

**BACHELOR OF ARTS (JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION)
ELECTIVE COURSE
FOURTH SEMESTER
TELEVISION NEWS: REPORTING AND ANCHORING**

COURSE CODE: BA (JMC) 208	L: 4	T/P: 0	CREDITS: 4
External Evaluation: 75 Marks	Internal Evaluation: 25 Marks	Total Marks: 100	

Unit I: [Structure of TV News Channel] L: 12

1. Basics of Television News: Concept of News and News Value
2. Structure of TV News Channel
3. Qualities and Responsibilities of News Personnel
4. News Sources and Monitoring Services

Unit II: [TV News Writing] L: 12

1. Characteristics and Essentials of TV Language
2. News Writing: Concepts and Elements
3. Writing for Visuals: Simple News stories, Writing Intros / Opening, Headlines & Closing / Concluding
4. News Writing for TV versus other Media

Unit III: [TV News Reporting] L: 12

1. Television News Reporter: Techniques and Styles
2. Different Types of Reporting: Objective, Investigative, Interpretative, Reporting Beats
3. Essentials of Field Reporting: Live/recorded Phone-in, Piece to Camera, Walk through
4. Guidelines and Challenges for a TV Reporter

Unit IV: [TV News Anchoring] L: 12

1. News Anchor: Qualities, Responsibilities and Professional Ethics
2. Voice Personality & Presentation
3. Anchoring News & Non-News Programs
4. Anchoring with/without Tele-prompter, Studio and Outdoor

TV Journalism

Television journalism involves more than reporting the news on television. It also involves researching and writing stories, collecting facts, following tips, and more.

Television journalism is the reason we have major television news shows – whether those shows are regarding world news, politics, sports or celebrities. The journalists who work to bring those television shows to life may research stories, write, collect facts, follow tips, and present the information to the public on television and more. Television journalism is not quite so different from print journalism, although television journalists use a different platform to tell their stories.

News:

News is an unpublished and not broadcast account of human activity, which seeks to interest, inform, or educate the readers. The first requirement of news is that writing should not have been published and broadcast anywhere before. It should come to the readers to the first time. It is like a hot cake coming straight from the oven. The second ingredient is human activity. News must relate in one way or the other to the human activity. Human beings must be involved in an event embodied in news. The Third important factor is that it should be of some interest to the readers. The interest may be physical or emotional. The fourth important prerequisite is that it should be designed to impart some sort of information to the readers.

"New information, the report of latest incident"

Characteristics of News

The important characteristics of news are

1. Accuracy
2. Balance
3. Objectivity
4. Concise and Clear
5. Current and freshness

New Value:

- *The power elite*: Stories concerning powerful individuals, organizations or institutions.
- *Celebrity*: Stories concerning people who are already famous.
- *Entertainment*: Stories concerning sex, show business, human interest, animals, an unfolding drama, or offering opportunities for humorous treatment, entertaining photographs or witty headlines.
- *Surprise*: Stories that have an element of surprise and/or contrast.
- *Bad news*: Stories with particularly negative overtones, such as conflict or tragedy.

- *Good news*: Stories with particularly positive overtones, such as rescues and cures.
- *Relevance*: Stories about issues, groups and nations perceived to be relevant to the audience.
- *Follow-up*: Stories about subjects already in the news.

Structure of TV News Channel:

Television stations are organized into five basic departments under the guidance of a company president and a general manager. These departments are news, programming, engineering, sales and advertising, and business administration.

News

The news department is the local face of any television station. News anchors, reporters, meteorologists and sports anchors usually become recognizable personalities in their communities. But behind the scenes are several people that facilitate news coverage, including the news director, makeup artists and a variety of producers, editors and content writers. Entry-level staffers at the news assignment desk, for instance, are on the front lines of the news-gathering operation. They man news-tip phone lines, listen to police scanners, wade through emails and press releases and assist editors and producers in assigning stories and scheduling interviews.

Programming

Programming departments have a manager and assistant staff. The manager coordinates with other departments, especially the production or engineering department, to ensure scheduling and local television listings are accurate and up to date. This person also negotiates with parent companies to secure airing rights for new shows. However, the National Broadcasters Association reports that many large stations have reduced programming departments due to content being pre-determined at higher corporate levels. Another department with a similar function is the traffic department, which sets the advertising schedule and helps develop and edit a station's master list of programming.

Engineering

This department handles the technical aspects of broadcasting and on-air time. Under a chief engineer, otherwise known as director of broadcasting operations, there are a host of managers, engineers and studio crew members, including show directors, cameramen, audio board operators, teleprompter operators, photographers, videographers, tape room editors and engineering technicians. Master control supervisors oversee the master control room and all switchboard operators. They monitor transmitter readings, align satellite receiver equipment and make sure video airs in proper sequence.

Sales and Advertising

This is the department of the television station that generates revenue. The director of sales oversees sales managers, including the national sales manager and local sales manager. The former handles sales representatives from national advertising firms, working on tight deadline to book air time for high-profile clients. The latter supervises a sales staff comprised of account executives. Often working on commission, account executives focus on the local market, making contacts with businesses and other organizations in the community to sell advertising. Advertising departments might also have production staffs that include art directors, electronic graphic artists and voice talent, as well as market researchers who review and interpret ratings.

Business Administration

The business administration department handles the day-to-day business of a TV station. Office managers or station managers work under the general manager and oversee clerks, receptionists and other help staff. Controllers, usually certified public accountants, are responsible overseeing the station's financial transactions, reports and budgets. They consult with other department heads regarding cash flow and expenditures. The human resources or personnel manager hires employees and ensures a safe workplace in all departments. Business administration might also house building maintenance workers who take care of the facility, from the studio to the restrooms.

Qualities of a Reporter:

The reporter must have some desire qualities to successes or to achieve the standard position of profession. The following are the basic qualities of a reporter or rather a good reporter:

Courageous and Confident

A good reporter should be courageous and confident. Without courage and confidence it is difficult for a person to be a good reporter. Timidity on the part of any reporter will get them nowhere. You need to be brave enough to write the truth, no matter what the consequences. Sometimes it's not easy. You end up almost becoming friends with your sources over time, and then one day you may be forced to write something negative about someone who thought they were your friend. That's just the nature of the business. Also, sometimes you have to get mean with people who try to stonewall you and hide the truth.

