

Marketing Strategies

Potential students, parents, counselors, administrators, and members of the community and health care industry will know what's going on in your program ONLY if you tell them. That's where your marketing skills come in.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT ...

- Would someone walking through your school for the first time know where the Health Science Technology Education Department is?
- Does the guidance counselor know the curriculum and content that you are teaching students?
- Have you worked with a teacher from another department in your high school this school year?
- Have you or any of your HOSA students participated in a radio or TV program this school year? Has your HSTE program been featured in a newspaper article?
- Does your HOSA chapter send mailings of HOSA activities to parents, alumni members, school administration, school board members, postsecondary programs and local healthcare professionals?
- Would someone traveling through town know there's a HOSA chapter in the local school?

HSTE PROGRAM EXPOSURE

There are several methods of communication you may utilize. (**Always consult your school administration for guidelines before submitting a news release of any kind.**) The newspaper represents the greatest medium for reaching everyone in the community; however, newsletters, radio, television and websites are also effective.

Recognize what is noteworthy and worth publicizing. Enlist the help of a colleague to review any material you prepare. A **positive image** of the program should be the focus rather than pride of authorship.

Newspapers

Anything that affects the lives of a number of people or will attract their interest is newsworthy. It tells readers something they did not know before, and it describes action. Stay alert for story ideas that will interest a wide variety of readers.

News Story

The news story presents facts to the reader in a concise and simple manner. Use the inverted pyramid style of writing to build a good story. The three-part pyramid begins with the most important part--the lead--at the top. Following is the middle (or elaboration) and the bottom (or the catch-all).

The lead usually answers all or part of six questions: who, what, where, when, why, and how. The middle elaborates or explains the lead. The end gives additional information not essential to the story, but which are interesting facts.

In writing news stories, remember two things:

- Names make news; give complete names and always be sure to spell them correctly.
- It is better to include too much than not enough. Allow the editor delete.

Building a News Story

Feature Story

A feature story is an account of something of unusual interest. This is useful in calling attention to a Health Science Technology Education course(s), activity or partnership.

The feature story usually follows the upright pyramid pattern that has three parts. The lead is a short sentence or paragraph to catch the reader's attention and serves as a guide to the body of the story. The middle is the body of the story, answers questions in the reader's mind, and holds interest. The bottom contains the conclusion to drive home the main point of the story.

Two types of features:

Personality sketch. It is usually concerned with achievement and describes a personality. It shows how the individual achieved success and centers on one person.

Personal experience story. Uniqueness will attract the reader to this type of story. It may involve a student's or teacher's experience and may be told in first or third person. The article could be about an unusual or interesting field trip, activity, or HSTE partnership opportunity.

NEWS RELEASE

Health Science Technology Education

Release date: For immediate release

Contact:

Address:

Phone:

Date:

Tour Taken by Health Science Technology Education Students

- Always give exact date in a news release: June 10 rather than next Thursday or tomorrow. Specify October, not next month. Double-check date and day of week on calendar.
- Be sure to double- or triple-space all copy submitted.
- List the address as well as the name of the meeting place.
- Use easy-to-understand words.
- Use figures for numbers above nine, hours of the day, days of the month (omit d, th, st), dimensions, and ages.
- Spell out numbers at beginning of a sentence or change construction of sentence to avoid using a number as the first word in a sentence.
- Give first names and middle initials of persons the first time they appear in article.
- Do not fold copy.
- Write "more" at the bottom of each page except the last one

Pictures

Clear black-and-white glossy prints are required for most publications. These may be any size, but 5" X 7" or 8" X 10" are preferred. You may also submit a disk containing pictures taken with a digital camera or you may email the pictures and the story directly to the publication. Contact the publication to request their guidelines.

Be sure to identify every picture submitted. It is best to write information on a separate sheet of paper and carefully tape this to the back edge of the picture. If writing on the back of the picture, pencil very lightly because heavy marks will ruin the image. Identify every person shown, being careful to indicate the order in which the names are written usually going from left to right, front row first, etc. Include the activity and the name of the organization involved, and the name and address of the person submitting the picture. Never staple, glue, or tape a picture to a sheet of paper. Note at the top of any accompanying story that a picture is included.

