

Media Training Workshop

Thursday 1 June 2023



Formative Communications

Training in-person & online

Media relations workshop



Mastering
media
interviews

Media
interviews -
techniques

On camera
practice

Andrew Manasseh

Andrew Manasseh has over 25 years strategic communications and media relations and advise Brussels based policy organisations and institutions on external communications and media management.



Media interviews: your big challenges

Reflect on your previous experience
of media interviews – and let's talk
about it.



What journalists want

Guests that speak clearly with impact and with examples we can relate to.

What makes news?

“When a dog bites a man, that is not news, because it happens so often.
But if a **man bites a dog**, that is news.”

Alfred Harmsworth (founder of the Daily Mail)

1865-1922

The hook – it's news if it's already in the news



What makes News?

Change

Controversy

Conflict

Think about the editors

1. Most broadcast interviews will be heavily edited.
2. Reporters and editors are looking for beautiful 'soundbite' quotes to light up their coverage.
3. You have to lift your ideas above the smog of information overload.

Your quotes need to have life, colour to be **remembered**.

Speaking for broadcast

Talk about	Answer	Slow	Voice
<p>Talk about what is close to the viewers</p>	<p>Answer questions in full, complete sentences – these can be clipped and used by editors</p>	<p>Slow the pace of your normal speech</p>	<p>Use word stress, pauses and vary your vocal pitch to add impact</p>

Media interview techniques

An opportunity to convey your key messages and colour them with data and stories

Technique 1 - speak for broadcast

Talk in short 'sound-bite' sentences

Make your sentences 'active' (subject verb object)

Try to 'brand' your answers

"We are working with different countries to ."

"Cellular Agriculture is talking with...."

Technique 2 – The ABC of media interviews

Acknowledge the question

Bridge to your key messages

Conclude your messages with proof points

And dangle the next case (if you are feeling lucky)

Technique 3 – Use pivoting phrases carefully

Use the interview to pivot to your messages.

“That has been a problem in the past, but we have put in place measures to....”

But take care not to evade the questions.

“It is a valid question and I would say that your viewers are also interested in....”

“I don’t have the precise details on that, but what I can say is.....”

