



To: The ABC News Staff
From: **Roone Arledge**
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Subject: ABC News Policy

This is the third edition of the ABC News guide to policy and procedures. Every editorial employee of this division will be given a copy. It is important.

It is not a prescription for action in every circumstance. The reason you are here is because we think you know something about journalism and don't have to be told everything.

But this guide will introduce you to the best ways we have found to deal with some common problems; the laws and procedures that are peculiar to broadcast journalism, and above all to a way of thinking about fairness and good sense. These things taken together will give you protections that are essential in a litigious society.

We are part of a great tradition and this book derives its strength from that. When the first edition was published, ABC News was a shadow of what it is now. We did about 15% of today's programming; we had between a quarter and a third of the personnel. We had successful reporters but no successful programs.

It will not be possible for any of us to repeat that growth in the future. But it is possible for someone to bring it down. Faking something, lying to the viewer, being sloppy or careless with the facts, falling into one of the traps that beset the last-minute production -- above all, not thinking of the consequences of what you do -- will hurt us all, will undo the work of men and women whose efforts built this division and gave you the chances you now enjoy.

Be as protective of our reputation as those of us who built it, and it will sustain you.