

## Structuring a Break

Here's a sample hour of programming for a drive is set up with 5 breaks:

Morning Edition	HOUR 1 (6-7 AM)				
CASE/CLOSE:	/	/	/	/	/
CASE/CLOSE:	Break 1	Break 2	Break 3	Break 4	Break 5
CASE/CLOSE:	/	/	/	/	/
CASE/CLOSE:	/	/	/	/	/

You can determine how many CASE/CLOSE rows are in each break, but think of each of these as 60 seconds of pitching (30 seconds of case, 30 seconds of close.) Four of these rows should help you keep your pitching to about 4 minutes, depending on the individual styles of your pitchers. Got a longer break to fill? You can add more rows. But for this guide, let's work with a standard 4-break hour aiming for four minutes of pitching (this does not include your usual "business" like underwriting, weather, etc.)

Morning Edition	HOUR 1 (6-7 AM)	
Break Notes:		
CASE/CLOSE:	OPEN	Close 1
CASE/CLOSE:	Case 2	Close 2
CASE/CLOSE:	Case 3	Close 3
CASE/CLOSE:	Case 4	WRAP

### Case v. Close:

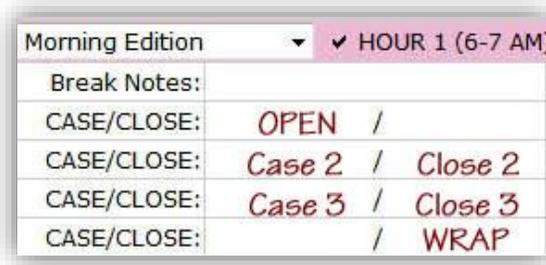
Every good pitch break has a balance of messages that engage our brains and our hearts. The decision to give is made with the heart – it's motivated by an emotional connection to the content. Once the heart has made that decision to give, though, the brain kicks in with a lot of questions: *Okay, how do I give? How much do I give? Should I give right now, or can it wait until after dinner?* That's where your close messages come in – they engage the brain. Keep that balance of heart and head in mind when you're building your break.

**Tip:** You can still appeal to emotion in your closes. Lead off a close with empowering language like "Be a hero to your public radio station." A quick way to give any pitch an instant emotional charge? Frequent use of the word "you."

## Structuring an Hour

You don't have to use every CASE or CLOSE in a break – you can leave a box blank if that better fits your strategy. Here's an example. Let's say you don't have any particularly motivating specials that day, so you want to get right to the "heart" message from the outset. You want your break to sound like this: **OPEN / CASE / CLOSE / CASE / CLOSE / WRAP**

In Pledge Driver, your break would look like this:



Morning Edition		▼ ✓ HOUR 1 (6-7 AM)	
Break Notes:			
CASE/CLOSE:	OPEN /		
CASE/CLOSE:	Case 2 / Close 2		
CASE/CLOSE:	Case 3 / Close 3		
CASE/CLOSE:	/ WRAP		

It's your choice. You can keep the CLOSE 1 box open, and reserve it for special features like matches, challenges, and giveaways. Or you can fill it with a standard close.

**TIP:** Remember that the first two minutes of a break are the most important – this is when you keep listeners or lose them! If you've got an urgent message or exciting special, place it early in the break.

## Building Your Hour

Choose scripts from public or private bins. Some people prefer to cater public scripts to their style/station and save them in private bins where they can be found easily. This is a good practice for scripts you'll want to use again.

**TIP:** If you save a public script to a private bin, don't change the name! When you're browsing public bins later on, you'll know which scripts you've already customized, and you'll avoid duplication.

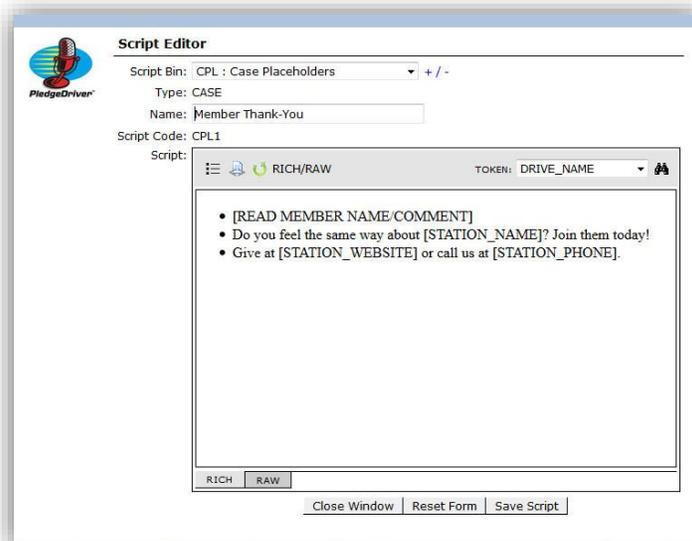
**OPEN:** Place your OPEN scripts into the first case box. Your open is your introduction to the pitch break. It should grab the listener (with a question, hook, or connection to the content) and invite them into the break. The public bin **\*OCa: Opens Case** has some great sample opens.

**CLOSE 1:** This is a great space for daily initiatives – challenges, matches, giveaways, special thank-you gifts. In the absence of specials, you can also use this space to remind/educate the listener about public radio's funding model, give an update on the drive. But remember to keep it exciting and never boring – this is early in your break and you can't afford to lose your listener.

**CASES 2-4:** These messages serve to remind listeners of their emotional connection to the station/content. They appeal to the heart. You can use a script, or a good comment from a listener-

member (some stations are able to gather comments in real time as listeners contribute.) Listener comments appeal to the heart by reminding listeners that they are part of a community.

**Tip:** If you want a host to read an external comment or fire a promo during a break, you can insert a placeholder by creating a new script. In Quick Start, you'll see a sample of this with CPL1 and XPL1.



**CLOSES 2 & 3:** These messages inform listeners of the logistics of giving. A close can be as simple as a reiteration of the web and phone, it can talk about ways to give (one time v. Sustaining), how much to give, what the listener will receive (thank-you gift, bonuses), and any additional impact they can have (challenges, matches, etc.) A listener may want to give in their heart, but if we're not clear about how to do that, they may not take the next step.

**WRAP:** A wrap is a summary of your break. Always mention the web address and phone number, and remind listeners of any deadlines or specials.

## Building Your Show

Vary your messaging from hour to hour to keep scripts fresh for hosts. You may want to alternate between two different opens and wraps, and use fresh case messages each break.

## Building Your Day

Don't reinvent the wheel! Build scripts for the first 3-4 hour show of the morning, then repeat those scripts each shift/show, making tweaks only to specials and deadlines that require it. Most listeners don't listen long enough to notice repeated scripts, especially when hosts are adding their own words and color to breaks.