

## THE “WRITE” WAY TO MAKE HEADLINES

by:

**Ronald Jr. B. Lacumbes**

*Campus Journalist, Magsaysay National High School*

As a campus journalist, I’ve learned that being part of a school publication isn’t just about writing articles or creating content. It’s about upholding the values of honesty, fairness, and responsibility. Ethical considerations guide our work, and they are crucial in ensuring that our writing serves not only the school community but also the greater good. Every story we tell has the power to inform, influence, or even inspire, which is why it's vital for us to adhere to ethical standards.

The requirement for honesty and candor is among the most significant ethical issues I've come across. I am aware that any errors or misrepresentations in my writing could be harmful because I work as a journalist. Whether it's a straightforward factual mistake or a misquote, it erodes my readers' confidence in me. I make it a point to verify all my facts, check my sources, and ensure that every statement I make is grounded in truth. According to Gomez (2023), “Accuracy is the bedrock of journalistic integrity. When journalists fail to verify facts, they jeopardize not only their credibility but also the trust of their audience.” This rings true to me every time I sit down to write – ensuring that my work is reliable and trustworthy is my top priority.

Another key aspect of campus journalism is fairness and impartiality. In our school, where diverse opinions and voices coexist, it’s essential that we provide a balanced perspective. I have learned that my job is not to promote a particular viewpoint but to present the facts in a way that respects the opinions of all parties involved. Covering controversial topics can be tricky, but by giving equal weight to all perspectives, I allow readers to form their own opinions based on an honest portrayal of the issue.

Writing with fairness also means not letting personal bias slip into my work. In doing so, I create a space where everyone's voice is heard and respected.

Confidentiality is another ethical responsibility that I take seriously. As a campus journalist, I am often privy to private or sensitive information. Whether it's a personal story from a fellow student or confidential information from school staff, I understand that respecting privacy is crucial. I make sure to obtain consent before publishing any personal details and take care not to reveal information that could harm someone or violate their trust. Protecting the privacy of individuals in my articles is not just an ethical obligation—it's a matter of integrity and respect.

While it's tempting to write sensational stories that grab attention, I've learned to avoid sensationalism. It's easy to fall into the trap of making a story more dramatic or exaggerated than it needs to be for the sake of increased readership. However, I have learned that sensationalism can be harmful and misleading. It can tarnish the reputation of individuals or groups involved, and it can damage the credibility of the publication.

As a campus journalist, I strive to write stories that are thoughtful, respectful, and rooted in truth. Instead of relying on dramatic flair, I focus on the real story and let the facts speak for themselves.

Avoiding conflicts of interest is another ethical guideline that I take to heart. I understand that my position as a journalist should never be used for personal gain or to further my own agenda. Maintaining objectivity is key to ensuring that my work remains credible and fair. Whether it's writing about a school event or covering an issue affecting the student body, I keep my personal feelings out of the reporting process. Transparency and honesty are essential, and I make sure to be clear about my sources and the information I present.

In addition to this, plagiarism is something I take very seriously. In the world of journalism, crediting sources is not just a courtesy; it's a requirement. I know that taking

someone else's words or ideas without proper attribution is not only unethical but also academically dishonest. Whenever I quote someone, paraphrase an idea, or use an image, I ensure that I give proper credit. This practice not only respects the work of others but also reinforces the integrity of my own writing.

Finally, accountability is a vital ethical consideration in campus journalism. As a journalist, I understand that mistakes happen, and when they do, it's important to own up to them. If I make an error in an article, I am responsible for correcting it. This transparency builds trust with readers and demonstrates that the publication values accuracy and accountability. It also teaches me the importance of learning from mistakes and improving my work going forward.

Being a campus journalist is a rewarding yet challenging experience. Through my work, I've come to understand the weight of ethical journalism. By adhering to the principles of truthfulness, fairness, confidentiality, and accountability, I ensure that my work serves the best interests of the school community. These ethical guidelines not only enhance the credibility of the publication but also shape me into a more responsible and thoughtful writer. The lessons I've learned in the school publication will guide me throughout my academic and professional journey, reminding me of the importance of integrity in everything I do.

#### *References:*

Gomez, L. (2023). Ethical guidelines for student journalism: Ensuring credibility and responsibility. *Journal of Educational Media*, 14(2), 67-79