

The Power of Radio

Introduction

Radio is very powerful because it reaches a huge audience quickly and because it allows the people in that huge audience to interact with one another more easily than television viewers or newspaper readers.

There are different types of radio stations: community, commercial and public. They have different types of owners and audiences and different programming, but they share a common goal: to connect with the listener in a way that is immediate and relevant. Radio is powerful because it has the ability to reach and influence so many people. This module discusses the challenges faced in using such power responsibly.

Radio is powerful because:

- It is immediate. News can be reported more quickly on radio than in newspapers or on television, because the technology is simpler.
- It is accessible. You can tune in to radio wherever you are. You can take a radio to the fields, or listen to it in a car. You can also do other things while you listen.
- It is inclusive. Radio can reach most people, including the poor, the marginalized and those who cannot read or write.

Radio presents challenges because:

- It is temporary. Stories often air only once, so if the information is confusing or if you miss a point, it's difficult to get clarification. Radio reports need to be clearly and simply written. And radio presenters and reporters must take extra care to speak distinctly.

At the end of this module, you should be aware that:
(Some challenges that occur in Radio are bellow).

Radio is accessible to everyone, but getting people's attention can be a challenge.

- Radio broadcasting requires meeting tight deadlines.
- Radio allows listeners to respond and make their views known.
- Radio allows listeners to become a community.

Reaching the Public

Benefits of Radio

Reaching the public - Radio is the most accessible of media because it can accompany you in whatever you do, and wherever you go:

- 1 Driving in a car
- 2 Working in the fields
- 3 Cooking dinner

You don't need to be literate or rich to listen to radio or to take advantage of its resources. In fact, educators and organizations have found that radio is the best way to get important messages across - especially to women in rural areas who may not have access to newspaper or television.

Reaching the public now - Radio is immediate. It is the modern equivalent of the village story-teller. Through words, sounds and the human voice, radio talks to an audience directly. How? By inviting listeners to explore new experiences, new places, new ideas. It gives listeners the stories they need to know in order to better understand the world.

Challenges

Understanding how and where people listen to radio - Radio is accessible, so listeners can tune in anywhere and at anytime. This is an advantage, but it also creates challenges. When people listen to the radio they are usually doing something else at the same time. Listeners may only have one ear on the radio, so it can be easy to miss important information, or to get an inaccurate or incomplete picture of what was said.

On radio, you have to be particularly careful about the way you communicate. This leads to another challenge.

Getting it Right - Right Now - Because radio covers what is happening now, it places a lot of demands on you as the practitioner. For example, when you are under pressure to be first with a news story, often there isn't much time to check facts. This can lead to mistakes. You will need to take care not to report in a sensational way, confuse rumors with facts or show bias in your reporting.

Skills and Responsibilities for Radio

Radio stations have many people with different skills and responsibilities. There are those whose voices are heard on the air, like talk show hosts and reporters, and there are also people who work behind the scenes like sound engineers, producers, marketing managers, researchers and call-screeners.

Sometimes one person may take on several roles. In smaller radio stations, a talk show host may also do research or a news reader may file reports from the field. Even at larger stations, producers are often involved in research and booking guests. Whatever the structure or size of the station, remember that successful radio depends on teamwork and all roles are equally important.

This module focuses on the responsibilities and fundamental skills that a radio journalist needs to do her job.

Responsibilities

Professional journalists, whether they work in radio, television or print, are expected to adhere to basic principles. Journalists should be:

Accountable

Balanced

Independent

Journalism associations or unions in many countries have established codes of ethics for the practice of journalism. Many media companies have also established their own ethical standards. Find out more about codes of ethics from these websites:

What to Say: Tips for Scripting

Like other kinds of writing, scripting involves several steps:

- Researching
- Creating a structure
- Writing

Research

Research is the foundation of any story. Consider these sources:

- News events related to the topic
- Stories previously written or aired about the topic
- People who can talk about the topic (interviews)
- Organizations involved in the story

Use a combination of research methods. Start with these basic research tools:

- **The Internet.** Use search engines to research a topic, find organizations or resources related to stories and locate archives of earlier stories. Some of the most popular search engines are [AlltheWeb](#), [Google](#) and [Yahoo](#).
- **Publications.** Newspapers, magazines and books can provide ideas and resources for stories.
- **Contacts.** Talk with colleagues and friends to find out what they think about a topic. They may be able to suggest people to interview.

Script Structure

The structure of a script depends on its purpose. Is it a news report? Is the purpose to entertain? To persuade? Or to share something important?

Be clear about how the script will flow. What pieces of information will be included? In what order? While a news story requires a more formal style and approach, these tips can be useful for scripting:

- Imagine talking to a friend. What questions does the friend ask? Answering these questions one-by-one will help you write with the listener in mind.

- Draft a rough outline based on the "talking to a friend" exercise above. Decide whether to tell it chronologically, with the most important facts first or some other way.
- Start with an arresting sentence--called a "hook"--at the beginning to attract and hold the listener's interest.
- End the story by satisfying listeners that all important questions have been answered.

Content

Use the following tips to write for the ear. Remember that these general tips will need to be adapted accordingly when writing news stories.

- [Write in short phrases](#). Keep it short, punchy and direct. Use only one idea per sentence.
- [Round off complicated numbers and write them in words](#).
- [Try to humanize statistics, facts and figures](#).
- [Use verbal signposts](#) such as "and," "but" and "so" to show structure in longer chunks of talk and to help listeners know where they are.
- [Paint pictures with words](#). Remember, listeners have to use imagination to visualize what is happening.
- [Write as if talking to only one person](#) and create a connection with listeners by using personal words like "you" or "we."
- Use contractions like "can't," "won't" and "we'll." They will make the story sound more natural.

[Here's an exercise](#) to help you think about writing for radio.

Tone

Getting the content right is not enough. The tone, or voice, is equally important. Listeners should not be insulted or embarrassed by an inappropriate tone.

For examples of how to write for radio, explore stories posted on the website for [From Our Own Correspondent](#), a feature of BBC News.

The tone for news writing should be:

- Unemotional.
- Direct and dynamic, but not sensational.

In other kinds of radio programs, such as talk shows or magazine programs:

- Be warm, friendly and enthusiastic.
- Treat listeners with respect. Don't patronize them.
- Talk to listeners but don't lecture them.

Creativity

All good writing springs from creativity, including news reporting even though it is more formal in style than other programs.

Creativity involves:

- Selecting specific details that paint pictures and allow the listener to imagine what is being described.
- Avoiding generalizations and adjectives such as beautiful, nice and lovely. Describe the scene in detail and let the listener decide whether it is truly beautiful.

