



Marketplace



Getting constructive stories published



## Training suggestions



## Learning outcomes

At the end of this module, trainees...

- ...can identify the kinds of news outlets and other organizations who might be open to commissioning constructive stories.
- ...can pitch a constructive story.
- ...can discuss arguments to convince a newsroom editor to commission a constructive story.
- ...know how to promote their stories individually on social media and follow up on them.
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## Training schedule

**Buzz groups / 40 minutes**

**Potential media outlets for your constructive stories** (fundamental)

Trainees reflect on media outlets for constructive story ideas.

**Group work / 1 hour**

**What makes a good pitch for a constructive story?** (fundamental)

Trainees identify criteria for good pitches and evaluate given pitches.

### **Group work / 1 hour**

#### **Pitch writing for a constructive story (fundamental)**

Trainees write pitches in small groups of two or three.

### **Role play / 1 hour**

#### **Get decision-makers' attention for a constructive pitch (fundamental)**

Trainees argue with an editor who is resistant to a constructive journalism approach.

### **Presentation / 15 minutes**

#### **Impact of constructive journalism on audiences**

Trainees can explain what studies have found regarding the impact of constructive stories.



## **Homework**

### **Prepare to convince a decision-maker of the benefits of a constructive approach**

Each trainee collects convincing arguments and arguments against the constructive approach (preparation for the session: [Get decision-makers' attention for a constructive pitch](#)).

### **Write a pitch for your constructive story**

If not done in group work during the workshop, each participant writes a pitch for a constructive story and sends it to the trainer for feedback.



## **Requirements**

### **Technology**

Internet

Face-to-face: laptop, boxes, projector / video screen (trainer), laptop, smartphones (trainees)

Online: laptops and smartphones (trainer + trainees), headsets

### **Materials (face-to-face)**

Board/whiteboard, flipchart stand and paper, cards (if available), markers.

### **Tools (online)**

Video conference: Zoom (Back up: WhatsApp)

Visualization: Miroboard, JamBoard (Zoom offers digital whiteboards as well)

Quizzes: Slido, Mentimeter

Communication: WhatsApp, Email

Documentation, shared documents: Google Drive folder



## Session details

- **Potential media outlets for constructive stories**

**Objectives**

Trainees brainstorm on media outlets that could be interested in publishing constructive stories.

**Duration**

Buzz groups: 20 min.

Discussion: 20 min.

**Preparation**

Prepare (written) task, and (virtual) board for 2-4 groups - 3 columns: (1) media outlets, (2) potential, (3) challenges

PPT



**40 min., Group work / discussion**

Divide the trainees into groups of 3-5. Let them discuss outlets or organizations in their region or country that might be interested in constructive stories. What is the potential and where are the challenges they'll face.

The groups share their results, experiences and discuss the outcome in plenary.

- **Matching the right media outlet level for your story idea**

### **Objectives**

Trainees can determine the right level of media outlet for their constructive story ideas.

### **Duration**

Group work: 15 min.

Presentation of group work and discussion: 20 min.

Input presentation, Q & A and discussion: 10 min.

### **Preparation**

Search for story ideas, write short story descriptions (with some context)

Prepare (written) task, and (virtual) board for 2-4 groups - per group 3 fields (local/regional - national - international). Trainees are asked to post story numbers in the field they judge appropriate.

PPT



### **40 min., Group work**

In 2 groups, each group is given 3-5 story ideas and is asked to determine the best level of media outlet to pitch it to.

Story idea 1: You want to portrait a shelter for refugees in your town where kids are schooled by older people from your community.

Story idea 2: In the small town where your parents are from, an 82-year-old man builds a bench for his wife in 30 minutes after a council plea was ignored to build a bench.

Story idea 3: In your city, a lab has started to grow meat artificially.

Story idea 4 (photo story): You want to present a program in your town that allows kids from different ethnic groups that usually don't get along to play together.

Story idea 5 (photo story): You want to present a social help program in your neighborhood where teenagers help teenagers to deal with their emotions.

Each group will be working on a separate chart. Each group presents their findings and the whole group discusses differences and overlaps and brainstorms criteria for pitching to media outlets.

The groups share their results, discuss the outcome of the group exercise and use that to brainstorm criteria



### **10 min., Input / discussion**

### **Media outlet level - for story pitches**

**Presentation:** PPT Finding your market, slide 3

- **What makes a good pitch for a constructive story?**

**Objectives**

Trainees identify criteria for a good constructive story pitch, analyze written pitches and suggest how to improve them.

