

COMMUNICATION WITH THE CLASSICAL MEDIA

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TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

HOMEWORK DEADLINE: 13 NOVEMBER 2024

- Provide a brief, 500-character (with spaces) overview of one part of your research, suitable for a journalist or editor. (Maximum limit: 500 characters (including spaces); shorter is fine, but not longer.)
- Use a minimal amount of technical and foreign terminology (1-2 terms max).
- If AI assistance was used, please include a note indicating this



WHY?

- Serving the public
 - to assess whether the arguments presented by politicians, entrepreneurs, and others are valid and reasonable, serving as part of the public accountability mechanism.
 - For example, Kristjan Tabri is an expert in dynamics, specializing in ship collisions. His expertise was highly valued in the recent 2020 re-investigation of the MS Estonia tragedy



Analysis: MS Estonia wreck damaged after hitting seabed





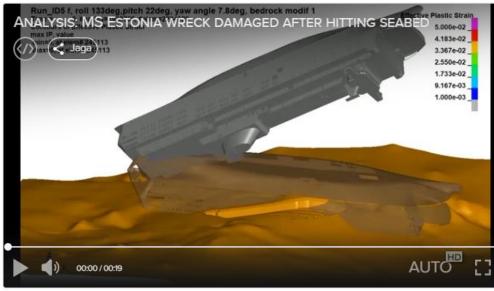


Photo: OJK/TalTech

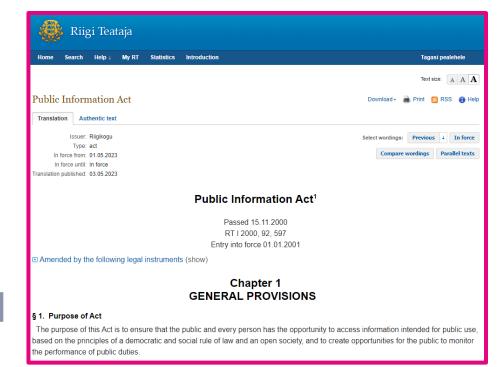
Based on computational modeling by Tallinn University of Technology researchers, a report presented on Thursday suggests that the Estonia's starboard side was damaged by the ship's collision with the seafloor.

The study's lead author, Professor of Marine Structures and Technology Kristjan Tabri, explained that a computational method was used to simulate the ship's sinking and its impact with the seafloor, while assessing structural deformations and damage.



WHY?

- Sometimes, there is only a single expert available, like Professor Emeritus <u>Dago Antov</u> — a situation not uncommon in Estonia.
 - Public Information Act





PORR.ee UUDISED ▼ TV ▼ RAADIO ▼ LASTELE JUPITER ▼

10-WS LATEST ▼ POLITICS ECONOMY DEFENSE CULTURE OPINION

Experts: Traffic in Tallinn comparable to Western Europe in the 1970s

NEWS

Rait Piir 04.09.2024 16:16



ly facing problems d by major Western

ental leap needed

society.

Similarly, Dago Antov, a traffic management professor at Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech), could not provide any examples where reducing traffic in city centers had led to their decline. He noted that the topic has been well-researched, including a study on Stockholm after the introduction of congestion charges. "It turned out that the turnover of businesses within the restricted area," grew faster," the professor cited.







Pärnu maantee Source: Siim Lõvi /ERR

WHY?

Dissimination

- Dissemination means making results available to the people that can best make use of them e.g. scientific community, industry, other commercial players, policymakers, and more.
- Beneficiaries of the EU's research and innovation framework programmes are legally obliged to disseminate and exploit results.

European Commission

What else?



IDEOLOGY

- Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Research Upholding Academic Freedom
- The Constitution of the Republic of Estonia
 - § 38. Science and art and their teaching shall be free.

Universities and research institutions shall be autonomous within the limits prescribed by the law.

