

Published with the new book by Michele McLellan and Tim Porter
News, Improved: How America's Newsrooms Are Learning to Change

Investing



in the



Future of News

Training for Midcareer Journalists
Key Survey Findings • March 2007



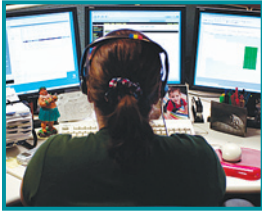
About the Knight Foundation

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, founded with the personal fortunes of newspaper owners Jack and Jim Knight, has given more than \$300 million to journalism-related causes since 1950. We aim to advance journalism excellence through education and training, to promote press freedom at home and abroad, and to help improve news in the public interest in all its forms.

We seek opportunities to invest in high-impact, transformational projects, those that create visible, lasting change. Our newest project is called the Knight Brothers' 21st Century News Challenge. If all goes as planned, we will set aside \$25 million over the next five years to seed innovative community news experiments. In the 20th Century, the Knight Brothers' newspapers were the glue that helped bind and build communities. We want to know who or what in the 21st century will do that. (You can learn more about the contest at newschallenge.org) Why focus on local news? Because our democracy is organized by community. Our future as a nation can't be separated from the future of our towns, suburbs and cities.



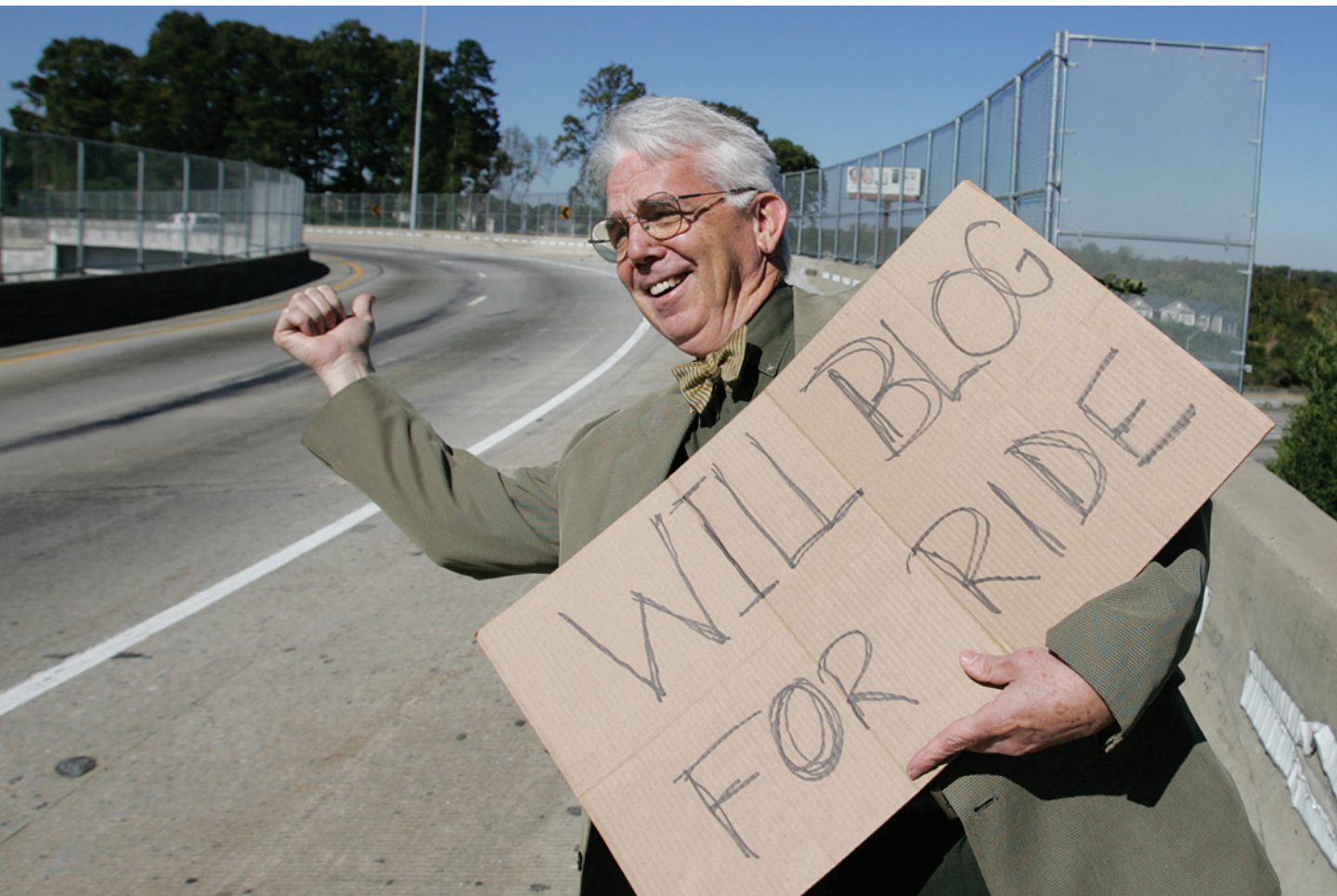
www.knightfdn.org



Journalists need more training. They know it. Their bosses know it. But training, a force that at once accelerates change and eases the difficulty of it, is not keeping pace with the challenges of an industry that is changing rapidly and radically.

