

UNIT

5

Writing for Radio & TV

WRITING FOR RADIO & TV

STRUCTURE

- Steps and elements of writing for Print: editorial, features & review
- Steps and elements of writing for Radio & TV: editorial, features & review
- Write news story & feature talk (one each for print, radio & TV)
- Writing, Designing and production of Dept. News Letters

• LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After this chapter students will be able to understand about:

- To understand how to write for Print
- To understand the elements of writing for Radio & TV
- Understanding News story and feature talk
- Writing department's News letters

• INTRODUCTION

Have you ever thought about how many newspapers are printed in India (if not in the world), and in how many languages? Can you make a guess? How many names of newspapers and magazines can you recall easily? Try also to remember the variety of messages that reached you through the print medium yesterday. Did you read a printed advertisement, a brochure, or a book or article in connection with your hobby or your profession?

Now that most homes have a television set, do we still need the daily newspaper and the weekly or monthly newsmagazine? Do you know anyone who does not get a newspaper or newsmagazine at all, because they get all their news from the television or the Internet?

These are the kinds of questions this unit raises and answers. When a new medium such as television or the Internet becomes available to us, we often fear that this means the old media - print, or radio - will fall into disuse. What happens, however, is a little more complex. The various media find their own space in our lives, depending on their particular strengths. Print has a permanence that other forms of mass media do not have. So it is still the best medium for messages that we expect to be useful or true for a long time: rules and regulations, analysis of events, and research reports, for example. Thus we find that different media get

better at finding out what they can do best, who their audience is most likely to be, and what their particular audience wants.

• IS PRINT A THING OF THE PAST?

For the past several years, as electronic and visual forms have come to dominate the mediascape, the death of has been predicted time and again. (The word 'mediascape', made on the analogy of 'landscape', means 'the media scene'. You may know that the landscape is what you can see of earth and sky from a particular place: it is a scene.)

But it's clear that print media - newspapers, magazines, and journals of various kinds - are far from extinct. While patterns of readership and circulation may have changed, all these forms of communication are still alive and vibrant. Millions of people in India and all over the world still wait for their morning newspaper; millions more still pick up their weekly newsmagazine or their favourite sports magazine from the corner news stand, and many thousands of professionals and academics still subscribe to their disciplinary journals - whether in medicine, mathematics or management - to keep up with new knowledge in their fields.

The print media span a variety of publications. These include:

- Daily newspapers (e.g. Times of India, Dainik Jagran)
- News magazines (e.g., India Today, Time)
- Special interest and niche magazines (Outlook Traveller; ,Health & Fitness)
- Trade and Industrial publications (magazines for specific industries or professions)
- Professional journals (Journal of Teacher Education, Indian Journal of Medicine)

Apart from journalistic media, there are other forms of communication that employ print to get the message across, such as advertising, public relations, advocacy and the emerging arena of info-tainment or edu-tainment. These are words coined to show the combination of information and entertainment, or education and entertainment. This combination is typical of television, and of some forms of print as well-for instance, youth supplements, or children's sections of the newspaper.

• SCOPE OF PRINT MEDIA

There has always been a fallacy that print media is nothing but newspapers. That is extremely wrong. The scope of print media is large. Magazines, journals, letters, academic and religious text books, wire services, company brochures etc. all come under the print media. But, the most popular type of these categories is undoubtedly the newspapers themselves. The advent of television, internet etc. have overshadowed the golden period of print media. But, millions of people retain the newspapers as their own life or the necessary part of a day. The number of

- Nowadays, newspapers are run by various political parties and religious organisations or their affiliated group. So, the question of credibility and objectivity is at stake. The journalistic ethics are often violated.

CONTENTS OF A NEWSPAPER

A newspaper is composed of a lot of components such as news, features, advertisements, columns, editorial, middles, reviews etc... News is also termed as news story.

WRITING A NEWS STORY

News story is any updated piece of information in newspapers. It has to be accurate and unbiased. Outdated information loses the worthiness or the value of the news story. News stories are collected by the reporter and scrutinised by the editor. All the news stories that turn up on the editor's desk may not necessarily appear in the newspaper. The news value of a news story is taken in to serious account. There are lot of factors that determine the news value or the news worthiness.

