the best quote ever

Taking Talking Points to the Next Level
“I only regret that I have but one life to give to my country.”

1776
Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”
• “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.”

• 1961
• “I have a dream today.”

• 1963
“My fellow Americans, our long national nightmare is over.”

1974
“Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.”

1987
What Makes A Great Quote?

- Easy to Understand
- Concise
- Paints a Picture
- Evokes Emotion
What Makes A Great Quote?

- Concise

Center for Media and Public Affairs says the average sound bite for presidential candidates was 7.3 seconds, a 26% decline since 1988. An 83% drop since 1968!
Crafting Quotes

- Tone (political or social)
- Sensitivity (to people or issue)
- Serious-Humor Scale (what’s appropriate)
- Demographics (who is target audience)
- Opposition (what will be said in return)
Questions to Ask

What quote do you want to be in the front page / lead paragraph / TV news tease?

Does it meet the criteria?
Easy to understand
Concise
Paint a picture
Evoke emotion
Questions to Ask

- Is it genuine, credible and authentic?
- Will all your family members understand it?
- Will it fit on Twitter?
The Process
Key Message Structure

• Level One: Key Message
• Level Two: Supporting Points
• Level Three: Statistics
Key Message

Structure (NCSL)

State Legislatures are the forum for America’s Ideas (Level 1)

• Congress has followed the states’ lead on welfare reform, education standards and energy issues (Level II)

• Fact sheets on welfare reform / education / energy issues (Level II)
The Quote
Campaign

It's like putting lipstick on a pig.

Social Media
Media Relations
Event
Print
Backdrop/B-Roll
Radio
Response to pig lobby
Brainstorming
(Concepts to Use to Create Your Quote)

- Current events
- Movies
- History
- Imagery
- Word Association ("Silver Bullet"--Colorado)
- State Names/Phrases/Mottos ("Don't Mess with Texas")
Examples: NCSL

“It’s like trying to spell a word while stirring alphabet soup.”

“It’s like breaking your leg and then pneumonia.”

“We now know that the rose has thorns.”

“The fiscal situation facing states is like a bad horror movie. The details get more
“We don’t want our health care hijacked,” said Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison.

“I am not the first president to take up this cause, but I am determined to be last.” President Obama

“This is a Christmas present for our military that will be ongoing from year to year.” KY Sen. Elizabeth Tori on bill supporting Fort Campbell
Quick Hits

• Try it yourself. Using the below situation, create a quote opposing the proposed budget item.

Because of the budget crisis, the state is considering selling properties and leasing them back, including the Capitol.
Quick Hits

• Here’s what the state treasurer said:

  “It makes us look like Rent-A-Center.” Arizona Treasurer Dean Martin on the state’s plan to sell state properties, including the Capitol
Quick Hits

• Try it yourself. Using the below story from the New Orleans Times-Picayune, create a quote for the governor and one opposing his actions.

• Gov. Bobby Jindal on Thursday defended his taxpayer-funded visits to churches and dismissed criticism from a national religious organization.

• Between March 2 and July 20, Jindal traveled to churches, mostly in north Louisiana, on a state helicopter at a cost to the taxpayers of about $45,000, according to State Police records.

• In May, June and July, there was rarely a Sunday when Jindal did not fly a taxpayer-funded helicopter to church services in a remote part of the state. Two aides usually accompanied him along with his security detail and pilots.
Training Spokespersons

- Understanding of Media
- Practice
- Cues
- Strengths / Areas of Improvement
- Evaluate
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