

MEDIA SKILLS

How to engage with the media



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A STEP BY STEP GUIDE

Whether it's a newspaper, radio station or a blog your local media is a great way to get heard on a particular issue and generate support. And the good news is that they want to hear from you! Journalists are always looking for stories that will interest their readers.



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1 RESEARCH & IDENTIFY YOUR LOCAL MEDIA

Local media includes newspapers or radio stations that are based in, and report on, a suburban or regional area. Get to know the reporting style and audience of your local media first.

2 WHAT'S THE 'ANGLE'?

Local media love a local angle. They'll want to know how this issue is affecting local residents like you. Be clear about what you want to achieve and always think of the 'call to action'.

3 MAKING THAT FIRST CALL

Do you want to publicise an event so other people can join? If so, you need to give the media plenty of time to run the story before the event. Try to get the journalist's personal email so you can send a follow up news release directly.

4 THE NEWS RELEASE

Ideally a news release should be less than one page and contain a snappy headline, details about the event, background on the issue, quotes from key people and your contact details.

Use our template as an example.

5 THINK VISUALLY

Newspapers need photos as much as they need words. When planning your event, think about whether there's a photo opportunity. If possible, check you have Diana Award branding in place.



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6 APPOINT A SPOKESPERSON

Identify a spokesperson who is willing to be interviewed by the media. Remember, you don't have to be an expert. You're being interviewed because you and/or your group care about an issue and want to help others.

7 FOLLOW UP AFTER AN EVENT

Don't forget to post an event update and any photos/footage on social media as well to keep the story going. Online media can be just as effective, if not more so, than traditional media.

8 WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

If you care about an issue but aren't organising an event, you could write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, giving your opinion. Try and keep your letter to about 200 words and focus on a single argument. Linking your letter to a recent issue is a good way to get published.

9 DON'T GIVE UP

Don't be discouraged if your story isn't published or promoted this time. Even large organisations aren't always successful in attracting media attention. The more letters and news releases you write on an event, the more likely your story will get published or broadcast.

Finally, let The Diana Award know about it! email us an update at emma@pellingpr.co.uk



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