- **Outcome or Impact**

If the consequence of an event or an issue affects a large number of people, it becomes news. A bus mishap killing twenty people has more news value than a bike accident killing one person

- **Timeliness**

Timeliness determines the value of news. A bank robbery of two crore rupees that happened one week before, has less news value compared to the same worth fifty lakhs or around an hour before. The nearness of the time is always considered to be significant

- **Proximity**

The factor of proximity suggests the nearness of the place where an incident occurs. An earth quake in Africa is of less newsworthy for Indians, compared to a tremor of same magnitude in any part of India

- **Prominence**

Even an ordinary event associated with a prominent public figure carries high news value. The picture of morning walk of American president in Delhi during his visit in India or a quarrel between two ministers has big news value to occupy in the front page of a news paper

- **Novelty**

Unusual events are always news worthy. A tree of dates in Kerala, a cat killing a dog etc. evokes news value. There is a general statement regarding the novelty of the news which goes like: if a dog bites a man, it is not news, but if a man bites dog, it is news because there is strangeness in it. The novelty creates wonder in readers

- **Human Interest**

The incidents of crime, sex scandals especially of public figures, the presence of mysteries in some events etc. are of perennial human interest so that such news gets maximum frequency

- **Tragedies/calamities**

Natural disasters and wars killing thousands of people remain as news for some days as they carry news value

- **Predictability**

The result of elections, some international matches, intelligence warnings on possible terror attacks etc. evoke human anxiety and curiosity so that the news value of such items remains high.

THE STRUCTURE OF A NEWS STORY

All the news stories are structured in an anti-pyramid style so that the major details of the story can be emphatically presented in the beginning and the successive part goes with minor details of lesser importance. It helps the reader to just know the crux of the story in the beginning itself so that he can save the time if he is running short of time.

HEADLINE

The headline should be simple and direct sentence. It is written in simple present and active voice capable of being understood easily.

LEAD

Lead refers to the first paragraph of a news story. The lead provides the substance of the news story. The most important part of the story is included in the Lead paragraph

A lead could be written in many ways taking in to account which part of the story is very newsworthy. In news where the prime minister dies, the important part is 'who' dies. So, the Lead paragraph becomes a who Lead. In the same way, there are many Leads like who lead, what lead, when lead, where lead, why lead and how lead (these five Ws and one H are the basic elements of a news story) a news story is supposed to answer or satisfy all the five Ws and one H.

The essential components of a News story are:

1. Date Line: A date line includes the name of the place of the incident, the date on which the story occurred.
2. By-Line: The by line consists of the name of the reporter.
3. Credit Line: The name of the person or agency providing the photos. It could be News agency, supplying news.

Hard news and soft news

There is some news which depicts the event as such. That is, the news on flood, accident, earth quake are given in a very specific way without much comments and analysis. These types of news are called hard news. There are some

other categories of news where a lot of interpretations, perspective, and analytical explanations are provided with. These types of news are called soft news.

FEATURES

A Feature story is a piece of news item written with a particular intention. So, it can be rather subjective as the writer enjoys more freedom to insert his or her personal views in it, in contrast to a news story where only objective facts are meant to be passed to the audience. In an ordinary news story, the reader can never pass on any special comments of his own as it is not permitted. His duty is to inform an event as such as it really happened. But, in feature writing, personal comments on a particular topic are entertained, along with anecdotes, quotations etc added to it so as to highlight the views of writer.

The intention could be to inform, or entertain or both, i.e. inform + entertainment. In feature writing, the topic need not necessarily be on a current issue. It could be of any general topic of interest. So, the factor of updating needed for news story never comes here.

STRUCTURE OF A FEATURE

- **Headline:** Headline often decides whether the feature has to be read or not. So, it should be as catchy that the reader should tend to start reading. Though the content is very fine, an unattractive headline may deter the reading.
- **The introduction:** The introduction should be so persuasive that the reader should be motivated to enter in to the body of the story and move further.
- **The body:** The body of the feature should reflect the details of the story.
- **Different kinds of views** on a particular issue or topic could be represented without losing the underlying and unifying rhythm and tempo of the story.
- **Conclusion:** The conclusion usually takes a definite perspective and a standpoint on a topic and tries to convince its audience by the detailed descriptions and analysis made by the writer.

While writing feature stories, it is important for the writer to understand which kind of audience he or she is going to address. The feature should be prepared in accordance with the taste of the audience. For instance, a feature on Dalits in India may not necessarily satisfy the interest of scientists or doctors, who are generally interested in features related to recent developments in medical system. The writer is supposed to bear in mind his intention of what he wants to do, such as to persuade, motivate, warn, entertain, inform, instruct, analyse etc.

ARTICLE WRITING

Articles appear on the editorial page of a newspaper. Unlike Features, it is a seriously written document with scholarly approach. The topic is presented after the detailed study and deliberations on the topic. The writer thoroughly and comprehensively reflects upon the various aspects of the topic with the support of deep knowledge on it. Articles try to educate and inform rather than to entertain.

