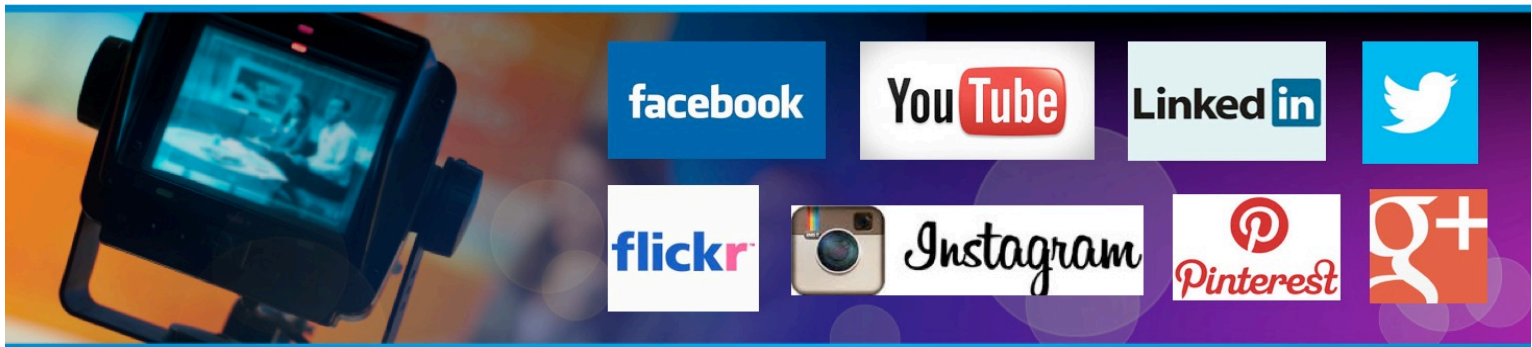


Broadcast, Social Media and Press Training



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GROUPKBROADCASTING
Frontline Media Training for Professionals

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Introduction

Group K Broadcasting Ltd has been in business since 1974 as a supplier of news and broadcast services to the radio and television industry. We have provided what we - and our clients - believe is the best, and most authentic, media training to governmental, public and commercial organisations since 1982.

A major strength of our business is our policy of only using people with thorough experience and an excellent track record in their field. For example, our broadcast trainers are all well-known radio and television presenters who also possess the ability to impart their knowledge to others.

Our client base is diverse, and includes:

- The Sentencing Council (Ministry of Justice)
- The Home Office
- The Cabinet Office
- The Japanese Embassy in London
- The Government of Gibraltar
- The Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)
- Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG)
- UK Trade & Investment
- UK Border Agency
- Folke Bernadotte Academy, Sweden
- Microsoft
- Chanel
- Kodak
- Orange
- The Richemont Group (owner of brands including Cartier, Mont Blanc, Alfred Dunhill, and Van Cleef & Arpels)
- Tate & Lyle
- Kraft Foods
- Pfizer
- Goldman Sachs

People now realise how vital it is to understand and interact effectively with the media. Requirements range from crisis management to building up a team of professional spokespeople capable of responding to a media request at short notice. And staying on top of a deluge of social media posts, blogs and Tweets.

Recent courses include:

- Broadcast training for an EU Senior Mission Leaders Course in Belgium
- Training for the Intellectual Property Office
- Training for Delegations from the governments of Ethiopia and Ghana
- A course for senior, high-profile spokespeople who are regular guests on the BBC's Question Time, The Big Questions and other radio and television programmes
- Broadcast and social media courses in India, Portugal, Sri Lanka, Tunisia and Russia.
- Bespoke courses for the Japanese Embassy in London

Objectives

The purpose of our courses is to enable key spokespeople to:

- Understand the importance of effective communication in delivering strategic priorities and objectives
- Understand the role of senior staff in communication work
- Develop high-level media skills to handle potentially challenging television, radio, and press interviews, and direct activity on all social media platforms.

The Broadcast Media



Broadcasting is a highly specialised area, and few people are really comfortable with a tough radio or television interview, no matter how senior and how skilled they are in their specialist fields. That isn't surprising: exposure to the sharp end of the media is usually infrequent and the studio environment, or a camera crew in your office, can seem strange and intimidating.

Any interviewee, however experienced, is dealing with a professional interviewer who is operating very much on his or her home ground. They are masters of all the techniques needed to coerce their guest into giving them a good story. And as we all know, a 'good' story in their terms can mean a disastrous one from the interviewee's point of view.