• § 45. Everyone has the right to freely disseminate ideas, opinions, beliefs and other information by word, print, picture or other means. This right may be restricted by a law to protect public order, morals, or the rights and freedoms, health, honour and good name of others. This right may also be restricted by a law for state and municipal public servants, to protect a state secret or trade secret or information received in confidence, which has become known to them by reason of their office, or the family and private life of others, as well as in the interests of the administration of justice.

There shall be no censorship

IDEOLOGY

- Openness to Debate and Critique
- Based on Evidence
- A dialogue among scientists, society, organizations, and politicians; it's a two-way conversation.
- Who are you? You are most likely a non-political expert in your field. Public perception of scientists often varies, but people view you as a trusted source of knowledge and expertise.
- From the inside out significant news should first be communicated within the organization (from the department to the university and then to the public)
- Any more suggestions?



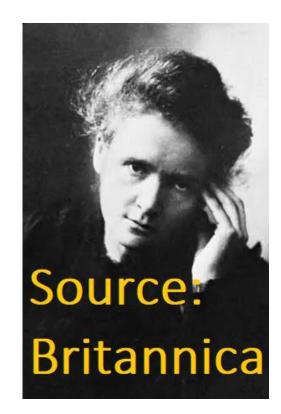
MOST IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

- What is the purpose of your media communication?
 - a. Changes in opinions, behavior, and worldview
 - b. Recruitment of students and academic staff
 - c. Collaboration and funding with the public and private sectors (such as through alumni) and other universities
- What are the primary target groups you communicate with, and who are the key stakeholders?

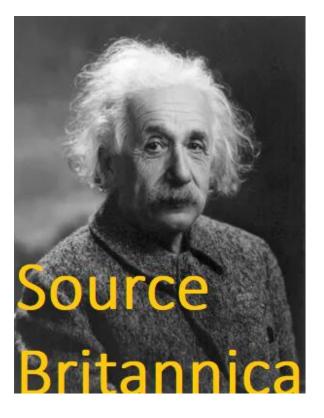


WHO ARE OPINION LEADERS? CAN ONE LEARN FROM THEM?

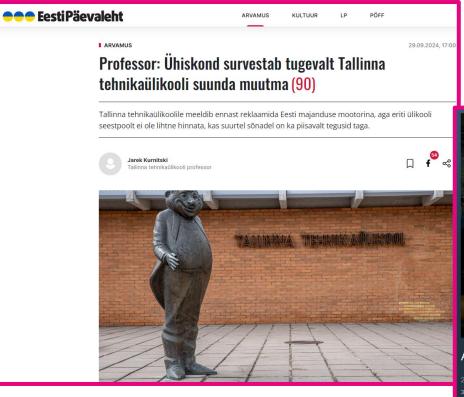
Recognized opinion leaders – who else?



