

# BBC sums don't add up

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The BBC Trust [announcement](#) that it accepts Director-General Mark Thompson's package of cuts is a recognition of brutal reality. But why does it mean the slashing jobs in places like BBC Factual where 40% of posts may disappear?

The BBC has been given a financial settlement that other media organisations can only envy. It will have to find efficiency savings of 3% a year but so has every other commercial news group that I know. New technology should go a long way to bridging that gap. So why sack so many journalists?

It is partly because the BBC is not prepared to tackle the culture of management consultants, too many bosses, and too many extra organisational services that have no benefit to the public. However, I suspect they don't add up to £2 billion a year. The fundamental problem is that the BBC continues to grow its empire.

No-one doubts that the BBC should be online. I personally can see the logic for BBC 4 and even the dreaded BBC 3. But at some point you have to choose NOT to do certain things and to accept that there are some new things that you should not begin.

These will not be popular suggestions as lambs for the slaughter, but should the BBC have launched a new Arabic service? Should it not consider abandoning much of its dreadful local coverage? Should it not restrict its online work to news and education?

Well, it is tough for me to decide but I don't run the BBC. It is their job to prioritise and that means saying 'no we won't do that' as well as 'you're fired'. Of course, journalists must become multi-skilled, multi-platform and more efficient. But it is clear that certain parts of news and factual programming are taking hits that will impact upon the quality of the product.

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