

Public Relations for Y's Men's Clubs

Sample radio and television scripts and additional sample press releases are available and may be obtained from the International Service Director for Public Relations and/or International Headquarters.

Let Your Light Shine

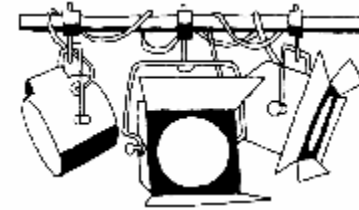
Meeting the Challenges and Opportunities of
Putting the Community Spotlight on *Your Club*

March 2005



Gaining the Spotlight

Eight Tips for Success



Acknowledgements

This manual was prepared by ISD Public Relations 1998/2000 Shirley Murtaugh of USA. She was helped in her task by the following Y's Men:

- IP 1998/99 Erick Kim who initiated the formation of Public Relations as an International Service for Y's Men and provided valuable resources;
- Ken Sutton, of the Gardena Valley Y's Men's Club, Pacific Southwest Region, a public relations professional who provided excellent resources and encouragement; and
- PAP USA Bill Ward who acted as mentor, read the early drafts and encouraged the content and style of the manual.

1. **Know what is newsworthy.** *Examples:* Y's Men's Presidential visits, cheque presentations, new clubs, community fund-raising activities, awards, elections and appointments to Y's Men offices.
2. **Meet your local news reporters.** Invite them to your Y's Men's meeting. Determine the best time of day for you to call to discuss an upcoming press release. Establish a relationship before an interview. And update your press list frequently to get your release to the right person.
3. **Keep in contact.** Sending out a minimum of four press releases each year is easy using the suggestions in Tip No. 1. Releases should catch the attention of the news editor or director in 15 seconds.
4. **Compile a press kit.**
5. **Be concise and accurate.** During interviews, give short answers in response to questions and know the figures for money raised and returned to the community.
6. **Keep optimistic and positive always.** Avoid the negative. Example — Question: Has your membership declined? Response: We are developing a targeted membership drive of business people in the community and my phone number for more information is
7. **Always call to confirm an interview beforehand.** Be agreeable if a time change is requested.
8. **Always follow up with a letter of thanks** to the reporter or the station director for his/her courtesy and, when appropriate, their fine coverage of your event.

- Don't worry about glasses. If your eyes are used to glasses, they will react unnaturally without them. The studio crew will arrange lighting to avoid any glare.

Cooperate with the director and floor managers during your appearance. Be aware that they may give you hand signals during the show to guide the speed of your presentation.

4. It goes both ways

Don't forget the value of your own public relations

Ask your local radio or television station to provide a speaker for your Y's Men's meeting. More and more stations are encouraging this outreach and would welcome an invitation. You will both learn a great deal about each other; such cross-communication is in the best tradition of public relations.



Reality: Once you have bought media advertising for a project, you cannot expect any media to give you free time or space, perhaps ever. Stick with free public service contributions or prepare an advertising budget — not both.

A word of thanks

After your presentation has been made, you should send letters of thanks to station personnel in appreciation of the help they have given you. Such expressions strengthen relationships and enhance your chances of getting public service time in the future.



Be sure to let them know of any reactions you receive. The station is vitally interested in the response.

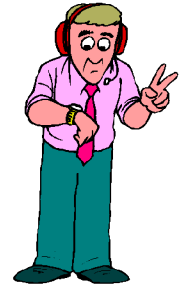
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- When photographs are used, mat or dull-surfaced prints are preferable as glossy prints reflect studio lights.
- Request the return of your visual material if you want to preserve it. Otherwise it may be thrown away.

When you are about to go on the air

The station will want you to sound and look your best. Whether your appearance is live or recorded, you will be given helpful suggestions and your co-operation will be appreciated.



For example



On Radio

You will receive instructions as to

- The proper distance from the microphone;
- How to handle your script with the least possible noise;
- Ways to avoid unnecessary noise, such as removing jangling bracelets, etc.



On Television

Personal appearance will be of vital importance to the success of your presentation.

- Wear clothes of soft, medium or pastel colours. Avoid sharply contrasting patterns and colours. Wear your Y's Men's jacket if it is businesslike.
- Keep jewellery simple. Pearls and dull-finished metals reflect less light than sparkling and highly-polished jewellery. Men may require a little powder on a bald head or if the skin is exceptionally oily. Makeup is advisable to hide any heavy shadows. (Makeup will be done in the studio by a professional makeup artist.)
- Women should avoid heavy makeup and too much lipstick.

broadcasting, e.g., “Use between May 4 and May 8,” not “Monday through Friday.”

