

#LightsCameraAction

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- ▶ I have no disclosures relevant to this presentation



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Words Matter

- ▶ For the right message to reach the intended audience—and to inspire action, thought, or emotion—it must be credible, relevant, irrefutable, and communicated with just the right tone



Learning Objectives

- ▶ Describe the role of the media during emerging threats and local outbreaks
- ▶ Describe how best to use media outlets to deliver your message to the public, including television, Internet, and social media platforms
- ▶ Evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of different social media formats as mass communication tools during an outbreak



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- ▶ Acknowledge emotion
- ▶ Deal in facts
- ▶ Respond with urgency
- ▶ Reassure with professionalism
- ▶ Use media as a tool
- ▶ Understand your audience
- ▶ Prepare in advance



What Does the Media Want From You?

- ▶ Understand the media's needs and role
 - ▶ They are under intense pressure and heavy workloads
 - ▶ They live and die by deadlines
 - ▶ They see themselves as public servants
 - ▶ They will go elsewhere for information if you can't respond quickly
 - ▶ They need you to be brief and use vibrant language (paint a picture)
 - ▶ They need you to think in headlines (speak in subheads)
 - ▶ They need you to help them tell a story
 - ▶ They need you to repeat, repeat, repeat

How Does the Media Craft a Story?

- ▶ Story frameworks (not “just the facts, ma’am”)
 - ▶ Overcoming the odds
 - ▶ Hero framework
 - ▶ Horse race framework
 - ▶ 3-V framework: victim, villain, vindicator

“A crisis is a Shakespearean tragedy, and you’re in the starring role. And if you don’t jump in fast and choose your role, you will be assigned a role.”

- Bruce Hennes, Hennes Communications



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Understanding Your Goal

- ▶ Communicate broadly
 - ▶ Web site
 - ▶ E-mail (internal audiences, key constituents)
 - ▶ Social media
 - ▶ News media
- ▶ Inform and educate
- ▶ Prevent and protect
- ▶ Provide an action plan

CDC. <https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/templates-tools.asp>.



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Don't Wait for a Crisis

- ▶ Commit to a crisis communications plan
- ▶ Conduct a vulnerability audit
- ▶ Who does what? And how to contact them 24/7?
- ▶ Where does it happen?
- ▶ Pre-scripted holding statements?
- ▶ Pre-developed FAQs or researched links?
- ▶ Is your Web site ready?

CDC. <https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/cercnewsrelease.pdf>
CDC. https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/message_development_for_communication.pdf
CDC. <https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/anticipatedqa.pdf>
CDC. https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/cercsample_msgplan.pdf



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Holding Statements

- ▶ What keeps you up at night?
- ▶ How likely is it to happen?
- ▶ If it happens, how likely is it to damage reputation?
- ▶ Write scripts for highest likelihood to happen and highest damage to reputation

Outbreak of Communicable Disease (meningitis, etc.)

Key Messages

- We are working with public health authorities to address an outbreak of (what) that has occurred in # of our residence halls here on campus.
- So far we estimate that # students have active cases of (what), and # students have been hospitalized; some have returned home due to their illness.
- Affected students are being asked to self-quarantine until they are no longer contagious. No visitors are allowed in any of our residence halls until further notice.
- We are providing information and support for a rapid recovery to the affected students and their families.
- Student health services has provided information to all residence halls describing the symptoms of (what). That information has also been posted to the university's website and our social media accounts. All students, faculty and staff have been given a link to that information via our email system.
- Anyone who experiences the symptoms of (what) is urged to contact health services or their own physician. Those symptoms include (what).
- Anyone with questions or concerns about the illness should contact health services at XXXXXX-XXXX or public health authorities at XXXXXX-XXXX.

Example of a Preliminary Statement: We are working with public health officials on an apparent outbreak of (name of disease) in # of our residence halls (names). As this is a highly contagious condition, we have asked students who are affected to self-quarantine in their rooms and we have closed those residence halls to visitors. At this time, we know of # students who have become ill and we are providing information and support to them and their families. Student health services has been a vital source of accurate information about symptoms and treatment—we urge anyone with questions to go to our website to learn what they need to know.

Tweet: Residence halls closed to visitors to better manage spread of (disease). (Link to statement).



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What Does the Public Care About?

- ▶ What happened?
- ▶ Am I safe? Is my family safe?
- ▶ What have you discovered that may affect me?
- ▶ What can I do to protect myself and my family?
- ▶ Who/what caused this?
- ▶ Who's in charge now?
- ▶ Has the threat been contained?
- ▶ How are victims being helped?



Preparing for an Interview

- ▶ What's the topic?
- ▶ Who's the reporter?
- ▶ What's the reporter's deadline?
- ▶ When will the interview run?
- ▶ Will the interview be broadcast live or recorded?
- ▶ Will the reporter be talking to other people?
- ▶ Where will the interview take place?



Preparing for an Interview

- ▶ What's your desired headline?
- ▶ What's your desired take-away?
- ▶ Do you have a sound bite?
- ▶ Aim for 3 key messages (2-3 supportive facts for each)
- ▶ Be prepared to answer the questions you don't want to be asked
- ▶ Message mapping developed by HHS
 - ▶ 3 short sentences that convey 3 key messages
 - ▶ Communicate in less than 9 seconds for broadcast media and 27 words for print

Pandemic flu message mapping examples available at www.calhospitalprepare.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/pandemic_pre_event_maps.pdf.



