which are perceived to be impartial, arranging exhibitions and conferences, organising visits to venues via important pressure groups and, almost inevitably, persuading the press and media to support the cause.”

It is for these reasons that PR is an important element of any marketing campaign. It is also a power strategy to extend your existing marketing campaign.

PR can be used to rapidly increase the business growth that marketing is endeavouring to establish, while being extremely cost-effective in comparison to other marketing methods.

Most importantly, the apparent impartial opinion expressed by PR is one of the most powerful foundation points for not only a successful marketing campaign but the establishment of your expert status in the minds of the public and the growth of your business as a result.

ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS

Public relations is about relationships. It begins with your relationship with the relevant person in the media and how they convey your communication to their audience. As such, begin by approaching the journalist, radio announcer or TV program manager personally, establishing a relationship and a connection with them and transferring your enthusiasm and energy for the project to them.

It is imperative that you look at the PR exercise from the side of the media person. As previously stated, make sure that you have information that is relevant to their audience that would be desirable for them to air or print and is newsworthy.

Provide them with information in a format that is useful to them and do not impose deadlines that make it difficult for them or provide conditions that are unrealistic or counterproductive. Instead, provide them all of the information they need in a usable format and assist them in any way possible.

Also, if you are inviting them to an external event, ensure that you provide details in advance to allow them to fit it into their schedule.

Be friendly, helpful... and, most of all, do as much of their job for them, in a way that they feel comfortable with and would appreciate, as is possible. Provide copy that is error-free and print ready in the style and format they need.

Journalists and other people reviewing public relations materials are often extraordinarily busy, running on tight deadlines and are viewing multiple public relations kits, many of which do not meet the classifications they require in order to release them. Avoid adding to their frustration in any way you can.

GETTING YOUR PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIONED

If your public relations kit meets all of these criteria; is print ready, error-free and newsworthy... and it does not get used — follow up.

Continue to build the relationship. Continue to reposition the information so it does become usable by the journalist. And, if not, gain an understanding as to why, make the modifications and adaptations and re-present the public relations kit, highlighting the changes that have been made.

Equally, after the public relations event and its success, be sure to phone the journalist in order to express your appreciation. Depending on the magnitude of the event, it may be also worthwhile writing a hand-written letter and providing a gift in appreciation.

Irrespective of the level of coverage you receive, it is important not to complain. Be grateful and appreciative and communicate that as far as is possible and practical.

Finally, as far as is possible, be available to receive calls and communications from the journalist to whom you have provided your public relations kit. Maintain your communications and relationship with them. Be honest in all of your communications and maintain regular contact.

Book signings are a good idea for another public relations angle...

Other types of angles include:

Celebrations

Activities of special interest groups

Tragedies

Things that have a family appeal

Once again, all of these need to be newsworthy and high interest.

PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES...

There are a number of specific techniques you can use as part of public relations. We will discuss them briefly here.

The Press Release

The press release, often called the news release or the press statement, is provided to newspapers as newsworthy material. The keys to success are:

- Newsworthiness
- Relevance to the market and audience of the newspaper
- Quickly addresses hot topics
- Is well written, documented and researched
- Is readable and interesting
- Does not directly promote the business

Tony Greener in his book, *The Secrets of Successful Public Relations and Image-Making*, provides the following golden rules for providing a press release:

1. First, be brief... try to condense your whole story into no more than eight paragraphs, fewer if possible.
2. Ensure that the gist of the story is contained in the first paragraph... preferably in the first sentence.
3. Keep the English as simple and every day as possible... try to avoid technical jargon with specialised meanings and obscure terms.
4. Pay attention to your layout... always give your release a heading and a date at the top. Always set out the document in space and a half or double spacing. Make sure that your name, address and telephone number are clearly set out at the bottom as a source for further information.
5. Use quotes... where they add to the credibility, but use them sparingly and never at the beginning of the piece.
6. Don't expect a piece of paper to solve all your publicity requirements. Follow it up with a phone call if you can.

TV and Radio

Press releases can also be provided to TV and radio. In providing information to these media again, follow the principles of making the release newsworthy, relevant and a complete story.

