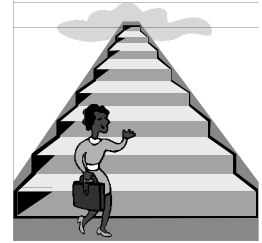


PR Methods

Pitch/Cover Letter



The last item you should prepare when getting ready to send out your media kit is a pitch letter. Design your pitch for a specific medium. Put yourself in the place of the editor or reporter to whom you are pitching your story (or in your case, your event). Remember “WIIFM” – What’s In It For Me, the editor/reporter? Better yet, what’s in it (your event) that is of interest to the readers of the publication or the listeners/viewers of the broadcast medium?

- Research the media you plan to pitch. Who is in their audience? What are their needs/wants? What types of stories does each medium tend to run? What are their deadlines for receiving story ideas? To which reporter or editor should you send your pitch? Why? How does that person prefer to receive information (via e-mail, fax, mail, etc.)?
- Focus on ONE media contact at a time and address your letter to that person. Include the person’s name, title and address. Then adjust your letter to fit the needs of other media contacts.
- Identify what you know about the readers/listeners of that medium.
- Write a pitch letter, following the guidelines in the “How to Write a Great Pitch Letter” handout.
- Follow the block-letter format in the handout. Put your letterhead at the top. After the salutation, use a colon (Dear Mr./Ms. _____:). At the end, use a complimentary closing (e.g., Sincerely,) with your signature, name, title, address and phone number (if not on your letterhead).

A Few Words About Pitching

Often pitching is done in person or via the telephone first, with a letter or e-mail followup. When speaking to an editor or reporter on the telephone, remember that person is busy and may be working on a deadline (NEVER call just before a deadline unless you have breaking news). You have to pique the curiosity of the editor/reporter in the first 10 seconds, so make sure that you get to the point early and focus on WIIFM from the listener’s point of view. Choose your words carefully.

When you make a followup call, have something “new” to add, such as additional details or another story idea. Do your homework before you call. Know what the media outlet is all about and which types of stories it typically runs. A media outlet probably won’t run a story that is similar to one it has already run. So find a new angle. Don’t be a pest. If the reporter or editor tells you he or she is definitely NOT interested in your story, go someplace else ... or figure out how to make your story match the needs/interests of the readers/viewers of that media outlet.