

This work is based upon work supported by the New York Wine and Grape Foundation



# What's Your Story?

NYWGF Industry Education  
and Training Program

Presented by Paul Stella

Sponsored by the New York Wine  
and Grape Foundation



# What's Your Story?

- Leading a family operation that spans generations?
- Shifting your life's vocation?
- Using experimental techniques?
- Organizing a community of wineries?
- Producing unique varieties?
- Hosting high-profile events?



# PR in Action

- Identify a “target audience”
- Communication is intended to induce desired behavior outcomes
- The action taken to accomplish a PR plan can usually be explained as an attempt to spread information within a target audience



# PR in Action

- *Controlled media*: PR practitioners dictate how information is delivered (internal publications, direct mail, advertising)
- *Uncontrolled media*: someone else decides content (newspaper articles, TV news)
- Three basic considerations: audience, timing and budget



# The Media



Rochester's alternative newsweekly...

The New York Times



Long Island Press



STAR-GAZETTE



# Media Relations

- The media serves as gatekeeper or filter through which PR efforts reach the general public and other groups whose support is needed
- Media coverage conveys a sense of legitimacy that an organization may not get from paid advertising; “third-party endorsement”
- PR efforts today focus on smaller, more defined target audiences through specialized media



# Various Media Outlets

- Newspapers (still a powerful force in shaping the public agenda)
- Newswires (feed news to TV and newspapers)
- Magazine (the most specialized medium)
- Radio (person-to-person medium)
- TV and Cable (prime source for news and entertainment)
- Online News Services



# Working with Media

- *Agenda-setting function*: the media's choice to cover one topic over others
- Organizations must facilitate the work of journalists to get their stories covered
- Selection and presentation of information needs to conform to journalistic standards



# Working with Media

- Mutual dependency: make the journalist's job easier, saving time and effort by providing information not otherwise available
- Every media contact is an opportunity to get feedback, to tell your story, to create a positive response to your organization
- Defensiveness is not appropriate: remain hospitable, cooperative and open



# Working with Media

- News release are a common publicity tool; any news-worthy occurrence in the organization is an opportunity for publicity
- Media kits increase the probability that publicity information will be used; info that would otherwise take hours to research
- Websites: provide dedicated locations for various information of use to media



# Writing Effectively

Just as communication is the primary action step in a PR plan, writing is the principal tool.

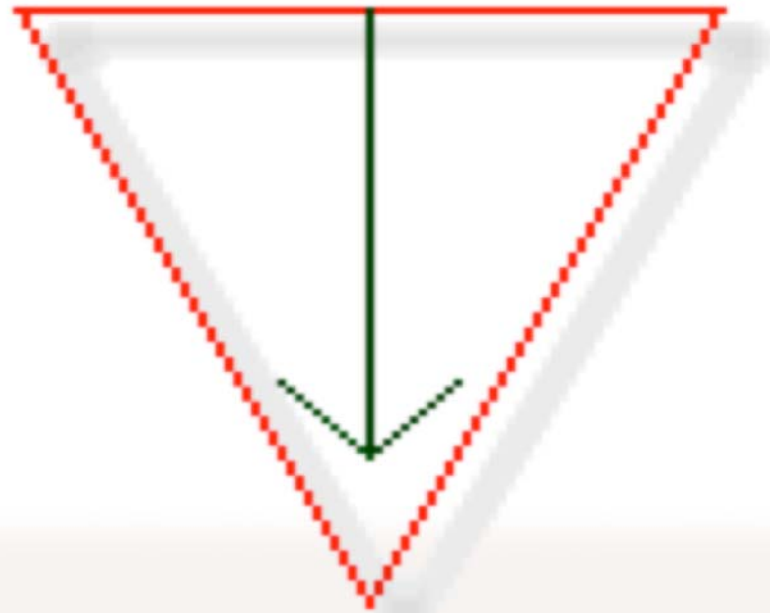
Shorter sentences achieve large gains in understanding (James Couey, Jr.):

- Sentences should contain *one* idea
- Use large and short sentences for variety
- Optimum average: 17 words per sentence



# Inverted Pyramid

- Organize a story from most important to least important (beginning with the 5 Ws)



# Press Releases

- The simplest and easiest way to reach the media, press releases are at the heart of any publicity effort
- Release can convey routine news, provide potential feature or background material, or offer follow-up information



# Press Release Writing Tips

- Use the inverted pyramid style of writing, emphasizing important or interesting facts first
- Answer as many of the basic questions --the 5 Ws (who, what, where, when and why) -- early in the news release
- Keep the lead short (25 words or less)



# Press Release Writing Tips

- Treat information that is not a timely news item as a feature story instead
- Be concise; releases should rarely exceed two pages; provide supplemental information on a separate fact sheet
- Include only information appropriate to the specific medium



# Press Release Writing Tips

- Be strictly accurate
- Be specific; use examples to show your point
- Do not editorialize or advocate a viewpoint
- Vary the length of your paragraphs; sentences should also vary in length



# Distributing Your Release

- Events Coverage
  - blanket local, regional media outlets
  - contacts vary (news director, assignment editors, etc.)
- Trend Stories
  - specialized media, wider geography
  - contact "beat" writers

