

Community Radio Reporter Training Manual



Allegheny Mountain Radio



WVNR, 1370 AM

WVLS, 89.7 FM

WCHG, 107.1 FM

RADIO DURBIN 103.5 FM

By: Emily Hughes Corio

P.I. Reed School of Journalism

West Virginia University

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1. Introduction:

Welcome to Allegheny Mountain Radio's News and Public Affairs Department!

Allegheny Mountain Radio is a network of three non commercial radio stations: WVMR in Frost, W.Va., WVLS in Monterey, Va., WCHG in Warm Springs, Va., and W278AL, a transmitter in Durbin, W.Va. The network's purpose is to serve the community and to educate and entertain its listeners, not to make a profit for any individual or corporation.

If you are a long-time volunteer or staff member, this manual will refresh your knowledge of fundamental journalism skills.

If you are new to AMR and to reporting in general, this manual will help you get started and give you the tools and confidence to produce stories for this radio station.

AMR's local news programming, whether it's a report on a school board meeting, road conditions, or the weather report, is a service that our listeners value.

No matter what your background, we're glad you are taking this step and want to make a contribution to your community radio station and to your community. It's a great way to make a positive difference where you live.

Volunteer Contract

All volunteer news reporters are asked to sign Allegheny Mountain Radio's volunteer contract before they begin working with the station. The contract outlines the volunteer's and the station's responsibilities and expectations. AMR works with its volunteers to devise a plan that fits both the volunteer's and the station's requirements.

2. What is News?

Before you get started reporting, you need to understand how to come up with story ideas. In other words, you need to understand what qualifies as “news.”

In order to determine if some event, issue, or idea is newsworthy, you must weigh it against several characteristics:

- *Proximity*: The location of the story in relation to your listeners. If you are a reporter in Marlinton, W.Va., you are not going to cover a story on road improvement projects in Richmond, Va.; however, you would cover the road improvements planned for Marlinton. Cover stories that hit close to home.
- *Prominence*: The subject of the story is someone who is well-known, like a politician or celebrity. For example, if the president of the United States goes for a mountain bike ride and breaks his arm, this is news, because the president is a prominent person. This is not the case for your friend Joe who suffers the same injury. In a small community setting, some examples of prominent people are: local politicians, doctors, business owners, and school principals or coaches. If any one of these people were arrested for anything, it would definitely make the news.
- *Timeliness*: News is anything new. Cover stories that are current. Your listeners do not want or need to know what happened at a meeting three weeks ago, unless it's significant and no one else has reported on it. If you are going to do a story on something that already happened, you need to find a way to update it so that it is new to your listeners. You can call the people involved and see if anything new has happened.
- *Conflict*: Many stories involve conflict. Whether it's two neighbors fighting over land rights or two countries at war, conflict can make an issue news worthy.
- *Impact*: Does the story affect people? Imagine a listener asking, “Why should I care?” about whatever it is you want to do a story on. If you can answer that question in a meaningful way, then you have a good story idea. Also, you can determine whether a story impacts people by following the money. Issues that affect how much money people earn or will have to pay in taxes usually gets their attention.

- *Human interest*: This includes odd, funny, light-hearted, or unusual stories. Human interest stories may not be timely, but they tell a story that people can relate to or that would just fascinate your audience to hear. For example, a story profiling the oldest person in your town, a 105 year-old man, is not breaking news, but it could still make for a good story. This falls into the “unusual” category, because people normally don’t live to be that age. Human interest stories are also referred to as “feature” stories.

You may also hear news stories described as “hard” or “soft.” Hard news is “breaking news, current issues, and agenda-setting” (Attkisson and Vaughan 1). Agenda-setting news is about a topic that the listener might not have thought about, but now that you did a story, they will. Maybe the listener didn’t know that local development was polluting area streams, but when you do a story on it you set the agenda of what people will now think about.

Soft news is described as “amusing, entertaining, informative, dramatic, weird, or otherwise compelling” (Attkisson and Vaughan 1). Human interest or feature stories are usually soft news stories.

As a first-time reporter, your first assignment should be “soft,” a feature or human interest story. This allows you to break into reporting without the added stress of having to cover something that’s controversial and complicated.

Once you file a few feature stories, you’ll feel more confident approaching “hard” news stories.

An example of a hard news story for your community radio station may be localizing a timely national issue (Browne). For example, if you wanted to localize a story about the poor state of the economy, you could talk to local bank managers, small businesses owners in your community, or working adults to see how they’re weathering the recession. Have any companies in the area laid people off because of the economy? You could also produce a story on one local family’s response to the recession.

Where do you find good news stories?

- *“Official” Sources*: Get to know certain people in your community and make sure they know you. These sources may be local politicians, police officers, the fire chief, community organizers, and people who are involved in various community activities. Call these people on a regular basis or strike up a conversation when you run into them in town. Ask if there’s anything interesting going on, because you may find out about a good story idea.

- “Real People”: Talk to average citizens who may have been impacted by whatever it is that you’re reporting on. You can find real people to interview by visiting public spaces, like a diner, a park, or a mall. You can also find real people to interview by searching public records. For example, if you are doing a story on a landlord who has a reputation of not keeping up his buildings, search violation records at the town’s building code enforcement office and you will find names of tenants who have complained or live at a residence that received a violation. Contact these people for an interview.
- Listeners: Solicit story ideas from your listeners. Produce a promo spot that airs on the radio and provide an e-mail address so people can submit story ideas electronically. You’ll get some good ideas out of this and some off the wall ideas. Just use your news judgment to determine what’s worth a story.
- A calendar: If you come across announcements about future events or meetings, mark it down in a calendar or put the information in a file marked “future stories.” It also helps to know important historical dates for the area you cover. Anniversaries of historical events can be turned into interesting stories that revisit history and assess the present-day situation. Also use your “future stories” file to keep track of issues you have already covered but may need to revisit. For example, someone may be indicted in the grand jury process. It’s important that you keep track of this story by noting when the court date for the case will be.
- Local government: Attend local meetings, including county commission, city council, school board, and other groups that are appointed by local government officials. “Instead of waiting for a vote at a government meeting, scan the meeting agenda in advance and identify, investigate, and report on interesting topics” before the politicians meet to discuss the issue (Attkisson and Vaughan 99).
- Local newspaper: “Read your community newspaper” (Raiteri 143). You may find story ideas through advertisements, legal ads, announcements, and stories in the newspaper. It’s OK to do a story on something that has already been in the newspaper, but you must find a way to update the story or to go more in-depth. If the newspaper article left you with questions, follow-up with a story of your own that addresses those unanswered questions. Chances are other readers were also left with the same questions and will appreciate your story.

- News Releases: (also called press releases) Organizations will send information to media outlets hoping that media will cover whatever it is they are trying to promote. These are oftentimes self-serving to the organization, but can be good story ideas and should be read and considered.
- Be curious: Pay attention to the world around you, and if something strikes you as odd or interesting, follow your instinct and investigate. A great story idea might come out of it. “Let your natural curiosity about people, situations, and life be your guide” (Attkisson and Vaughan 98).

When you determine what’s worth covering in a story, you’re using news judgment, and you’re also acting as a *gate keeper*. A gate keeper in news terms “determines what gets through to the audience and what doesn’t” (Attkisson and Vaughan 3).

This is a position of privilege, so it’s always important to keep your listeners in mind when acting as a gate keeper and using your news judgment. The more you understand what is news, in terms of what your listener wants and needs to hear, the better gatekeeper you will be.

Beats:

Some media organizations assign reporters specific topics to cover, also known as *beats*. Examples of beats are health, politics, or science.