Skepticism

A good journalist is one who doesn't take things on face value. Press releases or information given to them from people pushing for a certain agenda is only a starting point for a good journalist. Good journalists question sources and are always prepared to dig around until they get facts they are satisfied with.

Trustworthiness/Credible

Credibility is something that every good reporter should have. In other words, a reporter must exhibit characters and behaviors that make him or her to be believed and trusted by people. Journalists interact with people from all walks of life who are often faced with an extreme crisis in their lives. It is a good journalist's duty to know what to ask and when in the most appropriate manner. When people trust him enough to give him confidential or private information, it is his duty as a journalist to not make that information publicly available.

Develop Good Writing Skills

Wherever a journalist may work, whether in Print, Radio, TV or Online, they have to write. Depending on the time constraints, a good journalist is one who writes articulately, succinctly and quickly in an interesting and relevant way that appeals to readers.

Persistence

Craziest thing, some people you have to write about don't like you or don't care about you. You have to be able to call them over and over and follow them around like a stalker sometimes to get the information you need.

Good at Communicative Skills

The reporter has to be able to communicate with people, interpret what information they give you, and present it to others. The relationship of trust between information organs and people is the foundation for every journalist's job. To promote and maintain of this relationship all journalists should be good at communication sectors. A journalist has to respect, cultivate and defend the right to information of all people; for these reasons he researches and diffuses every piece of information that he considers of public interest in observance of truth and with a wide accuracy of it.

Inquisitive

A good journalist is one who is nosy. Where did the money for the project come from? Why is this politician supporting this policy? Why are these construction workers not wearing their head gear? A good journalist is one who is curious and burns with the desire to know what is going on in the world.

Integrity

A journalist cannot accept benefits, favors or tasks that impair his autonomy and his professional credibility. A journalist cannot omit facts or details essential for a complete reconstruction of events. Titles, summaries, photos and subtitles must not either distort reality or forge the contents of all articles and news. A journalist must not publish images and photos of people involved in daily episodes which are particularly terrifying or prejudicial to people's dignity, nor may he

dwelt upon details of violence or brutality unless for a prominent reason of social interest. He may not intervene in reality to create artificial images.

News Sense

News sense is the basic quality of newsmen. News sense is essential for a reporter. He has to have news sense or nose for news to distinguish news from non-news. He is the first reader of a copy and if he has made a mistake he has to correct it. A bad copy may have the most important element of the story buried in the fourth paragraph. He should be able to compare various news values and decide where to begin his story and should not miss important details.

Clarity

A reporter should have clarity of mind and expression. A person who is confused himself cannot tell a story to others. Only clarity of mind is not enough unless it is accompanied by clarity of expression. Without clarity of expression clarity of mind has no meaning. Reporter is the judge of clarity of the copy a good reporter will never allow a copy escape him unless the meaning is crystal clear.

Alertness

A reporter should always be alert while dealing with his subjects. Many major news breaks in the past were possible because of alertness of sources. A reporter has to be alert while working on news-beat. Lack of alertness of a reporter can be seen by readers in the morning for he will be leaving or introducing mistakes for everybody to see.

Punctuality

It is a good habit. It is always better to be punctual and then wait than reach late and ask others a rival may misinform you or hide some important information. At the beat too punctuality pays. If a reporter is punctual he will be treated with respect by his co-workers. If he is late he will irritate them and spoil the working atmosphere. Besides he may have to face the problem of backlog of copy which he will have to clear under the pressure of deadline.

Determined

A journalist knows the difficulty in finding information, especially when certain people won't agree to be interviewed. Nevertheless, they are determined to get over the toughest hurdle and bring a difficult story out into the open. What may start off seeming to be a simple news story can require hard work and determination?

Good General Knowledge

A good journalist is one who knows something about everything. They are well-informed news junkies especially in the area of politics, current affairs and law. There are plenty of ways to improve one's general knowledge, from watching TV quiz shows and doing the newspaper

quizzes to online searches, playing board games or even using your local or school library to access things like atlases, dictionaries and encyclopedias.

Cultivate Accuracy

A good journalist is one who double- and even triple-checks the spelling of names and gives the correct details of the events that took place. Journalists need to have an eye for detail and not be afraid to ask questions again and again to ensure accuracy.

Responsibility and Fairness

A good journalist is one who is able to take personal responsibility for what they write. They must keep in mind that there will be people who will be upset because they disagree with the angle of the story or because they wanted their story to be given more importance.

Motivated and Enthusiastic/ Curiosity

Curiosity is another very important quality of any good reporter. There is the need to be curious all the time. The spirit of curiosity helps the reporter get good stories. It helps a lot if a journalist has a skill or interest in something else. For instance journalists that know a lot and have a lot of interest in a certain subject are usually valuable. A good journalist is one who does not give up easily and one who has thick skin. There will be times when a journalist won't be able to find interesting stories to write up, or people who are willing to talk to them. Regardless, a good journalist maintains a high level of motivation whatever the situation may be.

Highly Competitive

It is difficult to get a job in mainstream media as a journalist. The industry is highly competitive and only few get selected. Nevertheless, there are many other opportunities for journalists as long as they are determined, competitive and have the skills noted above. Just make sure you get your foot in the media door. Some ways to start his journalism career include blogging, making regular contributions to his school or university newspapers, and volunteering at community radio stations. Keep in mind that any extra experience he gets in any media field will place him one step ahead of everyone else in the industry.

Hard working

A reporter should be able to work fast and enthusiastically on any given story. News writing especially has a lot to do with deadlines. This therefore means that a good reporter should be able to work under pressure and meet deadlines. If you can't soak the pressure then it is going to be hard to work as a reporter. The nature of the job being such, an 'up-and -doing' type of person

proves successful in this line. Naturally, persons who prefer fixed working hours and regular routine in daily life are unsuitable for this job.

Powers to Make the Right Question

Must be good at ask the right questions at the right time. A good reporter must be able to analyze and interpret information. He should have an ability to ask critical questions to the source. A shy and a reserved type of young person are totally unfit to become a successful reporter. He should be a man of initiative and should not be easily disheartened or discouraged.

