

Rhetorical Writing: Press Release Assignment

As a representative of an organization, club, activity, etc. that you are personally involved in, you will write a Press Release and design a visual advertisement for a social media platform about an event, achievement, or discovery from your organization. You will demonstrate your knowledge of rhetorical appeals and language techniques within your writing and visual design.

Your Press Release should reflect something your organization is doing that is noteworthy and that will be interesting to the public (and a particular target audience – people who would definitely engage if they only knew about it). It could be holding special events, celebrating an award or achievement, announcing fundraising campaigns, or describing new programs the organization is launching.

Requirements

PROPOSAL: Submit TWO brief proposals for your press release assignment idea. Include the organization you are representing, the subject (main topic) of the press release, and a brief rationale of its newsworthiness. Approval by Ms. Tse is required before proceeding.

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER: Brainstorm and outline the content of your press release. Some research or interviewing may be required. Planning ahead allows you to contact the right people or be in the right places to get the quotes or perspectives you will need to make your press release noteworthy and credible.

PRESS RELEASE FORMAT: A standard template is available on the webpage. Follow the format!

Begin with an attention-getting headline. Use vivid verbs and engaging diction that provides specific detail. Press releases often include more than one headline to give journalists different focus options. You will include at least 1 additional sub-headline.

The body should be written in the “Inverted Pyramid” style. The most important part of a story and critical details are communicated at the beginning. After the most crucial news is presented in the first paragraph, each succeeding paragraph fills in the rest of the story with details and background in descending order of importance.

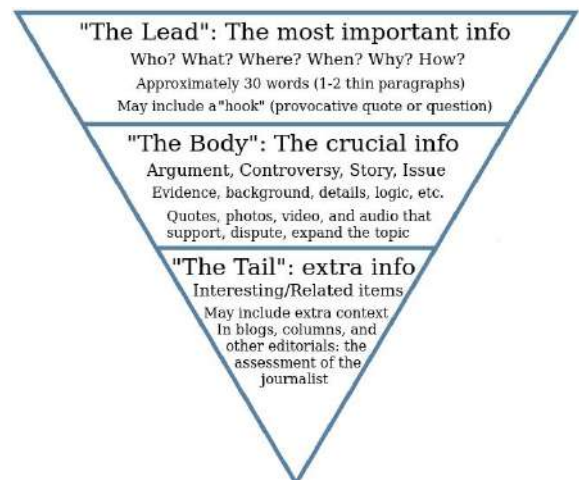
Quotes are mandatory from at least 2 different individuals. Language from authority figures or participants add flavor and perspective, since your writing voice should remain relatively professional and straightforward.

Length is 500-1000 words. Be precise & concise!

An “About the Organization” section is reserved for the end of the press release. This section typically mentions their reputation, accomplishments, vision, and mission statement to help clarify the identity of the organization for those who don’t know. (No copy and pasting of pre-existing “About Us” text!)

Following the press release format precisely, employing at least 3 different language techniques, proper grammar, sentence structure, and spelling are paramount to achieve a solid grade (40 Assessment pts).

SOCIAL MEDIA Visual Advertisement (10 Assessment pts): Design a visual social media post (Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter) publicizing the press release news. Get creative! Incorporate photos, links, or short videos as part of your post (credit for any reproduced material must be attributed to the original creators). Your goal is to get someone to engage with your ad post by liking, visiting the organization’s site, commenting, forwarding, reposting, etc. You will submit either a visual mock-up (digital or paper copy) or you can publish it on a real social media account and share with Ms. Tse.



Inverted Pyramid Style for Journalism

Press Release Graphic Organizer

Organization: _____ Topic: _____

Purpose (What do I want people to do?): _____

5 Ws & H

Who?
What?
Where?
When?
Why?
How?

Angle: So what? Why should anyone care about this?

Intended Target Audience:

Audience Analysis (What are their beliefs, biases, needs, and interests? What do they need to know, believe, or feel in order to act?)

Messaging: How do I want this topic or organization to be perceived and discussed?

Key Details

To enhance my PR, I need to cite quotes from

Outline Paragraphs

Lead

1

2

3

4

5

6

About Org

Ideal Headlines

Headlines need to convey the essential information while grabbing a reader's attention right away in 5-10 words.