**Duration**

Group work: 20 min.

Presentation of group work and discussion: 20 min.

Input presentation, Q & A and discussion: 20 min.

**Preparation**

Search for pitches:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fGbKUErk3m4fXoMVXQUc7\\_9M4OrgsdyohcVGzZuvUQg/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fGbKUErk3m4fXoMVXQUc7_9M4OrgsdyohcVGzZuvUQg/edit?usp=sharing)

PPT



**20 min., Group work**

Divide trainees into two groups. Each group discusses three pitches and decides:

- (1) Which ones are acceptable for a constructive format and why?
- (2) How can these pitches be improved?

Trainees present and explain their choices (Empathy, trying to understand who the other person really is, trying to connect with another person, etc.) .



**20 min., Input / discussion**

**Pitching a constructive story**

**Presentation:** PPT Getting-constructive-stories-published, slides 4-9

- **Pitch writing for a constructive story**

**Objectives**

Trainees write pitches according to the defined criteria.

**Duration**

Group work: 20 min.

Presentation of group work and discussion: 20 min.

Input presentation, Q & A and discussion: 20 min.

**Preparation**

Search for pitches:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fGbKUErk3m4fXoMVXQUc7\\_9M4OrgsdyohcVGzZuvUQg/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fGbKUErk3m4fXoMVXQUc7_9M4OrgsdyohcVGzZuvUQg/edit?usp=sharing)

PPT -

**20 min., Group work / discussion**

Divide trainees in small groups. Each group writes a pitch for a constructive story.

Depending on time, groups present their pitches to the plenary and they are discussed.

–What are the constructive elements in the story?

–How interesting is the story for the outlet's audience?

–Did the group follow the pitch guidelines that were discussed?

**• Get decision-makers' attention for a constructive pitch****Objectives**

Trainees practice techniques and approaches for convincing decision-makers of their story ideas and discuss challenges in pitching stories and different approaches for convincing editors

**Duration**

Role play: 30 min.

Discussion: 20 min.

Trainer input and discussion: 10 min

**Preparation**

Visualize the exercise description.



### **20 Min., Role play**

One person plays the role of the journalist, one person is the editor/decision-maker. The journalist tries to convince a skeptical decision-maker on the merits of the constructive approach and her or her pitch.

Alternatively, you could invite a media editor or media manager to your workshop and enter in the discussion with one or a group of trainees.

If a face-to-face workshop, you could choose people to play the roles and come to the front of the room. Give each person their role, then whisper to the person playing the editor additional information about how he or she might be wary: skeptical about CJ; having a really bad day; used only to breaking news, looking for high click numbers, etc.

The journalist pitches their stories and the constructive approach, and editors make comments/ask questions based on their priorities and mood. 10 minutes later, roles are shifted.



### **20 Min., discussion**

Groups share their experiences as editor/ journalist. Guiding questions:

- What was challenging about your editor?
- What approach did you take to overcome the challenges?
- What would you do differently in the future?

Write down key ideas on a chart/digital whiteboard.



### **20 min., Input / discussion**

#### **How to sell constructive stories to editors**

**Presentation:** PPT Finding your market, slides 10-15

- **Promote and follow up on your constructive story**

**Objectives**

Trainees reflect on how to promote their constructive stories individually and how to follow up on them.

**Duration**

Think, pair and share: 15 min. (3, 5, 22 min.)

Trainer input and discussion: 20 min

**Preparation**

Visualize the task description

**30 Min., Think, pair and share**

Ask the trainees to think about ways to promote and follow up on their stories individually, pair them with another trainee and let them discuss their ideas for 5 minutes. Then ask them to share their suggestions for promotion and follow up in the plenary. Guide the discussion and collect strategies on the board: (1) for promotion, (2) for follow up of constructive stories.

**20 Min., Input / discussion****Promote and follow up on your constructive story**

**Presentation:** PPT Getting-constructive-stories-published, slides 16-20

**• Impact of constructive journalism on audiences****Objectives**

Trainees can describe the results of studies on the impact of constructive journalism.

**Duration**

Trainer input: 15 min

Discussion: 25 min

**Preparation**

PPT



**15 Min., Input / discussion**

**Impact of constructive journalism on audiences**

**Presentation:** PPT Roots, role, ethics and impact(!), slides 21-24