What to Say: Writing for Listeners

Writing for radio is different than writing for print media. Keep these differences in mind:

Reading	Listening
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Readers usually focus only on what they are reading. They are usually not doing something else at the same time.➤ Readers can go back to what was written before and re-read it to make sense or to clarify.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Listeners are usually doing something else while listening to the radio, so their focus may be divided unless they are interested.➤ Listeners hear words and sounds once and then they are gone. They only have one opportunity to understand and make sense of a story.

Writing for the Ear

Writing for radio means writing the way people speak. Keep the following tips in mind:

- **Break** the rules of grammar when necessary. Clarity is the goal.
- **Say aloud** what you've written to make sure it makes sense.
- **Imagine** that someone is listening while you are writing and pretend you are talking to that listener.
- **Keep it simple** by using just one idea per sentence and avoiding long words.

1. Review: Writing for Radio

Before moving on to the next section, let's review what's been covered so far. Choose the best answer for each of the questions below.

1) What is the key to keep in mind when writing for radio?

- a. Callers can ask a radio announcer to repeat messages.
- b. Listeners often are paying full attention to the radio program.
- c. The ear can process a picture of the words better than the eye can.
- d. Listeners have only one chance to make sense of what they hear on radio.

2) When writing for radio:

- a. Always be careful to use correct grammar.
- b. Use long words rather than simple ones.
- c. Imagine talking to one listener.
- d. Try to fit as many ideas into one sentence as possible.

What to Say: What Not to Say

Part of being a good radio host or presenter is knowing what not to say. If listeners are insulted or embarrassed, they won't want to listen any more. Being a good radio host requires cultural sensitivity and accurate knowledge about an audience, from what style of program listeners prefer to what topics interest them. Experienced radio professionals know what offends listeners.

Radio hosts should not:

- Make listeners feel like just part of a crowd.
- Use sexist or patronizing language.
- Talk unprofessionally or make amateurish requests.
- Send private messages to friends.
- Alert listeners to commercials so that they will want to turn off the radio.

These examples of actual phrases heard on the radio illustrate how listeners might respond.

What was said:	Possible listener reaction:	Why this shouldn't be said:
Hello to all of you out there in listener land!	Well, I don't live in "listener land!" And I'm NOT "all of you!"	Makes listeners feel like part of a crowd
And thanks to our lovely newsreader, Angela. She's looking drop-dead gorgeous today!	Angela's a professional. Isn't that what you're supposed to be? Such comments are sexist and patronizing.	Sexist
Whoops! Finger trouble again --we've just got a new computer in the studio--so do bear with me!	Why should I? I expect YOU to do your job. I've got problems of my own!	Unprofessional and amateurish
Well, I seem to	WHY have you	Amateurish

have run out of time again. Join me again tomorrow.	run out of time? Shouldn't you be watching the clock?	
And here's a special song for my boyfriend, Siphoh. He'll know why it's special.	Why should I be excluded just because you want to send a private message to what's-his-name?	Private message
Well, let's go off to the marketplace for a few messages from our sponsors.	Oh, commercials. I'll go and make a cup of coffee. Maybe I'll just switch off.	Commercial alert

How to Say It: Talking to One Listener

A good script is the beginning of a good radio show. Presentation--the sound or tone of the presenter--is next. Whether reading a script or speaking spontaneously, on radio how you say something is just as important as what you say.

Effective presentation depends on:

- Understanding the audience
- Understanding your own voice and body

Audience: One Listener

In the section on writing scripts, you read about the idea of talking to only one listener. This principle is also the basis of all radio presentation, even news reporting. This practice will help you create intimacy and listeners will be drawn into the program.

Because people listen to the radio almost everywhere (in their bedrooms, in their cars, while they are working) radio provides the opportunity to be close to the audience in a way that other media do not.

Respecting listeners - talking to them as equals, friends and colleague - is an important aspect to this relationship. Listeners should not feel preached to or patronized. By visualizing this closeness with listeners, the right tone will come naturally.

Choice of tone is also influenced by:

- **Type of program.** The tone of a youth show announcer is different from that of a news reader. The presenter of a gender talk show will have a different tone than the host of a music program.
- **Time of day.** Early morning programs require a lively, high-energy tone to get listeners going. News programs require announcers to use a formal tone. Talk show hosts try to come across as friendly and more casual.

In addition to imagining one listener when talking, three other factors are key to effective radio presentation:

- Tension and stress

- Body positioning and gesturing
- Voice and speech

Tension and Stress

If a radio presenter is stressed, listeners will hear it in her voice, they won't focus on what she is actually saying. Tension ties the body's muscles in knots and can cause the voice to sound thin, strained, irritated or bored.

Before going on the air it is important to release the tension that stress, anxiety or other emotions can cause. Relaxation exercises, such as the ones listed to the right, can relieve stress by releasing tension from the body and calming emotions. Releasing tension opens the diaphragm, which promotes deeper breathing. This, in turn, helps the voice to sound more open and confident.

[My Back is Long and Wide Spinal Release](#)

During times of political turmoil or conflict, it is even more important for radio presenters and reporters to manage their personal tension.

*"Radio should be a sane, comforting voice in times of tension or difficulty. Like a friend, your local station should tell you the truth in a calm, unemotional way--and help you to focus on solving the problem."
Indonesian radio presenter*

Feeling anxious, angry, sad or depressed can make it difficult to sound sane, comforting or calm. But that is what radio presenters need to do for the sake of their listeners. Here's an example of how this all comes together in a tense reporting situation. Read how to [keep your cool](#).

Posture, Gesturing and Facial Expressions

Posture

Tension, as noted above, can cause the body to tie itself up in knots. Good body positioning, or posture, promotes confidence and allows for both a physical and psychological opening-up. Keep these tips in mind:

- Sit in a position that allows easy breathing and body movement.
- Never sit in a hunched or doubled-over position. Bad posture makes breathing more difficult and leads to a voice that sounds tense and uncomfortable.
- Good posture also involves
 - × Allowing the back to open and lengthen
 - × Allowing the neck and shoulders to be free
 - × Sensing the support of the floor or chair

Gesturing

Gesturing is a natural part of conversation. A presenter who gestures naturally as she talks will communicate more clearly. Listeners will notice the difference even if they can't see the gestures.

Facial Expression

Facial expressions are critical to the sound of a voice. If this seems hard to believe, imagine talking to someone on a telephone. Often, a person's voice indicates whether she is frowning or smiling. Listen to the radio and decide by tone if the announcer is smiling or has a serious expression.

On radio a smile is the equivalent of making eye contact. A smile, even if no one sees it, makes a person sound more inviting, confident and fresh.

