Media Training — study guide

Sooner or later a reporter calls about something that went wrong. How you handle that call shapes the story. This guide covers the ABC method, how to deal with unexpected questions, and the basic rights and risks of dealing with the press.

The ABC method

The **ABC method** has three elements: **Acknowledge, Bridge, Communicate**. It composes the answer in three parts: you start by answering the question, then bridge over to your own message on the issue.[1] It is used to deal with difficult questions on complicated matters while taking the opportunity to bring out your own message.

- **Acknowledge** the question — it shows you understood it and indicates you will try to answer.
- **Bridge** from the answer to the point you want to make.
- **Communicate** clearly: decide your message and present your key takeaways plainly.

When a reporter calls

If a reporter calls and asks questions, note the name and telephone number of the reporter and call back later, after talking to management or colleagues. Before and during an interview, check your main messages and core values with information management or a colleague. Keep to the facts and be consistent.

Answering well

- Choose terms and explanations so the reporter understands the overall picture and gets the impression that you and the company know how to manage the situation.
- Use examples from your business — a good way to explain the issue to a journalist.
- If you don't know the answer, be truthful: say you do not know, but that you can get back to them.
- Don't fill space with many words that carry no content. That looks like you are **avoiding** the question and signals that the company **does not** know how to handle the issue. Instead, focus on the questions that are being worked on.
- Correct, consistent information matters: correct facts avoid contributing to fake news, and consistency enhances trust.

Rights, risks and context

Freedom of the press is vital to democracy, but it has downsides: media outlets can publish almost anything, and the subjects of news stories have few legal rights to change a published story. Your legal options against newspapers, TV networks or radio shows include the right to have a correction published. Journalists, by their own account, see their role as exposing abuse of power. The end goal of "fake news" is to

© 2026 maritimetest.com · free study guide

provide misleading information and present it as news — which is exactly why accurate, consistent statements from you matter.

Key facts to remember

- ABC = Acknowledge, Bridge, Communicate — answer first, then bridge to your message.
- Reporter calls: take their name and number, call back after speaking to management/colleagues.
- Acknowledge the question and be clear about your key takeaways.
- Don't know? Say so truthfully and offer to get back to them.
- Use business examples; be correct and consistent (avoids fake news, builds trust).
- Padding with empty words looks like avoiding the question; focus on what is being done.
- You have a right to a correction; freedom of the press lets outlets publish almost anything.