MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

Session 3 "Basic Journalistic Writing" (3 hours)

PURPOSE

- In this session, the students explore the basics of professional journalism and practice journalistic writing.

KEYWORDS

- News, Information, News Values, Pyramid Structure of News, 5Ws & 1H, Title and Sub-Title, Writing Lead, Editorial Process and Code of Ethics in Journalism

RESOURCES

- MIL Guidebook
  - DW Akademie MIL Guidebook p. 35 – 65. Especially: 35 – 39; 59; 129 (https://www.dw.com/downloads/56736330/dwa-mil-guidebook-en-3rdedition.pdf)

TRAINING METHODS

- Topic Game, Guided Discussion, Guided Input, Group Work, Think – Pair – Share: Individual Work, Pair Work

POSSIBLE "TRAINING OF TRAINERS" ELEMENTS:

- A STUDENT CONDUCTS TOPIC GAME

HOW TO CONNECT TO PREVIOUS MEETUPS "VLOG" AND "ONLINE HARASSMENT AND FILTER BUBBLES"

- In addition to expressing opinions and engaging their audience through *video* productions, students can also share facts or express their opinions and engage with others through pieces of *writing*. It is important to understand the journalistic standards of writing (clear, easy to understand, complete, ethical, fair, balanced, transparent…).
- It contrasts to online harassment, cyber-bullying and hate speech, a high-quality journalistic post is always neutral, based on facts and meant to *inform* and not manipulate people.

LEARNING OUTCOMES – THE HEAD (KNOWLEDGE)

- Students *identify* basic characteristics of professional journalism (e.g., clear, easy to understand, complete, ethical, fair, balanced, transparent…)
- Students *recognize* quality journalism and shortcomings in journalistic writing that is sub-standard.

LEARNING OUTCOMES – THE HAND (SKILLS)

- Students *practice* writing a simple news article based on basic journalistic principles.
- Students *structure* information logically and write clearly.

LEARNING OUTCOMES – THE HEART (ATTITUDE)

- Students *recognize* and *value* the qualities of professional journalism in contrast to citizen journalism (e.g., social media).

- Students *acknowledge* the significant value professional journalism can have for society.

INTRODUCTION (10 MIN)

Introduction: Topic game "Fact or opinion in journalism"

Activity	● Play topic game "Fact or opinion in journalism"	10 "
Objective	● Students understand differences between fact and opinion in professional journalism	
Steps	● Welcome students to the session 3 "Basic Journalistic Writing" ● Explain to the students what the topic game is about and how to play ● Trainers prepare some statements of facts and some opinion statements in advance (e.g., on PowerPoint slides) ● Trainers ask students to identify which statement is a fact and which statement is an opinion by holding up colored cards to answer. For example, green cards stand for "fact", while yellow cards stand for "opinion" ● Trainers start playing from easily identifiable statements to more difficult ones ● After the game is over, trainers do a short reflection on the game by asking students what they have noticed, experienced, or learned from the game. Trainers link these reflections to the session of "Basic Journalistic Writing"	
Material	● Flipchart for game instructions ● Color cards/markers ● PowerPoint/ computer/ LCD projector	

	● Statements that can be categorized as "fact" or "opinion"
Notes	● Visualize instructions on a flipchart ● Carefully explain how to play the game to the students ● Before starting to play, give students an opportunity to ask clarifying questions if they do not fully understand the instructions or how to play the game ● Reflect on the game afterwards with the students and link the topic game to the following session
Possible ToT element	● Let a volunteering student conduct this topic game. The volunteer will need instructions how to conduct the game before the session begins Make sure the volunteer has understood the objective of the game, how to play it and how to reflect on it and connect it to the following session After this ToT-element, the volunteers should get feedback from the group and from the MIL Club trainers on what they did well and how they could improve as trainers

![DW Akademie]

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

BODY PART 1 (MIXTURE OF TRAINER AND TRAINEE CENTERED) (75 MIN)

Trainer Centered: Guided discussion: News, Information, and news values

Activity	● Guided discussion	**20"**
Objective	● Students reflect, discuss, and identify the differences between news and information ● Students recognize the concept of news values in professional journalism	

Steps	● Confront students with this statement of a fact: "Today, <name of co-trainer, e.g., Vibol> woke up at three a.m." and ask them if this information is news or will appear on the front page of a national newspaper. As they list the reasons why not, they will automatically come up with some "news values" professional journalists apply when determining whether information is news-worthy:
	
	     o Relevance (for a larger audience)
	     o Timeliness
	     o Impact
	     o Consequence
	     o Novelty / Out of the ordinary
	     o Prominence (Involving important people)
	     o Proximity
	     o Conflict
	     o Human interest	

