

Why Press Releases?

Press releases are used mainly for

1. Announcement launch of New Events (like inaugurations, parties, prize events)
2. Business News and Corporate Announcements (announcement of new product, new company members, latest technologies)
3. Social and Government News (from social and public organisations, clubs)

Important Points to Remember

- Write the news for journalists and media NOT as articles or stories. Such posts will be rejected by media people.
- Make sure you post full contact address with phone without which your news release will lack credibility for journalists
- Keep it short with 5 paragraphs atmost in the body of release.
- Dont use promotional or marketing language.
- Pick an Attractive TITLE to catch attention of media persons.
- DO NOT WRITE PRESS RELEASE IN UPPER CASE (title especially)
- Ask yourself - "Is your news worthy?"

Parts of Press Release

Title or Headline - The main title of the news. Always nice headlines easily attract attention of media persons.

Start like

unveils New Business Solution...

introduces new product....

boosts

announces

Date & Place - contains the release date and originating city of the press release. Example Miami,FL - 22 Aug 2006

Introduction - Highlight the the importance of the news in this paragraph. Usually contains three or four lines.

Body - further explanation, statistics, background, or other details relevant to the news. Give also some quotes from spokespersons.

Boilerplate - generally a short "about" section, providing independent background on the issuing company, organization, or individual.

Contact Information - name, phone number, email address, mailing address, or other contact information for the PR or other media relations contact person. Do not write email here.

Ending: ### indicates the end of press release, basically which refers to XXX meaning 30 used to denote end in telegraphic codes used in early years.

If your release newsworthy you will be contacted by TV or Radio stations for interview.

Sample Press Release Template

[Your Logo Here]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (date)

[Title Here]

(Example: XYZ Inc announces launch of new website <>)

Description: (optional) This is a very short description about the press release. some distribution sites will ask for this.

[CITY], [STATE],[Date] – [This is the opening paragraph. It should contain about 3-5 lines and considered most important since this catches attention of news readers and journalists. Typically questions for questions of who, what, when, where and why answered here. Keep it short and highlight what's whole release is all about.]

[This paragraph goes into little depth. Give more details of product or any events taking place. This should contain about 2 comments made by spokespersons. For example, Mr. XXX said "xxxx".]

[This paragraph focus on where users can find detailed information about product or events. Give a contact or website site for more information so that more additional information can be found. This paragraph should be concluded within 3-5 lines]

[The conclusive paragraph is known the "boilerplate" and can contain no more than 2-3 lines. A short "about" section, providing independent background on the issuing company, organization, or individual. Here you should explain future aspects, your or aim in meeting the current market or success. In general what you intend to do achieve.]

Contact Information:

[Company Name]

[Address]

[Telephone]

[Website]

###

(This mark lets the reader know that it is the end of the article.)

[Editors Note: optional]

New Product Press Release Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Name and title

Company name

Phone:

Web Site:

Email:

Title

Any city, state—November 18, 06 – First paragraph (**What**) Make the first two sentences have major impact.

Second paragraph – (**Who**) Who is making the announcement about the new product? Give the name and title of the person making the announcement.

Subsequent paragraphs – Add pertinent details about the new product and why it's newsworthy. Keep the reader "hooked." Why is this new product relevant to the audience? Why is the new product different from other similar products?

Final paragraph – keep to **two** sentences; "for further information call.....or email. Give URL of company web site.

###

(means end of press release)

OR

--more--

(means go to second page)

Sample Event Press Release Format

[Title of Event]

[Write a very short description with no more than 3 lines about event.]

WHAT: [Write the Event Name]

[This paragraph goes on about full description about the event. Indicate what the event is all about, its participants, speakers and guests who will take part in the event. You can also mention about asponsors.]

[Explain briefly what shows, seminars are taking place in the event. You can also mention here about free lunches, gifts, contests for participants in the event, if any.

WHEN: [DATE AND TIMINGS OF YOUR EVENT]

Example: Saturday, February 16, 2009 from 11am-1pm

WHERE: [LOCATION OF EVENT - FULL ADDRESS]

WHY:

[This WHY is optional and if you want you can omit this.]

This paragraph says in general why you are organizing the event (cause) and how it could benefit anybody. For example if you are organizing a seminar on a medical disease, you should talk about disease in general and how this event would work great to create awareness.

Admission:

[Indicate here who can come and if there is any cost, then you must mention here]

Registration:

[Specify how or who to get in touch for making reservations. Specify a website or a contact person with phone]

About the Company:

[This is a boiler plate. Give a short background information about profile of company organizing the event]

Media contact

Give contact address and phone for media contact including general inquiries about the event.

Common errors

Below are listed the most common errors made in writing press releases, and suggestions for improvement.

