KACV-FM
OPERATIONS MANUAL
2002

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INTRODUCTION

This operations manual is designed for use by students or airstaff of KACV-FM (hereafter known as FM90). It is divided into different categories describing the current approved policies for operation of the station. If a question arises and the program director is not available either by phone or cell phone, you should be able to refer to this manual for the answer or at least as a guideline to help you make the proper decision.

Please keep this manual in your possession. There are no great programming secrets in it, but you have to learn to keep a station's inside operation to yourself-so begin with ours.

This manual presents overall guidelines for the FM90 operation but “forgotten” circumstances will require new clarification and explanation.

**Disciplinary actions for violations of station policy(s)**

As members of the FM90 air staff, you are fulfilling the lab requirements for a college course. While this is a lab, it is unlike biology or computer labs because the College must abide by the FCC guidelines as well.
as AC's policies. Thus, violations of any of these policies will result in disciplinary actions including, but not limited to, suspension of on-air or production duties and privileges.

The program director will determine the severity of any violations and corresponding penalties. Any student wishing to appeal a disciplinary action should follow the appeals process.

** Appeals of Disciplinary Actions **

Any student may appeal the program director's disciplinary action. Initially, you may request a meeting with the Radio/TV department chairperson. As a final appeal, you may convene a meeting with the FM90 general manager, department chairperson and program director.

I. Programming Philosophy and Policies

The primary purpose of FM90 is to serve as a teaching laboratory for the Amarillo College radio students. Students working on FM90 must provide the audience with as much listening pleasure as possible...regardless of format. This is accomplished with a thorough knowledge of the music, its background, knowledge of the artists, and, of course, proper pronunciation of the artists' names. You must understand that radio broadcasting is a business. When you work in commercial radio, you will play music intended to attract a station's target audience which will in turn increase their business which will in turn increase your salary. This applies to all formats. It's essential to learn something about all kinds of music to succeed in the radio business. You also must be able to add some on-air personality in the form of humor, information, or perhaps just plain sincerity. You must know when to intern these personality elements in conjunction with formatted items such as time, temperature, station promotions, etc.

Concentration and dedication are two important things to remember when working on personality and timing. The aspiring jock must concentrate on what format elements are to be executed next and how you can make things different or unique from the other on-air personalities. These things take time and practice, so dedication is important. Thinking it's "just too hard to do" or "this doesn't apply to me" is a mistake.

Since the main thrust of FM90 is a contemporary format, the majority of the material covered in this manual will deal with that programming (rock jazz, soul, New Age, etc.).

** Target Audience **

When programmers talk about the "target audience" for a radio station, they are referring to the core group of listeners for that station. Target audiences are discussed in terms of age groups, sex, or ethnic backgrounds. The majority of radio stations today tend to program for a target audience of 18- to 49-year-olds. FM90 is programmed mainly for 18- to 34-year-olds.

** Station Image **
Along with a station's target audience, there is a certain "image" that programmers try to create for their station in the community. Image is a difficult aspect of programming to explain because it's an intangible factor. Within the community certain people think of your station in different perspectives. For example, you may have a mental picture of bankers when you think of soft rock or maybe farmers if you mention country. These images may not be an accurate description of the listeners, but you see what I'm talking about. FM90's image is based on the following: (1) we play the new music first. (2) FM90 is the Panhandle's premier modern rock outlet, and (3) our jocks sound and act professional. A jock must dedicate oneself to constant development. A radio station staff must act and work as a team. Every number one station in the country has an on-air staff that functions together. Consider a radio staff the same as a sports team, with each person doing his job well and relying on others to collectively "do the same." Poor performance get the sports team member benched. At FM90, poor performance will get you taken off the air. At a commercial station, it would get you fired. Remember your role. Support your team members and score when you have "the ball." There is not an "i" in "team."

Music Policies

The most important aspect of any music station is it's product. The music a station plays or does not play will determine the image of a station. FM90 is an alternative station that plays new music first! We must play the music that helps us keep this image. When you work for a commercial stations you will play some songs you like, and you'll play songs you don't. But remember, stations don't pick music to attract jocks. They play music to attract their target listenership. At FM90 we program our music on Mondays using trade magazines like Radio & Records and The Gavin Report. This information is fed into our computer which in turn runs the play lists. When you begin each hour of your board shift you turn to that hour's play list, begin at the top and work your way down playing only the songs in the order listed. You may not add or delete from this list. Failure to follow this procedure could get you taken off the air. (It would get you fired at a commercial station.) If you want to discuss any change in the play-list, make a case for something or point something out that was missed, please, by all means discuss it with the music director.

Legal ID Requirements

This radio station must be identified once an hour and within two minutes either side of the top of the hour and it must be logged on the program log as such. Obviously, this means don't start a 10-minute song three minutes before the hour. You may actually begin hours at :58, :59, :00, :01, or :02. If you're working off of a play list, start the next hour's music when you roll the ID.

FM90 uses a recorded ID during all shifts except Jazz and New Age.

When the time comes to give an ID verbally, the correct method is call letters followed by the city of license. "K-A-C-V-F-M Amarillo" is a legal ID for FM90. The FCC says we can put anything in front or behind that sequence.

The Transmitter And You

One of the reasons you are in the control room is to make necessary adjustments to the transmitter. The limits for proper operation of the transmitter are located on the computer that controls the transmitter from the control room. If you have any questions about this...please ask. FM90 is licensed to operate at 100,000 watt, not 100,001. Every two hours the computer will make the readings for you. If it doesn't you can force a log by punching "L" for log on the keyboard. If this still doesn't work notify an engineer immediately.

Once you have the bi-hourly readings, initial and look at them and see if any adjustments need to be made.

During the winter months, there are more specific readings to watch. These will be discussed at the jock meetings.
The Transmitter Goes Off!!!

Don't panic. Simply go through the sign-on procedure again. If that doesn't work call an engineer. Be sure you enter on both logs what time you went off and whether an engineer was notified. When you get back on the air, give a legal ID and enter the return time on both logs.

Sign-On/Sign-off

Turning FM90 on and off is a simple procedure, but you must do all the tasks required every time. The common mistakes made are forgetting to log the times the STL and main carrier are turned on and off, forgetting to print a log before you kill the carrier, noting "a.m." or "p.m." where appropriate, and turning the STL off after sign-off.