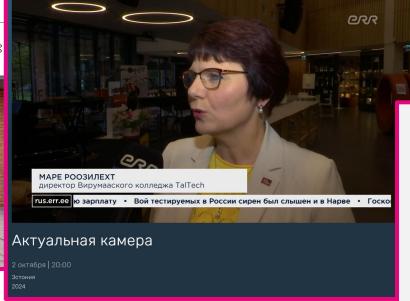




SPOKESPERSONS



Eesti Päevaleht/ Delfi



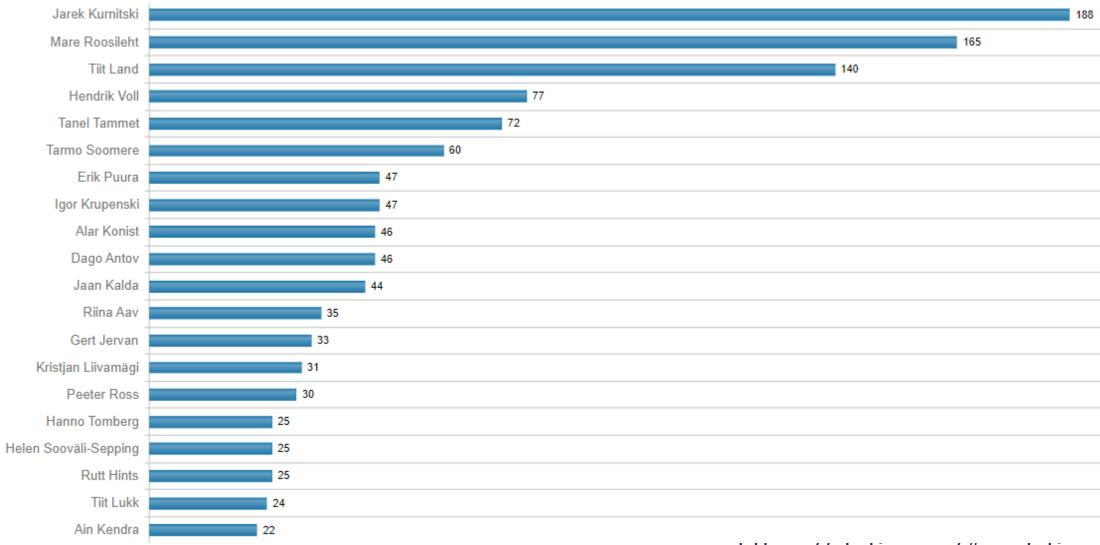
Aktualnaja kamera





err

TALTECH'S SPOKEPERSONS CURRENT YEAR





https://station.ee/#analytics

TALTECH'S SPOKEPERSONS

TalTech as an umbrella



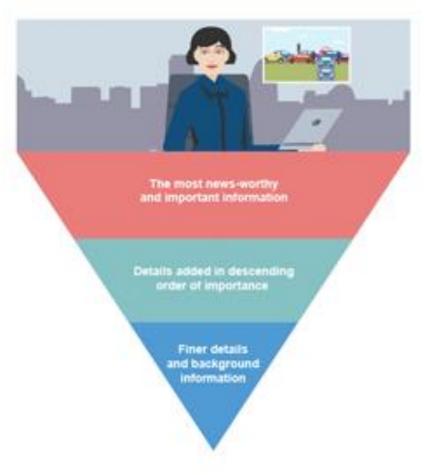
- You are TalTech
- Personal brand why not? However, it requires effort and dedication. You need to be visible to your target audience, at the very least.
- A <u>public figure vs private figure</u> public figures are individuals who have voluntarily placed themselves in the public spotlight



NEWS VALUES AND STRUCTURE

 Values: Impact, Unexpectedness, Prominence, Conflict, Relevance to the Community (both physically and mentally), Current Events, and Timeliness, as outlined by Tiit Hennoste.

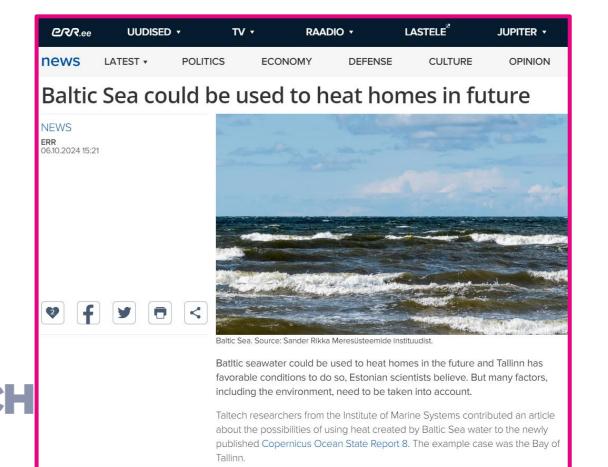
Use the inverted pyramid to **structure** your story. This means placing all the important information first and making sure the less significant aspects of the story are 'down the page' or towards the end – <u>by BBC</u>.