The conclusion is also added in the end in a sober style. So, an article is expected to be written with sense of credibility and accuracy after extensive research in to the topic. The article contains the element of analysing and judging a current situation as well as the prediction of the future based on the analysis of the situation in question.

STRUCTURE OF AN ARTICLE

An article consists of headline, introduction, body and conclusion

HEADLINE : The headline should be catchy for the reader

INTRODUCTION : The Introduction is also called the Lead paragraph. As its very name suggests, it leads the reader to take a decision on whether to move further or not. So, presenting the topic in a tempting way is very important

BODY: The Body of the article comprehensively analyses and discusses the topic in great detail

CONCLUSION : The conclusion of the article can be a summing up of the analysis or a Prediction of the future of the topic, in terms of its significance

BOOK REVIEWS

It is a special kind of analytical writing by the experts who are specialised in making in-depth analysis of a particular book dealing with a particular subject. Many books in literature, politics, sociology etc. are published in newspapers as book reviews. Through book reviews, the readers get familiar with many books newly introduced in the market. The reviewer must have in depth and comprehensive knowledge of the subject the book deals with and should be able to evaluate and judge the book in terms of its significance and impact on the reader.

The reviewer has to dwell upon the content, the range and the scope of the work and how it becomes important for a reader. The book review should contain an overall assessment of the book and its author. The impact of the subject, the background against which it was written, the style of writing, the approach adopted etc. also come under the assessment of the book. A review should be in such a way that the readers should get a real critical understanding of the book. The bibliographical details in the book review help the interested readers to locate the book easily. Sunday Magazine supplemented with THE HINDU newspaper is noted for good book reviews.

FILM REVIEW

Whenever a new movie is released, film reviews on that film find place in the newspapers to draw the peoples' attention towards its peculiarities. These reviews prompt them to decide whether to go to watch it or not. But, the review should never be like an advertisement falsifying the reality and misguiding the theatre goers. Instead, it has to be an objective depiction of its features in an unprejudiced, concise and specific way. So, the writer at least should watch it directly and analyse it. The writer's personal view of actor or director of the film, both positive and negative, should never colour the content of the review.

The first paragraph of the film review should include the name of the film, its characters, its setting, the directors and the genre it belongs. The second paragraph has to handle the summarised version of the story of film in such an attractive way that may draw the attention of the readers. The following paragraphs will deal with the reviewer's comments and analysis about the relevance of the story, technical quality, relation to the society etc.

INTERVIEW

Prior to interviewing someone, the interviewer has to plan many strategies to make interview more effective and informative. The interviewer also has to study very well about the topic of interview. Only a knowledgeable person will have better and relevant questions about a topic. Moreover, the interviewer should know some ideas on the personality of the interviewee. A prior consent from the interviewee about the topic, venue, and time allotted etc have to be taken. An informal approach helps the interviewee to open his mind better so that the interview will be more informative and entertaining. The interviewer should have a detailed and rough idea of questions to be asked. But, it may not be possible and desirable to follow the steps of the questions as pre-planned because of the answers diverging to the various other issues from the topic concerned. So the interviewer is supposed to rise up to the occasion and ask the questions in accordance with it, leaving the planned sketch of questions. But, interviewer should keep in mind the key points and ideas to be discussed and addressed. It is interviewer's duty to keep a pleasant ambiance, though the questions by him sometime appear to be a little provocative. The interviewee should feel comfortable with answering the questions in a relaxed manner, free of inhibitions. It will help the interviewer to make sure of the availability of the interviewee in future as well. It is desirable to record the interview, but with the consent of the interviewee. In case the interview is going to be published, the print version of the interview has to be sent to the interviewee. Any ambiguity or doubt in the statements made in the interview has to be clarified with the help of interviewee before it is sent for publication.

Press Releases or News Releases

Some relevant pieces of information are sought to be printed by newspapers for publicity as per the request from various entities like organisations, political parties, clubs, companies, unions and even individuals. These entities give the information in a clear and concise form to be published in the newspapers. These pieces of information are called news releases or handouts. Sub-editors scrutinize these for inaccuracies and get them published. Usually the information of the institutions and companies are forwarded by their Public Relations Department to the office of newspaper concerned. Press releases help them to clarify many issues to the public and help them explain the future course of action. If a political party wants to organise a protest march, they can inform it through a press release. If a jewellery business concern plans to open a new branch, it can be informed to the public through press release. It helps them to acquire more publicity free of charge.

