



HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE?

STAGE ONE

The basics

1. What's your story?
2. Who will you want to pitch to?
3. Is this a local or a national story?
4. Which media agents will write the story in your favour?

STAGE TWO

Understanding what news is

1. Stating your opinions isn't news! You need to make news happen.
2. Think about what media agents want; human angles, new facts, movements or events.
3. Remember events and photos are key.
4. Do or say something original to grab attention of journalists, avoid the same old narrative.
5. Think of any counter attack lines for any criticism you may receive.

STAGE THREE

Getting in touch

1. What contacts do you have to pitch it to?
2. Do your research. Look up journalists who specialize your subject area.
3. Call a switchboard before sending off your press release to see if they're interested.
Have a 30 second pitch ready you've practiced before calling.
4. Find email addresses for journalists online, or contact them on Twitter.



STAGE FOUR

Make journalists lives easier

You need to establish trust with journalists.

1. Do not exaggerate the truth by getting the facts or statistics wrong or journalists won't get back to you in future.
2. Always check spelling mistakes and grammar.
3. Make sure that you're quick. Journalists will go to bigger parties first, so we need to be faster!
4. Be prepared, draft quotes or responses in advance to get them out faster.

STAGE FIVE

Writing the Press Release

1. Never write more than a page!
2. Remember your audience, write different releases for different pieces.

How to structure a press release

1. **Title:** Has to both stand out and explain what's happening. >>Always use these symbols around your title<<
2. **Standfirst:** Further context
3. **Opening sentence:** Describe what's happening
4. **Context:** 2 more sentences - set the scene
5. **Quote:** Make it LEAP out of the page. Use strong words 'outraged' 'disgusted' 'honoured'
6. **Further Context:** A bit more scene setting
7. **Supporting quote** (preferably outside Organisation): Who can add more gravitas to your story?
8. **Contact details** *Give a mobile number* including people available for broadcast interview.
9. **References:** Back everything up using [references in square brackets].

Write your press releases in the body of an email - avoid PDFs, attachment or logos.

GOOD LUCK!