

10 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL PR CAMPAIGN

A DO-IT-YOURSELF GUIDE FOR AUTHORS



ANNE LOUISE O'CONNELL

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A Do-it-Yourself Guide

For Authors

Anne Louise O'Connell

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Learn more about the author at:
www.globalwritingsolutions.com

DEDICATION

In memory of my very first PR mentor, Shaela Lewis, who had enough faith in me as a newbie 20 years ago to bring me in on some pretty hairy crisis media training sessions.

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INTRODUCTION

The most important lesson that 20 years in the PR business taught me was that reporters don't like garbage and that 90 per cent of the press releases they receive wind up in what we used to call the 'circular file' ...the garbage bin. That goes double for the new, and very pervasive, online media. That's good news for you, since that means if you send a release that's not garbage, it should stand out, right? Ideally, yes. However, there are no guarantees. Editors, reporters, producers and bloggers are bombarded with thousands of messages minute by minute and it's even easier these days for them to click 'delete' so your release is never to be seen again. So, building relationships ahead of time and putting a little more thought into your 'hook' before hitting the send button will increase the likelihood that you'll be heard over the noise. My mission in writing this book is to help you do that!

The beauty of PR is that it's easy to learn if you take your time, do some research, listen to what people want (and how they want it) and give it to them. Really...it's actually that

simple. Now, if you have your heart set on a national or international cable or network show, that's a whole other ballgame and you'd better hire yourself a high-priced PR guru with some serious contacts. Oh...and, you'd better have a newsworthy, interesting, new, trendy or groundbreaking idea in your book. Even the most experienced, well-connected media relations expert can't (and won't) pitch garbage. Their reputation is worth more than that.

So, it's best to start with your local media plus some well-targeted online media (in your niche) and work your way up. If you aren't reading, or listening to any of them and you're committed to doing your own PR, it's a good idea start getting to know them now. Along with having something that will be newsworthy (of interest to readers, listeners or viewers), sending your story to the right people, at the right time and the right place is the key to a successful PR campaign.

I'm going to take you through 10 easy steps that I have put into practice time and time again over the past 20 years to

garner some great media exposure for the companies and clients with which I have worked.

If you follow these steps and don't leave anything out, you'll have a good solid *start* on developing a successful PR campaign to promote your book. I would love to hear about your successes so feel free to send an email to

anne@globalwritingsolutions.com and share your stories.

Or, if you get stuck and have any questions, I'm happy to help. So, let's get started.

CHAPTER 1

Your Book is written. You have your press release...Now What?

Step 1 – Make sure you have a newsworthy angle in your press release

In order to ensure that you're going to be sending out a release that will pique an editor or reporter's interest, start by asking yourself these questions:

Is there a hot issue or trend to connect with your book ?

Is there something happening in the political realm that you can draw from?

Are there any environmental issues that you can relate back to your book?

Does your book touch on any economic themes that would be relevant to what's going on globally today?

What social trends can be linked to the content of your book?

Are there gender issues that could resonate with people relating to a particular "sign of the times?"

Are there any commentaries on generational topics of interest or maybe geographic (regional, national or global) trending?

Does your book relate to a particular expertise that you have?

Do you have an area of expertise that you can address when the media wants to interview you? Other than being an author!

Do you have new insight into a particular field that you're writing about?

What is it that makes you an expert?

This would most often apply to non-fiction but if you're a forensic psychologist writing murder mysteries, for instance, there may be an interesting hook.

Is there an historical anniversary or a special holiday that is coming up that has any relation to your book?

For example, if your book is a romance novel or has anything to do with relationship advice, timing your launch near Valentine's Day and using that as a hook for your release would be a good move (although that's sort of a no-brainer and thousands of others will be doing the same thing. But, if you target your media right and have something different to offer, you'll be ahead of the pack...more on that later).

Is there a national or religious holiday that would bring attention to your subject matter? Again, depending on the content, maybe there's a connection with Mother's/Father's Day or maybe the anniversary of the invention of the printing press, the discovery of King Tut's tomb, the anniversary of the Wright Brothers inventing flight (you get the idea). Be creative! Dig into history a little bit and see what you come up with.

Is there recent research that's been done that makes your book timely?

Can you connect your book to any high impact, social or economic research surveys that have been done and released recently?

What gripping statistics can you use to draw attention to what you've written about?

Is there a high profile event that can dovetail with your book launch?