The difference with these media is that, invariably, you will need to go beyond providing the news release. You may need to be interviewed, attend a studio or have camera people come to you or an outside event.

It is important that you prepare for each of these elements and that you know the full extent of the release before contacting the people in preparation.

The Media Event and the Product Launch

Public relations can also be extended into a product launch or a media event where you are endeavouring to gather attention for a specific topic.

With a media event or product launch your focus is upon gaining the media's attention and presence at the event. You also have to have consideration for the audience and the type of feel and experience they are going to have and how they are going to contribute to the story.

The aim here is that you want the audience to support the message you are endeavouring to communicate and the media to respond positively to that and build the momentum of your story and share that with the community, creating community awareness of the event and its message.

Community Relations

Public relations also relates to community relations... how you are perceived by your community, how you relate to that community and the messages you want to provide to that community.

Information provided to any of the media outlets described provides the opportunity to communicate to the community through the media. The same methodologies apply; the outcome is community relations focused as opposed to a specific marketing strategy.

Internal Communications

Finally, public relations relates to how you are perceived by the members of your organisation. The culture of the organisation is either undermined or enriched by how you are perceived and what you communicate to your team and organisation.

As such, public relations campaigns directed internally build confidence, trust and deepen the connection between the team members individually and the team within the organisation. They enhance morale, effect productivity and performance and generate a sense of pride and loyalty if applied effectively.

THE BENEFITS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS...

1. Generate new clients... as with any marketing activity, the primary purpose and reason is to generate new clients. Public relations, by your exposure into the market, gives people the opportunity to understand and know about your service, and make a determination and decision whether that service is for them. Assuming it is, you then have the opportunity to have clients respond as a result of the story that gets relayed to the public about you.
2. Public awareness... by people telling stories about you in the public, by you getting exposure through the media, people become aware of you, of your services and the products that you have available to help them with their problems. If you market effectively using public relations, people will not only become aware of you, they will understand that you have solutions to their problems and will want to contact you as a result.
3. Credibility and authority... public relations give you credibility and authority that you would not otherwise, or may not otherwise, have had. What you say about yourself

holds very little sway over others. However, when somebody says something about you, paints you as an expert, defines the skills or abilities you have... then it becomes real, fact. When people talk about you in a positive way, this reality enhances your credibility and authority and places you as an expert in your field.

4. Public image... public relations gives you the ability to build a public image. It brands you, your practice, and clearly distinguishes and defines the niche that you are in and the achievements that you are capable of.
5. It creates marketing content for other marketing activities... the articles, radio and television interviews and other materials that result from your public relations campaigns can then be used in other marketing activities.

For example, you may provide a sales letter to existing clients or potential new clients with information about the public relations event that took place, defining the expert status that you have been placed in and how this may, therefore, benefit them. You, therefore, get the opportunity to leverage public relations into your other marketing endeavours.

6. Value-add to existing clients... public relations enables you to communicate in-house what is taking place within your public relations marketing. The effect is that you can either send letters to clients, reminding them of the benefits of care as detailed in your public relations campaign, or, if clients are in consultation, emphasise what this event meant for the community, and how that community message relates to the client. Invariably, you are providing the opportunity to remind clients of the benefit of care, and re-market and re-sell them on the care that they have already committed to, deepening their relationship with their practice and strengthening their commitment to care.
7. Corporate culture... public relations activities build a corporate culture. These activities create loyalty amongst your staff because of the service they see taking place within the community as well as giving the staff a sense of value for the contribution they make. The public relations should always recognise the team and the organisation for the job that is done in service of its clients.
8. Cost-effectiveness... public relations is a cost-effective strategy, maximising the return on your marketing dollar.
9. Builds the practice's story... finally, the beauty of public relations activities is it builds the story of the business, of the practice. It creates in the telling of the story a practice that has a life of its own. This is a wonderful element that is not only incorporated in the story of your practice and business in other marketing activities, it builds a life within the practice that everybody can be proud of, feel as though they have contributed to and links to their identity.

