

Communicating with the Press and in the Legal System

31st Annual MUNICIPAL STREETS SEMINAR
Richard A. Fosse, P.E.
University of Iowa College of Engineering



In the Hot Seat

Communicating with the Press and in the Legal System





**Failure to communicate clearly
can create trust issues.**

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Trust Me, I'm a Scientist
 Why so many people choose not to believe what scientists say
 Apr 19, 2011 | By Daniel T. Willingham

A friend of mine has long held that a vaccination his son received as an infant triggered his child's autism. He clings to this belief despite a string of scientific studies that show no link between autism and vaccines. When the original paper on such a link was recently discredited as a fraud, my friend's reaction was that it will now be

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PRINCETON ALUMNI WEEKLY

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses and universities shut down or imposed other stringent measures to combat the spread of the virus. How should the civil engineering profession respond to this situation and what are our ethical responsibilities associated with civil engineering related operations such as offices, universities, construction sites, health care centers, and transit systems in response to the pandemic?

FEATURES

Science Under Attack

livescience
 TECH HEALTH PLANET EARTH SPACE STRANGE NEWS ANIMALS HISTORY HUMAN

Americans Respect (But Don't Always Trust) Scientists
 By Megan Gannon, News Editor | September 23, 2014 10:55am ET

83
 22
 40
 31

Scientists might have a PR problem in the United States. In the eyes of the American public, scientists are seen as respectable and competent — but not necessarily trustworthy, according to a new study. If scientists want to soften their image, they might try to seem a little more friendly and warm, the researchers said. [6 Politicians]

Credit: angelodeca | Shutterstock
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ABOUT FACULTY & RESEARCH ADMISSIONS & AID ACADEMICS EXECUTIVE/CONTINUING ED NEWS

News

> News > In the News > 2021 > How the pandemic has hurt public trust in science

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How the pandemic has hurt public trust in science

A number of factors have combined to undermine public trust in science during the pandemic, including the rapid evolution of COVID-19 science, mixed messaging from leaders, a torrent of misinformation, political interference in federal science agencies, and political polarization, according to experts.

Kasisomayajula "Vish" Viswanath, Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, was among those quoted on the topic in a January 25, 2021 article in Chemical & Engineering News.

He noted that the urgency of the pandemic has put the scientific process—which often takes years and decades of debate—on display. "All of the sudden everyone is watching scientists, and they are seeing all the messiness of how science happens," he said. "People are seeing the sausage being made, and they don't like what they see."

Courts

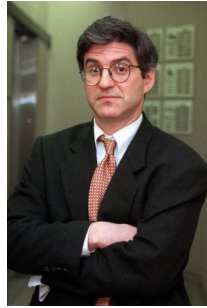
Press

The collage includes a woman being interviewed by a cameraman, a man in a suit speaking at a podium, and a judge in a courtroom.

This stuff can be scary!

The collage shows a man in a suit speaking in a courtroom and a group of people holding up their smartphones, possibly recording or taking photos.

Meeting with the Press is Scary!



Investigative Reporter

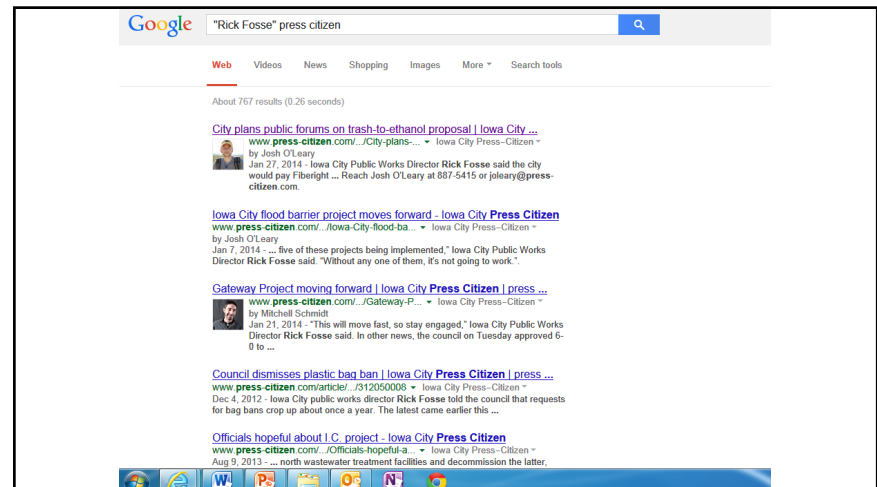
But Fear Not...



But Fear Not...