An annual book fair, literacy month, Mardi Gras, a Shakespeare Festival, Carnival, October Fest. Or even a vegetarian festival if your book has anything to do with vegetarian cooking or living a healthy lifestyle for example.

If your book is inspirational in nature, is there a TEDx event (or other high profile thought leader conference) coming to your community any time soon? Offer to be a speaker or provide copies of your book as a give away and include that in your release.

Does your book address a sensitive issue that sparks controversy?

Everyone loves a good controversy that leads to lively debate. And, it makes for a great press release and positions you nicely as an interesting interview subject.

Is there a local organization you can partner with or cross promote with that has a common theme or mission?

For example, maybe there's a thematic link to your favorite charity. Your press release may announce that part of the proceeds of your book will go to that charity and you'll be putting in an appearance at their next fundraiser.

The critical issue here is to recognize that, the fact that you've written a book is not newsworthy enough (unless you're a celebrity or an already famous author for whom people are holding their breaths waiting for the next masterpiece). There has to be something more to entice people to read about it. Once you know what that 'carrot' is, then you'll be better prepared to approach the media to pitch your story (but, I'm jumping ahead...that's Step 6).

CHAPTER 2

What should I be ready to send other than a press release?

Step 2 – Develop your media kit

When you've succeeded in piquing the media's interest they'll have more questions than just, "What's your book about?" Be ready with some interesting background information. Your kit should include:

Press release

Put your contact information at the very top.

Make sure you write a clear headline introducing the 'hook' and the main point of your release.

Put the most important facts in the first paragraph...don't make them hunt for it.

Include who, what, when, where, why and how.

Three or four paragraphs gives more than enough information for the individual reading your release (a reporter/editor/producer/blogger) to decide if they're interested.

Include a quote from someone with a high profile in your genre or community commenting on the value of your book.

Include a short bio paragraph (an abbreviated version of your author bio) at the end along with your website address.

Pitch letter – a brief (personalized) letter introducing yourself and what makes you/your book unique with an offer to be available for interviews and/or on an ongoing basis as an expert in your field.

Your author biography

Photos (at least a headshot of you and a graphic of your book cover)

Book trailer (if you've created one it could be incorporated into a TV or blog interview or on the online edition of a newspaper)...and definitely on your website.

Character bios (for fiction)

FAQs

These should include questions and answers to a few questions you'd like them to ask, i.e. How did you get the idea for your book? For fiction - Who is your main character based on? For non-fiction – Where did you develop your expertise in the subject area?

Links to any related sites or blogs

After you've developed these press kit elements, you'll have a great synopsis of your book that can be re-purposed for other marketing initiatives. As requests come in for more

information, you won't be scrambling to pull it all together and you'll be a star in the eyes of the reporter. Always bring a copy of the press kit with you when you do any in-person interviews or email in advance when you're doing any phone or Internet interviews. Of course, have it available for download on your book's website too.

CHAPTER 3

Who in the blazes do I include on my hit list?

Step 3 – Formulate your media list

Putting together the list of media outlets you plan to send your press release or a copy of your book for review to is a very meticulous, picky, time-consuming process. But, the more thought you put into it, the better results you'll get. One of the most important things to know is who is going to read your book. Of course, you've established this before you even wrote the book, right? Since you have identified your 'target market' it's also important to take the research one step further and determine how your audience likes to receive information and what media they read, listen to, watch, follow, interact with or otherwise absorb.

If you don't have a sophisticated media tracking software, (which I'm assuming you don't) just use whatever database you're used to or even an Excel spreadsheet. Make sure it's something you can update and include a column or field for notes and follow up required.

The bulk of your list should be media in your local community. Start with a regionalized media guide (like the MENA Media Guide from MediaSource I used when I lived in Dubai) or your local yellow pages (online or hard copy) or just Google "media in (name of your city, country or region)." I also used Bacon's and Burrelle's when building national media lists in Canada and the US and both are very good and you can usually find copies in your library. There are international guides as well. But, these directories can be expensive and, for your purposes, you should be able to get what you need online.

The list should include:

- Local daily newspaper/s (in a big city there may be more than one)

Community newspapers (could be weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly)

Monthly magazines (business, lifestyle or trade if you have written about a certain industry – whether fiction or non-fiction – especially ones that do book reviews)

Local radio stations (focus on the ones that are a talk format, especially morning drive shows or those that have regular news updates).

