

A sunset over a body of water with two shark fins visible in the foreground. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and long shadows. The water is calm, reflecting the light from the sky. Two dark shark fins are visible in the foreground, one on the left and one on the right. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with some clouds. An orange horizontal line is positioned above the title.

Media Relations During Crisis

What to Say at the Worst of Times

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**DON'T
FEAR
REPORTERS**

**Understand
Them**

A man in a dark suit is seen from behind, addressing a group of people outdoors. The group includes several women, some holding microphones and notebooks, and a cameraman with a professional video camera on a tripod. In the background, there are white vehicles, one of which has "LIVE NEWS" written on it. The scene appears to be a press conference or a media interview taking place on a lawn or grassy area.

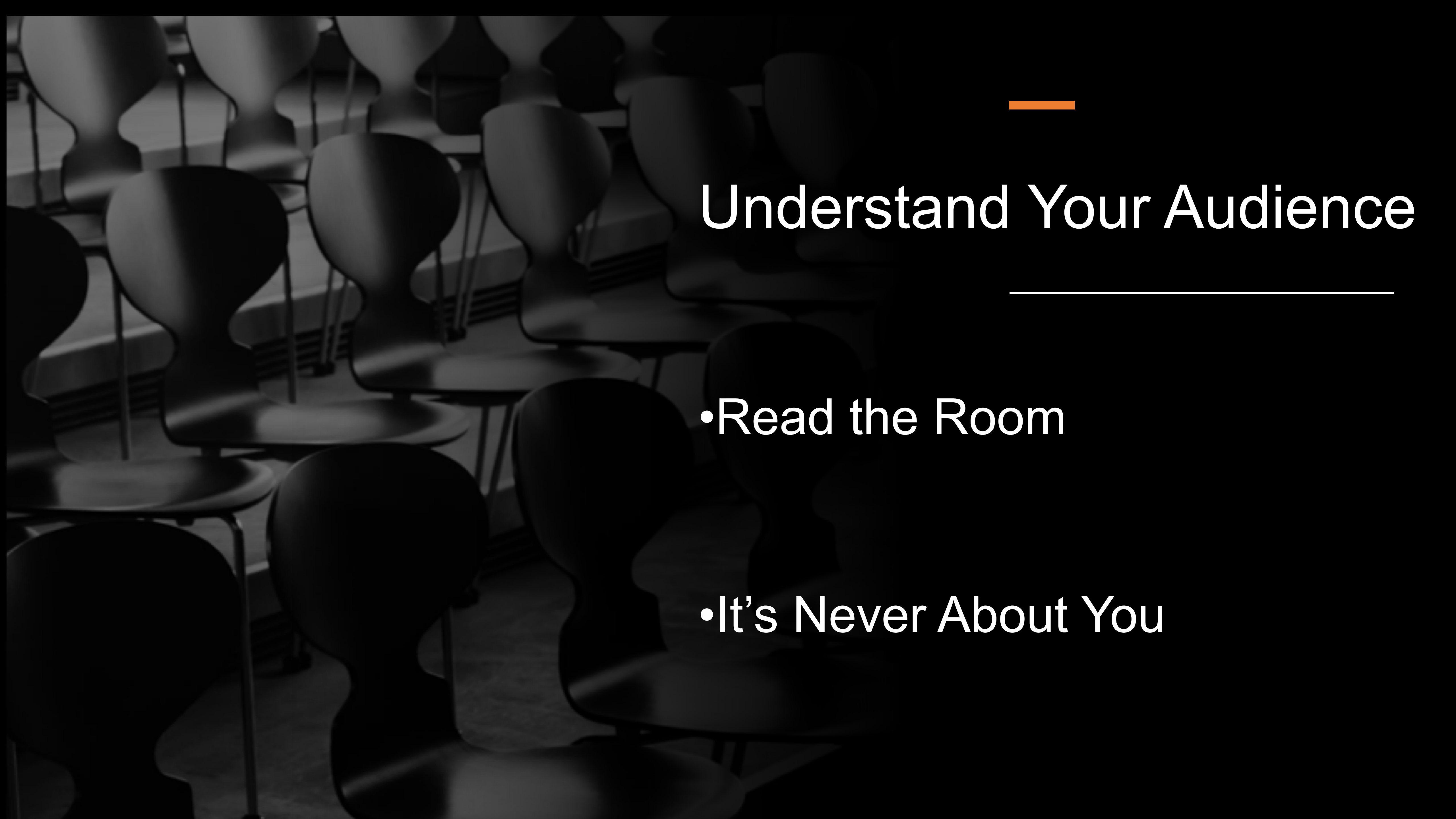
Understand Their Agenda:

What do they want?

