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This workbook has been written by Joanna Martin and edited by David irwin

# Communications for advocacy Writing press releases

#### 1. Introduction

The Business Advocacy Fund supports business member organisations (BMOs) to engage in private public dialogue and to advocate for an improved business environment. An essential part of advocacy work is communications. On occasion some of that communication may well be through the media. Getting a story into the newspaper, or on TV or radio, will be much easier if you are able to brief the media succinctly and clearly – and the normal way to do that is though sending them a press release.

The aim of this handbook is to provide an understanding of press releases as a public relations tool. It will introduce you to the logical steps in writing a newsworthy press release and then to identify suitable media to get the content of your release published.

By the end of this handbook you will be able to:

- Insert key advocacy messages into your media tools for maximum impact;
- Develop your communication and public relations skills by writing effective press release, media advisories and op-eds;
- Engage better with the media; and
- Identify target audiences.

#### 2. Expressing your issue in a press release

Advocacy is the act of influencing, or attempting to influence, the way that someone else thinks about, and acts on, an issue. Private sector advocacy describes attempts by the private sector to influence public policy in an effort to improve the business environment. When writing a press release, express your advocacy issue with two or three key messages only. You need to be clear about the problem that you are trying to solve – and if you have a proposal for a solution, then you need to be clear about that as well.

#### 2.1 Communication and advocacy

In general, communication is about encouraging people to act in favour of an organisation, a product or a project. This can be done in many ways and with different purposes, such as obtaining an interactive dialogue, challenging opinions, and changing behaviour and mind-sets. For advocacy, communications should specifically:

- Seek to create awareness
- Argue for the position you are advocating
- Persuade people to support your cause and to take action to support it

Inserting advocacy messages into your press releases allows the strategic use of mass media (newspapers, radio, television, blogs and other online news outlets) to influence policy initiatives. More simply put, press releases containing advocacy messages share policy-related information through the media, with the aim to affect action, a change of public policy, or to alter the public's view of an issue. This means that with a well written press release, with clear messages, you can persuade the press to convey your message to the greater public and, by extension, to your country's key decision makers.

#### 2.2 Creating key messages

One way to find your key advocacy messages is to ask yourself repeatedly "Why? How?", until you come to the core, the very reason for something happening. Asking yourself these questions will reveal the information which you can take for granted and which your audiences need to know and understand. The idea is to present a reasonable viewpoint of the issue to your audience. For example, applying economic logic to the debate and drawing on Kenyan national pride are good ways of conveying your advocacy messages to the public.

For example, imagine that your issue is multiple taxes on tea exports prevent the sector from growing.

Why are there multiple taxes? (Government wanting to create revenue) How can we persuade the government to reduce these taxes? (Commission a financial report to show data which indicates that growth in the sector with reduced taxes will stimulate the economy more and at a faster pace, than imposing heavy taxes on a few operators. Your press release could be the main findings of this financial report, with the aim of getting these main findings published. They will in turn influence the public and policy makers. Therefore, the key messages in your release could be:

- Reducing taxes will stimulate the sector, create more jobs and provide more revenue for the government (economic logic)
- The sector will grow at a faster rate, therefore the economy will reflect this growth (economic logic)
- Reducing taxes will make Kenya the most competitive tea exporter in the region raising export earnings and thus foreign exchange (national pride and more economic logic)

#### 3. What is a press release?

A press release is a written statement distributed to the media, normally by email and is a fundamental tool of public relations. Getting to know key journalists, by engaging with them formally (press conferences, events etc....) and informally (cocktail events, lunches etc....) will make a big difference to whether you get stories published and whether they are accurate.

The typical press release includes the statement "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE" across the top (occasionally a press release is embargoed until a specified date, but journalists frequently ignore the embargo, so it is better not to do that).

The text of a release is usually (but not always) written in the style of a news story, with an eye-catching headline even though there is a good chance that the journalist writing the story will change the headline for the newspaper.

The text should be written in the "inverted pyramid" style, with the most important information first, so that if the story is cut short, it is the least important content that disappears, from the bottom up.

After the headline, the content of the first paragraph is the most crucial part of the press release and should address the who, what, when, where, why and how.

Who will do, said or did something? What will be done, was said or it happened? Where it will be done, it was said or it happened? When it will be done, it was said or it happened? Why it will be done, it was said or it happened? How it will affect people or how it was done?

Journalists see press releases as having a specific agenda, and they will consequently want to add to the information, presenting a 'fair and balanced' view to the release. However, where strong quotes are included in a press release (Eric Sikilo, Chairperson of the XYZ business association, stated "VAT exemption on dairy products will double the incomes of rural farmers in a year") it is more likely that they will be included verbatim.

The aim of the public relations professional is to ensure an accurate story is covered in the media and to make the journalist's life as easy as possible, so public relations practitioners write press releases that encourage as much "lifting" as possible. Think like a journalist and emulate a journalistic style when writing. This will then attract the media to publish information in your release.

At the end of the press release, it is usual to write END or ### on a separate line, and then to follow it with the person or people who can be contacted for further information.

