



THE SUFFOLK LAWYER

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... And Never Say "No Comment"!

The Academy's first CLE program of 2004 was January 6th's "Media Training for Lawyers," a tips-and-techniques presentation featuring guest speaker **Art Samansky** of the Samansky Group, a Long Island-based public relations firm. Mr. Samansky, whose background includes 40 years as a New York City reporter and corporate public affairs executive, told the audience how to deal with both planned and unplanned interviews with print, radio, or T.V. journalists. "Stay on the record"; "stay on-message"; "never lie"; and "keep answers brief" were among the pointers he supplied.

The extremely well received program was arranged by Academy Officer Howard Baker (partially visible in the foreground).

Strategic Communications Plan Strengthens Law Firm Marketing Efforts

Lawyers and law firms should be sure to understand their firm's core messages and brand before developing their public image, marketing programs, or even building their website, Art Samansky, president, The Samansky Group, a Long Island-based specialized public affairs consulting firm, said in remarks at a Suffolk Academy of Law program held in January.

That requires the development of a well thought out strategic communications plan, akin to a general business plan, he said.

The continuing legal education seminar, "Media Training for Lawyers," focused on how to build an effective working relationship with media and the key elements in conducting a successful media interview, all of which should be part of the strategic communications plan, Mr. Samansky said.

"With greater media attention on legal issues, and the resulting increased interaction between attorneys and journalists, it is especially important for attorneys to understand how to work effectively with the media," said Howard A. Baker, Academy officer, and program coordinator for the seminar.

That understanding may be important to positioning a firm with the client community, peers, professional and community organizations, judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials, and regulators, Mr. Samansky said.

Effective public relations starts with developing a well conceived strategic communications plan, and employing public relations counsel that fits with a firm's needs and objectives, as well as its size, location and business area, Mr. Samansky said.

"Simply conducting media relations--whether pro-actively or reactively--merely for the sake of seeing the firm's name in print, generally isn't useful or wise, and may even be counterproductive," he said.

The Samansky Group specializes in strategic communications development, message development, reputational communications, media training, presentation training and development, speech training and speechwriting, litigation communications support, crisis communications, and website development.

For additional information about The Samansky Group, please log on to www.samanskygroup.com.