

15 TIPS FOR WRITING PRESS RELEASES

A press release is a written, formal statement to the media on behalf of an organization. It can announce a range of news items to a broader audience, such as upcoming events, innovative policies, or new programs. How well a press release is written is almost as important as the information it contains. Here are some tips:

1. Engage your reader from the start with a catchy headline or hook.
2. Keep it direct, short, and to the point. Limit your release to one page, two pages maximum, preferably double-spaced for easy reading and editing.
3. The most important information should come first, with less important details in later paragraphs. The answers to who, what, where, when, why, and how should be found near the top of the release.
4. Report only facts, not opinions. If you want to share your opinion, write a [letter to the editor](#) or an [op-ed](#).
5. Verify the facts you present. Your credibility depends on the accuracy of the information.
6. Include useful quotes that help serve the purpose of your press release. If you use quotes, be sure they sound like something a real person said. Don't make them up so they sound too preachy or stilted.
7. Stick with relevant details. Don't include unnecessary information that'll make readers lose interest.
8. Provide access to more information. Though you must keep your release short, you can still show readers where to learn more by providing relevant links to your website or other helpful pages.
9. Keep sentences short and simple. Don't use insider jargon, acronyms, or terms that the average person wouldn't understand. Eliminate "fluff" or "flowery" writing.
10. Assume your reader has never heard of your faith community and has no idea about your social justice mission. Include information that gives context to who you are and what your mission is.
11. Include visual aids if possible. A map, photograph, chart, or other illustration can add interest and catch someone's eye! Get permission first if you are using someone else's photo or graphic.
12. Have others proof-read the release to make sure it is interesting, understandable, and completely free of grammatical errors and misspellings.
13. Include contact information so folks can get in touch with you for follow-up or if they have questions.
14. Aim for sending it out earlier in the week, on Monday or Tuesday morning, so it gets maximum exposure and does not get lost in the shuffle.
15. Make your list of where to send your press release in advance. Some potential ideas to look into are local newspapers, general news sites, regional bloggers, or other industry partners.