

Crisis Communications and the Media

Why Do Reporters Ask Those Annoying Questions?

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What constitutes a crisis or big news story from the media point of view?

- Deaths or multiple injuries
- Bizarre behavior
- Political Scandals
- Government mismanagement
- Blatant inefficiency that causes chaos
- Freak accidents
- Disease outbreaks
- Mother Nature erupts
- Man-made environmental disasters
- When it's a slow news day, any tiny thing becomes big

How do they determine to call you?

- It happened at your port
- It happened on the way to your port
- It happened on the way from your port
- It happened somewhere else but it's a slow news day so they are "localizing" an event that happened far away

How do they approach you?

- En masse: Major disaster
- One by one or in groups: Not immediate but necessary
- Individually: A reporter uncovers the big story
- En masse: They are following “the big story” of aforementioned individual

Why do they ask those annoying questions?

- Too general: They know very little
- Too detailed: They are experts with multiple interviews
- Hard to figure out: They are fishing

What do they need?

- Real-time updates for their audience
- Background information
- Situational perspective
- Someone who can speak for the whole organization
- Effective, efficient, organized staff response

When will they unleash the investigative hounds?

- If denials are made and documents don't match
- If access to information is denied
- If multiple sources give conflicting reports