Twelve Steps to Getting OA's Public Service Announcement (PSA)
Aired on Radio and TV Stations

OA's PSA, *It's Not What You're Eating, It's What's Eating You*, received the 1996 Award of Distinction from the National Communicator Awards. Here's how to get our PSA on the air:

1. Call your local TV and radio stations and ask to speak with the public service or public affairs director at each station. When calling, don’t forget about cable TV stations; many small communities have cable systems that run PSAs. Large metropolitan areas will often have a local broadcasters association. Nonprofit groups may have to go through this association to get a clearance—a special number assigned to each organization—which can be used at all area stations. In areas with few TV stations, it is important that local meetings coordinate their approaches to avoid confusion.

2. Tell the public affairs director that you are submitting a PSA on behalf of the nonprofit organization Overeaters Anonymous.

3. If the station requires further proof of OA’s nonprofit status, write to WSO and we will send you a copy of our tax-exemption letter. (Note: Groups and intergroups can’t use this letter to establish their own tax-exempt status.)

4. Ask which format the TV station uses. (Radio stations will use compact disks.) Network television and most cable stations use Beta Cam SP. TV stations in countries other than the USA often use the PAL format. Be sure to write this information down when speaking to each station, since formats often vary; you will need specific information when ordering your PSAs.

Be aware that stations often don’t want tapes “on loan,” which leaves them with the responsibility of returning them to you. You have three options when purchasing the PSA: (1) buy enough original tapes for all the TV stations on which you want the PSA to air, and buy a VHS version for your own viewing; (2) prearrange with a TV station to duplicate your tape for all your uses, and give the duplicates to the TV stations; or (3) find a private studio that will reproduce the PSA for you. You will be expected to pay the TV station or private studio for duplication services. Prices for this service can vary widely and may be more than the cost to purchase originals from the WSO. Copyright permission to duplicate the PSA for airing is not required, as long as the copies are not intended for resale.

5. Ask the public affairs director if the station will accept a professionally produced PSA, or if they would prefer to dub over our video (some stations insist on using the voices of their own anchor people). If this is the case, you can send the station our script (included with the PSA) along with the tape. If any changes are made to the PSA, request to listen to or see it before it is aired.
6. Ask if the station is equipped to add your local intergroup’s phone number instead of or in addition to the WSO phone number provided on the tape. If the station is unable to do so, the PSA will direct interested people to call the World Service Office in Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

7. Use the order form included in the OA literature catalog or call the WSO to order the PSAs your local stations require.

8. Send the PSA for copying, or send a copy of the PSA, to the public affairs directors you have spoken with. Enclose the script with the PSA, as well as a letter on why the station should air the PSA (see page 51 for a sample letter you can adapt). It would also be a good idea to send an informative pamphlet; we recommend the flyer About OA.

9. Ask the public affairs director to let you know when the PSA will air. (PSAs are often aired at night.)

10. When the PSA has aired, send thank-you notes to the public affairs directors you have worked with.

11. Be prepared for newcomers to your meetings by stocking up on OA literature. Be prepared for calls to your local OA phone line by compiling a list of abstaining members who can help callers with questions about OA.

12. Report back to the WSO on your results with the video and audio PSAs. Write an article about your experience and send it the WSO.

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