

## Radio: An Illustrated Guide – Notes

Radio “stories” are character driven. They need a character audiences can identify with. Stories are “sequences of action.”

Basic Structure-1 (Narrative):

- Conflict – The story needs a conflict – an exigence (that brings out different positions and attitudes).
- Change – And the character has to learn something new, surprising, or unexpected in response to this conflict.
- Resolution – A story, even if banal, must have meaning, significance or “moral to the story.”

Radio = Didactic – educational, informational, meant to teach, explain. Don’t let audience infer meanings or main ideas, hit them directly.

Basic Structure-2 (Rhetorical):

- Anecdote – intro, situation, frame, encapsulated version of the story.
- Sequence of Actions – details, examples, specific supports.
- Moment of Reflection – claims, conclusion, generalization.

## Interviewing

Build a plan for the interview:

- Hit 2-3 main issues or ideas that you need to find out about.
- Build 3 primary questions that situate these ideas in the basic overall structure.
- Have ideas about the details you need so you can generate follow-ups on the fly.

Basic structure is similar:

- Narrative – get sequences of events and details.
- Reflection – ask them to reflect on those actions, to get the general principle.

Interview Tips:

- Opening pitch—it will be 30 min, cut down to 3-5 min, and will be about . . .
- Don’t be nervous, they pick up on your mood
- Tell them not to be worried about interrupting you
- Tell them a personal story to put them at ease to give you theirs (if necessary)
- Get the interviewee to lay out the anecdotes in detail (follow up, prompt). Prompt them to: tell events, in order, with vivid detail, even dialog (You are staging drama as you get facts).

- Goal: to understand and document their POV (or multiple POVs)
- Reflection: ask them to reflect on their anecdotes. Try out your hypotheses on them.
- Critique: anticipate critiques people might have to their reflections in order to elicit their rebuttals (gives them a chance to respond).

#### Recording Tips:

- Read or talk slowly with natural breaths after sentences or key phrases to create spaces that will make it easier to cut-edit-move later.
- Record 30 seconds of ambient room sound before you record your voice. Loop this is the background of your podcast because it helps smooth out the cuts that you make.
- Record in a room with little background noise and little echo—a carpeted living room or hotel room for example.