Of course, a smile is not always appropriate. For example, news reports on serious subjects are seldom delivered with a smile, unless a lighter story is included at the end.

Also, think about the fact that there are many different kinds of smiles. In addition to smiles of happiness, there are smiles that indicate understanding, sympathy or comfort. Think about how and when a smile during the following programs might be used.

- Talk shows
- Shows that give advice or support to the community
- Human interest stories or interviews
- Music request shows

Practice what it feels like to read a script while smiling. Then read a news script with a more serious expression. Listen for the difference. Try listening to the radio to "hear" the expression on the presenter's face.

Voice

The best **voice** for radio is natural and relaxed. The more comfortable you are with yourself and your voice, the clearer your voice will be. [Voice exercises](#) can help build confidence and promote speaking clearly.

Listen to someone who mumbles or someone who lowers the volume of her voice at the end of her sentences and notice how hard it is to understand what she is saying. Since listeners can't interrupt the radio to ask what was said, radio presenters must take extra care to be clear. Here are some tips:

- Before you go on air, do some exercises (included in the link above) to free up your jaw and tongue.
- If you are planning to read from a script, practice aloud until you feel confident. Pay special attention to difficult words and foreign names.
- Practice your pace and rhythm. Are you speaking too fast or too slow? Remember to pause and breathe naturally. Ask someone to give you feedback

How to Say It: Presentation Tips

Before going on the air:

➤ **Avoid stressful situations.**

- Get plenty of rest to feel free and alert.
- Allow plenty of time to prepare.
- Check for necessary items, such as script, reading glasses, water, etc.
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing.
- Use the relaxation exercises from the previous page.

➤ **Prepare the voice.**

- Avoid fizzy drinks and milky liquids. They can cause a film on the throat, which causes throat clearing.
- Don't eat sweets or chocolate. Sugar thickens saliva.
- Allow time for voice warm-ups and breathing exercises, like those reviewed on the previous page.

➤ **Prepare your body and posture.**

- Take a minute to relax your neck and shoulders. Do deep breathing to focus your mind and body. Breathe from the diaphragm.
- Check your posture and make sure the microphone is in a good position.
- Focus your thoughts and regulate your breathing.
- Remember to gesture.
- Finally, remind yourself that you are ready. Try saying to yourself:
 - × I'm going to talk to one listener, just beyond the microphone.
 - × I'm exactly where I want to be.
 - × I'm well-prepared.

On the air:

➤ **Equipment and materials**

1. Wear headphones over one ear so you can monitor how you sound and still be alert to what is happening in the studio.
2. Always have pen and paper ready.

➤ **On-air discipline**

1. Be prepared with cues. A cue is the introduction that a studio presenter gives to a pre-recorded story or a live interview. A good [cue](#) will lead the listener naturally into whatever follows.
2. Avoid giving long lists of what's coming up. Nobody will remember and lists are boring anyway.
3. Before announcing the time, make sure it's correct.

4. Give frequent station IDs and [throw aheads](#).

➤ **Professional discipline**

1. Don't take personal phone calls.
2. Listeners are the first priority, even when visitors are in the studio.

➤ **Scripts**

Use these guidelines for reading scripts:

- × **Prepare.** Unless there's a real emergency, never read anything on air that hasn't been practiced aloud. Tongue-twisters are not always apparent until they are spoken aloud.
- × **Understand.** Never read anything that could be confusing to your listener. Your voice will reflect it. Take the time to re-write the script before reading.
- × **Mark the script.** Underline key words, mark pauses (with "/" or another symbol), write phonetic pronunciations for foreign words.
- × **Choose the appropriate tone of voice.** How much emotion/feeling should be conveyed? Should the tone be light-hearted or serious?
- × **Look ahead.** Don't look at the script word by word. Train yourself to take in whole blocks of words.
- × **Handle mistakes professionally.** If you make a mistake, don't panic. If it's a big error--one that could cause confusion or misunderstanding-- apologize and correct it. Otherwise, take a breath and carry on. Don't draw attention to stumbles.

2. Additional Resources

To help you think about what you've learned about radio presentation, ask yourself:

4 Who is your favorite radio presenter? What do you specifically like about this person? Is it her style, her presentation, her voice?

5 As a listener, what do you find irritating in a radio presenter? Why?

6 When you've listed what you like and what you don't like, write a description of the elements of a successful radio presentation.

Radio Interviews: Tips for Interviews

Use this checklist to thoroughly prepare for an interview.

The Interviewer

An interviewer:

- Is a great listener
- Knows when, and how, to ask follow-up questions
- Has good communications skills
- Has the ability to be flexible in the interview
- Understands that there is an order in which interview questions should be asked
- Knows how and when to ask "why?"

It's important to consider gender with respect to interviewing. For example, a woman who has survived rape may not feel comfortable being interviewed by a male journalist. On the other hand, women journalists have sometimes encountered difficulties when interviewing men, especially when the man is powerful. Sometimes this can take the form of sexual harassment. Like any kind of intimidation, sexual harassment must be taken seriously. It's not just a "women's issue" and should be openly discussed in newsrooms so support systems can be put in place.

What should you do if you encounter sexual harassment in the course of your work?

- Trust your instinct. If you are uncomfortable about a suggested venue or time for the interview, make an alternative arrangement. If this is not possible, take a colleague. At the very least make sure your news editor knows where you are going and what time you expect to be back. Take your mobile phone. Remember: no interview is worth putting yourself at risk. If it doesn't feel right, don't go at all.
- If the interviewee is making you uncomfortable with remarks or actions, make it clear that your station takes sexual harassment of its employees very seriously. If the interviewee does not heed this warning, leave. Make a note of what happened and inform your boss immediately so you can discuss what action to take.

The Interview Subject

Deciding who to interview also takes some consideration. When selecting interview subjects, these tips can help:

- **Make sure the interview subject is confident and articulate.** This is especially important if you are looking for more than a short clip or comment.
- **Be gender-aware.** Don't stereotype people according to their sex. Not all nurses are women and not all soldiers are men. Also, if a woman's husband or father does not "give permission" for her to be interviewed, how will you deal with this? Will you just give up or take time to discuss possible solutions with her?
- **Think beyond the obvious.** A person doesn't need to have a university degree to be an expert. For example, a market seller may give you a more interesting view on the economy than a university professor.
- **Keep an eye and ear out for people who have a story to tell and an interesting way of telling it.**

It is important to find out as much as possible about an interview subject.

- What are her credentials?
- Why is she the right person to interview?
- What is her background?
- What will she bring to the interview?
- Will she be lively?
- Will she offer a unique perspective?

