

Lessons Learned from Someone Who Seeks to Engage with the Media

The Media influences culture, how as Christians should we relate to it? Nola Leach has been engaging with the media over many years, firstly as a Media and Public Relations Officer in the UK Health Service and then as the Chief Executive and Head of Public Affairs at CARE (Christian Action Research and Education) a major Christian organisation working in the Parliaments and Assemblies of the UK and at the EU. Using her experience she will share from practical examples the lessons CARE has learned about the opportunities and challenges of working with the Media for Christian organisations so that we can use it more effectively to further our ministries and work.

Nola Leach is a co-leader of the European Politics and Society Network and serves as the Chief Executive of CARE (Christian Action, Research & Education), one of Europe's leading Christian charities which provides resources and helps bring Christian insight and experience to matters of public policy and practical caring initiatives. CARE undertakes a variety of social caring and educational programmes and research. It is represented in the UK Parliaments and Assemblies, at the EU in Brussels, and at the UN in Geneva and New York. As Head of the Public Affairs team, she leads campaigns on topics such as human trafficking, Internet pornography, and the value of human life from its beginning to natural end. She has overseen the publication of *Living Free*, a sequel to the CARE book *Searching for Intimacy* – a resource designed to help those trapped in the net of Internet pornography. She is increasingly in demand as both a writer and public speaker. She has penned numerous articles, and regularly appears in the media.

Introduction: Importance of the media in Today's Culture.

I.

A. The growth in and nature of its influence.

1. The Press

2. TV

3. Social Media

B. The Importance of Engagement.

1. Phil 2:15 “ Go into the world uncorrupted, a breath of fresh air in this sinful and polluted society. Provide people with a glimpse of good living and of the living God”

2.1 Peter “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give a reason for the hope that you have”

3. “Taking every thought captive for Christ”

II. How do we engage?

A. With wisdom

1. Journalists have long memories.

2. Know when to say “No”

3. The danger of pre recorded interview.

B. With preparation.

1. Prepare, prepare, prepare and then you can fly.

2. Stick to main point.

3. Have “a crash plan”

4. The importance of training

5. Know the audience and other participants type of programme, use the right language

6. The importance of the beginning, middle and end

C. With warmth.

1. Be relational 1Peter Give an answer “with gentleness and respect”.

D. Be clear

1. Know what the aim is

2. Timing

E. Be confident.

1. We are the experts

2. The danger of flattery

3. Know who you are

F. Be Professional

G. Be Christ-like – truth and grace.

III. The Opportunities.

A. We Can:

1. Influence for good.

2. Bring an alternative position.
3. Build our credibility as “go to” organization.
4. Bring an alternative voice.
5. Build key future contacts.
6. Keep sharp
7. Campaign more effectively.

IV. The Challenges.

1. Unforeseen consequences

2. Finding the right training

3. Avoiding a “set up”

4. Time constraints

5. Being aware of “friends”.

V Questions and Observations.