Beats may also be assigned based on geography. A reporter at Allegheny Mountain Radio, for example, who lives in Highland County, Va., may be asked to cover the Highland County beat. This reporter could cover anything newsworthy that happens in Highland County, whether that’s a story on the school board meeting or a story about the upcoming Highland County Maple Festival.

Make sure you get approval for your story idea before you begin working on it. If you’re in Highland or Bath Counties, contact the station coordinator for WVLS or WCHG. The station coordinator will pass your idea along to the news director. If you’re in Pocahontas County, contact AMR’s News Director directly at WVMR.

Important phone numbers:

WVMR, Frost, W.Va.: (304) 799-6004; **WVLS, Monterey, Va.:** (540) 468-1234;
WCHG, Warm Springs, Va.: (540) 839-5400

3. Interview

Techniques:

Once you have a story idea, you need to do some research so that you understand what your story is about and who you need to talk to. Talking to the right people and getting the answers you need can make or break a good story.

Background research involves finding out the *who, what, when, and where* of your story. You may not find out all of these details in your research, but that's OK. Now you know what you need to find out through your interviews.

Your interviews should fill in, clarify, and confirm any of background information you have and address the *why, how, and what's next* of your story.

When deciding who to interview, "talk to victims and advocates, then move to regulators and governmental types before talking to the industry types" (Eurich and Himel).

For example, if you learn that a local lumber mill is shutting down, interview employees first. What are they going to do now? How will this affect them? Will they have to move out of the area to look for other work?

Next, interview the lumber mill owner. Why is the mill closing? How long was it in operation? How many people worked there? What was the annual payroll? How much did the company pay in local taxes?

Next, interview a local official. Having found out from the mill owner that the operation paid \$1 million a year in local business taxes, ask the local official how this loss of income for the county will impact local services. Did the company receive any tax breaks over the years to help it stay afloat?

Sound from your interview that you use in your story should be colorful. You want people to express opinions, feelings, and explanations during your recorded interviews and you want to use this emotive sound in your story.

Background information, which includes short, factual, and oftentimes numerical answers, is information that you can write down in your notepad. You can record this

information too, but it is not the sound from the interview that you necessarily want to use in your story.

Background information is often information that you, the reporter, can paraphrase in your story. Just make sure that you attribute that information to the correct source!

Interviewing Tips:

- *Create a list of questions before the interview.* DO NOT rehearse the questions with the person you are going to interview (“WORT News Volunteer Manual” 17). You want people to express genuine emotions during your interview. You don’t want the interview to sound scripted. You can give the person an idea of what you may be asking them about instead of sharing the actual questions with them before the interview.
- *Take notes during the interview.* If the interviewee says something interesting, make a note of the track number and time displayed on the recorder. You’ll be able to locate this good quote quickly when you start to edit.
- *Make eye contact and use silent cues.* You should occasionally glance down at your list of questions and at the recorder to make sure it is working, but do this quickly so that you can maintain eye contact with the interviewee as much as possible. This shows that you are interested in what the person is saying. If a friend looks away while you are speaking to them, it gives the impression that your friend does not care about what you have to say---not the impression you want to give the person you are interviewing. Also, you must stay impartial during interviews. Do not say “yeah” or “uh huh” during your interview; instead just nod your head. This shows you get the point, but it does not show that you agree with the point. Don’t talk while the interviewee is talking. This can be rude, but it also can ruin your sound.
- *Listen, Listen, Listen.* An interviewee’s response to one of your questions may lead you to ask a question that is not on your list. That’s OK. You can always go back to your prepared list of questions at the end of the interview to make sure that all have been answered.
- *Ask again.* Repeat your question if you feel like the person did not answer it. If you don’t understand a response, say so. If you don’t understand, your listener probably won’t either.

- Respect silence. People need time to think about their answer, or they could be trying to avoid answering. If you sit there waiting, they will speak.
- *Do not ask leading questions.* You have probably heard lawyers use the phrase, “Objection, your honor. She/He’s leading the witness.” Well, it’s also objectionable if a reporter leads an interviewee. For example, do not ask “How great is this new business venture?” Instead, ask “What does this mean for the community?” The first question automatically implies that the new business is great, and that’s an opinion. Do not put your opinions in your stories.
- *Ask direct questions.* Never ask two-part questions. Many times when reporters do this the interviewee only answers one part. Be clear about what you want to know.
- *Ask simple questions.* “Why?” “How?” “What happened next?” “So what?” These are open-ended questions that require more than a yes or no answer and often “elicit colorful, complex, contextualized, and opinionated responses” (“WORT News Volunteer Manual 15).
- *Use challenge questions.* Sometimes you have to play devil’s advocate and “probe” the interviewee (Whaley). Ask about the validity of what they’re saying or ask them about what their critics say: *How do you respond to John Smith’s statement that this plan will never work?*
- *Grab some interviews before meetings start.* This will save time and provide you with sound that you might not get if you cannot stay to cover an entire meeting. Just make sure that if the meeting includes a vote on something, you know how that vote turned out.
- *Always start your recorded interview by asking the person to say and spell their name.* This helps in a couple of ways: it allows you a chance to make sure your recorder works and your audio levels are good. It also helps if the person has a tricky name that’s difficult to pronounce. Now you have the person saying their name on tape, so you’ll know how to say it in your story.
- *Last questions:* End the interview with “Is there anything else you would like to add?” Sometimes you get the most succinct response. Also, ask the person if there’s anyone else they recommend you interview for your story (Eurich and Himel). Before you leave the interview, make sure you have the person’s name and contact information in case you need to clarify something as you put your story together.

Listening for natural sound:

Natural sound, or ambient sound, is sound from the field, separate from your interview sound.

For example, when you go out to do interviews about the lumber mill closing, record the sounds at the mill, sounds of people packing up the place. Use this sound at the beginning of your story to help set the scene. When you're talking about a lumber mill, your listener would expect to hear saws running, but you don't hear that at this mill--that's telling.

When natural sound is used in your story, it can stand alone for a couple of seconds and then the reporter's voice comes in while the natural sound softens and eventually fades out.

For example, the story about the lumber mill could start with a couple of seconds of the packing sound. Then your voice would come in and the packing sound would soften under your voice. This use of natural sound and voice at the same time in your story is called *mixing*.

Your script might start with this sentence (after your listeners have heard the packing sound): "This is not the sound you expect to hear at a lumber mill. Machines are being taken apart and packed up. Everything is going to auction. These machines still cut logs, they just won't do it here . . ."

This sound helps your listener visualize your story. Be observant when you go out into the field and think about what natural sounds will help you tell your story and create a scene in your listener's mind's eye. As the reporter, you want to give your listeners all the details you can to help them see your story in their mind. Natural sound is a great way to do this.

Also, make notes or speak into your microphone and record your observations---what do you hear, see, smell--- while you are in the field. This will help you write a descriptive story.

Natural sound should not be confused with *noise*. Noise is sound that interferes with your interview. For example, noise includes sounds like a computer humming in the background or an air conditioner running. Unless you are doing a story where computers or ACs play a central role in the story, this is not a good thing. Politely ask the person you are interviewing if they could shut down their computer during the interview, turn off their TV, AC, or whatever is creating the *noise*.

All of this hard work spent gathering your interviews and natural sound won't mean anything if you get back to the station and realize your recorder did not work.

Always check your recorder to make sure it works *before* you go into an interview.

Always carry spare batteries with you.

Always use headphones so you know whether your recorder is working during the interview and if the sound quality is good.

In summary, when interviewing, remember to: be prepared, be flexible, be engaged, be in control, and ask again if necessary.

4. It's Time to Write:

After you complete your interviews, it's time to listen to all of your sound, right? Not quite. In many cases, you should start writing your script first.

