

**A MEDIA ADVISORY INFORMS JOURNALISTS AND PRODUCERS OF AN UPCOMING EVENT.** It should clearly list who is hosting the event, when, and where. You should also include a couple of sentences about why the event is critical for the outlet's audience. Think about the medium. For TV stations, include a short description of visuals they might capture. For radio, is there any interesting sound? Send the advisory at least a week in advance.

**A PRESS RELEASE ANNOUNCES OR REACTS TO SOMETHING NEWSWORTHY.** Have one drafted in advance and hit send after a press conference. For breaking news, it has to go out within hours.

## BEST PRACTICES FOR BOTH TYPES OF RELEASE

- 1 **NEVER SEND AS AN ATTACHMENT.** Many media outlets automatically designate attachments as "spam." Always copy and paste content directly into email.
- 2 **INCLUDE DIRECT MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION AVAILABLE 24/7.** Don't list an office phone number you rarely use or an info@ or media@ email address. Answer your phone.
- 3 **LIMIT YOUR RELEASES TO ONE PAGE, MAXIMUM.** A press release should be in the neighborhood of 500–700 words. If you can't get it under 700 words, you're failing to make the material interesting and easily digestible. In many instances, the people reading your release will do so on a phone screen. Whenever possible, write so that the "must know" details fit on a typical phone screen without scrolling.
- 4 **INCLUDE THE FIVE W'S.** Your introductory paragraph should convey everything a reporter needs to know (Who, What, When, Where, Why) in 2–3 sentences.
- 5 **INCLUDE A SHORT QUOTATION.** Always include direct quotations in the second paragraph of your release so that they are easily accessible and attributable. Keep your quotes to one sentence.
- 6 **REMEMBER YOUR AUDIENCE.** With any mass-market media outlet, your audience will not have issue expertise. While reporters following your issue closely may appreciate details that move the issue forward, any quotations you include should stand alone and be accessible to a non-expert audience. Take a stand in the quote; you are advocating a position, so advocate. If your quote just provides context, then it is less likely to persuade people to support your issue.
- 7 **LINK TO RELEVANT MATERIAL.** Include a hyperlink to your credentials, salient media coverage, or additional reading material a journalist would find helpful. The goal is to make information easily accessible.

- 8 **REPEAT YOUR NARRATIVE.** Feel comfortable repeatedly injecting the narrative that you would like to see told into your press releases.
- 9 **CONNECT THE REPORTER WITH EXPERTISE—YOURS AND YOUR COLLEAGUES’.** At the end of your press release, always include the details that highlight how you can be a useful resource to the reporter. Make clear your willingness to connect a reporter with other experts.
- 10 **PUNCTUATION.** Always review closely and eliminate any typos or grammatical errors. Ideally, ask a colleague to look it over. The cleaner the copy, the more seriously a reporter will take you.