News Release Clearance

Clear all news releases through proper channels! Each school or district will have different policies about who must approve a story before it is released. Sometimes, only the teacher will be responsible. Other districts may require clearance from the school administration. In any case, be certain of the policies and procedures and carefully observe them.

Letters

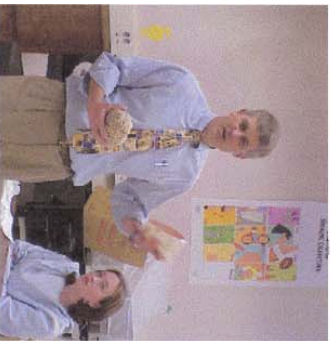
Public relations sometimes need a more personal touch than a news story. This can be provided by the thoughtful use of letters sent to students, business and industry partners, and others vital to the success of the program. Each letter should be individually written and printed when possible. Form letters with the recipients' names typed in are not extremely effective in public relations.

Many types of letters can help build good public relations. More specifically, every letter has some kind of impact on public relations. Initially, determine the purpose of the letter, how the recipient might respond to it, and who should write the letter. A formal or informal tone must be decided. The following are suggested ways to use letters:

- thank you letters to guest speakers;
- thank you letters to newspapers or radio and television stations who have given you publicity;
- appreciation letters to those who have sponsored field trips, clinical rotations, work-based learning sites, provided equipment or funding;
- information letters, explaining purposes of Health Science Technology Education course(s) to parents, business and industry members, and the community;
- letters of congratulations written to commend those who have been recognized for achievement; and/or
- recruitment letters to community organizations requesting their help

Following is a creative example of a “thank you” which was constructed by the Technology Department of Ronald Reagan High School, San Antonio, Texas. The pictures were taken with a digital camera and the certificate of thanks was created and presented to the guest speaker before he left the classroom.

Ronald Reagan High School Health Science Class



Dr. Kinsman's Brain Presentation

Broadcast Media

The broadcast industry gives millions of dollars every year for public service. Radio and television stations are limited to the hours they are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to be on the air.

Make a sincere attempt to study local programming before making first station contacts. Do not forget educational television channels that may operate in the area.

Types of shows. A few possibilities that may be available to you are group or panel discussions and interview shows. An educational channel may offer an opportunity for a show to explain the scope of training that your HSTE program offers students. This would aid you immeasurably in sustaining community support, and securing partnerships while attracting students to the program.

Promptness. Meeting deadlines and being on time for live or taped shows are important. Arrive well in advance of time set by the station. Choose participants who have pleasant voices and are not nervous. Practice in front of an audience and have them critique the performance.

Writing releases. The basic rules for newspaper copy apply to radio and television. Be accurate, concise, factual, and neat. Submit on 8 1/2" X 11" plain paper, typed double-spaced

Adapted from: "Business Program Guide"

Tips for Marketing Your Program

The Teacher

- 1** Technical Competence: know your subject matter and keep up with new trends by reading journals and attending professional seminars and classes.
- 2** Personal Strength: keep yourself mentally and physically fit, so you feel good about yourself.
- 3** Dress Professionally: if your personal appearance is unprofessional, your students will follow your example.
- 4** Get Involved In Community Service: as a coach, in parent-teacher organizations, as a youth group leader, or a town council member.
- 5** Use your business cards.
- 6** Ethics: be honest and fair with everyone.
- 7** Develop Your Listening Skills: listen carefully to the suggestions and problems of your students.
- 7** Show That You Care: You can't fake this. Extend congratulations for students' accomplishments, send graduation and get well cards.
- 8** Know Your Students—and their parents and family background. Don't hesitate to call parents with concerns or to invite them to support you in an activity.
- 9** Watch What You Say: Don't gossip or talk negatively about your students, school or other teachers. Be positive and professional.
- 10** Set High Standards. Students generally will perform to the level you set; demand the best from them.