FORMATS

- Primarily infotainment, particularly in the realm of blue-sky science
- Applied science lies at the intersection of science and business news
- Newly launched products or services qualify as business news





FORMATS

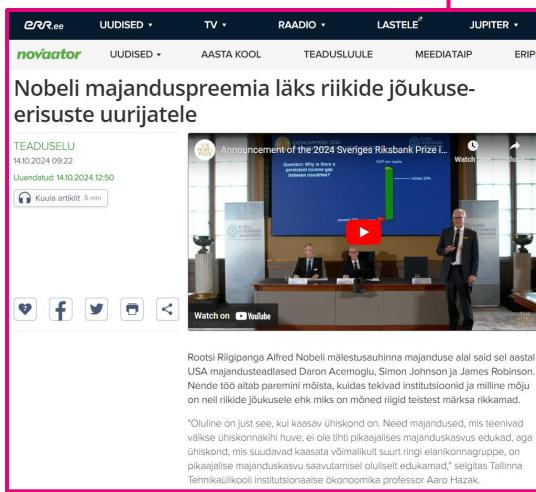
Brief comment – You are one of several sources.

Additionally, commenting on someone else's work:
 The Sveriges Riksbank
 Prize in Economic

Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel.

- If the information pertains to insights gained through collaboration or a project, inform the involved parties in advance.
- Keep it simple and brief







NEWS: Albert Lepplk 19:06:2024 10:41 Updated: 19:06:2024 11:46







Unlike Tartu, Tallinn currently has no program for reducing noise from traffic.

The capital plans to address this shortcoming by year's end.

According to the noise map completed in 2022, the main source of noise in

Tallinn is road traffic. The authors of the noise map note that more than 150,000 residents of Tallinn live in areas where the noise from cars and trams exceeds 55 decibels, which is as loud as normal conversation.

Professor Juri Lavrentiev from the Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech) said

that Tallinn has not made sufficient efforts to reduce noise. "Raising awareness of the situation is certainly helpful, but there have not been many concrete measures taken here," he noted.

To reduce noise, Lavrentjev believes a combination of measures is necessary: "Redirect traffic, reduce speeds where needed and use smoother asphalt."

Tallinn's Deputy Mayor Partel-Peeter Pere (Reform) said that excessive traffic noise is harmful to the health of the capital's residents and even costs lives. Currently, Tallinn does not have an action plan to reduce noise, but Pere promised that one would be ready by winter.

"We can reduce noise if we achieve other mobility goals, where more than half of the people use public transport, walk or cycle, and where we have normal, Nordic, calm speeds on the roads, like 40 kilometers per hour, and in some places 30 kilometers per hour. That is the solution," Pere said.

While Tallinn is still drafting its noise reduction action plan, the city of Tartu already has one in place, confirmed Tartu's <u>Deputy Mayor Raimond Tamm</u>,

"We have very specific plans. Last year, we introduced plans to build blike paths on several main streets. If we manage to complete the ring road around Tartu, we can redirect transit traffic, which will positively affect noise levels," Tamm explained.

Like Pere, Tamm also believes that reducing vehicle speeds is essential for noise reduction.

Tallinn Deputy Mayor Kristian Jarvan (Isamaa) said in a comment that while limiting noise is important for the city government, Deputy Mayor Pere's words are somewhat removed from reality.

"Speed limits will be determined based on a balance between traffic safety and freedom of movement. Slowing down public transport and the rest of traffic just to reduce noise would not be proportional and will not be done for as long as this city government stays in place." Jarvan noted.

He added that Tallinn plans to return to a policy of green waves where traffic lights are coordinated to facilitate traffic flow. "It will also reduce noise when cars don't have to accelerate and decelerate in between the lights."