The government also forwards the press releases to the newspapers to inform its plans and projects so that the public gets aware of them. For the state governments, the State Public Relations Departments issue the handouts to the newspaper office whereas the Press Information Bureau performs the same function for the central government

CHARACTERISTICS OF EDITORIAL WRITING

An editorial is an article that presents the newspaper's opinion on an issue. It reflects the majority vote of the editorial board, the governing body of the newspaper made up of editors and business managers. It is usually unsigned. Much in the same manner of a lawyer, editorial writers build on an argument and try to persuade readers to think the same way they do. Editorials are meant to influence public opinion, promote critical thinking, and sometimes cause people to take action on an issue. In essence, an editorial is an opinionated news story.

Editorials have:

1. Introduction, body and conclusion like other news stories
2. An objective explanation of the issue, especially complex issues
3. A timely news angle
4. Opinions from the opposing viewpoint that refute directly the same issues the writer addresses
5. The opinions of the writer delivered in a professional manner. Good editorials engage issues, not personalities and refrain from name-calling or other petty tactics of persuasion.
6. Alternative solutions to the problem or issue being criticized. Anyone can gripe about a problem, but a good editorial should take a pro-active approach to making the situation better by using constructive criticism and giving solutions.
7. A solid and concise conclusion that powerfully summarizes the writer's opinion. Give it some punch.

Four Types of Editorials Will:

1. Explain or interpret: Editors often use these editorials to explain the way the newspaper covered a sensitive or controversial subject. School newspapers may explain new school rules or a particular student-body effort like a food drive.
2. Criticize: These editorials constructively criticize actions, decisions or situations while providing solutions to the problem identified. Immediate purpose is to get readers to see the problem, not the solution.
3. Persuade: Editorials of persuasion aim to immediately see the solution, not the problem. From the first paragraph, readers will be encouraged to take a specific, positive action. Political endorsements are good examples of editorials of persuasion.
4. Praise: These editorials commend people and organizations for something done well. They are not as common as the other three.

1. Pick a significant topic that has a current news angle and would interest readers.
2. Collect information and facts; include objective reporting; do research
3. State your opinion briefly in the fashion of a thesis statement
4. Explain the issue objectively as a reporter would and tell why this situation is important
5. Give opposing viewpoint first with its quotations and facts
6. Refute (reject) the other side and develop your case using facts, details, figures, quotations. Pick apart the other side's logic.
7. Concede a point of the opposition — they must have some good points you can acknowledge that would make you look rational.
8. Repeat key phrases to reinforce an idea into the reader's minds.
9. Give a realistic solution(s) to the problem that goes beyond common knowledge. Encourage critical thinking and pro-active reaction.
10. Wrap it up in a concluding punch that restates your opening remark (thesis statement).
11. Keep it to 500 words; make every word count; never use "I"

A Sample Structure:

I. Lead with an Objective Explanation of the Issue/Controversy.

Include the five W's and the H. (Members of Congress, in effort to reduce the budget, are looking to cut funding from public television. Hearings were held ...)

Pull in facts and quotations from the sources which are relevant.

Additional research may be necessary.

II. Present Your Opposition First.

As the writer you disagree with these viewpoints. Identify the people (specifically who oppose you. (Republicans feel that these cuts are necessary; other cable stations can pick them; only the rich watch public television.)

Use facts and quotations to state objectively their opinions.

Give a strong position of the opposition. You gain nothing in refuting a weak position.

III. Directly Refute The Opposition's Beliefs.

You can begin your article with transition. (Republicans believe public television is a "sandbox for the rich." However, statistics show most people who watch public television make less than \$40,000 per year.)

Pull in other facts and quotations from people who support your position.

Concede a valid point of the opposition which will make you appear rational, one who has considered all the options (fiscal times are tough, and we can cut some of the funding for the arts; however, ...).

IV. Give Other, Original Reasons/Analogies

In defense of your position, give reasons from strong to strongest order. (Taking money away from public television is robbing children of their education ...)

Use a literary or cultural allusion that lends to your credibility and perceived intelligence (We should render unto Caesar that which belongs to him ...)

V. Conclude With Some Punch.

Give solutions to the problem or challenge the reader to be informed. (Congress should look to where real wastes exist — perhaps in defense and entitlements — to find ways to save money. Digging into public television's pocket hurts us all.)

A quotation can be effective, especially if from a respected source

A rhetorical question can be an effective concluser as well (If the government doesn't defend the interests of children, who will?)

What Is A Good Editorial?

What are the qualities that distinguish a good editorial? Are there certain essential attributes? What should a good editorial do to a reader, and what not?

These are some crucial questions that every editor, editorial board member, journal and its policy makers should decide for themselves and their respective publications. To that extent it is individual, and some may consider it the internal matter of the publication. However, a broad consensus on certain essential parameters maybe desirable, even essential, if the individual has also to be a significant part of the wider knowledge corpus which all editorials pooled together represent.

