

Transcript – Developing content for radio and podcast

So, you've written an amazing introduction to your story, you've fleshed out the conflict and the resolution, and you've even come up with a mind-blowing plot twist. Now it's time to tell this story for radio. Just like standing on the stage in a theatre and acting out a character, telling a story on radio and for podcast is a performance. This video will give you a bit of guidance on how to tell your story for a medium like radio and also to get ready for getting behind the mic.

When we're telling a story for radio our listeners are relying solely on our voice for information and so it's really important to tell that story in a really natural and conversational way. Radio is a very intimate medium and so we want listeners to feel like they're there with us in the room as we're telling the story to them.

So, once you've worked out the story beats – the start and the finish – throw that piece of paper away, memorise it, and start telling your story aloud by yourself in your room, record it, and listen back to your recitation of that story. This will help you to focus more on the delivery and the performance of this information, rather than focussing on, "Oh, this is the bit I have to get right", or, "this is where the story is going next". If you start to memorise it, practicing it over and over again, you'll eventually know it off by heart and you'll be able to focus on the next elements that we need to consider.

These elements that you need to think about are tone and volume. So, tone of voice – if you come to a really joyful moment in the story, smile warmly, as you're recounting that story because we can hear smiles when people are speaking. Perhaps there's a part in the story where it's midnight and you're sneaking around and you're about to hog into the family block of chocolate without any of your family knowing? Then you know, speak in a low whisper, and speak slowly, as you're creeping towards the kitchen. So playing around with your voice and using it to your advantage to help drive the story forward is really important.

A really effective way of capturing that sense of warmth and intimacy, and creating a sense of natural conversation is by visualising a friend or a family member. Think of them sitting in front of you as you're telling your story and that just helps to create this sense of comfort, helps you to feel more relaxed, but also creates that sense of drama like you're really telling the story to someone in front of you. The benefit of this, is this will translate into your voice, so that person who is listening to this story through the radio or perhaps listening to this story through their favourite podcast app feels like you're telling this story to them.

Along with your vocal tone and volume, think about your pacing. It can be really, really, really tempting, as you're telling your story to race ahead because perhaps, you're thinking about, "I need to hit this mark – I need to get to this next story beat", "I'm thinking about what's coming up ahead and I really don't want to forget it for the people who are in this room with me". Try and resist that, try and be present in the moment and sit with that story because after all the people who are listening to the story? They've never heard it before. So sit with it, enjoy it. Emphasise, pace yourself, and pause where you need to for emphasis



because of course listeners, like I said they've never heard this story before so the more you pause, the greater chance they have to take in this information and enjoy it.

A really good activity to do while you're practicing telling your story out loud is to again record yourself, but then actually each time you do a read of your story, speak with a different volume, change up the pace, change up the tone, emphasise different words. And what this will do is it will just challenge that feeling of rehearsal. Mix it up a little bit and you'll actually become more playful and lively. And this means, once you come to the live performance, you'll feel really comfortable and you'll know what emphasis works with what story beats. So, mix it up, record yourself and also don't be afraid to listen back to yourself in the recording.

Once of the other really important reasons for taking your time and pausing when you're telling the story is because people who are listening to this story through the radio – they can't pause the radio. Podcast listeners can – they can pause, and perhaps skip back a few seconds to capture maybe a word that you mumbled over or you said really quickly – but that breaks the tension of the story. So, take your time. Sometimes when we're rehearsing something or we're performing, again there's that sense of urgency, 'we need to rush'. But try and take a step back and tell the story as slowly as possible when you're rehearsing. Even this can feel really not intuitive at all, slowing down, listening back to yourself, you'll actually find that you're speaking at a really nice pace. Even the pace I'm speaking at now, I feel like I'm drawing out my words, I'm taking really long pauses, but after all, you want the person who is listening through their radio or podcast app to enjoy the moment and not feel rushed as they listen to the story.

And it's also really important to enjoy the moment. Nerves can get the better of us at the best of times and especially when we're performing for a large group of people and we know that a recording is going to be played on the radio to lots of people that we don't know. But enjoy the moment, take your time, breathe and if you make a mistake just keep going because most of the time, people won't even know that you've made the mistake.

And finally, this is about sharing interesting, diverse, powerful and bold voices and stories of our community. It's also a safe and inclusive platform to share these ideas, ask these questions and also challenge the status quo. So, when you're workshopping this story and you're about to pitch it, think about your audience, who's going to be listening to this story. Is it just your family or is it a wider community.? And, also make sure that the story you're telling is your own and it's from your own experience, because after all, we've only walked in our own shoes. So, enjoy crafting, have fun and we look forward to hearing your story.

Thanks for watching and if you need any further information head to the Adelaide City Libraries website.