Here is what to do and when:

KACV-FM Sign-On Procedure

Sign-on day, date, time and name on log cover sheet.
Turn on STL and log time. (Switch to operate)
Punch space bar on computer to activate remote screen.
Punch "T" on computer keyboard.
Bottom of screen shows all controls.
Punch F3 on computer keyboard for filament on...wait approximately three minutes.
Punch "T" + F1 on computer keyboard for high voltage on log main carrier, on time...at this time.
Check printer for sign-on log.

Hourly Check List

Punch space bar on computer to activate remote screen and check transmitter reading each hour. Check printer during your shift for logs every two hours. Raise and lower power for an output of 29.7 KW by punching "T" + "F5" or "F6" on the computer keyboard.

KACV-FM Sign-Off Procedure

Punch "I" on computer keyboard for log. (Wait for log to print)
Punch space bar on computer to activate remote screen.
Punch "T" and "F4" on computer keyboard for filaments off
Log main carrier off at this time. Turn of STL and log time. (Switch from operate to remote)
Sign-off log and time.
Also remember to switch the VHS/Demod switch to VHS

FM-90 Internet Procedures

FM-90's audio is on the Internet 24 hours a day.

A VHS tape is recorded daily from 12 noon until 6 p.m. This tape is than played back on the Internet at 12 midnight to 6 a.m.

Before Midnight:
Turn on the VHS machine and rewind the tape.
At the end of the programming day start the VHS and switch the VHS/Demod switch to VHS.
Look through the office window to see that the Equalizer has audio on it.

At 6 a.m.
After you have signed on the FM station switch the VHS/Demod switch to Demod.
Rewind the VHS tape.
Turn off the VHS tape machine so that the timer will operate at noon.

II. Formats

During the course of the semester, students may be required to pull both rock and block shifts. The
specialty shifts such as “All That Jazz” or “Body and Soul” are usually reserved for more experienced
students or, in some cases, individuals who demonstrate early-on that they have expertise and creativity
to work a specialty show. Following is a discussion of what is expected of students on each FM90 format.

“Sound Explosion”

The jock on this shift is expected to correctly follow the play list and the program log to
determine when to air live or recorded PSA’S and when to execute breaks according to station policy.
"Sound Explosion" is our in-house name for our alternative programming. It is a term that should never be
used on the air. “Sound Explosion” is the block students spend the majority of time so it's important to
execute its structure efficiently. Some “Sound Explosion” program elements are logged while others are
committed to memory. An important amount of the formatics are discussed in the section on 1/4 hour
Maintenance on page 19 of this manual. Here are some basics you must be able to execute:

(A) Billboards - Once an hour we list three songs that will be played within the next 30 minutes. Your play
list will identify those songs. We billboard a title, an artist, and one with title and artist and we announce
them in that order. This occurs on the :56 position. This is the only
time within the hour that billboards
may occur.

(B) Station Liners - These are updated weekly and are vital information concerning promotions and
feature artists during block programs. You should use at least two liners per hour and rotate them
equally.

(C) Seques - Before every current record we introduce the song over the intro. Before all other songs
play a sweater or jingle.

(D) 1/2 Hour Line - Our positioning statement is used on the 1/2 hour by itself. What you say is dependent
on what song you are playing. Check with the PD on what variations are acceptable.

(E) Prepared Bits - one prepared bit is to be used per hour. These bits are to be feature- oriented. Avoid
hard news. Information for these bits may come from USA Today, our local paper, the news wire or other
sources.

(F) Contests - At times FM90 awards prizes to our listeners such as CDs, cassettes, concert tickets, etc.
Check the contest sheet prior to each shift. When setting up your contest, ask for caller number nine.
Give both the local and 800 phone numbers. Once you have a winner, skew them! Get their name, age,
and phone number. Some contests may require the winner to be of a certain age. Make sure your
winner qualifies. Tell your winner that they have ten days to pick up their prize, and they must wait ten
days before they may be eligible to win again. For club shows, winners names might be on a pass list at
the door. Check to see how these admissions are being handled. Be sure to award what is on the give-
away sheet-if it says CD, make sure to give a CD away. There will be no exchanges without my
permission.
“All That Jazz”

Hopefully this shift can be filled by someone who has an interest in jazz and knows the artists and the music. The shift can be completed by a “non-jazz” buff if a little common sense and preparation are used.

“Music of the New Age”

This format has become popular quickly, and its success is based on letting the music play. Breaks in this show should come about every twenty minutes. At 11:00 p.m. keep it mellow. No up-tempo music. This show is to help our listeners face the horrors of Monday.

“Body and Soul”

Like the jazz show, this show should be filled by someone who enjoys urban contemporary music. The charts in Radio & Records or Gavin should be consulted every week. The Saturday 2:00 p.m.-2:00 a.m. portion of this program will consist of the hottest songs on the urban charts. Rap songs may not be played consecutively. As with all formats, you may not play any song that has not been previewed prior to air time at noon on Saturday.

It is important to understand that FM90 management reserves the right to prohibit airing any song, during any block.

FM90 will not air music deemed offensive to the community. No swear words or subject matter glorifying substance abuse or gang violence may be aired.

III. Assignment of Shifts

Normally shows are assigned at our weekly lab meeting. The shifts assigned will be for the following week. If you sign up for a shift and can’t make it, it is your responsibility to find someone to cover it and then notify me of the change. Students who show maturity and unusual talent could get assigned to one of the special music blocks. However, to keep that assignment you must continue demonstrating growth and improvement.

When shift assignments are made, we will try to accommodate work hours and other needs, but concessions are also required from you.

The program director will be notified of all shift changes by the person seeking the change.

IV. Equipment and It’s Use

This section deals with the FM90 equipment and more importantly how to use it correctly. It has taken Amarillo College years to obtain the current equipment and it should last and work long after all of us have come and gone. It is top quality and properly installed. Here’s what we have and how to use it:

Console

Our console is a Harris Gold Medalist. It is equipped with imported slide pots that operate
with a light touch. Please do not slam the pots. All the mics, computer, networks, compact and disc players, have their own pot so constant switching is not necessary. There are start and stop buttons below each pot. They act as remote starts for the CD players, and mics. Remember that whenever you push the “start” button you must push the “stop” button before the demotes will air again. The headphone and studio monitor should stay on “EXT 1” at all times. If they are in another position we could go off the air and you would never know.

