

WORD NERD

Wiki*ped*i*ate *n.* -- to confirm or validate something by looking it up on Wikipedia.

BIANCHI BIZ BLOG

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[Three Ways to Be More Quotable](#)

Client Kudos

Congrats to the **Steel Market Development Institute** on another successful Great Designs in Steel seminar. With a record number of attendees and media, SMDI rolled out the FutureSteelVehicle study, which shows how steel can help the next generation of vehicles be more fuel efficient.

Sales & Marketing Awards

The **Marketing and Sales Executives of Detroit** organization is now accepting nominations for its annual Platinum Awards. The awards honor those who distinguish themselves in the sales and marketing fields and who have helped their companies achieve critical business goals. [Learn more or nominate someone here.](#)

CAR MBS Discount



Discounted registration for **CAR's 46th annual Management Briefing Seminars** in Traverse City ends June 30. To learn more about critical connection points for those in the North American auto industry, [click here.](#)

Hope to see you there!

NDIA Charity Ride

The **National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) Michigan Chapter** will host its second annual USA Cares Charity Ride and Classic Car Show on Saturday, July 9 from noon to 6 p.m. at Kensington Metro Park (Maple Beach area).

The event will include an afternoon motorcycle ride that begins and ends at the park, as well as a classic car show. Live music / entertainment will be featured throughout the day.

Proceeds will benefit Michigan military families through USA Cares. [Learn more or register here.](#)

Charity Golf Outing

The **Women In Defense (WID) Michigan Chapter** will host its third annual 18-hole golf scramble on Friday, July 22 at Cherry Creek Golf Club in Shelby Twp.

The outing will benefit the organization's **HORIZONS-Michigan scholarship program**, which encourages females to pursue careers related to the national security and defense industries. [Learn more or register here.](#)

Bianchi PeRspectives

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“The questions don’t do the damage . Only the answers do.”

(Sam Donaldson)



Sometimes the most newsworthy -- and often most damning -- media coverage comes inadvertently, when the person being interviewed is unprepared for the question, and in frustration blurts out the first thing that comes to mind.

Once uttered, the words will travel around the world at mach speed. And the more embarrassing they are, the more they will be played and re-played on news sites, Facebook and Twitter feeds, blogs and sites like YouTube.

So before you or your executive go into an interview, think of the words of Sam Donaldson ... and take some advice from the Boy Scouts' motto: **Be prepared.**

Jim Bianchi, APR
President

Why Media Training is a Must!

Why do some companies invest so much time developing a PR campaign, yet risk getting it wrong by not media training their spokespeople?

Often, executives plead that they're "good to go," or are too busy to invest a few hours for in media training. But after an interview goes south, they'll be feeling a lot less confident. And as Dale Carnegie once said: "Only a prepared speaker deserves to be confident."

Taking that to heart, one can see why preparing your company's spokespeople for media interviews is so important. As the subject of a media interview, your executives don't control the questions asked, which is always a bit unnerving. But with the right training, they can learn how to prepare, how to deliver your company's messages effectively, how to avoid missteps and how to garner the kind of media attention your company wants.

Here are a few media training and interview preparation tips to help your executive master the art of the interview:

Why are we doing this again? -- As every interview is unique, research should be done for each. Your spokesperson should know going in to an interview what specific goals the company is hoping to achieve, as well as who is the audience is. Teach your executives to ask for this kind of information upfront, so they can be briefed.

Background check -- You want your spokesperson to know everything they can about the reporter they'll be talking to in advance. What is their writing style? Their background? Do they typically cover companies like yours? This information can help your executive feel more prepared going into the interview and allows you to help them tailor specific messages.

K.I.S.S.: Keep It Simple, Spokesperson! -- You and your executives should try to craft key messages so they are limited to about 30 seconds in length - or 60-75 words - per question. This makes responses easier to capture and understand. You can always elaborate further when asked. Also try to limit the amount of statistics, names, acronyms and technical jargon you use. The more complex the subject, the more you need to simplify.

Game plan for the good and the bad -- Preparing and rehearsing your key messages and talking points is a given for any interview. But you should also try to anticipate what the most difficult or troublesome questions will be. What is the worst thing a reporter could ask? Is there financial information you can't reveal? Partnerships you're not ready to discuss? Proprietary information that shouldn't be shared? Make a list of these questions and prepare answers for them, too.

It's not "off the record." EVER -- Remind your executive that if they're not OK with something being in print or broadcast - don't say it. Even if they're told it'll be off the record, act like it won't be. Also, let them know that if they don't know the answer to a question, it's OK to say so. You don't want them to waffle their way through it. Have them tell the reporter they'll get back to them and make sure you that they do, in a timely manner.

Mock it up -- Practice makes perfect, so having mock interviews as part of your company's media training is always a good idea. You can mix it up with different questions - including difficult ones - and try new angles. You may even want to video tape your practice sessions so your spokesperson can see how they perform. Not only does it give everyone more practice, but it helps you see how your key messages are landing and if they sound quotable.

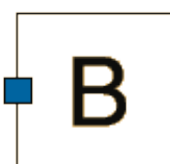
Details, details, details -- Don't forget to consider the little things when media training your spokespeople. Remind them of the importance of having a quiet place to conduct the interview and to allow enough time so they won't be rushed. Make sure all the terms and contact information are secured and known upfront.

Not over yet -- Post-interview, stress to your executives the importance of having someone follow up with the reporter (in a timely manner) on anything they had requested - additional information, images, etc. Remember - the more thorough you are, the more informational the end reader / viewer will have. Once the interview runs, be sure to keep track of results and feedback. Continuous improvement isn't just for your company's products and services, it should be applied to your messaging and communication as well.

Bonus tip: Get into it -- Remind your spokesperson to crank up their enthusiasm about 25 percent during an interview. Reporters are trained to be critical and if you don't treat your topic as if it is important or exciting, how can you expect the reporter to?

If you'd like more information on a customized media training program for your executives or technical spokespeople, please contact Bianchi PR at 248.269.1122 or jbianchi@bianchipr.com.

For additional tips on how to ace a media interview, including on-camera interviews, [click here.](#)



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