

The Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission The Public and The Media

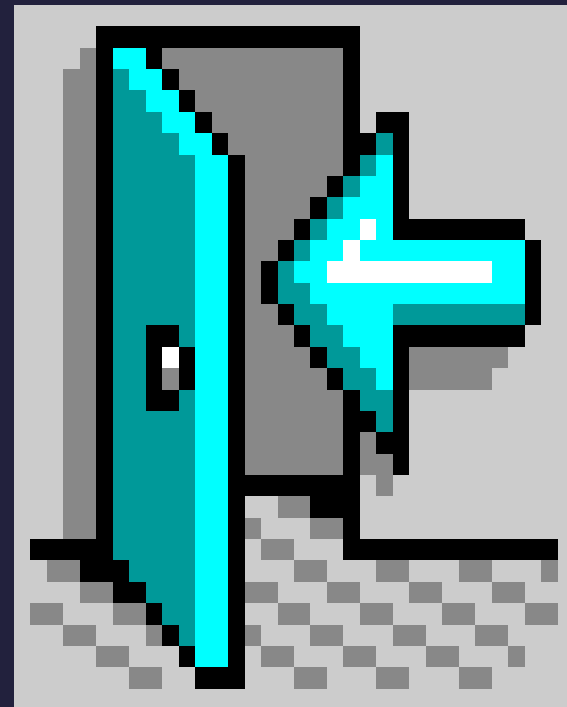


Judy Ripley
November 23, 2004



Open Door Policy

- Meetings of public agencies must be open to the public.
- A group of state employees who meet to conduct business is not considered a governing body.



Open Door Policy

Notice of meetings and executive sessions must be posted 48-hours (excluding weekends and holidays) before the meeting.

Open Door Policy

Executive Sessions are meetings that are not open to the public.

Open Door Policy



Agencies must provide access to the notice of the meeting and the meeting agenda through the state Website.

Open Door Policy

Public records that are confidential include:

- Those classified as such by state or federal law
- Trade secrets
- Medical records
- Confidential financial records

Open Door Policy

Any person may inspect public records during the agency's regular business hours.



Open Door Policy

If a public record is partially disclosable, the agency must separate or redact the material that may be disclosed.

Open Door Policy



Agencies must acknowledge the receipt of request and state how it will comply within 24-hours of a request made in person or by telephone.

Open Door Policy

The response time is 7-days for requests that are e-mailed or faxed.



Open Door Policy

There is no set time to produce records in statute, but the records must be made available in a reasonable time under the circumstances.

The Media



The Media

Dealing with the media is an Opportunity.

The Media

- Reporters are looking for sources to USE to get information.
- You should look for reporters to use to get your message out.

The Media

- Know what reporters need and how they work
- Know YOUR message and focus on it
- Be truthful and accurate

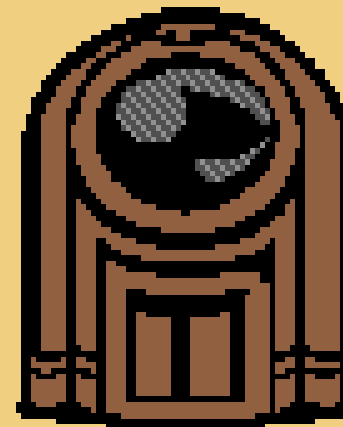
Newspapers



- Cover news in more detail
- Generally have more reporters
- Deadlines more critical

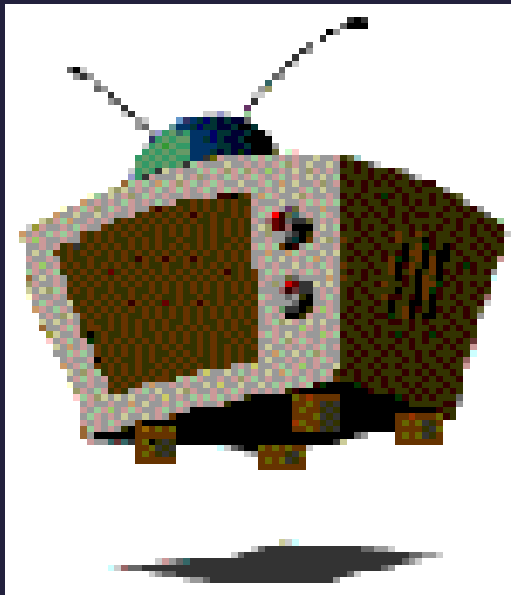
Radio

- Relies on mental pictures
- More newscasts
- Greatest impact in the morning
- 2nd largest audience in the afternoon



