

# Campaign Skills Trainer's Guide

## Module 8

### Building a Communications Strategy *Tactics, Tools and Techniques for Reaching your Audiences*





# CAMPAIGN SKILLS TRAINER'S GUIDE

## MODULE 8: BUILDING A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY *Tactics, Tools and Techniques for Reaching Your Audiences*

### SESSION OVERVIEW:

Communicating to voters and potential supporters through the media is a challenge for every campaign. This module covers the tools and skills needed to generate attention for your campaign and communicate your message through both traditional (television, radio, newspaper) and new (online, bloggers, social media) media.

### SECTIONS:

1. Developing a Strategic Communication Plan
2. Organizing Effective Media Events
3. New Media Communication
4. Working with the Media

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Understanding strategies and useful tools for generating coverage in both traditional and new media
- Planning and organizing a media event

**TIME:** 160 minutes

### MATERIALS:

- Flipchart and paper, markers and tape
- Training agenda (optional – can be written on the flipchart)

### HANDOUTS:

- Planning a Media Event Worksheet

### PREPARATION:

Writing on the flipchart in advance:

1. Agenda (optional – if it is not copied)
2. Learning Objectives
3. Developing a strategic communication plan:
  - Determine your objective(s)
  - Define your key audiences
  - Identify the most important media outlets for your campaign
  - Come up with a list of story ideas that promote and advance the campaign's message
  - Create a tactical outreach plan of events and activities
4. Media event: any campaign activity designed to generate press coverage.
5. Milestones: events highlighting key markers that demonstrate a campaign's success.
6. Criteria for an effective media event:

- It's newsworthy
- It reinforces the campaign's message
- There is a clear, interesting visual for television and photographs
- Campaign supporters are plentiful and enthusiastic
- The candidate's comments are concise and on message
- The time and place are convenient for the press to attend

#### 7. Planning the event:

- What news are you making? What headline do you want?
- How will you tell your story visually?
- Pick location and time convenient to reporters
- Get permission to hold the event
- Prepare media advisory and press release
- Select, invite, brief and confirm guest speakers
- Plan needed materials and equipment

#### 8. Before the event:

- Send media advisory to all reporters and news outlets
- Invite campaign supporters
- Secure permits if needed
- Arrange for special equipment
- Write out and practice the candidate's statement
- Finalize and copy the press release and press kit
- Confirm other speakers or special guests
- Call reporters to pitch the event and ask if they plan to attend
- Designate one person as "stage manager"
- Finish location set up at least an hour before the event starts

#### 9. During the event:

- Thank media, supporters and guests for attending
- Greet reporters at registration table; ask them to present credentials and sign in
- Make sure all event speakers know the order of speakers and who the stage manager is
- Distribute press releases to reporters
- Make sure all reporters and camera operators have access to electricity and anything else they need
- Take plenty of photos during the event, from different angles and perspectives
- Post and tweet live from the event to the campaign's social media networks

#### 10. After the event:

- Immediately send the press release and photo to all news outlets, including bloggers
- Post coverage of the event on social media networks and send it to key supporters
- Thank reporters who covered the event

#### 11. New media:

- Social Networking sites → Facebook, LinkedIn
- Blogs and Micro-blogs → Twitter, Blogger, Tumblr, WordPress
- Video Hosting → YouTube, Blip.tv
- Instant Messaging → Pidgin, Skype, WhatsApp
- SMS and Text Messaging → Blackberry groups, SMS sites

- Photo and Image Sharing → Flickr, Instagram, Smilebox
- Social Bookmarking → Digg, Reddit, Pinterest

12. Digital Advocacy:

- Digital advocacy: efforts to organize people using new media to take social or political action.

