

Communications Toolkit

Equal Justice Works
Leadership & Development Training
October 21-24, 2014
Washington, D.C.





Communications Toolkit

The following packet includes tip sheets and templates for Equal Justice Works Fellows to reference when speaking to the media, contacting the media and engaging on social media.

Included are:

- Top 10 Tips for Speaking to the Media
- Top 10 Tips for Using Social Media Professionally
- Top 10 Tips for Presentations
- Template Press Release
- Template Media Advisory

Please note that the templates are given as an outline for you to update and add information about your project and the community you are serving.

The press release provided is designed for you to share with local media to promote the start of your project. Press releases should be shared with a targeted list of relevant media (reporters who cover stories on your issue area, legal reporters, courts reporters, local community reporters, etc.) when you have a newsworthy story or announcement to share with the press.

The media advisory template is structured to promote an informational session to recruit clients and share your project with the community. Media advisories typically promote specific events that media may be interested in covering or attending and that can be promoted publicly through calendar posts, community news boards and other local event listings.

These materials are a starting point for you to engage with media and the local community. Be sure to revise the materials to credit sponsors, host organizations and other relevant partners.

For additional questions or concerns, please contact Elle Hogan at EHogan@equaljusticeworks.org.

Tips for Successful Media Interviews

1. **This is YOUR interview, NOT the reporter's**

If you get a call from the media, always ask about the topic, angle, deadline and who else is being interviewed for the piece.

2. **Develop your message diamond**



1. Respond to the Question, Hit Your Message
2. Expand On Your Message – Provide An Example
3. Hit Your Message

3. **Practice the interview**

Find someone to throw tough questions at you. Prepare your response and how best to pivot to your message.

4. **Avoid legal talk and industry jargon**

Run your answers by someone outside the legal field, and try to speak in terms everyone will understand.

5. **Stories are better than statistics**

A personalized anecdote is more effective and memorable than numbers and percentages.

6. **Less is more**

Most taped sound bites are only 10-15 seconds long, and printed quotes are typically one sentence. Do not give the reporter too much information or latitude to define *your* message.

7. **Play it cool**

If asked a tough question, stay calm, be confident and bridge to your message. Remember, it's the reporter's job to ask the tough questions, so you shouldn't take it personally.

8. **Never answer hypothetical questions**

The reporter could use your response to make you look like you are predicting something that may not occur. React to an open-ended question by pivoting to your message.

9. **Check interview background and know how to introduce yourself**

Serve as a resource to media and introduce yourself as an Equal Justice Works Fellow.

10. **Be Yourself**

Smile, be friendly and informative. Build relationships with the media that can promote your program.



Social Media Tips

1. **Ensure posts and profile content is appropriate**

Don't comment or post anything that you would not feel comfortable sharing with your boss, supervisor or client.

2. **Be professional at all times on social media**

Don't post pictures or share links that are unprofessional or that could be offensive to others. Un-tag yourself or ask friends to remove photos that are not appropriate.

3. **Re-read before posting**

Double check your posts to ensure they are free of grammatical errors and typos and clearly communicate what you are trying to say.

4. **Create a unified brand on all platforms**

Define your area of expertise and ensure that you brand yourself and your profiles accordingly with concise profile descriptions of who you are, what you do and what your expertise is.

5. **Be yourself**

Social media isn't your firm's website. You can show your personality online, just ensure that your distinct voice is professional and not offensive to anyone.

6. **Keep profiles up-to-date**

Keep your LinkedIn profile up-to-date with current job positions and professional associations. Join groups that relate to your project or profession.

7. **Get Connected**

Utilize the professional side of Facebook and Twitter by following and retweeting influencers in your community, issue area, legal community and local media as well as those who you meet at networking events and conferences.

8. **Be a source**

Use social media channels to provide information to your followers and friends. Share relevant information about your project issue area, as well as interesting legal news to establish yourself as a resource to your peers and the media.

9. **Avoid Discussing Cases**

Do not reference or provide details on any cases that you are working on. It is important to avoid mentioning recent wins or favorable judgments to maintain ethical standards.

10. **Be Aware of the Legal Ethics Rules on Social Media**

The American Bar Association outlines some of the ethical lapses that can occur while on social media, including legal advertising, making false or misleading statements and solicitation. Social media is a valuable tool, but must be used wisely and ethically.

