

Free practical tips to change your news organisation

 blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2008/10/18/free-practical-tips-to-change-your-news-organisation/

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My co-revellers in the [Carnival of Journalism](#) have their monthly bulletin of online journalism wisdom on show again. Go [here](#) to get their free practical tips to change your news organisation. Mine is more of a psychotherapy session.

A few weeks ago I was approached at a conference by one of the best specialist correspondents at the BBC. He was distraught. Was he facing the sack? Had he libelled the Royal Family? No. The reason for his genuine and deeply felt distress was that he had been asked by his bosses to blog.

My correspondent friend was asking me for help because during my [talk](#) that day I had put blogging in a much more traditional [journalist-friendly context](#). I guess, that as hack from a traditional background with no technological expertise whatsoever, I also came across as someone from the same mould as the experienced correspondent.

The teenage geeks and grey-suited managers who had tried to get him to blog had simply confirmed all his worst fears. These fears were, he explained, that blogging is difficult, it takes all day, it has to be controversial and/or witty, and it is fact-free and devoid of any editorial value.

I spent literally an hour listening to his concerns. I then explained the different reasons why I blog. It is useful, it is fun and it works as journalism, [networked journalism](#). I showed him that there is no one way to blog. He should only do it in a way that works for him and that fits in with his work pattern.

Perhaps he should blog about the problems of reporting his specialist subject? Perhaps he should blog about the bits of information he couldn't fit in to his radio or TV pieces? Perhaps he should just list a few links to sources that he found useful?

I assured him that he can ignore the specious or rude comments. Moderation is allowed and, indeed, desirable. He might even get tips and story ideas from his readers, I suggested.

It was like a revelation. He looked like a man taken off a kind of Digital Death Row.

So my tip is this. Make sure that your change agents match the people you are trying to change.

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