Just cast your mind back to a couple of classics: British Rail wasn't a complete laughing stock until a spokesman came out with that immortal line, *"It was the wrong sort of snow"*; and Ratners the jewellers didn't have to change their name until Gerald Ratner described his own products in less than glowing terms!

So training can be a distinct advantage. Recently, one client approached us a few days before the CEO was to appear as a guest on BBC Radio 4's 'Unreliable Evidence' programme, presented by that notoriously sharp inquisitor Clive Anderson. After the programme, the client's communications manager emailed to say:

"Just wanted to let you know the Clive Anderson piece went well and we used many of your tips and felt they really helped."

Another client in a similar situation wrote to us after a course:

"Recently, we searched for a good media trainer/coach to use for a specific project which we had a selection of trainers to choose from. From beginning to end, Allan has been a pleasure to work with. His training was first rate and of an impeccable standard. He is an expert in his field and knows how to put clients at ease and give them confidence in what he is teaching them to do. He tailored the course to our needs and really got to grips with our subject matter via his own research, making the course highly relevant and practical. It was also really enjoyable. I highly recommend others to consider Allan for any media training work they need. Professional, comprehensive, enjoyable and helpful."

Brief biographies of our trainers appear below.

The purpose of our courses is to enable key personnel to give effective and professional performances in media interviews. *What* they say is vital. Of equal importance is *how* they say it. And that applies to handling social media as well, where your every post or Tweet will be jumped on by potentially millions of people. You don't want a slip of the tongue, or an ill-judged social media comment, to go viral.

The best way of ensuring that a drama doesn't turn into a crisis is to learn and master the essential techniques.

With the proliferation of television news channels worldwide, in addition to the many radio stations, the media is hungry for articulate guests.

Our broadcast course puts the delegates in a radio and television studio, or face to face with a crew on their premises, so they can discover some of the tricks of the trade. Our social media simulation exactly replicates what can happen in reality. The aim is to help you take and retain control, and ensure that the viewers, listeners and followers get the precise messages you want to put over - rather than what the interviewer manipulates you into saying.

As the demands of the media intensify, so do the chances of being asked to act as a spokesperson - but this can work both ways. On the one hand, a high-profile interview is an opportunity to score a coup, but on the other you run the risk of creating a fiasco that damages the reputation of your organisation or your company's bottom line. Just ask Gerald Ratner.

Radio & TV Interviews

Much of the difficulty for anyone faced with a radio or television interview is the factor of uncertainty. What will the studio be like? How will I be treated by the producer and interviewer? How will I look and perform under bright lights? Will I have to wear make-up? Will I noticeably perspire under pressure? How should I deal with any questions I'd rather they hadn't asked? These are just a few of the issues confronting someone who has never been in a broadcast environment before.

Those who do have experience can still benefit enormously from practice, constructive criticism, hints and tips. Advice and help on performance, including use of voice and body language, are very much part of the course. It's surprising how many areas for improvement can be identified by an impartial observer.

We aim to answer questions and explain, not by lecturing, but by actually going through the process of radio and television interviews. Here's a typical format of a half-day training session:

- Radio phone-in interview
- Doorstep interview*
- TV studio one-to-one interview
- Down-the-line (DTL) interview**

**Door-stepping* takes place in a busy lobby. A cameraman and interviewer will be waiting to grab a few words with a subject as he or she leaves the building - literally on the doorstep. If there are other delegates, they can act as a 'media scrum' and direct questions at the interviewee.

***Down-the-line* is a frequently used technique utilising chromakey (blue or green screen) where the interviewee is in one location facing a camera, and the interviewer is elsewhere, perhaps thousands of miles away. Chromakey is used to insert a background artificially (such as the Empire State Building or the Houses of Parliament) to underline the fact that the interviewee is in New York or London. Looking relaxed while addressing a camera lens as if it were a fellow human being is a difficult skill that few can master without practice.

All the interviews are recorded, played back and appraised. At this stage we evaluate the content of the interviews – what the guest has actually said – and the style in which the information has been delivered. Excellent content is hugely devalued if the delivery is poor; weak content will not be saved by even the best delivery (although it might be a little more palatable!)

In all cases precise subjects and scenarios for each interview are agreed in advance, and we treat any sensitive corporate information in the strictest confidence.

