

## What is PR?

PR is a way of managing your organisation's reputation, a two-way communication between the organisation and the public. It can include anything your organisation does to raise its profile.

## Why do it?

Handling your PR in house is an excellent way of reaching many people quickly and with no expense. It is more commercially effective than advertising and can boost staff and volunteer morale.

Good PR will enhance the identity of your organisation and take control of what people say about you. It can help you build good relationships with journalists, and to promote events and community activities.

## How to Write a PR Plan

First identify who your stakeholders are. In other words, those people, groups or organisations who have a direct interest in or involvement with your organisation and who can be affected by the actions of your organisation.

How much do you know about your stakeholders? What do they read? If you know what they read you can then begin to identify where to pitch your PR.

What are the key messages your organisation is keen to promote and how do you want to deliver these messages? What do you want your customers or service users to remember about you? Are there activities you want to promote? What are your organisation's key values? Consult with your colleagues or team to review and invigorate these if necessary.

Who within your organisation is your key spokesperson? The person who writes your PR copy may not be the same person who has the confidence and ability to deal with the press on the phone or make proactive calls to journalists. Who already has this confidence who you can support and develop in this area?

When will it happen? Timing is vital. Do you want your story to appear once or over a period of time? Is there an event date or a deadline?

## Get Familiar with Your Target Media

Decide early on which media you want to use and check how they communicate marketing messages.

To increase the likelihood of your Press Release being used, use hooks:

- Local relevance
- An event
- Celebrities – interviews/quotes
- Awards
- Use superlative language which is exciting and engaging
- Milestones
- Research

## How to Write a Press Release

The key to good PR is creativity and if you can come up with ideas that are innovative and different is it much easier to be successful.

- Ensure what you send is clearly marked PRESS RELEASE
- Make sure it has a good, clear structure and doesn't ramble
- Make your headline dynamic and engaging
- Put the most important information at the beginning
- Include quotes – get good quotes if you haven't already
- Always write the release in the third person
- Use simple, easy to understand language
- Don't use abbreviations, acronyms or jargon
- Use photos (if you have permission to do so)
- Include your organisation's contact details
- Type the words End of Release at the end of the copy
- Send as an email, not as an attachment

## How to Work with Journalists

Journalists are very busy and like to get to the point.

- Find out when deadlines are due
- Don't give a long introduction to your Press Release
- Follow up after submission to find out if they are interested in the story
- Make it easy for journalists and grow good relationships with them

## Useful resources:

### Organisations

#### Business Link

[www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)

0845 600 9006

The website has useful information and interactive tools to help you to create your own marketing plan.

### Books

#### DIY PR: The Small Business Guide to 'Free Publicity'

Penny Haywood

Batsford Ltd 1998

#### 101 Ways to Market Your Business

Andrew Griffiths, Allen & Unwin

(Australia) Pty Ltd, 2001

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