Journalism 101 (and +, ++):
Quick guide for science writers

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Quick reactions to your blogs etc.

- Pick your audience and technical level. Specify. Write it out.
- Tone shifts in Daily Sun/NYT/Yahoo! ledes
  - Focus on CU, level of detail, informality
- Short sentences & grafs:
  - 1-2 sentence grafs, 20 words max sentences
  - 27/9/3 rule (27 words, 9 seconds, 3 ideas)
- Writing tip: Try multiple versions of lede or tweets, leave on screen

The writing process

- Identify the audience
- Identify the news
- Gather information
- Organize information
- Write the story
- Revise
Basic ledes

- Basic 5W&H/pyramid/summary
- Multiple Element
- Story-telling
  - Narrative
  - Scene-setting
  - Anecdote

Unusual ledes

- Contrast
- Direct Address
- Quote
- Punch
- None of the above
  - Implications
  - Cutesy
  - Other
Bad ledes

- Buried lede

Interviewing

- Open-ended vs. close-ended questions
- Funnel vs. inverted funnel interviews
- Build rapport vs. hit-’em-hard
Journalism 101+: Quotations

✦ Why use quotations?
  – Authority/credibility
  – Perspective
  – Color

When using quotes . . .

✦ Accuracy!
  – Get the words right
  – Get the person right

✦ Have something to say

✦ Mechanics
  – Place attribution at end of sentence or quote
  – Use “said”
  – Punctuate properly
HOW SCIENCE REPORTING WORKS:

WE DESTROYED TEN PERCENT OF CANCER CELLS IN A LABORATORY!

TIME TRAVEL DISCOVERED

CANCER CURED

F---K YOU!

WE DON'T CURE CANCER. WE'RE JUST MOVING FASTER TOWARD A FUTURE TREATMENT.