**Understanding Media: What are they trying to do?**

1. Building the basic news story: The inverted pyramid

   The main point first, then the supporting information:

   Supporting Details…complciations…kicker
   More real-life examples and quotes
   Color: background and history
   Grain of Salt…reaction…examples
   Crucial facts…quotes
   So what…the issue
   The lead
   (Art)

2. The bricks and mortar of a news story

   The lead—the main message—the news—the grabber
   The so-what paragraph—the issue, the reason you should care
   Basic supporting information (finish the five Ws)
   Good quotes—illustrative remarks
   Real-life examples—put a face on it
   The grain of salt paragraph—opposition, reaction, criticism
   Color: make them smell it, make it sing
   Background and history
   More detailed facts, background and history
   The kicker—a smart remark, startling fact
   Art—the more possibilities, the better

3. Weather conditions for construction—considerations beyond the story itself

   The sources—who can I trust?
   The timing—a deadline every minute, what else is happening
   The hassle factor—what else will it take to get this story?
   The missing parts—who has more information?

4. Contracting for a project—the role of flacks

   Be a reliable and hassle-free source of solid bricks, mortar, steel beams, etc.
   Provide the materials and a blueprint and let the reporter build the house.
   Have the materials ready in your colors in advance.
   Be able to produce more or find other suppliers on short notice.

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