We wonder if ever an exercise to publish all editorials of a certain publication has been undertaken, say over a five or ten year period. Or for that matter, say hundred editorials from hundred different editors. It may make for fascinating reading. We hope some smart publisher is reading this. It is possible editorials of one editor may have been compiled and published in book form. That itself is not uninteresting. But the flavour of different edits by different authors is, well, in a class by itself. Wonder if it has been attempted ever?

Of course we know why it may not have been done. Editors, by and large, are reticent people, with a magnified sense of their own importance. Well, this may hurt some, but before they jump at our throats, let us clarify that we belong there as well (The group of editors, reticent, and pompous.). Hence, they may be willing to publish a book of their own edits, but maybe averse to a book with multiple editors as co-authors. Maybe some smart publisher should manage it. He will make his bucks, for sure. And the readers, including fellow editors, will hugely enjoy the fare offered, as they savour the stuff that goes into edit writing. And a second important service will be to help deflate some editorial egos, much in need of puncturing, as so many readers would vouch for.

Enough of that for the present, for we must concentrate on the questions raised at the beginning of this essay. And we hope fellow editors can take some ego puncturing sportingly. Are they not doing it to their writers all the time? It helps to get to the other side of the fence on occasions. Never mind, for those who feel sour faced, there is solace. Their position in the periodical will ensure their ego builds up with some speed once again.

Opinion Maker, Reconciliatory, Balanced and Crusading

The very first criterion is that a good editorial is an opinion maker. If it is based on evidence, so much the better. But it analyses evidence rather than produces it. Of course what it analyses can be the basis of the production of new evidence. But it is more like the 'Results and Discussion' that follow 'Materials and Method' in a research paper in so far as it is an objective analysis. However, it goes beyond an analysis. It must necessarily also express an opinion. It must attempt to critically analyse and sift from the various opinions, analyses and evidences floating around. It must present a refreshing perspective on an issue so as to retain balance when writings get opinionated; and/or stir up the crotchety and crusty when scientific/creative stupor sets in. Moreover, a good editorial is contemporary without being populist. It tackles recent events and issues, and attempts to formulate viewpoints based on an objective analysis of happenings and conflicting/contrary opinions.

An editorial is predominantly about balance. But that does not prevent it from occasionally stirring things up, when such is the need. Hence a hard-hitting editorial is as legitimate as a balanced equipoise that reconciles apparently conflicting positions and controversial posturings, whether amongst politicians (in news papers), or amongst researchers (in academic journals).

All said and done, the element of balance can never be lost. For that, it certainly helps if an editor is a balanced individual by temperament as well. However, let it not mean that balance in temperament excludes crusading zeal. Most editors of some merit have the latter in reasonable quantity, although they may play it down, or publicly make a mockery of it, since it is the in thing to do (the mockery, not the crusading). Moreover, denial can be a strong defense mechanism, as much in editors as in the rest of humanity.

Make no mistake about it. Forget the loud protestation to the contrary. Scratch the surface of any good editor who enjoys his job, and a crusader will shine through.

To sum up, a good editorial is either one or more of the following: it is an opinion maker, it is reconciliatory between contrary viewpoints or standpoints, it is balanced in its analysis of evidence and events, and it is, manifest or otherwise, crusading in its thrust.

The Language

An editorial is traditionally written in a literary style. While it is difficult to define what a literary style is, let us say it is one in which thought is well clothed in language. So well that an editorial may make for a literary piece in literature, aside and apart from its factual or scientific content. However, having said that, it must be noted that an editorial is not only a literary piece. It must also express a firm and balanced opinion on something, an opinion that clarifies the muddle into which committed writers and researchers may lead the reader. At no stage must the language overshadow the thought, however. That is a subtle distinction to maintain. The thought may be embellished by language, not drowned in it. It is very much like a beautiful lady in an equally beautiful dress. Her beauty must be accentuated by the dress. She should not get drowned, or over shadowed, by it, for then the whole exercise is counterproductive. Like when a model becomes just a peg to drape a dress on. That is a distinct danger a good editorial writer must beware of. But, even if it be so, we may note that an editor with a literary flair can make even a humdrum issue vibrate with his unique touch.

To sum up, language is an important accessory, but never the main thing.

