

Do's & Don'ts of Media Releases

Do

- Send relevant news in a prompt and timely manner
- Ensure easy to read and clear layout
- Check the accuracy of all facts, especially names, titles and phone numbers, and check them again
- Write simply, state the facts, explain the concept and, show how it is useful
- The first priority should be clarity, the second accuracy and the third functionality
- Include 'quotable quotes' - sayings or comments that stand out for their originality, simplicity and strength - and source your quotes
- Have permission from all quoted and referenced sources
- Have your news release proof read by at least one other individual
- Spend time developing an engaging heading and subject line, and the first 10 words of the lead paragraph. This could be the difference between an editor reading on or clicking delete
- Ensure that you have highlighted the top benefits or value of your event, product, service or what it is you are promoting
- Include the contact details of the best person for further information. This will be the face of your organisation and may be contacted for newspaper, radio or television interviews
- Clearly indicate if there is more than one page of information <MORE> (one page is generally best)
- Know what makes news in your community and ensure your media release is newsworthy – research your local media
- Give phonetic pronunciation [in parenthesis] for difficult names or places

Don't

- Don't send photographs to all media (and ensure you only send quality photographs to the newspaper)
- Don't use HTML tags, bold type, underline or colour text
- Don't send a lengthy news release (more than 650 words). You will alienate the editor
- Don't exaggerate or make inflated claims. Stick to the facts
- Don't use jargon or clichés. Go for originality and freshness. Editors love clever writing and an interesting angle that points to a solution to an issue or a trend
- Don't use complicated language if there is an easier way of saying it
- Don't use fluffy language with too many adjectives
- Don't wait until the window of opportunity has closed on sending out your news release. If the public has lost interest, you have missed your moment and
- Don't leave out pertinent facts, even if they are negative towards you.

Source: Gippsport, "Do's & Don'ts of Media Releases"

Source: Sport and Recreation New Zealand, "Using the Media to promote your Club"