

News Training Manual

Broadcast News Tips

Broadcast news is a major source of news, but is different from print in a lot of ways...

Basic Differences.

- A. Personal Medium- see, feel, hear news... invite people into home
- B. Different Attention given- clever sharp writing to keep audience... research show people do at least one other thing while watch.
- C. One chance- direct, less complex, promote maximum understanding

Basics of TV news Writing

Readability is importance---sentences must flow like conversation.

- 1. Sentence Length- fewer than 11-15 unless good flow
- 2. Contractions- usable and more conversational
- 3. Detail Exclusion-
 - a. middle initial
 - b. ages are places 1st (24 year old Bob Smith)
 - c. simple addresses
 - d. round off large numbers and decimal places.
 - e. simplify full titles
- 4. Numbers as spoken copy-
 - a. Dashed between letters that need to be said separately (2-3-4)
 - b. generally spell out 1-11
 - c. spell out larger (one thousand-999)
- 5. Final Test- Read it Aloud

Strong Concise Words or Phrases

- 1. Complex Verbs- avoid flowering up. (they voted to terminate construction of the bridge....to stop building.)
- 2. Negative Verbs- confusing (decided not to escape...decided to stay put)
- 3. Synonyms- writers try to find and add variety but some are not good (said is always the best to)
- 4. Adjectives- keep it simple (poverty stricken...poor)
- 5. Phrases- descriptive phrases are often unnecessary. Try not to say same thing twice... "late night session ran into wee hours of the morning"
- 6. Active Verbs- adds excitement and adds clarity to exactly who did what. Some clues to passive verbs (was, by) "The bank was robbed by the lone gunman."..."The lone gunman robbed the bank."

- Attribution-** When?
1. Use for credibility
 2. Use to show doubt, quality of info
 3. Shorten or discard—some no question where come from.
- Where?- 1st... judge source credibility as facts heard.

Writing the story—Basic idea-

- A. What is happening now?
- B. How did we get there?
- C. What is next?

News Packages-

- A. Standard Parts-
 1. B-roll- visuals and nat sound
 2. A-roll- interview/standups/ narration tracks
- B. Writing Story-
 1. Do have nat sound sequence?
 2. Do have all b-roll wanted...any info not covered by b-roll
 3. Pick the bytes from key interviews
 4. Look critically at Bridge/Stand-ups
- C. Hints to writing-
 1. Write before edit room
 2. Don't write for the visuals you don't have...Be realistic
 3. If your video thin, narrow angle—Select useable focus—place some info put in lead-in and tag
 4. Let tracks breath—don't jam too tight, let video tell some story
 5. Let the visuals tell some of story
 6. Watch out sensationalism- don't get excited, you are not a promoter you are a reporter

Writing Leads

- Not only serve functions of print lead, but also starting point of the narrative.
- I. **Leads-** in broadcast far more complex and critical clever, tight, attractive and informative.....Attention Getting Device
 - A. Major Stories Easy Leads- some stories going to be interesting and attractive no matter what lead... but MEDIUM INTEREST
 - Effect on viewers
 - Proximity
 - Prominence
 - Human Interest
 - B. What Interests Me?- may not fit into category... keyword

- II. How much of story goes into lead? VERY LITTLE-** short and have enough to suggest the guts of story...

Basics of News Videography

Field camera work requires making critical choices.

Reality Reconstruction- conflict between art and information, aesthetic and facts.

- A. *Sensationalism-* take pictures of everything, enough to moderate story... be cautious
- B. *Staging-* set up or recreate activity to produce more coherent and clear visual story.... Some benign things okay (water story)
- C. *Memorability-* look for visual story within larger topic... look for closeups and unusual shots. Seek out drama, action and emotion

Toolbox of shots

*** shoot as much as you can... go in and dissect the event (look at room)

What shots are Best?

- A. people instead empty
 - B. action instead still
 - C. Close Up instead Wide Shot
 - D. Simple instead Complex
 - E. Restrained camera movement
 - F. Ambient sounds
 - G. Avoid generic visuals
- I. **Establishing Shots-** opener or new location (established idea not place)
 - II. **Point of View-** how person sees
 - III. **Relationship-** one subject relates to another
 - IV. **Reaction shot-** show people who are watching event

News Editing Basics

- I. **Vital Sequences-** basic building block, summarize event of action covered.
- Shots fit because of common association in theme, location, event, activity, process or time flow....
 - Collect shots ... 2 WS/ 4 MS/ 10 CU & 2 NS

A Few Rules- most agree on

1. Establish shot should grab attention, but easy to scan
2. Different fields of view should be alternated to prevent jump cuts (WS/MS/CU and back)
3. The Jump Cut make 2 WS hard to edit, 2 CU not as bad.
4. Motion must start and stop and be smooth

*****- Field Shooting Tips

- I. **Lighting-** Try not to mix light sources
- II. **Standups**
- A. Functions
1. Transitions
 2. Bridge- new time/location
 3. Closer- speculate future
- B. Action- well planned/purposeful movement.... Participant watch
- III. **Stills-** headlines, brochures
- A. Readability- read twice...Macro Lens
- B. Information Overload- keep simple and allow to read

*****- Editing Tips

- I. **Logging and Evaluating Tape-**
- A. Writer
1. What interview really say
 2. Ties with other soundbites
 3. B-roll exist to cover soundbites
 4. Any nat sound sequences
 5. Stand-up out of date or works
 6. Enough sequences for narration
 7. Natural establishers

B. Editor

1. Useable audio
2. Aesthetically good nat sound sequences
3. Enough slop (lead, tail) on standups
4. Nat sound strong and clear
5. Sync/ color/ focus
6. Sequence material
7. And parts missing

*** DON'T USE CRAPPY SHOTS

II. **Transitions-** overlap audio/video to smooth