FORMATS

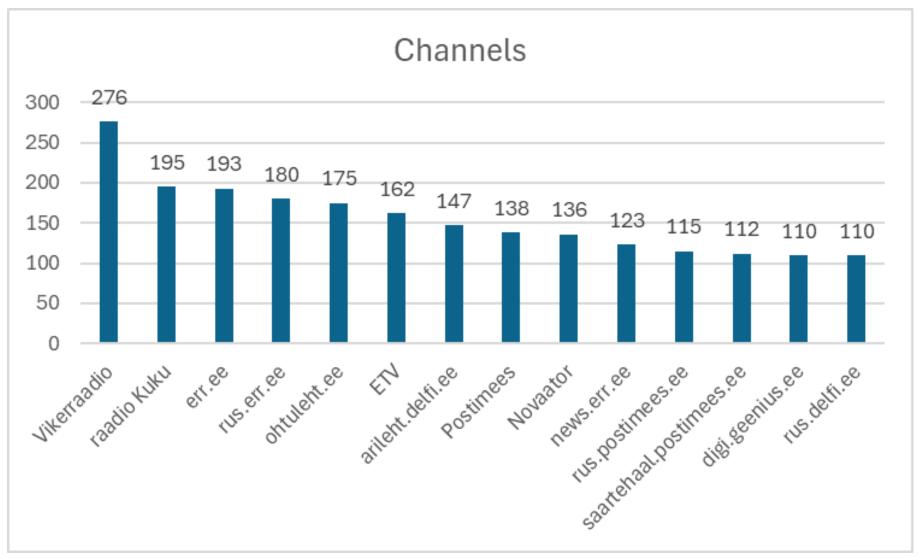
- Opinion Article
- Interview: pre-recorded vs. live TV
 - 1-3 sentence answers keep the tempo up. This is not a lecture!
- Background brief can evolve into a commentary
- If not:
 - On the record
 - On background
 - On deep background
 - Off the record
 - Deep off the record

These agreements must be made before the information is given



Reaction to someone else's opinion: must include new information or reasoning

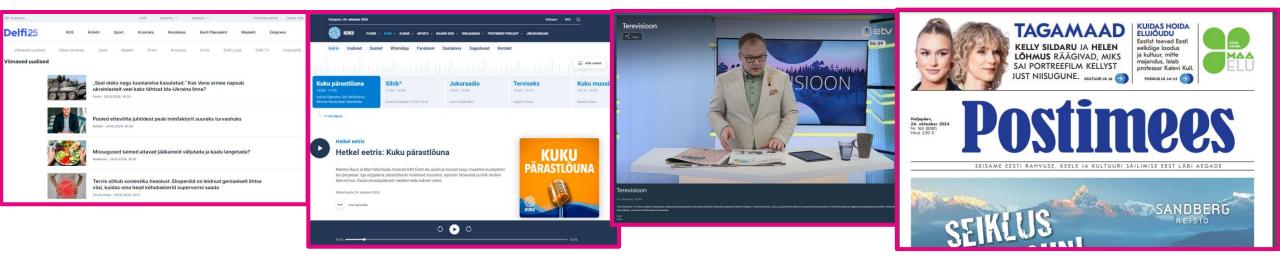
CHANNELS: AMOUNT OF ARTICLES/ COVERAGE





CHANNELS

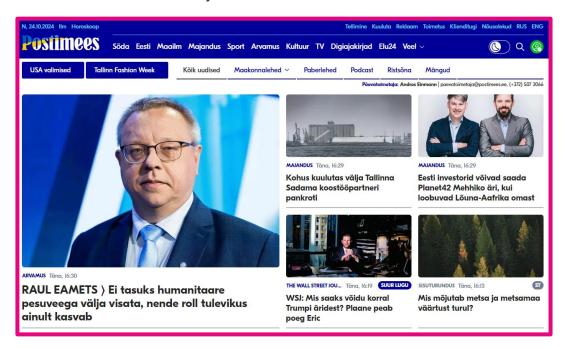
- Classical media: online, radio, TV, print (newspapers, magazines)
 - Linear and non-linear
- EurekAlert, Science|Business



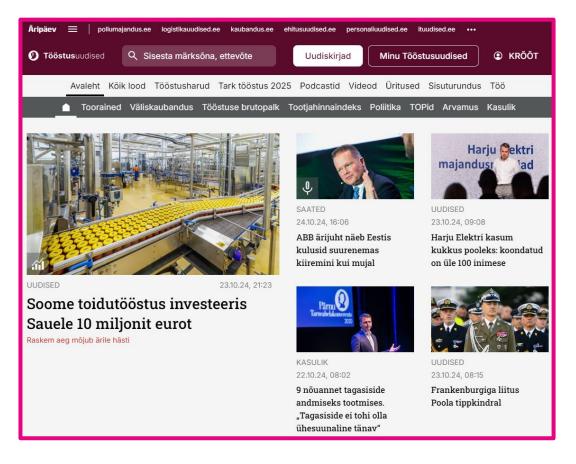


CHANNELS

General media (usually bigger audience) vs specialised media (usually more informed)

