

BEAT Process₀₈

1. Get your topic, your interviewee and your possible questions approved by the news director.

Get all of this done NO LATER than the day of your first class period of the week. However, it must be **approved** by then. If your topic is not approved, or if your questions need revision, the final result must still be approved by this date. That is why you should **start this process at the beginning of the 2-week cycle**, so you have plenty of time to go through revisions.

2. Get your written work approved (revised as necessary) by the news director.

Again, while the approval must be completed no later than the second to last day your class meets in the week, you really need to start this part of the process early. If the news director has revisions then those revisions must be completed and approved on the second to last day your class meets. Again, if you wait until the last minute, and the news director does not respond back to you on time, then that is your responsibility. (Again, start early in the 2-week cycle to prevent last minute problems.)

3. Have the final, approved beat assignment in the proper places and ready to air by the deadline.

If the beat assignment is not in correct form and saved correctly, then you have earned a zero, and run the risk of being pulled off the air and given "alternative instruction." The same is true if you did not properly follow the procedures. In addition to the above steps, you must follow the procedures tips sheet for voicers and wrappers (It is posted on my web site). Each time, before finalizing everything, go back to the checklist to make sure you have done everything correctly.

AVOID THESE COMMON PROBLEMS:

- **production saved wrong:** You must make sure it is saved as a **Windows PCM (*.wav) file**.
- **wrong file name:** check the procedures checklist. It is clearly described and you must save the written and the production as the same file name. (The writing should all be in one file)
To reiterate: **Kill date--slug--your initials** (example: **4-11-07--Allison on beats--GA**)
- **saved in the wrong place:** To find the necessary folders, go to the news folder on the server and then click on the news with sound folder. Then, for the **writing**, save it all as one file in the "**copy**" folder. For the **production**, if you are doing an **actuality** story (the kind you see on half sheets of paper), then save the production (it would only be the **sound bite that you are using from your interviewee**) in the folder labeled: **actualities.....**If you are doing a **voicer (just your voice** in the production), then save it in the folder labeled: **voicers.....**If you are doing a **wrapper** (which is like a **voicer with an actuality in the middle** of it), then save it in the folder labeled: **wrappers**.
- **production not backed up:** You must back up all work in a similar folder set up in your own folder on the server AND in a similar folder set up on your USB drive. If we run into a problem, we consult your server folder to fix it. And if something happens on the server, we will ask you for your USB drive so we can retrieve your work. This backup procedure is MANDATORY.
- **Paperwork in the "IN" basket but production is nowhere to be found:** Your paperwork should NEVER go into the "IN" basket until every other step is completed. ALL SOUND MUST BE IN THE PROPER PLACE.
- **Not enough copies.....Not stapled....No Code on back of all pages:** AT HOME print two copies of all paperwork and put your code on the back of each page. If you are doing wrappers or voicers, then you should end up with TWO (STAPLED) 2-page packets with your code on the back of all four pieces of paper.
- **Wrong Heading:** Do the heading based on the procedures tips sheet. Avoid copying and pasting old ones because it is easy to forget to change the info that needs to be changed, and at a minimum you would need to change the slug, the time and the kill date. Be careful to look at the procedures checklist to make sure you understand which times go where.....A heading must be on each page of your paperwork.
- **No Source listed under the slug of the headings on each page:** Where did you get your info? (If it is multiple sources, like a newspaper and an interview, then put both down. The source should be listed under the heading **under the slug on all pages of all paperwork**. (You also should be listing sources for each story in newscasts and flashes.)
- **Poor sound:** Our whole product is sound. If you have an actuality that is poor quality, you cannot use it. (Also, an actuality should be something more than just facts. It should be something the reporter can't say or that the reporter could not say as well or as colorfully....Don't just get a quick sound bite just to get sound. Make it count.) If you don't give a great, reporter's read on a voicer or wrapper, then we have no use for playing it. Sound should be a top concern.
Reasonable time ranges: **actualities:** 10 to 20 seconds; **voicers:** 15 to 30 seconds; **wrappers:** 20 to 40 seconds;
- **Factual Errors:** Since correctness is our top rule in news, this should never be a problem. Do not write something unless you are 100 percent sure it is correct. Only use facts. Verify facts with credible sources.
- **Top 10 News Tips errors:** By now you should know these inside and out....but review before and after you write.
- **NON-local topics or angles:** We are a local station. It is your job to find your OWN LOCAL NEWSWORTHY TOPICS. On occasions when you are adapting a state or national topic, you talk to a local person to find a local angle for your story. Remember, our main reason for existing: Local, Local, Local....in news, in sports, in everything.
- **Wrong Kill Date:** The kill date is ONE SCHOOL WEEK AFTER THE DUE DATE (Unless your teacher or news director give you permission for a different kill date.)

To avoid all of these problems....To avoid pressure: **Use your two week cycle.** Once your deadline passes, that day is the beginning of your new cycle. If you already have a topic by that time, then it is easy to get approval, go through revisions, get your work checked, check it yourself using the procedures checklist, and achieve perfection each time. There is a system of checks and balances to make sure you never mess up and to make sure that you don't miss a detail and to make sure you don't have any stress. **USE THE SYSTEM !!!**