WWW.ARTIE.COM

Television

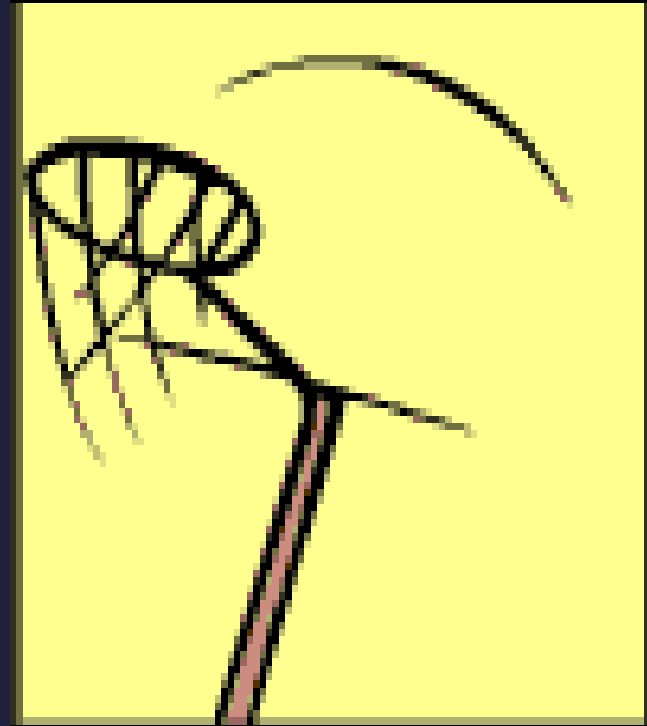


- Intimate
- Medium of feeling, not content
- Viewers react on looks, voice attitude, style and content
- Every gesture & expression is larger than life

The Media

Be Proactive.

You only score
when you are on
offense!

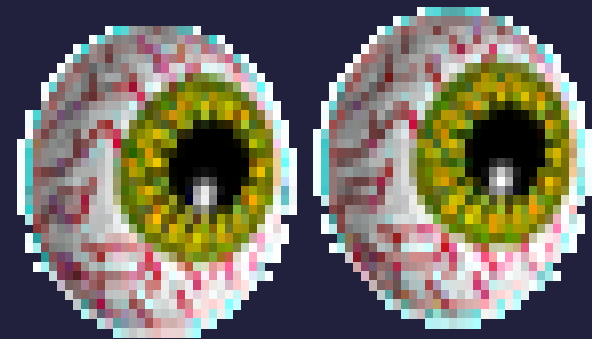


Preparation

- Determine key audience
- Anticipate what reporters might ask
- Practice the questions out loud
- Dress appropriately
- Know your interviewer

Who should speak

- You protect the credibility and image of your Commission by keeping the decision makers and staff out of the public eye.



When should someone else speak?

- You should look at this on a case by case basis.

Your Message

- Always based on fact
- Conveys your point of view
- Keep to 2 or 3 main points
- There should always be some key message points to use

Your message

Report your own bad news

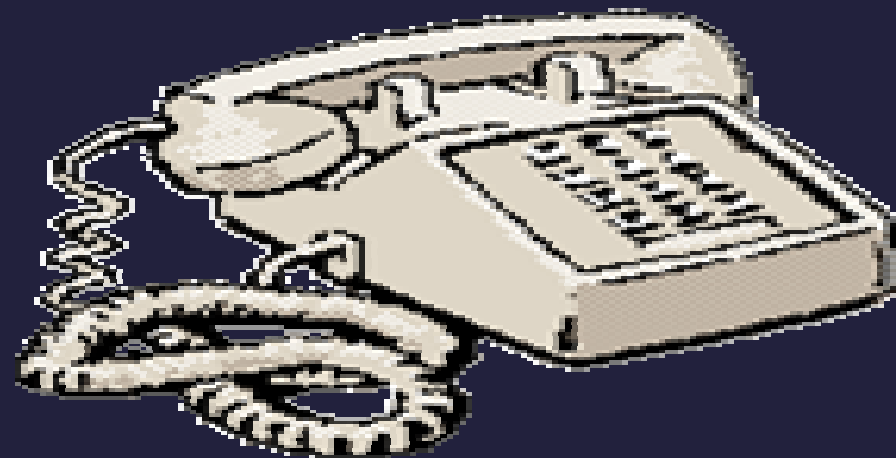
Feed reporters information

- When you have orders that are technical, give reporters the information they need in understandable language.
- Your spokesperson should understand the matter completely so they can explain it to those who will report it.

