**Writing a press release: top tips**

1. Stick to the facts – don’t feel you need to add lots of ‘fantastic’, ‘brilliant’, ‘exciting’, ‘the best ever’, ‘the best in the world’ exclamations – they aren’t necessary for a news story.
2. Ensure that those facts are completely correct, and proofread your work over several times. Read it, then go and do something else. Come back again to it later and read again. Make sure it makes sense and contains all the information you need to get across.
3. Start with a catchy headline.
4. Keep it simple. Start with a quick outline, or core message, of what is contained within the body of the release – you can expand on it in the text.
5. Include ‘Who, What, Where, When and Why’.
6. Include a quote – perhaps from your managing director or a customer.
7. The ideal press release is concise – 300 to 400 words; three of four paragraphs – but it can be shorter if your news is quick and simple. Don’t write pages and pages.
8. Don’t include loads of information about your company in the release itself. Add a ‘Note to editors’ section at the end (outside of the release itself) which can give a brief overview of your company. A paragraph is enough.
9. Don’t be afraid to shout about it. Use your press release as a powerful marketing tool that will help you win customers. Think about what ‘they’ need and how your product will appeal to them.
10. Remember, it is not a story or an essay. It is a quick, sharp container to hold the most pertinent facts that are newsworthy.
11. A few bullet points outlining what you are doing in an introductory e-mail, should get you follow up from any publisher.
12. Always send an appropriate image, or provide a link to an image for downloading.

In a real world press release, you should always include the details of how editors can find more – a website for instance – and your marketing manager’s contacts. **(FOR THE PRINT IT COMPETITION HOWEVER, DO NOT PROVIDE YOUR PERSONAL CONTACT DETAILS).**