Technique 4 – zooming out and zooming in

You decide on the focus of the interview

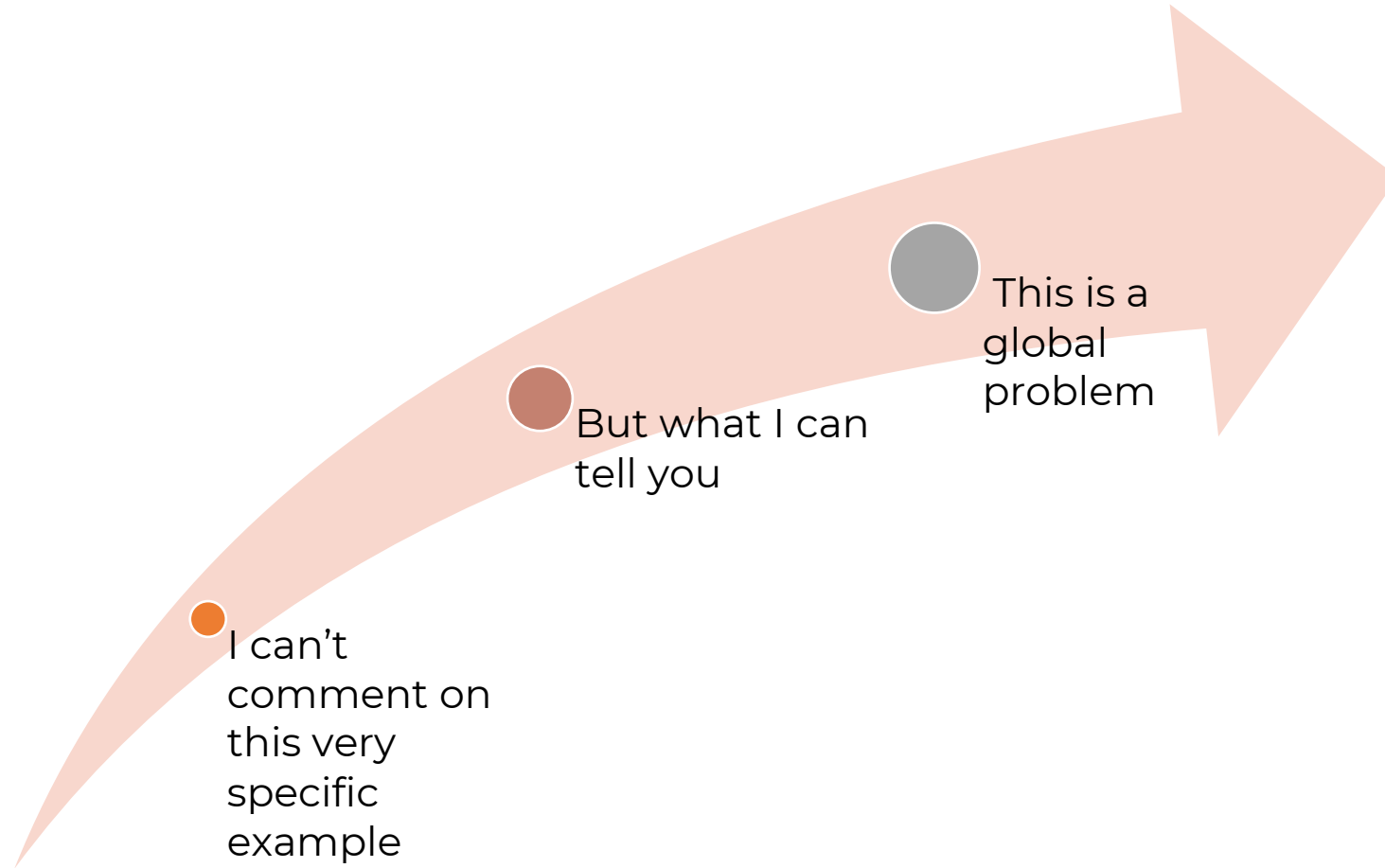


You can decide on where to focus the answers. News is about the very big global issues or the very local. Avoid the miserable middle.