Online pod casts (there are tons that focus on author interviews such as www.eyeonbooks.com).

Blogs that do book reviews or focus specifically on your subject matter

eZines

Local cable television stations

Local network television affiliates (that produce local community programs)

Internet TV

YouTube channels

If you have a really great story or unique pitch, include some national media as well (network morning shows, national magazines, etc.) with a targeted pitch formulated for each one. Don't be disappointed if they don't jump at the chance to interview you. But, you know what they say, "Nothing ventured, nothing gained!"

Register with HARO – www.helpareporter.com (it's free) – scan regularly for reporters who do author interviews or are writing about your area of expertise or any issues you address in your book.

Once your list is built you should call or email each and every single one and ask if the contact information you have is still correct. Also verify to whom you should send press releases. This might seem agonizing but it will save you a lot of wasted time and angst in the long run. You can often find a generic email address (newsroomatpublicationdotcom or infoatTVstationnamedtocom) and this is okay if you can't find a specific contact but is often a fruitless mission as it's a catchall for all those garbage releases from those who

haven't taken the time and done their homework! There's a very high turn over in the media (especially these days with electronic and social media) so it's tempting to use the generic email and be done with it. It's simply not as effective but it's your call. Of course, if you're reading the publication's online edition to glean reporter and editor information, you should have the most recent information already. Then it's a piece of cake, right? Most newspapers and magazines include the reporter's name at the beginning or end of the article and often will even include the person's email address. Media representatives have never been so reachable by the general public as they are now which is a double-edged sword. You have access but so does everyone else.

CHAPTER 4

What are the programs I want to get on?

Step 4 – Identify the best opportunities for interviews

As you're combing the lists of available media, read, watch and listen to see where the best opportunities are. When you contact the media, there's nothing they like more than hearing you've done your homework. Actually mentioning a program you've seen and pitch directly to that producer that you believe he or she would be interested in doing a story relating to your book's subject matter or your particular area of expertise is a welcome change (believe it or not, most people don't do their due diligence). Or, in the case of a newspaper, magazine or blog, you contact the actual reporter, feature writer or blog owner who writes about your topic and suggest that they might be interested in

exploring your story idea and offer yourself for an interview.
So, how do you accomplish this?

In effect, you're working on setting up either an old-fashioned media tour or a more modern day blog tour. Either one (or combination of both) requires time and research. Watch and listen to local TV and radio stations to identify opportunities. The more specific your media list is the better results you'll have.

Take note of the shows that do local interviews and who is conducting the interviews/hosting the shows.

What types of stories/issues do they normally cover?

Who do they typically have as guests?

What are the latest trends for which you can offer a fresh angle?

Watch the bylines in the newspaper to see which reporters are writing stories on the industries covered in your book or if there are any doing book reviews (look for the email address of the reporter at the end of the article).

Is there an opportunity to write a guest column/blog (you are a writer, remember)? Check out the op-ed pages of the newspaper and see if they have regular guest columns and write one that highlights the issues addressed in your book.

As you sign up to follow and are reading blogs, or watching Internet TV and listening to podcasts, take special note of those that invite guest bloggers or do book reviews or author interviews and add them to your list.

Once the task of creating your media list is complete you'll be glad you took the time. Having a thorough media list with the right people included will be an amazing tool as you progress with your book's PR. Consider it a work in progress though because people do change jobs frequently in the media (traditional and social) but this will give you a foundation on which you'll keep building.

CHAPTER 5

Who are the decision-makers for what gets in the news?

Step 5 – Identify the right contact people

As I said before, this is a work in progress and sometimes you'll have more than one contact at a particular media outlet, depending on the role they play. In the event that the reporter or producer you've been dealing with leaves, it'll be nice to have made a connection with their editor or executive producer. It's also good practice to get to know these senior exec's assistants and include them on your media list (and your Christmas/holiday card list too...electronic or otherwise).

In Step 3, I highlighted the importance of making calls to verify information. Here's a little more detail to prepare you to make that call (note that this is not the time to ask to

Speak to the individual, you're not ready for that yet. You just want to confirm contact details with a receptionist or assistant).

