

TOP TIPS FOR WRITING A PRESS RELEASE

(Who, What, Where, When, Why)

Planning

- Find a journalist - ensure contact details are correct
- introduce yourself
- Target to the paper - do your research
- Consider your angle - focus on 'firsts'
- Work out best time - personal touch, day and time

Writing a Press Release

- Always put the date at the top
- Write in third person voice: 'he' 'she' 'they'
- Snappy, humorous short title, centred and bold - capture the readers imagination
- Keep it concise
- make each word count
- avoid self-praise, claims you can't back up
- avoid over-biased, hyped information
- Avoid jargon - explain complicated terms
- Place your organisation's name in prominently in the opening section
- Start with a good strong headline, supported in the first paragraph
- Demonstrate that the story is of local importance - emphasise the local angle
- Briefly explain the who, what, why, where and when
- include quote from the horse's mouth - keep terms simple 'said'
- include their name and role with the group
- Final paragraph - summary of the release and any final information about your organisation
- Include photograph - the more professional looking the better, less people more action
- Provide a contact name and ensure this person is capable of taking calls outside normal 'office hours' and providing further information
- Include websites etc... for further research
- Provide information on the time-scale of the news story
- Stick to the facts, avoid the fluff
- Include an editor's note with any basic information such as background statistics and facts so that the journalist has all the material they need
- Support the name with a telephone, fax number, website and e-mail address if appropriate
- Proof read
- check your spelling and grammar
- present in a basic font (Arial, Times New Roman), double spaced
- ABOVE ALL keep it short, informative and interesting - Be innovative

Follow up

- Call to highlight your press release
- Thank journalist if printed
- If not printed seek feedback....try again!