Yesterday's news is today's birdcage liner.



Google "Rick Fosse" press citizen

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About (767 results) (26 seconds)

City plans public forums on trash-to-ethanol proposal | Iowa City ...
[www.press-citizen.com/.../City-plans-...](#) Iowa City Press-Citizen
 by Josh O'Leary
 Jan 27, 2014 - Iowa City Public Works Director **Rick Fosse** said the city would pay Fibertight ... Reach Josh O'Leary at 887-2419 or josary@press-citizen.com.

Iowa City flood barrier project moves forward - Iowa City Press Citizen
[www.press-citizen.com/.../Iowa-City-flood-ba...](#) Iowa City Press-Citizen
 by Josh O'Leary
 Jan 7, 2014 - **Rick Fosse** said that some of these projects being implemented, "Iowa City Public Works Director **Rick Fosse** said, "Without any one of them, it's not going to work."

Gateway Project moving forward | Iowa City Press Citizen | press ...
[www.press-citizen.com/.../Gateway-P...](#) Iowa City Press-Citizen
 by Mitchell Schmidt
 Jan 21, 2014 - **Rick Fosse** said, "This will move fast, so stay engaged." Iowa City Public Works Director **Rick Fosse** said, "Other news, the council on Tuesday approved 6-0 to ..."

Council dismisses plastic bag ban | Iowa City Press Citizen | press ...
[www.press-citizen.com/article/.../312050000](#) Iowa City Press-Citizen
 Dec 4, 2012 - Iowa City public works director **Rick Fosse** told the council that requests for bag bans crop up about once a year. The latest came earlier this ...

Officials hopeful about I.C. project - Iowa City Press Citizen
[www.press-citizen.com/.../Officials-hopeful-a...](#) Iowa City Press-Citizen
 Aug 9, 2013 - ... north wastewater treatment facilities and decommission the latter.

Google "Rick Fosse" Gazette

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About (196 results) (30 seconds)

Iowa City public works director to retire | The Gazette
[www.thegazette.com/subject/news/iowa-city-public-works-direct...](#)
 Aug 8, 2014 - IOWA CITY — Rick Fosse's notebook will be a little less full and parties a little more enjoyable starting this New Year's Eve. After 30 years with ...

City engineer named Iowa City public works ... - The Gazette
[www.thegazette.com/subject/news/city-engineer-named-iowa-ci...](#)
 Aug 29, 2014 - Ron Knoche, the city engineer the past 11 years, will take over for his boss, Rick Fosse, at the start of 2015, City Manager Tom Markus ...

Iowa City gets some good news on landfill fire - Globe Gazette
[globe-gazette.com/news/iowa-city-gets-some-good-news-on-landfill-f...](#)
 Jul 25, 2012 - Public works director Rick Fosse told The Gazette that state officials say the material that's been burned won't be classified as a "special waste" ...

Iowa City looks to landfill for energy - Globe Gazette
[globe-gazette.com/news/local/iowa-city-looks-to-landfill-for-energy](#)
 Mar 27, 2011 - Iowa City Public Works Director Rick Fosse said the city has been interested in the project for several years. "We can't do it without you.

Faculty | Page 4 | Civil and Environmental Engineering
[cee.engineering.uiowa.edu/audiences/faculty](#)
 The Cedar Rapids Gazette reports that a new University of Iowa study shows the ... Richard "Rick" Fosse, lecturer in civil and environmental engineering, has ...

Google "Rick Fosse" Des Moines Register

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About (240 results) (38 seconds)

Richard Fosse | College of Engineering | The University of Iowa
[www.engineering.uiowa.edu/faculty-staff/richard-fosse](#)
 The University of Iowa College of Engineering is located in Iowa City, Iowa. Programs include biomedical, chemical ... rick-fosse@uiowa.edu (319) 335-5526

Rick Fosse was a Master of Disaster (Relief) - Iowa City Press ...
[www.press-citizen.com/story/news/local/2014/12/29/rick-fos...](#)
 Dec 29, 2014 - His work with Iowa City began in 1984 as a civil engineer, after a year working for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in Des Moines.

Awards - Iowa ASCE
[www.iowaasce.org/awards](#)
 Iowa ASCE - Awards - Website for the Iowa Section of the American Society of Civil ... Congratulations Rick Fosse on receiving this distinction and thank you for your service. ... b. is a registered member of the American Society of Civil Engineers ... 2018 Raising the Red Bridge - City of Des Moines & Stanley Consultants.