- Information—to inform/enlighten
- “Accountability”: Challenge you
- Emotion
- Analysis
- Good quote

Covering Crisis-The Human story





Understand Your Audience

- Read the Room

- It's Never About You

The Cost of Poor Communication

**LUMBER
LIQUIDATOR\$**
HARDWOOD FLOORS FOR LESS!

The Cost of Poor Communication

Stock dropped 70%

**LUMBER
LIQUIDATORS\$**
HARDWOOD FLOORS FOR LESS!

Sales plummet / Regulator troubles

The Lessons

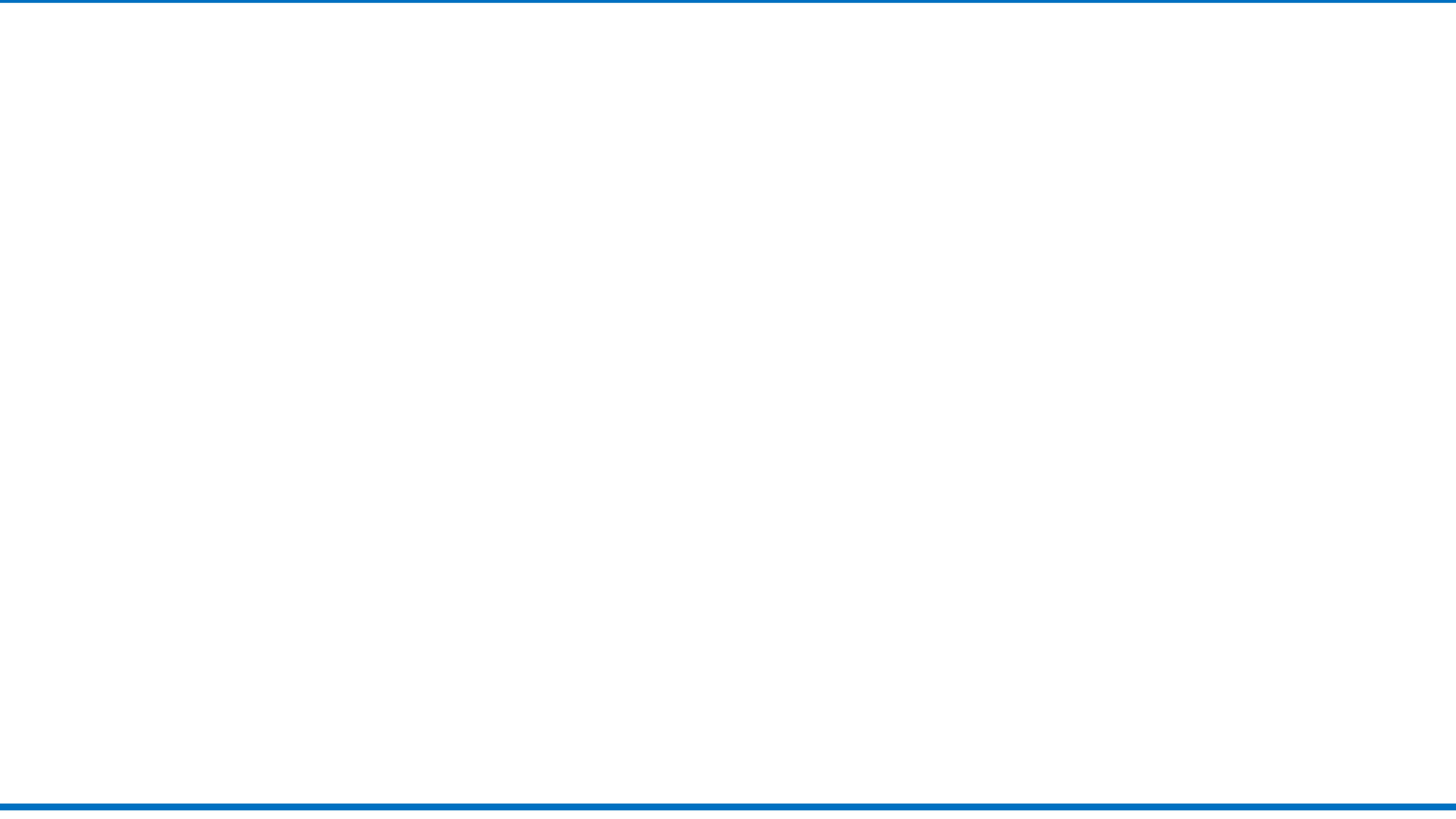
Ask yourself tough questions

Tell yourself the truth: is there a problem?

Deal with the problem proactively, BEFORE reporters call.

