






# 5 key questions - How to ask?

 <p><b>WHO?</b></p>	<p>Who is the author or creator of the media message?</p> <p>What information can we find about the author or creator?</p> <p>Who is in control of the creation and spread of the message?</p>	<p>Behind every media message, there are specific people, who created it. They have some life experience, opinions, and personal motivation. And very often, they also have some professional skills or expertise – either journalistic, marketing, creative, or business.</p> <p>Information turns into a media message the moment it is published by a medium. In some media, a high level of control over the origin and dissemination of messages is enforced by the management, operator, or owner of the media. These people pursue their own interests, most often commercial, but also others, such as political. In other media (social networks, for example), the creation and dissemination of messages are largely in the hands of users of the particular media.</p> <p>When we know who the creator of the message is and who has control over its origin and spread, we can put this message into a broader context, which makes us more likely to understand why it was created. If these people hide their identities, we should be vigilant.</p>
 <p><b>WHAT?</b></p>	<p>What is the content of the message?</p> <p>What opinions or values are presented in the message?</p> <p>Does the message contain sources and how can we verify the information?</p> <p>What information or statements are not included in the message?</p>	<p>There is always something the media message tells us. It can convey facts, express opinions, or promote or criticize some values or attitudes. The creators of the messages, who play a fair game with us, should help us distinguish the type of the message. For example, by clearly separating news from comments or their own content from paid advertising.</p> <p>The information contained in the message should always come from a source. Recipients of the messages should know the sources so that they can evaluate their relevance and credibility.</p> <p>Sometimes, however, what is not contained in the communication is also important. In the process of its creation, the creators have to make certain choices: some information are included in the final message, and some are not. We will probably not find out exactly how the message was created. However, we can evaluate whether its creator is trying to present us with several different points of view, or, on the contrary, whether they conceal some information from us.</p>
 <p><b>TO WHOM?</b></p>	<p>What target group is the message intended for?</p> <p>How does the message get to its recipients and how does it spread further?</p> <p>How can the message influence the opinions, attitudes, and behaviour of its receivers?</p>	<p>Each message is created for a specific target audience. The creators try to find out as much as they can about this audience, which helps them adjust the form and content of the message to these findings. They draw on various research and analysis of our Internet and social networks activity. Each of our clicks is detected and can reveal facts about us that we sometimes do not even realize.</p> <p>Which message reaches us on the Internet is still more often decided by automatic algorithms. They are set up to show us exactly the things we like. As a result, each of us sees the world a bit differently.</p> <p>It is significant to realize that in connection to that, different people perceive and interpret the same media messages differently. This is given by sociodemographic characteristics, personal experiences, opinions, and attitudes of the people. For instance, a grandmother will perceive the report on World War II in a different way than her granddaughter. And information about the corruption of a political party will be processed differently by its supporters and opponents.</p>
 <p><b>HOW?</b></p>	<p>How does the message try to capture our attention?</p> <p>What are the language and the audiovisual forms of the message and why?</p> <p>What emotions can the message evoke in its recipients and why?</p>	<p>The creators of media messages try to attract our attention with their products. In the case of Internet articles, we are attracted, for example, by distinctive headlines, which serve as baits that we grab and click on. However, nowadays, it is typical that more and more information is expressed through pictures and videos, because people no longer have the desire and time to read long texts. How the videos affect us depends, among other things, on what angle of view the cameraman chose, how he cut the recorded material or what sound complements the image.</p> <p>The language chosen is also a significant element of most messages. It can be neutral or contain emotional and evaluative expressions. The same event will have different effect if it is told in the first or third person. The author can speak directly to the recipients of the message - he addresses them, asks them questions, invites them to react, etc.</p> <p>If we realize by what means the creators are trying to capture our attention and evoke some emotions, we will be more resistant to manipulation. At the same time, we can also better appreciate the creativity of processing.</p>
 <p><b>WHY?</b></p>	<p>Why was the message created?</p> <p>Who benefits from the message?</p>	<p>There is always a reason for the creation and dissemination of a media message. They can be simple personal motivations, such as the desire to have fun, to say something, to educate or convince someone to do something. The reward for the creator can be a good feeling, popularity, or lots of likes.</p> <p>But there are other motivations. It can be commercial profit (media companies and social network operators sell our attention and data about our behaviour in the advertising market) or efforts to strengthen power and influence.</p>