

How to Write a Press Release – Transcript

A press release is a communication tool that is used to publicize an event, milestone, achievement, or other newsworthy information about your organization.

If done well a press release can yield articles, calendar announcements, television spots, and attention on social media sites, such as Twitter and Facebook.

There are three key things to making sure that your press release is used by the media, timeliness, news-worthiness, and relevance.

You wanna make sure that your press release is well written and free of errors.

Press releases should be written in the journalistic inverted pyramid style. The most important information should appear at the beginning and the less important information should appear further down in the piece.

Additionally, press releases should be written as a news piece, in the third person with an objective tone that interests the reader.

You should avoid using words like OUR or WE, so that the piece appears to be written from an outside third party.

A press release has a very specific format that should always be followed.

Let's examine a press release and explore what this looks like.

Always include contact information at the top left corner of the press release. This includes the company name and address, who the contact is, their phone number, e-mail, and the website address for your organization.

Press releases should include when they are to be used. If you want to delay your release, you should include 'release after' and a date. If you want the news spread immediately put, 'for immediate release' at the top. It's important to note that journalists are under no obligation to honor this date.

All press releases have a title. The title of this press release is specific, informative, and concise. It also uses alliteration at the beginning which can help get the attention of the reader.

When writing headlines for press releases avoid buzzwords, jargon, and filler. Be specific, concise, and use language that is both accurate and interesting.

This page embodies the stylistic elements of a press release. You should write your city in all capital letters, followed with a comma, and a state abbreviation. Your press release should

have one to one and a half inch margins, and be written in an easy-to-read traditional font, like Times New Roman.

Paragraphs are not indented but do have a space between them. Ideally press releases are no more than one page in length. Press releases use the writing conventions of the Associated Press style book. Many of these conventions can be found through simple web searches.

This is the lead paragraph; it tells the reader the who, what, when, where, and why, of the event. Placing this information at the beginning of your press release makes it easy to find.

This press release is about a fund raising event. The body of the press release contains interesting and important details and highlights of the event. These details provide multiple angles and aspects which can motivate a journalist to cover the story.

You should then follow with two to three more paragraphs that add interesting information and details about the event. These paragraphs should include quotations from experts. Using quotations give credibility and a personal voice to your press release.

Make sure you accurately quote and attribute statements using a person's first and last name, and title, or a brief description of their connection to the story.

At the end of your press release include a short statement about your organization. If your organization doesn't already have one, create a short 'about us' statement that you can use across many communications platforms.

Finally, the end of your press release should be indicated by three centered hash symbols. Once you've written your press release you need to determine who to send it to. You should spend some time identifying who the reporters are that cover information most related to your organization or event, and send the press release to them. For example, sports reporters probably aren't very interested in your non-profit event or a restaurant opening.

When planning an event, you should send a press release early on, up to two weeks or a month in advance. You should also plan to do a call down. Get in touch with the editor or reporter to make sure that they received your press release, and see if they have any additional questions about it.

Following these guidelines will help your press release stand out and bring attention to the good work of your organization.