Maintain Code of Conduct

Either way, a journalist must be fair all the time and maintain a level of objectivity in what they report. The best journalist is one who has strong ethical and moral codes of conduct that help them determine what information to write and what to leave out. Reporters are people that no media organization can do without. For example newspapers all over the world rely on their reporters for their news contents. A reporter's job is therefore a very important one.

Self Editing, Correction and Criticism Power

A good reporter should have the habit of self-editing their copy before submitting it to their editors. Reporters should be able to write well. By writing very well I mean writing clear and well-focused stories that is easy to understand by everyone. Good spellings, punctuations and grammar are also requirements. A good reporter should be able to take corrections and criticisms in the course of performing their job. Comments, opinions belong to the right of speech and of criticism and, therefore, they have to be absolutely free from any obligation.

Eyes for Indicating News Story

A good reporter should have an eye for what is newsworthy and should be able to produce new stories without being told. A good reporter should be able to gather facts in a very careful and accurate way.

Capable to Work with Others and Irregular Hours

The work of news gathering is quite an unpredictable one. One might never know when news will break or where it will happen. It is for this reason that a reporter should be able and willing to work at irregular hours. A reporter should be a good team player and be capable of working with other reporters, photographers and even editors. He should have an ability to work under

pressure to meet deadlines. The nature of the job being such, an ‘up-and -doing” type of person proves successful in this line. Naturally, persons who prefer fixed working hours and regular routine in daily life are unsuitable for this job. The above are some of the basic qualities that reporters should have regardless of whatever medium they are working – print media or broadcast media. If they develop these qualities, will be on the way to becoming a good reporters

Responsibilities of Reporter:

Reporters are people that no media organization can do without. A reporter’s job is therefore a very important one. The followings are the most common functions of a reporter:

To Gather News

A reporter is the gatherer of news, and as such performs an important function in a newspaper establishment. As he has to gather news, he is required to be on the move most of the time usually within the area allotted to him. He has to interview persons and attend public functions and meetings, press conferences and law courts to investigate events of public interest, to collect news and to ascertain news on contemporary events.

To Observe

A reporter is one who observes the passing show in the widest sense of the word and pictures its detail for the benefit of the whole society. He cannot play his part successfully unless he keeps his eyes open and his mind attuned to the present, future as well as the past. He must have the observation power to select news from the open world.

Finding the Angle

The angle of a news story is its most vital part. A news story is based on the angle it takes. Once a reporter gets all the facts about a story, the choice of selecting the right angle begins. The reporter has to decide it quickly because the story has to be reported at the earliest. So every reporter faces this question of deciding the angle.

To Make the News Reports

By reporting, we mean collection or gathering of facts about current events or background material required for a news story or feature. Reporters do it through interviews, investigations and observation. Reporters are given directions by editors to cover a particular event, known as assignments. They may be general assignments or special ones. Reporters write the news stories, which are called copies. We call a news report a news story. In a newspaper office, reporters are the ones who file stories. They may be given different assignments. These may be on politics, economics, parliament, the stock exchange, sports, courts or markets. The reporter’s job is to write the story as quickly as possible with all the facts and figures.

To Be an Active Listener As Well As Active Person

A reporter can get good stories by listening to others. While traveling in a bus, the reporter overhears the conversation between two passengers. “Did you go to the town today? There was a

terrible accident. A school bus overturned. Twenty children were taken to hospital.” By listening to this, the reporter gets a clue to a story. He now has to find out more details of the accident. Which school bus was involved? How many children were injured? In which hospital where they been admitted? The reporter goes to the accident site to collect all this information. The reporter’s job does not end there. He has to inform the photographer about the accident. The next day’s newspaper should also carry some good photographs about the accident.

Covering Events

PM visit Rangpur and hold a meeting, “India-Pakistan cricket Test in Mumbai”, “Kumbhmela in Haridwar”, “ International Film Festival in Goa “, these are all events. Reporters cover these events for their publications, channels or news bulletins. The coverage depends upon the importance and magnitude of the event. A small local government level meeting will be covered locally, whereas a state level function will get wider coverage. If it is a national event, it will receive nationwide attention.

Go To Press Conference

A major source of news is the press conference. Leaders of political parties hold press conferences regularly. Ministers also hold press conferences to announce various programmes and policies of the government. Business houses arrange press conferences to launch their new products. Organizations and Associations also held press briefings.

To Attend Press Briefing

These are other major sources of news items. Various commissions and committees submit their reports to the Government which are a goldmine as far as news reporters are concerned. Statements or press briefing by leaders and businessmen also make news. The reporters should present in media briefing.

To Move Into Respective Beats

As he has to gather news, he is required to be on the move most of the time usually within the area allotted to him. He has to interview persons and attend public functions and meetings, press conferences and law courts to investigate events of public interest, to collect news and to ascertain news on contemporary events. His work changes daily; as such he should be prepared to handle any assignment and move anywhere. He should have special knack of meeting all sorts of people in all types of circumstances.

To Concern About Parliament And Assemblies

Parliament and state assemblies when in session generate lot of news. Questions in both the houses of parliament, proceedings, calling attentions, zero-hour mentions, debates and various acts passed by the parliament also make news. The general budget and railway budget are presented in parliament. State budgets are presented in state assemblies.

To Have Liaison

The reporters should have maintained liaison with different sources of news. Such as- The police are in charge of law and order. So the police always maintain a close vigil about various activities of citizens. Reporters get details about crime, accidents etc. from police sources.

Interviewing

Interviewing people connected with an event or incident is a very common practice used by reporters to get details. Television reporters take the opinion of people which are called reactions. Occasionally, reporters of newspapers and channels conduct long interviews with important people.

Rewrite A News Story

Rewriting material needs that it flows or reads better and adheres to the house style of a particular publication. Ensuring that, a story fits a particular word count by cutting or expanding materials as necessary. Checking facts and stories to ensure they are accurate, adhere to copyright laws, are not libelous or go against the publication's policy. Plan to ensure that the right stories appear in the correct place on each page. If the reporter find any mistakes in a copy he should correct the copy. If he think that the story needs to add some information or develop the story then he should re-write the story.

To Make Quick Decision

He should be able to grasp the situation quickly and reduce it into writing in the shortest time and in a readable form. But while reporting news he must be able to judge its authenticity and then report the news so collected with absolute honesty. The narrative should be attractive so that the readers should enjoy reading it. In such a circumstance, he must have an eye for the important discussions/ decisions which are to be included in the report, omitting all other unimportant/irrelevant matter.