Counties can't keep up with road repair needs - The Des ...
[www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/2014/01/13/counties-c...](#)
 Jan 12, 2014 - If you are driving through rural Ringgold County in southern Iowa, be ... pace with street maintenance, says Public Works Director Rick Fosse.

Google "Rick Fosse" KCRG

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About (454 results) (23 seconds)

Iowa City Public Library gathers stories from ... - KCRG.com
[www.kcrg.com/content/news/iowa-city-public-library-gathers-s...](#)
 Apr 13, 2010 - Former public works director Rick Fosse recalls heading to the city hall basement, pausing to listen to the tornado. "I could hear a lot of debris ...

All Iowa City wastewater will soon flow to the same place | The ...
[www.thegazette.com/2012/03/29/all-iowa-city-wastewater-will-soo...](#)
 Mar 29, 2012 - (Matt Nelson/The Gazette - KCRG-TV9) Mark Carlson, KCRG "It's going to be a big project," said Rick Fosse, Director of Public Works.

No special handling of landfill fire debris | The Gazette
[www.thegazette.com/2012/07/24/iowa-city-landfill-fire-still-burni...](#)
 Jul 24, 2012 - (Jim Slosiarek/The Gazette-KCRG) Gregg Hennigan ... "It's not out of my mind yet," Rick Fosse, the city's public works director, said Tuesday.

2017 Homecoming Corn Monument Makes Debut on Pentacrest
[www.engineering.uiowa.edu/news/2017-homecoming-corn-monu...](#)
 Oct 3, 2017 - KCRG-TV News Coverage: <http://www.kcrg.com/content/news/Hundred...> with Rick Fosse, lecturer in civil and environmental engineering, and ...

Images for "Rick Fosse" KCRG

TORNADO

How do you survive over 1,000 encounters with the press?



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Advice for Thriving with the Press:

- Preparation
- Dos and Don'ts
- What to do when the press makes you mad.



Four Easy Steps to Prepare

1. Compile the facts in advance of an interview.

Facts and figures on our first winter storm of the 2009-2010 season:

Precipitation: 7.5" mostly snow, some sleet

Hours of Labor Clearing Roads: 592 hours straight time
391 hours overtime

Salt Used: 563 Tons

Sand Used: 310 Tons

Snow Hauled from the Central Business District: 260 Truck Loads

A Snow Emergency was declared on December 8th, effective December 9th at 8:00 AM through December 11th at 8:00 AM. In addition to regular media outlets, the following notifications were sent:

- There were 1077 subscribers who got e-mail notification of the snow emergency.
- There were 691 subscribers who got text alert notification of the snow emergency.

To subscribe, go to ICGov.org.

Citations issued:
Wednesday – 167
Thursday – 148
TOTAL – 315

Cars towed:
Wednesday – 126
Thursday – 113
TOTAL – 239

2. Anticipate the difficult questions that will be asked.

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3. Draft sound bites in your head so that you can say it the way you want to say it.

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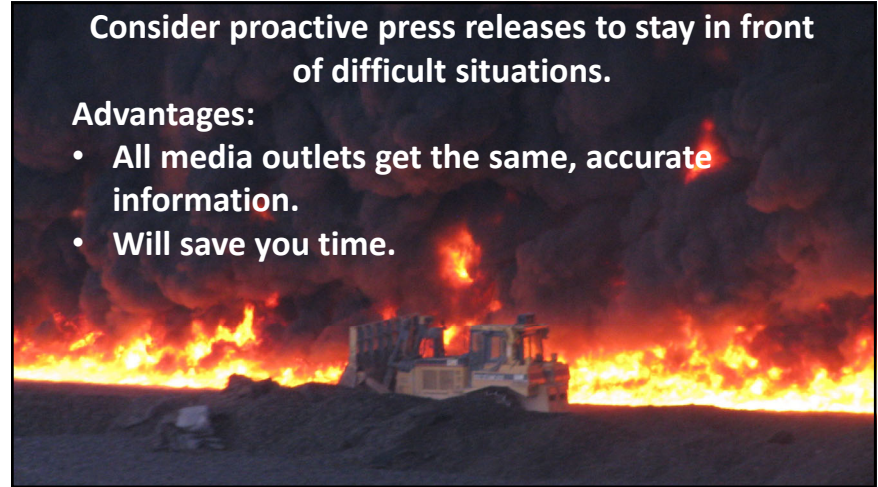
4. Find out if they are working with multiple sources within your organization.



Consider proactive press releases to stay in front of difficult situations.

