

Quality Requirements for Journalists and Measures for Improving Work Performance in the Information Age: Postprint

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Abstract

The information age has brought advantages and conveniences to journalists' professional development; with the evolution of China's socialist market economy and advancement of reform and opening-up, the national economy has grown rapidly while media coverage of economic life and phenomena has expanded accordingly, thereby imposing new requirements on journalists' professional competencies. High-quality, high-caliber economic journalists have become a crucial force for the survival and development of economic news media. Concurrently, journalists are also required to substantially enhance their work effectiveness.

Full Text

Requirements for Journalists' Qualities and Measures for Improving Work Effectiveness in the Information Age

Abstract: The information age has brought significant advantages and conveniences to the development of journalism. With the advancement of China's socialist market economy and reform and opening-up policies, China's economy has grown rapidly, and media coverage of economic life and phenomena has increased correspondingly. This reality imposes new requirements on journalists' professional qualities. High-quality, high-level economic journalists have become a crucial force for the survival and development of economic news media organizations. Simultaneously, journalists are required to substantially improve their work effectiveness.

Keywords: Journalists; Quality Requirements; Work Effectiveness; Improvement

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In the information age, people must process countless pieces of information daily, and content involving socio-economic relations, phenomena, and activities often touches upon material interests, with some reports even directly affecting economic trends. This poses challenges to traditional journalism and places higher demands on journalists. In response, contemporary journalists must possess comprehensive qualities to meet modern audiences' information needs. Only excellent journalists with both specialized expertise and multiple capabilities can effectively transmit information and produce high-quality, efficient news reports.

Since the reform and opening up, China's economy and society have entered a period of great development and prosperity. Economic news media, with their keen observation of economic and social phenomena and provision of professional, practical, guiding, and forward-looking economic information, have quickly gained market recognition. However, economic news media differ from other media types and thus have distinct requirements for journalists' qualities. Currently, economic news media face problems such as weak journalist team construction and uneven professional quality, which starkly contrasts with modern society's enormous demand for economic information. Therefore, economic journalists must possess not only the news gathering and writing abilities required of ordinary journalists but also specialized financial knowledge and professional ethics.

1. Sound Policy Competence

Policies are codes of conduct formulated by state organs or political party organizations to achieve the routes and tasks of a certain historical period. Economic policies are behavioral norms that people engaged in economic activities must follow. Therefore, economic journalists need to possess sound policy competence, which is mainly manifested in two aspects: First, publicizing and reporting on policies to promote their implementation. Economic journalists must grasp the policy basis behind current economic situations and development trends. When reporting major economic events and activities, they should determine topic selection, choose facts, refine themes, and arrange layouts or programs according to prevailing policies to achieve promotional effects. Second, researching and advancing policies to provide references for government economic decision-making. As economic development undergoes constant changes, economic policies also evolve during major economic transformations. This process is influenced by multiple factors, one of which is the resolution methods for economic hotspots, focal points, and difficulties reported in economic news. By proposing forward-looking strategic recommendations on these issues, journalists can expand the

influence of news reports and facilitate policy improvement.[?]

2. Profound Professional Accomplishment

Journalists' professional ethics should be prioritized above all else; other skills can be learned, but professional ethics cannot. When facing conflicts between commercial interests and public interests, economic journalists should make correct choices with a strong sense of responsibility and justice. A journalist is first a human being, second a citizen, and third a journalist. Without basic professional ethics, no matter how knowledgeable, one will only harm society. However, moral qualities alone are insufficient. As supervisors of socio-economic development, economic journalists must possess professional economic knowledge and corresponding reporting capabilities to truly become excellent economic journalists.

Profound professional accomplishment is mainly reflected in journalists' mastery of news communication theories and skills, financial expertise, and other disciplinary knowledge. This requires economic journalists to be "generalists" with multidisciplinary backgrounds centered on the integration of economics and journalism. News communication knowledge and skills include not only foundational theories of journalism and communication, interviewing and writing, editing and commentary, and professional competencies in news gathering, writing, editing, commentary, and photography, but also outstanding news sensitivity and an audience-centered professional attitude. News communication knowledge forms the foundation for quality journalism and should be applied when writing economic news to produce high-quality reports. Outstanding news sensitivity and an audience-centered professional attitude are requirements arising from intense competition in today's news industry. Economic journalists must possess sharp and profound vision to identify trends and universal issues behind complex economic phenomena and ever-changing data. Simultaneously, economic journalists must write according to their media's audience positioning, reporting economic information that audiences want to know.[?]

