

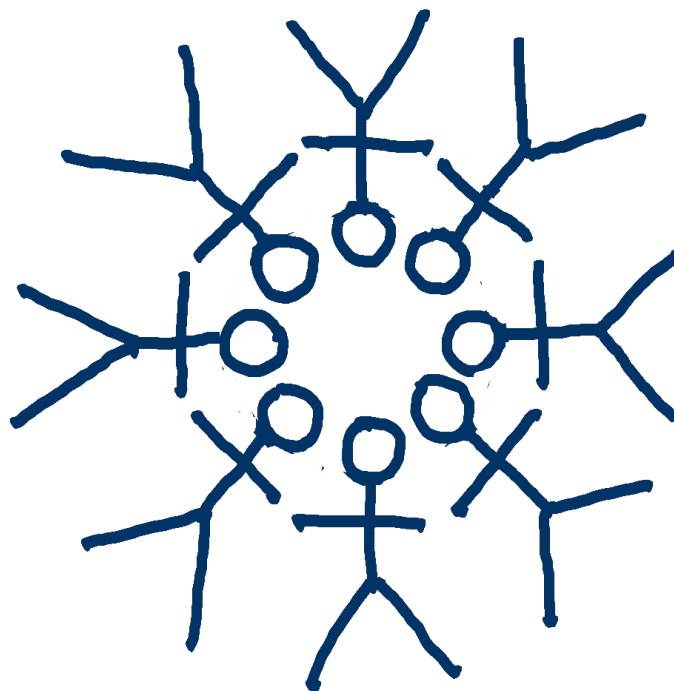
HOW TO WORK WELL WITH JOURNALISTS

Let's get the negative stuff out of the way first. Yes, there are some journalists with few scruples and many negative agendas. Your first interview with them is likely to be your last, but hopefully, you'll learn from the experience.

However, there are hundreds of journalists and media outlets out there with high standards, a genuine interest in your area of expertise and the desire to write fair, balanced news copy.

Professor Tim Harcourt of UTS Business School says academics should treat journalists as partners in the process, not the enemy. 'You are the expert – they need you for the story but can help you get your message out,' he says.

Professor Steven Rowley of Curtin Business School says it's a very symbiotic relationship. 'The more you get out there, the more likely journalists will get back to you. The more industry is aware of what you're doing, the more potential there is for future partnerships, and the easier it is to disseminate future research findings.'



Swinburne Business School's Dr Jason Pallant knows the publications that are read and valued by his industry targets, and he prioritises communications to them.

From Tell Us: What are you doing? Improving how you communicate your academic research, relevance and expertise by Leslie Falkiner-Rose. Available at abdc.edu.au/shop and online bookstores.

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'I've had people from organisations reach out and say I saw your piece on this, I found it really interesting, I would love to hear more about your research and opportunities. That is a great win that can build partnerships and relationships moving forward,' Dr Pallant says.

Dr Michael Callaghan of Deakin University never made a conscious decision to build his public profile but had been involved in a broad range of activities from marketing through ethics and corporate governance to human resources and management.

He follows up with reporters after initial encounters and connects with them on social media, building his networks over time. He has cultivated a lot of relationships with journalists, including a couple with whom he catches up every week, even though this may not result in stories.

Talking with journalists on a regular basis feeds into his very broad range of understanding and engagement with the world, which he says makes him a better, more relevant teacher.

Professor Warren Hogan of UTS Business School has been doing interviews for some years and has built his profile by being available and constructive.

'It's a two-way thing. They want someone to quote, they want an expert. But there's more to it than that. There's the relationship. So, you as an expert can be very useful to a journalist by being available to have a chat, to talk not about the story that day, but to help them build their expertise.'

Professor Elizabeth Sheedy of Macquarie Business School has developed relationships with journalists who cover banking and finance – the industry most relevant to her work. 'The advantage is that quite often, when a big story comes up, they'll approach me for comment, or I can send an email and say: *Are you writing a story on this?* Or perhaps a first story has already come out and you can say: *Are you planning on any follow-up story, because I've got a few things I could say on that?*'

Conor Duffy, National Education Reporter, ABC, says being respectful, being in contact and being available are key. Helping journalists with stories they're working on and connecting them with someone they need, even if there's no obvious benefit to you, creates a lot of professional respect.

Peter Ryan, Senior Business Correspondent, ABC, says media need to spend a lot of time building relationships at different levels. It's a good sign if he successfully puts through an early morning or evening call, and he'll then work on that relationship.

For more tips, visit <https://abdc.edu.au/abdc-communications/tips-to-improve-communication/>