Please keep all food and drinks well away from the board. If you spill something in the equipment, you are responsible for the repairs. Additionally, intentionally damaging any equipment (e.g. blowing the studio monitors) will mean you pay to have it replaced.

Scott Studios

FM90 uses the Scott Studios system for playback on all shifts excluding block shifts. This is a sophisticated, yet user friendly computer system that is used by stations all over the country. For regular shifts, all music, PSA’s Promos, Sweeps etc. come from the computer. The Scott system has a touch screen so you simply point and press the button for the function you need. Since it does work from a touch screen, be sure to wash your hands before you start your shift. The Scott has an Auto/Manual button on the bottom left corner of the screen. When it is time for a stopset, you will put the computer on “Manual” do your thing and press START to fire the next song. Do not forget to put the system back in “Auto”.

The Scott System has many advantages. Since you are not playing CD’s you will have plenty of time to prepare for your breaks and you will become a professional sounding jock in no time. The Scott System also has a countdown box at the bottom of the screen that tells you how long you have left in a song, PSA or newscast. It also counts down the seconds in a song before the vocals.

The right side of the screen has the element currently on the air and the next five scheduled elements. The left side contains the “Hot Keys” which can be played on the air at any time.

The Scott system has many other functions that you will learn as you begin your on-air training.

Compact Disc Players

There are 3 CD players in the control room. All three fire from the console. Push eject to open and push the tray to close. Turn the knob to find the correct cut number.

Equipment Failure

All equipment failure should be reported immediately. Notify the engineer or program director as soon as you notice the malfunction. Please don't keep it to yourself.

V. EAS (Emergency Alert System)

There are two important functions to EAS, and the FCC is concerned about both of them. The first is the Required Weekly and Required Monthly Test, and the second is the broadcasting of actual emergencies.

EAS RWT

Once each week we will receive a Required Weekly Test (RWT) from both the National Weather Service and KGNC. You will know when this test is received when the EAS lights are illuminated, and the EAS printer prints the weekly message. If you do not know what time it was received, look at the Sage EAS Endec receiver in the window it will say (MSG) message. By pressing the down button under MSG, you will be able to read the entire message including the time it was received. This is a log only test! Log it in the Station Log on the line that reads: received EAS test from KGNC at_________ by__________. If the test came from the National Weather Service, put one line through
Once each week we are also required to conduct a Required Weekly Test (RWT) on KACV-FM. The following is the procedure for conducting a RWT:

#1. Press the button under the word “WEEK” on the Sage EAS Endec.
#2. The screen will ask for a password. Enter password by pressing the button under “ENTER” four (4) times.
#3. Now wait until you are ready to interrupt programming. When that time arrives......
#4. Start the “EAS TEST” message on the DAD computer. It will say “This is a test of the Emergency Alert System.”
#5. Next...press the “Enter” button under the word PROCEED on the Sage Endec.
#6. In about 2-3 seconds KACV-FM will conduct an EAS Test on the air with three (3) Header tones followed by three (3) shorter End-of-Message tones lasting about 10.5 seconds.
#7. After the last tone, resume normal programming.
#8. Finally...LOG the time the EAS Test was conducted on the KACV-FM Station Log on the line that reads: Conducted EAS Test on KACV-FM at __________ by __________

EAS RMT

Once each month, during the first 111 week of each month, we are required to pass through a Required Monthly Test (RMT) on KACV-FM that will be originated by the State EAS Primary Entry Point radio stations.

The only requirement that you will have is to LOG the time that this RMT was broadcast over KACV-FM. The test along with its tones and audio message will interrupt programming and will be broadcast automatically on KACV-FM. The EAS lights will illuminate and the Sage Endec printer will print the RMT message. Again...if you do not know what time the test was broadcast, look at the Sage EAS Endec receiver window and use the down arrow key under the word (MSG) to read the message and the time it was received and conducted. LOG the time EAS RMT was conducted on the KACV-FM Station Log on the line that reads: “EAS Monthly Test at __________ by __________. This monthly test will test the entire State of Texas delivery system for emergency messages.

EAS ALERTS

The State Primary Entry Point station will re-transmit any national or state emergency message immediately. These emergency messages will be relayed to KGNC and re-transmitted by them to be automatically broadcast by KACV-FM when received. This will only require you to LOG the time that this message was rebroadcast over KACV-FM on the Station Log under the Heading of “EAS Alerts Aired on KACV-FM.” Please indicate what kind of an emergency you aired.

The same procedure will occur when the National Weather Service issues a Tornado Warning or a Flash Flood Warning. These two severe weather conditions will be automatically rebroadcast immediately on KACV-FM when received. Please LOG each time these alerts were rebroadcast on the Station Log under the ‘me heading of “EAS Alerts Aired on KACV-FM.” Again please indicate along with the time what kind of an emergency it was. Extra “Severe Weather Bulletin” alert sheets are available in the control room for
You may receive the same emergency bulletin on the ABC Teletype monitor. Check to see if it is the same emergency bulletin and depending on the situation you may want to repeat the warning. Severe weather usually travels from county to county and the Weather Service should issue additional bulletins. Remember to LOG each weather activation.

**Severe Weather Announcement Policy**

For the duration of severe weather in our area, it is the policy of FM90 to mention the counties affected, the type of warning, and the time the warning expires at every break. You may omit station liners and the like until the severe weather has left the area.

**Weather Tips**

There are some things you can do to make the severe weather experience less stressful. Be familiar with the weather conditions on the days of your shifts and be prepared for an outbreak of severe weather on those days when conditions are favorable.

The TV in the control room is set to the weather channel. Take a few seconds to look at it when the radar map comes up. Look and see if severe weather is moving into our area.

Check the news wire every five minutes or so once severe weather has broken out. Make sure you have a pen and some scratch paper handy to copy down any information that comes from the EAS receiver.

Know where the "Severe Weather Bulletin" sheets are to attach to the station log.

If it is more than you can handle, call the PD for help. Announce all weather bulletins in a clear and calm voice.

When the severe weather events have concluded, make sure that the severe weather bulletin sheet is included with the station log.

