

# CHMA Training Manual

## Session 4

### Your First Show

#### Planning Your Show

How do you plan for your first show? The first step is to decide what you would like to play and what you would like to say. This will be affected by many things, including: the time of day, the type of show, the weather, how you feel, your tastes, etc. These can all have an impact on your show.

#### What to play?

The easy part of the planning is the music.

As you go through and pick out music, remember the CRTC's minimum and maximum requirements.

Be sure to include at least 35% CanCon and xx% New Music.

It's best to make these part of your planning, rather than an afterthought. They will fit into the show better if you include them in your planning right from the beginning.

Unlike commercial radio stations, we won't tell you what songs to play. But we do set out guidelines.

We also encourage programmers to expand their musical knowledge and play different artists.

There is little sense playing the same few artists all the time – so listen to different artists. Also, there is little use in playing the same worn hits that other stations are playing.

#### What to say?

As you listen to the music you've selected, think about what you would like to say on-air. Then write it down. This sounds simplistic, but it works.

And remember, a piece of music is not great just because you like it. You should have reasons.

Express your opinion, but back it up. This might involve taking the time to research "Background"

on the artists you're playing. This is more than just giving the artist and the song title. Giving the

album title, the label it is on, and the year it was released, for instance, helps the listener find the

music should s/he wish to purchase it. Other information you can give includes where the band is

from, how many albums they have out, who is in the band, interesting quotes from the band...the list

is endless! Some of the info you will know by heart, but most will probably require a bit of

research. Check the web for interesting information on the music you play.

#### What else?

Review everything you've learned. Make sure you understand the rules. If you still have questions feel free to ask any staff member.

You might want to spend some time choosing a name for your show. We're pretty flexible on what you call your show, although we do have limits. But once you've named it, we'd prefer if you didn't change it.

## **Doing Your Show**

### **Fill Out Paperwork As You Go**

Fill out your program log and music log as you go. It's a lot easier to ensure accuracy if done this way.

### **Remember The Listener**

The people who listen to our station are intelligent and do not like to be treated like a mob. A good programmer does not refer to the listeners by collective names (ex: "Hello Sackville!"). Listeners also do not like to hear the same phrases over and over again, so listen to yourself critically. Watch your vocabulary. Don't try to use big words, just use the simple ones well... Assume that you have a regular audience of people listening to you, and address your program to that audience, to what you consider the ideal listener. No matter what you think, someone is always listening - frequently many someones.

### **Relax!**

If you are nervous (and for your first few shows you probably will be) your voice will sound like it. So try to relax. Imagine you are talking to a friend.

### **Speak Clearly**

Speak clearly. This means enunciate and pronounce words correctly. It is 'to' not 'ta'. 'For' not 'fer'. 'You' not 'ya'. And don't forget that you have a mouth. Watch out for lip smacking and be sure to open your mouth when you speak. Talking with a clenched jaw sounds terrible. Also, if you sit up straight in your chair, you will sound better. Just ask any singer – this is called projecting your voice.

### **Avoid Radio Jargon!**

Avoid using radio jargon while on the air. All of us may know what Can-Con, and Hits, and PSAs are, but our listeners do not care. Instead of saying "I'm going to read a PSA now", just start reading it, or if you feel you need a transition, say something like "listen to this" or "here's some information you might be interested in".

### **uh.. uh... and ... errr...**

Watch out for the incredible sounds that announcers always use when they are trying to think of what to say next.

At first, you're probably going to have to make a conscious effort to get rid of these. But it's worth the effort when you consider how much better you will sound.

To help you eliminate unnecessary sounds, write your on-air comments down in point form. Listening to your show later is always an asset.

### **You are not a robot...**

So try not to sound like one. Be expressive, not monotonous. Monotone is boring and will cause listeners to change the station or fall asleep behind the wheels of their cars, causing untold mayhem and chaos. Be particularly careful not to be monotonous when you are reading something. But be wary of the pace. Think calm and relaxed. No, not a heavily sedated kind of relaxed.

Just a chillin', taking your time, having fun kind of relaxed.

### **Avoid In-Jokes**

Believe it or not, more listeners to your show will include more than just your friends or family. So please remember respect all our listeners and remember that in-jokes are not funny or interesting to everyone. Listeners will not understand why "cheese is a breeze, DONny, you know what I'm talking about!" Donny might think it's funny but the rest of the work will think it's stupid and unprofessional.

### **Don't Babble**

Stay on subject. Don't wander off on tangents. It is very easy to babble away and say nothing. Make sure that you are providing content that is worthy of your listeners. Programmers who prepare before their shows, generally don't babble.

### **What Happens If I Make A Mistake?**

This is one of the most overlooked and valuable pieces of information we give our programmers. When you make a mistake, correct it as you can, but don't mention it!

If a CD misfires or skips or you play the wrong track, just continue with your show as if nothing has happened. Roll with the punches. Don't interrupt a song to tell people you made a mistake.

If you played a song you didn't intend to play, but still fits into the format of your show, let it play. If you happen to play a song you shouldn't, (foul language or wrong format) fade it out and go into your next song.

Radio is fleeting. People really will forgive and forget any mistakes as long as you don't call attention to them.

### **After Your Show**

Congratulations, you've just completed your first show on CHMA. Chances are, you did better than you think. But before you head out to throw yourself a party, there are some housekeeping chores that need to be done before you can leave the studios.

### **File Your Music**

Make sure you don't leave any CD's in the CD Players, vinyl on the turntable or any other media in any machines or lying around.

To ensure that you don't accidentally take any CDs from MCR, and to help track theft, complete the CD Checklist at the end of every shift.

### **Complete All Paperwork**

Ensure that all your paperwork is complete with the proper dates, times, and your signature. This includes the Program Logs, Music Logs and CD Checklist.

### **Clean Up After Yourself**

When you leave, the booth should be in as good or better condition than when you arrived. If there's garbage, dispose of it properly. Put PSA cards back in their box. CDs back in their cases. Pens back in the pen jar. But please, DO NOT hang headphones on the mics.

## **What's next?**

### **Listen To Yourself**

Stop by the CHMA offices during regular office hours and the Programming Director can tell you how to access the log of your show. You should listen to it to get an idea of how your show sounded on air. Don't beat yourself up, however. Make note of the areas that you should pay particular attention to next time, but also make note of what you did right.

### **The Review**

Once you have completed your first show, the Programming Director or an executive staff member will review your show to provide you with some ideas on how you might improve your performance. They will complete a form that will measure how well you followed the rules and how well you did creatively. You should be contacted by the Programming Director within a few days to go over this review and to discuss potential shifts for a regular program.

When you are choosing a shift with the Programming Director, make sure you know when you're available and any future events that might interfere with your being able to do your show in the weeks to come (a play, surgery, sports competition, trip to Mexico, etc.).

### **Your Shift**

Once you have worked out an appropriate time slot, and agreed on a format, you will be granted a shift on CHMA. Congratulations! You made it!

You will, of course, be expected to fulfill all the requirements and follow the rules but remember that you can take your program seriously, and still have fun. There's almost nothing better than the knowledge that you've just finished doing a really good program.

### **Promoting Your Show**

Be sure to promote your show to everyone you think might be interested. Let them know when it's on and what it's like. You may even consider making posters or t-shirts. Over time, your show will develop a devoted listenership.