



## Writing a Successful Press Release

### Getting the Basics Right

- You must have a news angle
- Express facts and not opinions
- Doesn't have to be a superb piece of creative writing
- Doesn't have to be witty or funny

### Key Housekeeping

- Your press release should ideally be the main copy in the email and should not be sent as an attachment
- Remember to include your name and contact number
- Include a good photo if you have one and name the photographer and people in it clearly

### Writing

- A good press release has a good headline
- Answers the key questions in the first paragraph
- All key questions answered in first paragraph
- What? Who? When? Where? Why? How?
- No vital info in last paragraph – releases are cut from the end
- People more important than things – so impacts on people and human interest
- Use short sentences and active, simple words
- Try to have quotations. They offer a human voice and draw the eye.

### Who to Send to

- Named journalists where you know the name
- Read the papers – see who writes on what topic
- News Editor/Features Editor/Art Editor
- Ring up and find out who they are

### 10 Don'ts for Press Releases

1. Don't type your press release in capitals
2. Don't type your press release in italics
3. Don't type your press release on both sides of a page
4. Don't fail to proofread your release – or, better still, have it proofed by someone else
5. Don't use clichés



6. Don't use padding ('with regard to' 'in the context of')
7. Don't send it late (some provincial papers stop taking copy much earlier in the week than you might think – check with them)
8. Don't send it to the wrong person – or the right person with their name wrongly spelled
9. Don't use bold type to emphasise points in your release
10. Don't open quotation marks and forget to close them