

# Program Production Thumbnail Notes

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## The Reporters Role

- 1) **The Story - Teller** provides a beginning, middle and end
- 2) **A Front Person** eg. representing company or a group presents the story and 'sells' the point of view.
- 3) The reporter needs to **be responsible** understanding the power of knowledge and the power of the TV.
- 4) **Be fair**. Provide balance
- 5) **Be accurate**. Know the facts. Research you topic and key people thoroughly

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## The Story

**Concider what style you would like to use for your report.**

- 1). **Issue based** e.g. 'user-pays'
- 2). **Event based** e.g. An unemployment protest march
- 3). **Confrontational** e.g. Corporation v's environmentalists
- 4). **Human interest** e.g. Teenager with a heart implant
- 5). **Observational** e.g. 'A day in the life of a fire fighter'
- 6). **Magazine / feature** e.g. A look at hairstyles.
- 7). **Profile** e.g. 'Rachel Hunter - Model'
- 8). **Adversarial** e.g. Reporter presents a story endorsing 'smoke free sponsorship
- 9) **Reporter lead** e.g. Reporter bungy jumping
- 10) **Miscellaneous** e.g. The mind boggles!!!

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## Standard Techniques

- 1) **Voice Overs** (V/O) Used to establish facts and information
- 2) **Interviews and Vox pops** Used to obtain opinions and feelings
- 3) **Pieces To Camera**, eg. an editorial comment or background information made to camera by the presenter. Used to turn a story around, usually later in item.
- 4) **Actuality recordings**. Made up of footage and comments recorded at the actual event being covered. Used to illustrate events and happenings.

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## Additional Options

- 1) **No voice over** \*Used to create story by letting subject 'tell'entire story
- 2) **Music** \* Used to complement visuals, often on emotive level
- 3) **Cut away interview** \* Used to illustrate parts of interview
- 4) **Statement On Tape (SOT)** \* Used to confront subjects with earlier statements made
- 5) **Point of View (POV)** \* Used to give a personal angle
- 6) **Vox pops (random interviews)** \* Used to illustrate public opinions
- 7) **Concealed camera** \* Used to keep subject acting naturally, or 'catch subject out'

\* NB. Don't 'over treat' stories. Keep it simple.

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## Suggestions For Style And Treatment

### 1) Issue Based

- Strong use of interviews and possible cutaways.

2) **Events based** eg. Unemployment march - find another vehicle for telling the story.

- Don't go for the predictable. Tell the story through the eyes of a policeman who's been on numerous marches.
- What does he feel?

- How is he affected?
- POV (Point of View)
- Cut aways and walking interview.

### 3) Confrontational

- Build up the event / meeting to parties
- Set them up at the beginning with a sports preview i.e.: 'on one side (blah blah) - on the other....'
- If one of the parties isn't prepared to meet the other, be prepared to meet the other, be prepared to 'footstep' or go in 'cameras rolling' (depending on circumstances)
- But questions must be asked in the interest of balance.
- Strong use of SOT (Statements On Tape).

### 4) Human Interest

- Transplant recipient tells the story himself
- No reporter presence
- No voice over
- Interview overlaid over sequences

### 5) Observational

- Sparing voice over
- Find 'signposts' i.e.: visual devices to move into another phase of story i.e.: 'the bells' (alarm) or clock.
- No other reporter presence

### 6) Magazine / Feature

- All music / with some vox pops
- Extensive use of editing devices

### 7. Profile

- Shoot everything with stills camera i.e.: Rachel eating - re diet Rachel exercising

Montage (compilation) of cover shots

- So it is all Rachel as the 'model'

### 8) Adversarial

- Reporter lead therefore use PTCs (Piece To Camera)
- 'First person's scripting
- 'Thoughts tracks' - record interview without pix for cutaways
- POV

# The Story - The Process

## 1) Where to Find it

- Current issues and events
- 'Contacts'
- Conversation
- Your mind

Keep well informed, interested, and inquisitive about people, events and life around you.

## 2) What to Do Once You've Found it

### Determine 'angle'

- There are countless angles to every story. Every reporter tells the same story differently. Be confident about your angle.

### Research

- Collect information by: Phone, personal meetings - not recorded, newspaper stories, Libraries, Magazines, on the net.
- At this stage spread the research net as wide as possible.
- Talk to all parties involved thoroughly before you shoot anything.
- Make sure of your facts.
- Be prepared to change your angle once you have collected your facts.

### Focus

Now write the sentence summarising the story

- Provides - Clarity and focus.
- Essential in successful story telling.
- Avoid going 'wide' on a story
- Provides discipline.

## 3) How to Plan it

### Determine

1. Treatment - what audio and visual devices you'll use.
2. Style - type of story (see above breakdown)
3. Structure - incorporates treatment and style and information = Recipe for telling the story.

Before you shoot anything write the story as you intend it to go to air. Determine as you go, how you will illustrate that information. (using visual instructions on left / audio on right). Remember - beginning, middle and end.

## Consider:

i. Shots / sequences / actuality - Use a variety of CU, MCU, MS and WS framed shots.

ii. Action / pace / brevity - Use Camera movement and movement within frame.

iii. Music / Visual effects - Use appropriately to enhance the item.

- Write your story knowing what information you'll be wanting from your 'talent' (interviews).
- Avoid being distracted from the 'focus'.
- Keep it simple.
- Provide a strong ending.
- Keep visual interest.
- Discuss with your camera team the structure and seek suggestions
- Audio and visual material must be supportive of each other.
- Remember no one person is ever responsible for a good story production.

## 4) How to do it.

- Remain flexible.
- Be prepared to throw your structure away.

## Interviews

- Where possible do your interviews first.
- Know what you want
- Remember interviews are for opinion not fact.
- Don't provide a list of questions but tell you talent 'loosely' what areas you will be covering.
- Don't be afraid to ask the questions you really want to ask.
- Listen and be ready to follow up. Keep it brief.
- Use open ended questions - use 'what, when, where, why, and how.

## Visual Interviews

- Look for action / sequences rather than 'wallpaper'.
- Look for actuality / S.O.T.

## Pieces to Camera

- Be natural. Don't talk down to people.
- Keep PTCs short and simple
- Use 'comfortable' language.
- Use PTC -
  1. To highlight information
  2. Present info you can visualise
  3. Provide creditability
  4. Reporter presence.
- Write and rehearse prior to shooting

## 5) How to get it together

- Rewrite structure and script according to changes

### Writing for TV

- Keep it simple
- Write it as you 'd say it.....
- Don't clutter with facts, and statistics.
- Don't describe what can be seen.

### Logging Tapes

- Determine which clips of interview you will use (find 'in' and 'out' points and time them).
- Find out which shots (and fill 'ins' and 'outs' on structure) correspond with your script.
- Record voice. Remember:
  1. Pace
  2. Think about what you're saying
  3. Say it - don't read it
- Now to editing and remember TV is a team effort.

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