

Checklist: Managing the internal approval process for press releases

- ✓ Know your deadlines. If a release has a scheduled day to go out, make sure you can get it approved long before then, 24-48 hours.
- ✓ How many people need to approve? Anticipate delays.
- ✓ Take responsibility/ownership for your part of the process.
- ✓ Know in advance how long the release will be. Stick to that word count.
- ✓ Get the facts, get a great first draft with perfect spelling, grammar and strong writing. Be critical. Look for traps—you'll find them.
- ✓ Does the release need to be cleared by legal? Give them lots of time. Does the release make claims that could get your company sued?
- ✓ We are part of a process. Don't let your ego get engaged about ownership.

Sending the document to the media

- Relationships matter. If you get a reporter on the phone, understand time is their biggest enemy.
- Before you call, email, text, use social media and have the material in their hands.
- Do not 'cold call' a reporter and expect a good outcome.
- Know who you are talking with, what stories they usually cover.
- If you want a good outcome and coverage, preparation is critical.
- Expect your pitches will be rejected more than they are acted upon.
- Reporters are not there to make you look good, they cover stories because they believe the content is interesting and the public needs to know.