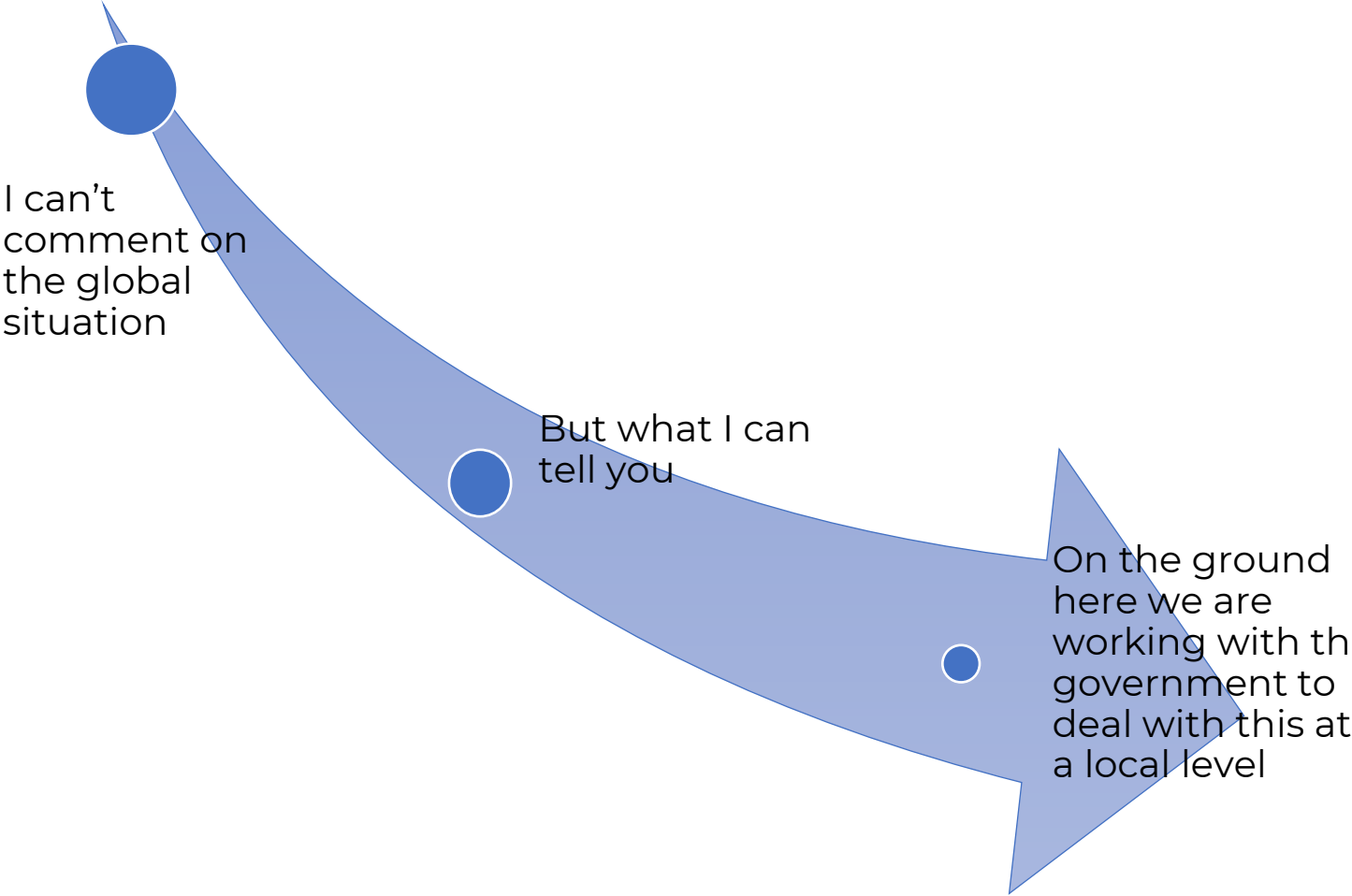


You decide if you want to talk about big ideas or on very local issues.

Zoom out to the very big



Zooming in - to the local



Tough interview questions

Seven common media questions – and how to deal with them

Tough interview questions

Hearsay
questions

Leading
questions

False
dichotomy
questions

Negative
repeat
questions

Speculative
questions

False fact
questions

Machine gun
questions

1. State your key facts and figures – align with the subject of the question.

A report in Civileats says that fake meat won't solve the climate crisis.

A recent study concluded that cultivated meat has the potential to reduce land use by 95% and water use by 78% when compared to conventional meat production methods.

2. Avoid repeating the negative.
“They’re not loaded with salt.” Avoid the term “fake meat.”

Our sources tell us that fake meat is not necessarily better for health. Fake meat is loaded with high levels of salt.

Cellular agriculture products can be produced without harmful antibiotic residues, microplastics, or heavy metals.

3. Always respond in the positive. Don't get drawn into the negative posturing.

AHow do you respond to the average consumer who doesn't want to eat fake meat?

Cellular agriculture products offer an alternative to those consumers who want tasty meat, chicken and fish but are mindful of the well-known environmental impacts of factory farming.

Key learning points

State facts

State your key facts and figures – as long as you are aligned with the subject of the question.

Avoid negatives

Avoid repeating the negative. “They’re not loaded with salt.” Avoid the term “fake meat.”

Positive

Always respond in the positive. Don’t get drawn into the negative posturing.

Don’t break into jail

Don’t open a door that has not been opened. “Of course, this will not suit all consumers, many people like their traditional meat...”

Checklist for interviews

Media interviews tips – Do's

...give yourself time to prepare (internalise)

