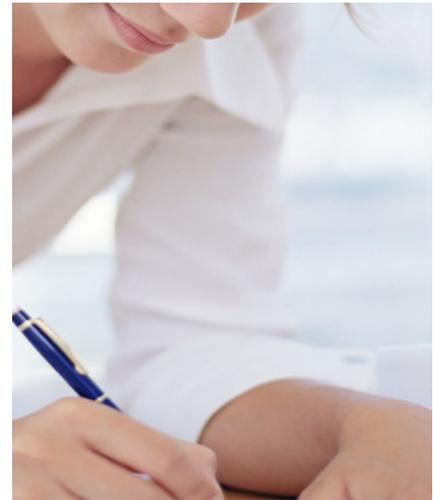


Communications Training— Level 2 Journalistic Writing



Introduction

Welcome to the second phase of Communication training in the North England Conference — how to prepare news articles for publication in Seventh-day Adventist Press and in local media

6 KEY AIMS

Identify a story for publication

Know how to create a story using the inverted pyramid style of presentation

To be able to use the six news questions

Give students the tools to use the three basic information sources for journalists to create a story for Seventh-day Adventist press publications

Provide students with the confidence and knowledge to help them create a good story with a local journalist for publication in a local newspaper

Show how to make a contact with a local reporter

Big fright

One area that frightens communicators is the thought of how you can get news into the Messenger, the BUC News or even the local press.

Your thought may be that your writing style is not good enough or that you don't have a story that is thrilling enough.

Please dispel either of those thoughts. Reporters are desperate for news, they want your items. Their reason for existence is to convey news to the public so that their readers can be better informed about the world.

You might wonder about your own abilities. The reporter is there to make



you look good. They get paid to take your idea and write about it accurately and well.



However a reporter won't write about rubbish unless your story is all about the garbage that is spoiling a neighbourhood and which your church has decided to clean up.

What the reporter needs, and which you can supply, is a story.

What makes a story?

Victor Hulbert uses a simple acronym to help teach people what a story is. That acronym is TRUTH and is highlighted in the sidebar to the left.

A topical story is one that is on people's minds at the time of writing. In January 2013 analysts discovered large percentages of horse meat in cheap beefburgers. The North England Conference Communicator ran a photo story that week highlighting the issue.

The story was topical because it dealt with the issue at the time—and because people were talking about it. The story tried to help people make sense of the issue, and in this case suggest that a viable alternative was to adopt a vegetarian diet.

The story was also relevant because the story mattered to the readers of the newsletter. The story would not have been relevant to a local sports paper.

WHAT IS A STORY?

Topical

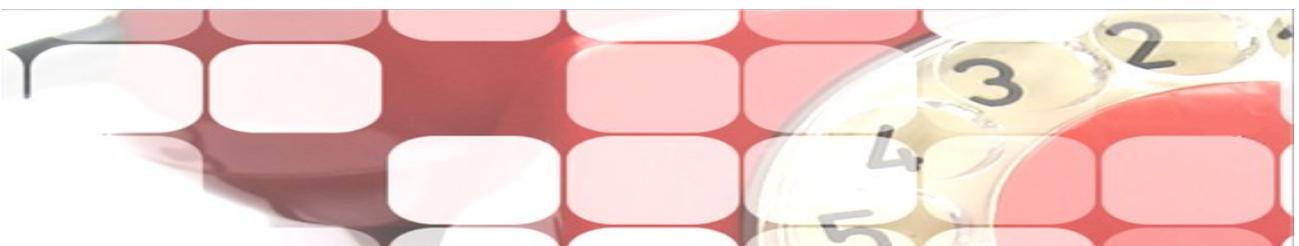
Relevant

Unusual

Trouble

Human interest

Newspapers like unusual stories. The young people who dressed up in early 20th century costume to help celebrate a





■ BACK TO THE PAST – dressed as Victorians are, from left, Matthew Hayes, eight, Thomas Sanders, nine, Michael Arthur, 10, Jake Channer, seven

ET picture by Alison Bagley: 231206-4-1

All dressed up to celebrate church's anniversary

THE daughter of one of the founding members of a church helped celebrate its 120th anniversary. Dozens of people dressed as Victorians to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, in Canon Street,

Kettering, on Saturday. The Seventh Adventist Church was established in America and the Kettering church, which was founded in 1886, was the third church of the denomination to be formed in the UK. Originally, there were 17 members

who met in rented halls in Kettering until the church was built in 1909. Church elder Tony Welsh said: "Around 60 people took part in the celebrations on Saturday, which included carol singing and re-enactments from history. "It was nice to have Joan Jessop in

the congregation. She is 93 and the daughter of one of the founding members, who donated land for the church." The church currently has 60 members who meet every Saturday for a Bible study group at 10am, followed by a service at 11am.