**DISASTROUS
WORDS**





The Lessons

Words matter.

Poorly-chosen words are damaging.

Think carefully in advance about what you're going to say. And how to say it.

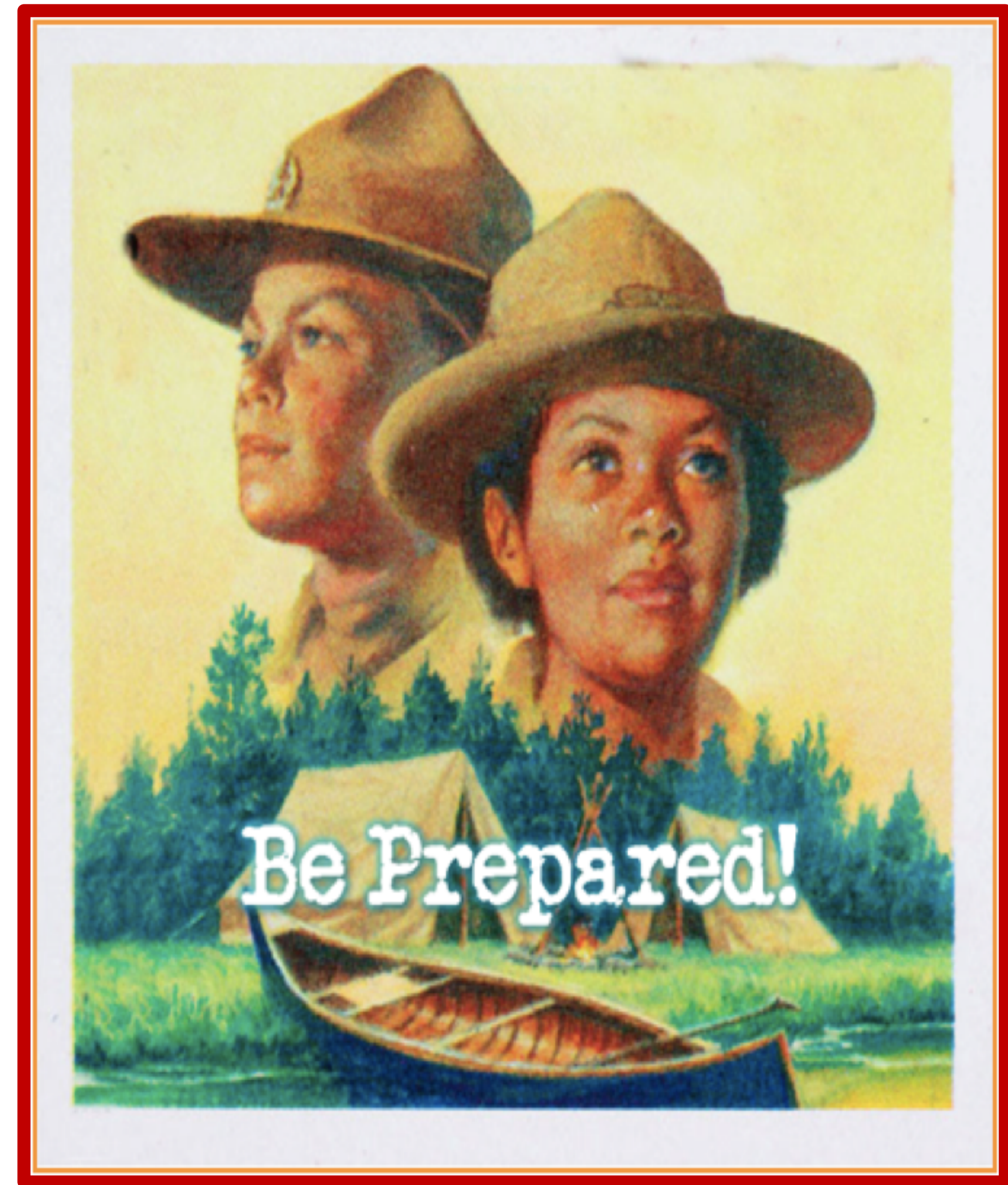
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

- **Identify core comms team**
- **Anticipate worst case scenarios**
- **Develop message templates**
- **Develop media list**
- **Engage crisis comms experts**



Fire Drills

- **Crisis scenario simulations**
- **Media train spokespeople**



GET IN FRONT OF THE STORY



BEST PRACTICES

- Let the experts lead
- Regular updates-be visible/available
- Few spokespeople
- Consistent, clear messaging
- Flexibility-story keeps changing
- Honesty/Humility/Patience
- Seek outside comms help if needed
- Trust is essential



Decisiveness over Delay

“If you need to be right before you move you will never win.”