The After Taste

Like the dessert after a good meal leaves an impact, in fact decides the, after taste, a good editorial must also be careful to leave a good after taste. This is one in which the reader is held to the piece and retains his interest right till the end. So the piece has to be sufficiently brief to hold his attention, and equally entertaining to hold his attention so that the wholesome is imbibed. It must be such that the reader feels enlightened, or empowered, or helped in forming his own opinion on an issue. While a good editorial expresses an opinion, it does not force it down the throat of the reader. It is subtle enough to appeal to the good sense of the knowledgeable reader without forcing him to toe its line. This is its real test.

The feeling after a good editorial is done with is one of profundity. It is of being in the presence of an enlightened being. It is of feeling ennobled and charged to do something worthwhile, or feel reconciled from a knotty or vexing thought process. It must, moreover, want you to give it a second read like wanting a second helping of a good dessert. And want to read further editorials by the same author like wanting ones favourite dessert after a meal.

Summing Up

A good editorial should express an opinion without being opinionated. It should teach without being pedagogic. It should transform without being evangelical. It should engulf without drowning. It should motivate to action without making you dictatorial. It should enlighten without getting you dogmatic, prejudiced and egotistical.

The last, and probably most important, a good editorial should be brief.

Steps and elements of writing for Radio & TV: editorial, features & review

FEATURES OF RADIO BROADCASTING

Features through radios are not based on current news, but on the information or topic of general importance. Unlike features in print media, which adopt some tips to attract the audience with catchwords and all, the radio features have to be attractive through the way it is presented with music and sound effects to create a dramatic effect in the mind of listeners. A team is assigned with preparing the feature so as to make it successful. A thorough understanding of the topic is acquired before the production. The journalists well versed in the topic concerned are more helpful. Features are of different types as given below.

Personality Features

This types of Features focus upon a particular figure of high profile so that the media persons concerned will make a detailed research upon the person whose feature is to be aired on a scheduled date. For instance, if the person selected is Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, his achievements in the field of science and technology, various positions he held, his childhood experiences, the challenges he has faced, his youthful experiences, family details, his perspectives and points of view, his contributions to the nation, his political approaches, his publications, various honours he had been conferred upon, his personality etc. will be showcased in great detail. So, the factor of timeliness is not a concern in the features. Though the same feature is rescheduled for next week or month, it does not affect the feature in the name of timeliness. But, a detailed ground work is necessary to present it spectacular and authentic way.

Geographical Features

These features dwell upon the particular geographical area. It could be a valley or mountain or city. If it is a city, the feature can trace back to its various developments in the past to its present form. The cultural and linguistic peculiarities of the people of the areas are well presented. The rituals, festivals, political and social culture etc. are also put under the presentation. If any historical significance and cultural heritage is bound with the place, it tries to explore it to take further knowledge of the audience. If the place is a tourist destination, it helps to promote tourism as well. So, a complete picture of a particular area can be comprehended through a feature on that place. Eventual features The features could be presented on particular events that are of high relevance .A notorious cold blooded murder that sparked controversies, a bomb explosion that took the life of hundreds of people, the world wars, the international espionages etc. are good examples. The background, causes, the consequences of the event are described in detail. These feature stories add to the knowledge of the audience as well as they increase the curiosity of the people to know further. The audience may be totally ignorant of some perspectives of the events which they come to get aware of. But, any inadvertent errors on these serious events may fetch bitter reaction. So, it is to be prepared very carefully.

The miscellaneous

There are some topics that draw the attention of Features like economic crisis, the spread of some contagious disease, the life of people living in slums etc. Since timeliness does not become a factor to determine its value, the media persons can take their own time to make a comprehensive study to present a feature.

RADIO INTERVIEWS

Unlike print media which mainly interviews the public figures in their studio, Radio often interviews the figures on the spot to clarify and diversify the various aspects of a news story. In radio interviews, the accuracy and clarity of the technical aspects of the process have to be made assured lest it should disturb the audience due to the technical interruptions. In the case of print media, capturing the content from the interviewee can conveniently be transformed into written forms.

But, in radio interviews, the audio has to be broadcasted. During the news reading, spot interviews are conducted to further information in the interest of listeners. The news reader can make a short span interview with a victim in a war-hit zone or with a politician on a controversial political development getting emerged so that the listeners can avail diversify their information. This type of interview is conducted extempore. So, the pre-planned questions and approach need not be expected from the interviewer. The other type of interview is the field interview where one representative or reporter of the radio approaches the interviewee in the field or area concerned.

TELEVISION

“Quality drama, and the best screenwriters, are all to be found on TV these days.” Whether you agree with that statement or not, it’s certainly hard to argue that shows like *Homeland*, the *Red Riding Trilogy*, *Breaking Bad* and *Downton Abbey* don’t contain some damn fine writing skills.