Interviewing someone soon after she has experienced a traumatic or emotional event requires special skills. Here are some [suggestions](#) for these kinds of interviews.

Asking for the Interview

Use these tips to prepare before picking up the telephone to request an interview:

First, decide:

- **Why** you want to interview the person.
- **When** you want to do the interview (time and date).
- **How** to get in touch with the person (have a list of possible contacts).

Before calling:

- Rehearse the call. To keep from being nervous or forgetting something, write rough notes on what you want to say.
- Be ready to suggest calling back later if the person isn't available now.

During the call:

- If it feels appropriate, smile to sound more assertive, confident and friendly.
- Remember that this call is the only chance to get the person to say yes.

- Be prepared to explain why the interview is important to listeners or to the story.
- Be ready to counter comments like: "I'll need a list of your questions first." (See the information below for what to do when someone asks for questions in advance.)

➤ **Remember to:**

Be polite, positive, friendly and clear.

Once the person has agreed to the interview, she may want to see the questions up front. It is important to find out why she wants to see the questions and try to resolve those reasons without giving her the questions. Perhaps you can explain that you don't provide questions in advance but that you can go over the areas you plan to cover.

On a case-by-case basis:

- [What would you do?](#)
- [When someone says no](#)

Providing a list of questions beforehand can create issues with:

- **Follow up.** If you agree only to ask approved questions, you will probably have difficulty asking any follow-up questions. If this happens, you won't be doing your job as an interviewer.
- **Balance.** The interview will be unbalanced if you are not able to follow up.
- **Sounding rehearsed.** If the interview subject knows exactly what you are going to ask, the interview will probably sound boring or rehearsed.

Brainstorm:

1. Write down the interview subject's name.

2. Write down important facts discovered in the research.

3. Jot down all of the questions relating to each fact without excluding any of your ideas. Later, when you are clear about your angle, you can select which questions are the most relevant.

Use these [preparation tips](#) just before the interview.

Interview Questions

Brainstorming is a helpful process for coming up with an initial list of questions. This is often done with the program's producer or other colleagues.

Questions should:

- **Explore the story or topic.** What is the purpose of the story? What does the audience need to know? What will listeners be interested in knowing?
- **Add dimension to the obvious.** "Why" questions are important. They open up room for exploration and can delve into what is not obvious.

- **Provide different perspectives.** Coming up with the list of interview questions may uncover a need to interview more than one person. For some interviews and stories, more than one perspective is needed.
- **Paint the picture.** Questions that ask the interview subject for description are important. They help listeners "see" the story or message.
- **Ensure the listeners are not left hanging.** Wrap-up questions close loose ends and answer anything that is still unclear.
- **Be simple and clear.** Questions should be short, simple and clear. For guidance, review the writing tips covered in "What to Say." Multi-layered questions should never be part of an interview. They confuse the interview subject and the listeners.

Questions should follow a logical order. Consider these guidelines:

[Asking difficult questions](#) may be a necessary part of the interview.

➤ **The first question** shouldn't be too deep, complex or broad because you run the risk of losing focus or control of the interview.

➤ **Core questions** do not necessarily have to follow the chronology of events. You won't have time to cover everything, so focus your questions according to the key issues you want to address.

➤ **Follow-up questions** are used when the interviewer wants the subject to elaborate.

1. **Magic question:**

1. "Why?"

2. **Opening up questions** might start with:

1. "Tell me more"

2. "Take me back to the first time you..."

3. "What was going through your mind when"

3. **Pinning down questions** might start with:

1. "What do you mean when you say...?"

2. "Let's be more specific. Are you saying?"

3. "To recap...do you mean that?"

4. **Closing questions** wrap up the interview.

1. "What's your message to..." (this works especially well for a profile or "soft" interview.)

Interview Location

The type of program often dictates where the interview is conducted. For example, if the interview subject is a guest on a talk show, the interview will probably be in the studio. If the interview is part of a live news report, the interview is likely to be live from the scene.

At other times, where the interview is done depends on the topic of the interview and the interview subject. Think about:

- The interview subject's time schedule. If she's busy and her comments are needed for the story, the interview may have to take place at her location, possibly her office, home or some other place.
- Whether the interview subject can travel to the studio. If the distance is too great, the interview could be done by phone.
- What other factors may affect the interview location.
- Whether background noise will add to the interview. For instance, an interview with a fishing captain may benefit from the noise of the ocean in the background.

Doing an interview on location means that all the recording equipment has to be taken along. Make a list of what will be needed and check the items off the list before leaving.

Conducting an Interview

Formal and informal interviews use the same skills:

- Listening
- Asking effective questions
- Sticking to the focus

These skills are part of everyday communication. This section will show how to polish these naturally learned skills and use them more consciously.

During the interview

Remember the presentation tips that were presented in an earlier section. For example:

- Talk one-on-one.
- Smile appropriately.
- Relax and breathe naturally.
- Speak at a natural pace, not too fast, not too slow and pause appropriately.

Talk show hosts need special skills. South African radio host Ndondo Dube offers these [tips](#).

Use written questions to help stay focused and on track:

Ask **open-ended questions**--beginning with how, what, why--to encourage an interview subject to open up.

- Keep the questions **short and simple**. Never ask multi-layered questions that the interview subject struggles to understand.
- Ask **questions** to which there are only yes/no or one-word answers to pin down or focus the interview subject. (If she can't stop talking, for example!) A good follow up for many one-answer questions is "why?".
- Invite the interview subject to give **specific examples, experiences and stories**. For example, "Take us back to the first time you performed in public. What happened?".
- **Keep thinking of the listeners**. What would they want to ask?

During the interview:

- Show attention by using **eye contact, body language** and **repeating** key bits of information. ("You say you first started composing at the age of six. How did you

start so young?") But be careful not to give too much audible feedback - like "mmm" or "OK." They sound irritating on radio and they'll cause you problems later if you have to edit the interview.

- Remember to help the interview subject come alive as a person and tell her story. **An interviewer should be responsive but does not steal the spotlight** or use the interview to show how clever she is.
- **If it is necessary to interrupt the interviewee, do it with a smile** as she takes a breath. Try not to raise the volume--or pitch--of your voice. Do not talk over what she is saying. It sounds aggressive.
- **Listen carefully.** These tips will help with [listening skills](#).
- **Ask follow-up questions.**

Track progress:

- **Watch the clock** and keep the interview paced to cover everything.
- **Know when to start bringing the conversation to a close.** Do it as naturally as possible. Don't say "Well, I'm afraid we have to stop there. We've run out of time." The interviewee and the listeners will feel cheated. And you'll sound unprofessional.
- **Thank the person you interviewed simply.** Don't go overboard.