To Investigate Information and Report

The investigative journalist digs beneath the surface to help readers understand what's going on in a complex world. Reporters must write and research stories in designated areas of expertise, or "beats." This is more common at larger news organizations, where journalists specialize in such specific topics as medicine, politics or sports. Small city and town newspaper reporters are more likely to cover a wide range of subjects. Editors assign specific topics, which reporters develop into stories from calling or personally interviewing sources. Additional fact-checking may be needed if sources don't agree on basic details.

Watchdog Of A Society

A crucial duty of journalists is to serve the public interest by acting as a watchdog on government, business, education, health, environment, safety and other institutions. That duty is particularly important where agencies and institutions restrict the flow of information. In any other case a journalist must always respect the principle of more transparency of the sources of

information, giving the readers or the audience the maximum possible attention to them.

To Be Socially Responsible

A journalist has to observe the maximum caution in spreading news, names and images of accused people for minor offenses leading to mild punishments, except in cases of particular social interest. A journalist must check all information obtained by his sources, he must accept responsibility for and control the origins of what he says, and he must always safeguard the substantial truth of facts. A journalist cannot discriminate against people on grounds of race, religion, mental and physical conditions or political opinions.

To Maintain Professional Secrecy

In cases in which the sources require secrecy, a journalist has to respect the professional secrecy and has to be able to inform the reader of such circumstance. A journalist respects the right of secrecy of every person and he may not publish news about someone's private life, unless they are transparent and relevant to the public interest, however, he must always make known his own identity and profession when he gathers such news. The names of victims of sexual violence can be neither published, nor can a journalist give details that can lead to their identification unless it is required by the victims themselves for relevant general interest.

To Have Time Management

News is extremely time sensitive. The reader wants his news to be new. Based on the idea that news is something you didn't know before which is significant or interesting to a group of readers, news items are basically timely or immediate. News is what new. Reporting something that has just happened or is about to happen. An afternoon raid on a minister house may warrant a live report during evening news. So the reporter must maintain time management.

Follow Press Laws, Ethics and Code Of Conduct

Press freedom is a word that is commonly used. By this, we mean the right to publish news without any restriction or control. But this does not mean that anything about anybody can be published. There are certain rules of conduct or principles of morality which we have to follow while reporting. The reporter should check and verify that the news which he writes is correct, accurate, and factual. He should not write anything that is misleading, inaccurate, defamatory, vulgar or obscene. Media should not intervene into the privacy of individuals. Also media should not report anything that harms national interest. If a report published in the paper defames the reputation of a person, that individual can file a defamation case in the court of law. The editor, printer or publisher is liable to be punished either individually or jointly.

Sources:

Sources are those individuals or organizations from which a reporter receives initial information about a potential story. A reporter cannot know the inside story of an event or organization unless someone inside provides him that information. To be able to have access to hidden

information, therefore, a reporter must develop his contacts and network of sources over time. A fresh reporter with little experience has fewer contacts than an experienced reporter.

There are primarily two kinds of sources: primary sources and secondary sources.

Primary sources are people who are involved in an event or are first-hand witnesses. Secondary sources are those, which provide background information, and need not be individuals or organizations. Books, reference material, newspapers, the Internet etc. are secondary sources. **Secondary sources** also help in research.

A good reporter never reveals his sources. The reporter must respect the confidentiality of his sources.

When a source discloses something to a reporter 'off the record', it means that the information is not meant to be written about, printed or broadcast or told to anyone else, but is only given to the reporter in confidence to help him or her understand the story better.

A reporter also has a responsibility to crosscheck the information given by a source and not to take it on trust. Ideally, therefore, a reporter must have several different sources that can provide him their viewpoints on the story.

Types of sources

Journalists should deal in reliable facts, so it is important that the sources you use for writing stories can give you accurate information about what happened or what was said. But just as there are lots of different news events, so there are many different sources of information. Some of them will give you very accurate information and we call these sources *reliable* (because we can rely on what they say). Others are less reliable, but still useful, while some can hardly be trusted at all. The main way of judging sources of information is on their reliability.

Reporters

One of the most reliable sources of information (although not completely reliable) are other journalists. They may be your colleagues or reporters from a news agency which supplies your organisation. If they are well trained, experienced and objective, their reports will usually be accurate and can be trusted. However, if there are any essential facts missing from their reports, these will have to be provided. Either they will have to provide them or you will have to find the missing facts yourself. Mistakes can happen. This is why news organisations should have a system for checking facts. A reporter's story should be checked by the news editor then the sub-editor. In small newsrooms, where the reporter may also be the editor or newsreader, the reporter must be especially careful in checking facts.

There is also the danger that reporters misinterpret what they think they see and then present that as a fact. This often happens when reporting such things as the size of a crowd. Unable to count every person in it, they make an estimate, often sharing their guesses with other journalists on the scene. This is just an estimate and any report which says "there were 40,000 people present" should be treated with caution, unless the reporter knows the exact number who came through the gate.

All sources, including reporters, are said to be reliable if we think they can be believed consistently. If a source is always correct in the information they provide, we will believe them next time. If they make a mistake, we may doubt what they say. Reliability is built up over time.

Your personal reliability as a journalist is important. If you have a good record for fair and accurate reporting, you will be believed. If you get a reputation for being careless in your work or biased in your interpretation, your colleagues, readers or listeners will not be able to rely upon you. In all cases it is better only to report what you know and make it clear in your report that everything else is either an estimate, an opinion or the word of someone else, perhaps a witness. You must always try to give precise facts and attributed opinion. If you cannot do that, you can use phrases like "it is believed that ..." or "it appears that ..." It is better to do this than to leave your readers or listeners believing that what you have said is a proven fact.

Primary sources

Often the source is someone at the centre of the event or issue. We call such people *primary sources*. It might be a man who fell 1,000 metres from an aircraft and lived to tell the tale; or a union leader who is leading wage negotiations. They are usually the best sources of information about their part of what happened. They should be able to give you accurate details and also supply strong comments.

The fall survivor might say: "I saw the ground rushing up towards me and I kept thinking 'So this is death'." The union leader might warn: "If the employers want blood on their hands, we are ready to supply it."

