



AI Generated

Writing For Mass Communications (Part 9)

Good Writing Is Rewriting

By

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You can read the first part of this series about ‘writing for mass communications’ [here](#), the second part [here](#), the third part [here](#), the fourth part [here](#), the fifth part [here](#), the sixth part [here](#), the seventh part [here](#), and the eighth part [here](#). The points I’m sharing are from seminars I taught for radio and television news departments during my career as a news manager. The following is from a manual I wrote about 40 years ago.

Good writing is rewriting. Write, rewrite, and edit. Before you turn in your story to an editor ask yourself these questions —

1. Is the lead on target or buried? If most of the body of the story is not about the theme you selected as the lead, the lead is wrong and you should rewrite it. If the main theme is buried in the body or ending of your story, rewrite the lead to make your point higher.
2. Is the story organized properly or does it jump from one topic to another and back? Did you place secondary information above the primary information in the body of your story? If it is, rewrite your lead or make two stories out of the one.
3. Does the story MOVE? Do the nouns and verbs carry the story forward with an internal momentum? Do the facts that you chose give movement to the story? If not, go back through the fundamentals of good writing to see what rules you may be breaking.
4. Are your facts correct? Is there anything in the story that makes you uncomfortable? Anything that could cause you problems later? If so, rewrite.

5. Are there any 'unanswered' questions in your story? Is your story complete? Will the viewers come away from your story wondering why you didn't look into some areas or ask someone a question? If so, you may have to rewrite or even go back into the field to complete a story you thought was finished.
6. Have you told all sides of the story? Is there anyone else you should talk with to be sure the story is fair? If so, either rewrite or go back into the field and get the rest of the story.
7. Have you told the story in an interesting manner? Have you mixed well-written sentences with natural sound breaks, punchy soundbites, and dynamic standups? Is this a story that would hold your attention if you saw it on another station for the first time? If the answer to any of these questions is 'no,' you need to rewrite.

Next Time

Part ten of “Writing for Mass Communications” — *Seven Problems Editors Have With Reporter Copy*