

# How to guide

## How to write a press release

Press releases are a great way for businesses to promote themselves and share their latest news or successes within the local media for their target audiences to see.

When creating a press release, there are a few key components that you need to include to ensure your press release is as effective as possible and more likely to be covered by the local press.

## Headlines

Creating a punchy headline is key to ensuring the journalist is interested and reads on. It has to be something which entices the readers and makes them want to continue to read. The fewer words included, the better. Having a headline which plays on words is a great way to grab someone's attention.

### Example story:

North Walsham plumbing company wins two national awards at a prestigious awards ceremony.

### Good headlines:

- Not one, but two - Plumbers R' Us scoops prestigious national awards
- Plumbers R' Us wins big at national plumbing awards
- Plumbers R' Us plunged into success with national award win

### Bad headlines:

- North Walsham plumbing company, Plumbers R' Us wins one award of excellence and best employer at Plumbers of the Year award last night
- Award of excellence and best employer of the year awarded to Plumbers R' Us

## Your intro

The top line of your press release should be punchy and explain briefly what the story is about. Keeping the top line generalised with a brief overview of the story keeps readers enticed and wanting to read on to get the full story. It also helps when issuing as you can send it to a wider geographical area.

Using the above example of a plumbing company winning an award, an example top line/introduction could be:

A Norfolk based plumbing business is celebrating after winning two prestigious awards last night.

Plumbers R' Us, based in North Walsham, was awarded a certificate of excellence and named best employer at last night's Plumbers of the Year awards.

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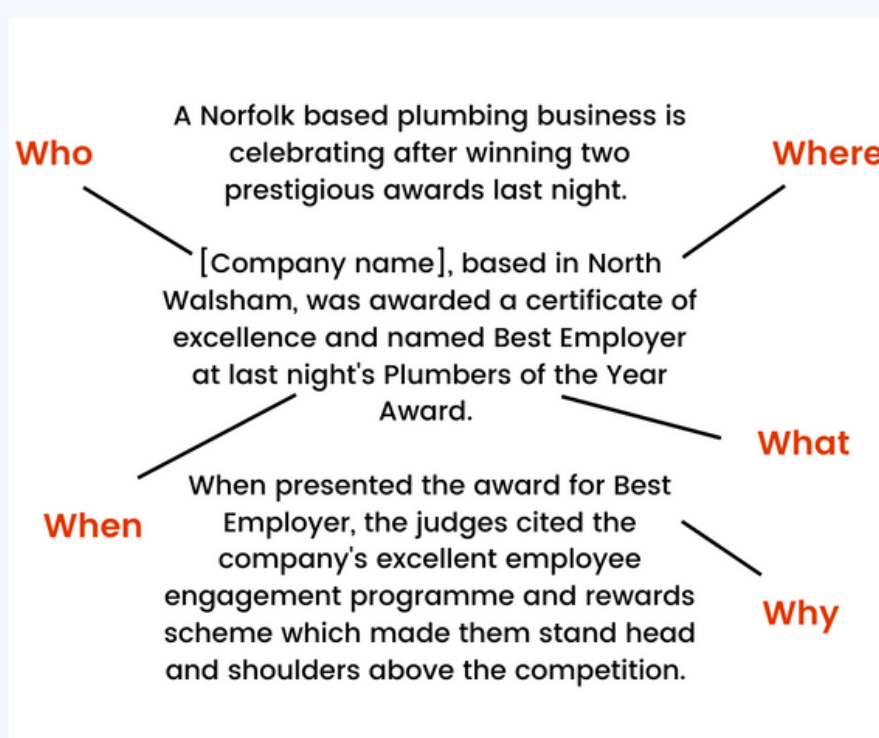
## The five W's

When journalists receive a press release, they cut the story from the end upwards. With this in mind, it is important to make sure the main points are all covered high up in the story.

When writing a story, you need to cover the 5W's: who, what, when, where and why.

This gives the readers a good overview of the whole story and ensures you haven't missed any key components.

An example of a story which includes the 5W's:



## How to use quotes

Adding a quote to a press release is a vital part of the story. Generally, it will come from someone who is connected to the story. For most businesses and for the above example, it would be the Managing Director.

Adding a quote makes the story personable and gives the readers someone to connect with. It also further backs up the factual elements of the story by offering opinion.

Stories can have more than one quote however, be aware that the closer to the end of the story you put the quote, the more likely it is to be cut to fit word and space constraints for newspapers.

Adding in quotes from industry professionals can also boost the overall feel of your press release.

When writing a quote for a business piece, you should include a name, job title and the company they are from.

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## Quote example

John Doe, Managing Director at Plumbers R' Us, said:

"I am absolutely thrilled to be named the Best Employer at the Plumbing of the Year awards.

"While we have been named Best Employer of the Year, none of the work we do would be possible without my fantastic team.

"This award is a testament to the work they put in day in and day out and I am extremely proud to be their boss."

## Photos

Local newspapers are highly unlikely to run a story online or in print without a good accompanying photograph.

To run in print, they need a high quality photo. They will not accept graphics or logos as this classed as advertising which needs to be paid for.

Taking a photo using a smart phone is acceptable, ensure that everyone is looking at the camera, there is nothing in the background that shouldn't be there – confidential information etc, if those included in the image are wearing lanyards, see that these are removed and take the photo in landscape.

When you send your press release, ensure you include a photo caption which includes who is featured in the photo and who the photo credit needs to go to. If you have taken it for your business, this will be you. If a photographer has taken it, the credit goes to them.