

# An Introduction to Working With Reporters

Faculty Development Day

August 26, 2019

# Office of Marketing & Communications

- ▶ We tell the story of John Jay College of Criminal Justice
  - ▶ A National Convener of Justice Issues
  - ▶ Center for Innovation and Research
  - ▶ Student Success
- ▶ Website, Publications, Social Media, Video, Graphics, Media Relations
- ▶ Help Us Help You
  - ▶ Keep us posted on your research, events, appearances
  - ▶ Update/Create your Faculty Expertise Form
  - ▶ Follow and share social media

# Why Reporters?

- ▶ If research falls in a forest does it make a sound?
  - ▶ Grants
  - ▶ Esteem
  - ▶ Make the world a better place

# Two Ways to Work With a Reporter

## ▶ Source

- ▶ You are contacted to be a source
  - ▶ Your expertise is part of a larger story
  - ▶ More common

## ▶ Subject

- ▶ You pitch your own work
  - ▶ You are the focus of the story
  - ▶ Much harder to do

# Source - The Process

- ▶ Reporter contacts you directly or through John Jay
  - ▶ Media Relations vets the reporter and media outlet
- ▶ Decide if your expertise fits the story
  - ▶ Don't say 'no' too quickly
- ▶ Decide if the outlet and the story will reflect on you the way you want it to
- ▶ Communicate with the reporter
  - ▶ Email, phone, skype, on camera, on set
- ▶ Wait for the story to appear

# The Interview

- ▶ Establish the rules first
- ▶ On/Off the record
  - ▶ This can change if you feel comfortable
- ▶ Background

# The Interview

- ▶ This is not a real conversation.
- ▶ Each thing you say must stand on its own as a unique statement.
- ▶ The interviewer wants you to give complete sentences.
  - ▶ What color is the sky?
    - ▶ ~~Blue~~
    - ▶ The sky is blue.
- ▶ Note: You have more leeway if it's for print or an extended live segment - but the full sentence concept give you the best opportunity to frame your reply

# The Interview

- ▶ Do not refer back to something you said earlier.

*“Like I said before...”*

- ▶ The producer will not use the clip of what you said earlier. Meaning, for interview purposes, what you said earlier does not exist.
- ▶ All answers need to be complete, short, and self-contained nuggets with no outside references.
- ▶ It’s not a problem if you repeat yourself in the interview - sometimes the reporter is looking for a shorter or more direct soundbite

# The Interview

- ▶ If you don't like something you said or are saying... just stop talking.
  - ▶ Start again from the beginning.
    - ▶ Don't continue from where you went off track
  - ▶ If you're not comfortable with something you already said, be clear, immediately that you do not want that used.

# The Interview

- ▶ You can have notecards, but don't use them and don't read.
  - ▶ The interviewer wants you to sound relaxed and unrehearsed.
  - ▶ You can use the cards to jog your memory of a key phrase or idea but not for whole sentences.
  - ▶ They will usually shoot only from the belly up, so you can keep your notes in your lap or out of frame at your side.

# The Interview

- ▶ Remember - this will be edited
  - ▶ We have to trust the producer to maintain the meaning of your words.
    - ▶ They will not change a positive statement to a negative
  - ▶ They want you to look good so they will look good.
    - ▶ You're the expert, they want you to look like one.

# Their Needs

- ▶ Deadline - Usually fast approaching
- ▶ Content from you
  - ▶ Print - one or two sentences that encapsulate everything you want to say
  - ▶ Video - 8 -12 second soundbite
- ▶ Content of the story
  - ▶ A cursory understanding of the topic
  - ▶ Usually told through the eyes of a protagonist
  - ▶ Compelling, extreme, outlandish

# Your Wants / Commitments

- ▶ Deadline - Between classes, office hours, life
- ▶ Content from you
  - ▶ Lengthy papers, years of research
  - ▶ 10-15 minute conversations
- ▶ Content of the story
  - ▶ Complete explanation, including nuances
  - ▶ Fact based
  - ▶ Truthful, unbiased

# Subject - The Process

- ▶ Complete your research/book/experience
- ▶ Find the hook - bring in Media Relations!
- ▶ Think about what the story would look like
  - ▶ Article
  - ▶ Opinion Piece
  - ▶ TV
- ▶ Think about possible venues
- ▶ Pitch
- ▶ Spread message on your own

# Lure Them In

- ▶ Find the hook
  - ▶ Why should anyone care?
    - ▶ It's important to you - make it important to a stranger with no referential knowledge
    - ▶ Step outside academia and look back
  - ▶ Personal Stories Sell
    - ▶ Show the impact
    - ▶ Overcoming challenges
    - ▶ Changed a life/lives/whole communities
  - ▶ Remember what you are competing against
- ▶ Examples

# What is the story?

- ▶ Think about the elements
  - ▶ People to speak with
  - ▶ Photos / videos
  - ▶ Statistics / graphics
- ▶ What is the best way to present this?
- ▶ This will help determine where we pitch it

# The Pitch

- ▶ In most cases, it's best for Media Relations to approach the reporter
  - ▶ Acting as your agent gives an added level of professionalism
    - ▶ I am vetting you, the same way I vet media
- ▶ Make sure your availability is clear
  - ▶ Via Phone, Camera, Email
  - ▶ Location
- ▶ Make sure all elements are available
  - ▶ Other people
  - ▶ Paper, stats, images

# Help Yourself

- ▶ Take Advantage of Social Media
  - ▶ Choose an appropriate channel
    - ▶ You don't have to be everywhere
  - ▶ Make sure it's up to date
  - ▶ Interact with the people you want to see your work
    - ▶ Follows, likes, retweets, comments
  - ▶ Make sure we have your handles

# Practice

- ▶ Pitch me your project!

# Contact us:

- ▶ Tell us News - new book, research, media appearances
  - ▶ <https://johnjay.jjay.cuny.edu/faculty-achievement/>

# Follow us:

**Facebook:** <https://facebook.com/JohnJayCollege>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/JohnJayCollege>

**Instagram:** <https://instagram.com/JohnJayCollege>

**Snapchat:** <https://bit.ly/JJCSnapchat>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/school/15100411/>

**YouTube:** <https://youtube.com/cunyjohnjay>

# Email us:

- ▶ Media Relations

- ▶ Richard Relkin [rrelkin@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:rrelkin@jjay.cuny.edu)
- ▶ Jan Benjamin [jbenjamin@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:jbenjamin@jjay.cuny.edu)