GETTING THE WORD OUT: HOW TO WRITE A NEWS RELEASE (WM2L)

Module
Working with the Media (WM)

Format
PowerPoint presentation

Purpose
This presentation contributes to the module learning objectives by identifying tools that can be used to get a message out, specifically a news release. The presentation highlights essential components and information that should be included in a news release.

Time Required
- 30 mins.

Activity Description
PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes. The presentation describes the characteristics, structure, content, and format of a news release as well as the variations of a news release and delivery. The presentation also touches on the format of a media advisory.

Participants may be used to writing what they may refer to as news releases, but are really advertisements. These tend to be announcements about events or the launch of reports; they pay for the space or airtime and the content is reproduced exactly as submitted. This is advertising; not a news release designed to generate media interest in a potential story. If this issue comes up, clarify the purpose of both activities.

Participants should review some example news releases as homework in advance of the session. Some of these are referred to as press releases, and some as news releases. PRB provides several examples through the policy communication toolkit; you may choose to provide your own examples instead.

Key Learning Concept(s)
- A news release is a brief news story that organizations usually write when they have some news, such as the release of a new report or information or a newsworthy meeting or event.
A news release includes the who, what, why, when, and where of the newsworthy message.

The best news release in the world is useless unless it reaches the right journalist at the right time and gets picked up in the media.

Materials Needed

- Laptop and projector

Associated Exercises

- Writing a News Release (WM3A)

Associated Presentations

- The Art of the Interviews (WM4L)

Required Preparation

- News Release Template (WM3A)
- Sample Press Release (WM3A)