It is a good idea to follow the contact details with additional background information, explaining who the organisation is, or explaining the issue, or background to the issue.

#### 3.1 The optimised press release

The optimised press release has followed the expansion of the internet. Unlike a conventional press release written for a journalist, the optimised press release is posted online. It is important for the writer to select keywords or key phrases relevant to the contents. If written skilfully, the press release will consequently rank highly in searches on Google and other search engines.

Figure 1 shows an example of a website page which hosts optimised press releases on an international Non-Governmental Organisation's website.

#### **MEDIA CENTER**

Welcome to our press section, where you can get our latest news and find current and archived press releases and media reactions. Our media teams worldwide are ready to answer your queries on all aspects of our work, please search the media contacts database for the contact most relevant to your query.

Source: Oxfam, see http://baf.fyi/oxfam

The example in figure 2 shows the actual press release, with catchy title, quotations and clear contact information.

#### Figure 2: Oxfam media centre press release

# In a year of non-stop climate disasters, COP 23 offers scant support

Published: 17 November 2017

With the United Nations' climate conference drawing to a close, it's clear there's been very little progress on how to help people affected by climate change, despite record-breaking hurricanes and catastrophic floods dominating headlines this year.

The biggest disappointment was the successful push by rich countries against negotiating financial support for poor countries to deal with "loss and damage," instead pushing the issue to a one-off workshop next year.

Raijeli Nicole, regional director for Oxfam in the Pacific said: "Hurricanes ravaged the Caribbean, floods destroyed thousands of homes and schools in South Asia, drought brought devastation to millions in East Africa. We're no longer talking about the future; people are already fighting for their lives against disasters intensified by climate change. We needed progress on how to support these communities, not schedule an appointment for a round of empty rhetoric."

There w opening COP als negotiat

The Paris Agreement doesn't mandate finance for loss and damage in the same way it does for emission There w reductions and climate adaptation; many hoped that the first COP chaired by a small island nation would opening make progress on this glaring gap.

A recent Oxfam report highlighted the ruthless inequality of climate change: poor communities are five times more likely to be displaced by extreme weather than rich ones.

"These are tangible accomplishments that the Fijian leadership of the COP and the civil society that pushed for them can be proud of," said Nicole.

Finally, the summit showed that the Trump administration's decision to pull the United States out of the Paris Agreement is almost universally reviled and has left them completely isolated.

"From activists to governors and business leaders, we saw the real face of American climate activism here in Bonn. The world has left Trump behind, sitting alone on a throne of coal," said Nicole.

#### **Contact information**

Simon Hernandez-Arthur in Bonn / simon.hernandezarthur@oxfam.org / +1 585 503 4568 / Twitter: @SimonHernandez

For updates, please follow @Oxfam.

Tags: climate change I COP 23 I extreme weather I natural disasters I UNFCCC

Source: Oxfam Media Centre, see http://baf.fyi/cop23

The title is quite precise so if you Google, "COP 23 scant support", the press release example above is the first to come up on the Google search page.

In a nutshell, a press release is a concise explanation of a newsworthy event or topical issue that is provided to journalists to be used in a news piece, article or programme.

Press Releases need to supply original information of interest and value initially to the journalist and ultimately the readers of the media to which it is sent. It has to be prepared professionally so that it can attract the interest of journalists. It is a written or recorded communication directed at members of the news media for the purpose of announcing something you would like reported.

Journalists receive press releases all the time. Most are sent electronically and many are deleted without being opened. Hard copies mostly end up in the bin. The main reason is because the information is of no interest or perceived to be irrelevant. But it can also be because the press release is badly written.

It is up to you to help the journalist grasp the point of the release from the headline and the first paragraph. Do not assume the journalist will read further.

#### 4. How to construct a press release

When you begin to write a press release you should ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the press release?
- Who am I writing it for?
- What does my organisation want to get out of the press release?
- What do I want my audience to get out of the press release?

Your press release must be newsworthy and have a news angle, a newsworthy approach. It should contain a new piece of information. The new piece of information will vary depending on the media you are targeting. This should go in the headline and should be expanded slightly in the first paragraph, together with the main facts.

The press release needs to answer these questions: WHO? WHY? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? HOW?

This is how journalists construct their stories, so you should emulate a journalistic style when writing the release, so you need to give them the material with which to work. Here are some other tips:

- The first paragraph should be just one or two short sentences.
- The detail behind the main facts should be further down in the main text of the press release, with the least important at the end.
- Include a short quotation from someone relevant to the story, perhaps a named senior individual from your organisation. A quote gives life and adds human interest.
- Do not quote anyone without checking first they agree with the form of words and context.

- Include a brief statement about your organisation if it is not well-known. This background can be at the bottom of the release in a separate 'note to editors'.
- Make the date of issue clear to avoid confusion, and state clearly whether the news is embargoed until a later date.
- Add a contact name, phone number and email address at the bottom in case the journalist wants to clarify something or needs more information.
- Do not put the head of your organisation as the contact person, unless he or she is willing and able to take calls.
- No press release should be more than two pages of double-spaced A4 paper (about 450 words in English).