Trouble also makes the news. Doubtless you want to avoid reporting the Local Treasurer running off with the church funds, but if the portable baptistery collapsed during a baptism — a reporter would happily take note of the event. You might then gain capital by being able to explain why it is that Seventh-day Adventists use a baptistery to immerse candidates rather than a font to contain a small amount of water for a christening service.

Human interest stories are always of relevance. The December 2012 issue of Adventist World had a small feature about Jonathan Duffy's new job at the Development and Relief charity, ADRA.

The magazine saw the story. However it is unlikely that your local newspaper would see the relevance of the promotion to a British audience.



However the story that attracted the attention of the Nottingham Post's on December 11th was the Pensioner who had a stroke while boarding the bus.

True, not a heart-warming story, but the impact of the human interests story along with the notion of 'trouble' led to a well-featured story.

The follow-up in the comment pages gave the chance for a local communicator to highlight simple ways to avoid a stroke.

Victor Hulbert's acronym, TRUTH, works well in helping you to determine what a story is.

Thinking time

There are three steps to take in creating your story. Find and use your sources, ask the right questions and then finding a publisher.

Sources

That well known source of information, Wikipedia, a source to a journalist is, "a person, publication, or other record or document that gives timely information. Outside journalism, sources are sometimes known as "news sources". Examples of sources

Watch: Series of photos that show the shocking moment a pensioner has a stroke on a Nottingham bus



Nottingham Post Follow

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

By Dominic Howell

This shocking series of photos shows the moment 67-year-old Malcolm Spencer, of Top Valley, had a stroke on a city bus.

Today he reveals how he survived his stroke, thanks to the care at City Hospital.



Malcolm boarding the bus



include official records, publications or broadcasts, officials in government or business, organizations or corporations, witnesses of crime, accidents or other events, and people involved with or affected by a news event or issue.”

If you are attending a Conference you will be taking notes of the events based on what you hear. During the event you may choose to interview the speakers to determine what they consider to be the main points of the presentation. In order to determine the thoughts of attendees you might ask a simple question of a number of people. This, a Vox Pop, helps provide a spread of opinion.

You might pick up written details of the presentations, listen to a video made of the event or look up details about the presenters from websites.

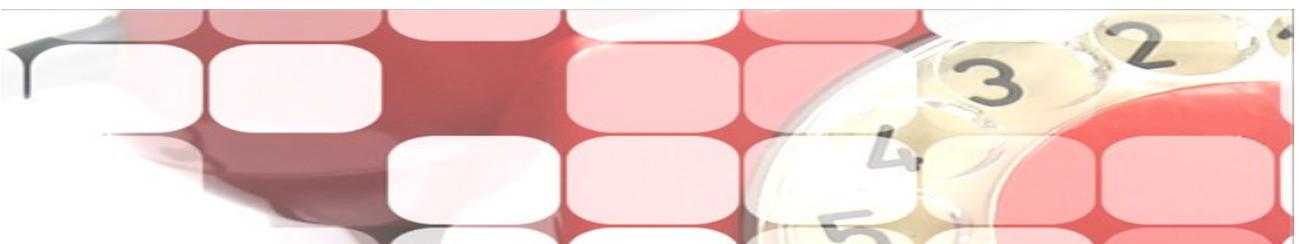
What kind of sources do you think you would be able to refer to if you were attending a Day of Fellowship—and were asked to write a report about the event?

A responsible journalist will use information from a number of sources in order to compile a good report of an event.

Interrogate your sources

There are six questions you need to become used to asking. They are known as the 6 news questions. Using these tools well and wisely make up the most basic skill in your journalistic armoury.

The following page outlines the questions you need to ask of your sources and provides an opportunity to work out how to work out how to use the questions in a real setting.



5 W's ... and how



*"I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who "*

Rudyard Kipling, The Elephant's Child

While you may choose not to overtly use the questions in your story you will need to be able to inform your audience who are asking you to tell you what happened, where did it happen and why did it happen.

