

## FORMATS OF RADIO PROGRAMMES

### 1. Announcements:

These are specifically written clear messages to inform. They can be of different types. These announcements have become informal and resemble ordinary conversation.

### 2. Radio talk:

The radio talk probably is the oldest format on radio. There has been a tradition in India and Britain to invite experts or prominent persons to speak for 10 or 15 minutes on a specific topic.

These talks have to go through a process of being changed into radio's spoken word style. Over these long radio talks have become unpopular. Instead, today, shorter duration talks are broadcast. Of course, we can listen to these talks only on public service broadcasting stations.

### 3. Radio interviews:

In the media, be it the newspaper, magazine, radio or television, journalists use this technique of asking questions to get information. There can be different types of interviews in terms of their duration, content and purpose.

There are full-fledged interview programmes on radio. The duration of these may vary from 10 minutes to 30 minutes or even 60 minutes depending up on the topic, and the person being interviewed. Most of such interviews are personality based, long interviews with well-known people in the field of public life, literature, science, sports, films etc.

With phone-in-programmes becoming popular, you may conduct live interviews. These interviews have been made interactive.

Another type of interview-based programme. Here generally you put across one or two questions to ordinary people or people with knowledge on some current topic to measure public opinion. For example- the railway budget is presented in the parliament, people representing radio go out and ask the general public about their opinion. Their names and identity may not be asked. Such programmes are called '**vox pop**' which is a Latin phrase meaning '**voice of people or voice of the population**'.

### 4. Radio discussions:-

In radio, is used this technique to let people have different points of view on matters of public concern. Radio discussions are produced when there are social or economic issues which may need to be discussed. Generally, these discussions on radio are of longer duration- say 15 to 30 minutes. Two or three people who are known for their views and a well-informed speaker or journalist who acts as a moderator take part and discuss a particular topic for about 30 minutes. The moderator conducts the discussion, introduces the topic and the participants and ensures that everyone should get enough time to speak on the particular issue.

### 5. Radio documentaries/features:

Radio also has this format. Unlike documentary films, radio documentaries have only sound – i.e. the human voice, music and sound effects. So a radio documentary is a programme based on real sounds and real people and their views and experiences. Radio documentaries are based on facts presented in an attractive manner or dramatically. Radio documentaries are radio's own creative format. The producer of a documentary needs to be very creative to use

human voice, script, music and sound effects very effectively. Radio documentaries are also called radio features.

#### **6. Radio drama:**

A Radio drama or a radio play is like any other theatre or drama. The only difference is that while a stage play has actors, stage, sets, curtains, properties movement and live action, a radio play has only three components. They are **the human voice, music and sound effects**. Radio uses its greatest strength for producing radio plays and that is the power of imagination..

#### **7. Running commentaries:**

Running commentaries on radio can be on various sports events or on ceremonial occasions like the Republic Day Parade or events like festivals, melas, rath yatras, swearing in ceremony of ministers etc. If it's a sports event, a commentator would give us all the details of the match such as the number of players, the score, position of the players in the field etc. By listening to the running commentary, you get a feeling of being in the stadium and watching the match. The commentator needs good communication skills, a good voice and knowledge about what is going on. Today radio running commentaries especially of cricket and other sports can be heard on your mobile phones.

#### **8. Magazine programmes:**

Radio also has magazine programmes like those in the print media. A radio magazine is episodically (a particular time on a particular day of a week or a month). Similarly, it has plenty of variety in contents. Some or many formats of radio are included in a radio magazine. These may be talks, discussions, interviews, reviews, music etc. Likewise, the duration of each programme or item in a magazine programme also vary. Another characteristic of a radio magazine is that it has a **signature tune. A signature tune is an attractive piece of music which is specific to a programme**. It can be like the masthead (title) of a magazine. A magazine programme also has a name and one or two presenters or anchor persons who link the whole programme. In the beginning, the titles of the day's programme will be given by the presenters after the signature tune. They also give continuity and link the whole magazine. Magazine programmes are generally broadcast for a special or specific audience.

#### **9. News:**

Among all the spoken word formats on radio, news is the most popular. News bulletins and news programmes are broadcast every hour by radio stations. In India, only All India Radio is allowed to broadcast news. Duration of news bulletins vary from 5 minute to 30 minutes. The longer news bulletins have interviews, features, reviews and comments from experts.

**10. Phone in programme** – In this age of technological development, phone-in is the most important format. This is called interactive programming where the listener and the presenter talk to each other. Their talk is live on air. Listeners dial up the announced telephone number at a stipulated time and get onboard the discussion with experts in the studio. Initially this format was introduced for playing the listeners' request-based film songs. Now it is being used for health-related programmes, rural broadcasts, complaints against the government/ administrative machinery etc.

Another interesting on AIR is **Radio bridge** : Radio bridge means connecting different stations throughout the length and breadth of the country. In this technique, for example, an

expert sitting at Chennai can interact with the common man in the studio in Delhi. This format was first used by All India Radio during elections.