



## **How to build working relationships with journalists**

A good story is what all journalists are after. The best thing you can do is understand that and work towards giving them material that will make good stories. If you want your side of a story told in the best possible light it helps to build some sort of relationship with the person who will be interviewing you. But how do you do that? Here's a basic six point plan I developed this week after a useful suggestion from a client.

- 1. Target the journalists you want to form relationships with by reading papers and magazines, watching the news and current affairs, listening to radio and monitoring social media. Choose those already producing stories on topics you are an expert in.**
- 2. Follow them on social media (hopefully they will follow you back).**
- 3. Contact them by sending an email or even calling. Ask if you can meet for coffee sometime.**
- 4. When you meet them or chat with them on the phone, let them know what you do and what stories and contacts you can offer them. Journalists love exclusives and inside information. Remember to honour an arrangement where an exclusive was agreed on.**
- 5. Maintain the relationship even if they don't write a story about you or your organisation initially and don't be put off if they don't run with one of your story ideas. Help them out with background information when possible. If they do contact you for comment make sure you are available and follow-up the interview or article to see if they were happy or if they need anything else.**
- 6. And finally, treat them with respect and always remember their their deadline.**

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