

How to Write a Press Release

From LP National Regional Affiliate Training

Press releases reach thousands of people at a very low cost and keep supporters engaged in your campaign or affiliate. If they're well-written, they're much more likely to be picked up by news outlets. They may even be published as-is, or with minor modifications.

There's stiff competition for the attention of news editors, who get flooded with press releases daily. Most are ignored. Limit press releases to ones that are well-written and where you can claim to have some legitimate news. Don't issue badly-written press releases. They discredit your campaign or affiliate and make subsequent releases less likely to be read.

Checklist for Writing an Effective Press Release

- Have a newsworthy story that appeals to the entire readership of the target media outlet(s).
- Write it like a reporter would write it, with an objective tone.
- Make the title as interesting and succinct as possible to grab attention, but be sure it reflects that the press release is about.
- Open with who-what-when-why-where. The title and first paragraph should convey the essence of the press release.
- Put the most interesting and relevant information in the first few paragraphs. Do not bury important points. Move less important details to the end.
- Include a quote which is memorable, clear, and appeals to the self-interest of voters. This is the only place in the text where you may opine.
- Be sure the piece is built around a challenge and then your specific situation.
- Be sure it mentions some of the benefits any proposal(s), if enacted, provides for everyday voters.
- Keep it punchy and interesting. Delete every word, sentence, and paragraph which lacks meaning and relevance to the release.
- Have at least one person with expert spelling, grammar, and punctuation skills proofread your release.

Include a quality photo of the candidate or other subject, or an action shot relevant to the news story (e.g. giving a speech at an event that the release is about). This will grab the attention of editors and journalists, and make their lives easier, since they would otherwise have to chase down a photo. Include a caption with photos identifying who is in it, where they are, and what they're doing.

IMPORTANT: for print media, it must be high-resolution. Most photos posted on the Internet are low-resolution and inadequate for print.

If you have the time, contact directly the media outlet(s) or reporter(s) whom you most want to use your release.

If you don't have skilled writers on your team, consider hiring a reporter to write releases for you. There are many unemployed journalists today who charge reasonable rates.

The following was not provided by LP National, but an LP Affiliate, laying out how they write their news releases.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bmay--HmYh1ZYbF1IQApDcCZgYc6CLEkhGJhj1CNJGs/mobilebasic>