Writing first forces you to determine what your story is about before getting bogged down listening to all of your sound.

If you are someone who struggles with deadlines, this will help you work faster. But you must start writing very soon after your interviews are completed or else your memory won't serve you well.

To start the writing process, ask yourself, "What is my story about?" It seems like an easy question, but it can be tricky if you don't remember those characteristics of what makes a good news story: *proximity, timeliness, prominence, and human interest*.

Try to describe what your story is about in three words.

Ask yourself: Who is this story about? What is this person doing? Why are they doing that?

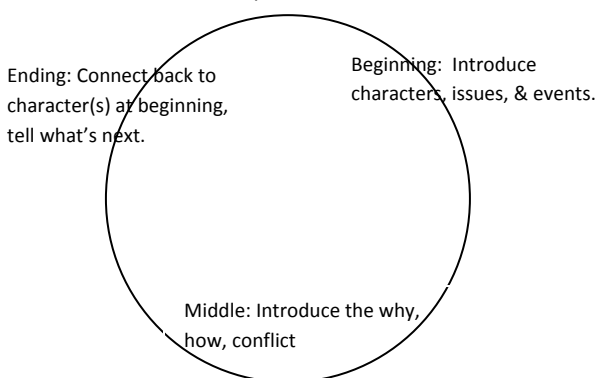
What you end up with is a "focus statement."

For example, if you covered a town hall meeting where city council members approved a tax increase, your focus statement could be: city raises taxes. Your three-word focus statement is for your benefit as you write. It is the theme of your story. It is not a phrase you insert into your script (but it could be used as a headline when your radio story turns into a story for AMR's Internet site).

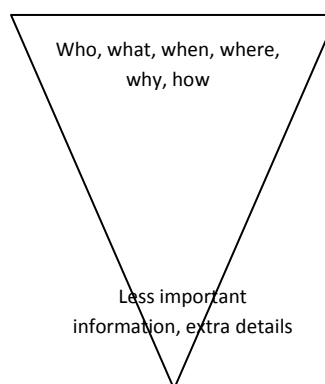
If you are having trouble finding your story's focus, walk into a co-workers office or call a friend and tell them about your story. Simply having this conversation will force you to articulate what your story is about. Also, your co-worker or friend may raise questions that you need to consider when writing your story.

Broadcast scripts sometimes follow a format that's referred to as a *completed circle*. A completed circle script has a beginning, middle, and end, unlike the print format which follows an inverted pyramid style (Attkisson and Vaughan 23).

See the graphic on the following page.

Broadcast Format:**The Completed Circle**

In the completed circle format what you write at the end of your story could be just as significant as what's in the beginning of your story. You want to give the listener new and interesting information throughout your story.

Print Format:**The Inverted Pyramid**

In the pyramid format the most important information is at the beginning. Oftentimes, print stories are cut from the bottom.

The style of broadcast writing can also be summarized this way: write *clearly*, *concisely*, and *conversationally*.

Write clearly: Your audience cannot re-read your radio story, so it's important to make sure your listeners understand your story the first time they hear it.

Write concisely: Get to the point. Only include *one idea* per sentence. Omit unnecessary details; only include details that make the focus of your story more clear to your listener.

Write conversationally: Keep sentences simple. This often means keeping sentences short and not using *jargon* in your script (jargon is words professionals use but real people don't.) Use contractions: you can start sentences with and, but, so, and or.

In writing your scripts, remember that people relate to other people. A story that starts with "a person" or "a personal story" will engage your listeners ("WORT News Volunteer Manual 13). A story that starts with a lot of numbers will make them say "huh?"

A good way to end a story is to tell your listeners what happens next ("WORT News Volunteer Manual 13). You can also end your story with the person or thought that started it (Geisler).

It may help to think of your script in these terms: the *lead* tells your listener the *what and where* of your story, the *body* of the story explains the *why and the how*, and the *ending* is about *what's next*.

Writing broadcast stories is also about anticipating what your listener may wonder about as they hear your story. If one sentence raises a question for your listener, the next sentence should answer that question. You obviously don't know for sure what questions your listener may have but you can anticipate.

For example: The first sentence of your story is: "City Council will give each city employee a 10 percent raise starting next month."

Now you anticipate what the listener will ask after hearing that sentence: why are city employees getting raises?

So, your next sentence in the story is: "Council members say this makes up for the last three years when the city didn't have money for any raises."

Now a listener might wonder: how does the city have the money to do this?

Your next sentence in the story is: "The city has an extra \$1 million dollars in its budget this year."

Why, your listener wonders. You write: "City officials say the budget surplus is a result of more people moving into town, increasing tax revenue."

A. Anchor leads: The anchor lead is read by the radio program's host, or anchor. It consists of a few sentences that introduce the reporter and the story.

Its purpose is to entice the listener to stick around for the rest of the story. The anchor lead should explain the *what and where* of your story.

The last sentence before the reporter's story begins, always introduces the reporter. It's as simple as: Joe Smith reports.

Always write your lead first. The lead guides your entire story.

Hard news leads: Use hard news leads for breaking news, timely news, and serious news. These leads are at least two sentences long. One sentence needs to explain the what and where of the story. If the story involves controversy, include another sentence that sets this up. This is a way to hook your listener with the lead and give them a reason to listen; they'll want to find out how this controversial story turns out.

EXAMPLE 1: *Marlinton employees will make more money starting next month. City council approved ten percent raises for all city employees. Heather Niday reports.*

EXAMPLE 2: *Former President Bill Clinton drew hundreds of people to a campaign rally Thursday at West Virginia University. Even early morning rain didn't keep supporters and spectators away. Emily Corio has more.*

Soft news leads: Use soft leads for feature and human interest stories. These leads can be more creative and longer than hard news leads. Again, the last sentence in the lead introduces the reporter.

EXAMPLE 1: *The Pocahontas Times has delivered the news in Pocahontas County for more than a hundred years. The late Calvin Price was owner and editor of the weekly newspaper for nearly half that time. A new film pays tribute to the country editor and conservationist. Heather Niday has more.*

EXAMPLE 2: *The Americana Museum in Preston County is closing. Everything is for sale at an antique auction this weekend. If you're looking for an old set of mailboxes or an iron lung, you'll find it here. Emily Corio was at the Teets' farm as items were tagged for the big sale.*

Question leads: It's best to avoid questions in your leads, because they isolate your listeners. For example, if your anchor lead starts with "Is your teenager addicted to text messaging?" This question only applies to listeners who have teenagers, so you risk losing listeners who don't. In summary, "questions can be hard to deliver, draw an answer you don't want, and trivialize the news" (Block and Dureso 51).

Umbrella lead: It introduces two stories at once; then the stories are aired back to back. If this lead is used, the reporter in the second story will need to start their story by identifying who they are and where they are reporting from.

Pitfalls in leads:

-Do not start a lead with "this story is complicated" or "it's the same story you've heard before" (Block and Dureso 86). Remember, the lead should make people want to listen.

-Do not start a lead with a quote, because it can confuse the listener. The listener may think those are the anchor's or reporter's words (Block and Dureso 51).

-Never use names in the lead sentence unless they're widely known by the audience (for example, the names of mayors, governors, or celebrities would be OK to include in the lead) (Attkisson and Vaughan 28).

A. Scripts without actualities:

There are two kinds of stories that you will be asked to produce: voicers and packages (more on packages later). Voicers are stories that do not contain actualities. *Actualities* are the parts of your recorded interview that you use in your final story; actualities are similar to *sound bites* in television stories and *quotes* in print stories.

Voicers are usually :45 long and should not be longer than 1:30. They include an anchor lead, which can add :10 to the total time.

