**ESSENTIALS OF A NEWSCASTER**

**Newscaster - The Anchorperson**

Newscaster is the person who reads the news to the listeners on radio and conducts interviews if needed.

**Essentials of a Newscaster**

A good news caster must posses the following essentials:

**1. Authority**

Authority as defined by **David Dunhill, BBC Voice Trainer, Former Newscaster.**

***“Authority is not a sound. Authority is a state of knowing what you are talking about and being able to explain it convincingly and readily to somebody else.”***

**2. Credibility**

A newscaster must be a good journalist not a good actor. Good journalist means that he has got ample knowledge of what he is reading out to the listeners. It must appear from his tone whatever he is reading out, he must know its worth as well otherwise he has ample chances to commit mistake. Sometimes it happens that the composer of the news script makes some errors in the spellings or in the names of the proper nouns. In such cases, if the newscaster is ignorant of basic facts and figures, he will not be able to correct the information and wrong information will go on air. From event to the broadcast, a news story passes through many hands but the newscaster is the person who enters into the scene at the end and holds the final presentation. It implies that manifold responsibility lies with him/her. Knowledge is confidence and knowledge is credibility.

A newscaster must have an insight of national and international issues. He must know the names of presidents of important countries, prime ministers, capital names, currencies, etc. He must know the names and respective departments of federal and provincial ministers, secretaries and other important government officials.

**Harry Ratliff – Bureau Chief, CBS News**

***“I am not interested in newsreaders – actors reading the news – it debases the news. Many of them don’t know what they are reading. When they interview someone they read questions somebody else has written. That's wrong. The news ought to be told by journalists—they have more credibility.”***

**Language**

We talk about language in terms of grammar, pronunciation and accent. As far as grammar is concerned, a newscaster must be well versed in the rules and principals of the language he is reading news in. Some important areas regarding grammar to be concentrated by a newscaster are: Tenses; Nouns; Verbs; Adjectives; Structures; Use of conditionals; Causatives.

**Pronunciation**

Whatever the language is if the pronunciation of the speaker is bad it gives bad impression and sometimes it changes the meaning of the word as well. For instance,

***Sentence*** (noun) means a set of words that carries a subject and a verb; and conveys a message.

***Sen`tence*** (verb) means to announce punishment.

***Rebel*** (noun) the person who fights against the government of his country.

***Re`bel*** (verb) the act of fighting against the government of his country.

A good and professional newscaster is always curious about the pronunciation of any new word that comes to his knowledge.

To be accurate regarding a professional newscaster knows the art of looking up dictionary for which the knowledge of Phonetics, Vowel Sounds, Consonant Sounds, Syllables, and Stresses- Primary, Secondary, & Tertiary stresses, is a must.

**Accent**

Accent is not necessary to be followed but pronunciation is something that must not be compromised.

**Unbiased**

A professional newscaster is the one who is unbiased at least when he/she is reading out news bulletin. He must be able to hide his feelings of hatred or liking for any one whose news he is reading out.

**Punctual**

Rain or storm, a newscaster is in form. What may come in the way, a newscaster has to reach the studio at least 30 minutes before the bulletin starts so that he may go through the script well in advance.

**Voice**

As far as the voice quality of a newscaster is concerned, it must be:

* Good but not necessarily exceptionally good.
* Comfortable.
* Confident.
* Clear.
* Healthy.
* Lively.
* Microphone friendly.

**ANCHORPERSON**

With the introduction of broadcasting came a unique job of anchorperson. There is no way out to carry out a program without a person especially in the programs of current affairs.

Be it an interview or conducting a talk show, a seminar or commentary there has to be a person to conduct the program.

# Male or Female

Although the gender debate is not raging any more in the area of broadcasting, producers, however, have been confronting with the question of handing over the anchorperson job to a male or female. The choice of a female is obvious in programs meant for women but the fair sex is also considered for children’s programs and programs produced on subjects like health and education.

But still economic, political, globalization and governance are the subjects which remain predominantly males’ domain as far regulating broadcasting programs are concerned.

There are certain programs which encourage anchorpersons over and above gender consideration like news reading or news documentaries.

There are exceptions as some female are proving as good as male in appearing as an anchorperson in programs made on political or financial issues. Some females are now showing interest in making running commentaries especially for the sporting events in which women appear. A marked change seems taking place though gradually.

# Appearance and Confidence (Voice and speech)

Having done on the subject of engaging a male or female for conducting a program, a program producer looks forward to a person who is acceptable in his/ her looks through the lens.

It is here that first part of the audition is taken. There is hardly an anchorperson, even the most fluent and charming persons in this field, who join this area without passing through the process of audition. It is not necessary that a person should be very good looking and attractive. This is usually considered additional qualification of the compere. What matters along with the looks is the confidence of the person who wants to take up the job of anchorperson.

No one is suddenly called to appear before the microphone or camera and prove its mettle as the talent. People are usually short-listed by the producers and then given a particular script

which is usually easy to learn and render. Good producers also help potential talents in injecting confidence in the later. Audition is not conducted once; talents are given chances to muster up their confidence to go through the testing period.

# Job Opportunities

Needless is to overemphasize here that with the world of broadcasting has also come a separate and complete job as anchorperson, announcer, news reader etc. It all depends on a person how he/ she takes up the job.

# Qualities in an anchorperson

Like every job there are certain qualities which a broadcasting house makes sure are possessed by the people who are willing to make a career in the job of modulator.

Here below we will examine some of essential characteristics of an anchorperson;

# Properly Educated

No broadcasting house is going to compromise on this property for an anchorperson. To be educated and properly educated is well defined in the eyes of a producer – one may be generally educated; a graduate or post-graduate. But for a producer a properly educated person means the one who should understand the exact requirement of the program under question and for which an anchorperson is being found. For instance, a person is masters in English language; the program belongs to financial sector – to discuss budgets, import-export policies, globalization of economy or free trade among nations etc. A producer will have to make sure that the compere of the program knows about the subject.

# Laced with modern knowledge

A good producer is always on the hunt to mark a person who is not only educated in the subject of his program, he very strongly wish to get a person who possess latest knowledge on the subject not only in the sense of terminologies but in the sense of latest developments going on in that field. For instance if the program is to discuss the free market economy and the global trends, the knowing of the process of globalization by the anchorperson would not suffice, he/she must be in the know of the latest developments – conferences, recommendations by the world economic forums and some regional agreements – and the criticism on those developments by the stakeholders would enable the anchorperson to talk to the participants of the program with confidence and help the viewers interested in the program to update their knowledge on the topic.

Similarly, if the program is on music, a mere knowledge of music would not work, the compere needs to know the latest albums, singers, tracks, instruments, re-mixes and the

experimentation going on in certain areas of the music field to justify a talk on the subject of , for example, modern music and emerging trends.

# Technical comprehension

An anchorperson is not a separate entity but very much a part of the production team. From this angle he/ she must understand the technical matters pertaining to production. For instance if he/ she feels that some vital mistake has been done in the opening remarks while recording the program, and instead of staying nervous all through the program, the person should understand that the mistake would be removed in the post-production process and viewers, or listeners would not get it, would help greatly in conducting the rest of the program.

Similarly the knowledge of camera positions, lights and microphones by the anchorperson would always help the producer to complete the recordings without inordinate breaks.

# Ethics and Legalities

A sound and sensible anchorperson will always take care of the legalities involved in the matter under discussion and the ethics in the exchange of views. The person should not humiliate a participant of the program in any manner and at the same time ensure that no other participant indulge in a negative attitude at the same time. A program conducted in a sophisticated manner is always valued higher than the programs ignoring this very sensitive aspect of production.