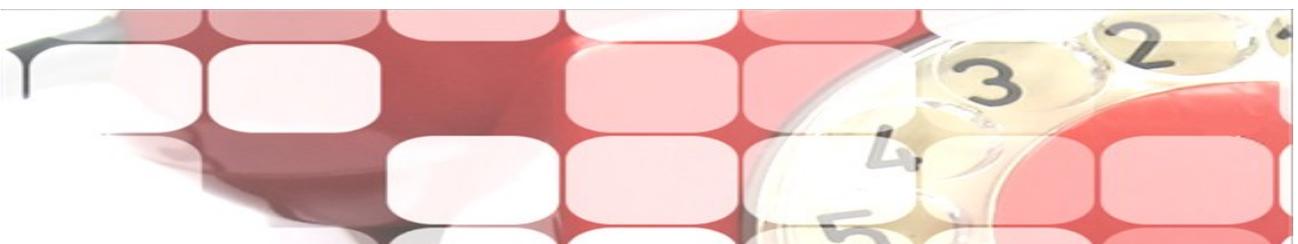
People want to make sense of their world. They need to use familiar methods to decide what is going on around them.



Watch the video <http://youtu.be/IMnrYquNVtE>

Decide the questions you would like to ask of Pastor Simpson so that you could write a story about a Natural Church Development Conference.

How would you phrase the questions?



The Inverted Pyramid

Imagine that you are the newspaper reporter who has spent some time on the big story of the week story.

You have taken notes accurately, examined a number of sources and used the basic news questions.

“The story's lead should convince the audience to read the entire story. Each paragraph in the story should build on information that preceded it and should also convince the reader to continue reading. Once the story has conveyed all of the information of relevance, it should end. This method of organizing a story is called the Inverted Pyramid.”

http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Adventist_Youth_Honors_Answer_Book/Vocational/Journalism

The 250 words you have created have been drafted and crafted carefully. The Editor takes a look at the space available and decides that there is only space for 200 words on the page.

You need to make sure that the best of your story reaches the public. You need the inverted pyramid. The reporter makes sure that the main part of the story is in the lead paragraph.

The best way to work out how to create a story in the inverted pyramid style is to read good examples of news reporting.

As most journalists undergo a common training scheme articles you will see in newspapers will follow the pyramid style of writing.

The next page shows an example of good writing using this style of writing.. Notice that the whole article could well be removed but that you have all of the real information in the first paragraph..



Boss to swap City life for Africa

One of the UK's most senior business men is to swap his City office for charity work in Africa when he retires in July.

Richard Harvey, chief executive of insurer Aviva, plans to spend a year living in Africa where he will work on behalf of international charities.

Mr Harvey said he had been inspired by his daughter who had spent a year helping with Aids education projects in Uganda.

The 56-year old, who earned £1.9m last year, has been chief executive of Aviva since 2001.

Aviva said Mr Harvey planned to travel to Africa with his wife, who as recently qualified to teach English as a foreign language.

Although he has yet to decide where he will go and what sort of work he will do, a spokeswoman said he was keen to "roll his sleeves up".

"He wants to have the gap year he never had," she said. "He is keen to apply his skills to practical, on-the-ground work."

Story from BBC NEWS:
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/business/6251241.stm>
@ BBC MMVII



Now for publication

Within the immediate Seventh-day Adventist world the main print medium is the Messenger. Details of how to contact the Editor can be found in the appendix at the end of this publication.

Please remember the immediacy of a topical and relevant story. Waiting a while—will probably mean that your article will not go to press.

Your main forum for Seventh-day Adventist news on the Internet is 'BUC news', published weekly on a Thursday. This has a very wide circulation and has an influence on many people.

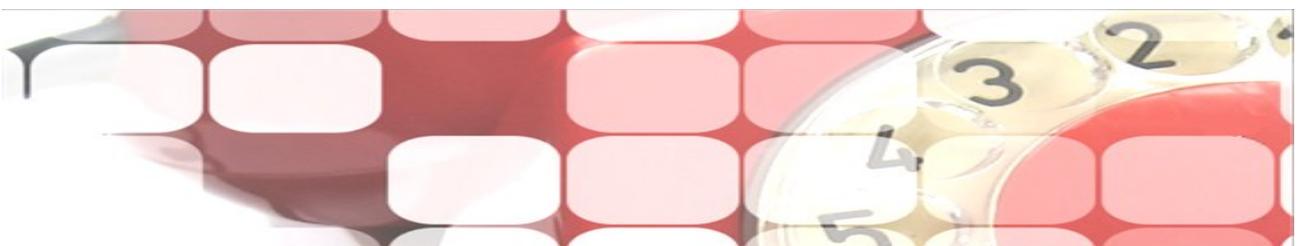
The more frequent publishing date means you really do need to provide copy to Pastor Hulbert as soon as possible. Wednesday morning is the day you are aiming for.

