

# How to Write a Good Press Release

A 5 minute guide

Presented by

**PressReleasePoint.Com**

A **press release**, also known as a news release, is simply a written statement distributed to the media. They can announce a range of news items: scheduled events, personnel promotions, awards, new products and services, sales accomplishments, etc. It is a fundamental tool of PR work, one that anyone who's willing to use the proper format can use.

## Steps

- 1. Write the headline.** It should be brief, clear and to the point: an ultra-compact version of the press release's key point.
  - It must be a simple declarative sentence announcing the main message in one line.
  - It may describe the latest achievement of an organization, a recent newsworthy event, a new product or service. For example, "XYZ Co. enters strategic partnership with ABC Co. in Singapore & United States."
  - Avoid questions, exclamation, promotional language or unrelated message in title.
  - The first letter of each word in the press release headline should be capitalized, as should all proper nouns. Do not capitalize connecting words like 'and', 'or', 'if' etc.

**Write the press release body copy.** The press release should be written as you want it to appear in a news story

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- 2. Write the Summary.** Summary must present the essence of news to busy readers in two or three crisp sentences.
  - Summary length must be between 100 and 500 characters (15 to 35 words).
  - Avoid !, #, ?, special characters, URL or contact information in summary.
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- 3. Press Release Body.** . The press release **body copy** should be compact. Avoid using very long sentences and paragraphs. Avoid repetition and over use of fancy language and jargon.
  - Start with the date and city in which the press release originated. The city may be omitted if it will be confusing, for example if the release is written in New York about events in the company's Chicago division. Add the word -the text (PressReleasePoint) - after date and place.
  - The lead, or first sentence, should grab the reader and say concisely what is happening. The next 1-2 sentences then expand upon the lead
  - A first paragraph (two to three sentences) must actually sum up the press release and the further content must elaborate it. In a fast-paced world, neither journalists nor other readers would read the entire press release if the start of the article didn't generate interest.
  - Deal with actual facts - events, products, services, people, targets, goals, plans, projects. Try to provide maximum use of concrete facts. A simple method for writing an effective press release is to make a list of following things:

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- 4. **Communicate the 5 Ws and the H.** Who, what, when, where, why, and how. Then consider the points below if pertinent.
  - - What is the actual news?
    - Why this is news?
    - The people, products, items, dates and other things related with the news.
    - The purpose behind the news.
    - Your company - the source of this news.
  - Now from the points gathered, try to construct paragraphs and assemble them sequentially: The headline > the summary or introduction of the news > event or achievements > product > people > again the concluding summary > the company.
  - The length of a press release should be no more than one page.
  - The more newsworthy you make the press release copy, the better the chances of it being selected by a journalist or reporting. Find out what "newsworthy" means to a given market and use it to hook the editor or reporter.
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- 5. **Include information about the company.** When a journalist picks up your press release for a story, he/she would logically have to mention the company in the news article. Journalists can then get the company information from this section.
  - The title for this section should be - About XYZ\_COMPANY
  - After the title, use a paragraph or two to describe your company with 5/6 lines each. The text must describe your company, its core business and the business policy. Many businesses already have professionally written brochures, presentations, business plans, etc. - that introductory text can be put here.
  - At the end of this section, point to your website. The link should be the exact and complete URL without any embedding so that, even if this page is printed, the link will be printed as it is. For example: [http://www.your\\_company\\_website.com](http://www.your_company_website.com). Companies which maintain a separate media page on their websites must point to that URL here. A media page typically has contact information and press kits.
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- 6. **Tie it together.** Provide some extra information links that support your press release.
- 7. **Add contact information.** If your press release is really newsworthy, journalists would surely like more information or would like to interview key people associated with it.
  - If you are comfortable with the idea of letting your key people being directly contacted by media, you can provide their contact details on the press release page itself. For example, in case of some innovation, you can provide the contact information of your engineering or research team for the media.
  - Otherwise, you must provide the details of your media/PR department in the "Contact" section. If you do not have dedicated team for this function, you must appoint somebody who will act as a link between the media and your people.
  - The contact details must be limited and specific only to the current press release. The contact details must include:
    - The Company's Official Name
    - Media Department's official Name and Contact Person
    - Office Address
    - Telephone and fax Numbers with proper country/city codes and extension numbers

- Mobile Phone Number (optional)
  - E-mail Addresses
  - Web site Address
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8. **Signal the end** of the press release with three # symbols, centered directly underneath the last line of the release. This is a journalistic standard.
  9. Continue to read the "[Dos and Dont's of press release writing](#)" to avoid common mistakes.

## Tips

Include the company name in the headline, any subhead, and in the body of the first paragraph for better visibility via search engines and for news professionals and other readers.

Research actual press releases on the web to get the feel of the tone, the language, the structure and the format of a press release.

The timing of the press release is very important. It must be relevant and recent news, not too old and not too distant.

Avoid jargon or specialized technical terms. If accuracy requires the use of an industry-specific term, define it.

## Warnings

**Always remember that editors are overworked and understaffed. If you can make life easier for them, you're more likely to get coverage. If you write a press release that's close to the way the editor will actually publish it, it may see publication with minimal editing. But if you fill it with fluffy advertising copy, don't use proper AP style, etc., the editor must severely edit your piece to use it. That means he or she is more likely to just move on to the next press release--and there are plenty of them.**

**Avoid the temptation to clutter your lead with a glowing generalization about your company ("XYZ Corp, a global leader in the manufacture of high-end widgets for the royalty of Europe, today announced...") Many releases are written this way, despite the fact that editors delete this kind of fluff. Everybody says they're the leader. Don't waste the editor's time. The place to put a description is in the company information section of the release. But keep it accurate and factual.**

When e-mailing a press release, do not make the subject line of your e-mail "press release." You will only blend into the crowd. Get the editor's attention by making the subject line your "grabber" headline, e.g. "Brand Co. wins \$30 billion government contract."

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