13. Using New Media for Campaigns:

1. Strategic Review: What is your goal? Where are your supporters? Where are your target voters?
2. Evaluate the Time and Resources You Have
3. Choose 1 or more Platforms: start small and build
4. Develop Systems for Managing Your Digital Advocacy Efforts

14. Working with the Media:

1. Develop relationships with key editors, reports and bloggers
2. Stay in touch
3. Understand what is newsworthy
4. Always be truthful and accurate
5. Don't be afraid to say "I'm not sure" then get the answer
6. Understand their limits and needs
7. Respond quickly to calls
8. Provide reporters with information in a format they can use
9. Anticipate their need for content and pitch stories
10. Stay on top of the story
11. Address problems and move on

KEY FOR THE TYPE OF ACTIVITIES INCLUDED IN THIS WORKSHOP:

TP – Trainer's Presentation

PEE – Participants' Experiences or Exercises

DBR – Facilitated Discussions, Brainstorming and Reflection

CLL – Conclusions and Lessons Learned

ANK – Application of New Knowledge

## TRAINING ACTIVITIES

### SECTION 1 – Developing a Strategic Communication Plan – 60’

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
1	Introduce the session and review learning objectives.	TP	2	
2	<p>Ask the participants to list all the ways their campaign or party use to reach voters through the media. Write their answers on the flipchart. Point out that some of the listed approaches require financial resources (such as direct advertising and access to media outlets), but:</p> <p><i>Most campaigns have to rely more on earned media than paid media for financial reasons. In this situation, your campaign is in less control of how much coverage it will get as well as how it is represented in the media. One of the main purposes of constructing a media strategy is to ensure that the message that appears in the newspapers, on the news or in a blog is the one that you want your target audience to see and hear.</i></p>	DBR	7	By asking the question about different ways to get media coverage, you will learn existing habits and understanding of how media coverage works, as well as be able to assess if participants take a proactive and strategic approach. At the same time, you are getting participants to focus on the topic and you are setting the context of the session.
3	<p>Introduce Developing a Strategic Communication Plan section:</p> <p><i>A strategic communications plan, or media strategy is your plan for getting positive coverage of your campaign through the media that your target voters use the most, in order to communicate your message to these voters.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Determine your objective(s);</i></li> <li>2. <i>Define your key audiences;</i></li> <li>3. <i>Identify the most important media outlets for your campaign;</i></li> <li>4. <i>Come up with a list of story ideas that promote and advance the campaign’s message, and,</i></li> <li>5. <i>Create a tactical outreach plan of events and activities designed to generate the coverage you want and on the platforms you need in order to reach your key audiences.</i></li> </ol>	TP	8	<p>Write developing a strategic communication plan steps on the flipchart in advance:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><u>Developing a strategic communication plan:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Determine your objective(s)</i></li> <li>2. <i>Define your key audiences</i></li> <li>3. <i>Identify the most important media outlets for your campaign</i></li> <li>4. <i>Come up with a list of story ideas that promote and advance the campaign’s message</i></li> <li>5. <i>Create a tactical outreach plan of events and activities</i></li> </ol> </div>

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<p><b>1. What is our objective? What do we want to achieve?</b>  <i>Like all aspects of your campaign, putting together a solid media strategy starts with thinking through what it is you want or need to achieve. What is the size of the audience you are trying to persuade? Is it large, manageable or small? Is media the best way to reach them, or is direct voter contact going to be more effective?</i></p> <p><i>What about the image or profile of the political party or any candidates? Are there any policy ideas or issues you need to advance to change the terms of the debate around an election?</i></p> <p><b>2. Who is the campaign’s target audience?</b>  <i>Who are the groups of voters with whom your campaign is trying to communicate?</i></p> <p><b>3. Which media outlets do our target audience(s) relies on for information? What are the most important media outlets to the campaign?</b>  <i>Think about how each group of your campaign’s targeted voters get their information. What media outlets do they rely on and use regularly? Consider all forms of media, both traditional and new, and whether infrastructure (for example, regular electricity or Internet service) will affect their access to various outlets.</i></p> <p><i>In the Middle East and North Africa, most voters get most of their information from watching television. But it’s not always easy to get television coverage for campaign events, so consider what other media outlets your targeted voters rely on for information. Are there special media outlets that reach certain groups of voters, such as minority groups, students, or people living in certain neighborhoods or remote areas? Do groups such as young people or women consume media differently?</i></p>			

