

HUBBARD COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
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HCO POLICY LETTER OF MAY 20, 1970

Issue II

NEWS RELEASES

As part of building good public relationships with the media, the press, radio and television, we should begin providing them with releases of what good news we have on Scientology, Scientology organizations and Scientologists.

CONTENT

In any news release it is vitally important to place all the essential data of who, what, where, when, why and how in the first sentence or at least in the first paragraph of the release, followed by fuller details. The information contained must be completely accurate; and if any Scientology terms are used, they should be defined or explained.

The release should be of newsworthy value and of reader or listener interest. The information besides being interesting should also be timely since news expires. For example, no newspaper would print a story on a Congress which occurred a week ago. Newspapers do want NEWS - news events, new ideas, new services, etc.

The news release should contain full information so that it does not need further questions asked by the media before it can be used. Just be sure to read it from the viewpoint of a reader and if it answers all reasonable, expected questions, it will be all right.

The information released should be useful to us from the standpoint that it furthers our objectives and accurately reflects the character of Scientology and Scientology organizations.

STYLE

A news release should be clear and precise. Long paragraphs are definitely out, as are complicated, overly long sentence structure. A study should be made of newspaper stories and styles in various newspapers to grasp the technique of writing news releases.

The lead should catch the attention of the reader and be very curt and to the point. (The lead is the opening paragraph of a news story, containing all the essential facts of the story.) It should be sufficiently interesting to result in a good headline which is generally written by the news editor. The facts of the story should support the lead in style, spirit, and information.

The release should not be padded and should be written in such a way that it cannot be edited to alter the facts or to slant the story differently. It should be presented as dramatically as can be in accordance with the facts and information presented - put in everything of news value, but do not exaggerate or use superlatives as you are presenting news, not advertising copy. The story should be of interest

to the readers of each publication to whom the release is sent. The release should fit the medium. A news release for the newspapers should be newspaper-style; for the radio it should have **listener appeal**; for TV it should be written as news script.

PRESENTATION

All news releases should be typewritten, triple-spaced on plain white paper, size 8½ by 11 inch, one side only. The top one-third of the first page should be left blank so that an editor can write the story's headline directly on the copy if need be. Your name, address and telephone number should be on the release so that you can be easily contacted if any data needs verification. If the text is more than one page, the word "more" should be written on the bottom of each page except the last page, each page should be numbered and the end of the story should be indicated on the last page. If there is a certain day when the story is to be released, it should be clearly stated on the news release.

PHOTOGRAPHS

For newspapers only glossy, standard-sized prints should be submitted, usually 7 X 9 or 8 X 10 in size.

For television only matte-finish photographs should be presented or a one to two minute film clip. The matte-finish photographs should be horizontal in the ratio of 4 units in width to 3 units in height.

The photographs should either be natural, unposed human-interest pictures or completely posed, professionally lighted and completely set up.

The photograph should tell the story as much as possible and should imply activity.

GOODWILL

Never be disappointed if your news releases are not printed or are altered. Just continue to provide the service of supplying what news you have. Never submit complaints to editors or reporters about their omission - just study your outlets more to discover what is considered by them to be newsworthy, and what is in their particular styles.

Mary Sue Hubbard
Controller
for
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