

Press Release Dos and Donts

A Few Do's and Don'ts

Do send your release to a specific editor. Address the envelope by name to the person you think would be most interested in your news.

Don't send your release to more than one editor at a single newspaper. If you don't get a response within four weeks of mailing your release, write a new one and send it to another editor at the paper.

Do send your release to different types of media outlets. Radio stations make good targets, especially those with talk radio formats. Send releases to television stations only if your news involves a visual event they can cover.

Don't send your release to every media organization in town, regardless of their focus. Your local gardening magazine will not appreciate receiving your press release about an article you published detailing technical advances in jet propulsion engines.

Do follow up with a phone call. In 20 years of public relations, I've never been rebuffed by an editor for making a courtesy phone call to inquire about whether they received my release or had any questions about it.

Don't pressure the editor to commit to a story or ask when "your story" will be running. This is a surefire turn-off for editors. Rather, keep your follow-up brief and polite. "I just wanted to see if you had any questions" and "thank you very much" are really the only things you need to say.