The format you choose to write this script in depends on who you work for and what they want your script to look like. Some editors want you to write in ALL CAPS while others want your scrip to look like a term paper with paragraph indentions. One format example of a voicer script is in Appendix A of this manual.

B. Scripts with actualities:

Packages are stories that include actualities from people the reporter has interviewed. An actuality is a section of an interview that will be played in your story.

Actualities are placed within your script to help tell your story. Good actualities contain opinions, emotion, colorful comments, and information that you cannot say, as the reporter.

Actualities take your audience to the scene of the story and add credibility to your story (Attkisson and Vaughan 45).

Actualities also break-up narration in your story. Long narration anywhere in your story should be avoided.

Actualities should be on average :20 long and can be shorter if the content is appropriate. They should not be longer than :30.

In radio broadcast writing, the reporter must write into an actuality, introducing the speaker and giving the listener a hint of what they're about to hear. The person quoted in the actuality needs to be identified by their title, then their name before we hear the actuality.

Broadcast stories are generally written in present tense, so you want to write into actualities with the verb "says," unless you are referring to a specific event or feeling that was in the past.

EXAMPLE OF WRITING INTO AN ACTUALITY:

Reporter: Preston County school officials are weighing their options as they decide whether to close Southern Preston Middle School.

The school was built in 1914. The three story brick building still has the original hardwood floors and plaster walls. **Principal Darrell Martin** went to high school in this building.

Martin: "I graduated from the building. My librarian graduated from here. My technology teacher graduated from here. So, there are a lot of memories here, and that's tough."

EXAMPLE 2:

Reporter: Recently, a school in Gilmer County was closed after an inspection revealed significant damage to its structure.

Director of the state Department of Education's Office of School Facility, Bill Elswick, says South Middle School needs to be inspected. He says it's similar in age and construction to the Gilmer County School.

Elswick: "Unfortunately, the type of review that's necessary would require exposure of all of the structural members, which would typically take out the ceilings, and the students cannot be present when that occurs."

Paraphrasing in your scripts:

You may want to paraphrase something that someone you interview says because you can say it in a more clear and concise way. This is especially true for factual information, but you must still attribute the information to a source.

EXAMPLE:

Lofink: "The one option was the least popular one that the parents didn't want was bringing students temporarily into the county high school setting while the study or repairs are going on. Another option is using part of the structure at the current school and housing part of the students in a fire hall or church building in the community."

Here is an example of paraphrasing part of that actuality:

Reporter: Preston County School's Superintendent, John Lofink, said the school board considered busing the middle school students to the high school. But, he says parents argued against this, so the board has another alternative in mind.

Lofink: "Another option is using part of the structure at the current school and housing part of the students in a fire hall or church building in the community."

When introducing people in your stories, keep their titles and names as simple as possible while still being accurate. Broadcast scripts do not include a person's middle initial, or suffixes, like "jr." and "sr.," unless omission of the suffix would confuse listeners. "Do not use the courtesy titles of "Mr." or "Mrs." etc. (Raiteri 3).

If an actuality sounds wrong, research what the person said. You do not want your story to contradict factual information.

Packages also sometimes include natural sound to help the radio listener recreate the scene in their mind's eye. Just like actualities can take listeners to the scene of your story, so can and should natural sound. Natural sound can be inserted into your story just like you would insert an actuality into your story.

Your script always ends with your outcue: "For Allegheny Mountain Radio news, I'm (your name). This is also your outcue for "voicers."

AMR packages are usually two to three minutes long.

See Appendix B for an example of a package script.

Pitfalls in writing:

-Do not include *value statements* in your stories. These are statements that assert a value or opinion without attributing the statement to anyone; therefore, it sounds like the reporter's opinion.

-"Don't characterize news as good, bad, shocking or interesting. Let the listener decide whether it's good, bad or interesting" (Block and Dureso 68).

-Always attribute emotional statements. "Put attribution before assertion" (Block Dureso 6). "Every time you write a sentence, look at it and ask yourself, who says? If it turns out you're the one who said it, you should probably drop that sentence because there's a very good chance that you've begun to generalize or editorialize" (Raiteri 29).

-Avoid using the words "that" and "which." If you have the word "which" in your sentence, your sentence is too long. Break it up into two sentences instead (Candow).

For example: "Obesity is a significant problem in West Virginia, which causes chronic illnesses like diabetes and heart disease" *should be*: "Obesity is a significant problem in West Virginia. It's linked to chronic illnesses like diabetes and heart disease."

“That” is a word that can often be deleted from a sentence without affecting the meaning of the sentence.

For example: “Sally Smith understands that times are tough.” Instead, write: “Sally Smith understands times are tough.”

-Avoid using the verb “to be.” This includes: *is, am, are, were, will be, have been, being,* and *will have been* (“WORT News Volunteer Manual” 10).

-Avoid passive writing. Write in active voice instead. Use this sentence construction: **subject-verb-object**.

-Use verbs that indicate an action. Examples: hit, charged, exposed. Instead of “The thieves have been charged,” write: “Police charged the thieves.”

-Avoid negatives: not, no, don’t, doesn’t, won’t (“WORT News Volunteer Manual”).

For example, instead of: “The county doesn’t have enough money to pay its bills,” try: “The county is broke. Unpaid bills are piling up.”

-Don’t confuse your listeners with too many numbers. Round out numbers: \$1.23 million should be said as “just over a million dollars.” Some numbers need to be exact, because the decimal point makes a difference, like the jobless rate.

-Avoid jargon. Use vocabulary your listeners will understand. “Save big, fancy words for Scrabble” (Block and Dureso 17).

Once you’ve written your script, READ YOUR STORY OUT LOUD. If you have trouble with a sentence or a word, try to rewrite it so it’s easier for you to read.

Summary of writing tips:

- Write for the ear; broadcast stories are meant to be heard, not read.
- Write like you talk, in a conversational way.
- Avoid clichés. This is lazy writing. Use your own words.
- Write tight. Cut unnecessary details.
- Let actualities add color, meaning, and emotion to your story.
- Get an edit. Have your news director read your script, or if they cannot, ask a co-worker or friend to read it. Ask them what they learned. Make

sure the points you were trying to make were clear. Pay attention to any questions or confusion they have.

- Listen to how other people tell good stories and learn from them.

5. Technical Aspects of Radio News:

A. Recording Interviews:

As radio reporters, it's not enough just to be able to interview and write. We also have to master the equipment that we're using.

In order to report, you need to feel comfortable using your recording equipment. When you go out to do an interview, your recording equipment will probably involve a microphone, headphones, and a recorder (if it's not a digital recorder with a flash card, then you must also have a mechanism, like a mini disc to record onto).



The Marantz Professional PMD 660

Recorder: The recorder in the picture above records audio onto a flashcard. This Marantz has become a popular choice for radio reporters, because of its ease of use, size, and dependability.

When working with a recorder the first thing to learn is how to turn it on and start recording. In addition, you also should know what can go wrong with the recorder in these two areas. What if it does not turn on after you hit the “on” button? Check the batteries. Also, read the recorder’s instruction manual to find out if you have to press and hold the on button for several seconds before it turns on. OR, if it’s not recording, is it in “hold?” Again, are your batteries dead? Is your microphone hooked into the machine correctly? Do you have the correct “input” selected on the recorder?

Make sure you know what kind of batteries your recorder takes and how to change them.

Always check your recorder before you go into an interview. Turn it on while you're sitting in your car and speak into the microphone. Then listen to that track to make sure it recorded.

This is a good chance to check your recording levels. On the Marantz PMD 660, you can see the recording levels on the end of the recorder. You will see green dots light up and this means the recorder is picking up sound. If you start to see orange and especially red dots, this means your levels are too hot and the recorded audio will be distorted. To adjust the levels turn the knob that is to the right of the level indicator dots.