**Wind Chill**

In the winter months, listeners like knowing what the wind chill factor is. The temperature may say 39 but it may feel like 10 below zero once you get out. Let’s say the temp is 39 but with the wind chill it registers 10 below zero. You announce this as "10 below." Do not call it "negative 10". It’s not "positive 10" when it's 10 above zero, so it can't be negative when it's below zero. Of course, using "word economy" you need not say "below zero." Our listeners know that 10 below means 10 below zero.

**VI. AIR CHECKS**

One of the most frightening moments in radio can come when the program director asks you to bring your tape and come to the office for an "air check." This is time when the program director, charged with acquiring high ratings, wishes to fine tune the air staff. This is when most air staff members feel the most vulnerable. The tapes bare all. Great breaks and big mistakes.

Air checks are important and regular occurrences around the station. Here's what to expect from the FM90 program director during these critique sessions.
Five areas that are critical to any live radio operation will be examined. Some will contain more information than others, just as some areas are more important than others. Some areas require consistent tinkering while others, once achieved, are left alone. There is nothing in the FM90 process that you won't find in any live commercial operation. Every program director has idiosyncrasies.

So, egos in check...

1. Delivery

We'll deal with the delivery of radio jocks first, since it is the most important aspect of the job. There are other important areas but the delivery is what the audience zeros in on. so we will too. The first thing the PD will tell aspiring jocks is to learn the concept of "word economy."

Jocks should not tell listeners what the listeners already know. It's a fact that long-winded unprepared jocks make listeners change stations. Keep that in mind, jocks should make everything on the radio important and rid themselves of the obvious. If there is some mental clock running in the listener's heads before they change stations, make each second count before time runs out.

There are many verbal traps jocks can get themselves into and if the air talent knows about them ahead of time, it will save them time in the program director's office during air check sessions.

Let's begin with something every jock must do, sometimes twice or more per hour, and that is the weather forecast. Disk jockeys may be a lot of things but they are not meteorologists. They should make no attempt to sound like one either. Unless the listening area is under severe weather warnings, the jock should make the weather a "capsule" of information. Hit the highlights and get out. Most listeners do not care about barometric pressure. Leave it off. Wind speed and direction are items that can be left off the forecast for time sake-especially in the Texas panhandle. Winds blowing under 25 mph are not news here. If the talent feels like they must mention it, then that's breezy and not windy. Windy is 35 mph or more.

Word economy can be brought into play in the forecast. There is simply no need to say "currently, it's 74 degrees." The listeners know that already. Saying "it's 74" achieves the same thing and takes less time. Besides, during the forecast you will probably give the expected temperature today, tomorrow, and the low for the evening. The opportunity to say the word "degrees" occurs four times, including the current temperature. So, how about "sunny and breezy this afternoon with a high of 85, a chance for rain tonight-low of 54, sunny again tomorrow and 87--it's 67 with the Beatles on FM.90." No mention of "degrees" at all, and the jock gets the chance to get in the station's call letters, too!

Some jocks continue the degrees thing even further with "it's 87 degrees-outside." Since when do radio stations give indoor temperatures? Or "it's raining...outside." Really? Thank goodness it's not raining inside. Or "the rain is coming down-now." Most of the listeners can tell when it's raining or snowing now, rather than later. Enough on the weather.

Meaningless trite phrases and cliches also come to mind when discussing word economy. Other statements to avoid are "that's tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m." Tomorrow night at seven will do it. "The public is invited." If the public is not invited, why are we reading this?

Some more irritants: "I'm John Smith until 3." Who will you be after 3? Are you then someone else or does the station sign off when you leave? "Here's a little Linda Ronstadt." Oh, she must be an inch or two tall. "Here's some Linda Ronstadt." Are you not going to play #1 of the Ronstadt song? "Here's music from Linda Ronstadt." Is that opposed to a speech from Linda Ronstadt?

Avoid referring to Wednesday as "hump day" or Friday as TGIF. And don't rely on crutch sentences as, "Hi, I'm John Smith on a Tuesday afternoon." Well, where is he on Monday mornings.
Once the determination of what to say is made, then the concentration on how to say it can begin. Radio, at its best, is a one-to-one medium. The jocks delivery should be even with a sense of talking to one person rather than addressing the masses. Imagine yourself in a conversation with someone who cannot respond. Avoid the temptation to tell "everyone out there in radio land" anything. Converse with the listener as you would your best friend.

Everyone in radio must have a pleasant voice. It doesn't have to be deep anymore, so jocks should not try to force it. You can learn to use the lower register of your voice without resorting to what is called "puking." Pukers don't breathe while speaking, force their voice down several octaves, and talk through their nose. Ask a friend to imitate a disk jockey and nine times out of ten they will assume this "radio voice" and start the sentence with "hey" or "this is." Try it. They usually put their fist up to their mouth to fashion a microphone.

This is show business and we are charged to "hype" certain things, but you may accomplish this by being excited and enthusiastic rather than phony. The last advice here is to be yourself. No one else can be you better than you. If there is a "secret" to any good air talent, it's that they are the same person when the microphone is on as when it's off. Think about what you're going to say, and then say it with genuine excitement. Enthusiasm is contagious!!!

2. Reading

Reading is very important to anyone wanting a broadcasting career. You simply cannot get a job if you don't read well. This comes in two parts, the first being able to read aloud, but it is also important to be well read.

Radio broadcasters are communicators and must be able to read items to their listeners and make it sound as though whatever you are simply "telling" the audience about the information. The trick to reading is not to sound like you're reading. This trait comes naturally to some people while other must practice. You must pay attention to the tone of your voice and the pattern in which it is used. Avoid being monotone at all costs. If your voice was measured in a monotone delivery on an oscilloscope, it would appear as a straight line. You would want natural peaks and valleys to appear on the screen of the scope as you read. The focus is to communicate the information the same way you would tell your best friend. Some words would be emphasized more than others.

There are a couple of pitfalls if you're not careful. The first is the "machine gun delivery." This occurs when you-spit-out-the-words-in a rate that-starts and stops-at odd points." Another to watch for is the "Lawrence Welk" delivery. This happens when you put an "a" sound on the end-a of-a all-a your-a words-a." Many beginning announcers get into that annoying habit when they turn on their "diskjockey" voice.

A final common error is to let the end inflection drop as if you have suddenly lost all interest in what you're saying. The last few years have brought a variation on that called "up speak." This happens when all inflections end in an up tone.

