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English lectures

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News values

❖ **Definition**

News values, sometimes called news criteria, determine how much prominence a news story is given by a media outlet, and the attention it is given by the audience...."News values are not universal and can vary widely between different cultures.

In Western practice, decisions on the selection and prioritization of news are made by editors on the basis of their experience.

News values is determined by a set of simple factors , News values function as *guidelines for decision-making* at every step of the news process. News values are one of the most important *practice-based and ideological* factors in understanding the focus and shape of news stories and the decisions of journalists.

❖ **News values influence how a story is written**

News stories tend to be written so that they demonstrate these news values, for example by highlighting the unexpected aspects of research news in the headline or in the first paragraph: the other news values can also be established through skillful writing. Satisfying more than one news value can increase the newsworthiness of a story

In addition:

- Think carefully about the timeline of your press release (Timeliness) and the country of publication (Proximity).
- Understand the news organisation, and their audience.

❖ **Types of news values**

- **Impact**

How will this affect my readers' lives? This is the real guts of the story. The impact of the story quickly establishes the importance of the piece to the reader.

- **Timeliness**

The news value of timeliness answers the question: Is this topic relevant now? The most obvious example of timeliness is "breaking news

Recent events have higher news value than earlier happenings. Of particular value are stories brought to the public ahead of the competition. These are known as scoops

- **Prominence**

Prominence in journalism refers to a story that involves a well-known person, place, or event. The perspective that news media have is that prominence makes the news account more important to the audience and results in more readers or viewers

- **Proximity**

Does this story matter to my audience?

Stories about events and situations in one's home community are more newsworthy than events that take place far away. For example, journalists assess the value of a news item reporting tragic deaths by comparing the number of deaths with the distance from the home community.

- **The Bizarreness**

Is there anything unexpected about this story?

This news value is best expressed through a great journalistic aphorism that I'm sure to mangle, but let's give it a shot: 'When a dog bites a man, that's not an interesting story. It happens all the time. But if a man bites a dog, then that's news.

- **Conflict**

Strife or power struggles between individuals or ethnic groups or organizations contain a conflict value and often grab the attention of audiences.

Stories often involve some kind of conflict. By definition, these stories are almost always controversial to some degree.

War. Public anger or bitter disagreement over fundamental issues.

- **Human Interest**

While many of the above news values are interwoven, human interest stories often stand apart. These stories speak to our shared experience, emphasizing uniquely human elements such as personal growth or an unexpected act of kindness.

Exercise: Judging the News Value of a Story

You are the editor. Decide which story in each pair has greater news value and explain your reasons.

A. The head of the fire department is fired.

B. A new fire department chief is hired.

A. Four couples are married at Old Town Hall.

B. Couple is married in hot air balloon over the city.

A. Tram kills woman hurrying home for Christmas Eve dinner.

B. Tram kills woman hurrying to the dentist.

A. U. S. actress Sigourney Weaver arrives to film movie in your country.

B. Former head of the U.S. State Dept. Madeline Albright arrives to give speech in your country.

A. Five cases of mushroom poisoning are reported near the capitol, no deaths.

B. Four die from mushroom poisoning in your neighboring country.