

THE BASICS OF GREAT PRESS RELATIONS: 10 HELPFUL HINTS FROM TAYLOR-MADE PRESS

Number one rule: Remember the press are people too. They have piles of mail and lists of things to do. Make their life easier! Here's how:

- 1. Make your press releases concise and to the point.** One page is enough. Make sure your release contains no mistakes, and is addressed to the right people (spell their name correctly!).
- 2. Put the facts in the first paragraph** -complete street address, time, ticket price, phone number for the public. If you have more information do another one pager with biographies and background of company/event.
- 3. Learn when the journalists' deadlines (or busy days) are** and avoid calling them on those days unless they request it! Make sure you meet their deadlines--late information will do them no good.
- 4. Read, watch or listen to the journalist.** If you want them to appreciate your work, you should appreciate theirs! Make sure they're a good match with your story, make note of the stories they cover. Find out which method of communication works best for them by emailing or calling first.
- 5. Don't think sending one email is doing publicity.** You need to get to know the journalist, make a relationship! You need to make sure they have your information and that you've made them interested in the event by personal and persistent contact.
- 6. Be short and sweet on the phone,** if you are lucky enough to get the journalist on the phone--have your conversation prepared!
- 7. When a journalist calls or emails, respond immediately,** he/she usually doesn't have much time to work on their stories.
- 8. Have good artwork**—newspapers, magazines, and websites always need photos, but they only use interesting, professional shots. Give them vertical and horizontal choices with high contrast as 300 dpi jogs for print and 72 for web. The ideal would be to have a press room on your website with downloadable images (with credits) and press releases in case they can't reach you.
- 9. Have video footage** on Beta ready for TV reporters if possible. Make sure a professional videographer works with you so the lighting is good and the angles are interesting. Put this on your website and other appropriate sites if you like it!
- 10. Give the press six months notice if possible.** Then follow up again three months out and then a month out (send artwork then). The final follow up should be two weeks out. Don't forget to invite them to the event, even if they didn't cover you--spontaneous invitations the week of the event usually work best.

P.S. Send thank you notes to those who cover your event. Everyone likes to be appreciated. Don't forget to keep in touch throughout the year with notes about what's happening with you. Don't let them forget you!

*Taylor-Made Press is a publicity and marketing service for the arts,
owned by Lisa Taylor, formerly of The Dallas Times Herald.
Call (214) 943-1099 or Taylormadepress.com for more information.*