Those of us who grew up in the South have a few more problems to worry about. We sometimes drop the "g" off of words that end in "ing." You will hear "workin" instead of "working." We also misuse words like "fixin" as in "I'm fixin to give away a thousand dollars." Words with a hard quick "a" sound turn into "caaaake" and "taaaaake." Many of us in the South do not open our mouths all the way when we talk and this leads to the dialect problem.

There is an easy exercise to help overcome this problem and with practice, it can help ease the dialect
problem. Put a pencil between your teeth and read something aloud. Then remove the pencil and read the same thing over again. You will feel your mouth stretch and become more animated. Try this sometime--it really works.

Other generic advice I can offer is to avoid contractions. Turn "couldn't" into "could not." It will take the strain off the dialect and it sounds better anyway. As I mentioned, it is important to be well read. These days, radio listeners have concerns that go beyond who did what song and what album it came from. Many stations do not even spend time on that information anymore. Take this simple current events test.

(1) who is the State Governor?
(2) is he/she a Republican or Democrat?
(3) what movie won "Best Picture of the Year?"
(4) who won the last Super Bowl?
(5) what won the Grammy for "Best Song of the Year?"
(6) name the mascot of the high school closest to your home.
(7) who is the mayor of your city?
(8) name the actors who have played Batman.
(9) what is the newest "restaurant" to open in your city?
(10) what was the last CD you bought?

How did you do? There are many things happening in your community and you need to know what they are. Read a newspaper daily. Watch at least one network and local newscast a day. Read Time or Newsweek. Check out the headlines on the tabloids the next time you're in line at the supermarket. Has Elvis been found? It doesn't matter if you believe in that stuff or not--it's a good topic for discussion on the radio.

A program director said once that if someone took a tape of a show in Amarillo and played it in another city and it made sense to those listeners, then the jock wasn't doing his/her job. It's nice that you read Rolling Stone, but try to have a broader scope on your listener's life.

Every city has some event that occurs annually. Be familiar with dates and locations of those events. Find out who benefits from them and discuss their activities. From the Fourth of July fireworks show to the area fair, get up-to-date on these events and be able to discuss and promote them.

3. Following Format

To most people, following the format means playing the correct music, but anymore, with computer-generated play lists, that is a given at most stations. There are adjustments and nuances that all stations use to separate them from the others--that extra "ingredient" that prevents your station from sounding like the one across town. There are variants from station to station and we'll look at a few common ones.

The station's slogan or call letters should be the first thing out of your mouth. Every time. Never miss the chance to tell your listeners what station they are listening to. Most radio markets have many signals in them and with the "scan" feature now on most people's radios, your listeners may have no idea who they have their tuner set on. Get the credit you are owed in that ratings diary. You cannot say the calls too much. Try to vary the way you say theme so they sound new every time. Put the emphasis on different parts. For example: all Hit K-99. Or, all Hit-K-99. All hit-K-99. For every element in the calls, there are at least that many ways to freshen them up.

If you are talking up a song, that is, talking over the musical introduction before the vocals begin, be sure you are finished when the vocal begins. If you're still talking when the vocals begins you're "stepping on it." If you continue to talk over the vocals have started, that's "stepping on it with combat boots" This is a mistake a seasoned air talent will not make.
Adjust your voice accordingly. Try to make it sound like part of the recording. Talking at too low a volume will bury your voice beneath the song and you won't be heard. Talking too loud over the song sounds like you're shouting and offends the listener. Attempt to talk through the music rather than above or below it.

A clever bit of chicanery may occur when giving "time." Many program directors still like to play games with their listeners. Radio's most popular ratings company is Arbitron. Arbitron says you may receive credit for a full 1/4 hour of listening if you can keep the audience member for five minutes. Some radio stations still avoid giving the time unless they are well within the 1/4 hour. Remember to use "word economy". Rather than say "it's 10 minutes past the big hour of four," say: "it's 4:10." It's quicker and it doesn't sound like you just got on the radio. Notice there is no "a.m." or "p.m." involved. The majority of your listeners know the difference between 4:10 a.m. and 4:10 p.m. It they don't they will call you.

In your career, you'll be called upon to do a "give-a-way." There is an art to this and it's easy to learn. Set the contest up in the first part of the hour: "FM90 has your chance to win ten thousand dollars in just a few minutes." When the time comes to give away, put the hype machine to it: "FM90 will make you ten thousand dollar richer if you are caller number nine." Remember to wrap it up by announcing the winner's name and what they won. "FM90 congratulates Bob Smith who ripped us of thousand dollars! ! ! Your chance to win is on the way."
This achieves two goals. First, people like to hear their name on the radio. Also, people like to hear the names of people that they know on the radio. Second, you have reminded your listeners that your station is the one that gives away the most prizes.

Most jocks will not give away $10,000 on a consistent basis. You will see mostly smaller ticket items like free meals, CDs and cassettes, concert passes, and t-shirts. However, you must sell the prize like it has the value of $10,000 and get your audience excited about winning it. Remember it's the sizzle and not the steak that draws the customers.

Whatever program director you work for will have similar touches of their own. They may not make much sense to you, but are there for a reason. Perhaps the program director has decided these major or minor methods of execution define the radio station. These tips should give you an example of the discipline you will need to become a valued part of the air staff. There is so much more to on-the-air performance than "that was and this is".

You may run across program directors who have a specific order to air commercials. Some prefer the best commercial in the set to the worst one. Others may like the exact opposite. Neither one is right or wrong. We just have our own way of doing things, just like you will when you become a program director.

4. Levels

The next two sections will pertain to your board work and the correct method of running the equipment. This information is "cut and dry" so not as much information will be included, however, it is expected that you already possess these skills before you apply for a job in radio.

One of your primary functions is to maintain consistent levels from all of your audio sources. Each CD, record, and any other tape source will have a playback level different from the first. In fact, the levels of songs on the same CD will vary slightly one from another. Some songs are soft and some very loud. Some start soft and then get loud. You must maintain a balance between them all. This is done for the listener's benefit. If they have to get up and raise and lower the volume on their radio every time a new song comes on, they will quickly change stations to one that requires less attention.

When watching television, have you ever noticed that the commercials seem louder than the program? There are television sets being sold now that contain a feature that regulates volume. Radios don't have that, nor should they need it.

