

Taking your research public

Strategies and tactics for
communicating effectively with the media
(and policymakers and the public)

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UNC
LINEBERGER

Taking your research public

Or what to do when Paul Goldberg calls...



UNC
LINEBERGER

Who we are



Bill Schaller
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Web/Social Media



Laura Oleniacz
Science
Communications

Why work with the media?

Enhance the reputation of Cancer Outcomes/UNC/you

Raise awareness about your expertise/research

Possibly influence quality and tone of reporting

Prevent/correct misinformation or misunderstandings

You are best positioned to speak about your work

If you receive funding, you need to share the findings

The changing media marketplace

Wider variety of media channels, each has specific needs/styles

News is published more quickly, content needed 24/7

Traditional news outlets are becoming web/mobile-focused

Fewer reporters who specialize in science and health at traditional news outlets

Format influences interview preparation

When a reporter calls

If asked to comment on independent study/report, get a copy and read it before interview

Ask the reporter what they know about the story, who else they have contacted

Get reporter's name and number and tell them you will call them back

Call UNC Lineberger communications

Crafting the message

Tailor comments to the medium/audience

Focus on 3-4 key points

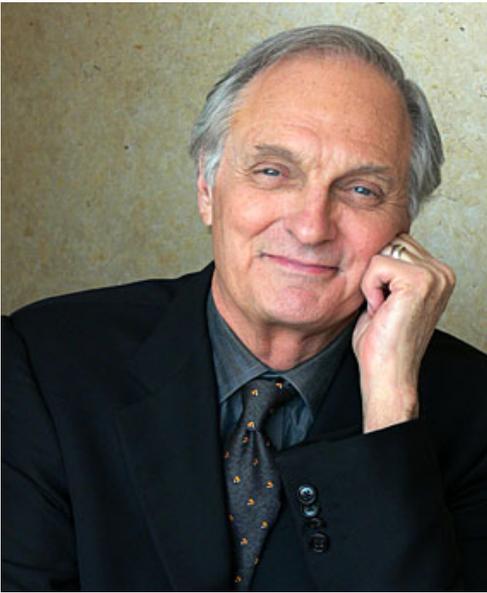
>What did you find, why is it important, what's next?

Outline key points, but don't read them verbatim

Be concise, direct and jargon-free

You do not control how the reporter will use your comments, but you do control what you share

Know (and respect) your audience



“You can’t do good science without good communication. You need to raise funds. The public has to back it. And you have to respect the fact that policy makers have not spent their lives studying science. They don’t talk your lingo. The more you’re aware of the other person’s response, the clearer you are going to be and the more impact you could have.”

Alan Alda

Boston Globe, Oct. 20, 2015

Media interviews 101

Everything is on-record

Frame the conversation

If a reporter strays, bridge back to topic

If reporter doesn't cover key issue, raise the point yourself

If you don't know the answer, don't guess

Be available to fact check but don't expect to review story

Elements of a good pitch

Anything can be news, but not everything is newsworthy

Why should the editor/reader/viewer care?

- Timeliness
- Impact/Consequence/Scope
- Relevance
- Novelty/Trend

Getting the word out

Externally

Press release

UNC Lineberger web site

UNC Lineberger Facebook

Twitter
screens

Internally

UNC Lineberger web site

UNC biweekly emails

UNC Lineberger plasma

UNC SOM

If you remember nothing else...

Contact UNC Lineberger communications when:

- **Your paper has been accepted for publication**
- **You have been invited to present at a meeting**
- **A reporter calls you**
- **Sponsor/collaborator presents a PR opportunity**

Everything is on record

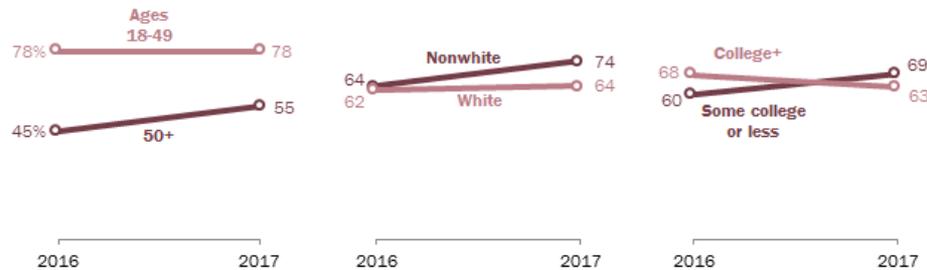
Format influences interview preparation

Preparation influences outcome

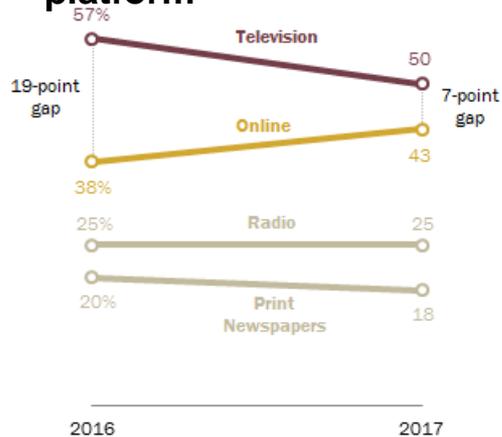
Media sea change

Source: Pew Research Center: Aug. 8-21, 2017

**U.S. adults (percentage) who:
Often get news on from social media sites**



Get news on each platform



Get news from multiple social media sites