So, if you want to make a break into writing for telly, whether you come from features, or starting screenwriting from scratch, here are some rules to consider.

1. Character Cast Size

Consider how many characters you will feature. Typically 4 or 5 with a stronger ‘lead’ character seems to work. Pick a handful of shows and check for yourself.

2. Characters in Conflict

Create characters that will constantly create their own conflict, even if just locked in a room together. Take a look at *Family Guy* for example: a slob dad, an uptight mum, a scheming baby, and an intellectual dog. Put any two of those in a room together and they would be arguing in 5 minutes, just because their personalities are so different. Conflict is key, both for drama and comedy – and having characters that generate it automatically, rather than relying on outside ‘plot’ will be extremely helpful.

Characteristics & Techniques of Writing Feature Story

A feature story is any piece of writing that falls between the cut-and-dried news story on the one hand, and the wholly fictionalized story or opinionated essay on the other hand. It is the product of factual reporting and reporting to which are added story elements of imaginative writing and interpretation. The special feature article is similar to news story in that it gives the readers facts in an interesting form. But it goes beyond those facts by multiplying them with study, research, and interviews to instruct, guide and entertain the readers who know about the subject as well as those who do not know.

Feature stories can be news stories. Features can be investigative. Features can be in-depth studies. Features can be for fun. The subject can be anything: places- a community, a farm, a business, topics-education, science, economy, religion, philosophy; events-parades, programmes, concerts; people-well known or unknown animals-unusual or ordinary; objects-art or product. In Other words, features can be about anything, you want to write about.

A feature story is a creative, sometimes subjective article designed primarily to entertain and to inform readers of an event, a situation or an aspect of life.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FEATURE STORIES

Following are some of the most important characteristics of feature stories:

1. They may inform, instruct and advise, but their primary purpose is to entertain the readers. They are usually read after the news and in leisure moments.
2. They are factual, and require reporting.
3. They may or may not be timely. If they are timely and related to a current news event, they are likely to appeal more to readers.
4. They may be written in any form and style. The only criterion is that the form and style be appropriate to the contents and purpose of the story.
5. They permit the reporter to use his/her knowledge and ingenuity to write a story original in ideas and treatment.
6. They rarely have news leads. Instead, they more often have novelty leads.
7. They usually strike the keynote in the opening sentences, which permit the readers to come into quick contact with the story and become interested.
8. They usually are not cut in make-up. Thus, the reporter may use any devices of the fiction writer: suspense, dialogue, description, narration, climax, and the like. The inverted pyramid does fit the purpose of a feature story.
9. They require the writer to apply his/her imaginations to the facts, yet they are not fiction.
10. They apply all principles of effective writing to achieve unity, coherence, and emphasis.

11. They usually can be improved by rewriting to eliminate all writing faults. For example, stodginess, verbosity-, abstractness, monotony and absence of rhythm, etc.
12. They bring readers as close as possible to the experience or idea of the story. The reader feels himself as a part of the story.

Techniques of WRITING THE FEATURE:

Structure

A feature is seldom written in the traditional Inverted pyramid pattern. Feature may be written in a narrative fashion, much like a good joke or anecdote. The good feature requires as much organization as the straight news story, for the feature has to flow smoothly and parts of a feature story must be kept intact if it is to succeed. In the well-planned story, every paragraph, every sentence, should add to the total effect

Leads

The lead attracts immediate attention and pull the reader into the story. Leads can vary in style and content. You can use description, narration, dialogue, question, unusual statement, call to action, comparison-contrast.

Transition

No matter how good the lead is, you need a solid transition into the body of the feature. It makes the reader want to continue. And it promises some kind of satisfaction or reward. The reward can be entertainment, information or self-awareness but has to be something of value to the reader.

Body

Sound knowledge of the subject, coupled with good writing skills, will let you take the reader through a variety of experiences. You should use the standard writing devices of crisp dialogue, documentable but vivid fact and detail, careful observation, suspense and if appropriate, plot.

Conclusions

The conclusion should give the reader a sense of satisfaction. You need to tie the conclusion to the lead so that the story has unity. Often you can do this through a short, tight summary. Occasionally, you can conclude with an anecdote or a quote that sums up the substance of the story. With a narrative approach, you build toward a climax.

Length

If a reporter asks how long a feature story should be the editor may reply, "as long as you keep it interesting." Feature stories vary in length from two or three paragraphs to 15 or 20 triple-spaced sheets of copy. Reader's interest is the main yardstick by which they are judged.

