

## Challenge Corporate Power



RAN.org

### WHAT IS NEWS?

Components of a newsworthy story:

1. **New**—To get their attention, your story should be current, timely, and fresh. It is a late-breaking development, something happening right now, a steaming hot entrée—not reheated leftovers. Like a brand new development on your campaign or new report.
2. **Local**—It should tie into what is going on in that particular community. Even if you are often campaigning on a national or international campaign, find a local angle, such as the potential impact on a local community. And definitely hold your event at the local branch of the international corporation you're targeting.
3. **Human Interest Angle**—Try to put a human face on your story, such as a local child who suffers asthma attacks on bad smog days, a former Ford employee, etc.
4. **Conflict**—A story with a hard-fought conflict makes news. Describe to reporters who the good guys and bad guys are. Examples: Our campaign to support the Grassy Narrows First Nation community's struggle to stop industrial logging was covered as Weyerhaeuser v Native Community.
5. **Controversy**—Anything controversial is more likely to get news coverage. Civil disobedience pretty much always gets media.
6. **Strange Bedfellows**—We can often garner increased news coverage by building a coalition of strange bedfellows, a coalition that contradicts most reporters assumptions of who supports environmental campaigns. For example, we worked former CIA director James Woolsey to advocate for Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicles and Iraq vets who want auto companies to stop driving a war for oil.
7. **Visuals/ Colorful quotes and images.**
  - Dramatic images—a fake oil spill on a beach, a huge STOP sign that says "STOP Weyerhaeuser," Blown-up photos of the place that is being put at risk.
  - Creative and fun images—we've had a ton of traction for wearing white "hazmat" suits and looking for "Investments of Mass Destruction" at JP Morgan Chase's headquarters. Our Boise campaign is famous for having a gigantic blow-up dinosaur with a t-shirt that said "I (HEART) Destroying Old Growth."

## Challenge Corporate Power



RAN.org

- Event visuals: Dozens of people marching backwards to protest a “backwards” policy, big banner hangs on the side of buildings.
- Some visuals are already there, like shots of the beautiful natural areas we want to protect, but often times we need to create a big visual for it to be enticing to TV.

8. **Timely**—Can your story be linked to an upcoming holiday or season? Examples would include using Independence Day to talk about how America needs to declare independence from oil or April Fools Day to talk about “Fossil Fools.”

**Also, the media love superlatives! Is something in your story the “biggest” “first” “most”? Don’t forget to make that part of your pitch.**