

TUESDAY **NOV 11TH**
8:30AM-4:00PM
1-DAY CONFERENCE



From Pitch to Partnership: Working with the Media

How to communicate in a way that invites collaboration and strengthens community health.



Hillary MINTZ

Public Information Officer &
County Executive Press Secretary



Lisa KWIAT

Public Information Officer &
Communication Coordinator, Public Health Division



3 PIO's for Waukesha County



Hillary MINTZ

Public Information Officer &
County Executive's Office



Nicole KELLY

Public Information Officer &
Communication Coordinator,
Health & Human Services



Lisa KWIAT

Public Information Officer &
Communication Coordinator,
Public Health Division



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Waukesha County Public Health

17 Departments / 1400 Employees



A little about Hillary

Former investigative reporter
WISN-12 (ABC) 2010-2023

Started at County Govt in 2023

Covered high profile trials

Emmy Award winning journalist

A little about Lisa

25 Years in Graphic Design,
Marketing & Project
Management (Banking & Construction)

Started at County
Government in 2022

Specialty: Branding & Design

FUN FACTS:

- We worked the RNC in 2024 (got our Secret Service Coins)
- Waukesha County PIO Team WON multiple Awards for our 2024 Fentanyl Video Series
- We attend PIO Government Training (NIMS, FEMA & NIOA)
- *Nicole is in SPAIN right now, or she'd be on stage with us.*

What does a PIO do?

- ➔ **Shares updates, safety alerts, and service information with the public.**
- ➔ **Communicates with news media.**
- ➔ **Explains county actions and decisions to residents (through all platforms).**
- ➔ **Provides accurate information during emergencies (both written and verbal).**
- ➔ **Acts as a spokesperson, sometimes goes on camera.**

What skill sets are beneficial to this type of position and work?

- ➔ **Strategic Communication Planning**
- ➔ **Situational Awareness & Judgment**
- ➔ **Policy & Structure Understanding**
- ➔ **Media Landscape & Awareness**





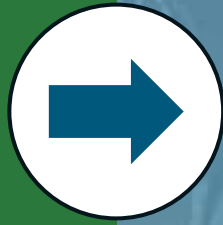
We actively seek relationships with the media.

Utilize all social media and communication channels.



We pitch ideas with interesting data and facts.

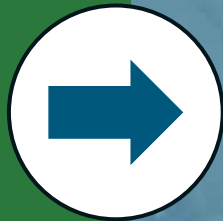
How to pitch an idea:



Timely news release with detailed information.



Be available with a person ready to talk about the news or story.



Provide a great soundbite the public would benefit to hear and use data.

Prepare Staff, Talking Points and Sound Bites for News Conferences



Plan & Capture County Events

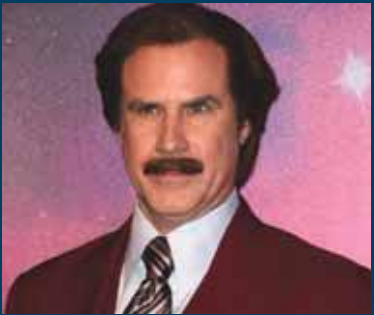


Strategize Consistent Social Media

Cruisin' Video Series



Think like a reporter.



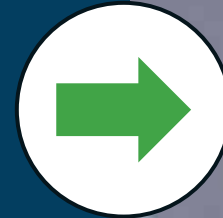
Don't just read a teleprompter!



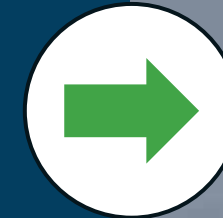
Aim to hold those in power accountable.



Be curious. Be a storyteller.



What happened, and should the public care?



What is the cost, what is the impact?

Essential Elements of a Pitch

Subject Line: Clear + compelling

Opening: Personal + fast hook

Why It Matters: Public benefit, urgency, advocacy, angle

Proof / Credibility: Data, real people, outcomes

Call to Action: “Would you like to cover this story?”

Offer: Interview opportunities, visuals, access

What is news?

HOW DO NEWSROOMS DECIDE?

