



Communicating with the News Media



***“No dogs or reporters
allowed
on the parade field.”***





Agenda

- **Part I: The Basics of Meeting the Media**
- **Part II: Communications Techniques**
- **Part III: Helpful Hints**



The Basics:

Communications Roles

- **Journalists view themselves as representatives of the public.**
- **You are a representative of your organization -- an official spokesperson.**



The Basics: Communications Roles

➤ Together, you are communicating with the public and fulfilling the public's right to know.

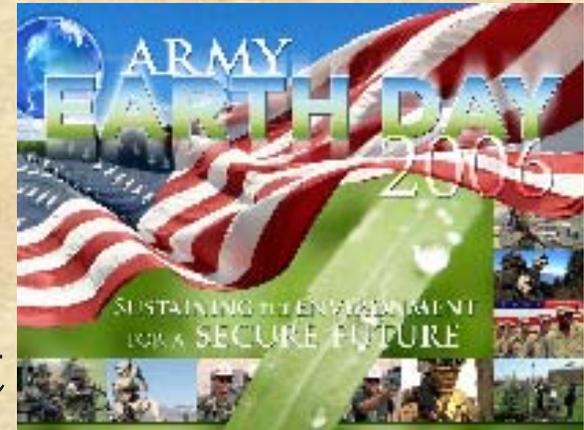


➤ Access equals fairness



The Basics: The Need for Engagement

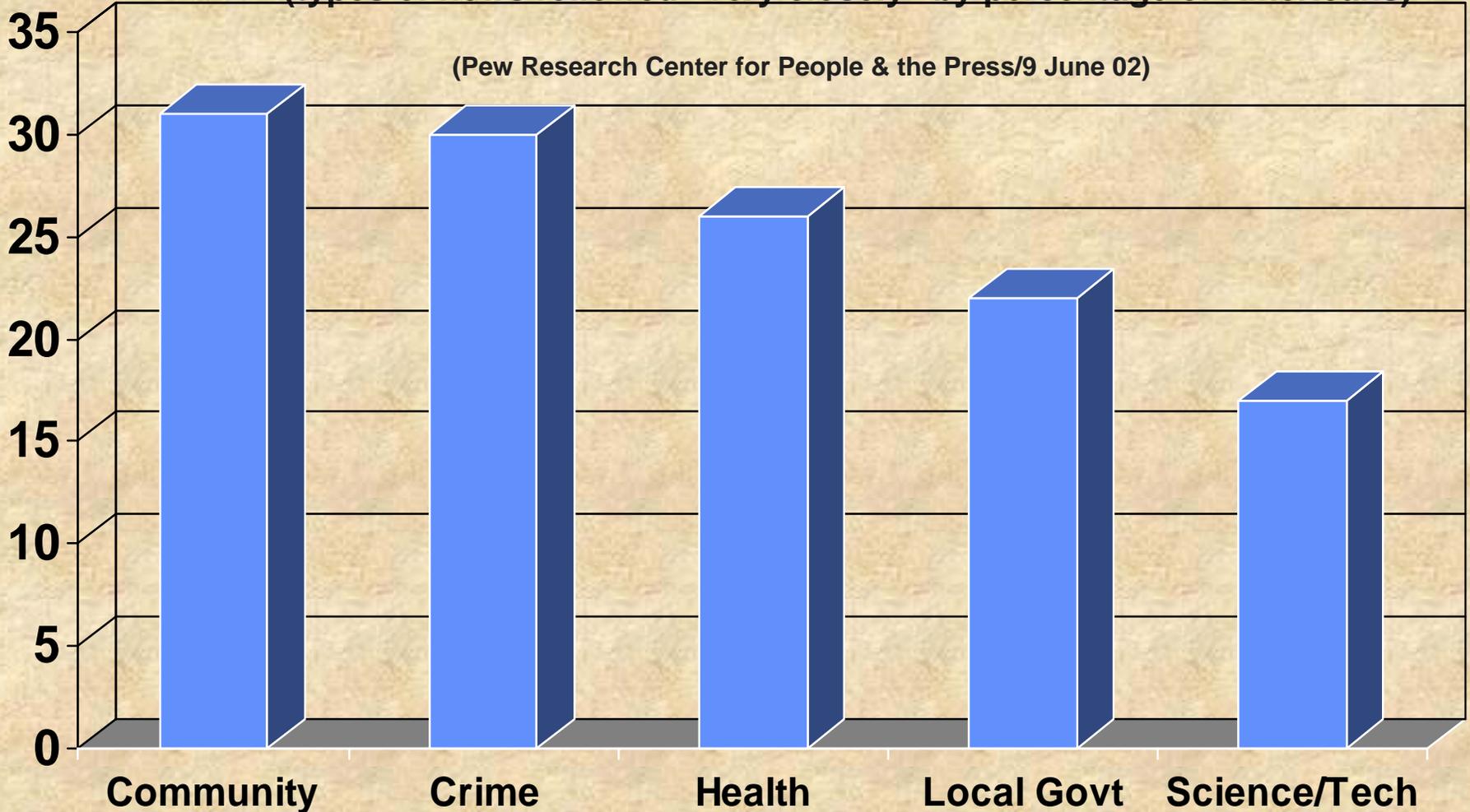
- **The news media enable us in disseminating our messages.**
 - Tell our story
- **The news media help us meet public outreach requirements.**
- **The public's perceptions are affected significantly by the news media.**





