

SOLUTIONS JOURNALISM

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What is solutions journalism?

- Through solutions journalism, reporters cover a wide variety of social issues facing citizens in a way that hones in on and emphasizes the potential responses, or solutions, to those issues.
- The stories that result provide deeply reported, in-depth information about a particular issue and make clear to audiences what possible means of solving that issue have been or may be applied.
- Solutions journalists hope to make individual readers more informed and efficacious citizens.
- Solutions journalism is ideally situated to local news.



Key Steps in Solutions Journalism

1. They center the story they are reporting on a response to an important issue, and they cover that response clearly by providing all the critical information and detail that audiences need to know in order to understand how the response works (or doesn't).
2. In covering this response, they emphasize its actual effectiveness (or lack thereof), rather than what the response was intended to achieve. Clarifying the response's effectiveness requires providing audiences with understandable evidence.
3. They make audiences aware of the response's potential limitations and break down the boundaries and scope of this response to the problem.
4. Finally, solutions journalists include in their work insights about the problem illuminated by this response that may be useful to their audiences and other people.

Tell the **WHOLE** story:

W: What response does the story address?

H: How does the response work?

O: Offer insight.

L: Include limitations.

E: Evidence of impact.

Benefits

- Makes readers more engaged with news about issues facing their community.
- People who consume solutions-oriented journalism are more likely than consumers of traditional news to share the stories they read and seek out additional information about the problems being covered.
- Engagement drives news consumption, which increases financial success.



Key Takeaways:

- Solutions journalism stories present responses to important social problems through evidence-based reporting that makes clear how the response is effective, what its limitations are, and what insights can be gained from that response.
- Solutions journalism stories are driven by the need to engage and inform communities, not to give them "good news." They are critical and detailed examinations of a potential solution, not soft news pieces worshiping or glorifying a social actor or problem response.
- Research shows that solutions-oriented journalism can engage readers, make them more informed, increase their likelihood of sharing news, and drive them to seek out additional information about the issue being covered.