Of course, just because a person was present at an event does not mean that they are either accurate or fair. The fall survivor may have injured his head after landing and so be confused. The union leader will want to present his side in the best light. It is vital to double-check and cross-check facts with other sources.

A word of warning here: If any of your sources, however reliable, gives you information which is defamatory, you can still be taken to court for using it. You are responsible for deciding whether or not to publish the defamatory material.

Written sources

Not all primary sources will be spoken. Written reports can make an excellent source of information for a journalist. They are usually written after a lot of research by the authors; they have been checked for accuracy and are usually published with official approval.

However, just because information is printed, that does not mean that it is reliable. With typewriters, computers and modern technology, it is relatively easy to produce printed material. You must look at who has produced the document. Are they in a position to know enough about the topic and have access to the reliable facts? Do they have a reputation for reliability?

This is especially important with information on the Internet. Anyone can put information onto the Internet and unless you know how trustworthy they are you cannot judge the reliability of what they write.

One advantage of the Internet is that you can quickly cross-check numerous sources, but beware: a mistake on one site can easily and rapidly be repeated by people writing on other sites. Even major online references such as Wikipedia rely on volunteers writing the entries and checking their accuracy and there have been numerous cases of people using entries in Wikipedia and other online reference works to spread untruths.

In many countries, official transcripts of the proceedings of a court or parliament have some legal protection from actions for defamation.

Leaked documents

You may occasionally be given documents which have not been officially released to the press. They may be given to you by someone in a company or government department who does not want to be seen giving them to the media. We call these *leaked* documents.

Documents are often leaked by people who believe that the public should know the contents (such as an environmental report), but who are unable to reveal it in public themselves, perhaps because they do not have the authority to do so. In some cases, documents are leaked by a person to gain an advantage over someone else, perhaps someone who is criticised in the report.

Leaked documents are often excellent sources of news stories because they can contain information which someone wants to keep secret. This might be a plan to do something which the public might oppose, such as bulldozing homes to make a new road. It might be a report on corruption within an organisation which the heads of that organisation do not want to be publicly known. Just because a government, company or other group does not want information to be known, that does not mean that you should not report it. If you believe that it is important to inform your readers or listeners of certain facts, you must do that, even if the information was

given to you unofficially. Of course, like any information, leaked documents must still be checked for accuracy before they can be used.

There are also legal dangers to consider when using leaked documents. They might, for instance, have been stolen. It is usually an offence to receive stolen property if you think it could have been stolen, even if it is only a few sheets of paper. As we explain in the chapters on investigative reporting, photocopying the document then returning it is often a way to overcome this problem.

Leaked documents could also be covered by copyright, so you could be breaking the law by quoting directly from them. You are on safer ground in reporting the substance of what was said, in your own words.

Secondary sources

Secondary sources are those people who do not make the news, but who pass it on. The official police report of an incident or comments by someone's press officer can be called secondary sources. Secondary sources are not usually as reliable as primary sources.

Most eyewitnesses should be treated as secondary sources for journalists because, although they are able to tell what they think they have seen, they are often not trained for such work and can be very inaccurate, without meaning to be.

Tip-offs

Occasionally someone will call with a story tip-off but refuse to give their name. These are said to be *anonymous* (meaning "no name"). These are the most dangerous sources of information and should only be used with extreme caution. Although anonymous tip-offs can provide good story ideas, they must never be used without a lot of checking. If they are wrong, you will be held directly responsible unless you have checked what they said with other more reliable sources.

Often people who ring up with a tip-off will tell you their name if asked, but on the promise that you do not reveal their name to anyone else. You must still cross-check what they say because, of course, you cannot quote them as your source if there is any dispute about accuracy, for example if you are taken to court for defamation.

Attribution

When you get information from a source, you normally need to *attribute* that information to someone. Attribution means to tell your readers or listeners the name and title of the person you interviewed or document you got the information from. You do it, for example, through the verb "to say" or a phrase like "according to..."

There are three levels of attribution, depending on whether your source is happy about being publicly identified or whether they want to keep some secrecy about what they tell you. These three levels are:

On the record, which means you can use both their words and their name;

Non-attributable, which means you can use the information, but not the source's name;

Off the record, which means you cannot use either the information or the source's name.

All of these terms are only used to describe reporting methods. They should not appear in your finished story. Let us look at these three in detail:

On the record

Most information you are given will be on the record. People will tell you the details openly and allow you to quote their names and titles. The politician making a speech, the witness describing a crash, the police officer reporting an arrest, the company chairman defending an increase in prices, all are usually prepared to be quoted and to give their names. Even if they are unhappy about the story you are writing (perhaps because it makes them look bad), most people will understand your need to report fairly and accurately what they say.

It is always best to get information on the record. You can remain accurate by using the exact words people say. You can also make the story seem more human by using direct quotes (or by using their voices on radio and television). But most important, people judge what they read or hear by the person who says it. They are much more likely to take notice if the Justice Minister says he believes in capital punishment than if the man who sweeps the street says it. On the record comments have an extra level of understanding for people because they know who is speaking and exactly what was said.

Non-attributable

Sometimes a source will give you information on the understanding that you can use the information but not attribute it to them.

Your source may do this for one of several reasons. Perhaps they are not officially allowed to give you the information, but they think it could be made public. Perhaps they do not want to be in the public eye.

Politicians sometimes give non-attributable details of a plan so that they can find out public reaction to it without any risk. If the public likes the plan, the politician can then go on the record and claim the credit. If the public do not like the plan, the politician can abandon it without losing face because his name was never associated with it anyway. The danger for journalists is

that, if the politician does decide to abandon an unpopular plan, you will be left looking like a fool for writing about a story which the politician will then deny ever having considered. Politicians occasionally leak document to the media for similar reasons - to test public opinion on an issue unofficially.

If you agree not to use your source's name, there are phrases you can use instead, such as "a spokesperson for...", "a reliable source at..." or "sources within..." These should only be used if you cannot convince the source to go on the record. They are an admission that you cannot tell the whole truth.

If your source refuses to go on the record, ask them if they mind some information being used and attributed to them, but leaving the more sensitive information not attributed specifically to them. They may allow their name to be used for certain parts but not for others.