When a Reporter calls...

Answer. Quickly.

**Ask questions: topic, deadline,
format.**

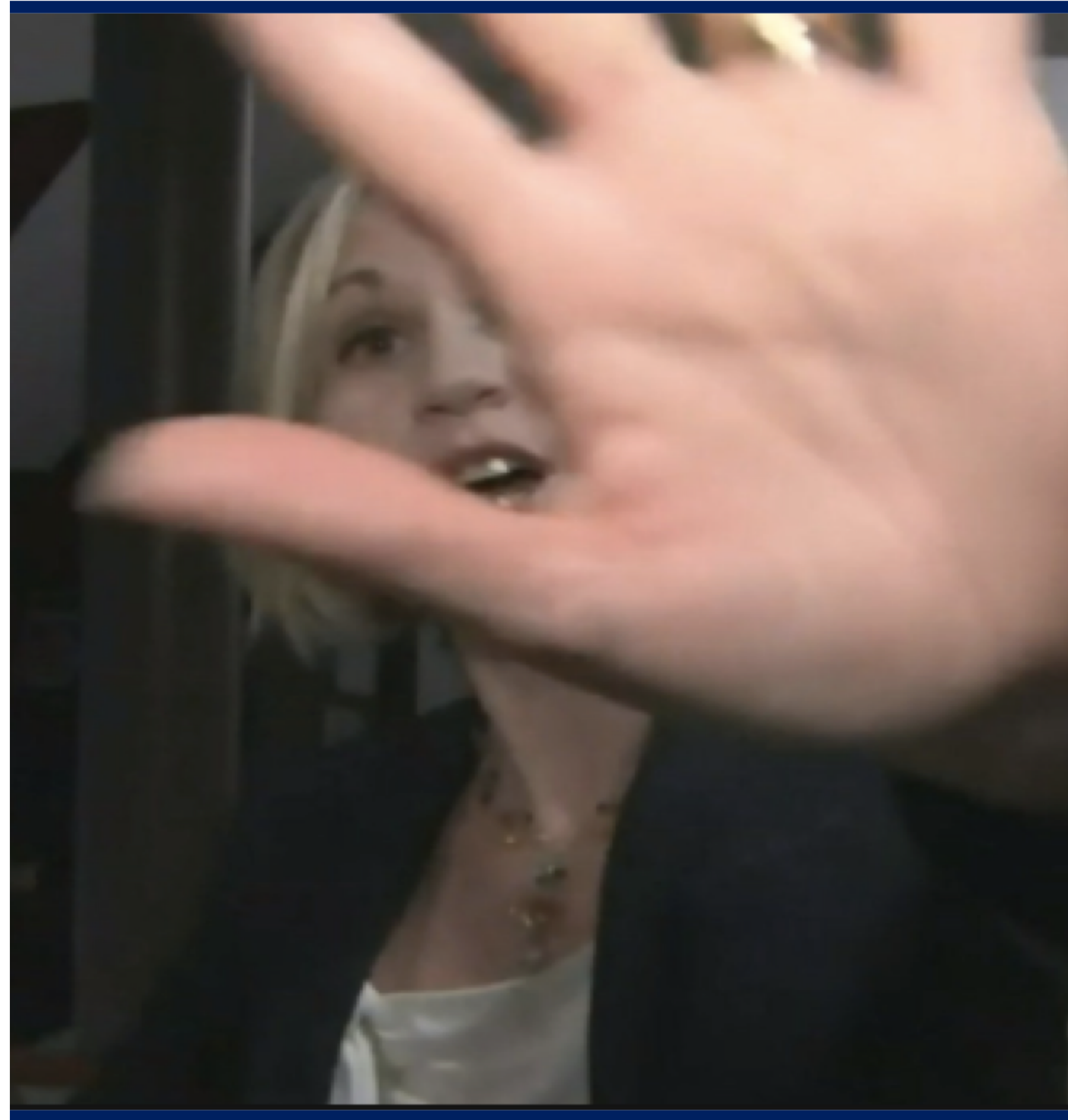
Brief reception staff on how to handle media calls

Default position: Engagement.

Avoiding Ambush

**Reporters only
chase...
when you evade.**

Face the music.



Silence is not an option-Tell your story

3 Key Messages

Supported by facts, figures, anecdotes

Speak Plain English-No Jargon, Euphemisms

Answer Questions

Tone Matters

EMPATHY, TRANSPARENCY, RESPONSIBILITY



Do The Right Thing





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Media Relations During Crisis

- Prepare/Anticipate
- Rapid Response
- Engage
- Plain language/Answer Questions
- Empathy/Transparency/Responsibility
- Do the Right Thing

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