THE KEY TO SUCCESSFUL PR IS NEWSWORTHINESS

We've already discussed the importance of a successful public relations campaign being newsworthy.

What makes something newsworthy?

1. A good story... have a good story to tell, something people identify with, want to hear about and enjoy reading.
2. Have real news... have news that is significant, important and that is worthy of being written in the newspaper for people to read.
3. Highlight a problem... people are drawn to problems, they focus on problems. This is just the way many minds work. As such, if there is a problem that you see, that people identify with, want to know about or are experiencing, talk about that problem.
4. Provide a solution... as much as people focus on problems, they also like to discover solutions. Detail the solution to a problem that you have identified, how that solution is available to them, how it is cost-effective, easy to implement and that it can be accessed.

The key here is not to provide the solution within the article, rather tell people that there is a solution, that the solution is available to them and where they can find that solution... namely, your practice.

5. Make a breakthrough... not only do people love news, they love new information, firsts or breakthroughs that give people the opportunity to see things that they haven't seen before, know things that they didn't know before or experience things that they haven't experienced before.

Be the first in your field to highlight something new and important. Be the first in your field to raise a topic of great importance. Be the first to raise an important truth. All of these breakthroughs give you pre-eminence.

6. Market trends and influences... bring awareness of new trends or influences to the market, such as the increase in frequency of arthritis and then, tie this to the problem that people are having and offer a solution for it.
7. Overcoming adversity... people love stories about how other people were able to face challenges, obstacles, pain and difficult circumstances and overcome them. Find a way to create a story that shows the adversity that a client was able to overcome through the service or care that you have provided.

8. Adopt a spokesperson... introduce a new spokesperson to the community, explaining the benefits of the care that you provide through this celebrity endorsement.
9. Align with a brand image... create a relationship, whether a sponsorship deal or otherwise, with a brand name identity that gives you great leverage in the community.
10. By being an expert... you can gain public relations awareness by being an expert in your field, by being identified as an expert and being interviewed on radio, television and in the paper to magnify that status in the market.
11. Local stories... another way to get PR is to be part of and create a local story, be part of something important that takes place in your community and use that as a method of involving yourself with the media.
12. Do something outlandish... that's right. Do something crazy, unusual, unique, that draws a lot of attention, something that everybody wants to know about and be part of... that also highlights you in a positive and beneficial light.
13. Do something flamboyant yourself... by being a flamboyant character, getting attention for yourself (as long as you don't take it too far and make it a negative PR), you can draw lots of attention to yourself, have lots of fun and gain notoriety as a result. If using this strategy, make sure it is consistent with your character and personality.
14. Client stories... a wonderful way to get public relations attention is, with permission of your clients, to tell the story of the achievements, results or outcomes a client has achieved as a result of the care that they have received from you.

This wonderful strategy enables you to communicate how effective your care is, the impact it has on people's lives... and these people's stories are very appealing to readers, listeners and TV watchers and make a fantastic opportunity to get yourself known through the media in the community.

15. Align yourself with a community organisation... align the practice with a community organisation like Lions or Rotary and provide a service through these associations to their members or to the community.
16. Charitable acts... charitable acts also provide wonderful public relations. They generate goodwill in the community and also allow you to demonstrate yourself as a benevolent and caring practice and individual, which aligns with the service-oriented philosophy of your practice.

17. Controversial points of view...another way to get PR is to provide controversial points of view about topics that are debated in the market.

For example, there may be an article that reveals how health is deteriorating in the older population. You take the counter-viewpoint to that, that people under your care are responding, getting younger. Therefore the controversial point of view gives you the opportunity to argue against what is commonly thought and present yourself as an expert offering a solution to this genre or market and gains recognition for the potential that your care provides to others.

18. Be interviewed...be interviewed on TV, radio shows or in the newspaper about any topic as detailed within this section of the program.
19. Crazy events...another way to get media exposure through public relations is delivering a special event, a crazy event that draws the public's attention and interest.

In the *Practice Mastery Rapid Fire Strategies Manual* I detail the idea of launching myself into the river via a canon... canonising myself for the miracles that I had provided in my care. This type of crazy event draws the attention of the market, emphasises the benefits of the care I have delivered while simultaneously giving me wide exposure and acclaim.

