5 WAYS TO CONNECT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

1. Build Relationships in the Community
   • Establish trust by finding ways to connect before a big story happens
   • Get involved in causes or community events
   • Let community members know how to reach you
   • Use social media as a relationship-building tool

2. Showcase a Variety of Voices
   • Reflect variety in age, race/ethnicity, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomics
   • Avoid relying on the same few sources for every story
   • Refrain from focusing only on people with extreme views

3. Examine Your Story Framing
   • Use neutral language when describing contentious situations
   • Avoid terms that serve as catch-all labels for people who may have very different beliefs
   • Be fair and consistent in coverage of local communities

4. Think Outside the Story
   • Share information about community resources
   • Look for positive community developments that might inspire stories
   • Show empathy when asking sources about difficult situations
   • Consider biases: Explore ideas or questions that might be uncomfortable

5. Diversify Your Newsroom
   • Diversify by age, race/ethnicity, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomics
   • Remember that communities want to be represented in their newsrooms

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