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TV anchors need to weigh in properly

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AN anchor is usually the weight or leverage that keeps a ship anchored and not drift away from its pier. Hence, TV anchors are responsible for keeping their shows within perspective.

This, however, has not been the case as seen in several anchored shows. For instance, the recent coverage of the SEA Games in Jakarta by RTM. In retrospect, RTM's Rahim Razali did a good job running the show but he obviously looked overwhelmed.

He was commentating on almost all the events, jumping from one event to another, and that caused him to confuse his words.

Watching ESPN, the subscription sports channel, made me realise the difference between ESPN and RTM.

When covering an event, ESPN uses a specialist, or at least someone who knows a thing or two, in that event (alongside the host).

RTM, however, had Rahim cover the gamut of "7-10 splits" in bowling to "half-twist sommersaults" in gymnastics.

If he had a production team feeding him information and write-ups of each sport, Rahim wouldn't look so "unprepared".

No disrespect for this man, for he has been Malaysia's long-serving sports commentator and a good one at that, too. But who knows how clearer the events could be to the audience, especially events that are new to Malaysians, like water-skiing.

Those involved in "live interview" talk shows, such as Face To Face and Teen Talk show keen qualities of a good host but falter when it comes to pulling the show together.

Daryl, of Teen Talk, while interviewing Innuendo on the show, kept repeating his questions, almost as if he ran out of them.

I pitied Reymee, for not only was he answering questions posed by the host but he was also trying to keep the callers comfortable because Daryl was silent when these callers were on air.

The questions (posed by Daryl) gave little credit to Innuendo because even though it is the No 1 R&B group in Malaysia and that it had an interesting start, little was mentioned about that. Instead, they were asked (repeatedly) what they do in their free time.

It even reached a point where Innuendo had to thank the callers on behalf of the show probably because they realised someone had to do it.

Zalina Azman, a seasoned host for TV3's Face To Face, also looked overwhelmed when she was conducting the forum "Artiste Management" with Mike Bernie, Sharizan and Sandy Monteiro.

The guests were given a roller-coaster ride of questions, jumping back and forth from one topic to another. But when Zalina Azman told a caller to "hurry up" because time was running out, I couldn't help laughing, thinking how the caller might feel.

These anchors should look at seasoned international anchors, such as Riz Khan of CNN's Q&A, to learn "show-management" skills.

I noticed Khan's capabilities when I saw him interviewing Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir recently. He seemed like he had researched our country extensively that any question posed on the show was received by him confidently.

Looking at a professional like Khan, anchoring is not just about answering questions.

It's about conducting a show smoothly, which is only possible if you

know the subject like you do the back of your hand.

It's also about having a balance of making your guests, your callers,  
and your viewers comfortable.

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