

SURINAME: MEDIA IN THE LIFT!



Henk van Vliet, radio maker and program maker tells about his experiences as professional media personality in Suriname. This revealed itself at the age of six when he was imitating the announcer and the advertisements on the radio. The showbiz and entertainment also caught his attention. As a media man it is very important to be confident. You have to be convinced of what you say or ask and that there is a good connection with the person you are interviewing. It is also important to make a good impression and at the same time bring out the best of the person.

Henk van Vliet started his radio career at the age of sixteen with an audition and had conversations with the director & the broadcast presenters. "When you want to work in the media you have to love it first. You can not be focused on earning a lot of money. You must love it, and feel connected with it as well, in order to develop yourself and become visible. When you love it and want it, you will go for it 100%."

I prefer to communicate personally, I can look at you and assess someone's feelings and anticipate. During my media career there was so much love for the work. My colleagues, and I were busy with developing our programs all the time. The only thing missing in our office was a bed.

Back in the days youngsters came with new ideas and helped to change media. An example is the introduction of 'Station Breaks', those didn't exist then. They had to convince the director to be

innovative. According to Henk van Vliet, media is an around the clock process, not one from 7 till 3. Media means that you have to be available 24/7. Another important aspect of the media is the educational character. As example he mentioned one of his programs that he introduced on the radio, 'Weetje Weetje', a quiz program he started with the knowledge he had of education. The different programs for teenagers which he developed were on a certain level and all had a message for the youth. As a media personality you have to set an example and have to know exactly what you say and how you say it. It is very important to have a qualitatively good radio and/or television station.

"If you want to have a good radio and television station, it takes a lot of time and investments."

Henk van Vliet explains that the wide range of choices of television and radio stations in the market is more than saturated which can result in low quality programs. It is also important for our society that there is more empathy for our culture in the media. Lately Surinamese artists gain more attention than before and that's great. Media has an educational function towards society. There is a certain code that is maintained by different media houses. If the message has a negative impact or the language is not suitable for broadcasting, then the item is not broadcasted.

Suriname is also into social media. It is an important factor to support the news and the broadcast. Items and the costs are low, but social media cannot replace radio or television. Live television or radio are still important channels in the media branch to inform, interest and motivate viewers and listeners.

There are enough experts to produce good programs about all kinds of topics that interest people, despite the amount of money and the wide range of television & radio stations. The media has made a huge progress in the past 40 years.

The most beautiful thing of media is when a song is produced whereby popularity and quality go hand in hand. Suripop, a biennially song festival for composers since 1982 sets a good example.