

1. Why do you need to organize a press conference
2. How do you organize a press conference
3. What do you before, during and after, in the process of organizing and executing a press conference

## Study Unit 8: PR and the Art of Writing

### Introduction

When an issue arises, you as PR person must come up with a strategy to ensure that the problem is addressed before it become a full blown crisis. To do this you will need to come up with a strategy. One of the things you do to get in front of uses is to write and publish press releases, press statements and news releases.

In this unit, you will learn the process of developing a press release, press statement and news releases.

### Learning Outcomes of Study Unit 6

Upon completion of this study unit, you should be able to

- 8.1 Writing a Press /news release

## 8.1 Writing Press/News releases

### What is a press/News release

A regular cadence of meaningful news can help a company stand out and build mindshare with journalists over time. That's where the press release (or news announcement) comes in.

A press release is an official announcement (written or recorded) that an organization issues to the news media and beyond. Whether we call it a "press release," a "press statement," a "news release," or a "media release," we're always talking about the same basic thing.

While the heading should contain action verbs, the first paragraph should answer the "who," "what," "why," and "where." The press release should also contain understandable language and a quote.

Most press releases are succinct at just a page long -- two pages, tops. Ultimately, companies want to provide enough information so that news outlets have sufficient material for publishing their own stories about whatever the company is announcing in the release.

And while it may be tempting to craft a press release that embellishes your company's accomplishments or twists the facts to make a story sound more intriguing to the media, remember: Press releases live in the public domain, which means your customers and prospective customers can see them. So instead of thinking of a press release solely as a ticket to earning news coverage, you should also think of it as a valuable piece of marketing content.

While there's no cut-and-dried formula for what a press release should include, here are a few types of occasions to help you carve out a focus for your press release and determine what content would help you broadcast your news in the best way.

### Types of Press Releases

1. New product launch
2. Mergers and acquisitions
3. Product updates
4. Events
5. Grand openings
6. New partnerships
7. Rebranding
8. Executive promotion/hiring
9. Awards

### **Press Release format**

- Title and Italicized Subheading to Summarize the News
- News Location and newspeg in opening line
- Two to Three Paragraphs to Add Information
- Bulleted Facts or Figures
- Company Description at Bottom
- Contact Information and "For Immediate Release" at the Top
- A "####" at the End

## **Rules to follow when writing a press release**

### ***Rule 1: Make your headline irresistible.***

You've got your announcement in mind, and now it's time to get it down in words to share with your community, industry, and followers. Just like writing the perfect blog post title, setting up your press release for success starts with your headline. You only have one line to work with, which can seem scary, but consider diction carefully to make your headline captivating.

Use action verbs, clear, understandable language, and keep your headline simple and short -- fortune (and search engines) reward the brief, so keep your title to one line to clearly focus people's attention on your topline message.

Most importantly, make it interesting: Keep in mind that reporters get dozens, if not hundreds, of releases each day, so invest the time to write a compelling headline. It's worth the time and effort on your part.

### ***Rule 2: Convey the news value to the press.***

For reporters, analysts, influencers, or followers to be inclined to share your announcement, you have to tell them upfront why they should care.

The first paragraph of your release should cover the who, what, why, where, and how of your new launch, update, or development. Reporters don't have a ton of time to sift through details and fluffy background information -- they just need the facts that'll help them tell your story to someone else from a position of authority.

There shouldn't be any new, crucial information covered after this section that the reader could potentially miss. A good way to ensure this is by using the reverse pyramid formula when writing your press release.

***Rule 3: Offer a tempting quote.***

Once you've set the scene, it's time to bring your details to life with a quote that reporters can use for context around your announcement and help paint a picture of how your news affects the given industry, customer base, and landscape.

Ideally, quotes will be from key stakeholders in your company including your executive team, project leads, or those directly impacted by your announcement. Quoting key figures and authorities underlines the importance of your development. The chosen quote should shape your narrative and emphasize the core of the announcement. Don't ask everyone in your office for a comment or feel compelled to quote all 25 people included in the acquisition -- pick one or two critical spokespeople and focus the quotes around their unique perspective.

***Rule 4: Provide valuable background information on the subject.***

In this last paragraph, keep in mind that the reader already has all of the vital details and information they need to file a story or spread the word.

It can be tempting to provide superfluous facts and tidbits about your company or the development of your announcement -- we sometimes think a piece of writing is lacking if it isn't drawn-out and just shy of being a novella. However, a press release needs to be helpful and concise.

Offer details here that strengthen your narrative, like creative or noteworthy ways your company developed the project or announcement at hand. Or, when applicable, comment on future implications of your announcement.

Another good way to add value to your press release is by using newsjacking. A process of relating your press release to something currently going on to make it more valuable to the journalist and reader.

***Rule 5: Summarize the "who" and the "what" in a boilerplate.***

Twitter is chock-full of reporters lamenting press releases or pitches that don't clearly explain what the company does or what the announcement is actually about, so instead of being the butt of a joke, make your release incredibly easy to reference.

Describe what your company does in clear, plain English, include a link to your company's homepage early on, and make your boilerplate succinct and straightforward. If you cite data, include a reference link for the data source, and make sure every name in the release has an associated title and company as well.

To keep yourself honest on this front, ask a friend or colleague to read the release without context and ask if they can easily and readily explain why the announcement matters, what your company does, and why the executives included are quoted. If the answer to any of those questions is no, get back to the drawing board.

The key to keeping your PR strategy new school is forgetting preconceived notions of what public relations is and instead focusing on creating highly remarkable content. Traditional press releases can still be really valuable when executed well, so instead of ditching releases as a tactic, give them a modern makeover to make them more useful for your marketing.

Think about how you've used inbound methods to transform your marketing strategies to be more personalized, approachable, and build relationships. Those same principles apply to your PR strategy: Create content to craft your own story and use tactful outreach to get reporters and analysts familiar with your brand.

**Summary of the study unit 8**

In this study unit 8 you have learned the following:

1. how to write a press release

**Self-Review Questions (SRQ) for study unit 8**

Now that you have completed this study unit, you can measure how well you have achieved its learning outcomes by answering the following questions. You can check your answers with the Notes on Self-Assessment Questions at the end of this study unit

1. What is a press release
2. List and explain 5 types of press releases
3. Based on the steps discussed in this unit, write a press release on any newsworthy event happening at KIU

### References and Other Additional Materials

- Roger Haywood, (1990), all about public relations, 2nd edition, mcgrawhill companies
- Bernstein, D, (1984) company image and reality, a critique of corporate communications, Holt, Rinehart and Winston Ltd, London
- Public relations, society and the generative power of history by Ian Somerville (Reader in Media and Communication), Lee Edwards, Øyvind Ihlen - 2020
- The Public Relations Handbook by Alison Theaker - 2001
- Baran, S. (2019). Introduction to Mass Communication: Media literacy and Culture (10th Edition). New York McGraw hill
- Daminick, J. (2001), Dynamics of mass communication, media in transition, 7th edition. Boston. McGraw hill
- Writing for Strategic Communication Industries by Jasmine Roberts