Investing in the Future of News, a new survey of more than 2,000 American journalists and news executives, finds nine in 10 journalists say they need more training and nine in 10 newsroom executives agree. The executives – typically among the most experienced and knowledgeable journalists – also admit they need more training themselves.

This hunger to learn – crossing multiple topics, from craft skills training, including new media, to ethics and legal affairs to management – is not surprising. The digital revolution has upended journalism. The speed at which information moves – and the new ways people consume it – is transforming what journalists need to know and do.

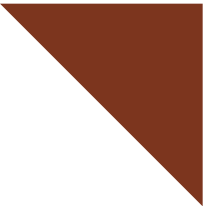


Jim Wooten, editorial page columnist at *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* participates in a commuting blog.

Journalists and news organizations must adapt, and adapt quickly and continuously. Traditional newsrooms can remake themselves, and some are doing just that.

The key to this transformation is strategic training in America's newsrooms.

Since 2003, training and research projects that comprise Knight's \$10 million Newsroom Training Initiative have worked with journalists and news executives. These projects demonstrate that training linked to actionable goals and encouraged by forward-looking leadership drives innovation and audience appeal by improving newsroom culture and news content.




“The tumult in the industry has forced everyone to recognize that we need to change to be successful and that there is a need for leaders and employees who are trained to handle that.”

Gary Pruitt, chairman, president, CEO, The McClatchy Company

This work is detailed in *News, Improved*, a new book by Michele McLellan and Tim Porter. McLellan, Porter and other Knight project directors sought to bring to the newsroom lessons from other professions and industries that consider investment in employee development critical to business success.

The new poll suggests a divide in the news industry. The good news: Three in 10 news organizations say they are doing more training today than five years ago. The bad news: The other end of the bell curve also is growing.

Overall, training in the news industry hasn't changed in the five years since Knight funded “Newsroom Training: Where's the Investment?” Then, as now, the No. 1 source of dissatisfaction among working journalists is the lack of training.



“Thinking about training and development in business terms, there is no question, no question in my mind at all, that it’s essential to our success.”

Jay Smith, president, Cox Newspapers

“Any news organization that believes it can move forward without investing in the development of its staff is kidding itself. ”

Dana Robbins, publisher, Waterloo (Ont.) Region Record and former editor, Hamilton Spectator

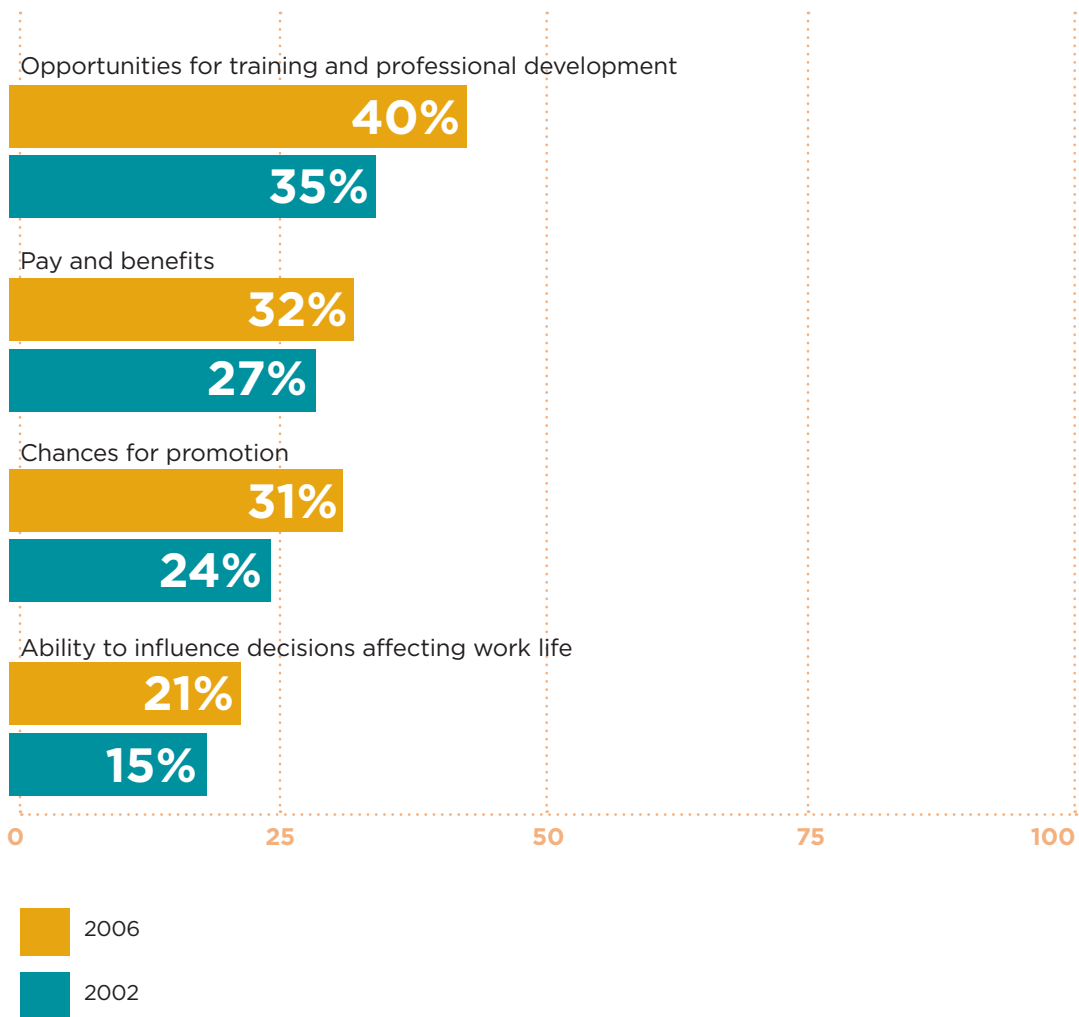
1. Journalists need training more than ever.

