Finding news masterclass with BBC Radio 5 live’s Karlene Pinnock: transcript

Hi, my name’s Karlene and I’m a broadcast journalist for BBC Radio 5 live. I work to two programmes: the Victoria Derbyshire programme and the Shelagh Fogarty programme, and my job entails setting up news stories and guests for those programmes.

We get in at 6.00am and the general thing to do is go through all the newspapers. On my way in to work I’ll generally have a look at Twitter and Facebook just to double check and see what people are talking about.

I follow various journalists (on Twitter), as well as normal people as well just to say what they’re saying – and to see what’s trending.

We get listeners calling in, or sometimes they might have texted us or emailed us to tell us what’s going on in their area. They might have a tip-off about a story that they might know or sometimes we’ll use contacts that we’ve worked with in the past. Press officers also give us a call and we get press releases into us too.

I do think an important part of journalism is that you’re always being a journalist, so whether you’re at home or talking to your friends, it’s really important that you always keep your eyes and ears open because you never know when a story’s going to come up and bite you.

There are lots of things you can do if you want to find news stories: checking online, reading lots of newspapers and using social media sites to see what your friends and people you know are talking about (obviously only if you are old enough to do so). And talking to people like your neighbours and friends to see what stories and issues are interesting them.

The majority of the research I do is probably on the web. My tip for you when you’re searching online would be, for example, when you’re using a search engine if you’re looking for a specific person or for background information on a person, then I put quotation marks around their name just so that it narrows it down to their full name and makes it easier to find.

Another way is using bookmarks so that you can go back to the same websites: if it was useful he first time around you might want to bookmark it to use it again the next time around.

Lots of search engines also allow you to use advancing searching which means you can narrow down your search a lot easier.

Truth and accuracy are two of the BBC’s most important values so it’s really up to you to make sure that everything you report is true.

So don’t necessarily believe everything you read. Check everything twice with two sources that you trust and make sure that all the facts that you are presenting or reporting are true.