

2007 MIWs

them enough information, opinion, or variety of viewpoints to help them make up their minds?

And sometimes, when the spots are effective, listeners say they like to learn about bargains or new products or services.

7. "TALKABLE" TOPICS

We're lucky; we work in radio. Most listeners do not have exciting lives or careers, so they want to hear "talkable" topics. Ask yourself: If you aren't talking about this off the air, why talk about it on the air? Before you discuss something on air, consider whether you would talk about this topic if you didn't have a radio show. Listeners also want vicarious experiences. They like to be taken on journeys they cannot take on their own.

8. MAKE ME LAUGH

If you can make a listener laugh, it's like handing them a solid chunk of gold.

9. TELL ME SOMETHING NEW

Listeners like to be in the know, and to learn new things. Give them material they can talk about, so when they turn the radio off, they have ideas and interesting new things to say to people. They also appreciate a little help with their "show prep" for dinner, just in case they don't have anything interesting to say when they get home after work.

10. SPEAK VISUALLY


Radio is an imagination medium. Remember to use details, speak visually, and paint word pictures. Imagine you are talking to one person, and that person is blind. How would you describe what you are talking about so the listener can "see" it?

11. HEALTH, HEART, POCKETBOOK

For years, Frank Magid & Associates' "health, heart, pocket-book" rules of topic selection applied. Today, there is a new one: transformation — how the listener's life can be better tomorrow than it is today because of what they've heard on the air. Discuss stories and topics that show a listener what is possible. Show them that they don't have to settle for the life they have; it can get better. This keeps audiences riveted. (Think Oprah, Extreme Makeover, etc.)

12. INSPIRE

All listeners want to feel good. If you give them that, you'll have the audience completely with you. Remember, if you don't care, they don't care. Make it matter!

Portions of this article were excerpted with permission from *Creating Powerful Radio: Getting, Keeping and Growing Audiences for News, Talk, Information & Personality* by Valerie Geller. 

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