

Attributions – All direct quotations, opinions, evaluations and second-hand statements of fact should be attributed to specific individuals. This information lets readers draw their own conclusions about the credibility of the story.

- Reporters can attribute information to people, documents or publications, but not to places or institutions.
INCORRECT: The hospital said the epidemic had ended.
CORRECT: A hospital spokesperson said the epidemic had ended.
- Attribution may be placed at the beginning or end of a sentence, or at a natural break within it. However, it should never interrupt a thought.
INCORRECT: "I shall," Gen. MacArthur said, "return."
REVISED: Gen. MacArthur said, "I shall return."
- A direct quotation should be attributed only once, regardless of the number of sentences it contains.
INCORRECT: "I'm opposed to any laws that prohibit the sale of pornography," the attorney said. "The restriction of pornography infringes on Americans' First Amendment rights," he said. "I like to picture myself as a good guy defending a sleazy thing," he concluded.
CORRECT: "I'm opposed to any laws that prohibit the sale of pornography," the attorney said. "The restriction of pornography infringes on Americans' First Amendment rights. I like to picture myself as a good guy defending a sleazy thing."
- Journalists put the name of or pronoun for the speaker and the verb of attribution in their normal order, with the subject appearing before the verb. That is the way people talk, and it is usually the most graceful way to write.
INCORRECT: Said Ronald Reagan, "I've noticed that everybody's who's for abortion has already been born."
CORRECT: Ronald Reagan said, "I've noticed that everybody who's for abortion has already been born."
- However, if you place a long identifying or descriptive phrase between the name of the speaker and the verb, the normal word order may be awkward. In that case, place the verb first and the subject second.
AWKWARD: "It will cost \$2 million," Smith, a 29-year-old architect employed by the California firm, said.
REVISED: "It will cost \$2 million," said Smith, a 29-year-old architect employed by the California firm.

*The preceding information was taken from Fred Fedler's "Reporting for the Media," seventh edition.

- Use “said” in attributions. The use of “admitted” implies that the speaker was hiding something. The use of “claimed” implies that the speaker’s assertion may be false. The verb “to state” means the same thing as “to say” – and “say” is shorter.

Titles – University professors should be identified by their full title on first reference. On second reference, you may use only the last name.

For example:

“The cost of newsprint continues to rise,” Margarita Diaz, assistant professor of journalism at Quinnipiac University, said.
However, Diaz encouraged students to buy the daily newspaper as often as possible. “There’s nothing to lose by being well-informed,” she said.

Remember this:

He weighs **more than** 200 pounds. (Don’t write “more then.”)

This book is **different from** the other. (Don’t write “different than.”)

“**There**” denotes location. “**Their**” denotes possession.

For example:

The boys put their books over there.