

## **Research Communications' Principles for Promoting Research:**

1) The orientation of all stories produced by Research Communications is based on what readers/viewers/listeners are interested in . . . what they want to hear – not on what the institution wants to tell them. Because this approach mirrors that of the working news media, reporters/producers/editors are more receptive to our content and make use of it. As a result, we look to report only on stories where the goals of the institution and the goals of the news media intersect.

2) There is no political element involved in the decision-making as to what stories are selected for coverage, or in how those stories are built. Normal journalistic practices and accepted news judgment are the guidelines we use that govern our approach on everything.

3) The potential for commercial applications from research results usually mandates a higher level of scrutiny on our part as to the editorial content. That is, our goal is to prevent any possible perception that the communication of such results is part of a strategy to promote a licensure or financial involvement that would benefit the university. Avoiding this “fiscal motivation” precludes much of the suspicion that journalists may bring to such stories and insures a higher level of receptivity.

4) Research Communications reserves the right to determine the editorial approach to the story, within the constraints of accepted journalistic accuracy. This occasionally means that our vision differs from that of the principal investigator in how he/she might explain the research. Although we work hard to compromise on specific language, we reserve the right to refuse a story which we feel is journalistically ineffective.

5) All stories produced by Research Communications are reviewed only by the principal investigator for technical accuracy. That “technical accuracy” measure is one that a reasonable person would understand, not one that necessarily reflects the literal technical precision that most researchers would define.

6) All stories produced by Research Communications are reviewed only by the principal investigator and not by any additional administrators, i.e., department chairs, deans, center directors, etc. “Writing by committee” almost always results in copy that dilutes the central message about the research and makes our stories less effective in garnering news coverage. In addition, the extra time for additional review often results in delayed stories that are perceived as no longer timely and newsworthy by the media. Limiting review to principal investigators reinforces the perception among journalists that we are conveying actual news – as they define it – rather than just promotional information for the institution.

7) Sponsors are not allowed any access to, or a right of review of, research stories prior to their release to the news media. This prevents the perception that the stories are part of a commercial marketing strategy.

8) While we strive to garner coverage from the local and statewide news media, the orientation of our stories always addresses a national or international cohort of journalists, insuring that what we produce has the greatest potential for coverage.

9) While we recognize that much research is the result of partnership between investigators at different institutions, we elect not to participate in so-called “joint news releases” where multiple institutions issue one combined and coordinated news release. We will, however, coordinate the timing of the release of Ohio State stories with those of other appropriate institutions involved in the work.

10) We adhere strictly to the embargo policies of the journals in which our investigators publish, as well as appropriate embargo considerations for material presented at major national or international meetings.

11) Principal investigators/authors are identified in stories first by their primary academic department appointment. Subsequent identification in succeeding paragraphs then recognizes joint or dual appointments to multiple departments, centers or institutional units. [For example: Lonnie Thompson is identified in first reference as a “professor of earth sciences.” Second reference is as “a research scientist with the Byrd Polar Research Center.” Endowed chair or professorship titles are not used since they are ignored by reporters covering such stories.] Institutional attribution is always to “Ohio State University” rather than to a subset, i.e. college, center, department, etc, of the university.

Our strict adherence to these principles has been the fundamental foundation for our success in gaining national and international news coverage for Ohio State University research.