

Successful communication is two ways. As well as informing and entertaining, listening is really important. Our role as scientists is to work with journalists to turn science into something thought-provoking and understandable.

How the media works News is driven by editors interests so find ones who share your agenda. Two thirds of press releases don't get taken up. Sell your story. Headlines are key, as is clear and concise content. Jargon is a brick wall. Journalists spend two thirds of their time researching, at committees, conferences, reading other newspapers and research papers to find stories. Editors write the articles and have final say on content so sell your story to an editor if you can.

What do the audience know? What do they need and want to know? What do you want them to take away?



Ask yourself...

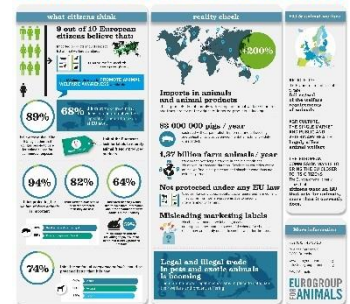


What makes a good story? Immediate, exciting, personal, dramatic and new. The media want to know who's impacted and what, where, when and why is it important? What are the consequences if it's not acted on? Highlight facts and where your research moves the story on. Journalism is competitive. They all want exclusives and early access to results. Make friends with journalists, invite them to a meeting on how to sell your research *then* write content so you don't waste time. They will help craft the right story. But understand it's a game of hit and miss. Be resilient and keep trying.

Consider digital media Commentary pieces, infographics, lists of outcomes, videos, animations or webinars are a great way to communicate your research. Multiple outputs can come from one piece of research which broadens reach. Two thirds of phone/computer use are videos. *Use visuals:* our brain processes these 60,000 times faster than text. We remember 65% of what we read 3 days earlier when it has an image, compared to 10% when text only.

Communication is an art Play with and engage emotions. Leave out detail and stats. Make the story exciting or shocking. Ensure you are not misunderstood. Deal with controversy clearly. In TV and Radio interviews make the most of the opportunity by focusses on take home messages. Anecdotes are also powerful. If they ask you the wrong question, don't bluff or be drawn in. Protect your reputation and your organisation. Say I don't know but I'm here to take about... Be confident, clear, concise, and be yourself. You are the expert. Plan, prepare and practice in front of a mirror.

Eurobarometer on Animal Welfare 2016



“Animals do have feelings - and here's the science to prove it”

Writing about science Pay attention to the style of your target communication and make sure you meet the brief. Communicate conclusions first to grab the attention of the reader and be as economic as possible with your words.

Putting research into practice Develop products and resources from research findings, and use demonstration and focus farms to provide proof of concept. Agree key communication messages and create a dissemination plan to effectively transfer these to stakeholders, including how to measure the uptake and impact. Understand behaviour change, facilitation, and resource support that can maximise impact. Make sure your plan matches what you are trying to achieve i.e. 1) Increase awareness 2) Change attitude 3) change behaviour. Finally, be realistic and patient. Getting a message across can take a decade. Changing behaviour can take another.

The interview Like flying hours the more you practice the better you become. Be confident, passionate and genuine. This makes great TV/Radio. Take every opportunity to prepare, including how to respond to awkward questions/current controversy. Better still, set the agenda, take control and use current debates to get your point across. Talk to your press office to prepare. They will share experiences and help manage your expectations.