Module summary

At the start of this module we indicated that you should be able to

Recognize techniques used by radio practitioners.

- The module described **three techniques**: writing, presenting and interviewing.

Understand writing techniques associated with the radio.

- The key is to **write as you speak**.
- Keep things **simple and short**.
- The module also covered **story structure, sentence content, tone and word choice**.

Identify key practices for effective radio presentation.

- The module covered **two presentation principles**.
 - Talk as if addressing one listener.
- It also addressed the importance of **body position and gesturing**.
- Finally, the module described how **voice and body are interconnected** and gave tips for making the voice sound its best.

Identify different techniques used for radio interviews

- Interviewing is a primary way people interact on radio. This course covered **two types** of interviews:
 - The opening up interview
 - The pinning down interview
- The module covered some **basic techniques** for preparing and conducting interviews.

Discuss how writing and presentation play a role in radio interviews.

- Both writing and presentation skills are needed to **successfully conduct an interview**.

Before we close out this module, let's review the material we just covered.

True/False:

1) Always give the interview subject the questions up front.

T F

2) Use closed questions to get someone to answer yes or no.

T F

3) The interviewer should never deviate from the list of prepared questions.

T F

4) In a longer interview, invite the person you are interviewing to give specific examples, experiences, stories.

T F

News Bulletins

A news bulletin is a round-up of the main stories of the moment. Main news bulletins usually appear at the top of the hour and shorter bulletins are often placed on the half hour. They may also be integrated into news programs. Stories in news bulletins are typically presented in the following order:

- Local stories or issues that might have the most impact on listeners' daily lives
- National or regional stories
- International stories

A national or local news broadcast might not report international stories unless the story affects the country or the local community. Stations may change this order around, particularly if a major news event occurs. News bulletins may also include financial updates, sports news, traffic reports and weather updates.

Some stations end with a story that makes listeners smile. This may be a "good news" or humorous story. Be careful with humor, as it might offend rather than amuse listeners.

Structure of a News Bulletin

A news bulletin may contain some or all of these ingredients:

- **Hard copy** is the scripted version of the news stories in the bulletin (without interview clips or other sound) as read by the news reader or anchor.
- **A news cue** is what the news reader or anchor says to introduce a recorded report, clip, or question and answer. A good cue introduces the clip clearly, concisely and smoothly.
- **A clip or soundbite** is a very short, recorded comment from someone who is key to the news story. Clips are usually just a few seconds in length. They are often recorded on the phone, but can also be recorded in person by a reporter on the scene.
- **A voicer** is a short piece, written and read by a reporter, not the news reader, which gives more detail about a news story. It may be recorded at the scene of the story, or the reporter may go out to the scene to investigate and then return to the station to write and record the voicer.
- **A report/wrap-around/package** is similar to a voicer, but also includes clips and sound.
- **Questions and answers or Q & As** are conducted between the news reader and a reporter at the scene of the news story. The news reader essentially interviews the reporter. This is usually done live.

Here are five combinations of ingredients commonly used when creating a news bulletin.

- News bulletin read from a hard copy script - ([example](#))
- News bulletin read from a script with a voice clip - ([example](#))
- News cue followed by an on-the-spot voicer - ([example](#))
- News cue followed by a pre-recorded report - ([example](#))
- News cue followed by a question and answer - ([example](#))

Programs that use News Bulletins

News bulletins usually appear at the top of the hour (e.g., 8:00, or 10:00). Shorter bulletins may also appear on the half hour during morning and evening peak listening times. In such cases, news bulletins become a component of news programs that are broadcast during those morning and evening time slots.

News Programs

A news program (sometimes also called a current affairs show) is a compilation of features, reports, interviews and discussions about current events, developments and controversial issues.

Depending on the audience and the reach of the radio station, a news program will cover a variety of local, regional and world news.

Local news focuses on community events. The community could be a neighborhood, a city, a county or even encompass a larger area depending on where the radio station is. Examples of local news stories include local tax changes, school referendums and debates among candidates for community elections.

Regional news focuses on news events at the state, provincial or even national level. A regional news program may cover elections or new public services, for example.

World news focuses on events occurring in other countries that have an international impact or are of interest to the radio station's listeners.

All stories could potentially be local news, depending on the angle. A plane crash in another country, for example, might have survivors who live in the radio station's community.

News Program Formats

Rather than simply having a presenter read news from a script, most news programs use a combination of formats. This helps to keep broadcasts lively, diverse and interesting to listeners.

News programs primarily consist of news reports, often live, as well as interviews and Q&As with station's reporters. They also can include:

- Features
- Discussions, sometimes with phone-ins

Early morning or drive-time news shows often integrate news bulletins and regular news

updates.

When appropriate, other formats may be used as well. Some stations include quizzes and competition, to attract listeners, with questions based on current events. Other stations have a regular commentary/analysis slot in the news program.

Challenges

There are two main challenges to presenting news programs: technical issues and content.

Technical Issues: Planning and Timing

Presenting a live news program on radio can be both exciting and nerve-racking because:

- News changes from minute-to-minute. News programs have to reflect this and keep the listener updated by reporting changing developments to major stories as they happen.
- News is unpredictable. A bomb attack, a fire at the local hospital or the death of the country's president could occur while you are on the air. Listeners expect the story to be covered immediately.
- News-makers are not always available for telephone interviews when you need them. If there is one person who is key to the day's top story, you will be competing with lots of other journalists for her comment.
- Technical problems can derail even the best plans. Plans to go live to a parliamentary press conference will be in trouble if the telephone connection breaks.

Another challenge is the need for split-second timing. If the show is supposed to last an hour, running for an extra ten minutes or ending five minutes early are not possible. If either of these happen, not only will the station's overall schedule be affected it will look very unprofessional.

So how do you achieve split-second timing on a news program, when you can never be sure of the content of the show? Here are some tips:

- **Always have a back-up plan.** Is the Minister of Health not answering her phone? Fill in the three minutes planned for the interview with her by playing a feature about the current controversy over HIV/AIDS vaccine trials in the community.

- **Be flexible.** Is the program in danger of running long because of a live report from the scene of a hospital fire? Decide quickly which item to drop from the original program plan in order to stay on track.
- **Stay cool.** Have you just spilled a drink all over your notes? All kinds of chaos may be happening in the studio, but the listeners should never know. As far as they're concerned, you are 100% in control.

Content: Developing a Listener-Centered Approach

In recent years, research has found that radio listeners -- as well as newspaper readers and TV viewers -- want more from news programs than reports on wars, disasters and the speeches of politicians. Instead of just taking in the news, people want to be a part of the news-making process. These days, many are asking for a more community-based approach to reporting.

