

Media training, or sink or swim?

There is no substitute for experience when it comes to handling the media. But all too often media training courses offer some one to one time with a journalist and hope that it is enough.

This approach can give a short-term boost to confidence, but it does little to provide a solid foundation for a spokesperson to build on. In short, they provide the media, but sometimes skimp on the training.

It's a subtle point, but an important one.

We aim to ensure that a media training course provides structured training. We do not sit someone in front of a journalist for a few hours and hope that they pick up media skills by osmosis. We assess how well a delegate performs as a spokesperson. We highlight their strengths, and we suggest how they can work on their weaknesses.

Each of our courses is designed so that delegates learn as much as possible from their time in front of a journalist. This includes measuring and assessing interview performance, and giving structured feedback. This question-by-question analysis on video, as well as providing the delegate with their footage on tape or DVD.

We work hard to ensure that interview "role plays" are as realistic as possible. We do this by following the same approach we use when we research a real-life story. This discovery process includes thorough background analysis of the company, its markets and the issues that affect it.

This research then forms the basis for hands-on message workshops and tailored interview training. Experienced national journalists carry out the interviews.

We use video as a key tool for interview sessions, with professional broadcast camera operators on hand to give feedback on presentation and technique. Then, each journalist will give their feedback directly to the delegate before the course ends.

We can run introductory courses, programmes focusing specifically on the messages you want to communicate, or programmes built around interview practice. And we can provide an intensive, one day course combining all these elements in one hands-on session, which is ideal for short notice projects or senior executives.

In each case, the objective is to give delegates a tangible set of recommendations for their future media work, from the perspective of working journalists.

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