



WRITE A MEDIA RELEASE



A MEDIA RELEASE IS A GREAT WAY TO ENGAGE JOURNALISTS AND PRODUCERS, ALERTING THEM OF POTENTIAL NEWS.

Usually one or two pages long, the release gives the media a synopsis of the issue/event/program that you are looking to share, and provides them with quotes from someone associated.

This How-To will explain the best way to go about crafting a media release in preparation for distribution.

FIND YOUR HOOK, AND MAKE IT YOUR HEADING AND LEAD

First, it's important for you to think about what will get a journalist's attention. When you are writing a media release, you aren't writing for the general public, you're writing for the media.

Journalists will look for a few characteristics to determine whether something is worth covering, these include:

- **Timeliness:** Is this the first time this has happened? Or does it happen rarely? Or is it well timed with something else important and relevant?
- **Impact:** Will it impact lots of people or have a lasting effect? Do lots of people want to know more?
- **Conflict:** Is there disagreement? Are you responding to comments from government, another organisation, or an individual?
- **Prominence:** Is there someone high profile involved?
- **Proximity:** Is it happening in the area where the media outlet is active? Will it affect their readers/viewers/listeners?
- **Novelty:** Is it unusual or unexpected?

If what you are trying to promote has an element of one, some, or all of these characteristics, then it's important to include that in your title and first sentence (your lead). For example, if you are launching a new education program, across the country, and there is a Minister involved, it's important that you include all of these details: "Minister launches new education program for all Australians".

BUILD YOUR RELEASE

Next, you need to list the elements of your story that are the most interesting, and most likely to get a journalist excited. Again, referring to the list of characteristics above, you build your release using the reverse triangle approach.

Starting with the most important part, you work your way through the details to the least important at the bottom of the release.

So for the new education program mentioned, you might have the following information:

- The pilot program involved 30 students
- The website is <http://newprogram.com.au>
- Students from across Australia will be able to get involved
- Federal Minister launched event
- New program is a world first
- Students in the pilot program improved their results by an average of 20%
- It was launched in Sydney
- The program will be rolled out to 30 schools nationally from today

QUOTES

Once you have a structure for your release, it's important to add quotes from a spokesperson to allow media to grab them and use them in stories. The easiest way to do this is to draft quotes for your spokesperson as part of a fully drafted media release, and then have them review the quotes as they are in the whole release.

With context and information outlined in the beginning of the media release, you can use quotes to add emphasis and detail where it might be useful or valuable. For example, the spokesperson could add emotion to the story – “When we saw the smiles on the students’ faces after they saw how their results had improved, we knew the program would be a great success.”

Remember too that you may receive requests for comment from media, be sure to respond quickly and have a spokesperson ready when the release is sent out. Look out for our How-To Guide on distributing a media release for more information on this process.

For examples of media releases, you can visit the [Science & Technology Australia Media page](#).

For a [Sydney media outlet](#), you would probably look to write a release that put the information in the following order:

- It was launched in Sydney
- New program is a world first
- Federal Minister launched event
- Students in the pilot program improved their results by an average of 20%
- The pilot program involved 30 students
- Students from across Australia will be able to get involved
- The program will be rolled out to 30 schools nationally from today
- The website is <http://newprogram.com.au>

If it's a [national media outlet](#), you might order it like this instead:

- Federal Minister launched event
- New program is a world first
- Students from across Australia will be able to get involved
- The program will be rolled out to 30 schools nationally from today
- Students in the pilot program improved their results by an average of 20%
- The pilot program involved 30 students
- It was launched in Sydney
- The website is <http://newprogram.com.au>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [How to write a media release](#)
- Australian Writers' Centre
- [How to write a media pitch](#)
- Higher Ed Marketing Journal
- [Writing a press release](#)
- Oxfam Australia

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