- Write all text for the voice — a bit more informal in style than copy written only for the eye. If you normally use “don’t” in conversation, write it that way in your script. A good rule: Be informal but don’t be too casual.
- Provide a biographical outline of any person to be interviewed, along with six or eight points to be covered. If the name is difficult to pronounce, give the phonetic spelling. *Example:* Murtaugh: Mer’-taw.

For Radio



- Time announcements to run 10 seconds (25 words), 20 seconds (50 words) or 60 seconds (150 words).
- Use simple, descriptive words that form pictures and give dimension and colour. Radio reaches only the ear and the listener must be able to see in his/her own mind the picture you are trying to create.
- Submit several clear copies of your material. Do not make carbon copies or use onionskin or any other paper which rustles.

For Television



- Check with the programme or news director about slides, films and photographs which can be used to demonstrate your message.
- Make sure text written to accompany such visual aids fits with the slide, film or photo shown.
- Time your text for a little slower pace than for radio. Standard announcements for television run 10 seconds (about 20 words), 20 seconds (40 words) and 60 seconds (125 words).
- Provide one slide for each 10-second spot, two for a 20-second spot, etc.
- Keep in mind that slides are preferable in most cases to photographs. They can be made professionally at minimum cost.

Introduction

No one lights a lamp and puts it under a bowl; instead he puts it on the lampstand, where it gives light for everyone in the house.

In the same way let your light shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:15-16)

We Y’s Men realise how important it is to heed those words of Jesus. This booklet suggests several ways in which we can share our light. But first we must recognize what that light is and who is really its source.

A bright light — the sun, for example — is impossible to look at directly. We depend upon *reflected* light from that sun to see our world. Reflected light brings out detail and colour; it enhances all that we see. It shows us the true beauty of our surroundings and lights up the dark corners.

Yes, we are the light which Jesus wants to shine, but we are reflectors of *His* light, the light of Christ. Every good we do, every person we feed, clothe, house, comfort or love, every act of kindness and sacrifice, is a reflection of His glorious light. He asks us not to cover our light, not to hide our good works, not to be reserved about the glory of Christ that we reflect, but to let it shine before people.

So let’s do it. Let’s tell people we are partners with the YMCA. Let’s tell them about our worldwide development programmes in partnership with the YMCA through *Time of Fast* and about our scholarship fund for young YMCA trainees. Let’s tell them how many kids we sent to camp for the first time in their lives. Let’s brighten the corners of our communities and inspire others to do the same. Let’s let our light truly shine!

The Three “Ps”

Publicity

Publicity seeks to inform To be effective, it must have a “news peg” on which to hang a story.

Promotion

Promotion, too, seeks to inform, but it also seeks to “promote” activity on behalf of a special project. Quite often there is no “news peg”, just a desire to get a programme under way.

Public Relations

Public Relations is a combination of the two, plus day-to-day activities designed to build sound and productive relations in a community that will enhance a group's reputation and its ability to serve.



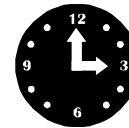
- **Accept suggestions.** Don't forget you will be working with experts.
- **Stay within the station's format.** Don't ask for special treatment or changes.
- **Taping in advance may be your best option.** It can be done when mutually convenient, then aired at a more desirable time. It can be aired a number of times and, if necessary, edited to fit the available time.

Make appointments



People who work in broadcasting are probably more pressed for time than most. Don't just drop in unannounced. Telephone first to find out when it would be convenient for you to visit.

Be on time



Once an interview or an on-the-air appearance is arranged, be on time. The clock waits for no one. An appointment or appearance that has to be cancelled because you are late might well be the last one you get.

Now for some HOT TIPS

- Submit all text to the programme director as far in advance as possible. Ten days would not be too soon.
- Get news releases to the news director as early as you can, a week in advance if possible.
- Type all text and double space, using one side of the paper only. Start a third of the way down the first page. Leave wide margins.
- Provide extra copies as requested.
- Put Y's Men's name (Club? Region? Area?) and your own name, address, telephone number and e-mail address as contact at the top of each item.
- Give all the facts, the what, when, where, who and why of your event. Be sure to give specific starting and ending dates for

The Importance of Image

Illumination

Impact

Imagination

Image

Ideas

The Power of " I "

Image begins with I. **Image** is an Impression, an Idea. **Image** excites the Imagination. How can I enhance our **Image** in our community?

I can

Wear my Y's Men's membership pin whenever I am out in public.

Wear my club shirt, jacket or sweater to every club meeting and project and to every Y's Men's Convention.

Wear my Y's Men's clothing when I attend other community meetings (Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, etc.).

Buy and wear a Y's Men's belt buckle, watch and other logo jewellery.

Identify my car as that of a Y's Man with a logo bumper or window sticker or licence plate holder if legally allowed.

At the YMCA my club can

Display the Y's Men's logo on the exterior of the building.

Permanently display the logo with meeting dates, times and location in the YMCA lobby.

Who should receive your message? Is it of general interest to a large number of the listening and viewing audience? Can it be tailored to those you most want to reach?

How can you best put your message across? Does it have enough general interest for a special programme? Would a brief announcement serve just as well?

Your answers to these three questions, particularly on the **what** of your message, will largely determine your success in getting free air time.

3. Know the Realities

Important: Public service announcements on radio and television must be on behalf of nonprofit organizations. In addition, no time can or will be given to promote bingo parties, lotteries or games of chance in any form.

Competition is tough

Broadcasters face a huge demand for free public service time and not all appeals can be honoured. There just aren't enough hours in a day to satisfy every request received. A station's "product" is its air time, and air time cannot be expanded, the way a newspaper can, if extra material turns up.

To enhance your own chances of getting public service time, make certain that:

- Your message is important and of widespread interest;
- It is presented in the best possible form.

Cooperate

All types of programming require cooperation with the station. Teamwork is the key to success in any venture.

- **Be prepared** with specific facts and workable ideas. Don't waste their time with vague generalities.

Keep the YMCA pamphlet rack stocked with Y's Men's literature, including the current newsletter.

Ensure that the front desk has information, times and locations of special Y's Men's projects and events.

My club can

Display signs with the Y's Men International logo and club name at the entrances to our community with meeting date, time and location if legally allowed.

Identify our project sites with our club name and Y's Men's logo.

Collaborate with other local service clubs through joint projects or giving a helping hand.

Ask for recognition from our local government through a proclamation of "Y's Men's Day" on our club's anniversary.

Strongly support "Y's Men's Sunday" at church: wear Y's Men's clothing; display our club banner near the pulpit; provide refreshments for post-service fellowship; have literature available.

Keep a permanent record of our club with an album of pictures, awards, articles, recognitions, etc. Display the album at appropriate functions.

I
can use my **Imagination**
for more **Ideas**
to **Illuminate**
and **Improve**
the **Image** of my Y's Men's Club.
That will have a great **Impact** on our future!

Other On-Air Exposure

Spots: Brief announcements made at various times during a broadcasting day.

Personality Spots: Announcements by on-the-air personalities such as disc jockeys or directors of women's features.

News Items: Short stories which are included in regular local newscasts and give briefly the who, what, when, where and why of a newsworthy event.

Editorials: Statements prepared at the station which present the station management's viewpoint on community programmes and projects. If your organization holds an opposite view, your spokesperson may be entitled to an on-the-air rebuttal.



A necessary first step

Time and available facilities vary widely from station to station. Call on the **Programme Director** (after first arranging for an appointment) to find out if public service time is available and, if so, the types of programming the station offers. A larger station will have a Director of Public Services or Director of Community Services.

A good basic rule: Know your stations and their programmes. Listen to or watch local shows first so you will know what you are talking about when you call.

2. Know Yourself

What ... Who ... How

If your Y's Men's appeal is to be effective, you should have the answers to these key questions even before you contact your local station:

What is your message? Are you sure of the basic idea you want to get

Unlocking the Secrets of Getting Air Time

Four Key Steps



The broadcasting industry, with the largest audience ever known, offers unparalleled opportunities for organizations such as Y's Men International who are working for the public good.

Reality: Broadcasting has no obligation to grant air time to any group, but all stations pride themselves on their record of service in the public interest.

How do you go about getting your message on radio and television? Like most things, there is a right way and a wrong way. The information in this chapter comes directly from the broadcasting industry. It has been adapted to help all Y's Men's groups do the job properly . . . and avoid the pitfalls into which many have tumbled.

1. Know What is Available

To be successful you should know the various ways a station can help. Public service broadcasting falls into two broad categories:

Programmes

Specials: Interviews, panel or group discussions, demonstrations, etc., in either a series or in a one-time-only presentation.

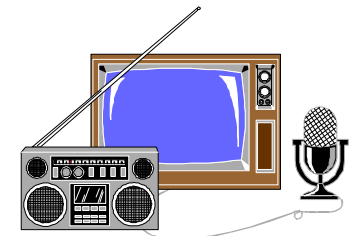
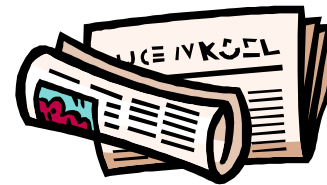
Segments: Similar but shorter presentations which are inserted as "participating" features of other programmes.

me-dia / mē-dē-ə (L) *n. pl.* the means of mass communication, such as newspapers, radio, television, internet.

Why Media Coverage?

Five reasons:

- **It will** illustrate your club's service to your YMCA and the community.
- **It will** recognize and highlight your members.
- **It will** magnify Y's Men's identification and improve your public image.
- **It will** instill pride in being a Y's Man or Woman and contribute to a dynamic, well-attended service club.
- **It will** generate additional members and enhance both activity and attendance at your fund-raising events.



Unlocking the Secrets of Getting Press Coverage

Four Key Steps



1. Access

Your Club President should appoint a **Public Relations Committee**. The committee chairperson needs to compile a list of local newspapers, journals and radio and television stations, complete with telephone and fax numbers, e-mail addresses and the names of appropriate personnel. A simple phone call to the switchboard of any news medium will get you the name of the reporter or editor who covers Service Club news.

Next, the committee members should set out to **cultivate relationships** with these reporters. Call them about any newsworthy press event. Example: “I am faxing you a press release covering the appointment of one of our club members to a regional position. We would appreciate the publication of this item.” This step is crucial to successfully generating positive news coverage.

As a minimum, the Public Relations Committee should keep in contact with **two key newspaper resources**. The first is the city desk reporting staff of your major metropolitan/regional newspaper. Service Club news is often covered in a special section of these newspapers, such as the local news section, volunteer activities column or in the social news. In this case, the section news reporter is the person to contact. The second valuable newspaper resource is the weekly suburban/local paper, which normally covers more Service Club events and in greater depth than larger papers. Become familiar with the deadlines of these papers, especially the local community press.

Write a **letter of thanks** at the first opportunity to your media contacts, thanking them for using your story. In the letter, note the favourable position of the article, the thoroughness of the coverage and the impact of the story on your successful event.

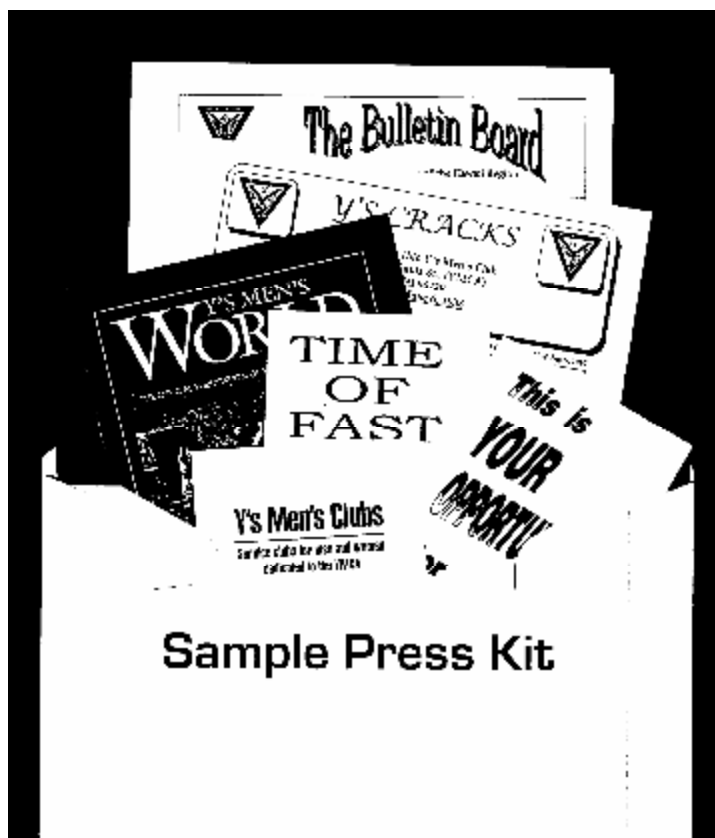


4. Persistence

Persistence is a key ingredient of all successful marketing (which includes public relations). Some salespeople are reluctant to continue pursuing a possible buyer after a few rejections. But experts tell us that they may have to ask up to five times before they are successful. This means it may take five visits or phone calls to direct the reporter’s attention to your Y’s Men’s story. **If you still fail:** Ask your contacts why they did not print your story. Most are glad to be of help with suggestions to improve your chances in the future.