Nine in 10 journalists feel a need for more training than they are getting now. The top source of job discontent among the journalists is “lack of training and development opportunities.” Four in 10 say they are dissatisfied with training opportunities.

News executives agree that journalists need more training. Nine in 10 executives say their staffs would benefit from additional training. About half say their staffs would benefit “a lot.”

JOB DISSATISFACTION RATINGS

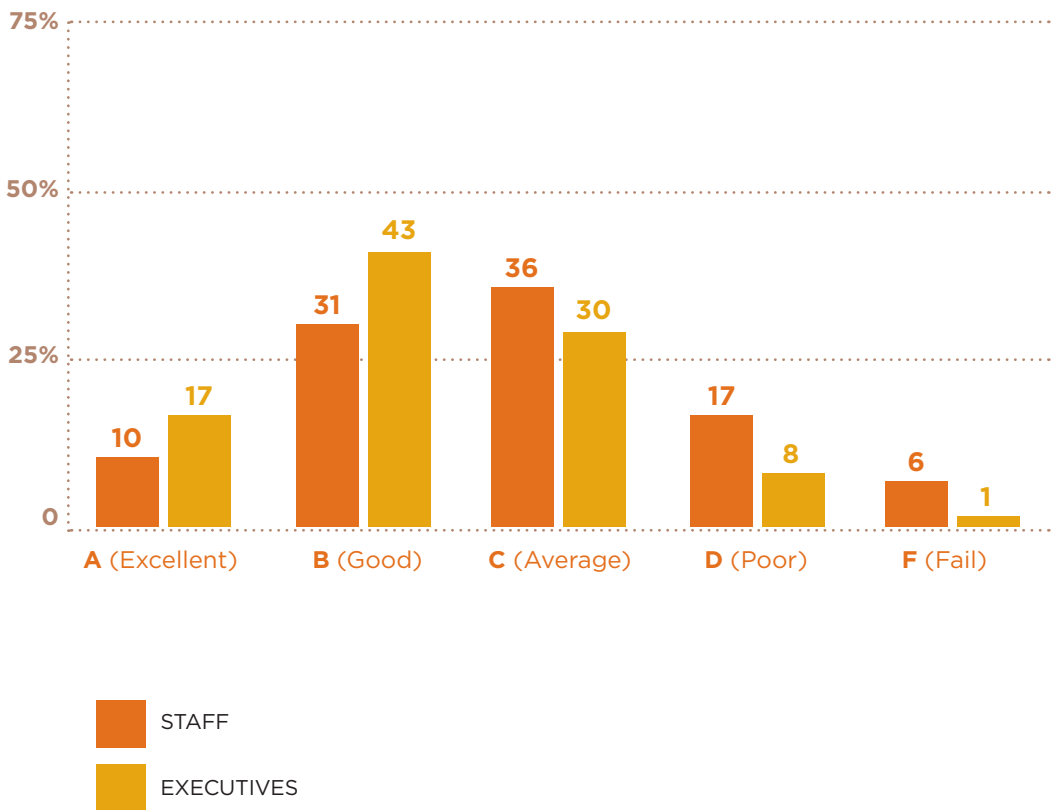
Journalists are most dissatisfied with ...



