

WRITING A PRESS RELEASE

A press release, also called a news release, is a short (one page if possible), descriptive statement that you can send to your local news media to announce your partnership with your local notable, his or her appearance at your library, or other newsworthy event associated with your campaign to recruit local notables and celebrities as spokespeople for your library. Include photos if appropriate. Reporters are more likely to cover your story if you send them a press release in advance.

How far in advance? For publications or other media that come out frequently, plan on two or three weeks advance notice. For monthly publications, plan on sending out your press release about six weeks in advance of publication.

A professional-quality press release has six main components:

1. **PRESS RELEASE heading** – Write the press release on your library or institution's letterhead, and put the following information at the top of the page:

PRESS RELEASE
Date of press release
For Immediate Release
Your contact information

2. **A headline** – It should be short and “catchy” to grab a reader's attention. Type it in **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS** in a size slightly larger than the font size you will be using in the body of the press release. Write it in the present tense. Example: **ABC COLLEGE CHEERLEADERS AND BAND SHOW THEIR SPIRIT FOR XYZ LIBRARY**
3. **Body copy** – The first sentence should state what is happening, and the next sentence or two should give additional information. Stick to the facts. Use short sentences and keep details to a minimum. Make sure that people can read just your first paragraph and get a good idea of what is going to happen.
4. **The five Ws: Who? What? When? Where? Why?** – Tell your reader what is going to happen. When and where? What's the reason? Why is this newsworthy?
5. **Contact information** – Repeat your contact information here, or add additional information, such as the library's website, if that would be helpful to readers.
6. **Indicate the end of the press release** – Do this by typing three # symbols at the very end, centered, like this:

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A sample press release follows.

**Your
Library or Institution's
Letterhead**

PRESS RELEASE

Date of press release

For Immediate Release

Your contact info (phone and e-mail)

YOUR CATCHY HEADLINE IN BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS HERE

Your Body Copy here.

Don't forget the five Ws: Who? What? When? Where? Why?

For additional information, visit *(your library's name)* website at
www.xyzlibrary.org.

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