Location

The location for interview training should precisely replicate. A genuine broadcast studio, with a professional crew, is the ideal location. We use Westminster Live - westminster-live.com - and IQ Studios - www.iqstudios.co.uk. Both are HD broadcast facilities servicing UK and international clients including the BBC, ITV, Fox, NBC etc. etc.. The equipment is of the highest quality, and the crew fully professional. As with our trainers, the studio personnel are used to dealing with interviewees from all walks of life, including world leaders. This means participants on our courses are subjected to the precise conditions they will meet in the real world, without any compromise.

In fact, one participant on a recent course shuddered and said “*Oh! I can feel the atmosphere!*” as he entered the broadcast studio. He was a senior manager responsible for 250 people, and by no means nervous. In his feedback to management he wrote:

“Just to let you know I thought the course was excellent. Allan King is (naturally) highly professional, and struck exactly the right note between encouraging us to deliver messages in a clear and cogent manner, and reducing us to quivering wrecks with the lash of his acid wit. Very enjoyable, very enlightening and very valuable. Thank you.”

An effective alternative to visiting a studio is a session on the client’s premises. In this case we use professional broadcast equipment and a director/cameraman who shoots news and current affairs on a daily basis. The quality of the training is not diminished, but exposure to the alien studio environment is obviously absent. This is a less expensive option and is useful if the participants are more likely to be interviewed in their office or on location, where studio familiarisation is not required.

The Results

The aim is to break through the natural fear of the unknown, with essential practical advice on clothes, posture and make-up (yes, men have to wear it too, although it isn’t compulsory on the course!)

It is commonplace to see, hear and evaluate distinct improvements in performance at the end of all the sessions. The tips on how to improve further will help to achieve a better understanding of how journalists go about their business, and how to avoid the pitfalls they might lay in your path.

The ultimate goal is to help delegates use the media to their advantage: regarding it as an opportunity rather than something akin to a visit to the dentist. A successful interview on a respected broadcasting channel is immensely valuable. It’s been calculated that ten lines of print or a two-minute TV report has the same impact as ten full-page advertisements in a national newspaper. There is no better means of putting information and points across, in one’s own words, for everyone to see and hear – and think of all that free advertising!

Social Media



Five years ago, social media was a plaything for teenagers: today it has become one of the most effective ways of communicating with a mass audience.

Our Social Media training is flexible and always tailored to the client's exact requirements. A typical session centres around a full-scale simulation exercise, lasting three hours, following an introductory presentation on the rapid advance and importance of social media, and a practical demonstration of how the simulation tool works.

The exercise gives the group a chance to rehearse the way they would handle a developing crisis in a secure, private environment, testing their social media procedures and skills.

The simulation platform creates wholly realistic interactions via Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, blogs, forums and online news sites. Course participants can post press statements, social media posts and comments, and a team of 'community managers' based in London mimics the public response. These role-players can produce 200-300 Tweets in a three-hour exercise: sufficient to challenge the social media expertise of any group.

Throughout the exercise we emphasise the importance of being pro-active with communications and published material, deploying news, blogs Tweets and images to seize the initiative ahead of competing news and information outlets.

The way the crisis unfolds is unpredictable. It depends, in part, on how the group responds to the gathering storm. They have to react with speed and coolness to prevent rumour and speculation obscuring the known facts. Under pressure, they must find a way of making your strategic messages heard above the hubbub.

Within half an hour of the conclusion of the exercise, we provide 'headline' reports, assessing how the group's output affected the outcome of the crisis.

Dealing With the Press



Although it can't compete with TV, radio and online for immediacy and impact, the UK press still wields enormous power and influence, bolstered by a new generation of fast-moving online news sites that are now available on any number of platforms, from your smartphone to your tablet. The days when newspapers 'went to bed' at 9pm are over: all the national and regional papers have websites that are updated every 2-3 minutes, around the clock – and they're much more widely read than newsprint. The Guardian, for example, sells about 300,000 copies per day. The paper's website – guardian.co.uk – has nearly three *million* visitors every day.

In the UK, newspapers have more scope than broadcasters to be rude, offensive, disrespectful and controversial. They have columnists who are troublemakers, iconoclasts and gossip-mongers. They don't care who they upset. Unlike broadcasters, they're able to take careless quotes 'out of context' and build their headlines and stories around them. This is why there can be more pot-holes to negotiate during a press interview than on TV or radio, because newspaper reporters have total control over how they 'angle' the story, which quotes they use and which they ignore. The broadcasting studio might be a daunting place, but at least you're never in danger of having words put into your mouth.

