



GUIDE TO HOSTING A MEDIA TRAINING HOUSE PARTY

January 17th, 2008

Thank you for signing up to host a Media Training House Party!

This is an **exciting and unique opportunity for progressive activists** to gain the skills they need to get the local media to cover progressive events and campaigns in their communities.

Below you'll find all the necessary details in order to successfully host your own media training house party. Your primary role as host is to prepare the participants at your house party for each section of the training and to act as a facilitator for the practice skills sessions.

This guide includes the details to help you with:

- An overview of the goals for the evening
- Preparing for the evening
- A breakdown of the schedule for the evening and what you need to do as a host
- Instructions for technical assistance
- Some tips on how to be a good facilitator

There are also a series of resources that CPL provides after the training. This includes a sample media advisory, a summary of the core concepts in the video, a sample checklist for preparing an event, and a discussion board to ask our experts questions and talk about the topics covered.

If you have any questions beforehand, you can go back to the Host Resources page at www.cplaction.org/media/hosts. You'll find answers to many common concerns and questions. For any questions that you still have, you can contact us at the email provided on the same page.

We also want to thank our partners in the nation-wide media training, including **MoveOn.org Political Action, True Majority Action, and ProgressNow.**

Sincerely,
The CPL Action Network Team



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Goals for the National Media Impact Training

The goals for the Media Impact Training are to help progressive activists develop a solid grounding in the skills necessary to gain more media coverage for progressive events and issues in their communities.

It's important to note that the training **will not be about broader topics, such as how to develop a media strategy or how to create a compelling message.**

This training is specifically about the nuts and bolts of getting earned media coverage. This includes assessing your resources to attract media coverage; planning a media-friendly event; personalizing a broader progressive message; pitching your event to a reporter; and following up to expand coverage.

And of course, a major part of any CPL program is the chance for you to meet other progressives and develop new connections in your community.

Checklist to Prepare for the Evening

Below is the list of things you need to in order to prepare:

- Make sure you've ordered and test your training DVD before the evening begins. You should have already ordered a DVD of the training video; if you need to download a digital version, email us at email@cplaction.org to get instructions.
- Read through the Host Guide (below) and understand both the schedule for the evening and what your role throughout the night will be.
- Download and print one copy of the "Guest Packet" for each guest who is coming to your party. We are closing registration down at 9am on Thursday, Jan 17. You will get emails each time a new guest registers to attend your event.
- Make sure you have a reliable way to join the webcast (which means an internet connection and speakers that are loud enough for everyone to hear). You can also use a speaker phone if you don't have an internet connection. To connect to the webcast, go to www.cplaction.org/media/webcast.html.
- Spread the word about your house party training to fellow activists, friends, co-workers, and others who might be interested in helping take back the media.
- And of course, contact us if you have any questions and for more information go to www.cplaction.org/media/hosts/

SAVE THE DATE – Monday, January 14, 2008 – 9:00 pm Eastern Standard Time

Conference call for hosts in which CPL Action Network staff will walk you through the evening's activities and answer any questions you might have.

To connect: **Dial 1-800-371-8200** Participant Access Code: **523417**



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HOST GUIDE

Your Role During the Training

We have designed the evening to be as easy as possible for the host; however, there are a few key areas where you are an integral part of the evening. Please read through this guide carefully.

You are in charge of keeping your house party on schedule. Because the training covers a lot in a short time period, it's very important that you follow the schedule as closely as possible.

SCHEDULE

6:45 – 7:10	Arrival & Introductions
7:10 – 7:35	Watch the Media Training Video
7:35 – 7:50	Webcast Set-up/ Video Discussion/ Submit Questions
7:50 – 8:15	Listen to Live Webcast with a National Media Expert
8:15 – 8:55	Participate in Practice Skills Sessions
8:55 – 9:00	Wrap-up and Meet Attendees

Detailed Evening Schedule

Below is a detailed breakdown of the schedule for the evening that also includes what your specific responsibility will be at each point of the evening.

6:45 - 7:10 Arrival and Introductions

As guests begin arriving for your house party, you should take a few minutes to get to know each other. This can be informal or you can have folks sit down and do introductions in a circle. There are two things you need to do before the video starts at 7:10. They are:

- Take Attendance - Use the "Attendance Form" that is listed on the Host Resources page at www.cplaction.org/media/hosts/. After the evening is over, you can submit your attendance sheet online using our online form or send in a hard copy through the mail.
- Pass Out the Guest Packets – Each participant at your party should get their own Guest Packet.

It's also a good idea if you have time to go over the agenda for the evening and talk about the goals for the evening. *You should have the video in your DVD player ready to go so that you can start it exactly at 7:10pm.*



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7:10 - 7:35 Watch Media Training Video

At exactly 7:10, you should begin playing the video for your house party. Start with the Introduction. Make sure that all of your guests can see and hear the video.

7:35 – 7:50 Webcast Set-up and Discussion of Video

Once the video is over, you should position the computer (with a reliable connection to the Internet) with external speakers to connect to the webcast. Make sure that it is in a convenient location where all guests can hear it. Then, join the webcast immediately.