Why Your Organization Needs an Internal Company Newsletter

When you've got news to share with your employees, team, or executives, an internal company newsletter can be the most effective way of reaching everyone. An internal newsletter could contain an update about the upcoming holiday party for the entire organization or information around the company's quarterly results for the executive team exclusively. And, you could have both! There are many different ways to use internal company newsletters, and you can have more than one for different teams, offices, or departments. The approach you take depends on the objectives of your marketing strategy.

A newsletter is either an electronic or printed report covering various activities of a company or business. It is sent to its employees, customers, community members, or other subscribers and consists of interesting content, promotions, announcements. A newsletter helps to increase traffic and serves as an information source.

Often times, organizations have an external-facing newsletter but lack any type of internal company newsletters. And that's the problem we are trying to solve with this blog (and our newsletter management platform). One reason why organizations forgo putting together these weekly, monthly, or quarterly email updates is that there's a myth that they aren't read by employees, however, the data shows otherwise.

How to Prepare to Write a Departmental Newsletter

Writing an internal or external company newsletter can be a way to stay in touch with staffers, customers, clients or the general public. Prior to writing your newsletter, you'll want to name your publication and make several key decisions related to your editorial content and policy, your audience, production plans and distribution avenues. You'll also need to decide whether you'll sell advertising to offset costs.

Readership and Content

Understanding who your readers are will help you determine the most appropriate type of content for your newsletter. For example, an internal newsletter for employees might include updates from various departments, news in strategic planning initiatives from the CEO, announcements, upcoming events, project updates and other news and information that would be valuable to people inside the company. An external newsletter for a business such as a nonprofit organization might include information related to volunteer opportunities, success stories, recruitment or fund-raising initiatives.

Writing, Editing and Production

Producing content for a newsletter can be done by a small business owner, an in-house marketing or communications professional or outsourced to a freelance writer. A key decision-maker in the organization should oversee the direction of content and develop publication policies. These will dictate issues related to content, deadlines, who in the organization will write and proofread different

articles and the process for doing so. Consider utilizing a simple desktop publishing program for formatting your newsletter and a digital camera and clip art graphics to give it color and pizzazz.

Topics and Categories

Create an editorial calendar that details the content you want to include in your newsletter. You may have regular features such as a product Q&A, a message from the president, feedback from customers, departmental reports or an announcements section. You may opt to allow op-eds, feature articles, customer or employee profiles, FAQs or tips sections. In addition to regular topics, reserve space for news, updates or seasonal topics that require coverage.

Distribution

How the newsletter is produced and distributed will be based on your budget, the length and frequency of the newsletter and whether you plan to transmit it electronically or print and distribute it. The extent of your production efforts will likely be based on your production and printing budget, which should also be determined as part of the pre-writing process.

• SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

- The scope of print media is large. Magazines, journals, letters, academic and religious text books, wire services, company brochures etc. all come under the print media.
- Drawbacks of news paper is that it cannot update the news; there is no scope for musical and visual impact on its readers; the illiterate people cannot read the newspapers though they want to know the news; etc.
- A newspaper is composed of a lot of components such as news, features, advertisements, columns, editorial, middles, reviews etc. News is also termed as news story.
- All the news stories are structured in an anti-pyramid style so that the major details of the story can be emphatically presented in the beginning and the successive part goes with minor details of lesser importance.
- The essential components of a News story are: Date Line, By- Line, Credit Line.
- A Feature story is a piece of news item written with a particular intention.
- Articles appear on the editorial page of a newspaper. Unlike Features, it is a seriously written document with scholarly approach.

• EXERCISES

Short Questions:

Q. 1. Which is the first daily news paper that started in English Language?

Ans. The first daily newspaper in English is The Daily Courant, the publication of which started in London in 1702.

Q. 2. What are some drawbacks of news papers?

Ans. Newspapers cannot update the news: in newspapers, there is no scope for musical and visual impact on its readers; the illiterate people cannot read the newspapers though they want to know the news; etc.

Q. 3. What is the difference between a hard news and a soft news?

Ans. Hard news is the one that depicts the event as is for eg. flood, earthquake etc. whereas soft news provides a lot of interpretations, perspective, and analytical explanations.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The publication of The Daily Courant News Paper started in London in:

- (a) 1690
- (b) 1699
- (c) 1702
- (d) 1705

Ans. (c)

2. Editorials should have:

- (a) Introduction, body and conclusion like other news stories
- (b) An objective explanation of the issue,
- (c) Opinions from the opposing viewpoint that refute directly the same issues the writer addresses
- (d) A solid and concise conclusion that powerfully summarizes the writer's opinion
- (e) All of the above
- (f) None of the above

Ans. (e)

• ANSWER IN BRIEF

- 1. What is the scope of print media?
- 2. What are the essential components of a news story?

