



## Tips for Developing an Effective Press Release

### What is a press release?

A press release is a written communication that provides a timely report on an event, circumstance or occurrence by a third party. It is provided to the news media for the purpose of promotion. If well written, a press release can result in multiple published articles about your event, project or program. It is designed to encourage journalists to develop news articles on the subject.

### How different is a press release from a news article?

A press release is generally biased toward the objectives of the press release's author and is most often viewed as raw materials by the media when creating news content.

A press release is different from a news article in that a news article is a compilation of facts developed by journalists and then published as news content within a given media outlet.

### What are the elements of an effective press release?

- **Develop a newsworthy angle:** To get your message communicated through to the publication, you need to convince the reporter/editor that your message (or the story surrounding it) is newsworthy. It is important to have an angle that will appeal to journalists (often by connecting your release to current events or issues). Here [\[hyperlink\]](#) you can learn about some of the elements that make a story newsworthy.
- **Provide good quotes:** Provide meaningful, memorable and, if possible, personal quotes.
- **Report in the "third person":** A press release purports to report on an event, circumstance or occurrence by a third party. When writing a news release, be a reporter and report on yourself or your business.
- **Be concise:** Press releases are most effective when they are under 500 words and preceded by a clear and attention grabbing headline.
- **Be accurate:** Remember that content of your press release is intended to be used by the media and it is critical to be accurate and reasonably detailed.
- **Develop an attention grabbing headline:** Be creative and keep it to one sentence. Capitalize the first letter of all words. Do not use all upper case letters. Do not use exclamation marks ("!"); exclamation marks convey that your release is advertising, not news.

## What are some of the formatting guidelines for a press releases?

- **Provide a dateline in the opening paragraph:** Physical location (city, state, country), and date (month, day, year).
- **Develop a strong introductory paragraph:** Begin with a strong introductory paragraph that captures the reader’s attention and contains the information most relevant to your key message(s). This paragraph should include answers to the “Five W’s”: (W)ho, (W)hat, (W)hen, (W)here, and (W)hy. It should also provide your key message and include a hook to get your audience interested in reading more. Effective releases usually utilize a strategy known as the inverted pyramid, which is written with the most important information and quotes first.
- **Provide additional details in paragraphs 2, 3, and 4:** These paragraphs should contain more details and important information, and make up the body of the release.
- **Use AP style:** Please note that FHI 360 uses the AP style. Here you can learn more about the AP style.
- **Ensure accuracy:** It is very important to maintain factual accuracy. Make sure you clear quotes with the experts who are featured in your press release.
- **Provide information for media contacts:** Please include information on whom reporters should contact to get additional information or interview experts.
- **Provide additional information:** It is considered a best practice to include links to additional resources relevant to the topic of the press release as well as to add boiler plates of organizations (as appropriate) in the end of the press.
- **End the press release with special characters immediately below the boiler plate:** ### or END

## **A Sample Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **MEDIA CONTACTS:**

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### **Nepal hosts conference on the country's role in "greening" health care**

**July 30, 2014 — KATHMANDU, NEPAL —** The closely intertwined relationship between health care and clean environment will be the subject of an international conference to be held in Kathmandu, Nepal, on July 30, 2014. The event, entitled "The Healthcare System in Nepal: The Role It Can Play in Helping to Heal the Environment," is being organized by FHI 360 under the leadership of Nepal's Ministry of Health and Population and in partnership with Healthcare without Harm (HCWH), Healthcare Foundation in Nepal (HECAF), the Global Green and Healthy Hospital Network (GGHH) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It is the first conference of its kind in the South Asia region.

"Many health care leaders and governments around the world do not realize that significant environmental harm can be associated with the operations of health care facilities and the services that they provide," said Janet Robinson, FHI 360's Global Director of Laboratory Sciences. "They are even less aware of the simple solutions that can both reduce their environmental footprint and offer substantial economic benefits."

According to WHO's report, entitled "*Preventing Disease Through Healthy Environments — Towards an Estimate of the Environmental Burden of Disease*," environmental factors contribute to nearly a quarter of all human disease and death, a toll that may be magnified by the growing health-related impacts of climate change. More than 150 government representatives, health care professionals, environmentalists and health care administrators from Nepal and other nations in the Asia-Pacific region will gather to discuss how that country's health care system can play an important role in helping to "heal" Nepal's natural environment. Participants will focus on the potential environmental harm caused by the operations and services provided by the health care sector.

"We hope that this two-day conference will help health care leaders in Nepal to understand the problem and potential solutions and implement processes that will benefit the environment and public health," said Ruth Stringer, HCWH International Coordinator.

## About FHI 360

FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender equality, youth, research, technology, communication and social marketing — creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 70 countries and all U.S. states and territories.

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