Keep an eye on the meters on your board. Pick out a spot on it and run all your audio sources there. The meters on the board measure in percentage. A good rule of thumb is not to let your music exceed 90 percent and your voice should not exceed 100 percent.
Most beginning disk jockeys have trouble maintaining a balance when they talk over music. You want your voice to sound like it's part of the recording. If it's "under" the music you're playing or too low, you will either not be heard or your voice will sound like a gnat buzzing around the listener's head. The listener may not even know what the sound is bothering them but they do know they can switch stations and make it stop.

Talking "over" the music will sound like you're shouting in an attempt to be heard. Listeners don't like to be shouted at anymore than you do. Leave the screaming to Judas Priest and make an attempt to talk "through" the music. Again, you want to sound like you were standing right next to Bruce Springsteen when he recorded the song that you are talking over.

If you start something very low or very loud, adjust the volume slowly. A sudden move from loud to very soft is annoying as well. You may not even get the chance as your listener was shaken by the sudden loud noise and changed stations.

Most stations these days have "limiters" on their signal that regulate levels and help the jock in keeping the levels consistent. But there is not a machine that takes Metallica down to a Roberta Flack level. You must watch these things yourself.

5. Mechanics

The art of running a "tight" board is married to the technique of levels. A commercial radio station makes "sound" for a living. The very last thing you want on the radio is nothing. We are competing for listeners and they will dial right by if they hear nothing. Dead air is the air talent's worst enemy. There should be no gap between audio elements. None! Not even a second. If this ever happens to you, you'll find out just how long five seconds is, and it's an eternity.

Remember what American Airlines tells their pilots, "In God we trust---everything else, we check." If a piece of equipment breaks down and dead air occurs, it's your fault. That's how your listeners perceive it. They don't know (or care) that the CD player wouldn't fire. They just know you made a mistake. Try to plan for disasters and you will be prepared when one happens. If all else fails, turn on the microphone and tell your life story. It's far more interesting than the sound of nothing.

If the song you are playing ends in a fade, don't let it fade all the way out before you start the next one. Watch your meters. When the song fade goes down to about 30 percent, start your next one. This is a technique that it-Top 40" jocks have done for years. It makes the next record sound fresh and exciting. If your song ends "cold," that is, it just stops, anticipate the ending and start your next song with no dead air between them.

If your station uses recorded sweeps or "bumpers," learn how to use them effectively. Should the sweep say "the most music on FM90" then, depending on how much time you have before the vocals begin, roll your song while the sweep still in progress. Don't let it go all the way through and then start your record. You always want the next song to jump out at the listener and seem fresh and exciting. Listen to the wording of the sweepers. Don't play an old song after saying "FM90 plays new music first."

Watch for the end of commercials as well. Be there when they end and start talking. Don't let a second or two tick off before you react. It's a second or two you'll never get back. If you entertain plans of making a successful living in radio broadcasting, you must develop these skills and maintain them.

Nothing separates a rookie from a pro like board work. Most any PD can spot a beginner just by listening for five minutes. Sloppy board work is a sign of laziness. Spend time getting down your mechanics and you'll never have to worry about them again. It will allow you to concentrate on all those wonderful things
you’ll say on the radio.

**VII. General Guidelines**

Just like any other broadcast facility, FM90 has a set of general rules which are set up to make operation of this station safe and legal. These rules are similar to those found in commercial stations.

**Drugs & Alcohol**

There will be no alcohol allowed in the studio. Alcohol in a broadcast studio is a federal violation and it jeopardizes the station’s license. Anyone with illegal drugs of any kind in the building will be prosecuted.

Any student who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be referred for counseling and will be suspended. The student will not be allowed to be on the air at FM90 until management is satisfied that counseling has been pursued and under way. A second infraction may result in permanent removal from the air.

**Theft**

ALL items in both the control and production rooms are the property of Amarillo College. Any attempt to leave with any CDs, cassettes, records, grease pencil, etc. will be turned over to campus security and charges may be filed.

**Transmitter Readings**

All FM90 staffers are required to make sure transmitter reading are taken every two hours. You must initial each printout, and determine if the readings are accurate, and make sure the paper from the printer is rolling smoothly.

**Logs**

All FM90 jocks must be aware of current polices regarding the program and station logs. Only black or blue ink may be used on the logs. Pencils or different colored ink is not accepted by FCC. You should be in the habit of bringing a pen with you and not depending on one to be in the control room. If you do find one in there, please leave it when you go.

**Correcting a Log**

At some point you will have to correct an entry on one of the logs. There is a wrong way and a right way to make corrections. The wrong way is to either scribble out an entry or write over it. The correct way is to cross out the entry with one line and make the new entry over it.

**Sign-on**

FM90 begins broadcasting at 6:00 a.m. every day. If you are assigned this shift, you must do what you have to do to see that we are on at 6:00 a.m. It is especially important during periods of bad weather that we hit the air on time. Anticipate poor road conditions and leave your home in plenty of time to get to the station by 5:30 a.m. If you see you aren’t going to make it, call the PD immediately. Mornings are the most listened to times of any radio station. It is a privilege to be asked to pull these shifts.

**PSA’s**
All public service announcements must be approved by the PD or the PSA Director before they air. There is no exception. All PSA’s for weekend airing must be at the station by closing time of the last business day of the week.

Weather Warnings

Each FM90 announcer needs to be aware of the station's weather alert policies. Each EAS alert and activation must be logged. In case of any warning for Potter or Randall counties, you should notify me immediately. If the PD is not at home—call the PD’s cell phone. No school cancellations will be aired without prior approval from the program director. Stay current on all EAS activation policies.

1/4 Maintenance

All shifts except New Age will follow the rules of 1/4 hour maintenance: no breaks may occur between :13 and :17 after the hour, or the 1/2 hour, or between :43 and :47 minutes after the hour. If you have questions about the 1/4 hour technique—check with the PD.

Commercials

FM90 is a non-commercial station; it is a federal violation to air commercial material. The jock on duty is responsible for implementing this policy. All network and syndication commercials must be covered according to current station policy. Bad judgement could put our FCC license in jeopardy and the jock will be placed on probation or suspension. Underwriters must be specifically identified as donors on the log and indicate specific air-time. Underwriters must agree to a contract and pay before announcements are made. FM-90 approves all donors. An underwriter should only be 30 seconds long. An underwriter cannot have a call to action or use descriptive language. I.E. “Come on down to Boots ‘n Jeans for the best Wranglers this side of the Rio Grande.” Only use factual information.