This also goes for the North England Conference Communicator. The circulation is smaller, but as they say, 'never mind the width, feel the quality'.

However we are trying to influence the world. Our aim is to give people the chance to make spiritual sense of the people and ideas they hear about.

That means you should be aiming to get your idea into the local paper, and that means getting to know a reporter.

This is the point at which you need to realise that the local reporter is desperate for news. He, or she, has a blank space on a page to fill. The Editor is pressing for copy. You may be the saviour of the day.



Take courage, take your good idea, review it, write it up, check the story through and then go to the local newspaper office.

GET TO KNOW A REPORTER

Read your local paper and note the name of a reporter whose work you like.

Ring up that reporter through the front desk at the newspaper and make an appointment to see him or her at their office.

Introduce yourself and hand over your business card featuring the official church logo – that also has all your current contact details. Try and develop a relationship.

When you have a story—you can then contact your reporter friend by name.

You can watch a video describing how to develop a relationship with a reporter—and maintain that relationship.

The video is called, 'It all started with an ADRA collection' and can be found on Youtube at http://youtubeBXzLh3uG4_I

Develop the Relationship

Once you have met your reporter treasure him or her. Judy Hamilton-Johansson from Middlesbrough uses the term 'bribery' to describe the way she has kept and nurtured her reporter.

Judy feeds her reporter with stories as often as she can. Not everything is published but because of the gentle encouragement she offers Judy knows that the work of her church will be taken note of.

The further advantage is that the reporter now rings her up for guidance on wider church issues. The result is that the populace of the Teesside area get to hear the wider perspective on the world that we can offer as Seventh-day Adventists.



Appendix 1

Books for you to read:

[A Manual for Positive Press Relations](#) by Pastor Mike Stickland

Out of print but someone may have a copy at your church

[The NCTJ Guide for Trainee Journalists](#) by Jon Smtih

Contacts you need to know:

The Messenger

Editor : Pastor Julian Hibbert

01476 539900

jhibbert@stanboroughpress.org.uk

BUC News

Editor : Pastor Victor Hulbert

01923 672 251

vhulbert@adventist.org.uk

North England Conference Communicator

Editor : Pastor Peter Jeynes

01159 606 312

07734 220 536

pjeynes@necadventist.org.uk



Appendix 2

To complete the Pathfinder Honour in Journalism you need to also learn the following

The following is taken from

http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Adventist_Youth_Honors_Answer_Book/Vocational/Journalism

Know the difference between passive and active verbs, and give three comparative examples.

In grammar, the voice (also called gender) of a verb describes the relationship between the action (or state) that the verb expresses and the participants identified by its arguments (subject, object, etc.). When the subject is the agent or actor of the verb, the verb is in the active voice. When the subject is the patient, target or under-goer of the action, it is said to be in the passive voice.

For example, in the sentence:

The cat ate the mouse.

the verb "ate" is in the active voice, but in the sentence:

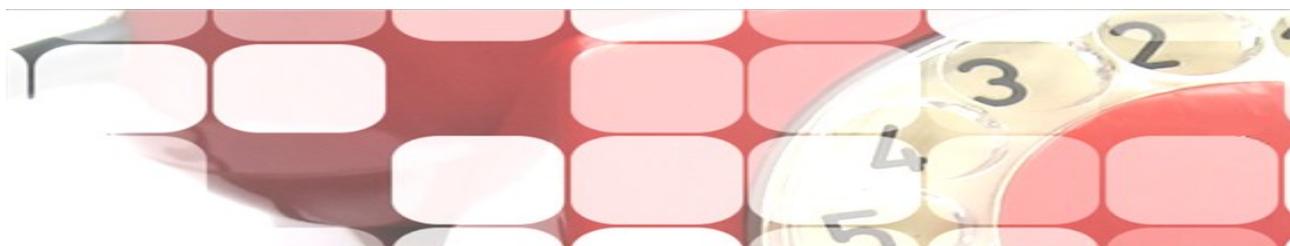
The mouse was eaten by the cat.

the verbal phrase "was eaten" is passive.