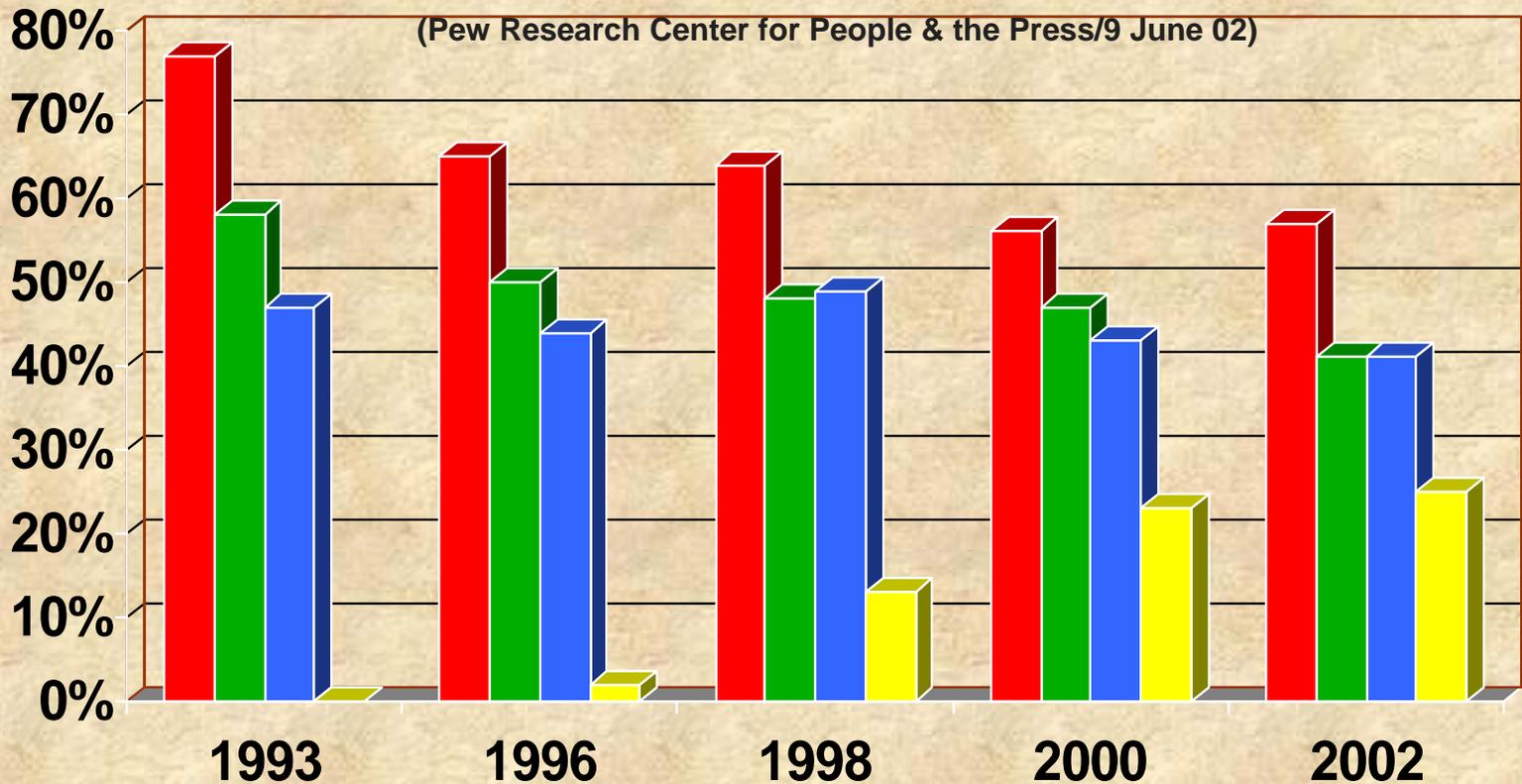
The Basics: News Interest

(types of news followed “very closely” by percentage of Americans)





The Basics: Trends in News Consumption



■ Local TV News ■ Newspaper ■ Radio News ■ On-line News



The Basics: Before the Interview

- **Know to whom you are speaking.**
- **Determine the major points you want to get across (safety and environmental stewardship, for example).**
- **Plan your responses.**





The Basics: The Message

➤ **Three basic message points for us to consider:**

- ✓ I'm listening
- ✓ I care
- ✓ I'm sorry (when necessary)



Keys to Communication



- **Perception equals reality.**
- **Successful communication requires trust plus credibility.**
- **Communication requires skill.**

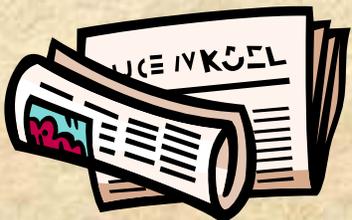


Communications Techniques

➤ Vary by type of medium...



- Television is *visual*. It is best at portraying action and emotion because it combines sound and sight.
- Radio is audio. It paints a picture through voice and sound.
- Newspaper. It is best for detail and for process. It too needs action for photographs.





Communication Techniques: During the Interview

➤ Stay in Control

- Be positive
- Don't repeat negatives
- Avoid
 - ✓ Speculation
 - ✓ Comparisons
 - ✓ Promises
- Answer questions to your advantage by rephrasing when possible





Communication Techniques: During the Interview

➤ **Methods to Help You Stay in Control**

– Flagging Phrases

- Don't lose sight of the fact...
- The critical thing to remember is...
- It comes down to this...





Communication Techniques: During the Interview

➤ Methods to Help You Stay in Control

— Bowing out Phrases

- I'm not prepared to talk about that issue today. We can schedule another opportunity to...
- My personal opinion isn't the issue here, what *is* important...
- The answer to that question would be pure speculation.





Communication Techniques:

During the Interview

➤ **When you finish your answer--
stop.**

➤ ***But*, do give the reporter lots of
written backup.**





Communication Techniques: During the Interview





Steps for Successful Communication

1) **Knowledge.**

2) **Preparation.**

3) **Practice.**

4) **Execution.**

