

## **FIVE BLOGGING TIPS I LEARNED FROM RADIO**

We learn so much about what we do from people working in the same field but sometimes you can get great insights from other disciplines.

I worked in radio for over 15 years both as a journalist and presenter and I reckon some of the things I learned at the BBC would be helpful to you.

1. **STAGE-FRIGHT** Did you freeze the first time you wrote a blog post thinking, 'I can't do this, people are actually going to read what I've written?' You probably didn't have many readers then, but as you got more successful did it kick in again when you thought of the sheer number of eyeballs on your work? In radio you are always told to think of just one person. As you sit there in the booth with your news scripts and your headphones on you can't risk thinking about all the people in their cars and kitchens listening to you. Talk to one person, someone you care about or someone you made up, but don't look down. Believe me it's easier this way.
2. **NOBODY WANTS YOU TO FAIL.** People who read your blog are looking for help and information or maybe they love the way you tell a story. They don't want you to slip up. Same in the radio game. Honestly, while the blooper tapes are fun at the Christmas party, the audience didn't tune in to hear you mess up, they switched on to hear the latest headlines.
3. **WRITE LIKE YOU.** The very best broadcasters take their scripts and re-write them in their own voice. Authenticity is vital. If you can make it chatty and conversational so much the better.
4. **WRITE CONCISELY** I knew a famous radio presenter on [BBC Radio 4's Today](#) programme who could take a script slaved over all night by a producer and reduce it from a page to six words. Sometimes we all know the back story and 'Now here's the latest from Haiti' is all you have to say. Your audience is fickle. Don't waste the precious time you have with them telling them things they already know.
5. **TELL IT STRAIGHT UP** At journalism college when we were learning to write news stories we were told to imagine that something big had happened. Then we had to picture running up to someone in the street and saying 'Oh my God...xxxxx has just happened'. That is the top line of your story or the opening line of your blog.

I think web-based writing is a lot closer to writing for radio than print-based journalism. The short punchy sentences and conversational style translates well. A lot of radio is un-scripted and off the cuff but you would be surprised by how much of the quality stuff is written down first. Listen out and if it's done properly I challenge you to tell me which is which.

**Lucy Thorpe is a former BBC radio journalist and presenter based in Maidenhead. She blogs about media issues, social media and interesting stuff that crops up in the news at [www.LucyThorpe.wordpress.com](http://www.LucyThorpe.wordpress.com) She also does voice-overs and commercial writing projects, just ask! [Lucy.Thorpe@btconnect.com](mailto:Lucy.Thorpe@btconnect.com)**

**Find Lucy on Twitter @Lucythorpe**