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<p>Once you know how your target audiences get their information, single out the ones on which your campaign can actually get coverage. These outlets become priorities for your media outreach strategy.</p> <p>As an example, one campaign might target the large, commercial television stations in the area, because most voters in their target groups watch a lot of television and these companies are likely to give some form of coverage to all parties. Another campaign may recognize that they are unlikely to get television coverage because the station's owners support a different party, or because these stations are unlikely to consider the campaign a priority. In this situation, the campaign might focus on a combination of newspapers, radio, and new media instead.</p> <p><b>4. What are the stories we want the media to cover that promote and advance the campaign's message?</b></p> <p>What kind of coverage does your campaign want to get? Do you want the press to focus on the issues that support your candidate's or pr party's central message, like covering the unemployment crisis and various candidates' plans to address job growth? Are you looking for coverage of your candidate's background and life story? Do you want stories that demonstrate that the campaign has a growing amount of public support? Come up with a list of stories you would like to see reported by your targeted media outlets.</p> <p><b>5. What strategies and tactics will your campaign use to get your priority media outlets to deliver your message to your targeted voters?</b></p> <p>Strategies and tactics are the specific actions your campaign takes to actually gain media coverage, particularly earned media.</p>			

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
4	<p>Divide the participants into groups of up to 5 and ask them to first come up with:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The objectives</li> <li>2. The audience(s) and</li> <li>3. Primary and secondary media outlets</li> </ol> <p>Give 10 minutes for this activity and 5 more for debrief.</p>	PEE	15	<p>If you are doing this session after you have done previous modules, the participants will already have defined their target audience(s), so they should just go back to findings from the targeting module and they could stay with the same groups as before.</p> <p>You are not assigning working on the strategies and tactics yet – that is going to be the next step.</p>
5	<p>After the participants have defined their objectives and audience(s), as well as their primary and secondary media outlets, go back to the list of different ways to get media coverage they have developed in the beginning and ask them to name those which they can use to earn media and invite them to discuss about what can be done to maximize earned media opportunities and attract media coverage. Write all their answers on the flipchart and try to elicit following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using media events</li> <li>- Having good working relationship with media</li> </ul> <p>Define a media event:</p> <p><i>A media event is any campaign activity designed to generate press coverage. Media events are more interesting for the press to cover than press conferences, because there is an activity to report on, and usually a visual image to show. Media events are the most powerful way to tell your campaign's story and bring your message to life, because you control the message, the speakers, and the visual picture. Media events can be site visits to locations (schools, health centers, factories, parks, etc.) to highlight certain issues, campaign activities (rallies, meetings, door-to-door canvassing), speeches, and debates.</i></p>	DBR	13	<p>Definition of a media event on the flipchart:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><u>A media event</u> is any campaign activity designed to generate press coverage.</p> </div>

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<p>Ask the participants to list some media events they could do to get media coverage and strengthen the message. Write their answers on the flipchart. You are looking for: conventions, receptions, public discussions, rallies, mass events (concerts), fairs, etc.</p> <p>Then, introduce the idea of campaign milestones:</p> <p><i>Milestones are events that receive special attention because they are connected with key occurrences during the campaign or with something that measures your success. For example, filing candidate registration papers with lots of signatures of support or receiving endorsements from important community leaders show that your campaign is competitive and newsworthy.</i></p> <p>Ask the participants to list some other campaign milestones events and write their answers on the flipchart. You are looking for: announcing your candidacy, receiving endorsements, reaching fundraising goals, meeting party registration deadlines, launching advertising or social media activities, releasing policies, platforms or manifestos, canvassing and other major campaign volunteer activities, hosting voter registration drives, etc.</p>			<p>What milestone events are:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><u>Milestones</u> are events highlighting key markers that demonstrate a campaign's success.</p> </div>
6	<p>Ask the participants to look back into their groups' findings from the previous exercise (objectives, key audiences, media outlets) and taking into consideration different types of events and campaign's milestones to come up with three or four examples of a campaign events which would advance their message, keep their supporters engaged and would be interested enough to appeal to the news media.</p> <p>Give 10 minutes for this activity and spend 5 minutes for groups' reporting.</p>	ANK	15	

## SECTION 2 – Organizing Effective Media Events – 30’

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
1	<p>Tell participants that now you are going to look more closely into what is needed for organizing an effective media event. Introduce the criteria a good media event meets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It’s newsworthy</i></li> <li>• <i>It reinforces the campaign’s message</i></li> <li>• <i>There is a clear, interesting visual for television and photographs</i></li> <li>• <i>Campaign supporters are plentiful and enthusiastic</i></li> <li>• <i>The candidate’s comments are concise and on message</i></li> <li>• <i>The time and place are convenient for the press to attend</i></li> </ul> <p>And checklists of activities for planning, executing and following up on a media event. Have those checklists written on the flipchart in advance.</p> <p><b>1. <u>Planning the event:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Think through: What news are you making? What headline do you want?</i></li> <li>• <i>Consider how you will tell your story visually (for example through a location, actions, people, or signs).</i></li> <li>• <i>Select a location that is convenient to reporters, with parking if needed.</i></li> <li>• <i>Select a time that is convenient for reporters, usually late morning or early afternoon.</i></li> <li>• <i>Make sure you have permission to hold the event if it’s at a special location.</i></li> <li>• <i>Prepare your media advisory and press release in the planning phase; this will help you clarify your message and ensure that the event you organize will generate the story you seek.</i></li> </ul>	TP	10	<p><u>Criteria for an effective media event:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It’s newsworthy</li> <li>• It reinforces the campaign’s message</li> <li>• There is a clear, interesting visual for television and photographs</li> <li>• Campaign supporters are plentiful and enthusiastic</li> <li>• The candidate’s comments are concise and on message</li> <li>• The time and place are convenient for the press to attend</li> </ul> <p><u>Planning the event:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What news are you making?</li> <li>• What headline do you want?</li> <li>• How will you tell your story visually?</li> <li>• Pick location and time convenient to reporters</li> <li>• Get permission to hold the event</li> <li>• Prepare media advisory and press release</li> <li>• Select, invite, brief and confirm guest speakers</li> <li>• Plan needed materials and equipment</li> </ul>

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<p><b>2. <u>Before the event:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Send a media advisory to all reporters and news outlets.</i></li> <li>• <i>Invite campaign supporters.</i></li> <li>• <i>Secure permits if needed.</i></li> <li>• <i>Arrange for special equipment such as sound, lighting, podium, etc.</i></li> <li>• <i>Write out and practice the candidate’s press statement.</i></li> <li>• <i>Finalize the press release and make copies, and prepare copies of the press kit.</i></li> <li>• <i>Confirm other speakers or special guests.</i></li> <li>• <i>Call reporters to pitch the event and ask if they plan to attend.</i></li> <li>• <i>Designate one person as “stage manager,” responsible for working with the candidate and any other speakers at the event to ensure a smooth flow.</i></li> <li>• <i>Hang banners, test the sound system, and do anything else you need to set up the location at least an hour before the event starts.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>3. <u>During the event:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Thank media, supporters and guests for attending.</i></li> <li>• <i>Greet all reporters at a registration table; ask them to present credentials and sign in.</i></li> <li>• <i>Make sure all event speakers understand the order of speakers and who the stage manager is.</i></li> <li>• <i>Distribute press releases to reporters.</i></li> <li>• <i>Make sure all reporters and camera operators have access to electricity and anything else they need.</i></li> <li>• <i>Take plenty of photos during the event, from different angles and perspectives.</i></li> <li>• <i>Post and tweet live from the event to the campaign’s social media networks.</i></li> </ul>			<p><u>Before the event:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send a media advisory to all reporters and news outlets</li> <li>• Invite campaign supporters</li> <li>• Secure permits if needed</li> <li>• Arrange for special equipment</li> <li>• Write out and practice the candidate’s press statement</li> <li>• Finalize and copy the press release and press kit</li> <li>• Confirm other speakers or special guests</li> <li>• Call reporters to pitch the event and ask if they plan to attend</li> <li>• Designate one person as “stage manager”</li> <li>• Finish location setup at least an hour before the event starts</li> </ul> <p><u>During the event:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thank media, supporters and guests for attending</li> <li>• Greet all reporters at a registration table; ask them to present credentials and sign in</li> <li>• Make sure all event speakers know the order of speakers and who the stage manager is</li> <li>• Distribute press releases to reporters</li> <li>• Make sure all reporters and camera operators have access to electricity and anything else they need</li> <li>• Take plenty of photos during the event, from different angles and perspectives</li> <li>• Post and tweet live from the event to the campaign’s social media networks</li> </ul>

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<p><b>4. <u>After the event:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Immediately send the press release and photo to all news outlets, including bloggers.</i></li> <li>• <i>Post coverage of the event on social media networks and send it to key supporters.</i></li> <li>• <i>Thank reporters who covered the event.</i></li> </ul>			<p><u>After the event:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediately send the press release and photo to all news outlets, including bloggers</li> <li>• Post coverage of the event on social media networks and send it to key supporters</li> <li>• Thank reporters who covered the event</li> </ul>
2	<p>Distribute the Worksheet Planning a Media Event and assign the following group activity: Fill in the grid on the worksheet to visualize and plan one of the media events you identified in the previous exercise.</p> <p>Allow 10 minutes for this activity. And spend 10 minutes on debrief.</p>	ANK	20	<p>There is not much time for the debrief to include full reports from all the groups and what you can do is to ask each group to report on a headline, lead, and questions and answers or likely responses.</p>

## SECTION 3 – New Media Communications – 40’

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
1	<p><i>Introduce new media:</i></p> <p><b>New media</b> is any newer technology that people use to consume information or interact with each other. Examples are:  <b>Social Networking sites</b> → Facebook, LinkedIn  <b>Blogs and Micro-blogs</b> → Twitter, Blogger, Tumblr, WordPress  <b>Video Hosting</b> → YouTube, Blip.tv  <b>Instant Messaging</b> → Pidgin, Skype, Whatsapp  <b>SMS and Text Messaging</b> → Blackberry groups, SMS sites  <b>Photo and Image Sharing</b> → Flickr, Instagram, Smilebox  <b>Social Bookmarking</b> → Digg, Reddit, Pinterest</p> <p>Ask the participants if their party or campaign use new media in communicating with voters and what new media they use.</p> <p>The next question is: What are the advantages of using new media? Record their answers on the flipchart looking for: inexpensive, exciting, where people are, fast, interactive.</p> <p>Now ask what would be disadvantages or challenges, record answers on the flipchart looking for: takes time; reaches people who are not voters, cannot control; can be a distraction from face-to-face; supporters you recruit through social networking do not go into your database, so you don't have their contact information to further build the relationship; no exact template on where to find supporters and potential supporters online; most people you reach may not be targeted voters; platforms were built for socializing, not campaigning; takes a lot of time for management and maintenance; nothing is private and mistakes have a long shelf life.</p>	TP + DBR	10	<p><u>New media:</u></p> <p>Social Networking sites → Facebook, LinkedIn            Blogs and Micro-blogs → Twitter, Blogger, Tumblr, WordPress            Video Hosting → YouTube, Blip.tv            Instant Messaging → Pidgin, Skype, Whatsapp            SMS and Text Messaging → Blackberry groups, SMS sites            Photo and Image Sharing → Flickr, Instagram, Smilebox            Social Bookmarking → Digg, Reddit, Pinterest</p>

<i>Steps</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Note to the Trainer</i>
2	Distribute the Worksheet Using New Media and ask the groups to think through the questions listed.  Use 10 minutes for the groups' work and the rest for debrief.	PEE + ANK	20	Alternatively you can do this exercise individually asking each participant to fill out the questionnaire.  If you are short on time, you could shorten this exercise by asking participants to answer the three parts of question five for the media event they planned earlier in the session. (how will you use the social media platform, what will you ask supporters to do, and draft 3 postings).

## SECTION 4 – Working With The Media – 29’

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
1	<p>Ask the participants to stay in their groups and to list at least 10 things a campaign or political party can do to develop and maintain a good working relationship with media in order to maximize earned media opportunities. Give 15 minutes for this activity.</p> <p>Take 15 minutes for debrief, but instead of having groups reporting have 11 guidelines written on the flipchart in advance and go one by one asking if any of the groups has it mentioned. If any of the groups have listed a guideline ask them to explain it, if not or if their explanation is partial you give an explanation.</p> <p>Here are the clarifications of each guideline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop relationships with key editors, reporters, and bloggers</b> <i>In working with the media, relationships are key. Reporters, bloggers and editors will be more likely to make the decision to cover your campaign if they know you or a member of your team, and if they are convinced that your candidacy is viable and has a real base of support. First impressions make a big impact, so make sure that when you meet with reporters the first time, you convey to them your campaign’s message and the kind of support you have.</i></li> <li>• <b>Stay in touch</b> <i>Call reporters regularly, not just to pitch stories or campaign events, but also just to stay in touch and discuss current events. Be available for calls from reporters at any time. Become a helpful resource to reporters.</i></li> </ul>	PEE	29	<p><u>Guidelines for working productively with the media:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop relationships with key editors, reports and bloggers</li> <li>2. Stay in touch</li> <li>3. Understand what is newsworthy</li> <li>4. Always be truthful and accurate</li> <li>5. Don’t be afraid to say “I’m not sure” and find out the answer</li> <li>6. Understand their limits and needs</li> <li>7. Respond quickly to calls</li> <li>8. Provide reporters with information in a format they can use</li> <li>9. Anticipate their need for content and pitch stories</li> <li>10. Stay on top of the story</li> <li>11. Address problems and move on</li> </ol>

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="178 208 746 846"> <p>• <b>Understand what is newsworthy</b>  <i>Certain types of stories and angles are considered newsworthy; understanding these gives you an advantage when suggesting stories to reporters or planning media events. Consider tying your campaign’s story to a major national news story, an anniversary or commemorative date, broader trends in politics or campaigns, the release of a new report or data, or a human interest story. Campaign milestones, such as candidate filing, reaching a voter contact goal, or opening a headquarters also make good news stories.</i></p> </li> <li data-bbox="178 857 746 1272"> <p>• <b>Always be truthful and accurate</b>  <i>Always tell the truth. Reporters rely on their sources for accurate information. Once a source proves unreliable, they won’t use that person again. Whenever possible, if you are making a point that can be backed up by independent evidence, provide that citation to the reporter so they can use it in their story. This helps your credibility and theirs, too.</i></p> </li> <li data-bbox="178 1283 746 1653"> <p>• <b>Don’t be afraid to say “I’m not sure” and find out the answer</b>  <i>If you get a question and are not completely sure of the answer, it’s best to say “I’m not certain; let me check on that and get back to you.” Make sure you research the question and call them back promptly. Reporters will appreciate your honesty.</i></p> </li> <li data-bbox="178 1664 746 2033"> <p>• <b>Understand their limits and needs</b>  <i>Reporters work under tight deadlines and high pressure. Expect, and insist on, fair coverage, but don’t expect reporters to go out of their way to cover your campaign. Make it easy for them to incorporate information into a story by providing research sources and suggesting other people to interview when you can.</i></p> </li> </ul>			

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="178 208 751 658"> <p>• <b>Respond quickly to calls</b>  <i>Most political stories are on daily deadlines, so respond as quickly as possible when a reporter calls you. If you want to have time to consider your responses, it's fine to ask the reporter what they are working on, what questions they have, and what their deadline is. Take a short time to prepare your responses, and then call them back as far advance of their deadline as possible.</i></p> </li> <li data-bbox="178 667 751 1043"> <p>• <b>Provide reporters with information in a format they can use</b>  <i>You can make a reporter's job easier by providing elements they need to put together their story. A clear, concise press release, along with the other elements in your press kit, will make their job easier. See the section on building a press kit in this module for further guidance.</i></p> </li> <li data-bbox="178 1052 751 1541"> <p>• <b>Anticipate their need for content and pitch stories</b>  <i>Think about what types of stories reporters might like to work on that could include a focus on your campaign. For example, your campaign could be featured in a story about campaigns doing online outreach to voters, or in a story about efforts to register new voters in your area. Don't be shy about calling reporters you know and 'pitching' or suggesting story ideas to them.</i></p> </li> </ul>			

Steps	Description	Type	Min	Note to the Trainer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Stay on top of the story</b>  <i>Make yourself a good source of information for your candidate and party, as well as for reporters. Monitor news coverage from a variety of sources. Learn what types of stories different media outlets cover, and what types of stories individual reporters like to write. Stay on top of the news, not just political news, but all types of stories that could affect your country or voters. Stay on top at all times of what your campaign's message and activities are, as well as the message and activities of your opponents.</i> </li> <li> <b>Address problems and move on</b>  <i>If you encounter a situation where you are misquoted or a story comes out about you that is inaccurate, address the situation immediately. Call and arrange for an in-person meeting with the reporter and their editor, and insist on either a retraction or that they print a response from your campaign without edits. With online coverage (including comments posted on stories or posts), be vigilant about responding quickly to unfavorable or biased coverage with your campaign's perspective.</i> </li> </ul>			

## CONCLUSION – 1'

Working strategically with the media can really pay off for your campaign, allowing you to reach more voters and persuade them with your message.

Developing a strategic communications plan, organizing effective media events, using new media communication, and improving your relationship with media will help ensure that you are maximizing every opportunity to inform, inspire and motivate your supporters.

## Worksheet: Planning a Media Event

Fill in the grid below to visualize and plan one media event.

<b>Headline</b>	Identify the news item of your story and frame it in a headline. <i>What's the headline of this story?</i>
<b>Lead</b>	Write a succinct paragraph in journalistic style to frame the story. What's new? Why would the news media cover this story?
<b>Photo or Visual Image</b>	Visualize the photo or image you want to represent the event. <i>What will people do at the media event that is visually interesting?</i>
<b>Candidate or Party Leader Quote</b>	Know what your sound bite is going to be and ensure everyone delivers it. <i>How do we state our message in 15 seconds or less?</i>
<b>Supporting Facts</b>	Provide local angles, facts and figures from objective sources. <i>What information do we have to support the claims we're making and provide interesting angles?</i>
<b>Validator Quote</b>	Pick speakers who reinforce your position. <i>What issue experts or constituency leaders will talk to the press for us?</i>
<b>Question and Answers or Likely Responses</b>	Prepare for media questions and opponents' attacks. <i>What will the reporters ask? What will our opponents say?</i>

## Using New Media Worksheet

1. What new media tools are most used by your campaign's supporters?
2. What new media tools are most used by your targeted voters (the voters you need to persuade)?
3. What new media tools are most used by opinion leaders in your community?
4. Which new media tools will your campaign use? Why have you chosen these?
5. For the media event you planned earlier in this module, pick one social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), and answer the following questions:

How you will use that social media platform to help meet the goals of the event (e.g., publicize the event, get supporters to attend, communicate the event's message to supporters, etc.)?

What will you ask your supporters to do via the social networking platform (e.g., ask supporters to help with planning or set up, engage supporters in coming up with ideas for signs for the event, post photos showing community members at the event)?

Draft 3 messages regarding the event you could use on the platform: