



SPANZ

SECONDARY PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.

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President
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Dear Colleague

From time to time principals raise issues with the Executive around the media. As a consequence of this we had Ron Wilkinson at our Symposium earlier this year. Those who attended his workshop found it invaluable. To help all principals in managing the press I make available some of his key points.

✓ ***Take the Initiative***

Get to know the journalists most likely to contact you.
Feed journalists with genuine news ...new to the journalist and audience ...immediately it is available
Know what their deadlines and interests are.

✓ ***Show Respect***

Accept that the media and its individual members have a legitimate and important role in any society, especially in a democracy
The NZ Bill of Rights says *"Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and opinion of any kind and in any form."*

✓ ***Be Confident***

You occupy a controlling position, but in many media interactions, the journalist is in control.
Accept that and be confident in yourself, your school, and its processes.
Welcome media contacts.

✓ ***Make Yourself Available***

By making yourself available, immediately or as quickly as possible, at the time initiated by the media representative(s) you will have the best chance of having your information or views presented in a timely and influential fashion.

✓ ***Prepare***

If it is media-initiated, find out what they want to talk to you about.
Gain time to think and gather immediate facts (preferably 5 minutes rather than 5 hours – check to see if the reporter has an immediate deadline and try to meet it).
Clarify what specific points you want to make irrespective of what other issues might be canvassed by the reporter.
Respond positively

✓ ***Be Open and Honest***

Always tell the truth and do not exaggerate.
If you do not know something, say so - do not try to bluff; offer to find out

If there are many details or the subject is complex, consider offering to fax or email that information in writing.

- ✓ ***Short Statements are Best***
They are more likely to be presented in full.
- ✓ ***Have an Up-to-date Media Plan***
That way all bases are covered
- ✓ ***Ask for Help***
Someone who is not quite so involved may give you a clearer perspective.



Graham Young
President
Secondary Principals' Association of New Zealand