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

	• Add missing news values if the students cannot think of them • Explain how professional journalists use these factors as criteria to decide whether information is news or not, and to evaluate how big the news is • Trainers can prepare a few examples from actual professional journalistic pieces for a clearer explanation
Material	• Flipchart for difference between news and information • Cards or flipchart for the news values
Notes	• Visualize on a flipchart

Trainee-centered: Identifying News Values

Activity	2 – 4 – all	20"
Objective	• Students identify news values in news items	
Steps	• Ask the students to get together in pairs • Give each pair one news item. Make sure that you distribute both news items evenly • Each pair should identify the news values of their news item and write them down as key words (time: 5 minutes) • After 5 minutes, ask students to find another pair that had the same news item. The two pairs should compare their results: did they	

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

	identify the same news values? If there are differences: ask them to discuss their findings (5 minutes) • After 5 minutes, ask everyone to get together and share their findings for news item 1 and for news item 2. Add and correct information if necessary (10 minutes)
Material	Cards, markers, 2 short news items from media websites (printed or photocopied for the student pairs)
Preparation	• Select two news items from a news website or newspaper (short news items, max 10 lines) and make photocopies or printouts. Half of the students will get news item 1, the others will get news item 2

Trainer-centered: Guided Input: Structure of news items - characteristics of a lead sentence

Activity	● Guided input	**15 "**
Objective	● Trainees identify the characteristics of a lead or lead sentence	
Steps	● Ask students if anyone can explain with the "5 W's and 1 H" are ● Point out that the answers to the 5 W's and 1 H make a news item complete. They contain what's new, what's most important, the essence of the news ● Ask the trainees where the audience finds this information in a news item or news article	

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

	- Explain that journalists usually cover the core of a news item right at the start, to gain the audience's attention. This is the so-called "lead" or "lead sentence". It tells the audience in one or two sentences what is new and important. It answers a few of the 5 W's and 1 H, but not all - It depends on the story / topic, which of the 5 W's and 1 H are most important: sometimes it is *who* did something, sometimes it is *when* something happened, or *where* - Journalists never pack all 5 W's and 1 H into one long sentence because that would sound unnatural and be hard to read - Trainers use power point slides or cards / flipcharts to discuss the characteristics of a lead - Contains the essence of the information / what's new - Short sentences - Simple words - Active verbs (not passive) - Is factual, precise, unbiased - Contains no unknown words, names or acronyms so it's easy to understand
Material	Flipchart or cards to visualize characteristics of a news lead
Notes	Visualize key points on a flipchart

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

Trainee-centered: Writing a lead sentence

Activity	Individual work	25'
Objective	• Students write a lead sentence according to the characteristics outlined in the previous segment	
Step	• Ask your students to imagine it's the first day of this batch of the Advanced Media 101 Club. They are reporters for a PUC website that reaches all students, and their task is to write a news item informing all students about the event and what makes it special • In the first part of this exercise, they will just write the lead or lead sentence, not the whole story. That will come in part two of the exercise The "lead" should not be more than three short sentences Time: 10 minutes Remind students that their readers may not know what the Media 101 Club is, or what MIL is • After 10 minutes, ask volunteers to present their lead. Ask for feedback • Add information or make corrections where necessary • Go through 3 – 4 versions of the lead After 15 minutes, move on to the next training segment	

Material	Pens and paper or computers

------------ **BREAK (15 MIN)** -------------

INTRODUCTION (10 MIN)

Trainee-centered: Topic game: Report on information

Activity	● Play game "Report on information"	10 "
Objective	● Students apply the concept of the 5 W's and 1 H in a playful, creative way	
Steps	● Have all students form a circle and ask them to invent and report on a piece of information ● Remind them that information should contain the answers to the questions who, what, when, where, why and how ● The trainers may write these questions on cards and place them in the middle of the circle ● The first person in the circle decides on the topic (sports, politics, economy, health, entertainment, weather) ● The next person starts inventing and "reporting" the story by contributing the answer to one of the 5 W and 1 H questions (e.g., who the story is about) ● The next person continues the report where their neighbor left off and so on, until the report is complete	

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

	Example: ○ Person 1 decides on the topic *Entertainment* ○ Person 2 answers who: *Britney Spears* ○ Person 2 adds what: *Britney Spears made a video* ○ Person 3 adds when: *Britney Spears made a video last week* ○ Person 5 adds where: *Britney Spears made a video in Phnom Penh last week* ○ Person 6 adds how: *Britney Spears made a video in Phnom Penh last week singing in Khmer* ○ Person 7 adds why: *Britney Spears made a video in Phnom Penh last week singing in Khmer because she loves her fans in Cambodia* ● Reflect on the questions and have the group try again with a different topic. Encourage them to be creative and make the example funny and unusual or ask them to come up with a realistic news story
Material	● Flipchart for game instructions ● Cards with Who, What, Where, When, Why and How
Notes	● Visualize instructions on a flipchart ● Before starting to play, give students an opportunity to ask clarifying questions if they do not fully understand the instructions or how to play the game