These ideas can give you the incredible market leverage!

Newsworthy Stories

Here are suggestions of a number of stories you may want to include in the above list of public relation activities:

- Client results, benefits and advantages.
- Difficulties or challenges that clients have overcome as a result of your care.
- The growth of your practice due to the high demand for the care that you provide.
- Speciality clients you are seeing as a result of unique results.
- New and breakthrough seminars or workshops being presented.
- Unique or special roles that staff are able to undertake and participate in as a result of the specialisation of your practice or method of operations.
- Any rewards or achievements that staff or the practice have achieved in the industry.
- Charitable or fund-raising events in the community and results they have achieved.
- Has the practice identified any new trends and what does this mean for the community?

- Has the practice initiated any new trends and what does this mean for the community?
- Are there any unique or special benefits that clients receive within the practice that they do not experience at other practices?
- Are there any unique or exciting events that take place in your practice?
- What outlandish marketing events can you think to do to draw attention?
- Has your practice been in business for 5, 10, 15 or any continued denomination of 5 years?
- Is there any new technology in the health industry that the community wants to know about?
- Do you have any solutions for a major problem area in the current market or health industry?
- Do you have a strong opinion or a contrary view that the market needs to know about?

Events

Here are a few suggestions of some events that will be noteworthy and attractive to the media.

Undertake a charity dinner whereby you invite the media to a \$1,000 per plate event where the media people will have the opportunity to eat for free, as well as meet and associate with the rich and famous in your community.

Create a carnival atmosphere (not necessarily a carnival) whereby there is a powerful wonderful social element, community emphasis (a non-business environment) and people can come to a wonderful experience.

Tell a story of your town... get all the prominent people in the area and interview them for a story about how their town has helped them to become the people that they have become.

Create any event or PR presentation that people can learn something truly valuable and meaningful for their life.

For example: Rayid, Family Tree Healing could be offering saplings to all children and getting them to plant them in public property as representation of the genetic line.

A wellness program event could incorporate a free anti-aging program for all octogenarians (or 80-year-olds).

What Makes You Attractive to the Media?

What makes you attractive to the media? What is it about you that will make the media want to get the word out about what it is that you do?

We've already spoken about how you can devote your time to charity or community organisations; how you can write a book and become a writer or can become a published author. We know that it is important to be newsworthy, become a spokesperson for your profession or develop expertise in your field... but what is it about you that will make you a great target for public relations?

The answer is your persona outside of your primary business.

Amongst the interesting hooks that draw the media to the information you are presenting, in addition to the invitations and parties that you throw, beyond the lectures you present and conferences you deliver and the events that you present at... you must be *interesting*. Really interesting!

You must be a personality that people want to know about. You must be a character that people are drawn to.

Or... you need to have something truly newsworthy. Something unique, something powerful, something the community wants, needs and must know about — now!

More often than not, the news is filled with events of horror, trauma... or something sensational.

The news is simply not interested in a mother-of-three practitioner who is doing a great job serving and helping her community.

You may be changing and saving lives, however, unless there is a way that the story can be told that demonstrates that, proves that in a powerful and compelling way... you are going to need to use public relations in a far more powerful way.

The way to do that is to become an attractive force to attention. To become a personality that warrants the attention... with a story that deserves attention.

What is your story that is deserving of the community's attention? And how are you going to present yourself, the persona or the character that is going to make you interesting and appealing to the community?

The PR Kit...

The PR Kit, or public relations kit, also known as the press kit, is a primary tool for your public relations activities. It is a folder or document containing information about you, your team and your practice, as well as the business you are in and the products or services you provide.

It provides a biographical sketch or resume outlining your qualifications, skills and abilities, defining you as an expert, as well as any background information in order to provide a complete picture and understanding of you and your practice.