3.1 Comprehensive Professional Knowledge and News Sensitivity

Economic journalists must possess sufficient economic expertise to grasp the connotations of economic concepts and phenomena and discern the essence of economic events through deep analysis. By integrating, sorting, and analyzing economic news materials, they should interpret more profound information or patterns behind economic phenomena, thereby guiding audiences' economic lives and behaviors. This distinguishes economic journalists from other journalists. To become an excellent economic journalist, having good professional ethics alone is insufficient; without economic expertise, one cannot grasp the deeper content of economic phenomena.[?]

3.2 Excellent News Writing Ability

News writing ability is an essential professional quality. Economic news often involves specialized terminology from the economic field. To enable audiences to intuitively understand reports, economic journalists must have solid writing skills.

4. Measures to Improve Work Effectiveness

Improving journalists' work effectiveness in the information age depends not only on journalists' use of high-tech equipment but also requires news organizations to enhance their supporting services and software development. Only in this way can audience recognition and appreciation for the journalism industry be further improved. The improvement of journalists' work effectiveness cannot be separated from deep integration with the information age, nor from news organizations' in-depth development and application of digital equipment. This requires journalists to not only utilize the information age to improve their work effectiveness but also to transform and strengthen the redevelopment of information age-related supporting facilities by news organizations to guarantee improved work effectiveness for journalists.[?]

4.1 Expanding Interview Channels

The 21st century is an era of rapid information growth in which anyone can become a publisher of news content, representing an important reason for the current explosion of information. The information age offers significant advantages in information dissemination and news event documentation, unrestricted by geography, culture, or space, and can leverage mobile advantages to expand news gathering channels. Based on this, traditional journalists can fully utilize the mobility advantages of the information age to expand their interview channels. Journalists can give full play to their subjective initiative, shift from passively receiving news clues in the past, strengthen their work enthusiasm and proactivity, analyze and judge valuable news content from the large number of clues provided by the audience, and conduct timely follow-up and interviews, comprehensively expanding their interview horizons and channels to lay a solid foundation for improving journalists' work effectiveness in the new era.

4.2 Optimizing the Interview Process

The interview model is an important guarantee for a journalist to begin interview activities. For different news events, subjects, and content, diverse interview models can be used. The interview process in the information age can greatly simplify interview models and steps. Through direct communication and understanding with relevant news subjects, facing the core content of news, the effectiveness of news interviews can be further improved. For example, in some livelihood news stories where grassroots people are "afraid" of news cameras, interview models through QQ or WeChat can be used to obtain more

authentic attitudes from news sources, creating an atmosphere that protects them and guiding and helping news subjects fully express their true thoughts, which helps journalists objectively judge and edit news content. For instance, for news events not in the local area, journalists can use video call tools for on-site video interviews, expanding the interview scope of traditional journalists, reducing the cost of interviewing out-of-area news events, and effectively integrating relevant resources of media organizations.[?]

4.3 Breaking Geographic Limitations

The rapid development and application of information technology have further broken the interview restrictions on traditional journalists and reduced interview costs. In the past, cross-regional news gathering and editing often required journalists to travel to track and interview news events effectively. Now, with the development of the information age, journalists can break traditional geographic limitations through video interviews, online phone interviews, live Weibo picture broadcasting, etc., which helps integrate the resources of the entire news gathering and editing team and further improve overall interview work effectiveness.

4.4 Enhancing Audience Interaction

Different from the interaction between news organization clients and audiences, journalists themselves can also use their own media platforms to maintain good interaction with the general audience. For example, journalists can establish self-media platforms through instant communication tools such as QQ, WeChat, and Weibo. Through interaction and communication with the audience, they can timely understand current audience preferences for news information and content, and make relevant changes in their news gathering, editing, and production processes. Currently, many media journalists have established their own self-media platforms, which further narrow the distance with the audience through in-depth social development, and this is based on the application and development of current smartphones.

In summary, with the development of network information technology, society and the nation have stricter requirements for news reporting. In this regard, journalists' personal qualities and knowledge literacy are extremely important to the industry's development and influence. Media professionals should further enhance the importance of traditional journalists in news work, use information age digital equipment to narrow the distance with audiences, strengthen communication and interaction, optimize gathering and editing models and processes, and further improve journalists' work effectiveness.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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