Advantages:

- All media outlets get the same, accurate information.
- Will save you time.



Advice for Thriving with the Press:

- Preparation
- **Dos and Don'ts**
- What to do when the press makes you mad.



Do understand that reporters work on tight deadlines.



Do share your notes with the reporter.

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Do understand the ground rules.

What does "Off the Record" mean?

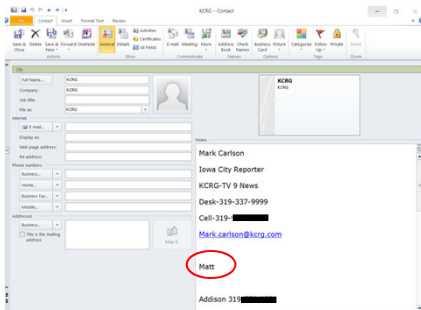
- Does that mean that nothing you say can be used in any way, shape or form?
- Can it can be quoted, but not attributed to the source by name or position?

Which is it?

Have that conversation in advance.



Do get to know the person behind the camera.



Do Share a Head Shot with the news papers



Head Shot



Head Shot

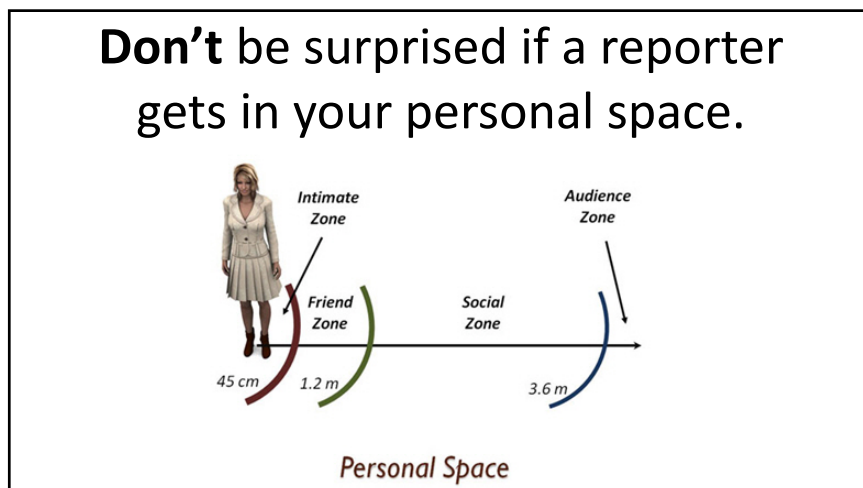


Head Shot



Head Shot








Don't rely on the reporter to ask the right questions.


Don't ask to review a story before it is printed.



Don't ask to review a story before it is printed.

If they offer:

- Be prompt.
- Limit your comments to the facts.
- Do not offer style or content suggestions.