You should try to avoid making any agreement to accept non-attributable information unless it is unavoidable. Your job as a journalist is to pass on news as accurately as possible. Unattributed stories will not seem as accurate to your audience as stories where information is attributed.

Off the record

You will occasionally be given information on the understanding that it is totally off the record. Although you will have to ask your source exactly what they mean by such a phrase, it usually means that you should not even write about what they tell you. And you must certainly not use their name.

People usually give information off the record when they want you to understand the background to something which is too sensitive for them to talk publicly about. For example, you might get a tip-off of a major police operation planned for the next day against the hide-out of a criminal gang. You ask the police chief for more information, but he will obviously not want you to publish anything which might warn the gang. On the other hand, he might not want to say "no comment" because you might start asking questions somewhere else. So he might say he will tell you off the record, on condition that you do not tell anyone else.

Because he is asking you a favour - that is to keep secret something you already know a little bit about - you should expect a favour in return. If you agree not to publish details of the story before the raid, ask him whether, as a sign of goodwill on his part, he will allow you to accompany the police on the raid. You will then beat all your competitors to the story of the raid itself and have a *scoop*.

One thing to remember about any request to treat information off the record is that it is only a request. You can agree or disagree. If a person says they will only speak to you off the record, you must decide how important their information is - and whether you can get it from

somewhere else. If you cannot, perhaps you can agree to their conditions. In any case, you should bargain with them to give it on the record or at least non-attributed.

If a person gives you an interview and only tells you at the end that it was all off the record, argue that they should have said so earlier and not wasted your time. You are in a strong

Using assumed names

You occasionally have to protect a source's identity by giving them an assumed name. This arises most often when you are writing about the victims of some kind of abuse, usually in feature articles or documentaries. These people may not mind you telling their story, but they do not want other people to know exactly who they are.

Children especially should be protected, although you can use assumed names for anyone with a good reason to have their identity kept secret, such as alcoholics, drug addicts or battered wives.

It is usual in such cases to give the person assumed name, for example "Raj" or "Anita", and no surname. You must, of course, tell your readers or listeners that this is not the person's real name, but is being used to protect them. If you use a picture them, make sure they are not recognisable in it. If you use their voice, it is common practice in radio and television to electronically change it so it cannot be recognised.

You may also have to disguise other facts of the story if there is a chance that these will lead people to identify the person. This should only be done after careful consideration and with the approval of your editor.

Characteristics and Essentials of TV Language:

Visual writing is the language of stories. This language translates a vision of some potential reality, including settings, events, motivation, and dialogue, into aesthetics, movement, and dramatic action, that can be presented cinematically. But few writers can write visually, so directors have someone else translate the script into visual language, if it gets done at all.

The word "visual," means "the totality of the visual medium in creating an effect," including all things that accompany a visual image to convey a reflection of life. This applies to books as well because the author's descriptions of settings and drama to create mental images. Many elements are blended in visual writing. They include the basics first:

- Honesty. Honest characters getting into honest situations, causing honest events, and finding honest solutions. The more honest, the more involved we become.

- Drama that engages the reader or viewer. If you can't answer the question, "What does it mean to the character - what are the stakes?" then it isn't engaging drama.
- Dramatic action that reveals the character's emotions, conflicts, and decisions - leaving much less to dialogue and "telling" about inner states.
- The effective use of symbols for communicating experience.
- Engaging the reader or viewer's imagination by not showing everything in complete detail.
- Character physical action involved with the setting.
- Settings that complement the dramatic action.
- Motifs music, sound, images, and scenes that help establish mood.

Organization of a News Story (Intro-Closing)

A story should have a smooth flow and development. There are several styles to writing a news script, but the basic organization is as follows:

Introduction: This is a brief summary of the story and the mention of the thesis statement or lead.

Establish the Scene: Write the basic details that answer the questions to the five W's and one H. What is the story all about? Who are the people involved? When did it happen? What date or what time? Where is the setting? Is it a local or international issue?

Recognize the Issue: This is the part where you elaborate on the issue or the event. Why did it happen? What is the issue or the event about? What are the factors that made the issue arise? And how did it happen?

Addressing the Issue: This includes the action items that can be done. A story should present possible solutions to the problem. The script must reveal that the story is well-researched and, provide substantial information.

Follow-up: The story should be moving forward. There will certainly be another follow-up for the following day's event. Include in the script that the news team will continue to cover the issue.

Proper Format In Writing A News Script

The news script is divided into two parts - the audio and the video part.

➤ Introduction

This is the first 30 seconds, an introduction read by the news anchor in the studio. It is commonly called RDR or "The Readers". There are no videos included in the script yet, only a photo of the headline and the anchorperson is seen on the TV screen.

➤ **Body.**

This is the meat of the report. Writing a script for the body is a bit complicated, especially if it is your first time. The technique for writing this part of the script is to digest the information mentioned in the RDR.

➤ **Conclusion.**

This last part of the report includes a temporary resolution to the story. Never leave the audience hanging. Always include a statement that gives a follow-up information or assurance to the viewers.

Reporting Techniques & Style:

Reporters should familiarize themselves with the cities/state where they work. Know the make-up of your viewers and what interests them.

If you are a reporter who works at a station in a military town, try to find story ideas or angles that relate to or affect the military or their family. If you live in an eco-friendly community try to find stories about the environment or tie it into your story.

People like to hear about things that directly impact them or are relatable. Knowing who lives in the city you are covering can help produce more engaging stories if the reporter considers the audiences' interests.

When pitching story ideas think about.

1. Who cares? Who does this affect?
2. What is the impact?
3. How can I make this story more interesting for my audience?

Voice

- Put stress and emphasis on words to give them meaning
- Use a conversational, but authoritative voice
- Vary speaking pace and always articulate

Body Language

- motions and gestures are important
- hand motions and gestures help guide the viewer through the story
- Pair words with action
- Use movement to create a more engaging piece

Piece to Camera (P2c)

A Piece to Camera is the television and film term used for when a presenter or a character speaks directly to the viewing audience through the camera.

It is most common when a news or television show presenter is reporting or explaining items to the viewing audience. Indeed, news programs usually take the form of a combination of both interviews and pieces to camera.

The Piece to Camera, also known as PTC, is any part of a news report, whether packaged or live, in which the reporter speaks directly to the camera while on the location of the story.