Always make a note of what track number you are recording onto. If you go to do another interview and see that you're on the same track as an earlier interview, stop the recorder. You are probably recording over your previous interview. Hit record again and make sure it starts a new track number.

Every organization that I have reported for records in "mono" not "stereo," so make sure you select "mono" if the recorder has this option.

Microphone: You can use an external microphone that plugs into your recorder, or depending on the recorder you use, you may be able to use the internal microphone that's built in.



An external microphone with a windscreen over the part of the mic that you talk into is pictured above. Whether you are using an internal microphone or a stick or external microphone, you need to pay attention to where it is placed during your interview. The microphone should be about six inches and off to the side just slightly from the speaker's mouth.

If you want to record your questions as well as the interviewees' responses then you need to "rock the mic." This means you pull the microphone back toward your mouth when you're asking the questions and place it back under the interviewee's mouth when they are speaking. Make sure that you do not move the mic prematurely or you will cut off the end of your questions and the end of your interviewee's responses.

Some microphones require their own batteries, but dynamic microphones do not. If you are using a dynamic microphone, and you are using the Marantz recorder "phantom power" should be turned OFF. Phantom power will use up battery power quickly. If you

are using a microphone that requires batteries, you can avoid having to put batteries in the mic by turning on the recorder's "phantom power."



Headphones: Wear them. Wearing your headphones will help you know that the recorder is working and whether the sound quality is good.

Always leave your recorder rolling until you walk out the door. You might miss really good sound if you pack up too soon.

B. Editing:

Radio reporters today are editing their stories digitally on computer software like ProTools or Adobe Audition, previously known as Cool Edit.

To start the digital editing process, you must first upload your files to your computer. Most reporters are using a digital recorder, so uploading is quick. If you're using a mini-disc recorder, you'll have to upload the sound in real-time, playing the sound as it records onto your computer. If you are using a digital recorder you can upload your files using a USB cord to connect the recorder to the computer or place the flashcard from the recorder into a card reader.

Uploading audio files to a computer using the Marantz Professional PMD 660:

- Turn the Marantz recorder off.
- Insert power cable into DC input on the side of the Marantz. Insert USB cable into the side of the Marantz.
- Press and hold the "USB" button on the Marantz, as you flip the on/off switch to "on." When you see "USB" on the Marantz display screen, you can let go of the USB button.
- On the computer screen: double click on the Adobe Audition icon. In Adobe Audition, click on "File" and select "open."
- In the "Open a Waveform" box that pops up, press the folder icon that has an upward pointing arrow in it until you are looking in the "Desktop."

- Double click on “My Computer.” In My Computer look for the “Removable Disc (or drive)” and double click on this.
- Open the MPGLANG1 folder and you will see your audio files. If you don’t see your files, check what’s selected in the “Files of type” box. You may need to change this by clicking the downward pointing arrow and selecting “Windows PCM (wav.)” or “MP3.”
- Double click on the audio file you want to edit. It will open in the Adobe Audition window.

Using Adobe Audition:

Think of editing sound waves in Adobe Audition as if you are editing text in a Microsoft Word document. If you want to delete a section of the sound wave, you highlight that section and press the delete button. If you want to move a section of your sound wave to another place in the file, highlight the section you want to move, click “cut” under Edit, then click the cursor where you want that sound to go and click “paste.” These concepts are very similar to cut, copy, and paste in Microsoft Word.

The easiest way to edit in Adobe Audition is to edit your interviewee’s sound down to just the actualities that you want to use in your story. If you have multiple interviews, save each interview in a separate audio file.

Once you’ve edited the interviews down so that the file only contains the actualities you want to use, insert 10 seconds of silence between each clip, so that it is easier to see on the computer screen where one actuality ends and another begins. To add silence between the actualities, click “Generate” in the tool bar, select “silence,” type 10, and click “Enter” or OK. You can copy and paste all of the clips into one audio file.

Next, upload your *voice tracks* into an audio file. Voice tracks are the sections of your script that you read and record. You can add them to the same file that all of your actualities are saved in, just make sure that you add the voice tracks to the very end of the file so that you don’t record over your actualities. OR, if you want to put your voice tracks in a new audio file, click on “file” and “new.” A box titled “New waveform” will appear, select these qualities within this box:

Sample Rate: 44100

Channels: Mono

Resolution: 16-bit

Use “cut” and “paste” to move your voice tracks into the file containing the actualities.

Leave about one tenth of a second of silence between your voice track and an actuality. This way it does not sound like you are talking on top of your interviewees.

When your story is put together, add five seconds of silence at the very end of your audio file. If you don't do this, the last few seconds of your story could be cut off if you transfer it to another computer or CD.

To Save: under “File” select “Save as.” Name your file in one or two words that are associated with your story topic and select “wav” in the “save as file types” box under the file name box.

Some editing tips and precautions:

- Always remember that in this program, if you make a mistake editing, you can go to “Edit” and select “undo.”
- If you are going to record more sound into an existing audio file, make sure that you click on the far right side of the audio file, the very end of the file, then start recording. If your cursor is clicked at the beginning of the audio file and you press record, you will record over the sound that's already in the file.
- The bar near the bottom of the Adobe window shows your audio levels. The bar should hit around -12. If your audio levels are too low or too high, click on “Effects” in the tool bar, then select “Amplitude,” then “Amplify/fade.” A new window pops up, allowing you to adjust your audio levels of whatever is highlighted in your file. On the right side of this box are presets or you can use the manual slider. You can also adjust the volume using the “Normalize” option under “amplify.” It's impossible to fix sound that is recorded too loud and becomes distorted. So, it's better to record at levels that are low than levels that are high.
- You cannot make any editing changes to your audio file if the “pause” button is selected on the player controls in the bottom left corner of the Adobe window.

Allegheny Mountain Radio news staff also use a software program called “Levelator.” Once this program is open on your desktop, you can drag and drop a wav. file into the program and the program evens out, or normalizes, the levels between the reporter's voice and the actualities. This program only works with voice files, not music files.

6. Voicing Your Script:

You've read it already in this manual, but it doesn't hurt to tell you again: always read your script out loud *before* you record yourself reading it. This allows you to make any necessary last minute changes to the script so that it's more conversational.

If you find a section that is difficult to read, this is a clue that you need to re-write that section. If you're having trouble reading it, your listeners will have trouble understanding your story.

If you are out of breath, check your sentence length. Try to make sentences shorter or vary the length of sentences: follow a long sentence with a short one.

Once you are satisfied with your script, and your editor approves it, you are ready to voice it.

Remember that radio is meant to be heard, not read. Listeners need to grasp what you're saying right away, so clear and conversational writing combined with effective and interesting delivery is essential. *Delivery* is how you read your script.

- Imagine a specific person that you're speaking to when you voice your copy. Remember, you are telling a story, not merely reading a story.
- When you step up to the mic to record, RELAX and BREATHE fully.
- THINK about what you are reading and sound interested. If you don't sound interested in your story, why should your listeners be?
- Be energetic. You may need to stand-up when you voice your copy if you find that your voice does not project well and sounds monotone.
- "Vary your pitch naturally," if not, you could sound "sing-songy" ("Next Generation Radio Handbook" 53).
- Slow your pace down if you're explaining something complicated ("Next Generation Radio Handbook" 53).
- Underline words that you want to emphasize and put a dash, //, where you want to pause (Candow). If you have a question in your script, don't read it, ask it.

How you write impacts your delivery. Avoid long phrases at the beginning of a sentence (Candow). This unrealistically requires the listener to hang on your every

word in order to follow what the sentence is about. Shorter sentences are easier to read and easier to follow as a listener, so keep one idea per sentence.

