



Media release template

A few tips to start:

1. Write your release as you'd like to read it in your target publication.
2. Write in the third person – as if a journalist was writing about you
3. Avoid hyperbole. Is it REALLY 'ground-breaking' or 'a world first'?

Structure your press release in this order:

Headline: What sums up your story? What would make someone want to read more? Make it catchy and engaging but not clichéd – unless you're planning to pitch it to a tabloid...

Date: Is this story date sensitive? Is there an event or announcement on a certain date?

First paragraph: What is the most important information? This paragraph is likely to be as far as most journalists read so make sure it summarises the whole story.

Second paragraph: What is the next most important piece of information? Make sure that the story still makes sense even if someone doesn't read this far.

Third paragraph: What is the least important information you want to include? Make sure there's nothing vital here – that should have appeared above.

Quote: Your chance to put your own opinion across. Say something that adds gravitas, doesn't sound like an advert. Cliché alert: Don't start your quote with the words 'We're delighted that...'

Final paragraph: Business background – history, awards, website etc – evidence for why you and your story should be taken seriously.

Insert the word '**ENDS**' (this signals anything below this point is not for publication)

Insert your **Contacts** here: How should the media contact you and what else can you offer to support this story, such as images, interviews, case studies, samples etc. Make sure the media can contact you out of office hours as journalists and newsrooms don't work 9-5.

Insert the sub-heading '**Notes for Editors**' and add additional information about partner organisations, further background etc that might be useful to the journalist but isn't essential to the story. This information may be the same for every release you write and is sometime referred to as 'boilerplate'.



Check before you send your press release:

- Get someone else to read it to check for typos, grammar etc
- Have you answered the questions Who, What, Where, When and Why?
- Has your story (and press release) got TRUTH? Is it newsworthy?
- Is your press release topical? Is it relevant to the audience you want to reach?
- Have you included some human interest? What difference does this story/product/service make to the reader, viewer or listener of the target media outlet?
- Have you written it in clear, everyday language, avoiding jargon, acronyms etc?
- Have you written it in the 'house style' of the outlet you're planning to send the release to?

Is your story newsworthy? Does it have TRUTH?

T – is it Topical? News is about what's happening now or is about the happen – not what happened a few weeks ago.

R – Is it Relevant? Is your story relevant to the geographical area (eg a local paper) or the topic area (eg a sector-specific magazine) that your target media outlet covers?

U – Is your story Unusual? Is it a little bit different or will it make a journalist think 'so what – heard it before'?

T – Does your story cause Trouble? Controversy or differences of opinion make great stories so be prepared to stick your head above the parapet and take a stand.

H – Has it got Human Interest? How does your story make a difference or impact on the life of the reader/viewer/listener? The best way to illustrate human interest is with a case study of a customer (whether a business or a consumer) to whom you have made a difference. Thus the reader can relate to how you could do the same for them.

Note: Your story **MUST** have topicality and relevance – and ideally have at least one of the other three elements above. If you've got all five, you've got a **GREAT** story on your hands, so don't squander it, make the most of the opportunities for media coverage. Get someone experienced in to help promote it to the media if necessary.