



# Media Relations

## Dealing with the media



Presentation by John Bender  
TML Consultant  
February 6, 2015



# Media Relations

**No  
Comment**



# Media Relations

**Even worse:**

**“Phone calls and emails to the office were not returned.”**



# Media Relations

## What “no comment” says:

- We’ve got something to hide.
- The other side is right.
- We can’t get our act together.



# Media Relations

**Every contact with the media is an opportunity to deliver a message.**



# Media Relations

## Lawsuit Example

### **Family of Killed Cyclist Files Suit Against City of Lakeland**

City Attorney Tim McCausland said he had not completely read through the lawsuit Thursday evening. However, he said that he does not think the city should be held liable, but that the court will make that determination.

"On behalf of the city, this is a tragic incident, and our sympathy goes out to all the people who were impacted."



# Media Relations

## Personnel Example

### **Orange family calls for justice after dogs were euthanized**

Orange Fire Chief David Frenzel, who supervises the city's animal shelter, said the employees were disciplined but will keep their jobs. He declined to disclose the nature of the discipline applied, citing personnel information confidentiality.

The two employees are compassionate workers who "made an error in judgment" and were disciplined for it. He said he feels apologetic toward the family, but there isn't anything he can do at this point.

"We've taken the measures to make sure this never happens again," he said.



# Media Relations

## Scandal Example

### **Company running red light camera program in El Paso allegedly bribed officials**

"The City of El Paso will be monitoring the situation. It is important to note that the contract went through a formal bidding process and is monitored by the El Paso Police Department and the Office of Management and Budget directly," El Paso City Manager Joyce Wilson said.

"The City of El Paso nor its Police Department have not been contacted by any investigator relative to this issue. If anything of substance emerges from the allegations then the city would take appropriate action."





# Media Relations

## The “no comment” comment

“I can’t comment on the specifics but I can say we are confident we have a solid case and we are looking forward to presenting all the facts.”

“Out of respect for the court and the judicial process, we will wait and make our case in the courtroom. That’s all I can say at this point.”

“I can’t discuss the details but I want to assure everyone that we take these allegations very seriously and there will be a thorough investigation.”



# Media Relations

## **“No comment” comment**

### **Naked Gainesville city attorney arrested**

Police investigating a complaint about a naked prowler arrested a lawyer for the city of Gainesville, Fla., after spotting him running through yards in the area wearing only a skull cap and tennis shoes, according to a police report.

“We need to evaluate the evidence to see if there is sufficient proof of these crimes. They are technical in nature,” State Attorney Bill Cervone said. “Until I know more about what caused this to happen and have more input from police and the victim, I’m not going to comment on something of that sort.”



# Media Relations

## Dealing with the media



Presentation by John Bender  
TML Consultant  
February 6, 2015