

Respond Like a PR Pro

— WORKBOOK —

Follow our 3 step framework to craft
a powerful response that a journalist will be
excited to include in their next article

SPARTAN
COMMUNITY



SPARTAN MEDIA

Picture this: You were just interviewed by a journalist, and you felt like you did a great job, but then when you finally see the article go live, you realize your name is nowhere to be found.

That sucks.

Look, no one wants to waste their time responding to a journalist and then have their insight not be included in the article when it gets published.

Unfortunately, sometimes that's unavoidable. But you can dramatically increase the chances that they cite you, sharing your valuable expertise with their audience and establishing you as an authority in your industry in the process—*if you take the right approach.*

The key is to respond to their questions in a way that not only provides a direct answer, but also explains what their audience should do with this information and what outcome they should expect when they do, intertwined with your unique expertise, all in an carefully structured framework. It may seem challenging at first, especially on the fly, but with practice, this will become second nature.

By following this powerful framework that we use with our clients at Spartan Media, you'll give a journalist's audience the best possible answer, making them far more likely to include your insight in their article. This helps to establish you as an authority in your industry.

What problems are people trying to solve when they invest in your services or products?

People aren't handing you money just because they love to see you do your thing—they're coming to you to solve a particular set of problems that are adversely affecting them in some way. What are 3-5 of the common problems they're coming to you to solve?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

How do you solve those problems with the benefits your services or products provide?

People aren't actually buying the services or products you offer—they're buying the benefits that come from your services or products in the unique way that you provide them. What are 3-5 of the benefits that solve their problems in a way that other options can't?

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

- 4. _____

- 5. _____

What is the outcome when you help them to achieve these benefits through your services or products?

People are coming to you to achieve a particular outcome from the benefits your services or products provide, like increased revenue, performance, or exposure. What are 3-5 quantifiable outcomes your clients typically get as a result of your services or products?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Your framework to answer a journalist's question

Use this framework, along with the answers to the previous questions in this workbook to craft a response that a journalist will be excited to include in their next article

IDENTIFY

How this question relates to a problem you solve for your clients



EXPLAIN

The situation and what the audience should do or should not do based on how you would solve this problem



HIGHLIGHT

The outcome their audience should expect to get if they follow or fail to follow your advice

Response examples

Below are a few examples of questions from journalists, along with powerful example responses that follow our framework and would be likely to get included in an article. We've spanned several industries in these examples to give you a better idea on how to apply the principles taught in this workbook to your own industry.

Once you've read through these examples, you can get some real world practice by finding articles in the media that talk about your industry, and asking a friend to use them to come up with a few questions for you, which you'll then answer following this same framework.

When you can consistently answer questions in this format, you'll be well on your way to becoming a recognized authority in your industry.

Question: How can home buyers make sure they're working with an experienced agent who can give them the best advice?

Answer: Before an agent can give you any advice, they need to first understand your situation and goals, so I train my agents to always make sure they invest enough time learning about a potential client. If an agent is not asking you in depth questions about your financial situation, credit, employment, children, and how you see your life playing out over the next five to ten years, I would treat that as a huge red flag because they don't

have enough information to accurately determine what the best real estate decisions will be for you. But when you get an experienced agent who takes the time to uncover the information needed to make the best decisions for your unique situation, you'll avoid mistakes that could cost you tens of thousands of dollars and keep you trapped in a home that's not right for you.

Question: How do leaders avoid impostor syndrome?

Answer: The first thing we have to do is identify what impostor syndrome is in the first place, which is a fear that we're not really qualified enough and that we're going to be exposed. When I work with leaders—and most of them struggle with this issue, I start by helping them to understand where the feeling is coming from. The reality is there's a deep connection between childhood trauma and being a high performer, so that's a big part of the equation. We're surrounded by other experts in our field as we go about the day, so we start to take our knowledge for granted. So the next thing I do is encourage them to get outside their bubble and start teaching others what they know—especially people outside of their industry. This goes a long way in resetting their perspective. It's important to treat this as a relationship rather than a thing to “cure” because it will never truly be gone, but when we work through these exercises together, I find that most people start to develop an relationship with impostor syndrome that affects them in a negative way far less.

Question: Why are we seeing more cases of hacking compared to the past, especially targeting smaller businesses more often than Fortune 500 companies?

Answer: A lot of people today have a false sense of security because so many Americans have grown up around technology, so they think they understand it. Newsflash—they don't, and that's why we see so many more cases of hacking lately. We help our clients avoid this with a two-pronged approach. First, we educate them on how hacking occurs and what to look out for so they're less likely to fall for the common tactics hackers use to gain access to their systems. Then, we leverage technology to harden their security in multiple ways. The first prong, education, eliminates most of the threats they'll encounter, and the second prong, technology, eliminates most of the attacks that get by. Unfortunately, there is no way to stop all attacks, even with an unlimited cybersecurity budget, as we've seen when our own military and intelligence systems gets hacked from time to time.

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