Use PTC

1. To highlight information
2. Present info you can visualize
3. Provide creditability
4. Reporter presence.

Live:

Reporters who are reporting live from a location do not have much time to compose a detailed and well-structured script, especially when they are covering a historical event. The anchors in the studio, and the reporters on the field are exchanging details, questions and information live on television.

It's not that easy to come up with a good script while reporting live on camera. There are times when a reporter forgets their points of discussion. The secret is focus. Remember that you are reporting for the viewers and that their concern should be your utmost priority. Ask questions as if you are the viewer. A live reporter, even under pressure, knows what the audience would want to know or ask from a report.

Guidelines and Challenges for a TV Reporter

The freedom of speech is the foundation of a democratic society. Good journalistic practice is based on the public's right to have access to facts and opinions.

The aim of these guidelines is to support the responsible use of the freedom of speech in mass communication and encourage discourse on professional ethics.

The guidelines concern all journalistic work. They have been drafted specifically for self-regulation in the field. The guidelines are not intended to be used as grounds for criminal or indemnification liability.

Professional status

1. A journalist is primarily responsible to the readers, listeners and viewers. They have the right to know what is happening in society.
2. Decisions concerning the content of communication must be made in accordance with journalistic principles. The power to make such decisions may not, under any circumstances, be surrendered to any party outside the editorial office.
3. The journalist has the right and obligation to resist pressure or persuasion that attempts to steer, prevent or limit communication.
4. The journalist must not abuse his/her position. The journalist may not handle issues which may lead to potential personal gain nor demand or receive benefits which might compromise his/her personal independence or professional ethics.
5. The journalist has the right to refuse an assignment that conflicts with law, personal convictions or good journalistic practice.
6. When handling issues that concern the journalist's own medium, the group or the group's owners, the journalist should make the context of the news item clear to the readers, listeners and viewers.
7. It is crucial to observe good professional practice when using the work of others. The source must be mentioned when the information has been published by another party.

Obtaining and publishing information

8. The journalist must aim to provide truthful information.
9. The journalist is encouraged to make clear his/her profession during the course of an assignment. Information should be obtained openly. If matters of social significance cannot be

otherwise investigated, the journalist may carry out interviews and obtain information by means that deviate from standard practice.

10. Any information obtained must be checked as thoroughly as possible, including cases where the information has been previously published.

11. The public must be able to distinguish facts from opinions and fictitious material. Nor may photographic and sound material be used in a misleading manner.

12. Information sources must be approached critically. This is particularly important in controversial issues, since the source of the information may be pursuing personal gain or to damage others.

13. A news item may be published on the basis of information that is considered limited. Reports on subjects and events should be supplemented once new information becomes available. News events should be pursued to the end.

14. The journalist has the right to conceal the identity of any person who has provided confidential information. The editorial office must respect this principle.

15. Headlines, leads, cover and picture captions, sales-promotion posters and other presentation material must be justified by the body of the story.

The rights of interviewer and interviewee

16. The interviewee has the right to know, in advance, in which context his/her statements will be used. He/she must also be told if the interview will be used in multiple media. The interviewee must always be told whether the conversation is intended for publication or will be used exclusively as background material.

17. If the interviewee requests to read his/her statement prior to publication, it is generally wise to acquiesce as long as this is possible in terms of editorial techniques. This right strictly concerns personal statements of the interviewee, and the final journalistic decision cannot be surrendered to any party outside the editorial office.

18. The interviewee's refusal to allow the publication of his/her statement must be complied with only if the circumstances following the interview have changed so significantly that the publication of the interview could be viewed as unjust.

19. Advertising and editorial material should be clearly separated. Hidden advertising must be avoided.

Corrections and right of reply

20. Incorrect information must be corrected immediately.

21. If the intention is to present information about the activities of a clearly identifiable person, company or organisation in a manner that would present them in a very negative light, the object of the criticism must be granted the right of reply on the issue in question.

22. If it is not possible to simultaneously hear the views of the parties involved, it may be necessary to give the party which has received the very negative publicity the opportunity to be heard afterwards. If this is not done, good journalistic practice calls for the publication of the comment of the party criticised.

23. A right of reply is a specifically intended mode of reprimand and should be published as soon as possible without any irrelevant additions.

24. Conventional cultural critique, political, economic or societal appraisal or similar presentation of an opinion do not, however, warrant the right to reply.

25. If the reply is not fit for publication as such, changes should be discussed with the writer. Even if no agreement cannot be reached, it is advisable to publish the essential contents in an objective manner.

Private and public

26. The human dignity of every individual must be respected. The ethnic origin, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, convictions or other similar personal characteristics may not be presented in an inappropriate or disparaging manner.

27. Highly delicate matters in one's personal life may only be published with the consent of the person in question, or if such matters are of considerable public interest. Protection of privacy must also be considered when using photographic materials.

28. Discretion must always be exercised when reporting on occurrences of illnesses or deaths or on victims of accidents or crimes.

29. It is generally acceptable to cover and photograph any event that transpires in a public place without having to acquire the permission of the subject(s) in question.
30. The right to privacy also applies when publishing public documents or other public sources. The public availability of information does not necessarily imply that it can be freely published. Particular discretion should be exercised when an issue concerns minors.
31. The name, photograph or other identifying facts of a convicted criminal may be published, unless it is viewed as unjust in terms of the position or action of the condemned person. The journalist must be particularly careful not to disclose the identity of a minor or person found to be criminally unaccountable.
32. The journalist must be careful not to present information that may lead to the identification of the subject in cases where the subject is only considered a suspect or has been charged.
33. Information about the convicted, charged or suspected individual should not be published if it may reveal the identity of the victim of a highly sensitive crime.
34. The identity of a victim of a highly sensitive crime must be protected unless the matter is of considerable public interest.
35. If the request for investigation, indictments or conviction has been a published news item, the matter should be followed to the end as far as possible. During an ongoing trial, the journalist should not strive to affect the decisions of the court or present a premature position on the guilt of the subject in question.

News Anchor:

A news anchor requires a number of skills, the first of which is a confidence in front of the camera. There's an ingredient of show business in the job of a news anchor -- not only do you need to be comfortable in front of the camera but you need to make people want to watch you.

