

Tips on Effective Press Release Writing

The Basics

- Make sure you have a story worth telling. Only write a press release when you have something newsy and relevant.
- Keep it short; no press release should be more than 200 words. Keep sentences short and simple. Try reading it out loud – does it sound right?
- Keep it factual; remember you are writing editorial for a newspaper or magazine and not an advertisement.
- Tell the story in the first paragraph; think Five W's – Who, What, Where, When and Why.
- Think of a catchy headline but avoid being too clever. The journalist will want to write the actual heading.
- Avoid clichés – like 'a best kept secret', 'experience something different'.
- Avoid words like 'wonderful', 'superb', 'breathtaking', 'stunning', 'fantastic'.
- If sending by e-mail put the headline in the subject box – do not just put 'Press Release'.
- Remember the first sentence is what the journalist will see in their inbox. Unless they find this interesting they will look no further!
- Make sure your contact details, including a telephone number are at the bottom of the press release.

Tips on Effective Press Release Writing

Format and Style

Headings

Use a letterhead if possible; mark clearly with 'Media Release' or 'Press Release' at the top of the page; add the date; put whether it is 'for immediate use' or if you want it to be published on a specific date put 'embargo until (date).'

Title

Use a catchy short title - give a sense of the story in a few words

Quotes

A quote from someone involved should add a new dimension or give a personal side to the story or explain the importance of the story. People quoted should be willing to talk to the press if required.

Contact Details

Name, title, telephone number/mobile phone, address should be included at the bottom of the document. Contact details should be on each sheet of additional paper as sheets can be separated.

Notes for Editors

This is where you fill in the background about your business, organisation or event. Describe who you are, what you do and give basic statistics if applicable.

Images

Attach good quality high res images if possible. Label any images and identify clearly people featured in them.