Doors & Security

The doors to the FM90 studio and production room should be closed at all times. This will keep the loud music in and the kooks out. There is a keypad on both studio doors. You will be given the current number to allow you to enter. This number should never be given to anyone. The front door to the building is to be locked after hours. If it is not, call the campus police or the PD to come up and lock it. No one should be admitted at night or on the weekends unless they have legitimate business.

Underwriting Announcements

Program underwriters may be given credit at the beginning and ending of various programs. Stick to the script. We may not encourage patronage of any business. This includes shows at nightclubs. If you have any questions regarding underwriting, please ask me before you say anything on the air.

Block Hot Clocks

All block show hosts must turn in hot clocks for their program within two weeks of the start of the semester. We need to be consistent in every program we air.

The Program Director reserves the right to make any changes in any program that airs on FM90.

Network News

The newscasts from ABC are to be recorded and played back later. You will read a state news minute, a sports brief or a business minute preceding the network news. Avoid the temptation to add any cute or flippant remarks. Save those for your prepared bits later in the hour. At the
conclusion of the ABC newscast, give the weather forecast and hit the music. Do not thank the ABC newscaster. It takes up time and it doesn't mean anything to your listener.

Remotes

While at a remote all students must be appropriately dressed and groomed. Also students must act in a professional manner and abide by all FM90 & Amarillo College policies. Questions or complaints must be directed to the program director.

Station Representation

No student may represent FM90. This includes, but is not limited to official or unofficial gatherings, press releases, and telephone conversations. All programming and station operation questions must be referred to the FM90 program director. Anyone with such a question should be asked to call during regular business hours.

Station Logo

The FM90 logo is the property of Amarillo College and may not be used for any purpose unless specifically stated by FM90.

Training New Students

At some point you will be asked to help teach new students the correct operating procedures for FM90. Remember how you were taught when you arrived. Teach the new jocks with the methods you liked. Answer all their questions and ask them some. Review all the things that you know they need to be aware of. Some students will take more time than others to acquire new skills. Be patient and remember when you were new to FM90.

Appropriate Language

Some stations use inappropriate language as part of their appeal. FM90 is owned by Amarillo College and represents the institution. Common sense must be used when the mic is on. Find something else to say in place of words that some of the city taxpayers would find objectionable. That's the way it is at Amarillo College in Amarillo, Texas.

Air Check Tapes

You must have an air check tape rolling at all times while you are on the air. This is a requirement on all shifts-no exceptions. This serves two purposes. One, you'll have a current air check at my request or for another station looking to employ you. Two, we have a recording of what was said on the air if questions arise.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all college buildings (that includes our building) by directive from the college administration. It is especially important that no smoking occurs in the control and production rooms. It will damage the equipment. If you feel you must light up, please leave the studios and go outside of the building.

Production Room

The production room may be booked for up to 90 minutes at a time. No one may book more than two hours per week without prior approval from the program director. Scheduled production time will be forfeited ten minutes after the scheduled start time. If you book the room, be there on time.

We are very lucky to have the digital editing equipment in the production room. Remember to keep the
door closed at all times. Resist the temptation to prop the door opens even for just a minute. A minute is all it would take for someone to come in the front door and leave with the computer.

When you complete working in the production room, please delete your work files from the hard drive.

Leave the computer on at all times but remember to turn off the monitor when you leave.

Questionable Material

No material deemed questionable will be aired on FM90. You are solely responsible for what you put on the radio and for all events occurring during your shift. All songs must be approved by the program director before air time. You must check all CD cases or LP covers for instructions on which version may be aired. In the case of block programs, the hosts must preview all new material prior to air time. You may not air any spoken material which may be deemed questionable. If you’re not sure if something is appropriate it probably isn’t. If you are still not sure check with the program director.

Visitations

All visitors to the control room must be pre-approved by the program director. This is especially important at night or on the weekends.

Food & Drink

All food and drink must be kept out of the control room. The equipment is expensive and doesn't function with Coke and Big Macs as part of the mechanics. If it could, the design engineers would have put them in there to begin with. Remember you are liable for the repair of damaged equipment.

Request Line

Please be as courteous as possible to all callers. Try not to engage in any banter that will come back to haunt you. If the caller is being rude, then simply hang up or refer them directly to the PD during normal business hours. The station never accepts collect calls. If you do, you'll pay for the charges and risk suspension. Do not at any time, give out a home number to anyone not enrolled in an FM90 radio class. No exceptions!

Telephone

The phone is for listeners to call. Keep all calls brief as they may be coming in on the toll-free line. Students will be responsible for any long distance calls resulting from collect or toll-free line calls and calls lasting over a minute in duration. Answering the phone is part of the job. Stay in touch with your listeners by being courteous and conscientious.

Trash

No radio station can operate efficiently if the control and production rooms look like a dump site. Please keep them clean. If you have food or drink in the studio throw the trash away before you leave. Throw away all cryptic notes and put up your CDs and records. If your music is left out, you will be asked to return to the studio and put them up. Cleanliness is important here because of the large number of tours, college executives, and the like who come through our halls. Each student is required to clean up the studios at the end of each shift or production time. Speaking of cleanliness, please attend to personal hygiene as we all have to live and breathe together.
Time

There are certain blocks within the hour that we announce the time and there are places we don't. You may give the time before any stop sets. Otherwise, don't mention it. Give the time in digital form..."it's 5:20" rather than "it's twenty minutes after five." It takes less time that way and it sounds better.

Memos

From time to time, the program director will post a memo to inform you of a change or to remind you of something. You are expected to read and initial it without adding remarks. If you don't agree with the new directive, talk to the program director. Your initials indicate that you read the memo and that's all.

If memos continue to be posted and you do not initial, the assumption will be that you don't care about the operation of the station. A different line of conversation will result.

Personality Conflicts

You are not asked to be the best of friends with other students on the air at FM90. But you are asked to be courteous and act in a professional manner. Should a problem with another student arise, please notify the program director. The PD will serve as a mediator if necessary. Once a decision is made, that's the end of it. Try to spend more time on your progress rather than worrying about what someone else is doing. If a problem persists, you may be moved to another shift or function at FM90.