A media trend called civic, or public, journalism has tried to address this. Civic journalism:

- Explores options and opens up solutions for pressing social issues, problems or crises,
- Engages the public in deciding what is news and who is newsworthy.

Community radio stations use this kind of approach because by their very nature these stations are focused on the community. But the influence of civic journalism has gone beyond community-based media and is now being used by commercial and public media organizations.

For tips on how to include a civic journalism approach in news reporting, these Internet resources might be helpful:

- [Pew Center for Civic Journalism](#)
- Radio-Television News Directors Association, [Community Journalism Project](#)
- The International Media and Democracy Project, [El periodismo civico como comunicacion politica](#)

Presenting, Scripting and Interviewing Techniques Specific to News Programs

The presentation, scripting and interviewing techniques discussed in Module 2 of this Radio course are the foundation to all radio programming, including news programs:

[Principles of radio presentation](#)

[Tips for scripting](#)

Skills for Radio Journalists

What to Say: Finding the Angle

The first step in developing a news story is to find the angle, or the main point of the story. One way to find the angle is to clarify the facts and then ask the question, "So what?"

To answer the "so what?" question, you need to understand who the listeners are. What news interests them? What information is relevant to their daily lives? What are they worried about? What do they feel strongly about?

The answer to "so what?" will lead to the story angle.

The necessity of an angle

The angle is what makes listeners say, "Oh, that's important," or "That's interesting."

[Compare two versions of the same story](#). Which one is more interesting?

Identifying the angle helps to sharpen focus for the story and leads to clearer writing. A story without an angle that covers every aspect of an issue will be confusing and lose listeners.

Finding the angle

While researching a story, ask:

- What is happening or what has been happening?
- Why is the story important?
- Why will listeners care about this story?
- What will listeners want to know?

Think about:

Listeners

- Who are they?
- What will make them identify with the story and find it relevant and interesting?
- What do they already know or think about the issue?

- What other questions would they like to have answered?

The story from all its perspectives

- Why did the event occur?
- What do people think about the event that occurred?
- Who is involved in the event and why?
- Will something happen in the future as a result of the news event?

Radio Programs and Formats

Relationship between Formats and Programs

This module will focus on formats and radio programs. Let's start by looking at an overview of how the two are related.

Linking Formats and Programs

Every radio program consists of information presented in one or, more often, multiple formats. For example: If a radio magazine program starts with a feature on a local politician, this might be followed by a discussion with the politician and studio guests or callers.

Keep in mind that not all formats work with all types of radio programs. However, there are some that work well together. The table below provides an overview of how the different formats can be used in radio programs. But remember:

- These are not fixed rules. On radio anything is possible as long as it works. Listener feedback will always guide you.
- Some elements could be classed as either a format or a type of program depending on how they are used. For example, a station might include a 10-minute discussion format within an hour-long magazine show or decide to air a regular hour-long discussion program.

	News Programs	Magazine Programs	Talk Shows
Features	X	X	
Discussions	X	X	X
News Bulletins	X		
Drama		X	X
Talks	Unlikely unless it is an opinion piece	X	X

Features

A feature is a report or story about a specific theme, issue, community or person. It is often a regular item in a news or magazine show and a more in-depth discussion of a topic. Radio terminology can differ from station to station, so you may find that this type of report is also called a package.

Structure of a Feature

- The structure of a feature is influenced by many factors. These **Length** - Are you doing a quick piece or a longer story with a more documentary-like feel? Features can be any length, from a few minutes to 30 minutes, or sometimes even longer.
- **Location** - Features are almost always recorded in the field, rather than in the studio. That's why include: the location is an important element in the story. How will you make the most of different sounds to tell the story and paint pictures for the listener?
- **Resources** - How many sources of information, and other ingredients, are you using and how will they be included? You will probably use at least some of the following:
 1. Interview clips. How many interviews do you need in a feature? There's no easy answer to that question. But your feature needs to focus on more than one angle if it is going to be really satisfying.
 2. Sounds (for example, background traffic, a busy market, crowds cheering).
 3. On-the-spot descriptions from a reporter (sometimes called stand-ups).
 4. "Vox pops" - or quick comments from citizens or people on the street about the issue you're covering
- **Deadline** - Are you covering a current news event (in which case you'd want to complete the piece quickly) or are you investigating a story about a long-developing social issue (for which you can take more time)?
- **Placement** - Will the feature appear in a news program or a magazine program? Features can be used in both types of programs so placement will influence everything from the angle you choose to the final length of your piece.

Here are a couple of tips to help you make a feature:

- [Ingredients in a feature](#)
- [Plan of action for producing a feature](#)
- [Logging your recordings](#)

Programs that use Features

Both news and magazine programs use features. However, because the goals of those programs are quite different, the features used in each are also different.

Magazine Programs

Magazine programs may cover

- Lifestyle
- Health
- Topical issues - from a human interest angle, rather than a hard news angle
- Travel
- Youth
- Gender issues

Magazine programs can cover almost anything. Some magazine programs only cover one topic while others may cover several.

Magazine Program Formats

Like magazines you read, radio magazine programs offer an assortment of items, often of interest to a particular group of people. Magazine programs are usually built around interviews. These might be live - either in the studio or on the phone - or they might be pre-recorded and edited. Magazine programs can also include many of the formats described earlier in this module.

- Features
- Discussions
- Dramas
- Talks

Most important is that the program offer variety in content, tone and pace. This can be achieved by:

- **Covering a wide range of issues or topics** so the program appeals to a wide range of listeners.
- **Mixing up the tone**, with some serious items and some light ones. For example, a mini- drama about a high school student who develops anorexia could be used to introduce a studio discussion on the issue, which is then followed by a phone-in with listeners. The tone of each of these items will be serious, but the next item might be lighter. For example, a feature about a popular new rap group whose members are all over 60.
- **Varying the length of the items**. Taking the example above, the mini-drama about

the high school student might be 3 minutes, the studio discussion 8 minutes, and the phone-in 15 minutes. The feature on the rap group could be 4 minutes. Having different lengths of the items keeps the rhythm of the show flowing and the listeners interested.

