

9. **Quotation**—highlights a key phrase or a summary statement

Those who cannot adapt to changes in their working environment “will be left behind or swept aside,” according to Maxine Brightwell.

Brightwell, state director of employment security, addressed the topic of “Your Working Future” in a speech delivered Wednesday to students at the Iroquois County Vocational Center.

Caution, avoid beginning the lead with a direct quotation that requires explanation before it will make sense to the reader. Often a partial quotation which gets to the heart of the speaker’s meaning works better than a full quotation. When you do write a quotation lead, begin with what was said rather than who said it or what was talked about.

10. **Question**—uses a question to summarize a main idea

How can a school district with a \$1.5 million budget surplus two years ago suddenly be broke? That is the question Board of Education members will be hoping to answer during a special meeting Tuesday night at 7:30.

Caution, avoid overuse of question leads. Your goal is to give the reader answers to questions, not to ask questions. Although they are somewhat simple to write, they tend to be the mark of lazy reporters. Good question leads ask a significant question requiring more than a yes or no answer. Be sure to answer the question or explain its significance in the next sentence or paragraph.

11. **Irony**—makes use of an unexpected twist

Eight years ago doctors told the parents of Janet Cushing that she would most likely not recover from brain damage she received in a bicycling accident. Saturday the Cushings watched as their daughter walked away as the state champion in extemporaneous speaking.

12. Avoid beginning with **where** or **when** unless you have a compelling reason to do so. A lead beginning such as “Last week the Student Council voted . . .” emphasizes the age of the news. Select an angle to make the news fresh. The types of leads you choose to write should be determined by the facts of the story. Don’t strain to be different just to be different. Study the facts available and then write an appropriate lead which makes the best use of those facts in giving the reader a clear and interesting account of the story.