

## How to Write a Press Release

1. Your press release should communicate some new development or event that would interest the community. What feature or event can you use for a press release? Why is it interesting to the community?

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2. Title your press release. The title should clearly communicate what the press release is about. An informative title is more likely to be printed than a catchy title, although if you can be informative *and* catchy, you'll have an even better chance.

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3. Answer the following questions about the feature or event:

Who (your company): \_\_\_\_\_

What (the product or event): \_\_\_\_\_

Where (If an event, where will it be held? If a product, where are you located? What community do you serve?): \_\_\_\_\_

When (the date of the event or the date you will begin selling the product): \_\_\_\_\_

Why (Why did you decide to create this product/event? What need does it meet?): \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Write your first paragraph (2-3) sentences. This paragraph should include the answers to all five questions you answered in #3.

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5. Write two paragraphs (2-3 sentences each) giving more supportive detail about your subject. Place the most important details first.

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6. Write a sentence or two briefly describing your company and what you do.

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7. Now, put it all together and edit it for good writing style. Make sure it meets the following guidelines:
  - Be clear and concise. Don't use several words where one word will do.
  - Avoid any technical terms used by you or your industry that the average person wouldn't understand.
  - Keep most sentences short and to the point.
  - Vary sentence length. Several short sentences in a row begin to sound choppy, so it's okay to include a few longer sentences.
  - Avoid using passive language. Rather than saying, "The product was developed by chief engineer Tom Smith," say, "Chief Engineer Tom Smith developed the product." This active language makes reading more interesting and emphasizes your company's active role. Use active language in 80 to 90 percent of your sentences.
  - Follow the style guidelines of the publication you're sending it to. If it's a newspaper, it probably uses AP style.
  
8. Print your press release on your company's letterhead. Include your contact information.
9. Send to area newspapers. It's okay to send to more than one newspaper, as long as the information is relevant to the community served by each newspaper.
10. Follow up. Call each newspaper to suggest an angle for the story. You'll have a much better chance of getting your press release published if you do this.