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

Possible ToT - Element	● Let a volunteering student conduct this topic game. The volunteer will need instructions on how to conduct the game before the session begins. Make sure the volunteer has understood the objective of the game, how to play it and how to reflect on it After this ToT-element, the volunteer should get feedback from the group and from the MIL Club trainers on what they did well and how they could improve as trainers

BODY PART 2 (MIXTURE OF TRAINER AND TRAINEE CENTERED) (50 MIN)

Trainer-centered: Guided Input: Structure of a news item

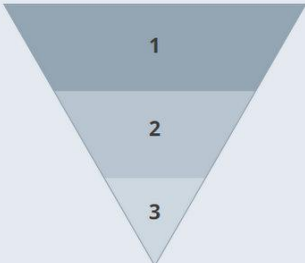| Activity	● Guided input	15 "
Objective	● Students identify and acknowledge the inverted pyramid structure of a news item or news article	
Steps	● Connect to the previous activity by pointing out that the lead is only the first part of a news item or news article. Ask the students what else there is ● The next sentences in a news item support the lead: they explain, give more detail, reactions, quotes, or background ● Ask the students how this information should be structured to make it easy to understand for a reader or listener ● Ask if anyone has heard of the concept of the inverted pyramid for news writing. If someone has, ask them if they could try to explain it	

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

	- Trainers add and correct the information if necessary - Trainers may use power point slides or a flip chart to fully explain the concept of the inverted pyramid in news writing The inverted pyramid is a popular model for news writing 1. Most important or interesting information: the lead should answer the questions **who**, **what**, **when**, **where**, **why**, and **how**. 2. Details or additional information that explains the lead. Sometimes **why** and **how** are answered here, instead of in the lead. 3. Supporting information: context and background. - Trainers remind students that news items and news articles should be structured so the audience can follow easily: - Logical order of facts - Short sentences - Simple words - Active verbs (not passive)
Material	Flipchart, cards, or Power Point slides to illustrate the concept of the inverted pyramid
Notes	Visualize key points on a flip chart

DW Akademie

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

Active media work: **Writing a news item**

Activity	• Pair work	35"
Objective	• Students structure information logically according to the pyramid model and write clearly	
Step	• Ask students to get together in pairs. Each pair should compare their versions for the lead and agree on one that fits the quality criteria for a lead sentence discussed earlier in the session • Then, the pairs add the missing information in a logical way following the pyramid structure: details, possibly quotes from students, trainers, alumni, PUC officials…, background information • The finished news item should contain all information that is relevant to your target audience. Max. 5 – 6 sentences. If you read your news item of out loud (imagine you are a TV or radio newscaster), it should not take longer than 30 seconds • Time: 20 minutes • After 20 minutes ask students to upload their finished news items to the Facebook group • Ask for volunteers and discuss their news items or pick some examples that you would like to discuss in class. Ask the students to give feedback; add and correct information where necessary • Feedback time: 15 minutes	
Material	Flipchart, Projector, Internet, Facebook group	

![DW Akademie]

Supported by the

Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

MEDIA AND
INFORMATION
LITERACY

CONCLUSION (15")

Conclusion: The role and responsibilities of an editor

Activity	● Brainstorming / concluding discussion about the responsibilities of professional journalists and editors	**15"**
Objective	● Students understand the role of an editor as part of the process of publishing news in professional media	
Steps	● Explain that careful editing is another quality criteria of professional journalism (in contrast to social media, where anyone can publish anything without editorial control) ● Ask students to brainstorm what they think the tasks of an editor in a professional media outlet are **Possible answers:** ○ Check all facts for accuracy ○ Check whether the story is complete (are the 5 W's and 1 H covered?) ○ Check and verify sources ○ Check text for transparency (are all sources identified?) ○ Work on language and choice of words (are the words easy to understand, neutral words that aren't politically "loaded" or emotionally charged…) Ensure the balance of the news article (are all relevant points of view represented?) **An editor will ask these questions:** ○ Is the topic and choice of interviewees relevant?	

	o Is the flow of ideas logical, easy to read and understand? o Is the writing fair? o Is there a clear distinction between facts or opinions? o Does the article contain incitement? Does it contain overly emotional expressions? If so, rewrite! o Etc. ● Trainers add or correct information that's missing or misleading ● To wrap up, ask students to give a thumbs-up or thumbs-down to indicate whether today's session has made some key concepts of professional journalism clearer
Material	● Flipchart for key responsibilities of an editor ● Cards/ markers
Notes	● Engage students in recapping and reflecting the key points of the session