**How to Write a Press Release**

(adapted from a talk I gave in 2013 for an Iowa City Chamber of Commerce event)

**Where media finds stories**

-City council agendas

-While covering other stories and events

-Local e-newsletters

-Social media

-Expert/trusted sources

-Press releases

**What is newsworthy?**

-Would it interest you as a reader, listener, viewer?

-Is it relevant to readers, listeners, viewers?

**Newsworthy Topics for Businesses**

-New product/service

-Upcoming events

-Awards

-Partnership

-Moves/relocation

-Expansion, new hire

-Being featured at a national event or on a list

**In media, every story should include these two items**

Lede:

-A lede is the introductory paragraph of a news story

-It’s meant to entice the reader to continue reading

-It should contain the Who, What, When, Where and Why of a story

Nut graph:

-A nut graph is a paragraph explains the news value of the story

**Introduction to the basic press release**

Press releases should also include a lede and a nut graph.

A press release should be outlined as follows:

-Contact Information

-Headline

-Body

+Lede paragraph: Should include the Who, What, When, Where and Why of the proposed story. Should not include excessive adjectives or marketing language. Keep it to the point.

+Additional information.

+Company boilerplate information: a description of your company that can be used verbatim in a news story.

Why the newspaper picked up a story:

-Timely

-Strong local connection

Why the newspaper did not pick up a story

-Press release too difficult to read, such as an e-newsletter that distorts the text

-Colored fonts

-All capital letters

-Sent the day of the event

-Too much marketing language

-Requires too much editing

**Sending a press release**

-Copy and paste into an email, as well as attach it

-Do not follow up with a phone call right away to see if the news person received it

-Send event-related press releases at least six weeks in advance, if possible

-If no action is taken on the press release after a few days, then call