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## Covering meetings and news conferences

"News Reporting and Writing,"  
Chapter 12



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## Similar to covering a speech

- Be prepared.
  - Why is the event being held?
  - Get an agenda.
  - Study background information.
- Arrive on time, and size up circumstances.



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## Taking notes

- Use speakers' key words and phrases, even when you're not taking direct quotations.
- Listen for good quotations.
  - Get them verbatim.
  - Put them in quotation marks in your notes.
- Understand the context, and pass it on to readers.



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## Using a recorder

- Only as backup
- Use counter to keep track.
- Watch for body language and actions that aren't recorded on the tape.



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## Watch the audience

- Size
- Reactions
  - Body language
  - Questions
  - Comments
  - What interests the people listening? It may also interest your readers.



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## Meetings

- Many are routine, but can provide tips and background.
- Some are business meetings where action is taken; some are only discussions.
- Sometimes the discussions prove most newsworthy.
- Look for information that will help readers know what to expect.



## News conferences

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- The speaker has a purpose, which may be self-serving. Your purpose is to inform your readers.
- Listen to others' questions and answers.
- Ask your own questions.
- Ask follow-up questions: Pin down specific answers.



## Hang around afterward

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- Observe.
- Ask questions.
  - Additional facts
  - Unanswered questions
  - Clarification
- Beat the competition:  
Make your story unique.



## Follow the story

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- Get people's reactions, especially if they've been accused.
- Verify facts.
- Add perspective.



## Writing the story

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- Focus on what was said and done, not the fact that the event was held or what the topic was.
- Ask and answer the question: What does my reader want to know or need to know?
- Write more than one story if warranted.
- You can write a summary story, maybe using bullets.