When contacting each media outlet ask for the names, direct phone numbers (if they'll give that out) and email addresses of the following individuals:

Print media

- Editor

- Deputy editor

- Community editor

- Lifestyle editor

- Reporter who does book reviews (not very common these days but doesn't hurt to ask) or writes on an industry related to your book (business, technology, education or health for example)

Broadcast media (TV and radio)

- News director

- Program director

Producer (of a particular show you've identified)

Presenter/host (sometimes they produce their own show and select their own guests)

Social media

Bloggers (there's usually a way to contact them directly from their blog – make sure you've read the blog and know what they typically write about and if/how they do interviews or book reviews. If they blog under a pseudonym, see if you can find their actual name and an email address).

Internet radio/TV hosts and/or producers

YouTube Channel – creator/producer/editor (The Writing Spirit, for example:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/WilliamKenower>).

Don't forget non-traditional media

College newspapers and radio (especially your alma mater)

Newsletters and bulletins of local Chambers of Commerce or business groups (or any other group you belong to like Rotary perhaps)

Wire services (free and paid)

Making old-fashioned media calls is almost a thing of the past. As I said before in most cases you'll be able to confirm the information you need with an email or on the latest online edition of the media outlet in question but never underestimate the power of the personal touch. People still like to hear a real voice...pine for it really. I know I do. That goes doubly for your local media. Pick up the phone and make a call. You'll be glad you did. But...in this step, you're still on a research mission. You're not pitching yet. Get to an editorial assistant or executive assistant or sometimes the receptionist at a smaller outlet and ask for verification on the names you've collected, confirming titles and contact information. Then, you'll know you're asking for the right person when you're ready to confidently make the call.

CHAPTER 6

What do I say when I call?

Step 6 – Develop ‘The Pitch’ beforehand

My biggest nightmare as a brand new account executive in the early 90s at one of the largest international PR agencies in the world, was the day I was handed a media list and a press release and told to contact every person on the list and pitch ‘the story’. The story was a dud. It was announcing some lame workshop with no-name speakers. I knew it. My boss knew it. But the client insisted...and he wanted the top business media to ‘cover’ it. Media don’t cover workshops unless there’s a really famous keynote speaker who’s going to unveil the solution to world hunger. All my boss could say was “do your best.”

It was a baptism by fire as one business editor and producer after another basically lectured me about wasting their time.

Some, more politely than others. I learned a valuable lesson very early in my career. Again, I reiterate, don't peddle garbage. Oh, and manage your expectations. Just because CNN is not knocking on the door doesn't mean there aren't plenty of media who would be interested. And, be creative. Although media may not 'cover' workshops (or book signings and launches) there could be interest in a pre-event interview on the topic of interest, burning issue or lesson to share. During the interview you can plug your upcoming event (launch party or book signing). That client from years ago wasn't open to that. It was, cover the event or nothing. It's critical to be flexible once you put yourself out there. It's about establishing relationships, which are give and take. Initially, plan to do all the giving! If you pitch your story and the reporter/editor/producer/blogger says, "I really don't think that works for me right now but do you know anyone who has recently found the cure for dandruff?" Don't argue with them. Thank them for their time and, if you do have a contact that fills the need they do have, give it up. That's how you start to build the relationship.

Here are some real basic guidelines before you pick up that phone:

Develop your pitch in advance. What's the news hook? Why would their readers/listeners/viewers be interested?

The pitch can certainly start with your name and that you've just published a book but quickly note what makes you/your book unique (the news hook).

Give your pitch in 10 seconds or less then pause for reaction or encouragement to continue.

Don't call on deadline. For newspapers don't call anytime after 4 p.m. For radio never call just before the top of the hour and for television never just before the noon, 5 p.m. or late night news (or whatever time the local station does its live news updates, which you'll know from your research). For online media, it's 24/7 so you'll more than likely send an email pitch (remember your pitch letter?) and then wait for a reply. Early in the week is usually better. If your pitch isn't breaking news, try to pick a slow news day.

Remember to highlight what it is that makes you an expert.

Make sure you practice your pitch before you pick up the phone (or, if you're emailing, re-read your email several times to make sure you don't have any type-os or grammatical errors and that you've gotten your point across early and that it's not too long...the reader shouldn't have to scroll at all).

If you're calling, it's a good idea to send an email in advance with a short note (and your press release that's been tweaked to match what the particular media outlet is looking for). In the note you can say that you'll be following up with a phone call (note a specific day and time) and ask if that would be convenient.

