

# Next Generation News Release



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# Quotations: “To use or not to use? That is the question.”

- Quotes can help you or, used inappropriately, they are a distraction.
- Most reporters would rather get their own quotes.

*“Using a release quote means I didn’t take the time or make time to talk to the person myself.”- Washington Post*

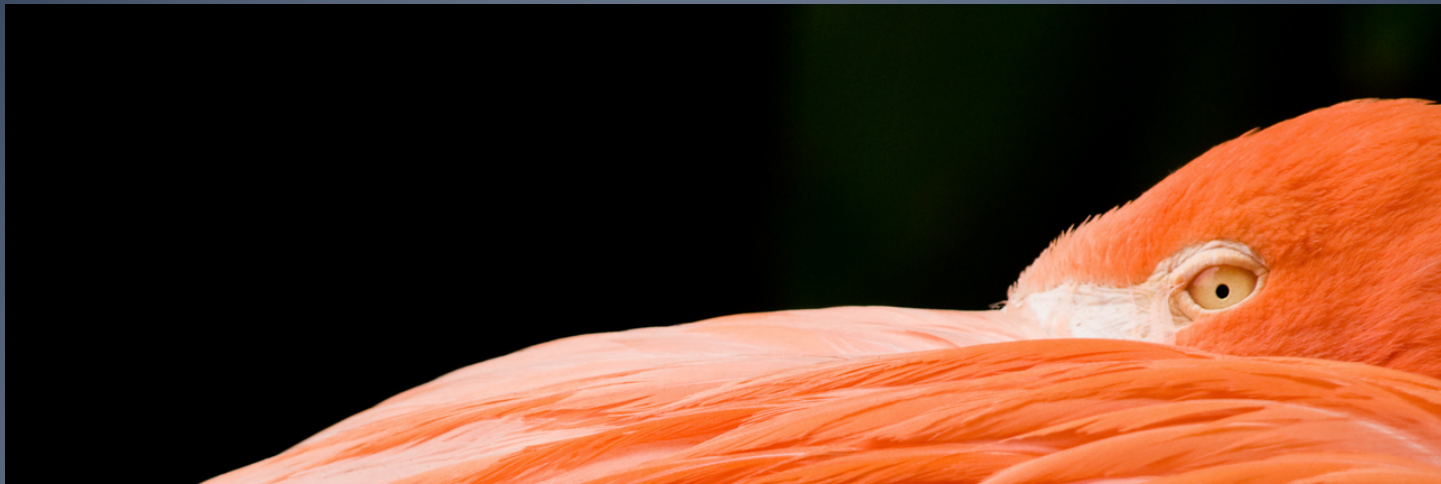


Sometimes the quote in the news release is all the reporter has, so you need to make it count.



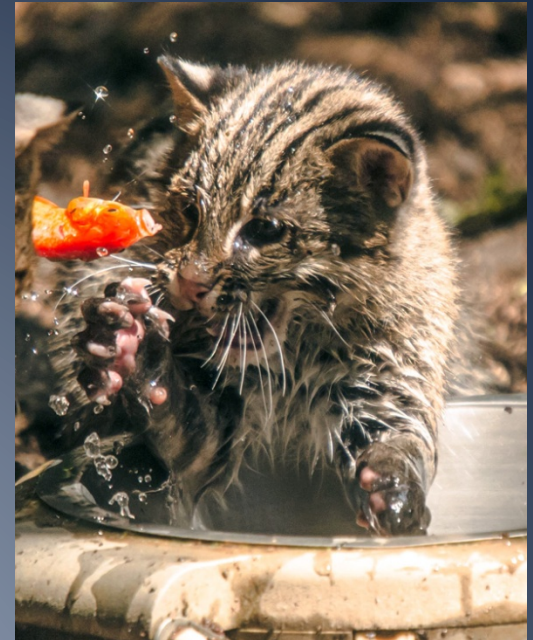
# Quotes Dos and Don'ts

- Make your quotes conversational
- The quote needs to say something that your news release doesn't
- Excite, express, and emote . . . but give the WHY
- Skip the jargon
- If you identify your person, company or product in the quote – it better not “feel” like Vanna White.



# *A picture is worth a thousand words . . .*

So use photos because journalists won't read an extra thousand words.





# Photos (connected to larger electronic photo albums) are necessary.

- Photos help a journalist visualize your story.
- Cause a journalist to pause and consider.  
*“(Photos) give us an immediate idea of what we’re about to read and whether we’re even the right person to have gotten it, so we can pass things along that aren’t suited for us.” – Washingtonian Magazine*
- Photos seduce. A photo editor may not want to use your photo but realize it’s worth his time to send a photographer to you.
- Your photo may not make the paper . . . but probably the website.
- Be clear about photo credit.

# You got my attention . . . but for how long?



“I think more than one printed page (including a photo, if appropriate) is too much.” – monthly glossy magazine

“Short, shorter, shortest.  
Hemingway not Joyce.” –  
*Bloomberg*





I know. You have so much to say about your amazing people, fantastic organization and life-altering products. So how do you keep it short?



TIP: Links to original source material are very useful for journalists

P.S. Some media outlets publish a news release verbatim! Without discussing the ethics, think about how this could work for you and how much space there is to publish.

# Journalists have to be able to find you. *It's vital.*

They want:

- Specific contact information.
- A phone number – that will be answered.
- An email address.
- To **connect with a real person**, not the office.





# Smithsonian Best Practices

- Fact sheets are a good thing.
- Include fact sheets with videos and photos as part of the additional information provided to journalists with a news release.
- No funky font. Smithsonian uses Verdana online and Times Roman on printed releases.
- Avoid electronic templates – they aren't good for mobile and they get your email marked as spam.
- Formula for links and tiny URLs – no more than one link per 100 words.

# REVIEW SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

## EDIT/REWRITE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Take vote at table about intended goal and audience. Tabulate.
2. Individually rewrite headline as one line.
3. Individually rewrite first sentence so it is simpler.
4. Identify hyperbolic or jargony phrase or statement and rewrite it.
5. Think of at least one visual that would strategically enhance release's content, readability and share-ability.
6. Think of at least one idea for making release more shareable among internal and external audiences.

YOU HAVE 15 MINUTES TOTAL FOR THESE ASSIGNMENTS. THEN WE WILL DISCUSS.