

In the Name of God

Vice Chancellor for Research and Technology

Center for Information Development and Scientific Publications

Press Release/News Conference Guideline

What is a Press Release/News Conference?

A press release (written or recorded) is an official statement issued by an organization to the media, announcing new achievements to the public. Sometimes referred to as a "media statement" or "news conference," it always discusses a **significant topic**. Press releases are an important part of communicating new achievements to the public. However, if a press release is confusing or difficult to read, it is unlikely to be picked up by the media. A successful press release should consider the following points:

- **Identify your audience.**
- **Use clear language and include quotes.**
- **Use active verbs in the title.**
- **The first paragraph should answer the "who," "what," "where," and "why."**
- **Keep the press release concise, ideally within one page.**
- **Include multiple contact information.**
- **Pay attention to the timing from production to release.**

Ultimately, research project managers want to provide enough information so that news agencies have ample material to publish. Remember that press releases are published in the public domain, meaning that stakeholders, policymakers, and knowledge consumers can easily view them.

Therefore, instead of seeing a press release merely as a ticket to media coverage, consider it **valuable content**. Since there is no exact formula for what a press release should include, here are some points to help you draft your press release and determine what content will best help you spread your news:

1. Press Release Template:

- Contact information at the top of the press release
- Title and subtitle
- Location of the research project in the opening line
- Two to three paragraphs adding context and additional details
- Use of bullets and icons
- About the project manager at the bottom of the release
- Use a slash (/) at the end to indicate the end of the release

When formatting a press release, you essentially want to write it in a fresh and simple way so that the relevant news agency can post it as an article on their news site. To start, here are the basics that **every press release** should include:

- Contact information of the project manager in the top left corner.
- A title that quickly and concisely explains the press release.
- The location of the research project in the opening sentence of the press release.
- A quick biography of the organization at the end of the press release.

Now, move on to the body of your press release:

- The first paragraph should provide research context and specify the work done.
- The next two to three paragraphs should include quotes from the principal project manager explaining "why the research project was conducted."
- The last paragraph should provide a quick biography of the manager and the presented and future projects.

Writing a press release to publish the results and achievements of research projects can help in better growth and raising awareness among stakeholders, but doing it correctly is just as important. Here's how to write a press release, as outlined above, step by step:

1. Write a compelling headline.

You have the results and achievements of your research project in mind, and now it's time to put it into words to share with the community, industry, and all stakeholders. Just like writing a perfect blog post title, drafting a press release starts with the headline. The press release title should be concise and impactful. At this stage, you need to:

- Use action verbs.
- Be specific.
- Keep it short.

2. Report newsworthy information.

If you want your press release to have news value, you need to provide a reason for its importance to the readers. A good way to ensure this is to use the **inverted pyramid** formula when writing the press release. The press should actually go from **the most important information** to **the least important information**. In **the first paragraph**, explain who, what, where, and in **the second paragraph**, cover why the event is happening. Journalists do not have much time to go over detailed and background information. They need the facts to help them retell your story credibly. After this section, no new and critical information should be covered as readers might miss it.

3. Provide a tempting quote.

Once you set the context for the press release, it's time to detail it with **quotes** that journalists can use as a basis for your news release. These quotes should help paint a picture of how your news impacts the industry, customers, and the community. Ideally, quotes should come from key stakeholders, including the executive team, managers, and research project partners, or those directly affected by your announcement. Quoting key figures emphasizes the importance of the research project results. The chosen quote should shape your narrative and emphasize **the main topic of the press release**. **Don't ask for feedback from everyone present**. Choose one or two critical spokespersons and focus the quotes on their unique perspective.

4. Provide valuable contextual information.

In the last paragraph, remember that the reader needs to know the key details from the press release. Provide details that reinforce your narrative. If necessary, comment on the **future implications** of the press release. **Linking your press release to something currently happening** can make it more valuable to the journalist and reader.

5. **Briefly state the "who" and "what" in the press release.**

Twitter is full of journalists lamenting press releases that fail to clearly explain what was done in the research project or what the release is really about. **Describe what you are doing in clear and simple language and link to the resulting article of the completed research project.** If citing data, add a reference link for the data source and ensure each name in **the press release** has **a relevant title and link.** For full transparency, ask a colleague to read the press release without bias and provide feedback. If they can't identify **the who, what, or why** in the press release, make sure to include these elements.

6. **Tips for Distributing Press Releases.**

Writing a press release is only half the work. Once you finish production, it's time to focus on distribution and publication. We are all familiar with distribution methods. **Publishing the press release on our website/blog** and **sharing** it with **stakeholders** via social media and email are essential. For maximum reach, consider:

- Contacting specific journalists.
- Sending the press release to top journalists a day before publication.
- Avoiding competition and rushing to release the press release.
- Sharing your media coverage.

How to Stand Out in Press Releases:

The key to maintaining a new press release strategy is to forget preconceived concepts and instead focus on creating valuable and noteworthy content. When well executed, press releases can be truly valuable. Instead of dismissing them as a tactic, make changes to make them more useful for distribution.

Other Points to Consider When Writing a Press Release:

Press releases are not exclusive to large organizations; small organizations can also benefit from press releases. PR specialists often write press releases in the third person and then send them to various appropriate news outlets. Before distributing a press release, make sure to include all the necessary information a news agency might need in your content.

1. **News Headlines.**

The goal of writing and publishing a news release is to provide useful and newsworthy information. Therefore, identify your goal before writing the press release. A news release can be about new products and services, new partnerships, etc.

2. Title.

The title is the first thing that grabs the reader's attention in advertising. The news release is no exception. The title and subtitle of the press release should provide an image of the subject matter of the news content.

3. Content Body.

The first paragraph of the press release includes important news details. This paragraph also talks about the event location and publication date. This paragraph should immediately grab the reader's attention and answer the five questions: who, what, where, when, and why of the story. The following paragraphs provide more details about the news and event and include quotes from those involved in the story. Quotes add credibility and strength to the story. Since there are numerous sites for distributing and publishing press releases, using keywords in the title and content body helps optimize it for search engines.

4. About Us.

Every press release should include information about the organization. In three to four sentences, talk about the organization, its activities, achievements, launch date, and ownership.

5. Contact Information.

It is necessary to include the contact information, including the name, phone number, and email address of the research project manager in this section or the "About Us" section of the press release.

6. Keywords.

Identify the media likely interested in your news and make a list of them. Visit their website and find information about visitors, listeners, and viewers. Look for reputable sources that can attract an audience to your news and event. Before sending the press release, gather information about the target publications.