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Bridging Phrases or Pivot Points

- ▶ The real issue is...
- ▶ It's important to emphasize...
- ▶ What people really need to know is...
- ▶ I can't speculate on that, but what I can tell you is...
- ▶ I'm not the best one to answer that, but I can tell you...
- ▶ People have that misconception, but the truth is...
- ▶ Let me put this into perspective...
- ▶ **Always summarize key points at the end of interview!**



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Off the Record?

- ▶ Assume everything is on the record, even if no tape is rolling and reporter isn't writing things down
- ▶ “Just between us” is meaningless
- ▶ “Off the record” suggests that the information will not be used
- ▶ “Not for attribution” or “on background” suggests information can be used, but your identity will not be disclosed
- ▶ **Do you have the right to ask to review the story before publication?**



Communication Channels

- ▶ Web site
- ▶ E-mail
- ▶ Media (interviews and press briefings)
- ▶ Social media
 - ▶ Facebook (highest usage among age 45-54, 53% female)
 - ▶ Twitter (most popular among age 18-29, gender equal, reporters use it)
 - ▶ YouTube (reaches more adults age 18-34 than any cable network)
 - ▶ Instagram (more popular among women, age 35 and under)
 - ▶ LinkedIn (professional connections)



Social Media Channels Differ



I like cupcakes



Here's a photo of my cupcake



I am eating a #cupcake



Here's a cupcake recipe



My skills include cupcake eating



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Social Media Do's and Don'ts

- ▶ Be tolerant (do not censor)
- ▶ Be direct
- ▶ Be humble
- ▶ Listen, listen, listen
- ▶ Use pictures
- ▶ Use links
- ▶ Share!
- ▶ Recruit influencers
- ▶ Create social media army



CDC. www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/ToolsTemplates/SocialMediaToolkit_BM.pdf.



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- ▶ Press briefing benefits
- ▶ On-camera tips
 - ▶ Always stand
 - ▶ Don't use notes
 - ▶ Maintain eye contact (reporter? camera?)
 - ▶ Hand motions?
- ▶ The interrupting reporter
- ▶ When words get put in your mouth
- ▶ Handling “the ambush”
- ▶ Silence really is golden



A Go-To Guide

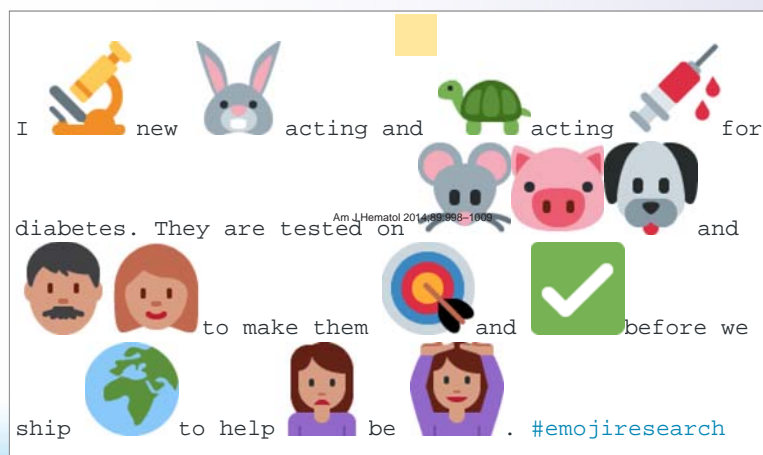
- ▶ Create a dedicated Web page
- ▶ Provide details as they become available
- ▶ Provide actions taken (by whom, when, what)
- ▶ What do people need to know?
- ▶ What steps can be taken to limit spread/threat?
- ▶ Provide photos or video clips
- ▶ Provide links for reliable information
- ▶ Include contact information for responders and experts

Avoiding “Fearbola”

- ▶ Be the first source of information
- ▶ Be trustworthy and show empathy
- ▶ Speak with one voice (clarity of message)
- ▶ Counter rumors in real time
- ▶ Educate inside organization to build an army
- ▶ Even when you have nothing to say, say something
- ▶ Manage expectations with scheduled updates (“feed the beast”)
- ▶ **The key to crisis communications is to actually communicate!**



Keeping It Simple



Take-Away Points

- ▶ All media communication should be goal-oriented
- ▶ Prepare crisis communications *before* crises occur
- ▶ Anticipate the media's needs and control the flow of the interview
- ▶ Use all media platforms available for communicating to the public
- ▶ Be deliberate and measured when using social media
- ▶ Prepare for rolling cameras—there are no do-overs
- ▶ Develop messaging to minimize panic
- ▶ Keep it simple (it is harder than you think!)



The Last Word...

Accept that you won't have the last word, so try to have the first words. If you don't tell the story, someone else will. And when that happens, it won't be the story you want told.



Additional Resources

- ▶ **Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC). CDC.** www.emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/index.asp
- ▶ **CERC by Leaders for Leaders. CDC.** www.emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/resources/pdf/leaders.pdf
- ▶ **HICS for Small Hospitals.** Association of Healthcare Emergency Preparedness Professionals. www.ahepp.site-ym.com/?page=IncidentCommand
- ▶ **HICS.** California Emergency Medical Services Authority. www.emsa.ca.gov/disaster_medical_services_division_hospital_incident_command_system_resources

