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# Constructing news

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**Construction is like the process a builder uses to build a house from raw material.**



# Relative news values

**“My reader is like me, therefore what I like, my reader likes” –**

**this approach focus on voices of mainstream and ignores alternative points of view.**



# Writing news

- News writing always starts with the most important fact



**If someone were  
blow up the  
building across the  
street you write...**



- ~~“Today seemed like an ordinary day, little did I know how it would turn out...”~~
- “Someone blew up the building across the street...”

- News story blurt out something and then explain themselves by attributing each assertion to the evidence of a source with authority to speak on the



Taxes are to rise by 50% (assertion). The Mayor (attribution) today confirmed the price hike and said it was necessary to meet costs (substantiation).

You should also establish the context.

He told a businessmen's breakfast meeting that the rise would take effect immediately.

**In constructing a news story speech might contain 800 words, but reporter has a limit of 300 words**



# Follow the advice of Australian newspaper editor, Sid Deamer

- “There is no such thing as a good objective journalist. If you are not sensitive enough to feel for your subject, to have a point of view, to suffer joy or agony or sympathy about a story you are covering, you will not be a journalist.”





# In constructing a news story, you must always consider 6 elements:

- **Who** (the subjects in the story)
- **What** (the action in the story)
- **Where** (the physical context)
- **When** (the time context)
- **How** (substantiates)
- **Why** (authoritative comment)

# News Writing Ba



1. Write simply. Simple words in the right combination can be powerfully evocative.
2. First things first. News writing starts with a bang and then explains itself.
3. Always attribute what you say to an authoritative voice.
4. A good introduction is everything.

# Basic News Structure

A Capital City man was yesterday sentenced to 13 years' jail for the murder of a former girlfriend.

*(The bottom line comes first. This sentence also answers who, what, when and why.)*

In passing sentence at Capital City Supreme Court, Judge Arthur Boyd said Raymond John Dixon's sentence was a message to all men that violence would not be tolerated.

*(Second sentence substantiates who, what and why and adds where and how.)*

Dixon had pleaded guilty to the murder of Mary Martin at Capital City in January last year.

*(Third paragraph establishes the context of the sentencing.)*

'I accept that Mr Dixon was severely affected by drugs and alcohol at the time of the offence, but cannot accept this as mitigation for his violent behavior,' the judge said in passing sentence. 'My first priority must be protection of society.'

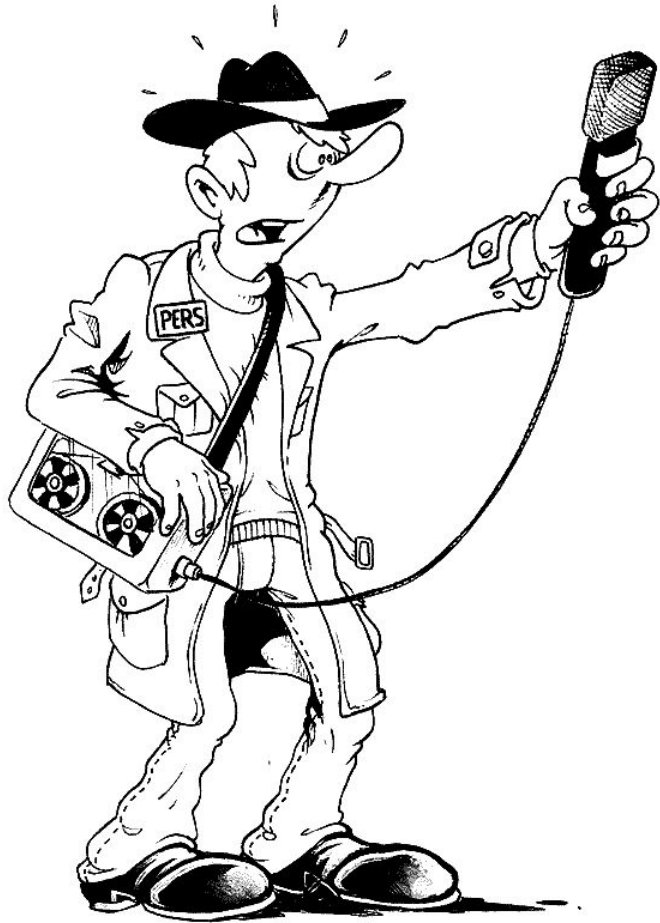
*(Quote is linked to the next assertion.)*

Judge Boyd said that to his credit, the prisoner had cooperated with police and led detectives to Miss Martin's body.

# Use quotes!

- Direct speech is lively;
- Due to quotes readers pick up clues about the speaker;
- Quotes add variety to the message.





- For something to be accurate it must be demonstrably correct within the clearly defined context in which it is

# Construction news in action

In pulling together the story from several sources, look for inaccuracies, anomalies, hidden leads, time differences another factors that affect how you evaluate the information you have.



To decide the news values that will drive your selection of the facts, you will consider those facts in terms of

- Timeliness,
- Proximity,
- Prominence,
- Consequence
- Human interest.



# Choosing the news



- Consider the relative news values
- Consider the reliability of information
- Decide whether the inf. you select is substantiated
- Prioritise the elements of news writing – who, what, where, when and how
- Evaluate the elements of the story that must be included





# Conclusion

News as a written or spoken form of communication is always constructed, in the sense that journalists never reveal all the information they have on a topic. Instead information goes through a process of professional evaluation that includes not only the reporters and their sources, but also a range of other journalists involved in the production and dissemination of the news. The process by which news is constructed is a reflection of professional judgments about the interaction of relative news values, the accuracy of information and the style and language used to impart the information.