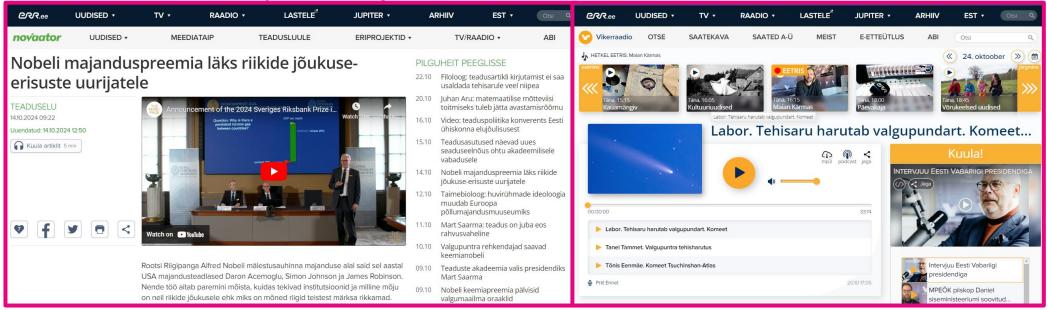






CHANNELS

There are not many science journalists left; most are with Estonian Public Broadcasting



 University Channels: Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Trialoog, background briefs, demos, press conferences, events (e.g., Night of Science), and the web

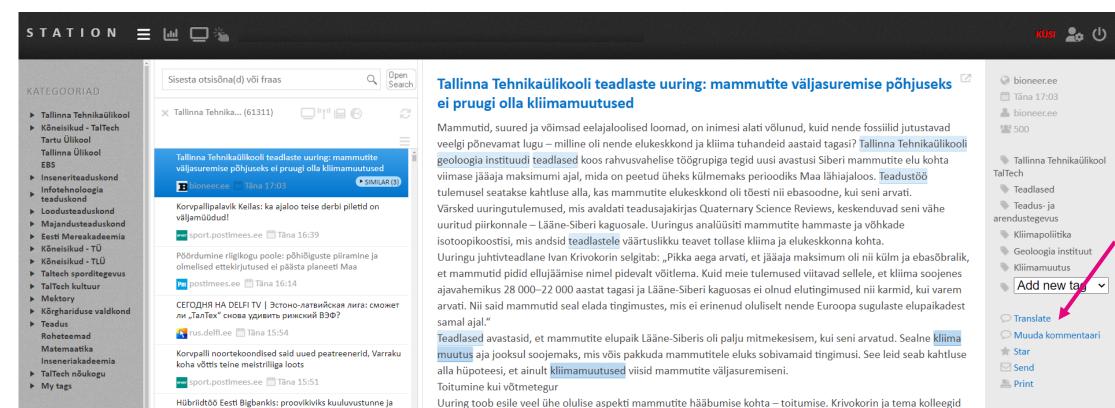
Your own channels and resources – what are the possibilities?

TOOLS

- Where is the discussion taking place, and who are the participants? What has been done and said recently?
- Station: There is a translate button available. However, one can also use a common search.

Username: taltech20

Password: tltch2023





TOOLS

- Proactive and reactive communication
- Grander plans require media plans, but be careful.

