

Introduction, broadcast steps and terminology

Career Paths

There's not a straight forward career path in the media. Change is constant, be it:

- Technology
- Audience
- Budget
- Programming

so

- Enjoy the work you're currently doing
- Maximize the opportunities in the job you're in
- Specialize, but always keep an eye on the future

and act professionally to all of your colleagues and classmates, you never know when they will become your boss!

Radio

- With radio we are restricted to just one sense – listening.
 - Listening is done in real time, so a listener may only get one chance to comprehend something (content and sound textures) .. clarity of ideas are important
 - Listening is done as a one-to-one communication .. even though your broadcasting to many
- The sound is the only reason why we are here. Good quality audio is not an accident and it's not an "add on".. It is the only way you are communicating with your audience.
- Good audio is about planning and execution.. the microphone is like a camera, or torch.. you're framing the story by what you capture.

Broadcast Steps

1. Prepare
know your location and equipment; and what you want to capture
2. Capture
3. Manipulate
post production edit / mix
4. Broadcast
5. Re-purpose
recut material for other platforms (web delivery or use by other broadcasters)
6. Archive
who knows when this will be defining moment for you or the interviewee, or the country or the world. Think about collecting your audio as a personal archive or making sure it goes into the company archive.

Tips

- Don't assume anything – always ask if you don't know, double-check, AND say if you don't understand something.
- Don't leave things to the last minute – know your equipment, know how you're going to get to a location and who you are going to meet.
- Have a plan B. What if the microphone doesn't work, or the batteries fail, or it's raining, or the phone number doesn't work, or the computer dies.

Know Your Audience

- Know your audience – are you speaking to an informed/niche or general audience?
- Where are they generally listening? (at work? in the car? in a quiet room?)

Knowing who your audience and where they listen will inform:

- Interview style (informants and content)
- Scripts
- Recording and production techniques

A scripting example: The RNZ *Country Life* programme deals with rural issues. There's an expectation in their scripts that their listeners know farming terminology, for example words like "pugging"

Terminology

- Generally you will not be working in isolation. You will be sharing resources and content with others - and so communication is key.
- Where possible use standard industry terminology, especially when you're referring to equipment or technical issues. For example: omni microphone, peak distortion, tracks, stereo, mono, sample rate, db (all of which will be covered later)
- File management is very important. Instantly knowing if an audio file should or should not be broadcast in a pressured situation can be helped by using consistent terminology.

For example:

- RAW (original file)
- FINAL or BNCE (edited and mixed, ready for air)
- PKG (package)
- TRAIL (a little teaser clip to highlight story)
- VCR (voicer)
- CUT (audio cut or grab)

So we could use something like:

journalist initials_slug_date_audio type.wav

gw_apples_12feb2011_VCR.wav

Scripts

Remember when you're working with other people (sound engineers, voice talent, producers etc) make sure you include BED information in your script for each audio cut:

- Beginning (e.g.: "Today in Wellington...")
- End (e.g. "...John Smith reporting")
- Duration (e.g. 4:04)

Words and Phrases

Some words and phrases you may encounter:

In live situations:

- You're live (you're on broadcasting)
- Top of the hour (start of the hour)
- Bottom of the hour (half-past the hour)
- 10 second cue (warning given presenter when audio is ending)
- Early out (an early ending identified in a piece of audio)

In production:

- Production (you're pre-recording, not live)
- Level check (presenter does a test read to make sure the microphone is working and levels are set correctly)
- Drop in (presenter here's audio in their headphones and then starts reading, drop into-record – like Punch in with music recording)
- Pick up (when presenter makes a mistake, they pause and pickup reading again – often going back a sentence so you can edit it together)
- Ripping (import audio from a CD)
- Bounce (mix down an audio recording to a new file)

Audio:

- Raw (unedited, original recording)
- Peak distortion (when there's too much level going into the recorder)
- Drop out (sudden cut to silence for some technical reason)
- Ready for air (edited, good broadcast level, labelled)

Editing:

- Pre-roll (hear audio before a certain point, usually only a few seconds)
- Post-roll (hear audio after a certain point, usually only a few seconds)

What are some words that could describe sound?

- Full
- Thin
- Dynamic
- Quiet
- Loud
- Distorted
- Squashed
- Weedy
- Harsh
- Soft
- Brittle
- Tanky
- Reverberant
- Echoy
- Crisp
- Muffled
- Dull, Bright