Challenges

Magazine programs can be complex to put together and produce. They need detailed planning to address those complexities, including:

- **A strong team.** Magazine programs usually have not only a presenter, but also a producer and a team of researchers. In smaller stations, this is not always possible, but the presenter will still need some support.
- **Careful planning.** Like news programs, magazine shows incorporate a range of items. These have to be ordered carefully so the program has a logical, fresh flow. And, because magazine shows are also live, they need split-second timing so the show doesn't run too long nor too short.
- **Topic briefings.** Because magazine programs often cover a wide range of topics, presenters or hosts need to be briefed with background information.
- **Guest management.** Most magazine programs feature guests. Staff has to do research to find the guests, book them and prepare them to be on the show.
- **Caller support.** Magazine programs with call-in discussion components require call coordination and caller screening.

Because of the complexity and planning involved, magazine programs usually have a dedicated producer. In smaller community radio stations, the presenter may serve as the producer as well. For more information, read a general overview of the [producer's role](#).

Presenting, Scripting, and Interviewing Techniques Specific to Magazine Shows

The presentation, scripting and interviewing techniques discussed in module 2 are the foundation of all radio programming, including magazine programs.

The tips found on the next page for call-ins on talk shows could also apply to magazine programs that use this format.

Talk Shows

A radio talk show is a program formed around discussions. Talk shows provide an opportunity for listeners to discuss news and current social issues affecting their lives. Most importantly talk shows allow listeners to hear what others in the community have to say. They have often been used in post-conflict situations to promote dialogue and better understanding between people from different ethnic or religious backgrounds.

Talk Show Formats

In addition to using discussions, talk shows may use other formats to grab listeners' attention or to help them connect with an issue. For example:

- Drama
- Talks

Using a combination of these formats will create a more diverse program. A drama can be used to introduce an issue for discussion and talks could be used to add personal perspective to the topic.

Some talk shows also use music to generate discussion. For example, songs about peace or tolerance can be used to open dialogue in a region experiencing conflict.

Challenges

Guests and callers always present interesting challenges for a host. They may have strong opinions, use controversial terminology or be very emotional. Or they may lack confidence and find it difficult to express themselves. Hosts should be able to accommodate anyone as long as the guest/caller does not use hate speech or try to use the show to incite violence. Review [tips for handling challenging callers](#).

Other circumstances that can lead to a challenging show include:

- **Violent conflict, war or social tension.** Hosting a talk show at a time when there is discord in the community or your listeners are dealing with a tragic event,

Exercises:
[Aminah's](#)
[Challenge](#)
[Community](#)
[Call-In](#)

requires sensitivity, superb program management, careful call screening and good interviewing skills.

- **Lack of visual cues.** Because the host can't see the people phoning in, she must listen attentively to callers and make sure she understands the point being made or question being asked. Sometimes people who are experiencing pain or trauma sound very angry. And since facial expressions and body language will not be visible to the host, she needs to take care not to misinterpret the callers' feelings or intent. She should always try to be calm, friendly and understanding, even if a caller starts to attack her personally.
- **Time management.** Like news programs and magazine shows, talk shows are almost always broadcast live. This means the host has to make sure that as many views as possible are aired in the time available. She has to balance the need to give a broad picture of the topic with the need to dig deeper. The host must also make sure that guests and callers keep to the point and don't waste precious time, but she must do so respectfully.

Presenting, Scripting, and Interviewing Techniques Specific to Talk Shows

The presentation, scripting and interviewing techniques discussed in module 2 are the foundation to all radio programming, including talk shows.

In addition, **being a good talk show host** requires excellent facilitation skills. These skills involve the ability to:

- open up dialogue
- summarize points
- play devil's advocate and keep the discussion flowing by presenting alternative viewpoints

A good facilitator will also set boundaries for what is and is not acceptable. Without such boundaries, freedom of speech can degenerate into anarchy or – worse – hate speech. It's not about censorship, but about building a relationship of mutual respect with listeners so they share responsibility for making the show a success. (See setting ground rules below)

She also has a personal recipe:

- Be a great listener.
- Do not take "negative" calls personally.
- Never judge or exclude, rather open up and include.
- Do lots of research but never be afraid to ask basic questions. They're probably

- exactly the questions the listener would like to ask.
- Help listeners find solutions.
 - Use the language and tone of the caller. It makes the caller feel welcome. If the caller is unreasonable or angry, take a deep breath and acknowledge the caller's feelings. Then listen.
 - Have a sense of humor and don't take yourself too seriously.
 - Be able to see many different viewpoints and step into the shoes of many different callers.

Find out what it takes to be a good radio host by taking this [short quiz](#).

Setting ground rules encourages callers to contribute positively to the discussion and helps the host to manage the discussion creatively. Having ground rules is especially important if the program is dealing with a divisive issue or is being aired during a time of conflict.

Read some [examples](#) of ground rules jingles.

A ground rules jingle can be created and used at the beginning of a talk show and whenever an angry caller needs to be cooled down. If the caller won't abide by the rules after the jingle has been played, the host can say goodbye and move on to the next caller.

Talks

A talk, not to be confused with a talk show -- a style of radio program that will be reviewed later in this module -- is a short, scripted story or commentary usually presented by the writer and based on personal experience, observation or analysis. It is often a personal account of the impact of an issue or event in someone's life. It may also be an opinion statement about a political, ethical or moral issue.

Talks can be used to highlight the impact of an issue on individuals or spark discussion on a topic. Generally, they are about two minutes long.

Structure of a Talk

An effective radio talk uses storytelling techniques to grab the listeners' attention and help them identify with an issue or experience. These techniques include:

- A clear compelling introduction to hook the listener
- Painting pictures with words so that the listener can imagine what is being described
- A friendly, personal tone - not a patronizing or preachy tone - to make the listener feel the speaker is talking especially to her
- Suspense, twists and surprises

Programs that use Talks

The following programs use talks to supplement or lead into stories:

- Magazine programs
- Talk shows

A news program may sometimes include a personal commentary about a current event or issue, but other kinds of talks do not usually appear in news shows.

Discussions

A discussion is a conversation between two or more people on a specific topic. On a radio program, discussions include a program host and guests or experts on the topic being discussed. Listeners may also be involved in the discussion if the program has a call-in portion for questions and comments.

Structure of a Discussion

Radio hosts must understand how to effectively use discussion. Four elements drive the shape of a discussion: the radio host, the topic, the program's goals, the listeners or callers.

