

10 TIPS

rethink

Drafting a Press Release

- 1 Never send a press release 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.
- 3 Limit your press 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.
- 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.
- 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 injecting the narrative that you would like to see told repeatedly 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.