[The American Bar Association provides tips](#) on how to navigate social media and maintain ethical standards.



Presentation Tips

1. Engage, Entertain and Educate

Every presentation is an opportunity to teach an audience, but they'll only learn if they are engaged in the presentation. Keep the 3 E's in mind when designing and delivering a presentation.

2. Include Compelling Stories

Compelling stories help engage, educate and entertain all types of learners.

3. Using Stats, Charts and Data

Use statistics and figures to BACK UP your thesis instead of figures BEING the thesis.

4. What's Your Headline?

Don't bury the lead. Say up front what your presentation will set out to prove and prove your thesis in the body of the presentation.

5. Use the Presentation Diamond

1. Tell them the **ONE** thing you want them to take away
2. Provide supporting points and examples
3. Remind them about the **ONE** thing you want them to take away



6. The Art of Powerpoint

Powerpoint is not a script. Use it as a guide, but don't include too much text or charts and graphs.

7. Connect with the Audience

Be aware of non verbal communications. Make eye contact with your audience. Think about how you can interact with your audience.

8. Step away from the Podium

The podium can be a barrier between you and your audience. Step away from it to better connect.

9. Practice, Practice, Practice

Learn how you best practice for a presentation. Do you need your script written out, in an outline or in bullets?

10. Dealing with Nerves

Nerves are natural. Do some quick exercises before you begin a presentation to get rid of some of the adrenalin. Deliberate breathing can help you slow down if you find that you are racing through a presentation.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

[Name]
Equal Justice Works Fellow [or other title]
[Phone]
[Email]

Legal Fellowship Awarded to [Local] Attorney at [Host Organization]

Equal Justice Works Fellowship Provides Funding for Attorney to Provide Pro Bono Legal Services to Local Community

LOCATION – Month XX, 2014 — Equal Justice Works, the national leader in creating public interest opportunities for lawyers, today announced that [Fellow Name] will serve as an [Equal Justice Works Fellow/correct title] at [host organization] in [City, State]. [Last name] will provide free legal services to [community group] through the [Project Name].

[Project Name], will allow [last name] to help provide pro bono legal counsel to people facing [project issue areas & and details on the project]. This project is being funded by the [sponsor name].

“Quote from fellow about the goals of the project and why you are excited to serve this specific community,” said [fellow name].

[Last name] is a graduate of [law school]. He/she previously served as [past relevant experience], and brings a knowledge of [issue area specifics].

“Quote from EJW representative / sponsor contact / host organization,” said [representative name].

For additional information about the program, please contact/visit [Contact information].

###

About Equal Justice Works

Equal Justice Works is the national leader in creating public interest opportunities for law students and lawyers. Collaborating with the nation’s leading law schools, law firms, corporate legal departments and nonprofit organizations, Equal Justice Works offers a continuum of opportunities that provide the training and skills that enable attorneys to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes. Equal Justice Works is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. To learn more about Equal Justice Works, please visit www.equaljusticeworks.org.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

[Name]
Equal Justice Works Fellow [or other title]
[Phone]
[Email]

*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

Free Legal Services Available for [Target Community]

*Equal Justice Works Fellow Offers Pro Bono Legal Work for those with
[Additional client-specific details]*

LOCATION – Month XX, 2014 — Free legal services are available through [Project Name], an initiative by Equal Justice Works Fellow [Fellow Name]. [Project name] provides legal advice and representation to [client description] seeking counsel on [specifics on what legal services are available]. [Project Name] is in partnership with local nonprofit [host organization] and is funded by [sponsor name].

For those interested in learning more, an informational session will be held for potential clients at [Location]. For additional information about the program, please contact/visit [Contact information].

WHAT: [Brief description of the event]

WHERE: [Location Name]
[Address]
[Additional instructions]

WHEN: [Date]
[Time]

Note to media: Media interested in learning more about the [Project Name] or interviewing [Fellow's Name], please contact [Name] at [phone] or [Email].

###

About Equal Justice Works

Equal Justice Works is the national leader in creating public interest opportunities for law students and lawyers. Collaborating with the nation's leading law schools, law firms, corporate legal departments and nonprofit organizations, Equal Justice Works offers a continuum of opportunities that provide the training and skills that enable attorneys to provide effective representation to underserved communities and causes. Equal Justice Works is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. To learn more about Equal Justice Works, please visit www.equaljusticeworks.org.