

Information Package

Media Spokesperson Training

Be Your Authentic Best **In front of a camera or under the spotlight.**

RMA's Media Spokesperson Training course gives you the tools you need to get your message across, ***clearly and credibly***. We teach the opposite of spin to help you communicate what is best and true about you and your organization. We take you inside how journalists work and show you how to work with them — not as adversaries, but as partners in a business transaction.



Media Training

RMA Media Spokesperson Training is an intensive full-day course focusing on practical advice and one-on-one exercises built around the actual issues your organization faces every day. It will change the way you communicate in the media and in front of every audience you need to reach.



Check out our complete catalogue of courses, including *Public Speaking and Presentation Skills; Issue Management; Strategic Communications; and Writing*, at www.rmassociates.ca



1. Who Are We?



You want trust, not spin
Clear, authentic communication engages with every audience. They trust it. It's refreshing. And it's what we do.

www.rmassociates.ca

RMA is one of Canada's most recognized media relations and communications training companies. Since 2000 we have provided hundreds of courses to thousands of participants in all sectors and in all parts of Canada, as well as the U.S. From Iqaluit and Yellowknife to NORAD headquarters in Colorado Springs, from Victoria to Newfoundland, from Ottawa to Washington, D.C., RMA is a trusted partner of those wishing to communicate clearly and authentically.

You can find out more at rmassociates.ca

In written evaluations, 99% of the people who take our courses say they would recommend them to a colleague.



"I now have a 'toolkit' to increase my confidence."

"This was a great course. I was dreading it! [The trainer] was a fantastic, personable instructor who really helped drive the 'message' home. I have definitely improved my interview skills!"

"Hi, the interview went well. The reporter commented that I was the most understandable scientist that she has done an interview with. Thanks for the preparation. I found it helped and made me less nervous."

"I was able to learn from my mistakes and build on my strengths. I highly recommend it to others. 10/10"



2. Media Training Course Content

Course Content and Approach



Since 2000, in classroom sessions, RMA has offered participants a blend of theory and practical application, with heavy emphasis on the latter.

Each session is based on the collection of file-related information from each participant. This material enables us to assess their skills and knowledge in advance and to build individualized, reality-based messaging and audio and video interview exercises.

Each participant participates in practice audio and video interviews followed by personalized analysis and feedback.

Training objectives are pursued through a “theory > example > practice > critique” teaching sequence, and our modularized content means that the emphasis and course material can be tailored to focus on the mandate, priorities and concerns of the client. The content typically encompasses:

- what news is and what reporters look for;
- how different media collect and present information in different ways;
- the perceptions and needs of different audiences;
- the elements of a message, and how to prepare and deliver them effectively without sacrificing authenticity and accuracy;
- dealing with critical or sensitive issues;
- preparing for an interview and anticipating the questions;
- dealing with muddled or difficult questions;
- understanding the impact of body language and presentation;
- handling news conferences and technical briefings; and,
- handling aggressive interviewers.

3. Course Agenda (one-day course)

Note that a blended course is available that combines our onDemand learning service with a half-day in-person practice session. All of the same material is covered as the full-day session but it offers additional flexibility in scheduling.

9:00 a.m.	Module 1: Introduction Introduction – Objectives/Agenda - Round table - Concerns - Definition of an effective spokesperson
9:15 a.m.	Module 2: Rules of the Road Communications Policy - News is
9:30 a.m.	Module 3: Context Canadians and the news media - Media Landscape
9:45 a.m.	Module 4: Plain Language What is plain language? - Written exercise and review
<i>10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Break</i>
10:15 p.m.	Module 5: The Audio Interview Audio-recorded exercise and review
11:30 a.m.	Module 6: Messaging Key messages - Written exercise and review
<i>12:15 p.m.</i>	<i>Lunch</i>
1:00 p.m.	Module 6: Messaging <i>continued</i>
1:30 p.m.	Module 7: Message Delivery When the reporter calls - Addressing the question
2:00 p.m.	Module 8: Video Interview Body language - Nervousness - Exercise and review
<i>2:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Break</i>
2:45 p.m.	Module 8: Video Interview <i>continued</i>
4:00 p.m.	Module 9: Summary and Review Review of concerns and evaluation
4:30 p.m.	End

4. Course Materials

RMA's bilingual course materials include:

- the participants' reference manual;
- animated presentation slides;
- RMA's training videos, and
- our online, onDemand service.

Participant Manual (Samples)

The manual is distributed to all participants at the beginning of the course, along with a trainer biography and an evaluation form. The document provides background information that expands on the content presented in the course modules, and contains links to additional web information.

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Module 2: Rules of the Road
Prepare for the Medium

News media can be divided into:



Traditional



Community

Within each, each medium has its own needs and expectations of interview subjects regarding news/information-gathering and dissemination. Spokespersons should prepare for the interview in mind the needs and expectations of the medium they are working with.

Inside the traditional media

Broadcast reporters have more deadlines, fewer staff and less room for detail.

A daily newspaper in any major market has a newsroom of about 100 editorial staff (reporters and editors). That's almost ten times as many as a television station in the same market. That television station has roughly three times as many reporters/editors as does the local radio station.