With so many strings to the media's bow, people in the public eye need to be pitch-perfect at all of them.



With a series of practical interviews simulating realistic scenarios tailored to suit each client's speciality, the course demonstrates how to leave as little as possible to chance when you face the press: how to deal with hostile reporters and turn difficult questions to your advantage; how to organise your messages into memorable quotes and give yourself a fighting chance of seeing them in print precisely as you uttered them; and how to negotiate the many traps press reporters employ, exploding such media myths as 'speaking off the record' (there's no such thing!)

The course also covers press conferences - how to arrange them effectively - and the crucial distinction between the *general* press (anything from The Times to the local weekly) and the *trade* press, specialising in the client's particular field. Trade publications have considerably smaller circulations than national papers, but they're avidly read by your peers and competitors, and their reporters invariably have a keener understanding of your 'story'.

As in the broadcasting course, each interview is analysed and assessed afterwards, with observations welcomed from each member of the group.

At the end of the session, participants are provided with detailed tip-sheets, reminding them of the dos and don'ts of engaging with the press: a useful aid to refresh the memory immediately ahead of an important interview on which your organisation's fortunes might depend.

Trainers

CEO and Course Director **Allan King** has worked in broadcasting for more years than he cares to remember, and was a main anchor with Sky News, Europe's first 24-hour TV news channel, from 1993 to 2008. Sky News has an audience of up to 100 million people in over 90 countries, and in 2008 a programme Allan presented on the terrorist attack on Glasgow airport won a BAFTA, the television equivalent of an Oscar.

Allan's previous experience includes: LBC Radio in London where he presented a wide range of programmes as well as training the station's newsreaders and presenters; Independent Radio News; Independent Television News; Channel 4; and radio and television work in Germany and Vienna. His interviewing background ranges from heads of state to pop stars.

Allan obtained the first television interview with Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams after the London Docklands bombing broke the IRA ceasefire in 1996. He was also on air at the time of the Queen Mother's death in 2002 and received praise in several newspapers for his sensitive handling of this sad event.



In 2008 the Gibraltar Government appointed Group K Broadcasting to carry out an in-depth review of the publicly-funded Gibraltar Broadcasting Corporation (GBC). The review was aimed at completely revamping the organisation to bring it into line with modern broadcasting practices.

Subsequently Allan was asked to implement the review's findings, and accepted a three-year engagement as Chief Executive of GBC, which ended in 2013.

Frank Partridge has combined broadcasting with written journalism in his two-pronged media career. Initially specialising in broadcasting, he was a national radio presenter with BBC Radio 1 (Newsbeat), Radio 4 (PM) and World Service (Outlook) before becoming a special correspondent, reporting from more than 40 countries and anchoring BBC radio's coverage of Nelson Mandela's release from prison in South Africa that signalled the end of apartheid. At PM, he won a Sony Radio Award for his coverage of Margaret Thatcher's resignation.



In 1993 Frank became one of the principal anchors on Sky News before returning to the radio studio in 2002 as the drive-time presenter at the re-launched LBC in London. At Sky, Frank anchored two programmes (the Oklahoma bombing and the UN invasion of Kosovo) that won gold awards from the Radio & Television Society.

More recently, Frank has appeared frequently in the UK press, writing for the Independent, the Guardian and the Sunday Times as well as a host of magazines, and he is a visiting lecturer on journalism at the University of London.

Gerry McCrudden is a media training consultant specialising in advising government officials and others in the best ways of dealing with the media.

Prior to leaving HM Diplomatic Service in early 2006, Gerry was Head of the Middle East and South Asian Media Team in the FCO Press Office as well as being the FCO Middle East Public Diplomacy Co-ordinator. He previously led the Foreign Office's two largest press and public affairs operations overseas – in the USA and India.

He has conducted specialist training modules in Istanbul, Barbados, Moscow, Lusaka, Hong Kong, Amman, Belgrade, Dublin, Paris, Dubai, Baghdad, Croatia, Kiev and Brussels. Gerry has also trained Saudi, Croatian and Iraqi officials. He has given presentations on media work to foreign diplomats attending the Foreign Service Centre at Oxford University and to young British Diplomats at the National School of Government.



