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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Thiensville) May 8, 2008 – Media trainer and public relations counsel Dennis Dean, The Dean Group. Thiensville ([www.deangroup.com](http://www.deangroup.com) & [www.mediatrainerpro.com](http://www.mediatrainerpro.com)) is among a group of experts leading a crisis communications seminar for Wisconsin attorneys Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup> in Elkhart Lake. The seminar features panels, mock trials and audience interaction addressing issues raised by the government, media and stakeholders in hypothetical crisis situations. It is being conducted by the Wisconsin Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel America (WISAACA). Also on the panel are Steven Biskupic, U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Wisconsin; Nathan Fishbach, an attorney with Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek, SC and former Interim U.S. Attorney, Eastern District of Wisconsin; Richard Levick, President, Levick Communications, Washington D.C.; Paul Kritzer, Former General Counsel-Media, Journal Communications; Bruce Lindl, General Counsel, Regal Ware, Inc., and others.

Dean, a former reporter, anchor and managing editor at two Milwaukee television stations, provides media expertise, public relations counsel and media training for corporate executives, attorneys, advertising agency clients and others confronting the media.

“Organizations need to be prepared ahead of time,” Dean says. “You can’t start when the crisis hits. Having a crisis plan in place ahead of time is vital.” Dean tells clients when bad things happen, they need to get out in front immediately and be in control. Do that, he says, and you can mitigate the damage more quickly and restore order. “But you have to start ahead of time to be ahead of the game when a crisis strikes.”

Dean, who advises clients on how to get into the news as well as stay out of the news, says companies need to closely monitor both their organization, their industry and related areas to become aware of trends, pick up early warning signs and other indicators of a pending crisis.

“It’s not just the industrial accident on the plant floor or at the construction site you need to worry about, or the prospect of a product recall or an executive involved in embezzlement” he says. “Today nearly every industry has outside critics and adversaries, from environmental and political groups to their own competitors. Knowing what these groups are doing is critical, along with having plans in place to counter it.”

“The biggest mistake people make is saying ‘It can’t happen here.’ It does. Bad things happen to good companies. But they can do something about it, especially if they start planning today for a crisis tomorrow.”

Dean says outside public relations counsel who understands the news media and can operate effectively in the face of crisis is important before, during and after the event. So is outside legal counsel. “In-house staff are critical to the process, but outside experts bring additional perspectives, and crisis experience to the table,” according to Dean, who says in-house staff are often influenced by internal pressures, dynamics and conflicts that don’t effect outside experts. Dean says during a crisis it is not uncommon to have to tell corporate executives things they may not want to hear, or coach them to do what they are unaccustomed to doing. “I had to tell an attorney recently he was wrong in something he did,” Dean relates, “and the sooner he made that part of his response to a situation, the sooner he could mitigate the damage to his law practice.”

The WISACCA mini-conference draws attorneys from across Wisconsin. Additional seminars on corporate responsibility, environmental, employment and other issues are scheduled. It is being held May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake.

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