A news anchor also needs to be spontaneous. While many anchors will read scripts off of a teleprompter or notes on their desk, but you need to be spontaneous to deal with any situation. If news is breaking information may be fed to an anchor on the spur of the moment from a producer. The anchor needs to be able to listen to what's happening and then relay the information to the audience in a clear and concise manner.

Your voice is the key in this field. You should focus now on projection, accent and modulation.

All of these things will help you deliver your "script" in a convincing nature. Be commanding in your speech. This will give you reliability with your audience. Read newspapers and magazines aloud. Listen to the best journalists in the field when they speak and try to emulate them. Being a TV reporter/anchor takes sacrifice. On the surface it seems like a glamorous job but those of us who have worked in the industry know it is just the opposite.

Voice Personality & Presentation:

- **Put stress and emphasis on words to give them meaning**

A reporter's voice affects the meaning of a report. How a reporter says something creates a certain tone and clearly points out key facts.

It is important for the reporter to give value and meaning to their words.

Main points of the report may not be clear if the reporter does not put emphasis on key words by changing the pitch, tone, or inflection of their voice.

Lowering your voice, or using a downward inflection, when saying a key word stresses certainty and conveys a more serious tone. Raising your voice, or using an upward inflection, when saying a key word conveys doubt, uncertainty or excitement.

Speaking in a monotone voice will lose the audiences' attention, as there is no variation or excitement portrayed in the report. If a reporter speaks in a monotone voice, viewers may perceive the reporter as uninterested in the story.

- **Use a conversational, but authoritative voice**

Voice coach Ann Utter back recommends broadcasters to speak like they are talking to a good friend. This conversational tone creates a better relationship with the audience because the reporter sounds like he or she is engaging in a personal conversation with the viewer.

Reporters should also speak with a lower pitch to sound more authoritative so audience members feel confident in their reporting abilities and credibility.

However, be careful not to completely abandon your natural voice, because an obnoxious theatrical news voice can distract the viewer from the story, which is the main focus.

- **Vary speaking pace and always articulate**

Talking quickly portrays an excited tone. Talking slowly portrays a more serious tone. A reporter's pace should reflect the moods of a story.

Broadcast reporters must be careful not talk too quickly that the audience does not understand what the reporter is saying or too slowly as they might sound boring.

Broadcast reporters only have one chance to present their message because the viewer does not always have the option to watch the report again, unlike print where the reader can reread a sentence as many times as they desire.

Articulating will help ensure viewers understand every word.

Characteristics of New Anchor and Reporter:

Good reporters have some common characteristics that make them effective.

The most important characteristic of a reporter is ethical behavior. When a reporter fails to operate according to a strong ethical and moral code of behavior, that one individual's failing can damage the overall credibility of the news media in long-term, serious ways.

Even honest reporters seem to be making too many mistakes. As a result of major episodes of dishonesty combined with too many factual errors, readers and viewers of news are having a harder time believing what they read and see in news reports—even in the places they should be able to trust. Polls show that the public's confidence in media is falling.

Ethics is a system of deciding what is right and wrong. To develop your own code of ethics to help you make decisions about cheating or plagiarism. As a reporter, you will surely be called on to make ethical choices, and you should give some thought to developing a personal process for making moral decisions.

The right ethical decision is not always clear, and even individuals with strong moral systems and the best of intentions can make mistakes. At the very least, journalists must examine their personal ethical codes and realize that behaving honestly in the pursuit of truth is the most important characteristic of a reporter. Honesty and credibility are the only product mainstream media have for sale.

Another important characteristic for a reporter is **curiosity or inquisitiveness**. Although some people may declare a lack of interest in certain subjects, the reporter may not. The reporter should be curious about everything, including science, psychology, literature, history, politics, differing cultures, children's games, animal behavior and economics. The reporter wants to understand all subject areas, because they eventually relate to or intertwine with news stories.

Persistence is a helpful characteristic for a reporter. When someone says no comment, some people may become discouraged, but a good reporter finds challenge in such a refusal and becomes more determined to get the story. The reporter goes on to ask, how can I get the person to agree to comment? Or how can I get the information another way?

Another important characteristic for a reporter is to enjoy **interacting with people**. It's hard to imagine anyone getting any pleasure out of a reporting if she doesn't enjoy talking to people. The job often involves approaching strangers and asking questions that many people would consider too personal to ask even their closest friends. Although you may not think of yourself as an

extrovert, you may find that with a little practice and experience, talking with people can become enjoyable.

Regardless of whether an individual is an extrovert who enjoys working with people, anyone interested in working in a newsroom should be willing to be a **team player**. The process of putting a newscast together happens in a group of people. The reporters and anchors are most visible to the audience, but the producers, writers and assignment editors hold vital responsibilities as well. Just like most jobs, no one does it alone, and enjoying the group effort and recognizing the contributions of others will make the work much more pleasant.

Most successful professionals share the characteristic of **being organized**, and reporters need this skill as well. Working on deadlines and dealing with lots of different people on many different subjects require self-imposed structure. Reporters must manage their time effectively and give attention to managing many details and lots of information. The simple ability to keep names, addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail addresses in an accessible format is an important job skill. Finding the name of a contact and a phone number quickly could mean the difference between getting and losing a story.

Broadcast reporters must also be willing to **accept criticism**. Everyone makes mistakes, and in the broadcast business the mistakes are usually seen by many thousands of people. News directors and producers should tell the reporter how to be more effective. Audience members may write or call to criticize the story content or more personal aspects of a presentation, such as the reporter's delivery or appearance. Stations may bring in consultants to work with on-air personnel in making changes. Because of the nature of some stories, there will be people who will not like you. In short, the broadcast reporter will work more successfully by learning to accept criticism.

Reporters must also show **flexibility**. Those who want the routine of a 9 to 5 desk job should avoid the world of television news. Few reporters, editors and producers work Monday through Friday during normal business hours, and as your career advances, you'll probably work a variety of schedules that may include weekends.

Newsroom personnel must be able to change plans in an instant and make the change with a **positive attitude**. You may be on your way to cover a council meeting and be diverted to the scene of an accident. You may have dressed for a live shot in front of a theater and find yourself trudging through mud during a driving rain. Reporters and photographers work in a variety of settings and meet and interview all types of people. Although some days in the newsroom are routine, most days are not, requiring a person to be flexible.

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