2. News organizations get only a “C” grade for training.

Journalists give their organizations a “C” average for training. Executives give their training programs slightly higher marks. Both executives and staff give out lower grades than they did five years ago.

TRAINING REPORT CARDS



3. Training is uneven across the news industry.

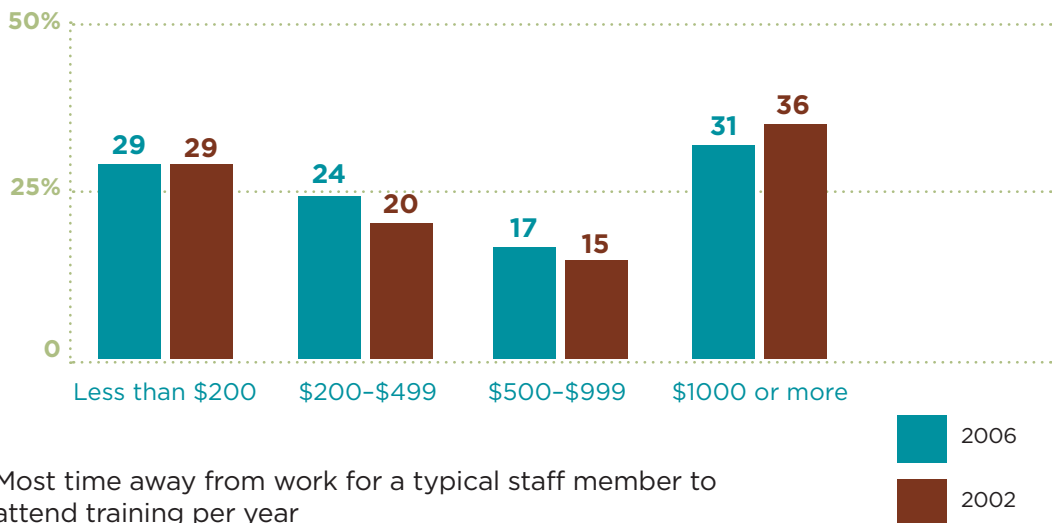
One in 10 news organizations provides no training, and three in 10 journalists were not provided with any training by their news organizations.

Executives say lack of money and time are the biggest obstacles to providing more training. On average, industry investment in training – time and money – was largely flat compared to 2002, except for a drop at the high end, among organizations spending \$1,000 or more and allowing a staff member to be away for a month or more.

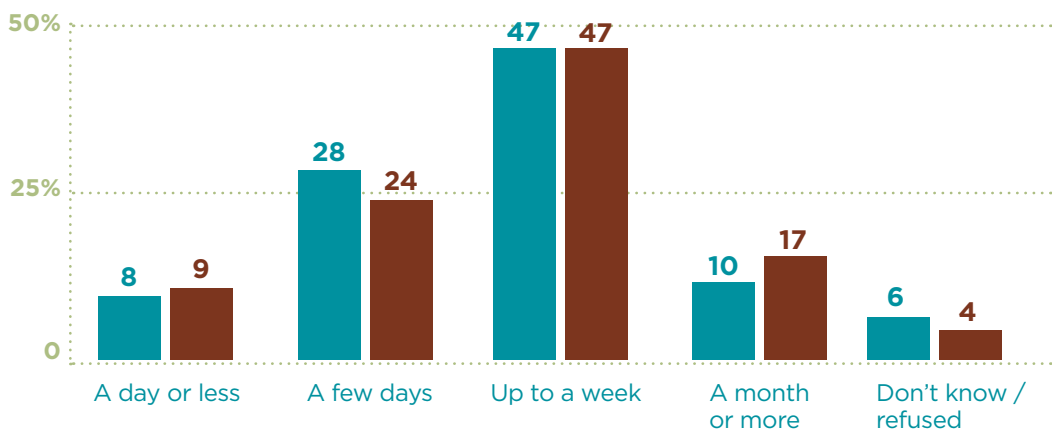
Four in 10 executives report that their newsroom training is part of a larger effort developed by a parent company, a higher rate than in 2002.

