

Prepare and Ace the Media!

When facing the media, one should take note that it is a chance of a lifetime to showcase yourself or your company, even though it may just be for 15 minutes. This was a key message that was delivered to the participants at a recent IPRS workshop. "Ace the Media like a PRO".

The workshop, held on 28 July 2009, was conducted by IPRS Council Member and Managing Director of Red Shoe Communications, Ms Kathy O'Brien, with a guest trainer, Mr Woon Tai Ho, Managing Director of Green Orange, and former MediaCorp News CEO.



Left to right: Kathy checking some notes during the workshop, the mock interview segment

Two very interesting segments in the workshop were the "mock" press interview and press conference in which participants were put to test 'LIVE' in front of a camera. Most participants emerged excited and satisfied from the "hands-on" sessions.



Left to right: participants viewing the replay of their interview segment, Kathy briefing participants before the press conference, the mock press conference

Relating his experiences at MediaCorp, Tai Ho shared with the participants that the newsroom was sometimes in a mayhem with journalists needing to get their facts right all the time. He highlighted that being a journalist was a tough job. If only PR professionals understood this, he believed that the fear of journalists could be overcome. Tai Ho added, "The ultimate step when facing the media is to prepare, prepare and prepare! There is no substitute for preparation."



Participant Ms Kow Sin Yee from the corporate communications team at Canon Singapore gave two reasons why she had joined the workshop. First, was the trainer's background in media relations. Secondly, the relevance of the workshop content to her area of work. "The workshop lived up to my expectations. It would have been even better if there were additional practical sessions." Sin Yee, who is also an IPRS member, added that she looked forward to IPRS organising lunch talks on topics such as social media versus traditional media.



Ms Esther Tan, Corporate Communications Manager at NTUC FairPrice and IPRS graduate, said that she joined the workshop to gain more knowledge on facilitating media interviews. "I loved the training which was lively and practical. The role plays were especially helpful," she added. Esther said

that she looked forward to attending workshops on crisis communications and the social media.

The key points that the trainers observed during the “mock” sessions which they then encouraged participants to note included:

- Listen to the questions and take time to answer
- To be familiar with the content well before approaching or facing the media
- Use statistics that are accurate
- Maintain good eye contact with the journalist and use deliberate body language
- Use positive and solid proof statements and simple anecdotes
- Use push and pull languages
- Add vocal drama
- Repeat the key message three times but not in a row
- Choose words you want people to notice



Presentation of Certificate

When asked to comment on the workshop, veteran trainer, Kathy said, "Our 'unannounced' guest trainer, Woon Tai Ho, made a great difference. A media veteran with 25 years of Mediacorp experience behind him, Tai Ho could speak with both authority and specificity about what sells and what doesn't inside the newsroom. I'm so pleased that we were able to match this challenging group of demanding professionals with a training team that included a Mediacorp News veteran. With Tai Ho adding specific examples and the newsmakers' perspective, we had a day full of stimulating debate and challenging role-plays."

To find out more on IPRS workshops, please contact the Secretariat at 6534 1841.

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