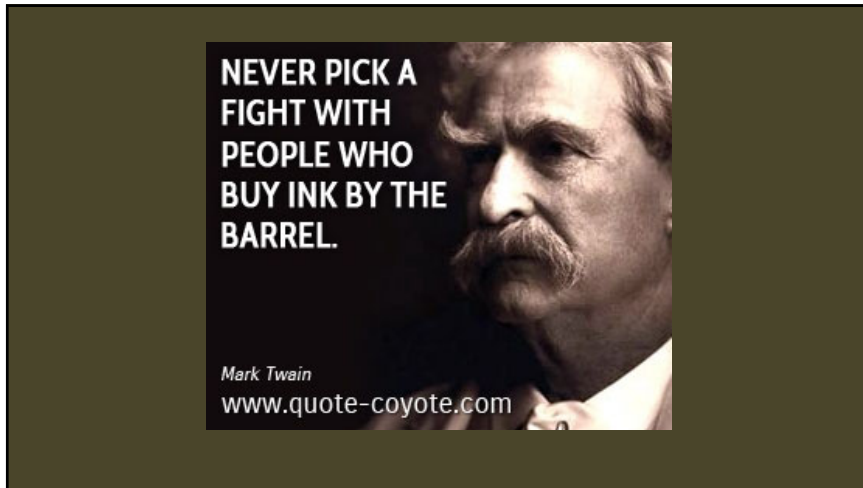
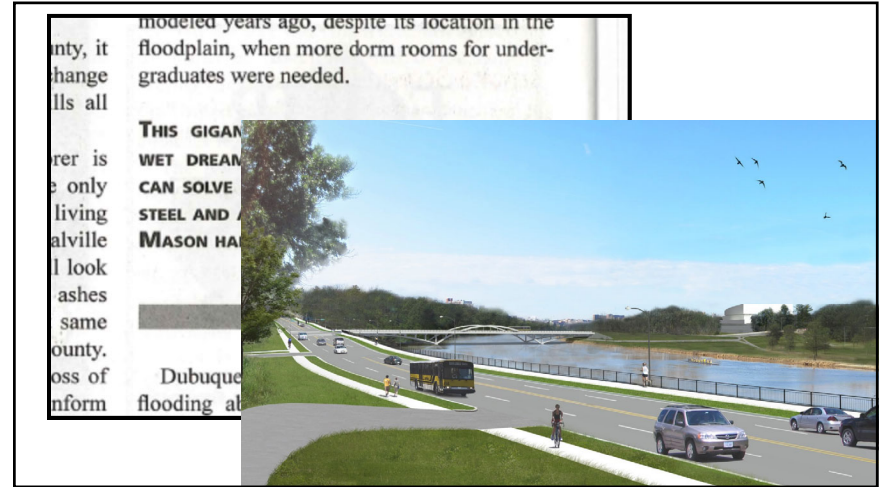
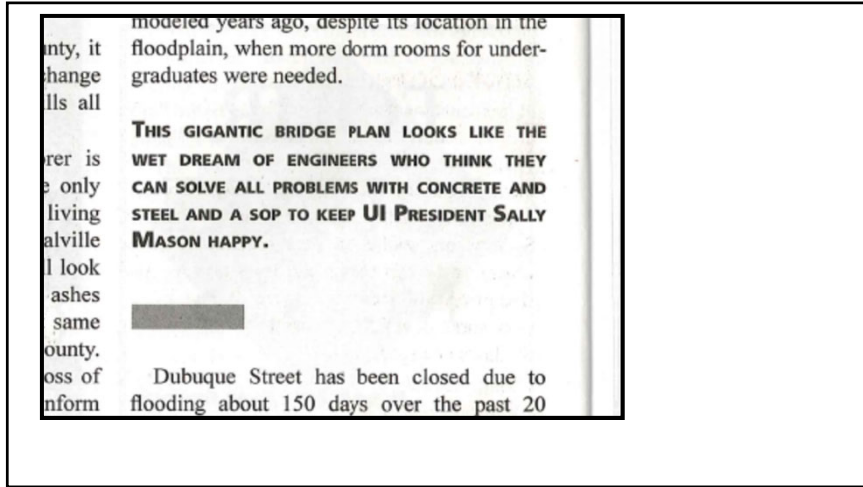