When?	Purpose	Channel	Whom	Spokes-	Time of contact	Person charge	Outcome
September	Invitation to press	E-mail	Journalists	Prof of Engineering	Septembe r	Head of Media relations	
September	Invitation	E-mail	TalTech alumni		Beginning of Septembe r	Head of Develop ment Fund	



- Define the problem and your opinion on it, supporting your view with arguments for and against
- Choose not the easiest topic, but the most interesting one
- The text:
 - Introduction (max 3 sentences) Make it so captivating that the reader can't stop reading. Start with something newsworthy (like an event of the day), a relevant joke, or an important question
 - Thesis (main statement, frame of the opinion article)
 - Main problems and arguments
 - Context: background information. A brief step back.
 - Topic/ theme development. Arguments. Examples.
 - Development of the main argument (followed by supporting evidence and conclusion).
 - This is where the strongest arguments are presented, along with arguments nr 3, 4 and 5
 - Also present your counter-argument. And then overturn it.
 - Present your 2nd strongest argument.
 - A proposal for change



- Avoid Overloading with Statistics or Facts. It's better to present statistics and facts separately in a designated fact box
 - To illustrate use your own experiences
- Paragraph Length: Each paragraph should consist of 3 to 5 sentences, ensuring they
 are connected and flow smoothly from one to the next.
- **Structure**: Conclude with a strong summary and punchline that reinforces your main message. Include a clear call to action to engage your readers further.
- Coherence: Ensure that your writing aligns with the style of the channel—whether it's
 a newspaper, magazine, or online portal—to maintain consistency and appeal.



- Other suggestions
 - Use clear, simple language
 - Keep sentences short
 - Make it interesting
 - Say something new
- Some more suggestions
 - Credit all sources
 - Double-check facts and spelling
 - Read it out loud: it is a great way to spot typos, awkward phrasing, and areas that need improvement.



- When the article is ready
 - The first person to convince is the opinion editor
 - They would like to see the finished article, not the idea of an article
 - Write an opinion piece that connects to current news
- If an opinion editor asks for your article, act fast. The topic may not remain relevant for long.
- After the opinion is published
 - Your piece may attract negative feedback, so be ready to defend your arguments politely and clearly.
 - Don't feel obligated to read the comments online; that's something I or a colleague can handle for you



PREPARATIONS

- How to visualize? For example oil-shale or phosphorite, legos, different colours and textures of liquid, nature, student formula.
- What else can be used?
- Demos must prioritize safety. Consider potential threats in the studio environment





SHORT EXCERCISE WHAT TO WEAR?

- Smart casual attire that boosts confidence
- Look polished and professional: clean and ironed clothing, combed hair
- Avoid dense stripes or checkered patterns: these can create a distracting effect on screen, making it look like they are "swimming" or moving
- Fit in: formal outfit with formal interview and casual with more laid back themes
- Make a choice: focus on your message.
 - Decide whether you want to draw attention to what you're saying or your outfit.
 - Don't experiment with a new hairdo or outfit right before an important event



SHORT EXCERCISE PREPARATIONS

- Before agreeing to an interview, ask from the journalist:
 - What is the exact topic?
 - What are the questions?
 - Who are the other interviewees?
- NB! Talk to your supervisor.
- What are your own topics, what is important to you max 3 themes.
 - Print this list: bring it with you to the interview
- Tell a story to add emotion and humanize the topic.





In May 2023, a teenager spat at and racially abused a Customer Service Assistant during rush hour. She was arrested and sentenced to three weeks in prison.

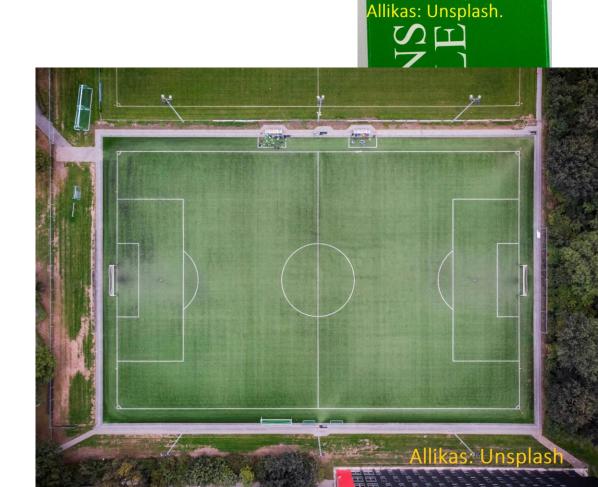




SHORT EXCERCISE PREPARATIONS_2

- Understand the background and history of the topic, including the global and local context, and be familiar with a few significant statistics, whether large or small
- Use plenty of examples
- Verify all your facts every single one.
- Illustrate with comparisons:
 - size of the human hair, matchbox, football field, as big as City of Tallinn