Tools spokesperson needs

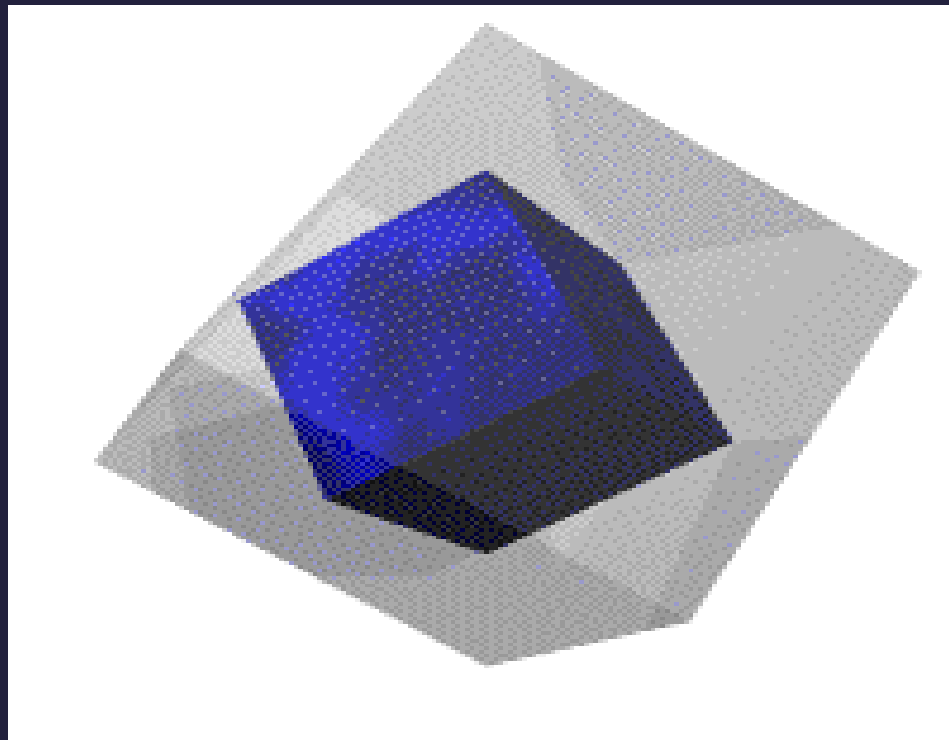
- Access to the chairman
- Access to the background behind the decision making process
- Support of the Commissioners and Staff
- Clear understanding of the “chain of command”

Interviews



Interviews

Set the box



Setting the box

- Who will do interview
- Where
- When
- For how long

Setting the box

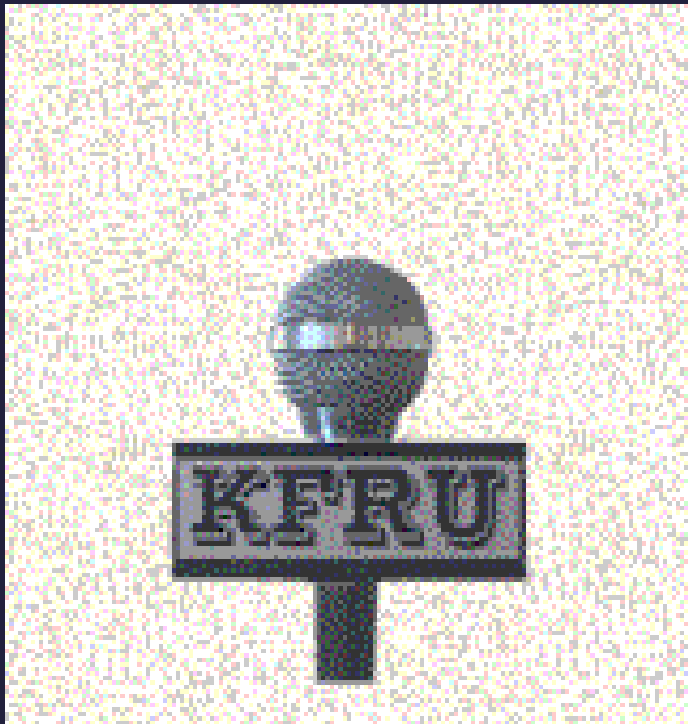
- Define the subject of the interview
- Know who is coming and a little about that reporter's style
- Do the interview in a neutral place – not in your office

Setting the box

- Set a maximum time for the interview

GENERALLY 10-15 MINUTES MAXIMUM

Stay on message



- Know What you want to say.
- Know How to say it.
- Find a Place within the interview to say it.

