



## Tips for writing and distributing a news release

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The most common vehicle for bringing an event to the attention of the media is the news release. However the effectiveness of your news release depends on its style, clarity and whether it provides the information an editor or reporter needs.

Always start with the most important point you wish to communicate (“the lead” in news jargon). Editors are busy people and won’t search through your release to find what’s important.

Include the five “W’s” and an “H”: Who, what, when, where, why and how.

Be concise and keep it simple. Your goal is to interest the media in your story, not to provide all the details. The more brief the release, the more likely it will be read.

Remember your audience – both in the newsroom and in the general public – and write for them. What is going to interest them in your story?

Think of local angles. If your event is in Spokane, the editor in Yakima will be more interested in who is attending from Yakima and why than in the event itself. You need to inform the Yakima editor why readers/viewers/listeners in Yakima will want to know about it.

Target your message to your audience, both in the newsroom and the public. The more relevant your release is to the audience of the medium you’re approaching, the more likely you’ll get the publicity you’re after.

Always include the name, phone number, e-mail and hopefully home phone number where an editor or reporter can get additional information. Home phone numbers are important since many reporters work outside of regular business hours.

Write in active voice. Avoid jargon and acronyms.

Find out about deadlines. Always allow lots of lead time, especially if publicizing an event.

If you’re going to do this regularly, buy an Associated Press Stylebook – and use it. Available through most bookstores, or from AP: **The Associated Press, 50 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10020**