Always make sure that you pronounce names and places correctly. This is why it's important to ask the people who you interview to say and spell their name at the beginning of your interview.

7. Journalism Ethics:

Reporters earn and keep the public's trust by following ethical guidelines. All of your hard work interviewing people, writing your script, editing, and voicing your script won't matter if you do not have credibility as a journalist. How do you build your credibility? Practice good journalism ethics in every story that you produce.

The cornerstones of journalism ethics are:

- **Truthfulness**; seek the truth and report it.
- **Minimize Harm**
- **Be accountable**
- **Act Independently** (Iggers 38)

Journalists can practice ethics by always keeping these four characteristics in mind as they select stories to cover, interview people, write, and report on a story.

When thinking about making good ethical decisions, it's important to first follow your gut. If something doesn't feel right, talk to a co-worker or your editor about it and don't move forward until you're comfortable with the situation. Make sure that you can defend your decisions for producing a story a certain way, and remember that truth is the best defense.

While the four cornerstones of journalism ethics should guide your reporting, you must also keep these reporting characteristics in mind: fairness, accuracy, objectivity, and balance.

Fairness. You must attempt to get a variety of perspectives into a story. "Persons publically accused should be given the earliest opportunity to respond" (Iggers 42). If you ask someone to respond to an accusation and they do not get back to you in time for your story, you should add a sentence in your story that lets the listener know you tried to get the opposing viewpoint. The sentence could be: "Repeated requests for an interview with Mayor Joe Smith were not returned."

Accuracy. Fact-checking your story is necessary before it's broadcast. This includes information in an actuality.

Objectivity. Many people feel that reporters can never be completely objective. We all view the world in a certain way based on how and where we were raised. Still

others feel objectivity is something that reporters should strive to achieve. This means looking at a story topic and issue as impartially as possible.

On the other hand, sometimes it may be necessary in your reporting to offer an “objective interpretation.” It can become necessary to “place the facts in context,” without giving your opinion and feelings on the subject (Iggers 94).

Conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest must be recognized and avoided. For example, if your sister owns a drugstore that’s going to be closed down because of violations, you cannot cover this story.

The Society of Professional Journalists advises reporters to “remain free of associations and activities that may compromise integrity or damage credibility” (qtd. in Iggers 44). Reporters should not donate to political campaigns or volunteer to work for political campaigns. Doing this would make you look bias and you would have a difficult time covering any story that involves politics in the future, and a lot of stories do.

As a reporter, your credibility is what your stories and your station’s news department are worth.

Ethical pitfalls:

If something is reported that the station later finds out was incorrect, it’s important to correct the error with a brief mention of what was originally broadcast and what was wrong with it during the next news broadcast.

Be aware of libel. “The courts define libel as published defamation that damages a person’s reputation” (Raiteri 34). Libel is a charge associated with broadcast material, while slander is a charge associated with print material. Truth is your best defense. People who bring libel and slander charges against the reporter or media company have to prove that the report was false, hurt the person’s reputation, and was done intentionally.

Plagiarism is copying someone else’s work and claiming it as one’s own. “Simply paraphrasing the words doesn’t exempt you from a plagiarism charge” (Attkisson and Vaughan 205). However, paraphrasing is acceptable in broadcast writing as long as you attribute the information to the person who originally said it.

Never, ever make information up or exaggerate information. This is called fabrication. Believe it or not, journalists have done this in the past and they are no longer journalists. Fabrication hurts you, your station, and the profession as a whole. Stick to the truth and ask yourself about every fact in your story, “Is this true?” Then ask yourself, “Says who?” Make sure you can attribute your facts to reliable sources.

A Journalist's Responsibility:

What we choose to report on is also a reflection of our ethics. Reporters and editors are in a position of power. They decide what topic and specific information will or will not be covered in a news story. Therefore, it's important that you recall the characteristics of a good news story.

Your role as a community radio reporter is to provide your listeners with information that is educational and entertaining and that helps them understand what's happening in their community and how they can be active citizens.

Community radio reporters are critical links in their communities, sometimes covering issues and meetings that will not be covered by any other media entity.

This duty to educate the community comes from a media theory called social responsibility. The Hutchins Commission was established in the 1940s to assess whether the media was meeting its social responsibility.

The Hutchins Commission Report said:

“The press emphasizes the exceptional rather than the representative; the sensational rather than the significant. The press is preoccupied with these incidents to such an extent that the citizen is not supplied the information and discussion he/she needs to discharge his/her responsibilities to the community.” (qtd. in “WORT News Volunteer Manual” 37).

The commission was critical of the media and as a result “articulated a code of social responsibility for the press to adhere to,” including to provide “a truthful, comprehensive, and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning” and to provide a “forum for the exchange of comment and criticism” (“WORT News Volunteer Manual” 37).

8. The Sunshine Law:

West Virginia has a law that outlines the public's right to attend government meetings and request public information. It's called the West Virginia Open Meetings Act, or its casual name is the Sunshine Law.

Read it online at: <http://www.wvsos.com/adlaw/register/openmeetingshandbook.htm>

It's important that reporters understand this law because it applies to them. Under this law, meetings can go into executive session. During an executive session the public and the media must leave the room or board members must move to a private room.

"A governing body of a public agency may hold an executive session (closed meeting) during a regular, special or emergency meeting, only after the presiding officer publicly identifies the specific exception under the Act for having a closed meeting, and a majority of the members present votes to hold an executive session. No decisions can be made during an executive session, but minutes may be taken" ("The West Virginia Open Governmental Proceedings Act").

One of the following reasons must be given when someone on a public board makes the motion and the board approves going into executive session:

"(1) To consider acts of war, threatened attack from a foreign power, civil insurrection or riot;

(2) To consider:

(A) Matters arising from the appointment, employment, retirement, promotion, transfer, demotion, disciplining, resignation, discharge, dismissal or compensation of a public officer or employee, or prospective public officer or employee unless the public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee requests an open meeting; or

(B) For the purpose of conducting a hearing on a complaint, charge or grievance against a public officer or employee, unless the public officer or employee requests an open meeting. General personnel policy issues may not be discussed or considered in a closed meeting. Final action by a public agency having authority for the appointment, employment, retirement, promotion, transfer, demotion, disciplining, resignation, discharge, dismissal or compensation of an individual shall be taken in an open meeting;

(3) *To decide upon disciplining, suspension or expulsion of any student in any public school or public college or university, unless the student requests an open meeting;*

(4) *To issue, effect, deny, suspend or revoke a license, certificate or registration under the laws of this state or any political subdivision, unless the person seeking the license, certificate or registration or whose license, certificate or registration was denied, suspended or revoked requests an open meeting;*

(5) *To consider the physical or mental health of any person, unless the person requests an open meeting;*

(6) *To discuss any material the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of an individual's privacy such as any records, data, reports, recommendations or other personal material of any educational, training, social service, rehabilitation, welfare, housing, relocation, insurance and similar program or institution operated by a public agency pertaining to any specific individual admitted to or served by the institution or program, the individual's personal and family circumstances;*

(7) *To plan or consider an official investigation or matter relating to crime prevention or law enforcement;*

(8) *To develop security personnel or devices;*

(9) *To consider matters involving or affecting the purchase, sale or lease of property, advance construction planning, the investment of public funds or other matters involving commercial competition, which if made public, might adversely affect the financial or other interest of the state or any political subdivision: Provided, That information relied on during the course of deliberations on matters involving commercial competition are exempt from disclosure under the open meetings requirements of this article only until the commercial competition has been finalized and completed. Provided, However, that information not subject to release pursuant to the West Virginia freedom of information act does not become subject to disclosure as a result of executive session;*

(10) *To avoid the premature disclosure of an honorary degree, scholarship, prize or similar award;*

(11) *Nothing in this article permits a public agency to close a meeting that otherwise would be open, merely because an agency attorney is a participant. If the public agency has approved or considered a settlement in closed session, and the terms of the settlement allow disclosure, the terms of that settlement shall be reported by the public agency and entered into its minutes within a reasonable time after the settlement is concluded;*

(12) *To discuss any matter which, by express provision of federal law or state statute or rule of court is rendered confidential, or which is not considered a public record within the meaning of the freedom of information act as set forth in article one [§29B-1-1 et*

seq.], chapter twenty-nine-b of this code. (1975, c. 177; 1978, c. 85; 1999, c. 208)” (“The West Virginia Open Governmental Proceedings Act”).

