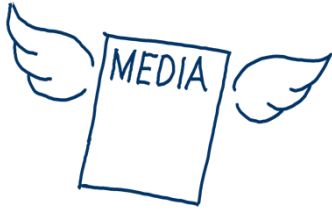


HOW TO GRAB ATTENTION WITH YOUR MEDIA RELEASE



Think like a journalist and write your media release as if it's a news story.

That means a compelling headline; the most important elements at the start; active, clear and concise writing; and direct quotes from one or more people.

FORMAT

- **Use just one A4 page** but don't cheat by using a font smaller than 11-point or ridiculously narrow page. If there's too much information, provide background or relevant facts on a second page.
- **Have a one-line punchy headline** (up to about six words). Add a short subheading only if that second point is vital.
- **Date the media release** at the top of the If it involves an event, **ensure the event date, time and location are also at the top.**
- **Detail any spokespeople available.** Put the name, title, email address and mobile phone number of one or two contacts at the bottom of the page. Ensure one contact is available from early morning to late at night to cover different time zones and news deadlines.
- **Detail any audio, video and/or still images available** for media use.
- **Include social media handles** like @businessdeans for Twitter or your LinkedIn address.

CONTENT AND WRITING STYLE

- **Put the most important points at the top.** If you haven't grabbed attention in the first paragraph or two, your release will probably hit the bin.
- **Include direct quotes** from your spokesperson or spokespeople.
- **Write in an active, not passive manner.** Active: The cat sat on the mat. Passive: The mat was sat on by the cat.
- **Keep language simple and to the point.**
- **Be specific and say exactly what you mean.** It's not a facility: it's an office block, hospital, factory, etc.
- **Don't waste words.** Eg: *most* rather than *the majority of*; *now*, not *at this point in time*. And avoid cliches.
- **Don't put too many ideas into one sentence.** Never underestimate the value of a full stop.
- **Use one sentence only per paragraph.** Short, sharp paragraphs are the style – check out some newspaper stories.

- **Forget unnecessary or meaningless modifiers.** Eg: anonymous stranger, advance warning or collaborate together.
- **Avoid jargon.** People outside your field of expertise may not know what you're talking about.
- **Avoid or explain acronyms.** If you must use acronyms, spell out the full name and put the acronym in brackets the first time it is used. For example, Queensland University of Technology (QUT). Then use the acronym for subsequent mentions.
- **Double check the meaning of words and spelling.** Don't rely solely on spell-check. Watch out for American spellings like organization (US spelling) instead of organisation (Australian spelling).
- **Road test your media release** on a couple of people who know nothing about its subject matter. Is it clear, do they understand it and is it of interest to them?
- **At least one other person should proofread it** and check for typos and other glitches. Even small mistakes detract from your credibility so it's worth paying attention to detail.

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