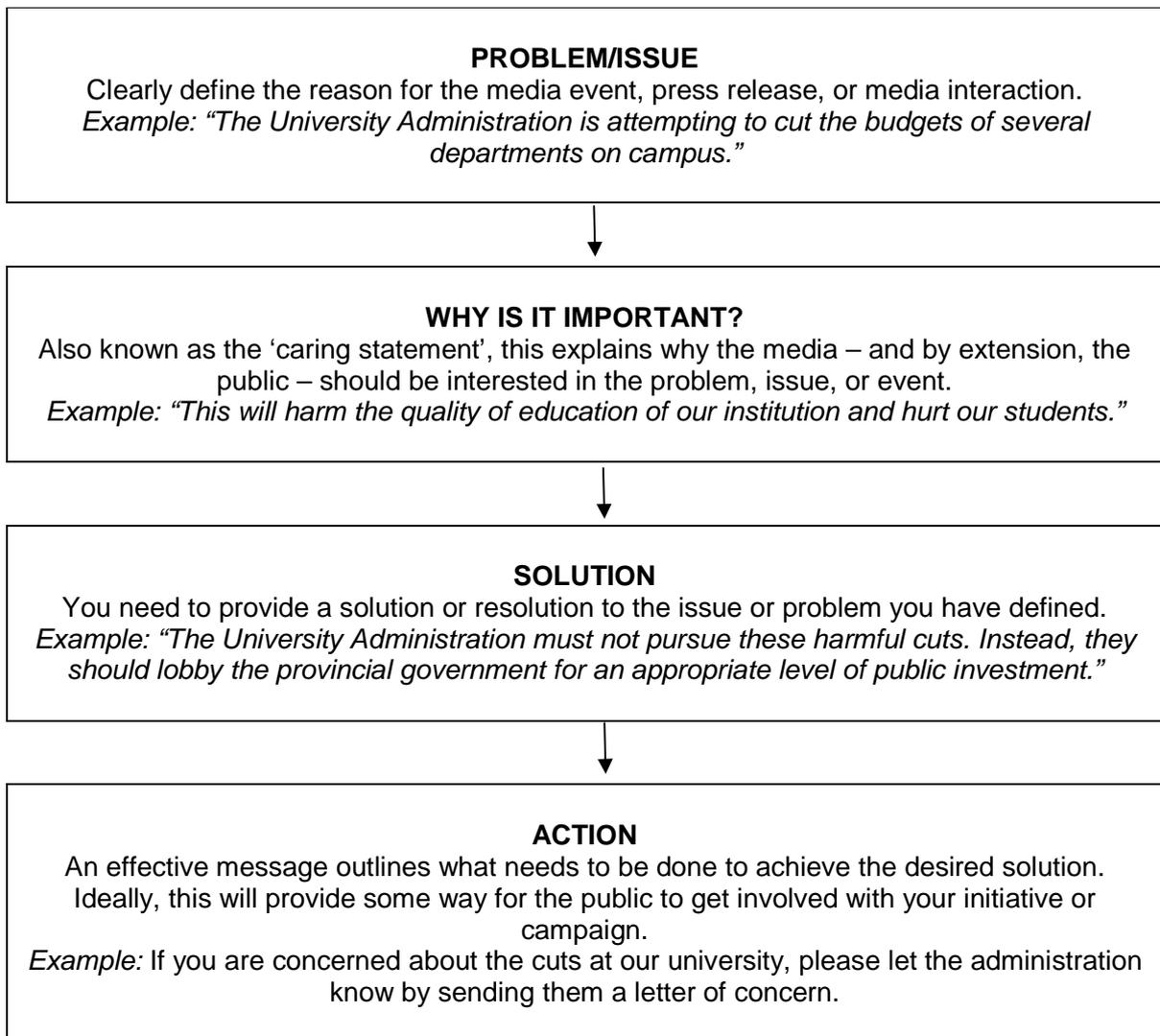


Developing Effective Key Messages

Concise, clear messages that promote action are essential to any media strategy, document, or interaction. They allow you to construct effective press releases, focus your interviews, and be consistent with reporters and editors. A strong set of messages has four elements:



Tips for effective messages

- Define your audience before crafting your messages (Students? Faculty? Politicians?). *Who* you are speaking to will determine how you focus and construct each point.
- Messages are most effective when they are *personal*. That is, when they speak to how a given issue will impact an individual or group of individuals, and how they can become involved in the solution.

- Make sure all of your messages are supported by solid, well-researched facts, and that you have easy access to this data before doing interviews.
- Make sure all of your spokespeople are familiar with your key messages before talking to the media. Consistency across your faculty association is important.
- While key messages are a very important, they aren't meant to be straightjackets. Some situations will require you to go beyond your messages, or even develop new ones.