Gerry created for the FCO, along with specialist Arab media professionals, media training courses in Arabic suitable for those who need to communicate their messages to the key and important Arabic speaking world.

As well as serving as Press Secretary in New Delhi he was also Director of British Information Services and Deputy Consul General New York. In 2005 he returned to the United States as Interim Head of the Public Affairs team in the British Embassy in Washington DC.

In addition Gerry has also worked in the following British Diplomatic missions abroad: Saigon, Mexico City, Bahrain, Tristan da Cunha, Brussels, Pretoria, Barbados and Nairobi. In the latter post he dealt with UK's humanitarian efforts in Kenya, Somalia and the southern Sudan and was concurrently Deputy Permanent UK Representative to the United Nations Environment Program.

Gerry also worked with the Washington DC consultancy DDP Global in providing training to Washington based Embassies and others, helping them understand how the US Administration and Congress works – especially in the foreign policy field.

Vivien Creegor started her career at the BBC more years ago than she wants to admit!



She was invited onto the broadcast training scheme there, after which she was taken on by Radio 4 as a newsreader/announcer. There then followed a five year stint as the Regional Presenter of 'Points West' for BBC TV in Bristol. The BBC also invited Vivien up to TV Centre in London firstly to present the lunchtime news (called 'News after Noon' in those days!) and then to co-host a travel and transport programme, 'Transit', with the DJ Mike Smith which went out "live" on BBC 2 on Friday nights. She was then head hunted by the fledgling Sky News, and spent 15 years mainly as the Presenter of the evening news but also doing stints on 'Breakfast' and 'Live at Five'. During this time Vivien's corporate career began in a fairly spectacular way as the

United Nations in Geneva asked her to host various conferences for them in Beijing, Cairo, Sharm El Sheikh, Vienna and Geneva itself. This led to much more conference work for companies as diverse as ICI, Hewlett Packard, AstraZeneca, UBS, Coutts Bank and many more.

On leaving Sky, Vivien trained as an actress, living in California during the Summer of 2008 as she attended the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Los Angeles, finding herself in a class full of 20 year olds! Back in the UK, Vivien works in fringe theatre, does voiceover work for 2 agencies and writes about 3 travel articles a year for 'The Mail on Sunday' – most recently going to India, Brazil and Alaska.

Samantha Simmonds has been a broadcast journalist for over 15 years. She is a main presenter for Sky News – where she has been working for 7 years. She regularly anchors the evening paper reviews, and the main morning and afternoon programmes. Samantha has broken some of the biggest stories of the past few years including the Aurora cinema shootings in Colorado, news of Michael Jackson's death, the death of Amy Winehouse and the sentencing and subsequent hanging of Saddam Hussein.



Among Samantha's most recent highlights were presenting at the Olympic Park on the night of the Olympic opening ceremony and on location outside Buckingham Palace during the Royal wedding – covering 'the kiss' and interviewing the crowds. She regularly interviews senior politicians, celebrities and ordinary people touched by extraordinary events.

Samantha started reporting for BBC local radio in Yorkshire in 1995 before joining Channel 5 as a producer in 1996. She started reporting for BBC News in 2000 – working for BBC Breakfast and BBC London news. With the BBC, Samantha covered many big stories such as the Soham murders, the Potters Bar train crash, the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks from New York, and she reported on the 7/7 bombings in London.

Summary

Our broadcast, social media and press courses can run individually as distinct units or we can tailor a bespoke course comprising any combination.

A good sense of humour and liberal use of anecdotes (including Allan's own potential disasters on air!) help to generate an excellent team spirit with our course participants. The studio environment is demanding and tiring, as is the presence of a camera crew and a seemingly never-ending torrent of Tweets and posts. It is vital to engage people who are often nervous and feel under exceptional stress. The most rewarding comment we hear is "I was so scared about coming on this course that I almost chickened out, but I'm so glad I came!"

As evaluations and subsequent feedback have demonstrated, we consistently achieve an exceptional level of client satisfaction. We take pride in observing measurable improvements in participants' interview skills as they blossom from shrinking violets at the start of the session to confident media performers at the end of it. And from thinking a 'Tweet' is the sound of a bird to realising the power, potential pitfalls, but exceptional usefulness of social media when handled the right way.

Our courses are widely considered to be fun, enjoyable and relevant. And they can change the public perception of your business. Why not contact us for a quote?