Major market news programs are broadcast between two and four times per day. Typically, a news program's deadline is based on the time the next edition is going to press.

Newspaper reporters are expected to deliver stories that offer context and detail to readers. In broadcast news, reporters, they can work equally effectively by telephone or in person with subjects and spokespeople.

Most television stations now belong to regional or national chains (see Module # 3). Many also contribute to 24-hour all-news channels. Therefore they face many deadlines during the day.

A typical television news report uses images and movement to create impressions and a sense of drama. TV news viewers typically come away with impressions and ideas rather than content detail.

Many radio stations broadcast two newscasts per hour during the morning and afternoon "drive times", with hourly newscasts the rest of the day. Radio reporters manage more deadlines than their colleagues in traditional media. Radio reporters are better equipped to bring you news as it happens because they are less encumbered by equipment and technology than are their television counterparts.

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For broadcast stories, the information that the subject is attempting to relay to the audience will be relayed in short, focussed "clips". It is preferable for spokespersons to present their information in 10 to 15 second clips than to have the reporter edit it down for them.

Community media

Community media include weekly/monthly newspapers, non-profit radio stations, community cable channels and specialty publications (newsletters, industry magazines, etc.). Community media have a broad reach and big impact with their relatively small audiences. When dealing with community reporters, ask yourself, "What is the impact of this issue on the audience of this media outlet?"

The national association of the daily and community newspaper industry, Newspapers Canada, reported that in June 2016, there were 1,060 community newspapers in this country. Community newspapers publish almost 20 million copies each week. The majority of circulation is free, accounting for more than 18 million copies weekly. Almost 90% of community newspapers publish in a tabloid format.

Different emphasis

Traditional media tend to emphasize "controversy"



whereas community and web-based media emphasize "relevance".



Use your understanding of news and the media to:

- ⇒ Forecast issues and questions
 - Plan for controversy in daily media
 - Plan for relevance in community media
 - Identify opportunities
- ⇒ Prepare messages/response lines
- ⇒ Prepare one page backgrounders/fact sheets
 - One page or less for broadcasters
 - One page + more info for newspapers
- ⇒ Prepare the spokesperson



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Sample Animated Presentation Slides

RMA uses a variety of adult learning-based teaching methods, including presentations, reality-based exercises and instructional video. Our presentation slides are animated and dynamic. Because the detailed information is contained in the Participant Manual, the slides are not heavy with excessive text that tries to convey too much information at once. The slides form the basis for the trainer's comments and the group discussion. Again, the sample slides shown below are from previous projects and could be adapted or modified to meet your needs.

DEFINITION OF AN EFFECTIVE SPOKESPERSON

Using plain language,
the spokesperson delivers
messages
while directly addressing
the question.

ADDRESSING THE QUESTION

Address the question asked

- Audience's support is driven by trust
- Evasiveness ≠ trust
- Either:
 - Provide the requested information
 - Say you can't and explain why

In both instances, you are also delivering messages

MESSAGES

Move audiences to your point-of-view by demonstrating:

ACTION

RATIONALE

EMPATHY

SOME INTERVIEW TIPS

Nothing is off the record.

- Just before the interview starts ask for the first question
- If on the phone, stand up
- If Skype, webcam at eye level
- Avoid jokes
- Let the reporter fill the silence
- Stay calm with persistent or hostile questioners
- Avoid repeating the negative

Training Videos

“Reporting the News” is comprised of a series of short training videos are woven throughout the course. The videos were produced by RMA and feature interviews with national and locally-focused reporters talking about various aspects of their work and how they go about their jobs. We hear reporters describe how they see the demands of working with public sector and non-profit organizations.



5. Partial Client List

To demonstrate the scope of RMA’s experience providing media relations and communication training courses, over the past five years (2012-2017) we have provided training services to the following:

Healthcare and Post-Secondary

- the University of Toronto - multiple courses;
- the Montfort Hospital;

Non-profits/NGOs

- Canadian Bar Association;
- Pillar Non-profit;
- Plan Canada; and,
- Doctors Without Borders Canada.

Provincial/Territorial Government Organizations

- the Ontario Cabinet Office on Communications - multiple courses;
- the Government of Nunavut - multiple courses;
- the Safety, Licensing Appeals and Standards Tribunal of Ontario;
- the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation (MRI);
- the former Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, Trade and Employment (MEDTE) - multiple courses;
- the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board;

Federal Government Organizations

- Public Safety Canada – multiple courses;
- the federal panel exploring options for assisted dying in Canada (External Panel on Options for a Legislative Response to *Carter v. Canada*);
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Ontario, Quebec and Western Canada) - multiple courses;
- Health Canada (National Capital Region and Ontario Region in Toronto) - multiple courses;
- Indigenous & Northern Affairs Canada (Atlantic Region);
- Elections Canada;
- Global Affairs Canada (formerly Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development) - multiple courses;
- Parks Canada – multiple courses;
- Canadian Forces bases across Canada (DND);
- the Public Health Agency of Canada - multiple courses;
- the Canadian Food Inspection Agency - multiple courses; and,
- Canada Border Services Agency (Atlantic Region) - multiple courses.