introduction

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Floodplain Communications

- Know the Problem (Logic Model)
  - Local conditions – “Why Here?”
  - Contributing factors
  - Measure for accuracy
  - Improving vs Worsening
Floodplain Communications

- Communications Lifecycle
Floodplain Communications

- Building Capacity Increases Messaging
  - Develop partnerships
  - Add message channels
  - Hone your messages
Media Relations is KEY
Three Universal Truths

- Reporters have to compete for airtime every day
- Reporters don’t know the market
- Reporters are lazy.
• Get to know reporters in your media market
- Follow/Follow Back
- Availability is almost as important as knowledge
- Education takes time
- Text messaging vs Press Release
- Always be prompt
WHO ARE REPORTERS & WHAT DO THEY WANT?

• Never assume that the reporter understands the story he’s working on.
WHO ARE REPORTERS & WHAT DO THEY WANT?

• Assignment desks make reporters compete for airtime
• Little time for reflection and understanding
How We Think

• Data
• Economics
• Facts
• Logic
• Internally-oriented
• Head Knowledge

How Reporters Think

• Conflict
• Confrontation
• Damage/Carnage
• Fear
• External
• Struggle
• Heart Knowledge
COMMUNICATIONS PRIORITIES

• Give them something to talk about

• Keep 3 back-pocket ideas at all times

• Match your “problems” to real stories they can use
  – Weather is always a great topic and meteorologists love to do “stories”

• Talk to the community in your interviews
COMMUNICATIONS PRIORITIES

• Explain what is being done to address the problems.

• Be definitive and specific—not vague.
COMMUNICATIONS PRIORITIES

• Frame responses in public’s self-interest—not yours.

• Remember: the reporter is not your audience or your friend
  – Don’t try to please him
  – Do try to accommodate him

• Practice, practice, practice!
TELEVISION INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

• Learn the art of sound bites.
• Look at the reporter, not the camera.
• Be confident, assertive. Never show anger and don’t argue.
• Be in control – emphasize the positives.
• Use everyday English.
• Don’t gesture wildly or fold your arms. Be natural.
Results for Mecklenburg County

- 97 interviews per year average
- 142 published stories/year
- Multiple airings: +/- $300,000 value
- Trusted resource, positive affiliation
Example
questions?

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