

**Amber - Communications manager from IMEU (Insitute for Middle East Understanding)**

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- Introductory points
  - Most work happens behind the scenes like talking to reporters - making sure Palestinian stories are told (pitching stories, recommending students to reporters for stories)
  - The purpose of this meeting is to give tips and tools for statements and interviews
  - The main principle for messaging is to lead with shared values: freedom, unity, justice (think about your core values of safety, dignity, and togetherness).
- Value statements
  - Value statements help keep statements from going to unrelated areas, under 45 seconds if possible
- Language
  - Be wary of academic jargon and unfeeling descriptive phrases
  - Avoid encampment—often framed in negative way
    - Describe as a protest on our lawn, where there's dancing, singing, eating food together as students join in solidarity, creating community, standing up for human rights—keep it as clear and as non-clinical as possible
  - Be clear when using the term “occupation” as easily misunderstood
    - Use also displacement and genocide
  - Solidarity but also unity, allyship, support from other marginalized groups
  - Careful with financial terms like divestment and endowment—use your money, your tax and tuition dollars
- Say what you're for, not just against
  - Bring people into the movement with your language—describe an alternative world we're envisioning, where Palestinians are given the same respect, the equality they deserve, where Palestinians are free, not just given freedom of movement but also freedom of speech
  - Empower your peers to allow them to join this movement with us.
  - Be proactive not reactive; never defensive
  - Don't repeat the opposition's lines
- Storytelling
  - Stories stick with us in a way that data doesn't. Example: 20 Universities have been destroyed vs "A fifth-year architecture in Gaza is no longer able to receive her degree because her University has been destroyed by "Israeli" forces.

- Tell individual stories of students (while protecting their identities and keeping them anonymous, not speaking for them), students who have sacrificed a lot to be in community with peers on lawn, students from all walks of life here
- Messaging priorities
  - Topline: Right now, Israel is brutally bombing and starving millions of Palestinians in Gaza. As a student, I'm horrified that Princeton is funding Israel's genocide.
    - Not horrified that Princeton hasn't divested, but horrified that supports
    - Divestment and endowment fund are confusing words
  - Topline: We're not going anywhere, hundreds of students are continuing to peacefully protest at Princeton. Our values call on us to speak up for justice for Palestinians. We will not be silenced.
    - Always say peaceful before protest—create word association, maps protest-peaceful
    - These are values statements
    - Emphasize freedom of speech—American value
  - Topline: Princeton's repression of student advocacy for Palestinian freedom is part of a pattern across the country aimed at silencing students speaking out against Israel's genocide in Gaza
    - Pattern of repression—can speak to case at Princeton more specifically, but not just a one-off event
  - Topline: We are not alone. Thousands of students across the US are loudly calling for justice for Palestinians. It's past time for university leaders to do the right thing and support the Palestinian struggle for freedom.
  - Topline: This is happening all across the United States, mention specific Universities that are doing this
    - New York University, The New School, University of Michigan, Emerson College, Yale University, University of Maryland, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Swarthmore College, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Tufts University and Barnard College/Columbia University
    - This is so much bigger than just 300 students at Columbia. There are thousands of us. It is a national movement. Say "I was inspired, I'm not just doing this with students at Princeton, there are people thousands of miles away in California that I am doing this with."
  - Remind people that the goals are ceasefire, divestment and self-determination for Palestinians.
  - Tell people about how Universities have a history of repression. Give examples of Columbia's pattern of behavior of giving NYPD approval to arrest students
  - Always refer back to Gaza. Be sure we are not distracting.

- “I am watching a genocide live-streamed. I couldn't imagine my University being bombed.”
- When people say we shouldn't focus on things abroad, bring up how you're disgusted that our tuition and tax dollars are funding genocide
- Smears and attacks (False accusations of antisemitism)
  - Always acknowledge that antisemitism is a real and dangerous problem
  - Don't say “false accusations”—people aren't very receptive
    - Say instead: I have always spoken out against violence, racism, and all forms of oppression against all people. That is why I am speaking up for Palestinians.
    - Add: Those claims are used to try to smear us and our advocates for supporting Palestinian freedoms
  - Emphasize your right to speak out against racism, oppression, and violence
  - Refocus onto facts of your case and what happened to you
    - “Antisemitism is a real problem, no one deserves to feel unsafe, and that's why I feel the need to speak out on behalf of Palestinians who are being brutally murdered in Gaza”
    - “We want all students to feel safe, which is why we have to speak up on behalf of those who are oppressed”
  - Never bring up antisemitism unless it is brought up—don't associate human rights and Palestinian freedom with antisemitism, don't do their work for them
  - Say: Lots of our organizers are Jewish, their social justice training is what motivates them to be here, when we say never again, we mean never again for anyone.
    - BUT: Don't speak on behalf of Jews, pick key people to be ready to do that because it's been a big request at Columbia
  - Russia/China smear: emphasize this is a distraction, bring back to the issue at hand
- Interview/press engagement prep
  - Ask for their deadline, respond to inquiries quickly and maintain regular contact
  - What kind of interview is this? (In-person, live-TV/radio, responding to written questions, etc.)
  - Check with other people, Google your interviewer's name + “Gaza” and/or “Palestine” (in quotations), familiarize yourself with journalist and outlet, ask around if people know anything about them or the particular outlet/media (be specific, e.g., NYT Video spin different from NYT Print)
  - Make yourself available and respond asap, you want to be the person they go to for all their questions
- Interview techniques
  - Flagging—begin sentences with phrases that catch people's attention, e.g.:

- The most important thing to remember/realize/think about is...
- The key issue is...
- I really want to emphasize that...
- Bridging: Answer the question you want to answer, not necessarily the question asked; use the question being asked to you as a springboard, or bridge to say what you want to say, e.g.:
  - The question we should be asking is...
  - The real problem is...
  - It would be more accurate to say...
  - Let me emphasize again...