Comp Staff Goodies

Occasionally, FM-90 will have extra CD's or passes to shows available to staff. Ask if you want something rather than just walking out with it. If you receive something, it is meant for your enjoyment only. Do not take the extra CD's or tickets and try to sell them to somebody else. If it is discovered that you have, you may be permanently cut out from future freebies.

Personal Collections

No student may bring their own CD or record collections to FM90 without prior approval from the program director. No exceptions!

Program Director and the Last Word

Amarillo College has hired a program director to oversee the operation of FM90, just as the commercial stations have hired a program director to oversee their operations. The final decisions on who works what shifts will be made be the program director. The final decision on what songs are played will be made by the program director. The final decision on what time elements are to be aired will be made by the program director. The final decision on what promotions will be sanctioned by FM90 will be made by the program director. The final decision on what PSA'S will run will be made by the program director. The final decision on what FM90 does regarding programming and the student staff will be made by the program director.

This policy follows most commercial stations in the country. Air talent at commercial stations are simply not allowed to declare anarchy and proceed at will. Nor are they here.

Tips for Great Breaks

You must give sufficient thought to what you are going to say before you turn on the microphone. You must know how your break is going to end before you even begin. Just turning on the mike isn't going to send all these great thoughts into your head. You must give preparation to this effort. This will keep you
from stumbling around and running out of steam.

Following are six ingredients for great breaks.

1. **Don’t be trite**—we discussed this earlier in this guide but I think it’s important enough to review. Avoid saying things like "hi there, everybody out there in radio land," "it's five ticks past the big hour of five," "the big clock on the wall says....," or the "tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m." Address your listeners in the singular sense—never the plural. Your listeners want to feel that you are talking to them only. Radio is the most intimate form of mass communication. Learn to use it well.

2. **Don't Use Radio Jargon**—uttering things like "my CD wouldn't fire" means nothing to anyone but you. Remember, your listeners hold you solely responsible for any accidents or dead air. Most people don't know or care how radio works. You have been hired to entertain them, not yourself or other local disk jockeys. Listeners don't know about remote starts, STL failure, headphone squealing, cue tones, or modulation levels. You may not know how your favorite soft drink is made, but you know when it doesn't taste right. Same thing applies here.

3. **Don’t Be Negative**—I'm aware that Howard Stern has made a career of being negative, but there is only one Howard Stern. Unless you are fortunate enough to be syndicated nationally, you are probably forced to hone your craft in a smaller market. Be careful about negativity. You might be finding yourself saying things like "this town is so dull, there is nothing to do here." Remember the majority of your listeners live here because they choose to. When you call their hometown dull, you are calling them dull. Keep your personal life out of your listeners' life. Radio is show business. If your landlord has thrown you out the same day your spouse took the kids away forever, don't bother your listeners with it. They have come to you for entertainment. They have enough going on in their own lives without having to be burdened with your problems. Talk up the town—find out what's going on. What are some of the great things about their hometown? What makes them special? Read the papers, go to clubs and talk to people. In Texas, a great icebreaker is always "how 'bout them Cowboys?" There will be something in every area that will be similar. Be positive and make your listeners happy they've chosen you to entertain them.

4. **Don’t Be Offensive**—"Shock-jocks" are offensive by nature, but it's too hard to get a job by offending people. Avoid sharing your politics as you are bound to offend someone who doesn't share your beliefs. The same thing goes for religions, sex education and drug legalization. Offend someone enough and they will never listen to you again. Bathroom humor and dead dog stories are other easy ways to find yourself unemployed. There are some stations who rely on offensive matters to attract an audience, but most do not. Learn to perform on the radio by not being offensive and you'll find yourself more marketable.

5. **Don't Sell Yourself Too Hard**—Most people select a radio station because of the music it plays or the prizes it gives away. If you are not part of the morning teams you may be expected to stay in the background and let the station's programming do the rest. Remember: you're the sizzle—not the steak. The station will be on the air tomorrow if you leave today.

6. **Don’t Talk To Anyone Not Mic-ed**—If you insist on talking to anyone else in the control room, put a microphone on them. You can hear them fine without one because you're wearing headphones in a soundproof environment. Your listeners have to contend with car noises, crowd sounds, and household clamor. Don't make them work to hear you. There is nothing worse than being on one side of a conversation. Let your listeners hear everyone involved.
More Thoughts

A good way to decrease the paranoia of air checks is to roll a tape every time you're on the air. You'll get accustomed to the fact that a tape is running and you won't be so conscious of the fact that you're recording yourself. There will also be a selection of tapes for you to take in to the program director for critique. Even if they ask for the most recent tape, it will be no big deal.

Remember, the program director's job is to help you improve your sound. Everyone can sound better and if you want to change markets or stations, ask questions. Get some of the other jocks at the station to listen to your tape. Send one to a program director out-of-town every once and a while and ask for his/her feedback. Most program directors will do that.

If you are a beginner, pick two or three things to work on at a time. Don't try to get it all at once. Master one method and move on to the next. Maintain your composure. It's not brain surgery and no one is going to die if you make a mistake.

Remember that no one program director has all the answers. Just because one program director thinks you stink it doesn't mean the next one will. There is a job in radio for everyone who wants it badly enough. Your first job probably won't be mornings in New York. Keep in mind that all morning talent in the Big Apple started just as yours did from the beginning. They had a dream and they did what they had to do to get where they are.

And in the End

It happens to everyone. During your career here, there will be a time when everything goes wrong at once and you have no idea what to do. Remember, if it is a programming problem call the PD at home. If there is no answer, call the PD's cell phone. If it's an engineering problem call the engineer "on call". If it's a panic situation call either or both. After you call someone stay off the phone! We can't call if the line is busy.

Basically, just plain common sense will dictate what you can and cannot do as far as the operation of the station is concerned. Needless to say, any illegal activities will be handled accordingly.

These rules, as well as everything else in this manual, are here for one reason: to teach you to be a professional and the correct operation of a broadcast station which will ultimately get you a job in broadcasting!
POLICY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I have read and understand fully the rules and guidelines outlined in this manual. I also agree to operate KACV-FM in accordance with the procedures listed.

Signature_______________________________________________

Date___________________________________________________