



Field Recording Training Sheet

(Based on handouts and verbal training Feb 27, 2005 at station WRYY)

Packing Checklist:

1. Recording Device
 - a. Mini Digital Recorders Preferred
2. Mic
 - a. Larger is better
3. Headphones
4. Cords
 - a. For Press Conferences and similar, XLR to mini (1/8"/3.5mm)
 - b. For Rallies and TV only boards, RCA Jacks
 - c. For computers, Mini to mini
 - d. For extended life of recording device outlets, Audio out and Mic extension cords
5. Batteries
6. Tapes/Discs
7. Converters
 - a. For cords, such as male to male, female to female, male to female, etc.
8. Small Note Pad
 - a. Note Markers used on recorder
 - b. Note speakers
 - c. Note sound conditions
9. Pens and pencils
10. Rubber bands/tape or WRYY bumper sticker
 - a. Piggyback recording by taping your mic to theirs

Recording Checklist

1. Mic On
2. Put on Headphones to verify it is actually recording and monitor it
3. Levels of each speaker (too hot, too cold)
4. Take Ambient Sound Recording for editing and benchmark

Recording Tips

1. Heart and soul of the entire production process is the practice of precise recording methods. Pay attention to as much detail as possible. Always listen to everything carefully. Focused and curious frame of mind will be very helpful.
2. On a technical level, well-recorded tapes/discs and thoughtful interviews will translate into pleasurable, easier-to-edit materials. Choice cuts "float" to the surface and cumbersome editing chores will be kept to a minimum.

3. The better quality the recording, the more apt people will be to listen to it, be it on the radio or via computer file. High levels of ambient noise (such as wind) make it difficult to keep listeners listening and focused.
4. ALWAYS be ready to record when you get to the “field” or event. You NEVER know what will come out or what will surface as relevant in the future.
5. If it is a press conference, speech, or meeting, look for a press booth box you can plug into the sound board. Calling in advance will give them the opportunity to help you and give you the knowledge of what to have to make it happen. Try to go early and setup. Regularly scheduled meetings/speeches at same locations often use the same personnel to assist you. Build the relationship and it will pay off.
6. Make certain the interviewee is “on mic”. Mic should be pointing directly at the speaker’s mouth from about six-inches away. Don’t be afraid to ask them to repeat for the mic or to speak clearly for the recording.
7. You may want to consider telling the speaker you are “recording for rebroadcast on WRYR”. Use the volunteers manual at the station as a guide and good judgment for good ethics.
8. Web Sites of interest
 - a. www.youthradio.org
 - b. www.amarc.org
 - c. www.radiodiaries.org
 - d. www.transom.org (for interview techniques)
9. Recording levels should average –12 for digital and 0 for analog. Try not to “peak out” as the editing software may clip out the highs and lows and the overall quality will be compromised.
10. MP3 files make the easiest file to email or use for PSA as well as show sound bites. MP3 should be the final file format, not the work in progress whenever possible. .wav files are the highest quality and should be kept in an organized filing system in such programs as ITUNES or similar software. Editing software such as COOLEDIT3 and Soundforge are good, but you may want to start out with simpler software
11. Regardless of the quality, getting the message out comes first. WRYR is willing to accept less than perfect MP3 files to help the communities get out the word. Do not fear imperfect quality and content. Quality takes time and practice, two things you may not have at first, nor does WRYR expect you to have. Have fun and relax.
12. If you need to, repeat your questions and responses while still in the field with the same ambient sound. You can cut and paste it during the edit process.
13. Use of Fade in and Fade out during edit of the audio file will make it easier to listen to, but is not necessary. Use of Zoom in and out will make cutting and pasting during edit easier and quicker. The longer you work with the software the easier it will be.
14. Larger files may need to be “special delivered” to the station via FTP sites and similar means. Please call ahead so you can access these available resources. WRYR is willing to air long meetings (relevant ones, anyways), but will not be able to use email to retrieve it. Save emails for the shorter files. You may find that post-edit files are 1/8 of the total recording time or all of it was saved. Use good judgment.