...know your messages & stick to them

...use facts, figures and relevant examples

...be interested and engaged

...correct journalists if they get it wrong

...feel able to clarify and check the facts

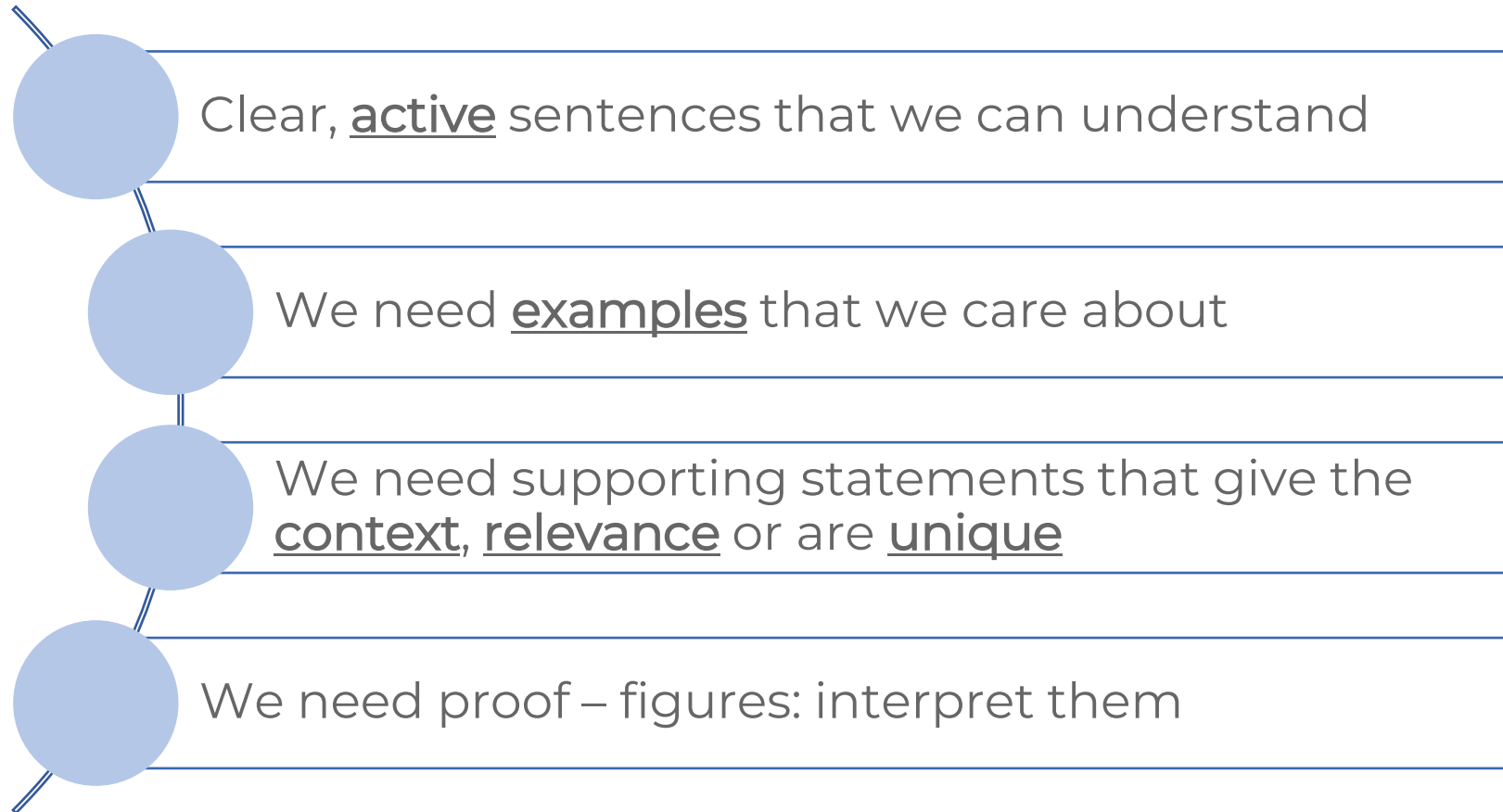
...keep your words simple and stop

...

Media interview tips - Don'ts...

- ...launch into an interview without preparing
- ...feel obliged to fill a silence
- ...let your guard down in an informal setting
- ...ever go “off the record”
- ...ever say “no comment”
- ...rush, reflect before answering
- ...ask for copy approval
- ...say anything unguarded at the end
- ...get up and walk away

Messages are simple



Speaking for broadcast

Talk about	Answer	Slow	Voice
<p>Talk about what is close to the viewers</p>	<p>Answer questions in full, complete sentences – these can be clipped and used by editors</p>	<p>Slow the pace of your normal speech</p>	<p>Use word stress, pauses and vary your vocal pitch to add impact</p>

Talking points: language for the ear

Communication technique	In writing - example phrases
Acknowledge the question / previous point	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “You ask how policy makers can help – let me give you some examples”• I’m glad you’ve asked me that....”
Focusing: tell the audience (panel) why they should listen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “What we need to concentrate on is ”• “What I would like to stick to is....”• “What people should take away from this is....”
Flagging: what you are going to say next is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Basically, what it boils down to is ...”• “The most important thing to remember is ...”• “What we need to remember is this ...”• “Here’s where we stand ...”
Sequencing to provide signposts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Firstly, we need to pass new regulation, secondly.....”• Let’s move on to the next thing....”
Repeating (looping back) to restate key messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Let me finish up saying again....”• “So, again what’s crucial is.....”

Checklist for interviews

Media interviews tips - Dos

...give yourself time to prepare (internalise)

...know your messages & stick to them

...use facts, figures and relevant examples

...be interested and engaged

...correct journalists if they get it wrong

...feel able to clarify and check the facts

...keep your words simple and stop

...

Media interview tips - Don'ts...

- ...launch into an interview without preparing
- ...feel obliged to fill a silence
- ...let your guard down in an informal setting
- ...ever go “off the record”
- ...ever say “no comment”
- ...rush, reflect before answering
- ...ask for copy approval
- ...say anything unguarded at the end
- ...get up and walk away



Thank you!

See you soon :)

Contact us:

www.formativecoms.com



Formative Communications

Training in-person & online