

Tip Sheet for *My Source* Participants

Below are some tips to help your stations select *My Source* Ambassadors and record and broadcast their testimonials. Thanks to all the stations that provided these tips.

Build on Other Stations' Past Successes for Soliciting Ambassadors

1. Collect a lot more names than you intend to use. You may get 20 names and end up with only one usable testimonial.
2. Don't be shy about asking! Most people are flattered to be considered.
3. Start with people from your members' list and viewers and listeners who have reached out to the station positively in the past. Contact these people directly. That way you'll gain practice and more confidence in soliciting people who have no 'official' connection to the station but are already fans.
4. Solicit ambassadors anywhere you go; you don't necessarily need to wait for the on-air spots to be broadcast. You can ask people at cocktail parties, interns and volunteers at your studios, recipients of the Teacher of the Year awards, etc.
5. Use your staff to solicit. Everyone throughout the station can solicit ambassadors.
6. Ask your current ambassadors to suggest other people they know who might be avid public broadcasting fans and interested in providing a testimonial.
7. Start collecting a list of ambassadors much earlier than the time the spots are needed. This gives you more time to vet your list and be more selective about participants.
8. Use your own air-waves to solicit ambassadors. This can include using on-air talent or simply using scripts throughout the day to request submissions.
9. Leverage board members (including station Board of Directors, Community Advisory Boards, etc.) in soliciting testimonials. Ask board members directly to record spots or help you recruit other community leaders who are public broadcasting fans.
10. Incorporate testimonial solicitations in to your membership guides, e-newsletter and web sites.
11. Participate in community events such as art fairs, health fairs, etc. to solicit testimonials on-site. Always keep a sign-up sheet and pens/pencils available. You never know when an opportunity might arise.
12. Post flyers, posters, and tear sheets at local businesses and community bulletin boards.
13. Solicit ambassadors from visitors to your station and open house events.
14. Collaborate with your station's government relations office to solicit local policymakers or with your development office to solicit station members or donors or with your Outreach/Events office to coordinate events where you could collect ambassador names.
15. Tap your talk show guest lists to recruit "high profile" ambassadors.

Recording Ambassador Testimonials

1. When possible, send the ambassador question cues IN ADVANCE of the shoot to help prepare them for the conversation.
2. Capture as many testimonials from a single ambassador as you can. For example, if the ambassador lists several reasons why public broadcasting is valuable to them, then create several different spots using the same ambassador but with different taglines. That way you'll quickly build an inventory of *My Source* spots. It also ensures that you have other "tagline" options to consider as you're doing your final editing.
3. For radio testimonials, plan for at least 15 minutes to record and 30 min. for editing, adding music beds, and final reviews. Initial outreach & follow up phone calls to schedule logistics can take additional time.
4. Keep the testimonials short (0:30 or less) as it is much easier to find air-time for short spots than it is for longer spots.
5. If applicable, don't let your ambassadors see their written responses before shooting, even to "refresh" their memory. They tend to want to try to memorize what they have written, and this often sounds too scripted and unnatural. Stress the importance of not using a scripted text.
6. Solicit, shoot, and produce a couple of trial testimonials on a "practice" group to ensure that you have the process and procedure in place before reaching out to the general audience, influencers, etc. to do "real" testimonials.
7. Be sure to gather the initial testimonial before worrying too much about the *My Source* tag line.
8. Keep your ears open because you never know when the great *My Source* tag line will emerge from the testimonial.
9. Capture testimonials in a piecemeal fashion as this will keep the initiative fresh and relevant throughout the year. As new issues or topics come up, you can capture testimonials as they relate to the issues or topics at hand or on a regular cycle. For example, stations may want to plan to capture testimonials once every quarter or during fundraising drives. If you have planned out your station events for the year, then stations may want to target a few of those events throughout the year to collect names of potential ambassadors.

When to Broadcast Your Spots

1. Base your broadcast frequency around specific initiatives or events, and keep base-level rotation on-going to continue the awareness. For example, some stations increase spot rotations during fund drive cycles and then, decrease the rotation but continue to play them to maintain audience awareness particularly during times of high tune-in like during morning or evening commutes.
2. Broadcast program-specific testimonials before the program airs.
3. Use your member testimonials during fund drives to encourage other listeners/viewers to become members.
4. Collect a suite of testimonials based around different themes or subjects that can be broadcast at appropriate times throughout the year. For example, collect testimonials about the educational value of public broadcasting and air those right before school starts in September.