Prepare a **press kit** for special events. A press kit consists of background material about Y's Men, who we are and what we do. It can include recent Club, Region or Area newsletters, a fact sheet or brochure about Y's Men International and a list of recent awards or commendations earned by your club. Reference should be made in it to our official web-site: www.ysmen.org. When reporters arrive at the event, the Public Relations Chairperson should greet them and give press kits to each. Press kits are in addition to any material specifically about the event.



2. Creating a Press Event and Photo Opportunity

First, **focus on a particular Y's Men's event**, which can be a fund-raising or volunteer activity that contributes significantly to the community. For example, you can choose your club's Time of Fast meal or your "Make a Difference Day" activity. Then, along with a dynamic description of the activity and names of notable people who will be involved, ask at least a month in advance of the event for a photographer and reporter to attend.

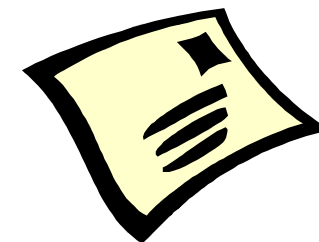
Media representatives are looking for a visual backdrop and lively activity for good photos. You must have a spokesperson available who is experienced and knowledgeable about Y's Men and your cause. And you must have a **press kit** available (see Key 3. below).

If you are your club's spokesperson, follow these guidelines for effective news interviews:

- Do not be overawed by media people; they need to fill pages or time slots and you are their source.
- Be informative, factual, positive and optimistic.
- Use short and concise statements.
- Close the interview with conviction.

3. Communicating

Send out a **one-page press release at least four times a year**. These press releases will provide information about events, elections or appointments, fund-raising activities, special visitors, etc.



The Press Release

The press release, also called a news release, should be on your club letterhead. It should include the five Ws — **Who, What, When, Where and Why**.

- Below the letterhead write “**For immediate release**” or “**For release before**”
 - The name, telephone number and e-mail address of the **contact person** (you) should be next. This is essential in case the reporter has questions.
 - Write a simple **headline** for your story.
 - Keep the body of your release concise and to the point — **one page is always best**. If there are more, be sure to label each page with the date, headline and page number.
 - Text should be **double-spaced** to allow for media editing.
- Tip:* Mention the name **Y’s Men** several times in your story. Research shows that identification is enhanced if the organization’s name appears three to four times in any promotion.
- There are varying ways to **signal the end of your story**. You may use any of these symbols: # # #, * * *, - ooo - or just - End - centred at the bottom of the page. After the symbols you may add “Photo(s) enclosed” or any other message necessary to tie things together.
 - **Photos (black and white or colour) should be clearly marked** on the back with full names left to right. Use a marking pen; others will indent the paper, spoiling the photo.

Good idea: Before sending off your release, first call to verify the name of the appropriate reporter. (Personnel assignments change.) Explain that a news release is being sent and ask that they carefully consider it. Then, after the event, schedule a short visit to give them a press release about the outcome and perhaps a photo of the event.



Sample Press Release

Y's Men International Northeast Region



Contact:
John Smith
Publicity Director
123 Southdown Road
Ashwood, A1B C2D
Phone & Fax: (0222) 9876543
E-mail: josmith@hotmail.com

For immediate release

International Service Club Organization Appoints Ashwood Resident to World Post

Mary Turner of Ashwood has been appointed an International Council Member of Y’s Men International, a 75 year old service club in partnership with YMCAs everywhere. An active member of the Ashwood Y’s Men’s Club for over 20 years, she has held a variety of local offices as well as positions in the Northeast Region. Ms Turner is a school teacher by profession and at present is Principal of Ashwood High School. In her International post she will be working with people from all continents to promote the efforts of Y’s Men on behalf of YMCAs the world over. She is the first woman ever from Canada to hold the position. Ms Turner will assume office on 1 July 2000 and will serve for a period of two years.