

Effective PR – How to Write a Powerful Press Release

Providing journalists with newsworthy information in a timely manner in a format they are familiar with using communication vehicle of their choice – a press release – will boost your chances of coverage.

A well written press release will communicate your message clearly, concisely and ‘sell’ your story to the press. So, how do you write a release?

- Use a strong headline without being obscure or over clever. Journalists review hundreds of releases each day and this is the first thing they will see so make it good.
- It must clearly set out the message you are trying to communicate be it a new service, record sales month or winning an important new contract. Think of a pyramid – the first paragraph contains all the crucial information you need – the who, when, where, what and why. The subsequent paragraphs then go onto to flesh out those key facts.
- Short and sweet. Limit your press release to about 300 words, with no more than 60 words per paragraph. All additional background information/company background should be included in a ‘notes to editors’ section at the end of the release.
- Use short sentences and avoid unnecessary jargon. Always include quotes in direct speech, from a named person not your company. The comment is the strategy behind the story. So, if the news release is about the opening of a new office the quote will be about the strategic importance of the office to the company and the benefits it will bring to the company and its people.
- Contact details. Always include the spokesperson’s contact details on the release – their name, position in the company, direct line, mobile, named email address (info@addresses are not enough) and address. Make sure this person is available for comment when the release goes out, there is no point including a contact person who is on holiday.
- Follow it up. Call the relevant journalist on publication following the press release