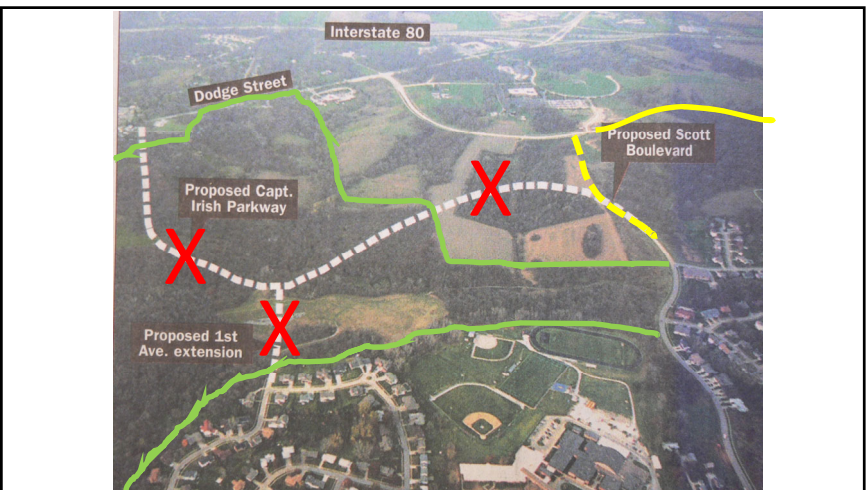
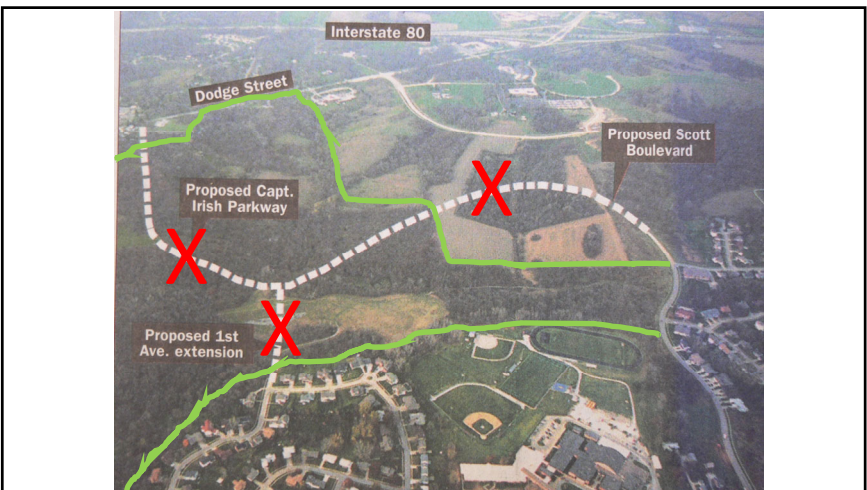
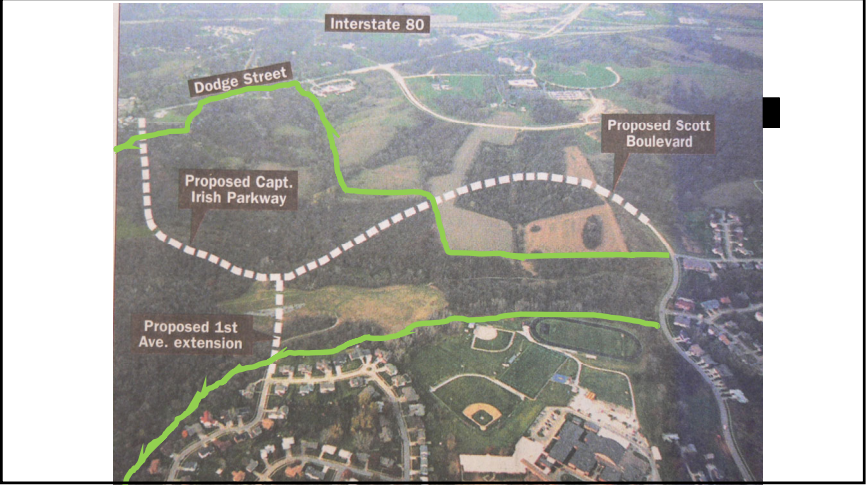
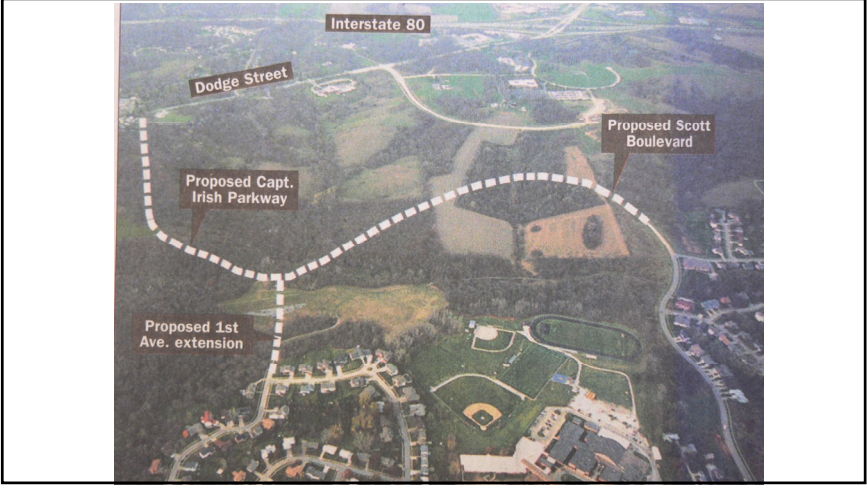

Don't worry if you are not satisfied with the way you look or sound.



What to do when the press makes you mad.







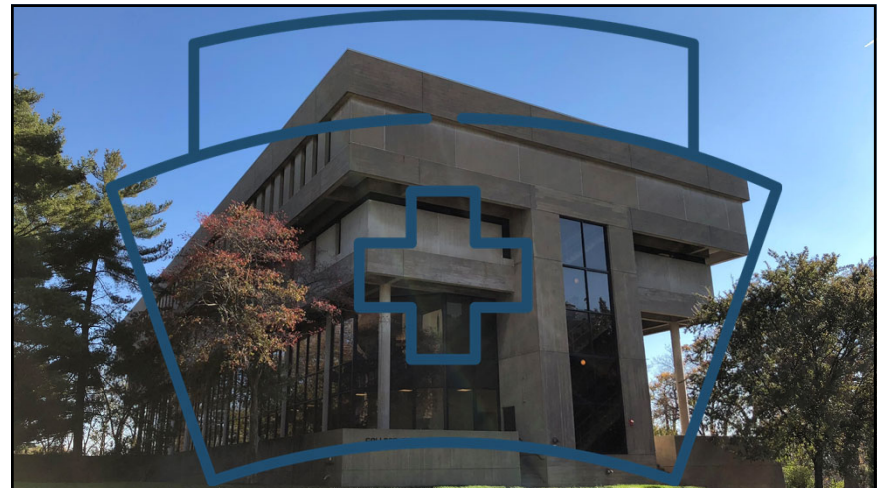
Keys to a good long-term relation with the press:



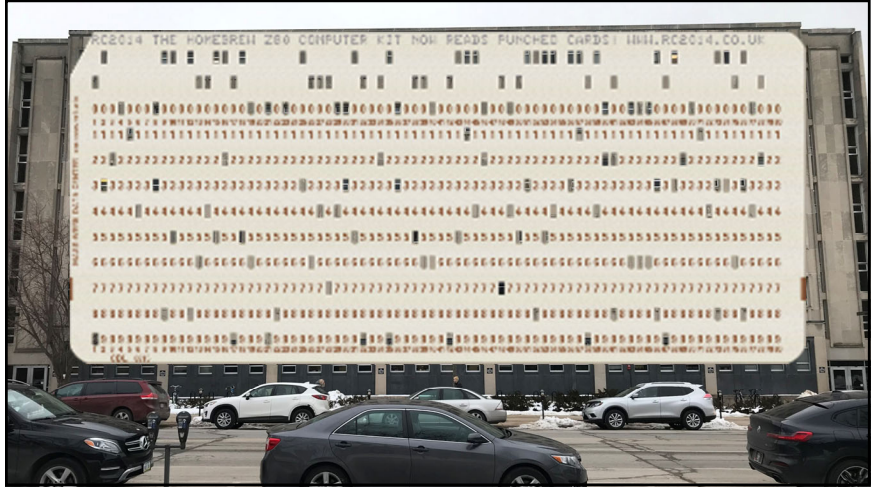
- Be available.
- Be open and honest.
- Keep something available for slow news days.
- Give them feedback – mostly positive.
- Provide prompt factual corrections.

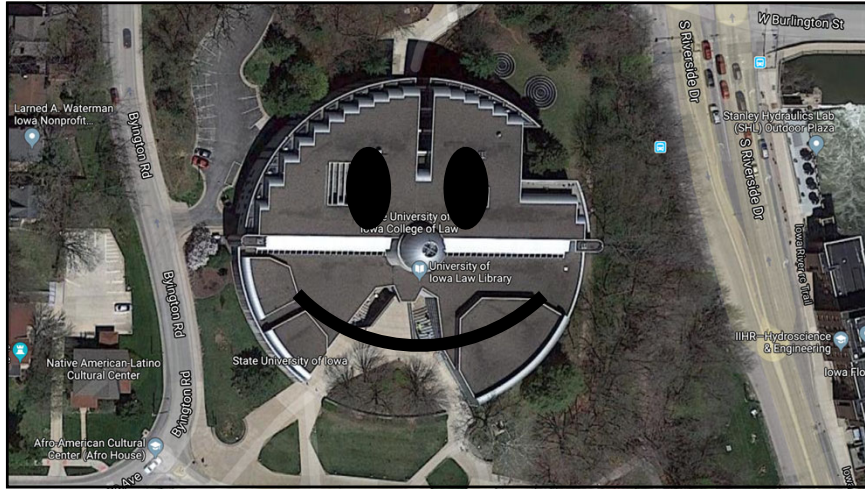
Over time you can develop a symbiotic relationship.

- Reporters need sources.
- You need to get accurate information to the public.
- A relationship based on mutual respect is the foundation to meeting these needs.









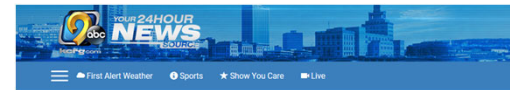
**Your attorney is
your ally.**



Why do engineers get involved in litigation?