In each case identify the verb, then identify if it is doing the action. If the subject is doing the action then it is an active verb.

Active verbs are generally preferred to passive verbs.

If you are using Microsoft Word you can direct your computer to find your passive verbs. You can choose to change the passive verbs to active verbs for better journalistic style.



Appendix 2

One clue for determining if a sentence is active or passive is the presence of a 'to-be verb (*such as is, was, were, are, be*). If one is found, the sentence is likely to be passive.

To change a sentence from passive to active, figure out who or what is performing the action specified by the verb, and see if you can rearrange the sentence to make the "actor" the subject.

Examples

Passive Voice	Active Voice
The Journalism honour was earned by	Johnny earned the Journalism honour
Our campfire was built by the Companion class	The Companion class built our club's campfire
The Explorers were taught Knot Tying by the Guides	The Guides taught Knot Tying to the Explorers
Susan was rescued by the lifeguard	The lifeguard rescued Susan

Your Examples

Passive Voice	Active Voice



Appendix 3

ASSESSING YOUR COMPETENCE

The following exercises are designed to help you develop a little confidence and ability. They are taken from the Adventist Youth Honours book—and so successful completion will entitle you to the Journalism Honour.

EXERCISE 1

Submit a story to a Seventh-day Adventist publication. There should be at least three paragraphs in this story.

EXERCISE 2

Know how to write a cover letter to the editor for submitting your story or article and write a cover letter to the editor to include with your story or article.

EXERCISE 3

Write to a publisher, requesting story-writing guidelines. Story writing guidelines are available free from the following Seventh-day Adventist publishers:

Pacific Press Publishing Association

1350 North Kings Road

Nampa, ID 83687

<http://www.pacificpress.com/index.php?pgName=newsOLFPTsub>

Review and Herald Publishing Association

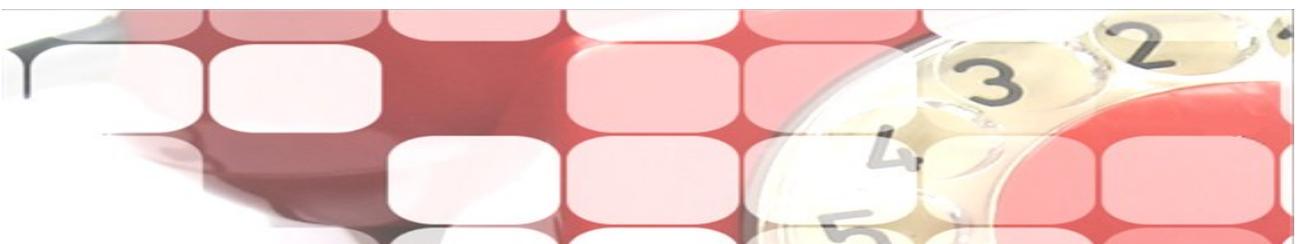
55 West Oak Ridge Drive

Hagerstown, MD 21740

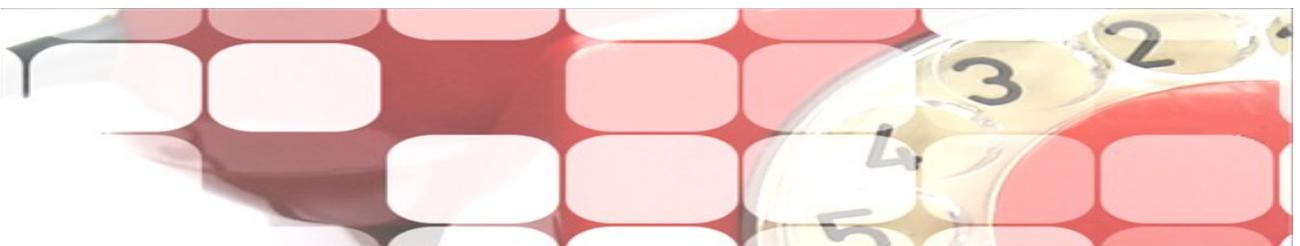
http://www.reviewandherald.org/index.php/general/writers_guidelines.rhpa

You will need to inform me that you have completed these exercises—the time limit is **December 30th, 2013 if you took this course in 2013**

Pastor Peter Jeynes - pjeynes@necadventist.org.uk



Notes



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