

FICTIONAL

J202

Culver

Assignment: Translating Priorities into Leads

Lead Solutions

Week 2

Below are suggested leads for your assignment on prioritizing information. While some other options are also viable, you will benefit from comparing your lead drafts to these and discerning whether you chose the right path in tailoring your information.

Scenario 1: Advertising Strategy Memo

Audience: Whiz Bang Cola executives and marketing team

Goal: Sell your new strategy for marketing Whiz Bang

Lead: Whiz Bang Cola can build market share by narrowing its primary audience focus to high school and college students and honing its advertising messages to emphasize great taste and caffeine boost.

This lead works because:

- it begins the strategy memo with a direct statement about the focus of the strategy (rather than beginning with history or some other extraneous fact)
- it uses active, precise verbs (build, narrowing, honing, emphasize)
- it's short and direct (one sentence, 28 words)
- it highlights the client/product, showing that your agency takes it seriously
- it doesn't engage in blatant salesmanship or make promises it can't keep (such as, "Culver Creative will dramatically boost Whiz Bang sales by saturating the college market with innovative messages.")

Scenario 2: Television News Script

Audience: Dane County viewers of the 6 p.m. news

Goal: Inform people about this plane crash

Lead: A Middleton plane crash this morning claims the life of Interdyne executive Bill Josephs.

This lead works because:

- it's short and direct (14 words)
- it states the most important point and leaves the rest of the story to explain and give context
- it's phrased in current tense (claims), a critical aspect of broadcast writing
- it focuses on the death because it will be news to most people unless they heard about it on radio
- it focuses on both the death and the person who died (Josephs' prominence makes this story more important than the death of an unknown resident, like it or not)
- it uses an active verb ("claims the life of," rather than "Interdyne executive Bill Josephs was killed...")
- it assumes viewer knowledge of Interdyne, rather than clogging up the lead with such extra explanation as "medical instruments manufacturer Interdyne" (this is a safe assumption because it's the county's fifth biggest employer – a smaller corporation would've needed such explanation)

Scenario 3: Public Relations Press Release

Audience: Constituents, especially people who will vote in the upcoming election, through the news media and religious leaders

Goal: Build Quaz's image to help her garner more votes and win the election

Lead: U.S. Rep. Mary Quaz will help citizens explore how government and religions can work together to solve problems in a forum Friday night, titled "Coping with War: Finding Faith in Times of Challenge."

This lead works because:

- it focuses on a current issue or event
- it is short and direct (34 words)
- it does not mention re-election, so it does not open Quaz up to charges that she's only doing this to get votes (a mention of the election is fair game lower in the release)
- it avoids the jargon of "faith-based initiatives"
- it ties Quaz to the public through "will help citizens explore," making her appear collaborative – a positive asset for a politician
- it has a current news peg
- it does not mention her competition (indeed, the rest of the release should never even touch on the fact that Georgette declined to participate in the forum)
- it includes a time element, Friday night, and states it as a day of the week rather than "tonight"

Scenario 4: Newspaper Article

Audience: Dane County readers of the Wisconsin State Journal

Goals: Inform people about developments in this situation

Lead: The Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services Friday announced it will reopen its investigation into a fatal stabbing at a Dane County home for troubled teens after an allegation that staff altered records in the case.

This lead works because

- it hits on the most recent and most important development (reopening the investigation)
- it includes a time element early on (Friday)
- it uses active verbs (announced, altered)
- it attributes the announcement (to the Wisconsin DHFS, rather than writing "The state will reopen," which sounds like the writer made the announcement)
- it's short and direct (37 words)
- it describes the home, rather than naming it because it may not be well enough known
- it provides just enough detail on the death and allegation to give context to the relaunch of the investigation
- it localizes the home to Dane County, boosting interest for readers