INVESTMENT IN TRAINING

Most money the organization can spend per staff member per year



Most time away from work for a typical staff member to attend training per year



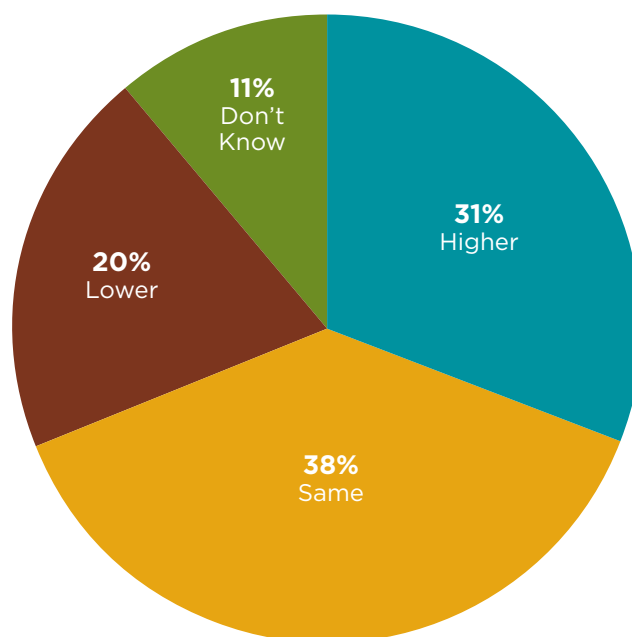
4. News organizations that are providing more training are seeing results.

Three in 10 news organizations have increased their training budgets in the past five years. Those increasing training tend to be national media organizations, the top 100 newspapers in circulation, and smaller-market television outlets. Organizations in growth areas in the South and West are more likely to have increased training than news outlets in the Northeast or Midwest.

Organizations that are increasing training tend to be more strategic about it: They are more likely to have a training coordinator, more likely to allocate 2 percent or more of their news budget to training, more likely to require staff members participate in training and more likely to strongly link training to specific goals. Executives in these organizations give training performance an “A” or “B” grade.

Meanwhile, one in five news organizations has cut the training budget in the past five years and four in 10 are keeping training at about the same level.

TRAINING BUDGETS SINCE 2002



5. Weekly newspapers, local radio and ethnic media are less likely to provide training.

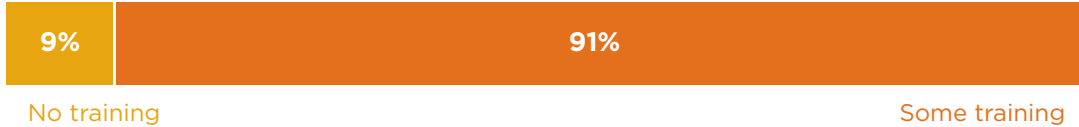
Local radio, weekly newspapers and ethnic media organizations tend to spend less money on training than larger organizations, suggesting they are more reliant on free training.

TRAINING PROVIDED BY NEWS ORGANIZATIONS

LOCAL TELEVISION



DAILY NEWSPAPERS



ETHNIC MEDIA



LOCAL RADIO



WEEKLY NEWSPAPERS



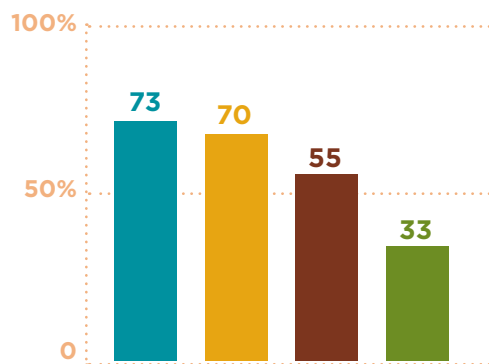
6. Multimedia and new media training are increasing.

Training in ethics and law and in journalism crafts such as writing, photography and design, are most often provided, executives say, followed by new media. Most news organizations plan to increase their spending for new media training. Content or beat training such as politics, business or health, is provided less frequently and the amount has declined since 2002.

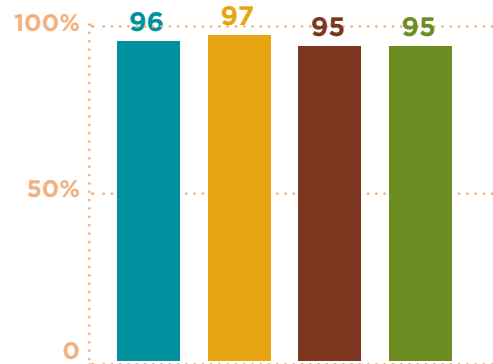
Four in 10 journalists who feel they need additional training said they would benefit most from more training in new media, followed by craft skills, 22 percent; beat areas, 13 percent; and ethics, 8 percent.