Follow these steps when writing your news/press release:

- Start with the "Release date." This tells the reporter when the information on the release can be published or broadcasted. If the document can be released immediately to the public, you can put "For immediate release"
- Reporters can also hold the information until a future date. In that case, you would need to put "Embargoed until: 00/00/00" with the date the information is to be released. The release date is typically located on the top left-hand corner. You should note that journalists are generally poor at honouring embargoes.
- Place your contact information in the top right-hand corner of the page. This
  includes your name (or the name of the person handling media inquiries), a
  phone number, and your email address.
- Next, write your headline. A headline is a short phrase summing up the essence of the release. Example: CEO of top agricultural organisation urges government to drop taxes in sector.
- Then, include a "dateline." The dateline is the location of the story, which usually includes the city/town and state. Example: NAIROBI, Kenya A bill signed into law today reduced taxes on sunflower seed production and ensures better incomes for farmers in the industry.
- The body of your press release will follow the dateline. This is where you will tell the reporter/editor the "who, what, where, when and why" of your story. Your release should follow a 'pyramid' style of writing, where the most important information or newsworthy "hook" appears first, and is followed by supporting information. This writing style is necessary for any news materials, because your readers (reporter/editor) are busy and receive many different pieces of news. The reader may not have time to get through the entire page, so you must give the most important information the reason why they should pursue a story at the beginning.
- The first paragraph, the "lead," should be the most powerful. This is where you should tell the most important information of the release, in order to get the interest of the reporter/editor reading it.
- Keep your sentences and paragraphs short and use plain language. Avoid acronyms and jargon. You should try to keep your release to one page.

- Be sure to include a quote. This puts a human face on the news you write. The quote should substantiate the lead, be from a significant person, and add value to the point of the release. Try to place the quote in the first three or four paragraphs of the release.
- Finish with a "tag." This is usually one paragraph of current, attentiongrabbing information about your organisation and its involvement with the issue covered in the release.
- End. Reporters/editors look for a symbol (### or -30-) at the end of a release to let them know that the release is complete. If your release is more than one page, it is important to add "—more—" at the bottom of the first page to indicate that there is another page to the release. These symbols (### or -30-) and instructions (—more—) should be centred at the bottom of the page.
- Photos. Photos from a meeting or an event can be helpful in getting coverage. Digital copies are the easiest to submit. Include a brief caption that has information about the people in the photo, and the purpose of the event. (Note: Notify your contact that you will be emailing a photo before you send it. Emailed photos often get caught up in a "spam" filter file.)

#### 5. Targeting your press release

Only send a press release to journalists who are likely to be interested in the content. So, aim to establish a rapport with journalists who are interested in you.

Prepare a list of target media. This will help you decide the news angles (approaches) and writing styles.

Write several versions with different angles (approaches) if you are targeting different types of media.

Vary the language and detail if necessary. For example, use specialist terms for a technical journal but not for a national newspaper.

Always think about the ultimate target audience – the reader, viewer or listener. What will interest them?

Here is an example of targeting different audiences:

Imagine your BMO has secured sponsorship from a major telecommunications company. It involves hosting an online communications hub to promote your advocacy issue, engaging and mobilising stakeholders around the issue.

The main press release might say something like: "The Kenya Tea Association will ask people to have their say on the future of the tea industry, thanks to a new mobile phone app developed by SAFARICOM, which asks consumers what they like about Kenyan tea."

The press release for the communications trade press might say: "SAFARICOM has agreed to sponsor the Kenya Tea Association as part of its profile-raising campaign..."

For a development/third sector site the press release might say: "Stakeholder participation in the tea sector will be boosted this year..."

#### 6. How your press release is treated by the media

Do not assume that a press release will be used in the way you intend. A journalist might take some of your material and add it to a different story on a related topic. It might also prompt a journalist to enquire about other things that your organisation does. Assume the journalist will re-write your press release.

#### 6.1 Key points to remember

- Is the announcement new and worthy of a press release?
- Decide your target audience first
- Make it very clear at the top of the press release what the story is about
- Keep press releases short and to the point
- Send a press release only to the media outlets that reach your target audience
- Make it easy for journalists to contact a key person for further information.

#### 6.2 Check list

Use this check list to ensure your press release is as focussed as possible:

#### **Before you start:**

- At whom is the release targeted?
- Who will be reading it?
- Where will the content appear? (online, newspaper, journal?)
- Decide whether it is best as a separate document or body of an email.
- News should be new, relevant and interesting

#### Writing the press release

Use a template with your logo and the words 'FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE' at the top. Use a standard font in 11pt or 12pt.

- Is it embargoed or for immediate release? Always put a date.
- Use short sentences and short paragraphs especially for the Web.
- No more than two pages of double-spaced A4.
- Include a quote from key personnel if possible.
- Does the release answer key journalistic questions?
- WHO? WHY? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? HOW?
- Check spellings preferably with a dictionary.
- Double check any names (including place names) and times.
- Add contact info for more details, including an out of hours phone/email
- address if appropriate.
- