

**martincharlton**  
communications

## Public Relations / Media Training 101

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**MARTIN CHARLTON COMMUNICATIONS IS THE LARGEST PUBLIC RELATIONS COMPANY IN SASKATCHEWAN AND ONE OF THE LARGEST IN WESTERN CANADA.**

Martin Charlton brings together a top-notch team of multi-talented communications professionals to provide clients with unparalleled results.

We help our clients build bridges to their stakeholders, the public, media and other key opinion leaders.

We work with local, provincial, national and international clients who are large and small businesses, industry associations, government and non-profit organizations.

It's our job to separate perception from reality and to build understanding and support.

# Experience

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Martin Charlton Communications has many years of experience with municipal communications, issues management and crisis communications:

Next to *doing* the right thing,  
the most important thing is to  
Let people *know* you are  
doing right thing

John D. Rockefeller

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Why communications is critical to the operation of a municipality.

Everything stops when we don't communicate with each other.

When you are not only publicly accountable, but judged in the court of public opinion.

**Publicity is absolutely critical.  
A good PR story is infinitely  
More effective than a  
Front page ad.**

**Sir Richard Branson**

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Audiences perceive that their chosen, trusted news provider (radio / TV / newspaper / online) is impartial when it comes to content which is not paid for. In Canada and most western countries, it is a requirement to inform the audience when an article is a paid feature, commercial, advertorial or partnership.

From audience research we know that people treat their chosen news provider as a source of trusted news.

They believe the following:

Editorial opinion cannot be bought when outside of an advert / advertorial / partnership etc.

Up to 92% of audiences trust word-of-mouth recommendations,



# The business of news media

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All news outlets aim to deliver high quality news coverage to their audiences.

To do this costs money.

They either have to charge the audience a fee, have advertising or a combination of both.

Excluding CBC, the news outlets (regardless of being TV, print or online) in Canada generate 100% of revenue based on the number of readers / listeners / viewers.

The CBC is publicly owned, which means that the bulk of the cost for program making is born out by taxation. However they still run adverts online and on TV based on the number of people they reach.

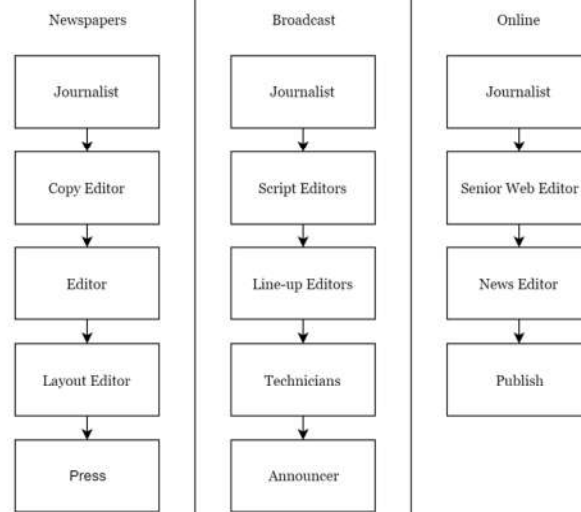


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## The Job of the News Media

Journalists believe in the two fundamental freedoms:

- Freedom of the Press
- Freedom of Speech



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### Organization of the News Media

- Reporters do not have free reign to cover whatever they want. They are part of an organizational structure.
- Reporters are assigned stories by superiors who have discussed story ideas while also scanning a file of events that are happening that day. Senior reporters are more likely to have

In other words, don't automatically blame the reporter if something got left out or is distorted. However, if a reporter did make an error, there is a chain of command you can follow to make complaints.





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## **Underdog**

Media instinctively listen to the underdog. Most news media argue that it's a characteristic of a free society that dissenters be heard.

Today's establishment could be tomorrow's underdog. It's all a matter of perspective on any given issue.

**Passenger who was dragged off United Airlines flight settles with airline over 'unfortunate incident'**  
By MICHAEL TAMM AND DEN HAMMERS, THE ASSOCIATED PRESS | April 10, 2017 | Last updated: Apr 28 10:47 AM ET | News from The Associated Press

**A healthy 3-foot-long giant rabbit is found dead after United flight**  
By Tony Marco and Hilary McGinn, CNN | Updated 9:49 AM ET, Thu April 27, 2017

**Delta Air Lines apologizes for forcing family off overbooked flight**  
By Arunima Banerjee and Brendan O'Brien | Reuters

**United Breaks Guitars guy says airline shows 'lack of compassion' in wake of latest PR disaster**  
Tuesday April 11, 2017

**Which airlines are most likely to bump you?**

Airline	Voluntary removals from U.S. flights in 2016
Delta	129,825
Southwest	88,428
United	62,833
American	44,259
Skywest	4,411
ExpressJet	33,598
Allegiant	19,444
Alaska	6,896
Virgin America	2,375
Frontier	2,096
JetBlue	1,705
Hawaiian	326

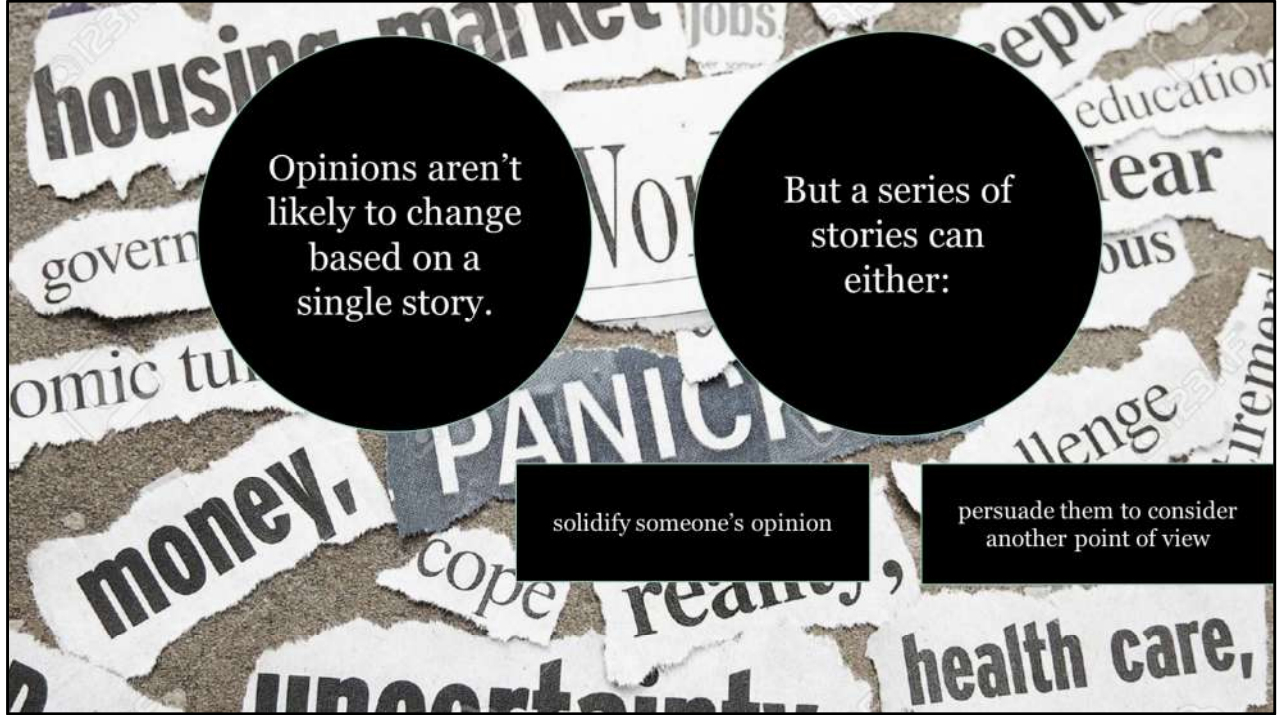
**10 DAYS Of Delicious Dining June 2 - 11**

**New in Life & Style**

**Musician Dave Carroll, left, became famous for a song he wrote about United Airlines breaking his guitar. CEO Oscar Munoz, right, is under fire again after video of police officers dragging a passenger from an overbooked flight was shared online. (Andrew Vaughan/Richard Drew/CH&D)**

Then, there are crises of accountability. Someone has power – or a perceived control or influence – over others.

These involved money we've spent and our expectations of service and the quality of goods we are being sold. It involves the relationship we have with these organizations and the qualities of those leading them – they are honest and well-intentioned.



### **POWER OF MEDIA**

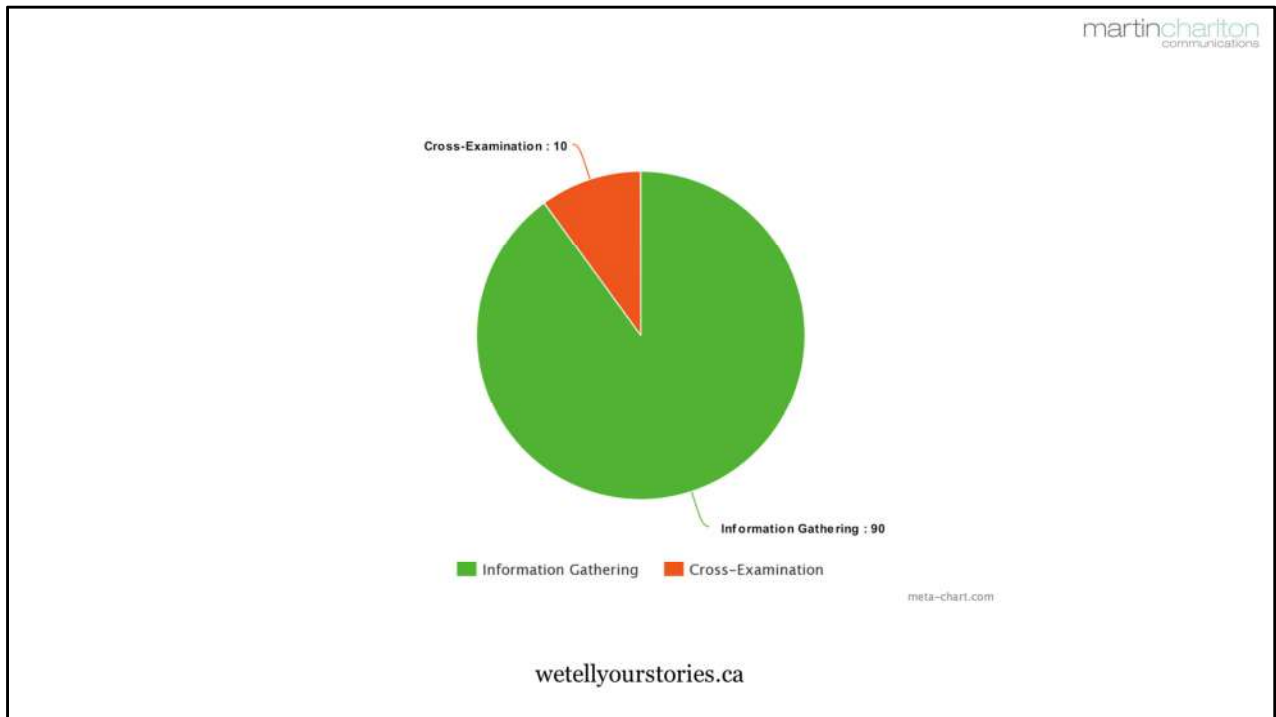
The power of the media is less about what they say or write. It is more about which discussions they generate through the stories they cover.

Nothing to see here



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No comment doesn't work. Elements of building a plan. What keeps you up at night?



Information Gathering (90-95%) – the reporter wants simple, straightforward information or opinions in order to compile a story.

Cross-examination (5-10%) – the reporter is contacting you on a highly contentious or sensational issue and usually has a source of information that is hostile to your own position.

# What not to do

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Be Prepared for anything, During a media conference or interview, whether it's a more casual opportunity for information gathering or cross examination, walking off is never the answer.

It becomes a bigger story than what you were there to do in the first place.

# Tips for preparing for an interview

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## How to Prepare for an Interview

- Know the media - watch local news, listen to radio, read newspapers, visit media websites
- Familiarize yourself with reporters and their styles.
- Don't automatically agree to an interview. Ask your own questions (what they are looking for and why) and determine if you are indeed the right person.
- Don't agree to an immediate interview, give yourself time to prepare. When you get a reporter's request, ask what the deadline is and that you will call him back before that deadline.
- Ask for the questions to be emailed to you – many reporters won't want to do that, but it is worth asking so you can better prepare.
- Be properly briefed and armed with relevant information.
- Don't take longer than necessary to get back to the reporter, or the reporter



will find other sources, which may be less favourable to you.

- Treat each interview request as an opportunity, not a problem. This is your chance to tell your story, regardless of the reason for the interview. Consider what you want people to know and make sure you get that into the interview.
- Determine one or two key points you want to make on the issue. Then practice how you will make those points in a concise, easy-to-understand manner.
- Practice making your point in 10 seconds or less. Anything beyond 20 seconds will likely not make it into the story.
- If time and circumstances allow, find an associate and have him or her play reporter. Have them ask you the nastiest questions they can think of on the topic and practice making your point. Usually, co-workers are far harder on you than reporters – if you can survive their questions, you can survive anything.
- While practicing, avoid jargon and acronyms which won't be understood by anyone outside your industry.

# Bridging – the tools for telling YOUR story

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**A – B - C**

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# Acknowledge

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Be respectful – don't just reply with an unconnected answer to the question. There are two tips here.

Either accept the question (ie – that's a great question) or reject the question (for example – what's more important is...)

OR you can spend a little time answering that question and bridging it to the point which you want to communicate.

# Bridge

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The phrase which you will use to get to the point you want to make.

## Example

Indeed we are spending 86 million dollars on the project, but let me put this in to perspective by saying that long term investment such as this will ensure (then positive message) that we don't only remain competitive, but lead the field in ...

Or

If a journalist poses a question to which you do not agree the premise, don't reinforce the negativity that they are positioning, but respond with something like. "the evidence doesn't support what you said, but we know that we have accomplished....positive message

# Bridge

...However, the real issue here is...

...What's important to remember here is...

...Before we leave the subject, let me just say...

...I'll get to that question in a moment, but let me start by saying...

...While I appreciate you raising this...

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A few more examples.

The third example (before...) is particularly useful when an interviewer wants to move on to a different topic and you still have a valid point to make,

The fourth is great when dealing with a tough question. It shows that you are willing to answer the question, but you want to put it in to context.

# Communicate

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Going back to the preparation for your interview, deliver the succinct message that you want the listener / viewer / reader to take away from this.

Keep it short and to the point, avoiding acronyms and jargon.



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Great example of bridging.

In this radio interview the guest bridges brilliantly. The first thing she does is put the proposed question in to perspective. During the interview she even manages to move the focus back to the regulators for the reason that a drug is not publicly funded.



# Humour & Analogies

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# General Interview Tips

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- Opinions
- Off the record
- The pregnant pause – awkward
- No comment
- Microphone / camera always on – next slide



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# Advice when talking to reporters

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Doesn't have the courtesy to acknowledge the questions.  
Makes good points on reinvestment since take over  
Organization is perceived negatively by viewers because of a lack of empathy for people who had negative experiences and for being confrontational



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Overall advice when talking to reporters

Being respectful matters

# Interviews Techniques and Locations

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Always ask if live or pre-recorded before agreeing to interview

Face to face

Phone

Studio – tv / radio

Environment

Privacy

Comfortable

# After the interview

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Watch back  
Right to reply  
Fact checking

Consider the true impact. Will this be a blip or a crisis



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- Government Relations
- Issues Management
- Crisis Communication
- Digital Strategy
- Content Creation
- Fractional Communications

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