The Program and The Students

- 11** Your students are your best recruiters. Their behavior and dress, in and out of school, tell the public about your program.
- 12** Your program should mirror a professional health care setting: high standards; proper attire required; strict safety standards; wearing of promotional school and program jackets and T-shirts.
- 13** Teach students to answer the phone and greet visitors to your classroom or lab with a greeting that is simple, friendly and professional. This prompts a good impression of your program.
- 14** Participate in tours and hands-on demonstrations for visitors to school events. Host an open house. Send volunteers, demonstrations and displays to local health fairs, county fairs, and festivals.

- 15** Use posters and brochures to promote HSTE program activities.
- 16** Get to know people in the local health care industry. Not only can they hire students, they can recommend your program.
- 17** Require students to keep records of what they do each day and the amount of time it took. It will teach them to be accountable for their time.
- 18** Compete in contests. It's a great motivator for students and may bring good publicity.
- 19** Keep your labs and classrooms clean and neat. Their condition influences the quality of the work done in them.
- 20** Praise students for their accomplishments—be sure it is genuine, worthy praise. This makes students feel good about themselves and what they are doing in your class.
- 21** Send out newsletters about your Health Science Technology Program and announce winners and results of contests the morning after they occur.
- 22** Build and utilize partnerships, with well-known reputable health care professionals from your area and adopt a middle-school class for a year. Promote wellness, HOSA and health care careers to them.

The School

- 23** The attitudes, behavior and comments of administrators, teachers, cooks, custodians, security officers and school nurses present an image of the school to the public. A positive attitude can have a beneficial effect on school enrollment.
- 24** Remember your program partners at health care facilities usually have a public relations or human resources department. Jointly create and disseminate brochures of your HSTE program and HOSA activities.
- 25** Schedule a Health Science Technology Program Orientation visit every January to acquaint area students with your facilities.
- 26** Systematically follow up your orientation—with calls and letters to students; an open house for students and parents; notices of application schedules; phone calls; flyers about the benefits of health science technology programs; radio and television plugs with past and present students, employers and parents.
- 27** Look to your community for help with student recognition. For example, professional organizations or Rotary Clubs may support a Student of the Month program. Outstanding students receive certificates and newspaper recognition and become eligible for cash awards at the end of the year.
- 28** Share a powerpoint presentation about your HSTE program and HOSA at a PTA meeting or with the community.

Marketing HOSA

Stephanie Pigg, Region II Vice-President

Imagine yourself in an elevator on your way to a HOSA event. You are sporting your oh-so fashionable navy blazer, when a well-dressed businessperson turns to you and asks, "What is HOSA?" How would you reply to this distinguished looking person?

HOSA may be one of the best-kept secrets in America. However, it does not have to be! All it takes is a little time and a little courage to get the word out about this wonderful student-led organization. Use these tips to market HOSA:

Be Helpful - Offer to volunteer at local hospitals, clinics, and nursing homes in your hometown. Remember that HOSA is a nonprofit organization is committed to helping others.

Advertise - Write an article on your local HOSA chapter activities. Send the article to a local newspaper. Be sure to inform the newspaper about any fundraiser you conduct to help others. (Hint- Make-A- Wish Foundation ©)

Organize - Organize a fundraiser to help the less fortunate.

Participate - Participate in local events such as March of Dimes, Relay for Life, or other walks that benefit others.

Be Enthusiastic - Let everyone at your school know that HOSA is fun. Share stories about the various conferences and competitions you have attended.

Approach - Present a program about HOSA to local businesses, healthcare facilities, and hospitals. Adults are pleased to hear about students helping the community. Offer your services to them; help in any way you can. You never know what valuable resources these contacts can hold. If you show them how effective HOSA is at preparing students for future careers in the medical field, companies will be happy to "adopt" your local HOSA chapter to help you travel to competitions and conferences.

Do you feel more prepared to face that businessperson now? These are just a few of the many ideas to market HOSA. So get out there and show the world what HOSA members can do!