TYPES OF TRAINING FOR JOURNALISTS

Organization provides training in



Executives find training effective in

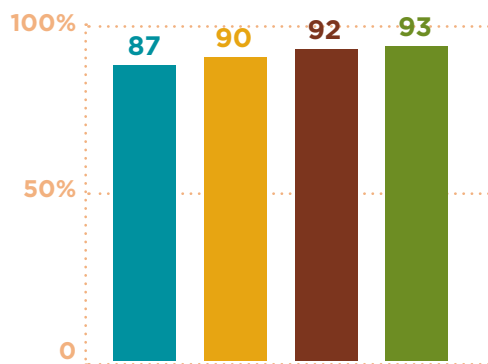




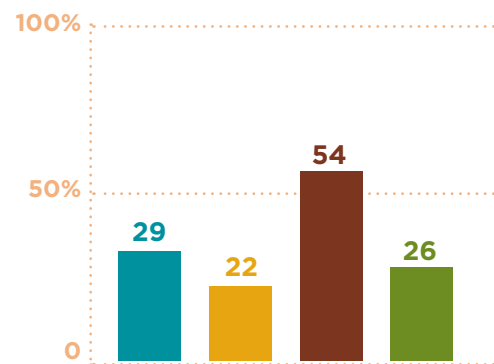
“Training goes hand-in-hand with improvement. The more quality training you can provide your staff, the better they become and the better the newspaper and Web site become.”

Ken Tuck, editor, The Dothan Eagle

Staff find training useful in



Organization plans to *increase* training in

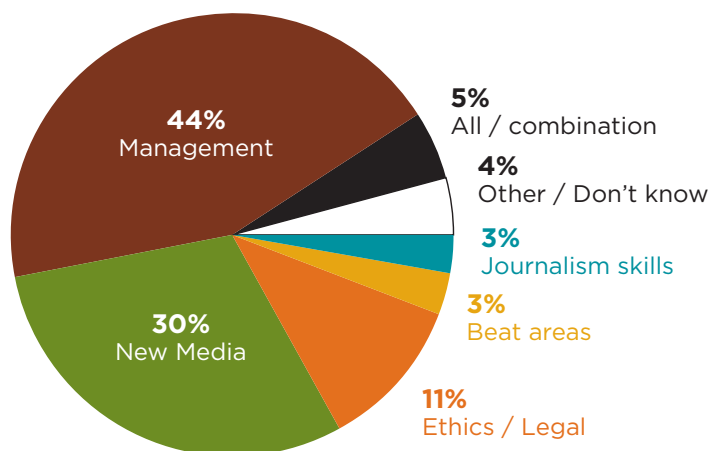


7. Management training is a priority.

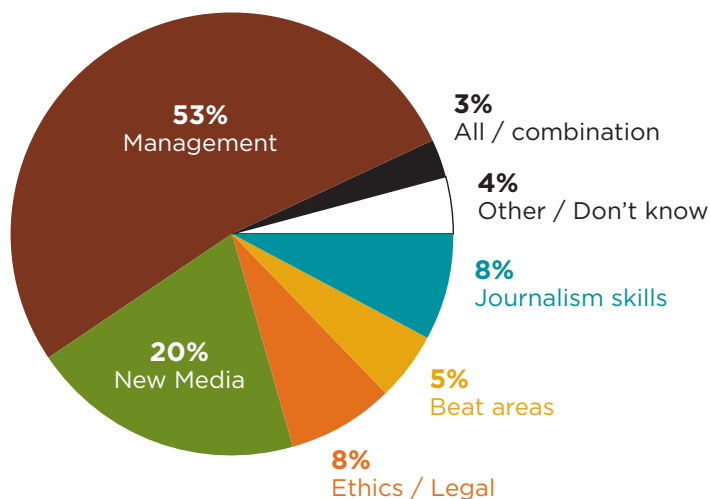
Nine in 10 news executives want more training, and four in 10 say they would benefit most from management training. Their staffs agree. Nine in 10 journalists also said top managers would benefit from additional training. Among staff who think top managers should have more training, more than half said they would benefit most from management training. Eight in 10 journalists said their immediate supervisors would benefit from more training and nearly half of them said the supervisors needed management training more than any other type of training.

TOP MANAGERS' TRAINING NEEDS

Executives say they and other top managers would benefit from additional training in



Staff members say top managers would benefit from additional training in



8. Newsrooms rely most on in-house training.

Eight in 10 news organizations provided in-house training. Six in 10 use outside programs. Journalists prefer outside programs. Executives consider outside programs more effective in only one area – journalism ethics and legal issues.