- **Emotional**
- **Visual**
- **Buzzworthy**
- **Is it news you can use?**
- **What's the chatter online?**

What does the audience need to know?

Answer | Transition | Message

Preparing for Media Interviews



Reporter “Were you prepared to handle extensive power outages?”

Interviewee: **(Answer)** “Yes.”

(Transition) “We wanted to get ahead of the storm, so we made sure enough staff would be available to restore power as quickly as possible.”

(Message) An event like this is an example of why we remind customers to prepare for outages, check our outage maps, and communicate with frequent updates about restoration status via social media.

A faded background image of three people standing in a hallway. On the left is a woman with blonde hair wearing a dark blazer. In the center is a man with reddish hair wearing a black t-shirt with a graphic. On the right is a woman with long brown hair wearing a blue jacket and a patterned backpack.

Good Stuff TO KNOW

**The average length of
a story is between
20 and 1:20 seconds.**

BE YOURSELF

NO NEED TO BE PERFECT

NEVER USE: “NO COMMENT”

Always explain why you cannot talk about something.

NEVER SAY: “OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS...”

It has been officially deemed UNAUTHENTIC.
You need to speak from the heart.

OFF THE RECORD?

No such thing! All words said can be quoted.

WISCONSIN IS A 1 PARTY CONSENT STATE.

Most reporters keep their word, but some won't.

**THE INTERVIEW STARTS WHEN A REPORTER
PICKS UP THEIR PHONE.**

No heads up.

Examples of Effective PIO Work:

County Exec Cancer Journey



Started July 2024

Uncharted Territory

Unscripted / Authentic

Gov Cast



Helps listeners
understand
government issues

Branded & Relevant

Fentanyl Video Series



Provided perspectives on
the crisis from the
County, Parents, First
Responders and those
with Lived Experience.

2024 Warming Shelter



Dozens of people came
to the warming shelter at
the Waukesha Expo mid-
January 2024, during a
mid winter storm/power
outage

August 2025 Flooding



98 Million in Damages
to residents

Set up EOC

Worked with FEMA

Maybe someday we could COLLABORATE on a project?

We've recently joined TikTok and people seem to like us:



 **t**
whoever got this king to say slay, thank u
9-18 Reply  184

 **Em**
Can I nominate a tik tok for an Emmy
9-17 Reply  95

 **MaryKate** 🦋 ✨ ❤️
As a Waukesha county resident, thank you!!
9-18 Reply  9

 **James Howlett**
Slay King 👑 🍌

 **Bizmyth**
This is so Waukesha 🌈 i miss home
9-21 Reply  2

 **Monica Marsh**
Wow, sending love from Langlade on this absolute masterpiece.
9-18 Reply  11

 **Rebecca Blaze** 📺 us
Where's the social media manager? They deserve their flowers
9-18 Reply  16

 **Tess Stumvoll**
Incredible. No notes
9-18 Reply 12



In Waukesha County, we're all
working toward the same goal:

**a stronger, healthier
community.**

**But we often speak
about that work...
*separately.***

WAUKESHA COUNTY
COMMUNITY HEALTH
PARTNER SUMMIT
Supporting and Connecting Community Health Improvement Plans

The Pitch

A PARTNERSHIP BRIDGE

Every media pitch is also a community pitch.

Because every story builds trust, and trust attracts partners.



Our Pitch: A PARTNERSHIP BRIDGE:

Awareness

**We know of
each other**

Connection

**We talk
occasionally**

Coordination

**We share
information**

Collaboration

**We plan
together**

Integration

**We solve
together and
measure
shared impact**

We're aiming for this!



2025

**WAUKESHA COUNTY
COMMUNITY HEALTH**

PARTNER SUMMIT

Building Bridges, Creating Impact



Great Communication = Great Partnerships

- ➔ **Clarity**
- ➔ **Transparency**
- ➔ **Shared Values**
- ➔ **Shared Wins**
- ➔ **Consistency**



**MORE
PARTNERS
THAN A
REALITY
DATING
SHOW.**



**If we want collective impact,
we must communicate like we
are already a collective.**



**Thank you for
listening.**

**Any
questions?**