If you're going national, identify a timeframe during which you'll be available for interviews (if they want you to be in studio live). This can be costly if you don't live in the same town so keep that in mind (that's why virtual book tours have become really popular and Skype interviews). Only do

it if it is going to be worthwhile or you're going to be in town anyways. Or, if there's a local affiliate, it could get picked up nationally if the story angle warrants it.

It's also important to practice what you'll say when someone asks, "What's your book about?" Make it short and sweet so it's quotable (in the business we call it a "sound bite" or in the networking realm I've heard it called your "elevator pitch"). It's really important that when you're making your pitch, be prepared to be flexible and maybe even brainstorm a different angle on the spot. An editor, reporter or producer wants to feel like they're getting a story no one else has. If you can tailor a pitch to each media outlet (give each one something a little different...the bigger ones anyway) they'll love you!

CHAPTER 7

How do I fit this into my busy schedule?

Step 7 – Scheduling interviews

When you succeed in pitching your story, you want to close the deal: Schedule the interview! The fact that you've come this far shows that you are serious about implementing a proper media relations plan. Don't let it fall apart here by being picky about when you're available. A producer, editor or reporter doesn't care that you have to pick up your son or daughter by 2:30 or that your monthly bridge club or golf outing is on Tuesdays so that won't work for you. Clear the decks... and I do mean clear them. You've done enough prep work so if they want you to come tomorrow at 3 o'clock, say yes! If it's a print or online interview you can probably do it by phone (or Skype if you're not in a country where it's banned). However, if you can do the interview in person, it's better because you can see the body language of the

interviewer and you can wow them with your glowing personality. Of course, with television, you'll have no choice but to go in to the studio to do the interview.

Here are a few key must dos:

Be flexible and available. Reporters and producers are busy and are always on deadline so don't miss an opportunity because it's happening fast. Just make sure you've prepared well in advance of making that phone call.

You'll know the nature of the interview because you've pitched the angle and sent the press release. However, ask the reporter/editor/producer if there's anything you can prepare in advance or if it would be possible for them to send you a list of questions. Ask this question gently. Many interviewers prefer to have you 'fresh' and not practiced but there are those who will happily send you some possible questions to put you at ease. If they say no, don't panic, just prepare as best you can by creating your own list of possible questions and answers and practicing them.

If it's a print interview choose a location that's comfortable for you (even your home if that suits you) but preferably not a loud public place.

If it's a radio interview and they give you a choice between coming to the studio and doing it by phone, plan to go to the studio if it's at all possible. You'll have a better experience. You'll be more natural and engaging if you can see the interviewer face-to-face. Not to mention the technical problems that can arise from a remote interview, especially with mobile phones and spotty Internet connections if you're doing the interview via Skype (which I do more of now since I'm living abroad).

Once you've finalized the date, ask for very detailed directions to get to the location and get a cell phone number for the producer or production assistant.

For a broadcast interview, ask if it will be live or taped and how long the process will take. Be prepared to spend a

couple of hours, especially if it's a taped interview and there are several guests.

Follow up with an email to confirm the date, time and location and re-confirm the day before the interview.

It's a really good idea to keep your schedule clear for the day so you won't be rushing. Or, if you're doing several interviews in a specific time frame (if you're doing a full-blown media tour) make sure you give yourself plenty of travel time between interviews. I've had clients racing into a studio at the last minute, out of breath, sweating profusely and with butterflies in their stomach because they were worried they were going to be late. They jam-packed their schedule with unrelated meetings in between and didn't leave themselves enough time to review their notes or practice. If it's a taped interview, you'll have time to gather your wits about you but if it's live, you go on when the red light goes on, whether you're ready or not.

CHAPTER 8

What if I say something stupid?

Step 8 –Preparing for the interview

The best way to avoid nervousness and tripping over your tongue is to prepare, prepare, prepare... and prepare some more. Remember, this is your book and your life. They're not going to ask you anything that you can't answer. The more you prepare what you'd like to get across, the more you'll be able to control the interview. You want it to be natural, like a comfortable conversation, but you also need to focus on what the most important points are that you'd like to address, or not address. What parts of your background do you want to share? Everyone wants to hear the 'how you became an author' story, even if it's not the main point of the interview. Are there things in your past you'd rather not talk about? If there are, have a response ready to deflect uncomfortable questions and then plan how

you would calmly re-direct the discussion to a subject you are prepared to talk about. That's not likely to happen, unless you're a well-known celebrity or you have a deliciously shady past, but you want to be able to maintain your composure no matter what comes up. People will want to know the person behind the book so be prepared to expose a little of your history and private life. It does make for a better interview and a more interesting story.