The federal Freedom of Information Act, or FOIA, allows the public and media access to public records. A reporter may have to file a FOIA request if they feel like there’s information they are not being told by public officials but could be available in public records.

Read it online at: http://www.usdoj.gov/oip/foia_updates/Vol_XVII_4/page2.htm

A FOIA request should look like a business letter. A header at the top of the page should include:

- The name of the government agency that you are sending your request to
- The name of the head of that agency
- The address of the agency

The body of the letter should be addressed to the person at the agency who is in charge of handling FOIA requests. The body of the letter should state that “this is a request under the FOIA Act 5 U.S.C. 552.” Specify the documents you are requesting and include any dates that would help the FOIA officer locate the documents you need.

Also specify how you want to receive the documents: electronically, by mail, or if you want to visit the agency and view the documents in person. This can save you and your station copying fees.

See an example of a FOIA request in Appendix D.

9. Turning Radio News into Web News:

Currently, at Allegheny Mountain Radio audio stories are uploaded to the Web site and the text component on the Web includes a headline for the story and a two to three sentence tease for the story.

Try to keep your headline to several words, typically between three and five words total. You may be able to use your story's focus statement as the headline. When creating a headline, write actively: subject-verb-object.

A tease is written like an anchor lead, explained in Chapter 4 of this manual. The tease should only be a few sentences long. It needs to tell the listener the "what" and the "where" of your story. If there is any controversy in your story, hint at that controversy in your tease.

In the future you may need to include a text version of your story on the Web site. The Web version of your radio story does not have to look just like the story that aired on the radio. You can and should change the script so that it looks like a print story. Refer back to the inverted pyramid style discussed in Chapter 4 to help you write a print or Web friendly version of your story.

See Appendix C for an example of a radio story that was turned into a Web story.

The Web version of your story can include more information than your audio story or it could include less. For example, you may want to shorten an actuality when you turn it into a quote for the Web story.

When transferring information from a broadcast story into a Web story, make these considerations:

- Spelling. Make sure people and places are correctly spelled!
- Include photographs
- Use bullets when listing information
- Separate text into shorter sections. Large sections of text are not appealing to Web readers.
- Suggest links to other sites related to your story

- Create opinion polls (Attkisson and Vaughan 75)
- Solicit listener/reader feedback

The Web can be a great tool during breaking news. You can and should update your Web site with breaking news information just as often and perhaps even more often than when you broadcast information.

10. Feedback: How to help reporters improve

Encouragement and constructive criticism are necessary when giving feedback to other reporters. Make a habit of giving this kind of feedback to your reporters, and their story-telling ability will improve.

As an editor, or a co-reporter giving feedback, start by asking the reporter to tell you about their story before you even look at their script. Pay attention to how and what the reporter tells you about their story and remember this when you are going over the script (Geisler).

As you go over the script, act as a “coach” not a janitor (Geisler). You want the reporter to physically fix what’s wrong with the script or the audio and make sure they understand why the changes are necessary.

Giving praise is also an important part of giving feedback. “Make all praise specific. Tell the writer exactly what you liked and why” (Geisler).

Listening sessions are also helpful. Bring all of your reporters together and play a story from each person, then have everyone talk about what they liked and offer constructive criticism about what they did not like. This can be a humbling experience for people who are not critiqued often in front of other people. Everyone will get used to it, just make sure the feedback session does not turn negative.

11. Other Resources:

This manual has addressed key elements of reporting, from selecting what to cover to producing the finished audio piece. Hopefully, this manual provided you with a good foundation for reporting or improved upon your existing reporting skills.

This manual should be one of many resources that you use to help you report for Allegheny Mountain Radio. You are encouraged to read other material in order to learn more about reporting and improve your story-telling skills.

Below are additional community radio and journalism resources:

National Federation of Community Broadcasters: <http://www.nfcb.org>

Pew Center for Civic Journalism: <http://www.pewcenter.org/>

Radio-Television News Directors Foundation: <http://www.rtnda.org/>

The Poynter Institute: <http://www.poynter.org/>

Society of Professional Journalists: <http://www.spj.org>

West Virginia University P.I. Reed School of Journalism:
<http://journalism.wvu.edu/>

Communication for Social Change Consortium: “How to Do Community Radio”
<http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/publications-resources.php?id=237>

Knight Digital Media Center: <http://www.knightdigitalmediacenter.org/>

and <http://www.ojr.org/>

Journalist’s Toolbox: <http://www.journaliststoolbox.com>

Journalism Jobs (includes information on internships, fellowships, and training):
<http://www.journalismjobs.com/>

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Appendix A:

Voicer Script Example 1:

Story Slug (headline): Sago Reopens

Anchor: The Sago Mine in West Virginia re-opened today after a January accident that killed twelve men. International Coal Group officials told employees that a lightning strike caused the explosion. Emily Corio of West Virginia Public Broadcasting reports.

Corio: Production resumed at the Sago Mine with this morning's day shift workers. The mine will return to its normal schedule, operating 24 hours a day.

The company says some eighty employees spent several weeks repairing damage from the January explosion.

International Coal Group's own investigation links the explosion to a powerful lightning strike.

However, state and federal officials, completing a separate investigation, have not determined the cause of the explosion.

The miner who survived the January accident visited home for the first time Tuesday. Later in the day he returned to the hospital where he's receiving speech, physical, and occupational therapy.

For NPR news, I'm Emily Corio in Morgantown, West Virginia.

Appendix B:

Package Script Example 1:

Story Slug: Clinton campaigns in Grafton

Anchor: Hillary and Chelsea Clinton spent Mother's Day in the town where the holiday began a hundred years ago. Clinton visited the birthplace of the founder of Mother's Day in Taylor County and gave a speech in Grafton at the former B&O railroad station. Emily Corio reports.

Corio: Almost two hundred people packed into what became a tight space to hear Hillary Clinton speak. Trains full of coal slowly passed by outside, but inside Clinton's speech didn't focus on coal or energy. Instead, she talked about women, family, and Mother's Day founder Anna Jarvis.

Clinton: You know, Anna Jarvis prevailed against the odds. If you were to come up with an idea right now for a national holiday and you persevered for nine or ten years like she did, it would be a labor of love and that's what it sometimes does take to make the changes that are going to benefit us.

Corio: Clinton also praised everyday women for the work that doesn't get noticed in history books.

Clinton: It is hard raising children today. There are so many demands. The jobs don't pay what they used to, which means that usually you have to have both parents working, don't you. If you're a single mom, honestly, I think you're a miracle worker, to be able to manage the family and the job at the same time. (applause)

Corio: Clinton told the audience that if elected, she would like to expand the Family Medical Leave Act and explore paid leave for certain circumstances.

Clinton: The average family in America, taking care of a child with a disability, a spouse with Alzheimer's, a parent with Parkinson's, will spend at least \$5,000 out of pocket taking care of that loved one. I think we should give a \$3,000 caregiver tax credit so that families are not put at a financial disadvantage for doing what they're doing out of love and dedication. (applause)

Corio: Grafton resident, Star Hill was among those who applauded Clinton's proposal. She says the candidates' position on the Americans with Disabilities Act is a major issue for her and her family.