The Interview

Learn how to prepare short, quotable
“nuggets” or “sound bites”

The Interview

Who is listening?

Employees

Community

Those you regulate

Legislators

The Interview

- Answer questions if you can and explain why if you can't
- Don't use jargon
- Be fair and firm

The Interview

- YOU NEVER HAVE TO ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE AMBUSHED!

The Interview

Never say “NO COMMENT”

Stay on message

- What's important here is to remember...
- I can't answer that question, but what I can tell you is....

Stay on Message

- Let me put that in perspective...
- Don't assume that you've made your point—ask whether you've made yourself clear



Concentrate and Focus

- Look at the interviewer not the camera
- Focus on the questions and your response
- Eye contact makes you appear more confident and credible

Concentrate and Focus

- Avoid chairs that swivel or rock
- Don't cross your legs
- Don't grip the arms of the chair

Concentrate and Focus

ALWAYS ASSUME THE CAMERA OR
MICROPHONE IS ON!

Negative questions

- Never let a reporter put words in your mouth.
- Never pick up or repeat a negative question, Rephrase it in a positive way.

What if questions

Don't answer!

Another's crisis can become yours



Another's crisis can become yours

2003 Blackout

The lights went out: the great US blackout started on 14 August 2003, and lasted for 30 hours. It was the worst blackout in the USA for nearly 40 years,

The US and Canadian governments have established a joint task force to investigate the causes of the power failure. The task force is headed by US energy secretary Spencer Abraham and Canada's

Another's crisis can become yours

California Energy Crisis

Who Turned The Lights Out? To understand how California can get out of its energy crisis, you have to understand how it got into this mess. And that's

When it comes to big-time economic disasters, it can be hard to specify exactly when "the situation" turned into "the crisis" ...

Fortune, February 5, 2001 by Gunther, Marc · 1 page ·

Another's crisis can become yours

Natural gas explosions



Good practices

- Keep a log of media calls. Include who you talked to when you talked to them and what you talked about.

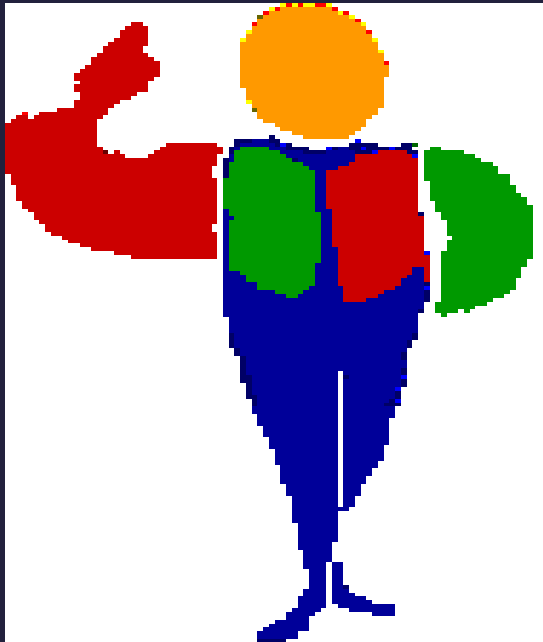
Director of External Affairs (IURC)

Provides
issue/position
explanation and
understanding to
Legislators



Director of External Affairs

Serves as a Liaison to



**Indiana General
Assembly**

Governor's Office

Other State Agencies

**Utility Industry
Organizations,
particularly on
Legislation**

External Affairs

- Track Utility Legislation impacting IURC, Public Utilities and Consumers
- Provide Testimony and Information at Legislative hearings
- Suggest Legislation to Address Problems in Public Utility Field

External Affairs

External Affairs Office Exempt
from “Ex Parte” Rule

Communications often informal

Good Communications

- Content
- Context
- Careful
- Credibility
- Comprehensible
- Concise
- Clear
- Coherent



Questions?

