



Make an introduction.

The first step to a successful relationship with local media is to introduce yourself. Call the local paper/TV station/radio station, find out who handles public events/fundraisers/school groups and introduce your club and its goals. Invite them to a meeting or lunch; they might not come but will appreciate the offer. This creates a personal connection that the reporter/editor will remember.

What is a press release?

A press release is pseudo-news story, written in third person, that seeks to demonstrate to an editor/reporter the newsworthiness of a particular person, event, service or product.

Designing a press release

When you design your public relations campaign, develop your angles, develop your media materials and begin contacting the press, always think: "What can I do at this step that will make this more useful to a journalist?"

Journalism 101 — the lead paragraph includes the who, what, when, where and how of the story. If the reporter were only to read the lead of a good press release, he'd have everything he needed to get started.

The balance of the press release serves to back up information in the lead and headline.

If you have photos, include them (high resolution, if possible), and it doesn't hurt to follow up with a phone call to make sure the reporter/editor received your press release. Some things get lost in e-mail; it's a good idea to double check that your messages are getting through.

Some key things to remember

- Stay away from hype-bloated phrases like "breakthrough" or "unique" or "state-of-the-art", etc.
- Always write it from a journalist's perspective. Never use "I" or "we" unless it's in a quote.
- Read lots of good newspaper writing to get a feel for the style.
- Shorter is better; If you can state it in two pages, great. If you can state it in one page, better.

NOTES:

Most media outlets are on the lookout for groups of teens who are doing good things, follow these tips and your club might just end up in the headlines or on the evening news.

This format is also useful for creating donation request letters.