Here's the preparation drill:

Outline the top three key messages that you want to get across (what you really want the readers/listeners/viewers to remember most after the interview is over). If you try to jam in more than that, you'll run out of time and you won't succeed in reinforcing any of your messages. You'll also be more effective in managing the flow of the questioning.

Do a little research on the interviewer. If it's a print interview, what has the journalist written before? Are his or her articles balanced? If it's a television, radio or blog

interview, what is the interviewer's style (serious, light, friendly, business-like, controversial)? The more you know about your interviewer the more at ease you'll be.

As I mentioned in the last chapter, put together a list of potential questions and formulate your answers ahead of time. But try not to sound rehearsed or robotic. Think about any tough questions you may get asked. If you wind up on the 'hot seat' you don't want them to see you squirm.

Doing media interviews can be nerve-racking at the best of times. Just remember, the more you do it the better you'll get.

And relax! No one knows you and your book better than you do.

If you haven't done it before, practice with friends and practice your key messages.

Of course, you'll have sent a copy of your book to the reporter or producer after the interview was scheduled but don't forget to bring several signed copies with you for broadcast interviews - one for the interviewer and a couple to give away to viewers/listeners.

Don't forget to provide your website and contact information in writing (should be included in your confirmation email and any subsequent communications) and include an image of your book cover. In a television interview, these graphics will often be put up on the screen when you mention your book or website, which will reinforce it, and viewers may even write it down. Even for a print publication, if you've emailed your website address, the reporter can verify it when he or she writes the story and not have to rely totally on notes that could have been taken down wrong. The graphic of your book could also be used to illustrate the article.

Practice in front of a mirror, video tape yourself and/or practice with a friend or colleague (preferably someone who will give you honest feedback). Don't freak out

at first. We all hate ourselves on tape. Take a step back, detach yourself and try to be objective. Note any bad body language habits (twirling your hair) or annoying verbal hiccups (ums, ahs or 'you knows'...my worst one when I do interviews). Be mentally aware and correct them before they happen. Practice, practice, practice... and then just do it! It'll get easier, I promise.

CHAPTER 9

How do I put my best face forward?

Step 9 – Doing the Interview

Not many people can afford their very own stylist so must take the responsibility of developing their image into their own hands. Now that you've crafted the messages you want to get across, outlined some possible questions and answers and practiced your answers out loud in front of the mirror and among friends (yes, I really mean it), it's time to think about your look and delivery style. How do you want your image to come across? This is especially important for a television interview but how you present yourself visually and the body language you use can come across in a radio interview and can be easily picked up and described (either in an unflattering or flattering way) by a skilled journalist or blogger.

Choose your clothing carefully. A simple, solid colored, smart suit is always a good choice. Note: the same care should be taken when having a head shot done for print. For guys, a tie is probably not necessary, unless your book is a serious business book and you need to come across as a professional and an expert in your field. Try to match your style to the genre of your book. For fiction, it's a little more difficult. You may be writing erotica, but you're a mid-western housewife with three kids, a golden retriever and a white picket fence. If you are, be prepared for the question to come up of how you get your ideas!

Don't hide who you are but find ways to emphasize the positives (and maybe even capitalize on some traits that may be a little quirky). I remember preparing to media train a client who I'd never met but had spoken to on the phone. He was coming in for a session to practice handling difficult questions. He was the head of an association of businesses that were embroiled in a controversy surrounding a serious environmental issue. He walked into the room and my heart sank. He looked like a cross between Lurch from the Addams Family and Jaws from the James Bond movies.

There was no way we could make him look non-threatening, so we focused on his voice. If you closed your eyes and just listened you could imagine him narrating children's bedtime stories. We decided to put our emphasis on radio. Point is, you've got to play the cards you've been dealt.

Here are your must dos and don'ts:

If you're doing a television interview don't wear stripes or really busy patterns. Bright, solid colors always come across better.

Make sure you arrive plenty early so you can get used to your surroundings and get comfortable. Do a little deep breathing while you wait in the green room (that's what all broadcast media call the room they have their guests wait until it's time to go into the studio).