TRAINING AREAS

News organizations provide training in-house or outside in the following areas

JOURNALISM SKILLS



BEAT AREAS



ETHICS / LEGAL



NEW MEDIA



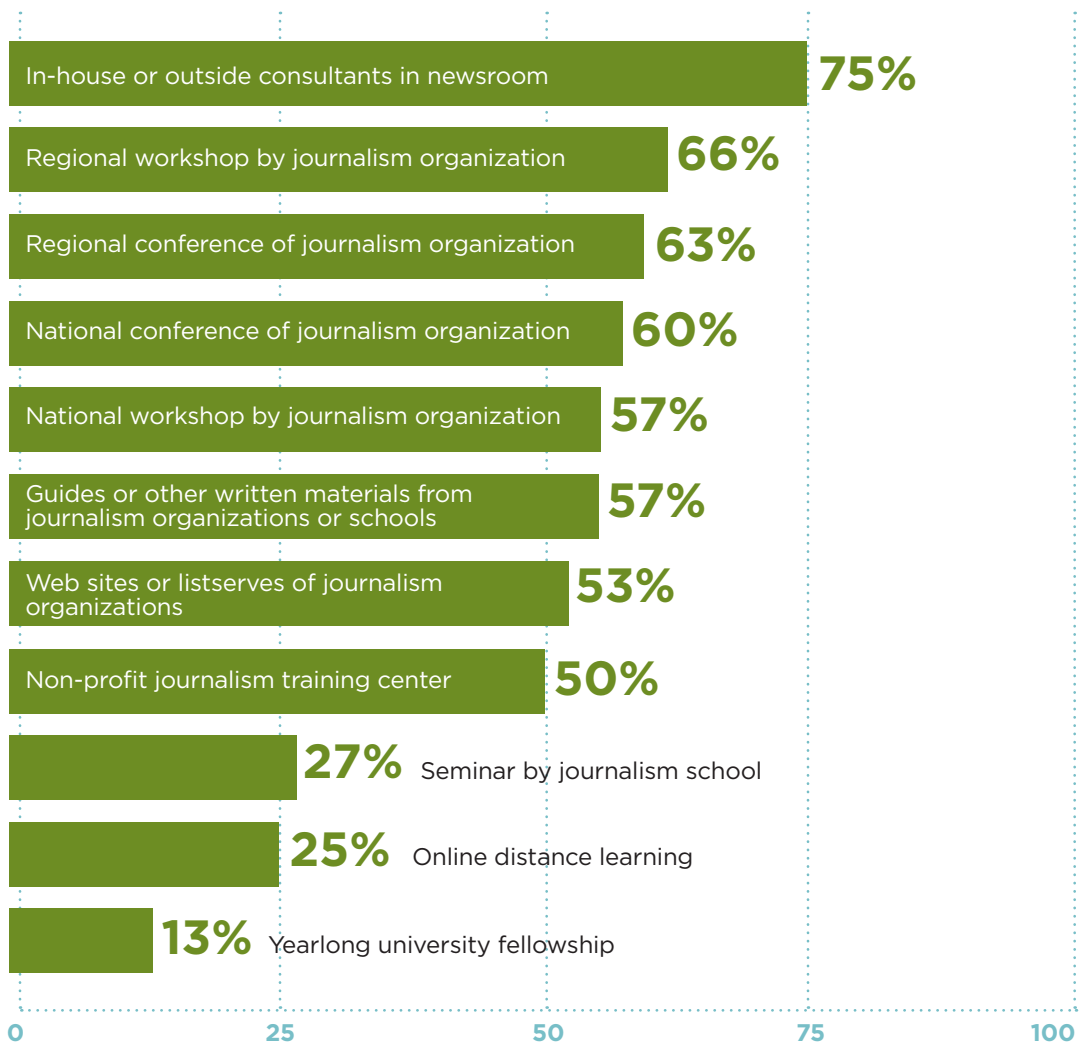
MANAGEMENT



9. Use of online distance learning has doubled.

One in 10 journalists use online distance learning, compared to only one in 20 five years ago. The increase, which coincides with the development of Poynter's News University and its more than 35,000 registered users, is accompanied by greater interest in online learning on the part of news executives. More than two in 10 said their newsrooms had used this method in the past year and another four in 10 said they would seriously consider using it.

