

## Newsworthy elements

<p><b>Controversy/ conflict</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What drama or controversy do you want to highlight?</li> <li>• What is at stake? For whom?</li> <li>• Should a business, institution, or government agency be doing something differently?</li> <li>• Are rules or regulations being violated?</li> <li>• Who is benefiting from this problem not being solved?</li> <li>• Who is losing out? How?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Advocates appeal and draw media attention to HMO decisions to retroactively deny coverage to patients once they become ill.</p>
<p><b>Irony</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is ironic about this story?</li> <li>• Is there a contradiction to point out between how things should work and how they are really happening?</li> <li>• Is there hypocrisy to reveal?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> "Where's the Fruit?" a study released by the Strategic Alliance, played up the irony — and hypocrisy — of companies using fruit on labels but not in the products themselves.</p>
<p><b>Injustice</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is inequitable or unfair about a particular situation?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ About the decision of an institution or government agency?</li> <li>○ About the treatment of a vulnerable group?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Is this injustice serious enough for the media to adopt an ongoing watchdog roll?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Advocates use a report showing that low-income communities of color are more likely to be exposed to air pollution to demand that local regulators restrict new pollution permits.</p>

<p><b>Anniversary</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can your story be connected to the anniversary of a local, national or historical milestone?</li> <li>• Was legislation or a regulation passed previously that has made a difference to this problem or should have?</li> <li>• Does the anniversary offer the opportunity to ask what happened then and where are we now?</li> <li>• What progress has been, or should have been made?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> One year after Hurricane Katrina ravaged New Orleans, California news stories ranged from coverage of individual stories of struggle, to investigations of government failings, to a Sacramento Bee article that took a very local angle on the theme by running a front page story called “Tempting Fate: Still Awash in Doubt” about the risk of flooding being faced by Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta residents.</p>
<p><b>Broad population interest</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does this story affect a lot of people, or does it relate to groups of special concern, such as children or the elderly?</li> <li>• How can your story emphasize the aspects of your issue that are important, interesting or appealing to the broadest number of viewers or readers?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Advocates working to secure universal health insurance in California highlight how many people in a variety of circumstances across the state have been without health insurance at some point in the past few years.</p>
<p><b>Seasonal/holiday link</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What about your story, issue or policy goal can be connected to a holiday or seasonal event?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> The Orange County Community Foundation used Valentine's Day as an opportunity to pitch stories about its donations to a Free Clinic to start a new program called “Mi Corazon/Mi Vida” (My heart/ My life) which will provide services to reduce women’s risks for heart disease. Environmental advocates also used Valentine’s Day to highlight the high use of dangerous pesticides in flower production. Gay rights advocates used the holiday to stage a protest in front of San Francisco City Hall where two years before they had been allowed to marry.</p>

<p><b>Breakthrough/ milestone</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the story mark an important medical, political or historical “first”?</li> <li>• Can you make the case that, given a particular event, decision or action, things will never be the same on this issue or in your community?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> The adoption of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) by the World Health Organization was framed as a milestone in the history of corporate accountability and public health. After three years of negotiations, 192 countries agreed to the adoption of the first-ever global public health treaty.</p>
<p><b>Personal angle</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a person who can serve as a representative example of a broader problem — a person with direct experience with the issue who can provide an authentic voice in the story?</li> <li>• Is that person prepared to talk to a reporter about the problem in a manner that emphasizes the necessary policy solutions?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Mothers residing near ports of Long Beach became effective advocates when they decided to talk publicly about the toll air pollution takes on their families and the need for policy solutions.</p>
<p><b>Celebrity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do any celebrities support your issue and policy goal?</li> <li>• Would they be willing to lend a hand to your efforts?</li> <li>• If you are able to form a partnership with celebrities, will the relationship be worthwhile — and predictable?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Former Pittsburgh Steelers’ running back Jerome Bettis has used his celebrity status to promote asthma education and treatment. He asks those with asthma to take the “Asthma Control Test” and talk to their doctor if their asthma is not under control.</p>

<p><b>Visuals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What compelling visuals would explain the problem and policy goals?</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Child care teachers show up at a state budget hearing with dozens of preschool children bearing signs in support of their teachers. The slogans on their signs, such as “Support our teachers so they can support us,” clearly link to the policy goal of increasing teacher salaries.</p>
<p>This table was adapted from News for A Change: An Advocate’s Guide to Working with the Media, 1999.</p>	