

## TYPES OF RADIO CONTENT

Pre-recorded content makes your radio show more interesting. By breaking up the interviews with 2-3 minute pre-recorded segments you will keep your listeners attention.

Breaking to play a short segment is also a way to stop an interview that is going in the wrong direction and gives you time to speak to your guest and explain what you need.

You only need 1-2 pre-recorded segments for each show and they should never be longer than five minutes each.

Pre-recorded material can become very time-consuming to produce if you are not careful. The golden rules are to keep your recording focused, short and of good sound quality and your editing will be easy. Long recordings of lots of people speaking, where you're not sure what you want and with background noise or poor sound quality can take hours or even days to edit into something useable.

The types of pre-recorded content that could be used are:

1. **Weekly radio drama** where the same characters encounter different scenarios with the aim of educating the audience through a fun, entertaining story. The key is to keep the drama entertaining and not let it just become a teaching session.
2. **Interviews** with people unable to attend the show. These should be kept to 3-5 questions and be edited well
3. **News report** from an event or activity. This is where you record what is happening at an event and add in interviews or vox pops. This kind of package can easily become very long so it is important to keep the recording focused to what you want. This is also the hardest to edit together.
4. **Vox pops**, where journalists go out into the street to ask members of the public for their views on matters of current public concern. A random selection of members of the public are asked for their opinions on a given topic, and the best ones are recorded and edited and used on the radio. There would typically be only one or two questions.
5. **Songs**, for example the cholera theme song. Songs are a good change to talk and can recapture listeners interest.

## **VOX POPS**

Vox pops are a way of including the views, opinions and needs of ordinary people in your radio show. They can be used to ask public opinion, test their knowledge, forecast the future, stimulate public debate and even encourage more people to listen to the radio show.

However you have to plan a vox pop in advance and make sure what you publish is still relevant and interesting. For example there is no point publishing a vox pop on preparations for the rainy season in August.

### **Step 1 – planning your questions**

1. Never ask "yes" or "no" questions. Ask open-ended questions, especially ones beginning with "How", "Why" or "What"
2. Keep questions simple and straight forward
3. Be clear on what you want to find out and plan your questions to get this information
4. Only ask each person 1 or 2 questions each
5. Try and ask a mix of people eg men & women, young & old, rich & poor
6. Don't ask leading questions that push people to answer in a certain way. For example: 'do you think young people in Sierra Leone are lazy and don't work?' might lead to a yes, whereas 'Do you think young people have enough opportunities for education and employment in Sierra Leone?' will likely encourage a no. Instead be neutral and ask 'what are the challenges facing young people in Sierra Leone?'

### **Step 2 – carrying out your vox pop**

1. Check your equipment is working before you go out
2. Pick a busy area with plenty of people to interview, but keep away from loud background noise
3. Aim to interview around 6 people – although always do a few more interviews than you think you will need so you have some in reserve
4. Always introduce yourself and explain where you are from and what the interview is for
5. Don't promise to use a person's interview but do tell them when the show will be on and encourage them to listen
6. Try to relax your interviewee and be aware they might be nervous of the microphone so don't push it in their face
7. Avoid interrupting their answers unless it seems that they might go on talking for too long

### **Step 3 - Editing your vox pop**

1. The quotes must be strong, easy to understand and in good taste, with no swear words or other bad language.
2. You must listen through the whole of your tape again when you return to the editing suite, making a written note of the best quotes and their location on the tape.
3. You do not need your own questions between the voices of your interviewees. You should write your cue or intro script to explain the issue and what question you asked, but then allow the people's

voices to be heard replying one after the other. Edit their comments very tightly, taking out all unnecessary words and pauses.

4. It will make your tape more interesting if you mix a variety of voices, male and female, young and old, well-educated and uneducated and so on.
5. You can also mix languages
6. Finally, make sure that all the sound is adjusted to the same level. There is nothing more annoying than trying to listen to a bad sound recording.