

THE KEYS TO POWERFUL SOLUTIONS JOURNALISM

Austin, TX – August 13, 2019 – At a time when news coverage is often portrayed as too negative, solutions journalism offers a more comprehensive view of the story. Our [past research](#) shows that readers of solutions journalism feel more informed, optimistic, and interested in engaging with the reported issue. In this new study, the Center for Media Engagement looked at five core components of solutions journalism:

1. *Problem*: The causes and symptoms of the issue,
2. *Solution*: The replicable ideas tied to solving the problem,
3. *Implementation*: The how-to details of putting the solution into action,
4. *Results*: The progress, data-based or anecdotal, that has been made in working toward a solution, and
5. *Insights*: The teachable, big-picture lessons that can be learned beyond one particular solution or situation.

This experiment set out to determine which components of solutions journalism had the greatest effect on reader attitudes. We found that articles containing all five components:

- Improved readers' perceptions of article quality.
- Increased readers' intentions to engage.
- Increased interest in and knowledge about the issue.
- Boosted readers' positivity.

"Solutions journalism has the potential to help rebuild relationships between journalists and the public," says researcher Caroline Murray. "It involves journalists in the everyday problems people face and it connects the public to community leaders that are trying to solve the issue."

For newsrooms, the results of this study suggest that it is worth the effort to fully explore all five components of solutions journalism in depth. Doing so can improve how readers view the quality of the coverage as well as make them want to get involved in finding a solution to the problem.

This research was supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation with contributions from The Impact Architects. To read more about the findings, access the full report on our website:

<https://mediaengagement.org/research/powerful-solutions-journalism>

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The Center for Media Engagement, part of the Moody College of Communication at The University of Texas at Austin, provides research-based techniques for engaging digital audiences in commercially viable and democratically beneficial ways. Learn more at mediaengagement.org.