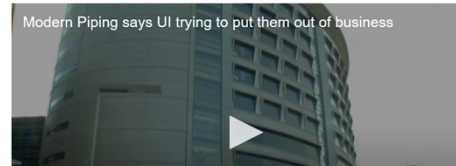


Construction Claims



Iowa court sides with Cedar Rapids company in dispute involving Univ. of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital construction

Modern Piping says UI trying to put them out of business



Injuries



Eminent Domain

Iowa farmers sue to block use of eminent domain for Bakken pipeline

William Petroski, bpetrosk@dmreg.com Published 6:26 p.m. CT May 20, 2016



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(Photo: Rodney White/The Register)

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Two lawsuits were filed Friday in northwest Iowa's Cherokee County by owners of farmland that a Texas company is trying to seize for construction of the Bakken crude oil pipeline.

The litigation could have far-reaching implications, because there 1,295 properties along the 346-mile pipeline route in Iowa, and voluntary easements still haven't been obtained on about 168 Iowa land parcels. Construction on the pipeline began this week in North Dakota, South Dakota and Illinois, but the Iowa Utilities Board still hasn't authorized the start of construction in Iowa because of a lack of federal permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Window & Door Replacement



Disasters

MISSOURI

Act of God? Or government? In fight over flood, farmers blame Army Corps of Engineers

BY ANDY MARSO

MARCH 24, 2019 05:30 AM, UPDATED MARCH 24, 2019 05:30 AM

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Environmental Infractions

GPC class action lawsuit

GPC to pay more than \$50 million in proposed settlement

MEREDITH ECKLUND meredith.ecklund@musicatlinejournal.com Oct 8, 2018

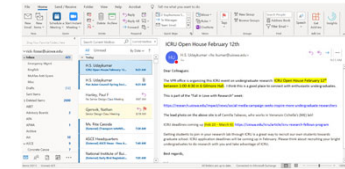
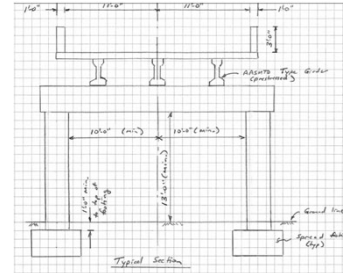
TRY 3 MONTHS FOR \$3



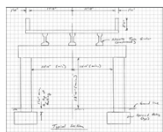
**You've been pulled into litigation.
What should you expect?**



Once notified, you can not dispose or delete any records, communications, or calculations related to the case.



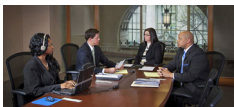
Discovery Process



Provide documents and communications.



Provide written answers to questions.



Provide testimony at a deposition.

Preparing for a Deposition



- Tell you attorney **everything**, even if it does not support your case.
- Always be honest. Do not embellish.
- Take the time necessary to prepare.

During the Deposition



This is not in a court room,
but it is real testimony.

During the Deposition



Pause and think before
you answer.

During the Deposition



The opposing attorney may try to get
under your skin. Don't let them.
Never respond with sarcasm.

During the Deposition



Already asked, already answered.

In the Courtroom



All the same tips as the deposition, plus:

In the Courtroom



You don't get to see the rest of the trial.

In the Courtroom



Pause and think before you answer.
If there are objections, listen to the
judge's response.

In the Courtroom



Their attorney will try to embarrass and
discredit you. Relax. You've got this.

In the Courtroom

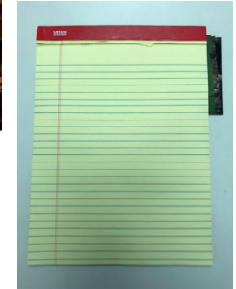


Respond only to questions, not statements!

In the Courtroom



Anything you bring on the stand with you is fair game.



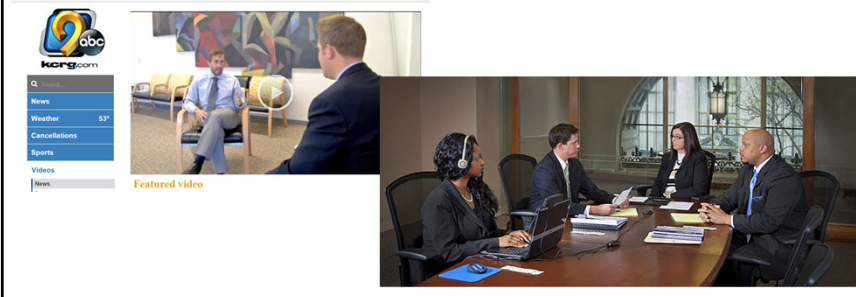
What about the Jury?



What have we learned?

What have we learned?

Honesty is always the best policy.



What have we learned?

Don't fear the press.



What have we learned?

Get to know the camera person.



What have we learned?

Your attorney is your ally.



