This Week’s Focus: Deadlines? What Deadlines?

If there’s one recurring challenge the majority of journalism staffs from around the country face, it’s figuring out a way for them consistently to meet deadlines. Unfortunately, there are no easy solutions to this problem, but there are some things you can try. First, break bigger projects into smaller interim deadlines so early on editors can see where problems might lie and nip them in the bud. Second, empower more students to make edits so everything doesn’t bottleneck on one or two people. Finally, create incentives for students who meet or even exceed deadlines. Bonus points? Candy? Paper plate awards? The ability for editors to skip “work nights” because they’re done with their tasks? Any and all might work.

THE LESSON: CREATE A DEADLINE CALENDAR

In small groups, have students brainstorm solutions for problems regarding missed deadlines. From what part of the process do the problems stem? What consequences do you currently have for missed deadlines? Are those consequences effective? What kinds of things would motivate your staff to succeed?

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Organizing your staff

Description
Students will research other media staffs around the country to see how they structure their programs. They will interview staff members from other schools and compile a list of pros and cons from those staffs’ point of view. Students will then analyze the information.

Objectives
• Students will interview peers from around the country.
• Students will examine the arguments for different staff structures they discover.
• Students will select the structure they think will work best for their staff and explain and defend their position.

The link
The link to the full lesson is HERE. NOTE: This lesson is available free to everyone during the dates listed at the top of this page. Want to have access all the time? If you’re not a member yet, consider joining JEA today for access to all of the resources.

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