- In order to join the webcast, you need to go to the following website:
<http://www.cplaction.org/media/webcast.htm>
- In case there are problems connecting via web, as a backup, we will also have an option available to connect to the conference call via phone. Instructions for calling in will be available on the webpage listed above.

When you are connected and waiting for the webcast to start, you should ask your guests if they have any questions to submit to the national trainer (who will be featured on the webcast). Some good questions to get your group talking are:

- What did you like about the training video?
- What was unclear?
- Did you see anything in the video that you want to learn more about?
- If you've worked with media before, what has been challenging?
- If you've never worked with media before, what are you most nervous about?

Any questions your group would like to submit must be emailed to us before 7:45 pm to mediaquestions@cplaction.org. Please include your name and house party location.

At exactly 7:50 the conference call will begin. Everyone should listen to the call.

7:50 – 8:15 Listen to Live Webcast with a National Expert

The webcast/conference call will feature a guest trainer who is an expert on earned media, as well as Center for Progressive Leadership Action Network staff. During the webcast, the trainer will touch on several important issues, and we will try to answer as many of the email questions as we can. You can encourage your guests to take notes if this will help them retain the information better.

8:15 – 8:55 Participate in Practice Skills Sessions

During the webcast, a Center for Progressive Leadership Action Network staffer will give instructions for starting the small group interactives. **At this point, your role is critical.**



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The first step is to have your guests break up into groups of 3 or 4 people. Once everyone is in the small groups, have them take out their guest packets and spend ten minutes working through the practice scenarios on their own.

After ten minutes, instruct your guests to begin the practice as outlined in their guides. During this session, they will take turns assigning each other roles of organizer, reporter, and timekeeper. During each round, one person will practice giving a two-minute pitch to a reporter who they want to cover their event. The timekeeper should make sure that each round is limited to two minutes before switching roles and trying again. Guests will be provided with a tracking sheet where they can make notes regarding one another's performances.

While the other guests are taking turns practicing, you should serve as a facilitator and keep track of time. Check in with all of the groups, and make sure that participants are all getting an opportunity to practice their pitches. It is very easy for this portion of the evening to get off track, and while dialogue with our neighbors is great, we want to insure that everyone gets the most possible out of the role-playing exercise. We've found these role plays are the most valuable part of the entire night, so you should make sure everyone tries it out (there are tips on this below).

8:55 – 9:00 Wrap-up

At 8:55, you should have each group wrap up its role playing. Bring them back to an area where people can share some of their experiences and lessons learned while practicing their pitch. This is also the time when you can remind them to fill out an online evaluation form of the training that will be sent out the next day and check out the online resources (information they will receive by email as well).

At 9pm, the official training is over! However, we encourage you to have some informal time to allow your guests to get know each other and talk. Networking and building a state-wide progressive network is what this is all about!

Tips for Facilitating the Small Group Practice

- The most important thing is...to keep people on track! There will be people who will want to tell stories, talk about the Presidential primaries or issues they care about...everything except the scenarios and the practice skills session. In order to get the most out of the evening, walk around and make sure people are following the instructions!
- Encourage participants to really use the full ten minutes of time to prepare for delivering their pitch, including writing down the key points they want to make and thinking through how to localize and personalize their pitch. Remind participants to think about how they can take tips from the video and conference call and practice incorporating these into their own pitch.



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- Back up the timekeeper in each group to ensure that your guests are staying on topic and in their roles. Although each group has its own timekeeper, you can always remind groups that it is time to switch roles so that every participant has an opportunity to practice his/her pitch.
- Circulate between the groups to keep an eye on each group and help ensure that every participant has an opportunity to practice delivering a pitch and receiving feedback.
- Encourage your guests to talk openly and freely, both in their roles as organizer and reporter, and as they provide one another with feedback; but remind them that this activity is designed to practice delivering a pitch. While we encourage active sharing of viewpoints and respectful debate, we count on you as the host to ask participants to save these conversations for the end of the evening and focus for now on improving their skills at delivering a pitch.

Partners – Finally, we would like to recognize the work and contribution of the partners involved in the event, including:



The Center for Progressive Leadership Action Network is the sister organization of the Center for Progressive Leadership, a nonprofit national progressive training institute. The Action Network connects emerging and established leaders to create a community of progressive political leaders to work on key progressive issues, advocate for progressive causes, lead and support progressive campaigns, and build the America of our dreams.



MoveOn.org Political Action, one of the largest Political Action Committees in the country, brings real Americans into politics to fight for a more progressive America and elect progressive candidates. But in contrast to most PACs, which funnel industry contributions to candidates in exchange for access, MoveOn.org Political Action brings hundreds of thousands of small donors together to elect candidates who will represent the American people.



ProgressNow.org is a first-of-its kind organization. Our mission is to provide a strong, credible voice in advancing progressive solutions to critical community problems. But we don't do that on our own – we work as a communications team for the entire progressive community. We're a marketing department for progressive ideas – a campaign that never stops. We work year round to challenge conservative propaganda in the media and make sure that progressive perspectives are heard.



We started TrueMajorityAction in order to compound the power of all those who believe in social justice, giving children a decent start in life, protecting the environment, and America working in cooperation with the world community.