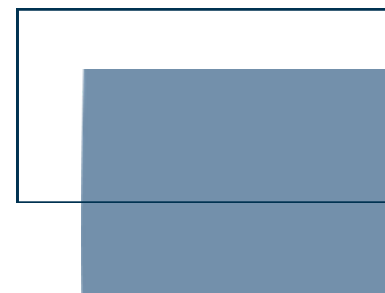




# How To Stop Committing Random Acts of PR

---

5 questions to decide what's worth the PR effort



# The Reality Most Comms Leaders Face








PR often shows up as urgent - tied to a new initiative, a leadership request, or the sense that you should be doing something. Even when it's not clear what that something is or why it matters.

You're already investing real time and resources, and yet the work still feels reactive or disconnected from the outcomes that matter most.

I help communications leaders at mission-driven organizations get clear on where PR effort is actually worth it - so you can stop wasting time on random acts of PR. Real impact comes from clarity, commitment, and consistency over time.

# 5 Questions To Save You From Random Acts of PR

When a PR opportunity comes up, I run through these questions because they reveal whether it will build momentum or just waste time and create more pressure.

<p>1</p> <hr/> <p>What's the real goal here?</p> 	<p>2</p> <hr/> <p>Will this build our reputation or just create noise?</p> 	<p>3</p> <hr/> <p>Is leadership aligned on why this matters?</p> 	<p>4</p> <hr/> <p>Do we have the capacity to support this well?</p> 	<p>5</p> <hr/> <p>If this works, what actually changes?</p> 
--	---	--	---	---

**These questions prevent wasted effort and keep PR aligned with real organizational goals instead of just activity.**

# 1. What's the real goal here?

What are you actually trying to accomplish with this PR effort? Is it clearly connected to a real organizational priority - funding, partnerships, leadership credibility, board confidence? Or does it feel like something you should do simply because the opportunity exists and saying no feels risky?



## Watch out for:

- ✗ "We need visibility" requests without a clear reason
- ✗ PR efforts that don't ladder up to a broader strategy
- ✗ Leadership requests that feel more like ideas than priorities

## Do this instead:

Write down the primary goal in one sentence. If you can't - or if it changes depending on who you talk to - the effort is already misaligned. When your CEO says "awareness" and your development director says "donor confidence," you don't have a strategy - you have two campaigns fighting for the same resources.



## 2. Will this build our reputation or just create noise?

Not all coverage moves the needle in the same way. Some efforts reinforce how you want to be known; others create short-term attention without contributing to long-term trust. And some - if you're not careful - can actually undermine the positioning you've worked years to establish.

### Watch out for:

- ✘ Opportunities that look impressive but don't strengthen your core narrative

---

- ✘ Chasing coverage simply because it's available

---

- ✘ Media that positions you adjacent to your mission instead of aligned with it

### Do this instead:

Ask whether this opportunity strengthens your core narrative. If it pulls you away from the reputation you're building - even if it looks impressive - it's creating noise, not credibility. When a B Corp is offered a business growth panel that won't touch sustainability or values, the visibility looks good internally, but it doesn't build authority with the stakeholders who matter.



# 3. Is leadership aligned on why this matters?

Vague agreement is not the same as shared strategy. Misalignment at the top almost always shows up later - as frustration, rework, or you defending results that were never clearly defined.

## Watch out for:

- ✘ Vague agreement that masks different expectations
- ✘ PR efforts moving forward without a shared definition of success
- ✘ Leadership saying 'sounds good' when they're actually imagining very different outcomes

## Do this instead:

Get explicit agreement on success before you commit resources. Ask: What does success mean? What are we optimizing for? What tradeoffs will we make? When your CEO expects national coverage, your board wants community engagement, and development is measuring funding impact, you're building three different strategies - and none will succeed.

# 4. Do we have the capacity to support this well?

PR doesn't end when coverage lands. Someone has to prep the spokesperson. Someone has to amplify the story. Someone has to be ready if follow-up opportunities come in. The real value depends on what happens before and after, and whether you actually have the capacity to support it well.



## Watch out for:

- ✘ Saying yes without confirming internal bandwidth
- ✘ Overextending yourself or your team when you're already stretched thin
- ✘ Assuming you'll 'figure it out' when the journalist says yes

## Do this instead:

Be honest about whether you can support this right now - not someday or if everything goes perfectly, but with the capacity you actually have. When a journalist offers a profile during your merger and no one has time to prep leadership, the opportunity becomes a liability.



# 5. If this works, what actually changes?

This question separates activity from impact. It's the difference between checking a box and building something that actually compounds over time.

## Watch out for:

- ✘ Success defined only by impressions or placement
- ✘ Difficulty explaining why this mattered six months later
- ✘ Coverage that feels good in the moment but doesn't connect to anything strategic

## Do this instead:

Ask: if this works exactly as planned, what becomes easier? What becomes possible? Strong PR compounds. A well-placed story leads to partnerships. A byline builds credibility that brings reporters calling for commentary. A media moment builds funder confidence that shortens fundraising cycles. If you can't point to what changes, you're creating activity, not momentum.



# Clarity > Random Acts of PR

Most frustration comes from random acts of PR: reactive, disconnected efforts that create pressure instead of progress.

When you get clearer about what's worth pursuing - and just as importantly, what you're willing to say no to - PR stops feeling chaotic and starts feeling purposeful. That clarity allows effort to compound instead of just creating more work.

But having a framework doesn't solve the underlying problem. You still have to run through these questions, make the final call, manage leadership expectations, and carry the reputational risk. But you don't have to carry it alone.



# When You're Ready For Someone To Own It

There's a point where the challenge isn't clarity. It's capacity and ownership.

You understand what good PR looks like. But the work is still being shaped by last-minute requests and competing priorities, rather than a proactive strategy and someone to manage it day-to-day.

**Ad hoc PR gets ad hoc results. You need someone who owns it. That's where I come in.**



With more than 20 years of experience working alongside mission-driven organizations, I partner closely with busy teams to move away from random acts of PR and toward an intentional, sustainable approach that drives meaningful impact. PR stops being something you manage on the fly and becomes something that consistently supports your reputation, growth, and mission.

If you're carrying too much of this alone and ready for hands-on, senior-level PR support - especially if you already have an agency or internal setup that isn't delivering the clarity or results you need - let's talk.

**[Book a discovery call today.](#)**