The specific elements of the PR Kit include:

1. Cover page.
2. Table of contents.
3. Synopsis... or background summary of relevant information.
4. Biographical sketch and/or resume... your qualifications, experience and a description of your expertise that defines you as an expert.
5. Practice description... detailing the history of the practice, the products and services it provides and historical events of interest.
6. Visual portfolio... photos, articles and images of you, your team, the practice and any products or services you are able to demonstrate. This also incorporates any photos or images of you in action delivering care, in a public setting such as workshops or being interviewed on TV or radio or talking with people of note.
7. Newsworthy events... newspaper or magazine articles, interviews or other public relations activities that you have been part of.
8. Copies or articles about you, your business or your product and service.
9. Copies of excerpts from books you have written or articles you have published or research papers you have submitted.
10. Areas of expertise... a list of topic areas in which you may be called upon to offer advice, information or comment as a qualified expert in your field.
11. Public relations documents... such as press releases, the pitch letter, etc.

The public relations kit can be provided to any media outlet, newspaper, radio or TV station with a cover letter, the pitch letter, and the press release materials.

The Pitch Letter...

Your pitch letter is the compelling copy that sells your public relations event to the media representative you are contacting. It provides the content for your public relations idea, interesting the reader in your proposal. The goal of the pitch letter is for the reader to conclude, "This is what I need for my newspaper/radio segment/TV segment, etcetera."

The key elements of a pitch letter are:

1. Produce the letter on professional letterhead.
2. Personalise the letter... direct it to a specific individual, their name and the appropriate salutation.
3. Customise your letter... write the topic specifically to the person you are marketing to, the area of influence they have and relate it to topics of interest or newsworthiness. Detail which elements of the pitch are relevant to the publication or station you are approaching and why, emphasising which community interest areas the story relates to.
4. Be brief... edit heavily to make sure that you communicate your message quickly and succinctly.
5. Demonstrate newsworthiness relative to their audience... demonstrate why they should have an interest in this story and how it would be valuable to them.
6. Define the action they need to take next... give them cause and reason to call you, as well as ensure that the contact details are there.

The Press Release...

The press release differs from the pitch letter. As stated, the pitch letter is a way of introducing the idea of providing a media release to an individual, whereas the press release is the document, information or message that is part of the public relations campaign that media outlets will use to write the articles printed within their newspaper or the stories delivered on radio or TV.

The press release becomes the foundation for the media release. The media release is the communication read by a newspaper's readers or heard by a TV/radio station's viewers and listeners and therefore must get the attention of the person reporting as well as have the potential to get the attention of their listener or reader. This is the basis of having newsworthy information.

As with your pitch letter, be succinct with your writing in the press release, keeping it to under a page.

Press Release Format

In order for a press release to be well received, there is a specific format required.

The format includes:

- A header:
 - For Release... describes the release date for the press release.
 - For Immediate Release.
 - For Release Before (insert date).
 - Release After (insert date).
 - Release at will.
- Provide the specifics of the release as described above.
- Contact Information... ensure that you provide clear and concise contact information, including your name, your address and contact details.
- The headline... the same principle applies to press releases that applies to all marketing headlines... make them stand out!
- Typesetting... use a sans serif font, 12pt double spaced.
- Body copy... it is important to have a powerful lead in paragraph that telegraphs the headline and intensifies interest leading into the remainder of the body copy.
- Inserts... use statistics, research and quotes if it adds to the story, increases the interest of the story or adds to the validity of the story. Quotes in particular are generally considered interest-increasing. Any qualifications or credentials that increase your qualification as an expert may be included also.
- The offer and call-to-action... as with all marketing materials, if it is possible, it is best to have a specific offer and call-to-action. If it is possible to include it within a press release, then do so.
- Summary... the summary is termed a boilerplate and is the final, concise paragraph that summarises you individually and the company.

For example,

Integrated Natural Therapies is located at 142 Monaro Street, Queanbeyan, and has operated since 1986. The practice specialises in transformational and wellness care. For more information call 02 6299 2660 or visit www.INT.com.au.

- End... ### symbolise the end of the document.

Follow up

Once you have provided the press kit, pitch letter and press release, ensure that you follow up by contacting the person you have sent the media kit to. Prepare yourself for the telephone conversation with the same depth as you have prepared the media kit.