Element	How the element drives the format
Radio host	<p>The host serves as a facilitator. Whether interviewing program guests in the studio or over the telephone or taking calls from listeners, the host is responsible for managing the discussion.</p> <p>Learn more about how to create interesting radio discussions.</p>
Topic	<p>Discussion topics will be influenced by the program's focus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ If the show covers a broad theme, such as current affairs, ideas can be drawn from many different sources, including political affairs; international, regional or local developments; scientific breakthroughs and new books.➤ If the program deals with a more specific subject, such as business or finance, topics will be influenced by major news on this subject. Angles related to current events can also be used as discussion topics. For example, a program about finance might include a discussion about the financial impact on the community of a newly-built highway. <p>Listeners are often the best sources of story ideas. Feedback from the audience can generate new topics for the show.</p>

<p>Goal</p>	<p>Goals are influenced by the program's overall focus as well as the specific topics for a given program. Typical goals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encouraging expression. Allowing listeners to be heard and voice their opinions. For example, a public affairs talk show might solicit feedback from the community on a proposed tax bill. ➤ Providing information. Offering in-depth exploration of or insight into a current issue. For example, a magazine show focused on health might invite experts to participate in a discussion on sex education in schools. ➤ Giving instruction. Presenting advice on a specific topic. For example, a financial talk show might offer guidance on investing or invite experts to give an overview of a new business regulation.
<p>Listener/ Caller</p>	<p>Callers will influence the flow of the discussion with their comments and questions. The host needs to keep callers focused on the topic at hand.</p> <p>Having screeners answer the phone lines frees the host to focus on the current discussion. Screeners need to have a good understanding of the overall program goals as well as the current program topic. Often, program producers will fill this role.</p> <p>These resources provide tips for handling callers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How to Handle Callers provides ideas on how to deal with callers who are aggressive or hostile. ➤ National Public Radio's <i>Talk of the Nation</i> (aired in the U.S.) provides a helpful Guide for Callers

Programs that use Discussions

The following programs often use discussions:

- **News programs** sometimes use discussions when there are phone-ins from listeners.
- **Magazine programs** use discussions to supplement feature stories. These discussions can take the form of interaction with guests, calls from listeners or questions from live audiences.
- **Talk shows** use discussions as the main format for the show. Discussions might be between the program host and guests on the program, between the program host and listeners who call in, between guests and listeners or among all of them

Drama

Dramas are fictional stories, but they are based on real-life events or situations. Drama is an effective tool to help listeners connect with issues on an emotional level. Radio dramas are widely used in Africa, Asia and Latin America, especially to present information about social issues.

Dramas can be long - 30 minutes or more - or short - 30 seconds to 5 minutes. The length depends on the topic and how the drama is being used within a radio program. Short dramas are commonly referred to as mini-dramas.

Dramas are effective catalysts for opening up discussion on sensitive topics, such as HIV/AIDS, domestic violence or teenage sex. The drama scenario sets up a situation where guests or callers do not have to talk directly about themselves or their own situations. Instead, they can comment on the issues raised in the mini-drama and respond to the situations or ideas of the characters.

The descriptions and information below deal with making mini-dramas. Many of the same guidelines apply to making longer dramas.

Structure of a Mini-Drama

Making a mini-drama isn't difficult or time consuming. In fact, the process should be creative and fun. There's no need to record in a studio; it will sound much better if it is recorded in the field or on location with realistic sounds. Rehearsing beforehand will reduce the amount of time needed for editing.

Consider these components when making a mini-drama:

- **Message.** Decide on one clear, simple message or problem, such as teenage sex. It isn't always necessary to provide solutions, especially if a drama is being used to set up a discussion or debate. Sometimes it's better to leave the drama open-ended and invite listeners to phone in with suggestions and solutions.
- **Characters.** Keep the number of characters to a minimum. Listeners won't be able to focus on the message if they have to keep track of multiple characters.
- **Actors.** Ensure that the actors have a good sense of who their character is, even if this information isn't directly conveyed in the drama itself.
- **Setting or scene.** Mini-dramas are simpler to produce if they have only one location and one point in time. If you need to include more scenes, make clear transition points or bridges so the listener doesn't get confused.
- **Sound effects.** Include simple sound effects to help listeners imagine the scene.

Kitchen noises, doors shutting, and cars honking, for example, are easy sound effects to make on the spot. Find out how to make simple [sound effects](#).

Don't be afraid to use humor. Laughter is often the best way to make points about a serious issue. Fictional environments and humor allow listeners to explore issues that they might otherwise shy away from.

Find out more about [how to make a mini-drama](#). Or listen to an example of a radio drama from [UNICEF Somalia](#). (You will need an audio player to listen to this file.) Or read about producing radio dramas for conflict prevention at [Radio for Peacebuilding Africa](#) (you will need to register on the website to access this file.)

Programs that use Mini-dramas

Mini-dramas can be used in:

- **Magazine programs** to introduce an interview or program guest
- **Talk shows** to lead off a discussion or invite calls

Module Summary

Review the concepts that were covered in this module.

Distinguish between formats and radio programs.

Radio programs are made up of many stories that are presented using one or more formats.

Identify five types of formats and discuss their purpose.

- [Features](#) provide an in-depth perspective on a story or issue.
- [Discussions](#) provide a means for listener interaction.
- [Dramas](#) use fictional stories to illustrate a topic.
- [News Bulletins](#) tell listeners about the main news stories of the moment.
- [Talks](#) tell personal stories or give personal opinions.

Identify three types of radio programs/shows and discuss their differences.

This module described news programs, magazine programs and talk shows. The programs use different formats.

The other difference is based on topic or focus. News programs focus on important information about current events or developments of the day. The other programs can cover whatever topics or issues the radio station staff thinks is appropriate and interesting for their listeners.

Module 3: Radio Programs and Formats

Review: Radio Programs

In this section, three types of radio programs were described, including what formats they are used in them and the challenges and techniques of each.

Please review what you learned by answering these questions:

1) News programs, magazine shows and talk shows are usually all:

- a. pre-recorded and edited
- b. based on interviews
- c. broadcast live
- d. likely to include a mini drama
- e. b and c

2) Telephone guests may participate in the following radio programs:

- a. News programs
- b. Magazine programs
- c. Talk shows
- d. all of the above

3) Magazine programs are different from talk shows because:

- a. Magazine programs require careful time management
- b. Magazine programs use formats other than discussion
- c. Magazine programs use the drama format and talk shows do not
- d. Magazine programs focus on news stories and talk shows do not

Review: Formats

The previous pages explored several types of formats that can appear in radio programs.

Before going on to radio programs, please reflect on what was just covered by choosing the most applicable answer to these questions:

1) What does an effective feature generally include?

- a. One long interview on a current news issue
- b. A range of views, experiences and sounds
- c. A mini drama to open up discussion
- d. A news bulletin

2) If possible, a radio drama should:

- a. Be recorded in the same kind of location as where the story is set.
- b. Be recorded in a studio to ensure good quality.

- c. Include as many characters as possible so the listener doesn't get bored.
- d. Always be completely scripted.

Module Summary

Review the concepts that were covered in this module.

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