



Ten Tenets from MPR News

- 1) **We believe standards matter.** We don't compete with tabloid television, shock-jock radio, or the kind of newspapers found at supermarket check-out stands. We believe public radio must adhere to the highest journalistic principles, ethics and standards for accuracy, balance and fairness.
- 2) **We believe journalists should make decisions about important news coverage.** We don't make news decisions based on the use of focus groups, seeking to find out what kind of lifestyle news people may say they want. Instead, we seek to provide the kind of news people need to be informed citizens in a democracy.
- 3) **We believe in the independence of MPR News.** As an independent news organization, we stoutly resist interference of any kind, whether from government or corporations or foundations. We are open to everyone's ideas, suggestions and even criticism, but we make our own news decisions. Within MPR, we have established the principle of a firewall to insulate journalistic decision making from other company considerations.
- 4) **We believe there should be a sharp distinction between news and entertainment.** Although this line is badly blurred today, we believe there must be a clear distinction between news and entertainment, between reality and fiction. We are not in show business. We believe there is too much hype and too many celebrity stories, and not enough fact-based important news citizens need.
- 5) **We believe that content is king, and words are the key to that content.** Great writing and the careful use of words are the currency of mankind's progress. We take pride in presenting a well-written story and an intelligent talking head, knowing that words and careful editing are critical to understanding and our success.
- 6) **We believe in appealing to the mind, not just the senses or emotions.** Amid the tabloidization and glut of information available today, there is too little news analysis to explain the "why" and the "how" of the news. We want to engage and inform thinking citizens, and not contribute to the distraction of mere consumers. Only in-depth reporting can unravel the complexities of our age.
- 7) **We believe credibility and respect are worth more than popularity.** We don't produce programs for short-term audience gains—that is, to be more popular and achieve higher ratings during a "sweeps week." Instead, we believe that solid and important programming over time will have greater credibility and value, and earn greater respect, contributing to deeper, long-run appreciation.
- 8) **We believe journalism is a profession.** Too often, news organizations simply pass on the opinions of others, or run with the rumors reported elsewhere. This is not journalism. We know that listeners come first. Our audience deserves good journalism, which is based on reporters gathering information, searching for facts, analyzing, sifting and weighing what they find, and then writing clearly about it.
- 9) **We believe news is a public service, and not a profit center.** Public service is the very soul of the journalism profession. To us, news is not just a business, it is also part citizen education, part moral enterprise.
- 10) **We know that the First Amendment comes with enormous responsibility to serve the public.** There may be some who see this constitutional protection as simply a license to make money using the public's airwaves, but we don't and we never will. Our bottom line is how well we perform our mission "to enrich the mind and nourish the spirit through radio, related technology, and services. We will enhance the lives and expand the perspectives of our audiences, and thereby assist them in strengthening their communities."