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| RADIO WRITING TECHNIQUES*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the basic radio writing techniques.*Radio writing techniques are designed to capture and hold the audience's attention until you have delivered your message. These six techniques are as follows:l Aural sense appeall Rapid getawayl Power of suggestionl Pacing and timingl Freedom of movementl ConflictAURAL SENSE APPEALRadio depends entirely on the ear; it must work completely on the listener's mental image inspired by [sound waves](http://electriciantraining.tpub.com/14182/css/Sound-Waves-29.htm) coming from the radio speaker.RAPID GETAWAYRadio material must capture the attention of the audience within the first few moments of presentation or listeners will be lost. The material must present a challenge, a promise, a suggestion or a conflict to arouse the listener's attention.POWER OF SUGGESTIONThe human mind is a vast storehouse of scenery. The radio writer suggests to the audience what the scene should be, and listeners - through their mind's eye - can see anything from a pinhole to Waikiki Beach.PACING AND TIMINGYou must prepare the material for delivery within a definite time frame. Within this timeframe, the changes in quality, emotion, thought or feeling of the material are controlled.FREEDOM OF MOVEMENTAs the radio writer, you can take listeners from one point on earth to another, or even into outer space with words, sound effects or the appropriate music.CONFLICTRadio writers call conflict the backbone of interest in radio writing. Conflict is the ageless formula of hero against villain, good against evil, the fight for survival and the solution to difficult problems.RADIO NEWSWRITING*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Recognize the basic rules of radio newswriting.*As a Navy journalist your first encounter with radio writing will probably be as a radio newswriter. In that assignment your job will be to meet the deadlines and rigid standards of the [electronic media](http://draftingmanuals.tpub.com/14063/css/Electronic-Media-177.htm) with the Navy's news story.Radio news style, while dictated by the need for getting and holding the attention of an audience, differs from station to station. It is alive and constantly changing along with the broadcast industry itself.As with most areas of journalism, there are few absolutes. When scripting broadcast copy, you will face many subjective choices that can only be made by using your own common sense.The guidelines presented in this chapter are intended to be consistent with the style recommended by The Associated Press and United Press International. However, keep in mind that these guidelines are just that- guidelines. For your copy to serve any worthwhile purpose, it must be the kind of spots and releases the individual radio stations in your geographical area desire and are able to use. Most local broadcast stations have individual pReferences regarding their newscasts and announcements. To be responsive, you must be willing to adapt to those pReferences. Study the styles of the stations in your area. If your material does not meet the requirements of the stations you are attempting to serve, then make the necessary modifications.Initially, be aware that writing for broadcast media is not the same as writing for print media. True, the same rules of accuracy, propriety and good taste apply; nevertheless, there are a number of differences, particularly in writing style. Your job is to tailor each release for the medium that will use it. A release sent to an area newspaper may be turned down by area broadcast stations if it is not rewritten in broadcast style.Remember that any station is more likely to use your release if it is in a form that does not require the newscasters' reworking. Do not create extra work for the news outlet. This is a fundamental step and should be practiced by every public affairs office.Broadcast writing is highly personalized - far different from writing for the print media. Broadcast copy is written and designed for the ear. It is personal and has a sense of immediacy. The listener becomes involved and feels as though he is a part of the event being reported.THE SIX CsIn keeping with the requirements previously covered, your broadcast copy must measure up to the following six Cs: l Clear l Concise l Complete l Conversational l Current l CorrectClearClear copy is written in a simple, easy-tounderstand manner. It is developed in a logical way, flows smoothly and is easy for the listener to follow. Even the simplest story may be misunderstood on the basis of one hearing. The listener's attention may be divided between any number of [distractions](http://photographytraining.tpub.com/14130/css/Distractions-125.htm). Therefore, a radio news story should be perfectly clear to avoid misinterpretationAvoid jamming too many thoughts or numbers into one sentence. Generally, sentences that are more than 25 words contain more than one thought and should be rewritten into separate sentences. The same principle applies to dependent and independent clauses. They are often very cumbersome, so write them as separate sentences. Commonly accepted literary techniques, unusual words and complex phrases, also tend to obscure sentence meaning and you should avoid the use of such.In broadcast writing, simple words say it best. Choose words that everyone will understand - the announcer as well as the listener. Do not ignore colorful or descriptive words. However, steer clear of flowery phrases and trite [expressions](http://draftingmanuals.tpub.com/14262/css/Expression-169.htm) that simply take up time and are of no value. Avoid slang and always translate military, technical, legal and foreign terms into simple language.ConciseYou have concise copy when all unnecessary words have been trimmed away and only those words essential to convey your thoughts remain.It cannot be overemphasized that broadcast writing is writing for the ear. Listeners do not have the opportunity of "rehearing" your copy, so your sentences should be direct and crystal clear. If your copy is long and involved, you put a strain on the listener and hinder [comprehension](http://navyadministration.tpub.com/134t/css/Comprehension-134T_74-74.htm). This does not mean broadcast writing should be kept at a fifth grade level - but given the choice of being complex or simple, you should choose the latter. Your obligation is to put information into meaningful terms that the "average audience" will understand, and more important, want to hear.CompleteFor the broadcast story to be complete, you must include in it at least four of print journalism's five "Ws." Obviously, you will normally state what happened in your lead sentence. Then you will tell to whom it happened, when it happened and where it happened. Why and how generally are not critical, although to be complete, some stories will require this information.ConversationalLike good conversation, broadcast writing is informal and free-flowing. Write the way you talk. Let the story tell itself. This may sound easy, but it will takesome effort in the beginning. A common pitfall is to write a story as it may have been required for an English [composition](http://draftingmanuals.tpub.com/14276/css/Chapter-1-Composition-11.htm) or a print journalism assignment. Broadcast copy is read aloud by the announcer. It is not read by the listener.The twofold objective of the conversational tone is that first, it allows the announcer to pick up the drift of the story and second, it makes the copy sound "right" to the audience.A good broadcast writer "listens" to the story being written. When you have finished writing your copy, take it out of the printer and read it aloud to make sure it sounds conversational. Make sure there are no hard-to-pronounce words or [combinations](http://draftingmanuals.tpub.com/14065/css/Combinations-93.htm) of words that are awkward to the ear. Rid your copy of words that might be unfamiliar to your listeners.CurrentIf your story is not current, you do not have "hard" news. News of a perishable nature is usually hard news. If you have a story of immediate news value, you should expedite its completion and delivery to the media. By the same token, if there are new facts or circumstances relevant to your initial release, an update of the initial story should be provided (and marked as an update). This will help ensure currency. It is also helpful if the new or changed elements of the story are identified to reduce possible confusion with information in the original release. You will feel the pressure of meeting deadlines, but remember your [credibility](http://photographytraining.tpub.com/14129/css/Credibility-27.htm) is on the line.CorrectThe hallmark of journalism as a writing art - either print or broadcast - is the accurate presentation of facts. Your finished product must correspond accurately with the facts of the story. In the field you will follow every possible lead to get the facts as well as report them |  |