Hill: You know, living everyday with my son in a wheelchair, we have found that so many, so much of the time, places that say that they're ADA, can handle chairs, and

that's not the case at all. That's our goal is we'd like try to find, of all ages, people in wheelchairs to be able to enjoy the same thing that everyone else does.

Corio: But Hill says she's still undecided. She wants to research the candidates before Tuesday's primary election. Not all Clinton supporters made it inside for the speech. Grafton resident, Arthur Polling, waited outside, hoping to catch a glimpse of Senator Clinton. He supports Clinton, but says if she doesn't get the nomination, he won't vote in November. His wife Faye, rolls her eyes.

Faye Polling: Why cut off your nose to spite your face, if they're voting for McCain? That's what it would be if people thinks that way. I like Hillary and I like Obama too, whichever one makes it, I'll be willing to vote for yeah. And I'm a registered Republican from Pennsylvania, how about that. I changed and now he's not even gonna vote. I'm gonna quit cookin' for him.

Arthur Polling: Well, they got a lot of good restaurants.

Faye Polling: Well you'll get sick of that.

Corio: The Pollings weren't the only split couple there. James and Ellen Weekly may disagree come November too, but they both support Clinton now.

James Weekly: I was a Republican for 59 years, and I finally saw that if I wasn't rich it didn't mean anything, so I changed to Independent. But the thing of it is, I looked back in time and saw how things were, despite some bad press, that her husband did, and that's bound to give her some experience and that's the reason why.

Corio: If Hillary Clinton doesn't win the democratic nomination, James says he'll support Obama. But his wife Ellen disagrees. She was also turned off by the controversy surrounding Obama's former pastor. But she says one way Obama could win her vote as the presidential candidate is to have Hillary Clinton's name on the ballot as Vice President. For West Virginia Public Broadcasting, I'm Emily Corio in Morgantown.

Appendix C:

A Web version of a package script:

(This is adapted from the script in Appendix B)

Clinton campaigns in Grafton

Hillary and Chelsea Clinton visited the birthplace Mother's Day in Taylor County. This year marked 100 years since the holiday began. Clinton also used the visit as a chance to speak to voters.

Almost 200 people packed into the Grafton B&O Railroad Center.

Trains full of coal slowly passed by outside, but inside Clinton's speech didn't focus on coal or energy. Instead, she talked about women, family and Mother's Day founder Anna Jarvis.

"You know, Anna Jarvis prevailed against the odds," Senator Clinton said. "If you were to come up with an idea right now for a national holiday and you persevered for nine or ten years like she did, it would be a labor of love and that's what it sometimes does take to make the changes that are going to benefit us."

Sen. Clinton praised everyday women for the work that doesn't get noticed in history books.

"It is hard raising children today. There are so many demands," said Sen. Clinton. "The jobs don't pay what they used to, which means that usually you have to have both parents working, don't you. If you're a single mom, honestly, I think you're a miracle worker, to be able to manage the family and the job at the same time."

Sen. Clinton also told the audience that if elected, she wants to expand the Family Medical Leave Act and explore paid leave for certain circumstances.

"The average family in America, taking care of a child with a disability, a spouse with Alzheimer's, a parent with Parkinson's, will spend at least \$5,000 out of pocket taking care of that loved one," Sen. Clinton said. "I think we should give a \$3,000 caregiver tax credit so that families are not put at a financial disadvantage for doing what they're doing out of love and dedication."

Grafton resident, Star Hill was among those who applauded Clinton's proposal. She says the candidates' position on the Americans with Disabilities Act is a major issue for her and her family.

“Living everyday with my son in a wheelchair, we have found that so much of the time, places that say they can handle wheelchairs, and that’s not the case at all,” said Hill. “That’s our goal is we’d like try to find, of all ages, people in wheelchairs to be able to enjoy the same thing that everyone else does.”

Hill says she’s an undecided voter. She wants to research the candidates before Tuesday’s primary election.

Lyndie Hoffa, on the other hand, says she’s voting for Hillary Clinton, and if her candidate loses the democratic nomination, Hoffa says she will stay home on election day. She says she can’t get behind Senator Barack Obama.

“I think that the whole thing with his preacher getting out, saying a lot of the things that he has said. I mean, he can’t be in a congregation and not share some of his views and that has really turned me off from him so,” said Hoffa. “I think voting for McCain is like putting another Bush in the Whitehouse, and our country can’t stand another four years of that.”

Not all Hillary Clinton supporters made it inside for the speech. More people, like Grafton resident, Arthur Polling, waited outside, hoping to catch a glimpse of Senator Clinton.

He supports Hillary Clinton, but says if she doesn’t get the nomination, he too doesn’t think he’ll vote in November. This makes his wife, Faye, roll her eyes.

“Why cut off your nose to spite your face?” asked Mrs. Polling. “That’s what it would be if people think that way. I like Hillary and I like Obama too, whichever one makes it, I’ll be willing to vote for. And I’m a registered Republican from Pennsylvania, how about that. I changed and now he’s not even gonna vote. I’m gonna quit cookin’ for him.”

Grafton residents James and Ellen Weekly may disagree come November too, but they both support Sen. Clinton now.

“I was a Republican for 59 years, and I finally saw that if I wasn’t rich it didn’t mean anything, so I changed to Independent,” said Ms. Weekly.

If Hillary Clinton loses the democratic nomination, Mr. Weekly says he’ll support Obama. His wife Ellen disagrees. She was also turned off by the controversy surrounding Sen. Obama’s former pastor.

She says one way Sen. Obama could win her vote as the presidential candidate is to have Hillary Clinton’s name on the ballot too.

Appendix D:**FOIA Request Example:**

To:
Jane Doe
Office of Administration

December 3, 2008

Dear Ms. Doe:

Please consider this a request made under the West Virginia Freedom of Information Act, W.Va. Code 29B-1-1, et seq.

Please make available for my inspection and copying documents in your possession regarding violations issued to business X in Morgantown, W.Va., dating from today, Dec. 3, 2008 to the earliest violations on record at either of these establishments. If there is a standard form that your agency fills out when violations are caught and fines are levied, these forms would be most helpful to review.

If your office maintains any records in computer or electronic format responsive to my request, please make those available in electronic format.

If you choose to withhold any records which are responsive to my request, please provide me with an index of those documents. The index should describe each document and the claimed exemption, provide a relatively detailed justification as to why each document is exempt, and specifically explain the basis for the claimed exemption. See *Daily Gazette Co. v. West Virginia Development Office*, 198 W.Va. 563, 482 S.E.2d 180 (1996). The disclosure provisions of the state FOIA are to be liberally construed and the withholding provisions strictly construed. The party claiming exemption has the burden of showing the express applicability of such exemption to the material requested. See *Queen v. West Virginia University Hospitals*, 179 W.Va. 95, 365 S.E. 2d. 375 (1987).

If any records in your agency's custody contain both exempt and non-exempt material, please provide redacted copies of these documents. See *Ogden Newspapers Inc. v. City of Williamstown*, 192 W.Va. 648, 453 S.E. 2d 631 (1994).

Because my use of these records will benefit the public interest through the broadcasting of a news story on public airwaves, please waive any applicable copying fees or costs. If you choose not to waive the fees, and the cost of producing these materials will exceed \$25, please contact me before you proceed.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact me at (304) 284-1459. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Emily Corio

Senior Producer

West Virginia Public Broadcasting

(304) 284-1459 (office)

(304) 284-1454 (fax)