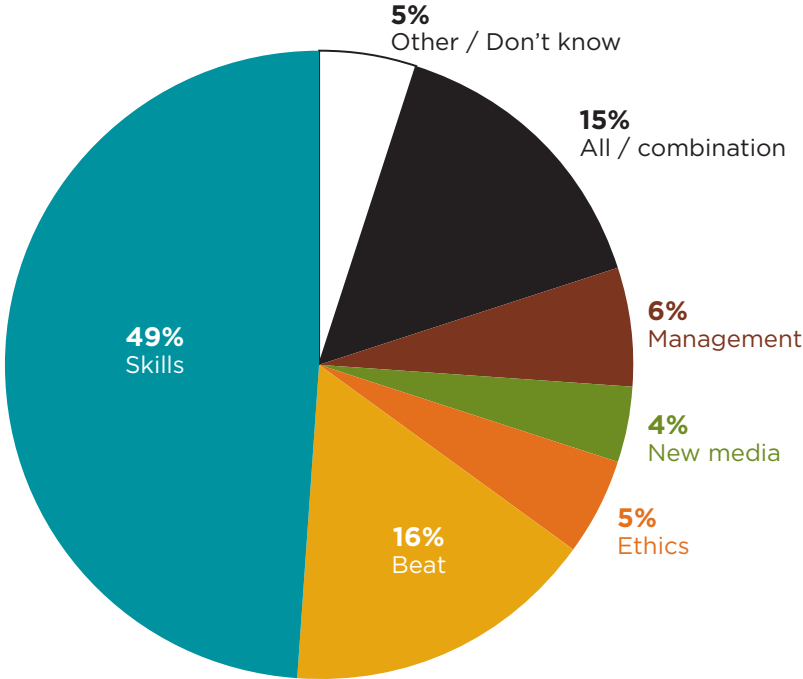
NEWSROOM USAGE OF TRAINING PROGRAMS




10. Beginning journalists need more training.

Only 3 percent of news executives who had recently hired new journalists said the new hires had the training they needed. More than half said new hires need some additional training and four in 10 said new hires need a lot more training. Half of the executives cited journalism skills as the top training need.

TRAINING NEW JOURNALISTS NEED MOST





Investing in the Future of News: Training for Midcareer Journalists, sponsored by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, is based on telephone and Web-administered interviews with 2,025 news executives and news staffers and was conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International (PSRAI).

Both executives and staffers were interviewed from 11 different media categories: daily newspapers, weekly newspapers, ethnic newspapers, national television networks, cable TV networks, local television stations, national radio networks, local radio stations, news magazines, wire services, and Internet news Web sites. Specific media categories were further stratified in both the executive and staff samples to represent the differences in organization size. Samples of executives and staffers were drawn randomly from those listed in *Bacon's Media Source*. The data were weighted to make the final executive and staffer samples more representative of their target populations and more comparable to each other.

A total of 741 news executives were interviewed Sept. 5 - Nov. 6, 2006. Results based on the news executives' survey have a margin of error of ± 5 percentage points. A total of 1,284 news staffers were interviewed Sept. 5 - Nov. 16, 2006. Results based on the news staffers' survey have a margin of error of ± 3 percentage points.

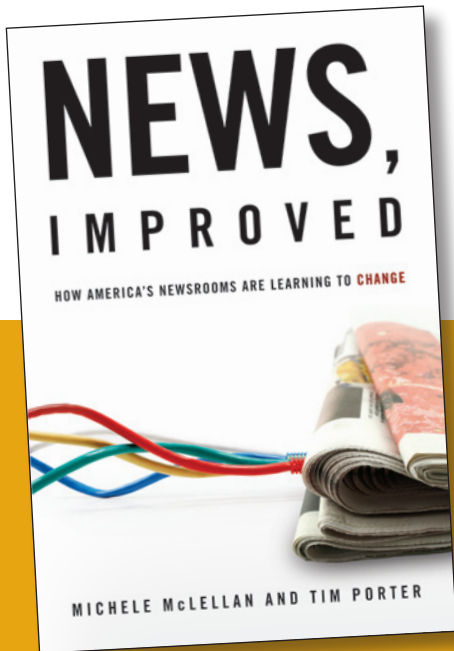
To learn more about the survey's methodology or to read the survey questionnaires, visit www.newsimproved.org.

Investing in the Future of News

Key Survey Findings

1. Lack of training is the top source of dissatisfaction among journalists, ahead of pay and chances for promotion. Nine in 10 journalists say they need more training.
2. Most journalists give their news organizations no higher than a “C” average for training.
3. One in 10 news organizations provides no training to its journalists.
4. Three in 10 news organizations have increased their training budgets in the past five years. Four in 10 have not changed their budgets; two in 10 organizations have cut budgets.
5. Weekly newspapers, local radio and ethnic media are less likely to provide training.
6. Multimedia and new media training are increasing.
7. Management training is a priority.
8. Newsrooms rely most on in-house training.
9. Use of online distance learning has doubled.
10. Executives say nearly all new journalists need more training.

A practical guide that tells how continuous, strategic learning can increase audience appeal and journalistic quality



News, Improved: How America's Newsrooms Are Learning to Change

News, Improved: How America's Newsrooms Are Learning to Change shows how leadership, goal-setting and staff development improve the culture of the newsroom and the content of the news product – both key drivers of audience appeal.

News, Improved focuses on lessons from \$10 million in training and research projects funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, including Tomorrow's Workforce, a partnership of major news corporations, more than 50 national journalism professional and midcareer teaching organizations, and one of the nation's most prestigious schools of journalism, Medill at Northwestern University. The four-year project showed how strategic newsroom training improved content and newsroom culture.

For more information or to read excerpts from the book, visit www.newsimproved.org.

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