

HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

A press release should tell journalists what the story is at a glance. Keep it short and to the point.

Write in the body of the email (not an attachment) and no logos. Here's a guide:

Press Release

For immediate release: [date] (If you want it to be used as soon as they receive it) or:

Embargoed for: [time/date] (A way of giving journalists time to prepare and to ensure they don't use it until a specified time.)

Headline

(Start with a snappy headline, but not too clever)

Photo opportunity: (What it is, where it is, when it is and contact details)

Paragraph 1: Summarise the story - who, what, where, when and why. All key information. Imagine what they will find most interesting about your story and put it in the first sentence.

Paragraph 2: Put in more details to flesh out the story you've outlined in the first paragraph.

Paragraph 3: "Quotes from you or someone relevant to the story." Don't try to cram too many points into one quote – each quote should make one point.

Paragraph 4: Extra relevant information

Ends

Notes for Editors

- Provide background information in case they run a longer story.
- Outline what you have to offer: pictures, interviewees.
- Outline any additional relevant information or facts and figures, but keep it short.

Contact Name and Number

They will use it – make sure someone's there to answer!

Communicate with journalists

Call them and check which journalists cover your area and when their deadlines are. Introduce yourself and tell them the sort of stories you can offer.

Follow up your release – ring the news desk to check they have it, whether they'll be covering the story and if they have all the information they need.

Pick your time to ring journalists - try not to ring close to deadlines. (Ring the newsdesk to find out when they are). Eg, journalists on daily papers are usually busy late afternoon –so call mid-morning.

If the journalist isn't interested in your story, ask why – it will be useful learning for your next story.

Don't be put off – there may be a several reasons why your story isn't used – a bigger news story might have squeezed it out, they may have just run a similar story or it might not have grabbed the editor of the day. Keep trying.

- The Media Trust Online Guides provide lots of helpful hints and tips on how to get the most out of the media. Look under Our Services – Online Guides at www.mediatrust.org