- **Don't** write a press release on a trivial subject. Any information contained in a press release must be newsworthy, important, and interesting. Once readers determine that the subject matter isn't valuable, they will stop reading.
- **Don't** start your press release with "lead up" material. Begin the press release with not more than 15 words of hard-hitting facts to hold readers' interest and get them to read further. Make your point, don't lead up to it.
- **Don't** use fancy language. All writers must be well versed in writing "fluff" material to make a piece sound showy. A press release is not a piece for fluff! Use only plain, simple, but professional and intriguing terms.
- **Don't** improvise. Just state the facts. Not your opinion, not your viewpoint, not your commentary. A press release is a purely factual document; readers aren't interested in anything else.
- **Don't** forget your audience. A crucial part of a press release is convincing readers that it contains information meant for them. Be sure you tell your audience why they should continue to read the press release, or you will lose them by the third sentence. People don't read things that don't pertain to them.
- **Don't** issue a press release until you have something to say. Press releases should be issued when you have a significant amount of newsworthy information to draw the readers' attention. Every time readers examine press releases, they ask themselves "Why should I care?" Give them sufficient information to care about.
- **Don't** provide the order of information incorrectly. Many writers make the mistake of announcing who is making the news, not the substance of the news itself. In press releases, what is more important than whom. Unless the press release deals with a very well known celebrity or public personality, the substance of the information is more important than who said it or did it. Check your press releases to make sure what comes before whom.
- **Don't** write more than you need. A press release should be so concise and well-crafted that it takes only one page; rarely should it run into a second page. Make every word count. Readers' attention span with press releases is limited; say it, then end it.
- **Don't** use a boring title. The title of your press release is the "hook" that grabs readers' interest and keeps them reading. Titles should be short, concise, and powerful, using active verbs. Failure to capture your audience through your title will result in your press release ending up in someone's slush pile.
- **Don't** forget essential information. When reading your press release, media representatives need to have crucial details such as the individual to contact, address, phone, fax, e-mail and web site URL address. If you make their job difficult by leaving out this essential information, media representatives will not bother to find this information on their own.

PRESS RELEASE

We would like to draw your attention to a different type of memorandum, called Press release. It is written for the outside world and is not meant for internal circulation like other types discussed in this chapter.

We may define a press release as a memorandum written to make newsworthy information available to the public. This is one of the several methods used by a corporate organisation for holding its feet in the market and boosting its image. As the name indicates, the memo containing the information is released to the news media for dissemination. The information could be in regard to a significant change in the policy of organisation, merger or collaboration with another organisation, diversification in business, launching of a new product, etc.

A press release is different from an advertisement as the former is strictly factual. The emphasis is on focussing the information that would be of immediate benefit or interest to society. The various strategies of structuring and presenting the message used in advertisements to attract and persuade the prospective consumer have no place in a press release. That is why its style is expository: direct, concise and clear. However, sometimes the title of the release is catchy enough to be used by the press. The name and address of the person who could be contacted for further information is invariably given. If the release is to be telecast, it may include film footage, explaining the message by visual means. Usually, the name of the organisation is given on the top whereas the date and the name and designation of the officer releasing the memo at the bottom as shown in Exhibit 22.7.

Healthcare Ayurvedic Products Ltd.

Arvindpur

Bhavnagar - 623004

Goodbye to Diabetes and Dyspepsia

The company is pleased to announce the launching of the following products in the market:

- Diabof
- Dyspocar

They are available in the form of 250 mg tablets and 300 mg capsules respectively.

These medicines have been developed after more than a decade's intensive research by our R & D Division on the use of indigenous herbs for health care. They have been successfully tested on a sufficiently large number of patients spread over a wide geographical area.

The first medicine is for those suffering from insulin-dependent diabetes. One tablet a day controls the blood sugar, keeping it within permissible limits. Its continuous use in most cases activates pancreas, helping it produce the required amount of insulin.

The second medicine is for those suffering from chronic stomach disorders such as dyspepsia, dysentery, acidity, etc. Two capsules a day after main meals can regulate and tone up the entire digestive system.

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For further information and bulk orders, the interested persons and parties may please contact:

Sri Shyamal Saxena
Research Director
(Phones: 01524-732611 and 734689)

16 December 2001

R.R. Malik
Company Secretary

Exhibit 22.7

OTHER SHORT MESSAGES

While dealing with the major forms of communication we have already discussed how to write effective messages. Here we shall focus our attention on how to write short messages, namely, fax, e-mail, and telegram. The transmission of messages such as these depends partly, on how to compose them, and partly, on how to handle the technical instruments through which they are transmitted. We shall concentrate on the former. The technical aspect has already been discussed in Chapter 2.

By its very nature a message sent through fax or e-mail is direct, devoid of all words and phrases that do not add significant meaning to the basic message. However, a brief reference to context, where necessary, is provided to make it complete and independent. Obviously, therefore, you have to write neither salutation such as *Dear Sir, Dear Madam*, etc. nor complimentary close such as *Yours faithfully, Yours sincerely*, etc. You should, however, include your name at the bottom. Both faxes and e-mails are often used for sending formal business letters as well. But those between intimate colleagues can be informal.

You would observe from the examples given in Exhibits 22.8 and 22.9 that both fax and e-mail are like a memo in nature and structure. The layout is slightly different, partly because of the technology used in sending them. As we discussed earlier in this chapter, a memo is usually written for transmission of messages within the organisation. This is not the case with fax or e-mail. These are used for communication both inside and outside the organisation.

Fax

Fax from: Faulad Cement Mfg. Co. Ltd.
423, Naubat Ali Road
Surjangadh - 321034
Fax : 312 835 4968

Fax to: Purchase Manager, Madhulika Enterprises Private Ltd.

Fax no: 103 626 3122

Date: 30 December 2001

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* Based on the proforma given on study pages 313 and 251 of *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, Sixth Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000.