

# HOW TO EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE WITH THE PRESS

By: Zainab Mahama and Joyce Okyere Asiedu

# Outline

1. Definition
2. Public Relations and Media Relations
3. Roles
4. Approaches
5. Tactics
6. Principles
7. Some Tips on how to Succeed

# Definition

- Engaging with the media is an aspect of Public Relations which involves working with the press for the purpose of informing the public of an organisation's mission policies and practices in a positive, consistent and credible manner.

- Typically this means coordinating directly with the people responsible for producing news and other write ups in the mass media.

- Goal: to maximize positive coverage in the mass media without paying for it directly through advertising.

# What is the mass media



# What is the mass media?

- ▶ It is the collection of media technologies that reach a large audience through mass Communication.
- These include:
- The print media





- Electronic media: radio, tv, online sources, film telephone and now social media



# What role does the media play?

- ▶ To Inform
- ▶ To educate
- ▶ To entertain

What are the approaches/tools for media engagement?

- Press Releases
- Audio releases or podcasts
- Backgrounders
- Bylines or op-eds
- Emails
- Fact sheets
- Features or articles
- Documentaries, letter to the editor
- Media kits
- Video news release
- Press conferences
- Talk and interior shows
- Rejoinders
- blogs



- Media relations is a two-way thing.

You seek to satisfy the interest of your organization and that of the media

# How do you effectively engage the media?

## ► Principles of Media Engagement

- Know and anticipate the needs of the media you are working with
- What do journalists want?
  1. Story or quote
  2. Make their deadline - timeliness
  3. Beat the competition
  4. Build their image
  5. Looking out for accuracy, truthfulness, completeness.



## Principles continued:

- Write in clear and concise language. Don't use jargons. As Ambassador Jackson says, "explain in such a way that your grandmother can understand what it is and do it."

- Admit you don't know the answer to a question. Offer to get the answer quickly
- Be open with the media as much as possible
- Return phone calls
- Assume all you say is on the record.
- Keep and update a media contact list

- Let the media know how to get you when need be:




- Know the structure of the media
- Know who to invite for what program

## Putting a human face to your engagement

- ▶ There is a combination of proactive media relations and putting a human face to your engagement with the media. This is having a strong and deeper relationship with journalists and the media fraternity.

- The media would want you to treat them as human beings
- See them as allies and not as intruders or enemies
- Attend such programs as weddings, funerals, that affect them.



- 
- Acknowledge their work and efforts with compliments
  - Know how to request a correction



- Pay them occasional visits, sms and whatsApp or call them.

- Host breakfast, lunches, dinners or soirees when need be



# Useful Tips

- Engaging effectively with the media should be a:
- Deliberate
- Planned
- Sustained effort