In the event that you receive a media interview, either on radio or television, there are some key things you need to consider:

1. The interview is a marketing tool... although it is a public relations activity, do not forget that it is simultaneously a marketing event. Endeavour to address the questions as a method to answer questions the community may have and provide a service to the community through the interview process... but not at the expense of forgetting that it is a marketing event. Ensure that you provide information about yourself, your practice and how you can be accessed by the community to provide a solution to their problems.
2. Be prepared... if you are granted an interview, prepare for it in the same way that you would for an exam. Know everything that you need to know, have it available in short term memory and present confidently the information that you want to get across.
3. Get yourself comfortable... before the interview, make sure that you are comfortable and relaxed. Be sure to take time to get to know the interviewer so that you can feel more natural in your communication with them.
4. Mock-run... if possible, do a mock-run of the interview so that you can get any nerves out of your system and anticipate any questions they may have.
5. Getting the questions right... if you can, ask what questions they will be asking at the interview so that you can prepare. Also, if possible, provide questions to them that you would like them to ask so that you can provide the answers that support your marketing message.
6. Remain calm... stay relaxed throughout the entire process. Breathe.
7. Support documents... prepare some support documents that the journalist can take with them when you are finished to reiterate the information that you have shared with them, build the story that you are providing and allow the theme of your message to be interwoven within the journalist's story. Also, ensure that you have all of your contact information on this document and direct them to where more information can be found if they need it.

Follow these strategies and you will create significant free publicity as part of your marketing campaign and continue to build the platform for a successful practice.

Who to target in the Media

When mailing your press materials to the media outlets, it's important to address the information to the right person.

I suggest that you first contact the TV stations, the radio stations and the newspaper in order to confirm that the people that you want to talk to are in fact the people that are described here.

Television talk show... send it to the Executive Producer.

Television news... send it to the Assignment Editor.

Radio talk show... send it to the Producer.

Radio news... send it to the Assignment Editor.

Magazines... send it to the Editor.

Newspaper news... send it to the News Editor.

News events... send it to the Listings or Calendar Editor.

Newspapers features... send it to the Lifestyle Editor.

Whenever possible, try to discover the names of the people in these positions so that you can personalize and send the press materials directly to them.

When Contacting the Media Sources

So what exactly should you know before you contact the media for a press release?

Know exactly what your media campaign will involve.

Know every step of the event that will take place in detail.

Have all of the background information in relation to what you need to know to demonstrate expertise and authority to validate the effectiveness of the event, such as knowing everything about your product and service, your practice or the community.

Know your subject topic inside and out, backward and front.

Know what you can about the people that you are dealing with, both within the media, the community and your clients.

Know the language that you need to use and the terminology you need to understand.

Know the protocols for how the media and public relations process unfolds.

Know that they work on a tight deadline and that time is of the essence.

Know that they are human... and busy... and they make mistakes.

Know everything that you need to know to be confident... and to be the best person for the job... and this is evident in your communications to them, making you attractive to the media.

Don't Just Ask, "Are you going to run my media release?"

This is potentially one of the most challenging aspects of public relations... not knowing where you stand with the media.

You may think that you have newsworthy pitch. You may think that the information you're providing is valuable to the community... and you may even have the impression that the people you are dealing with in the media are interested, positive about what it is that you have to say and are going to give complete support for your public relations campaign.

However, despite the positive signals that you may be getting and the confidence that you feel... there may be delays with the people in the media getting back to you. Oftentimes, people's initial response of this is to call them up and ask whether or not they are going to run the media release.

This immediately puts the people in the media on the defensive, potentially alienates you from them and undermines the relationship.

While you do need to be persistent with them... you also need to be simultaneously patient.

Equally, you need to know how to communicate to them effectively, not to create defensiveness within the dialogue, but to get certainty as to the status of where things are stand with your media release.

Raleigh Pinskey in her book, *The Zen of Hype*, suggests the alternative way to ask if they are going to run your press release is:

"So, what did you think of my idea?

Are you interested in the piece?

Is it something that you think you can fit into your format?

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