SHORT EXCERCISE PREPARATIONS_3

- Use simple language: talk as if you're explaining things to your grandparents.
 - Avoid foreign words, complex scientific terms and jargon
 - Speak in a way that your audience can easily understand.
- Find an interesting place for your interview; a lab is always a great choice! Where else?



SHORT EXCERCISE PREPARATIONS_4

- Check, how a theoretical physicist does that www.youtube.com/watch?v=TAhbFRMURtg
- Or mathematiciann www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vp570S6Plt8
- Drink water.



SHORT EXCERCISE DURING AN INTERVIEW_1

- Get straight to the point
- Free your breathing: stand or sit in one place, except when you need to move to demonstrate something
 - Standing: keep your feet shoulder-width apart.
 - Sitting: sit like a pianist, maintaining good posture. Be mindful of the length of your skirt.
- Use your hands naturally
- Avoid crossing your arms or moving your hands behind you
- Don't sway side to side or move up and down.
- Listen to the question
- If you didn't hear or understand the question, ask the interviewer to repeat or clarify it
- If the journalist asks multiple questions, choose the one you prefer to answer.
 - When discussing serious topics, keep your facial expression serious





SHORT EXCERCISE DURING AN INTERVIEW_1

- Avoid saying or doing anything you wouldn't want to be seen or heard later.
 - Watch your language
- Where to look journalist will tell you
- Don't worry about filling silence; it's not your problem.
- Avoid provocation: don't engage with provocative questions.
 - For example, if asked, "Have you stopped drinking brandy in the mornings?" remember that there is no suitable answer to such a question.
- Questions will not stay inside the news except in interviews
- Speak a bit more slowly and in a lower voice than usual



SHORT EXCERCISE HOW TO STAY TRUE TO YOURSELF

- The camera may be recording both before and after the interview.
- Stay silent: If you don't want to answer, it's okay to remain silent.
- Don't lie. If you don't know the answer, just say so.
- Silence your phone.
- Once the interview concludes, your control is also over. However, in written text, you can have the right to review and check facts before any comments are published -- provided this is agreed upon before the interview starts



THREATS

- No dirty laundry
- Journalist: friendly or the other
- Biased journalist
- Prejudiced expectations
- Ordered opinion
- What else would be best to avoid?



THE WORD IS PUBLISHED

- Once published, changes can be difficult: it's best to provide accurate comments or information from the start to avoid complications later
- Handling feedback: the feedback can be critical. When and how should you react? Or is it simply a discussion?
- Your message may spread to other channels and news outlets, which is a positive sign.



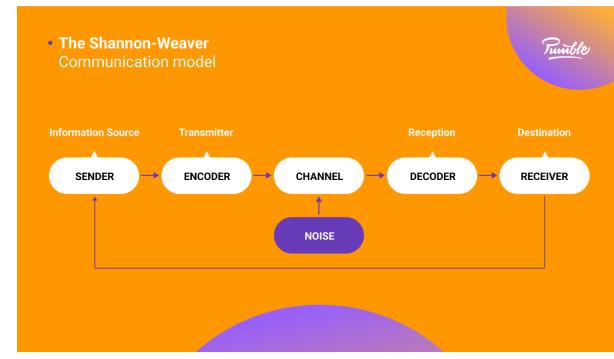
WHAT'S LEFT

- Crisis communication
 - Provide necessary and background information and rely on experts to manage the situation
 - Act quickly



THEORY

- Communication: social interaction through messages (Fiske)
- Shannon decoding terminology...
- A gatekeeper, typically an editor, decides whether your idea goes public
 - Timeline
 - Amount of characters (in print and web)
- AI as an actor in communication?





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