Remember your key messages. If you're ever stuck for an answer or the question is irrelevant to your book, bring the interview back to one of your key messages. Use bridges such as:

What I'd really love to talk about is...

What the book is really about is...

I'm not sure that's relevant but the reason I'm so passionate about this subject matter is because...

Don't forget to mention your website or wherever else your book can be purchased as naturally as you can, several times during the interview.

For print interviews make sure your answers are short and sweet so you don't get mis-quoted or taken out of context. Make it easy for the reporter to pick up the quotable quotes or the "sound bites." Don't give too much background. That's what the press kit is for. The same goes for the shorter (5-10 minute) radio or television interviews. Use stories, anecdotes and analogies whenever possible.

If you're doing a full-blown, half-hour talk show (radio or television) then you have the luxury of going into a little more detail but make sure you don't drone on or you'll lose

your audience. Be memorable, be funny or shocking (where appropriate), tell stories, paint a picture.

Remember, NOTHING is ever off the record. As soon as you are in the presence of the reporter the interview has begun.

I can't emphasize this last point enough. An interview begins the minute you are in earshot of the reporter, presenter or host, and doesn't end until you have left the building, hung up the phone or clicked the red 'end call' button on your Skype. I remember being called on the carpet by a boss I had years ago when a story ran after he was interviewed and it quoted him absolutely slamming the competition. He sounded like a raving lunatic. I had coached and coached and practiced with him almost daily but he just couldn't help himself. He was upset with me (classic case of Freud's transference) because it was my job to make him look good but I couldn't control what came out of his mouth. Remember, you're the master of your words, make them work for you, not against you. And, don't say anything you wouldn't want your mother to see in tomorrow's headlines.

Chapter 10

How did I look and sound?

Step 10 – Follow up and tracking

So, you've written all your PR materials, done your lists, pitched the story, done the interviews and now you can sit back and relax, right? Wrong. Your job isn't done yet. PR is a continual loop and you should be prepared to start the process over again in a few months' time to re-ignite the interest in your book. As you do your interviews, you'll want to gather and analyze the results so you can see what you did right, and replicate it... as well as what you did wrong, so you can do better next time.

It's all about the follow up and maintaining those relationships that you've started. I strongly recommend that you make a 'To Do' list and make sure you check everything off.

The 'To Do' list:

Send a thank-you email after the interview and for print media say that you're available if they need to verify any information or need additional background.

Send a signed copy of your book as a thank you to anyone who helped during the process if you didn't already leave copies behind (editorial assistant, assistant producer, a researcher).

After a print interview ask when the story is going to run, watch for it and clip it (both print and electronic versions if it appeared in both).

If you've done interviews with national media you might want to hire a monitoring company to watch for you and provide clips (both print and broadcast). I've used Burrelle's (<http://www.burrellesluce.com>) and Bacons (now Cision - <http://intl.cision.com>) for that too.

Review the results and evaluate your performance. Answer the following questions:

Did you communicate your key messages?

Were you able to give any website or contact information? (Basically, letting people know how they can get a copy of the book)

Did you speak slowly and clearly?

Post your clips (both print and broadcast) on your book website as well as your Facebook personal and fan pages and on your LinkedIn profile (or any other social media). Don't forget to Tweet the link to the article anytime you get good coverage.

I know... setting up your social media platform is a whole other book so...stay tuned!

CONCLUSION

Once you've gone through all these steps and done the groundwork and are watching the results roll in, make sure you take advantage of all opportunities to cross-promote your PR success on all platforms!

And, if you're not able to do it in person (i.e. you're a globetrotting expat like me and the 'local' media couldn't give a hoot since you're not from there and your book has nothing to do with the local area you currently live in), the next *10 Steps* edition will be *10 Steps to a Successful Virtual Book Tour...A Do-It-Yourself Guide for Authors Abroad*.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Anne Louise O'Connell



Author, Editor, Social Media Consultant

Website: www.globalwritingsolutions.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/annethewriter

Twitter: www.twitter.com/annethewriter

Blog: www.anne-writingjustbecause.blogspot.com

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/anneoconnell

Other books written by Anne Louise O'Connell:

@Home in Dubai...Getting Connected Online and on the Ground, published by Summertime Publishing

www.athomeindubai-gettingconnected.com

Mental Pause (her first novel that won an Independent Publishers' Magazine – IPPY – Award for best adult fiction)

www.facebook.com/mentalpause-thenovel