

Four Secrets to Energizing Your News Story

By Rusty Cawley

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Every news story must have a FACE. If you forget to put a FACE on your story proposal, your chances of interesting a reporter are nil.

All true PR Rainmakers faithfully practice this fundamental every time they design a story proposal for the news media.

By FACE, the PR Rainmaker means:

* F: Feelings

* A: Analysis

* C: Crisis

* E: Energy

These are the elements of a well-crafted story proposal. Let's look at each part one by one.

1. Feelings are the emotions that your story stirs within the reporter, and thus the reader.

The seven basic emotions are love, hate, anger, fear, sorrow, envy and greed.

There are endless degrees, combinations and variations on these seven. (For example, "pity" is fear blended with sorrow.

"Rage" is an extreme form of "anger."). Your story must strongly arouse one, and only one, of these basic emotions. (Note that only one of these emotions, "love," is positive. This is one reason why news is almost always negative.)

2. Analysis provides the logic that sells the story. Feelings open the door with a reporter, but logic closes the sale.

Analysis may come in the form of numbers, statistics, data, studies, surveys or expert commentary.

The key is that the analysis must at least appear to be objective and accurate.

The analysis allows reporters to take your story seriously. It also gives reporters a subconscious excuse to listen to their feelings.

3. Crisis is the inherent conflict within the story. Without conflict, there is no news. This is what reporters mean when they talk about getting "both sides of the story."

Every story must have at least two sides. Ideally, for the news media, the story has a hero on one side and a villain on the other.

You want portray your company as a hero that is solving a problem.

4. Energy is what results from mixing feelings, analysis and crisis in the right proportions.

Energy is what drives the story.

It is what compels the reporter to want to write the story. It is what compels the editor to give the story good play.

It is what compels the reader to finish the story, to remember your story, to pass it along to friends.

The PR Rainmaker knows: You never take on the media without putting on your game FACE.

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Rusty Cawley is a 20-year veteran journalist who now coaches executives, entrepreneurs and professionals on using the news media to attract customers and to advance ideas. For a free copy of the ebook "PR Rainmaker," visit www.prrainmaker.com .

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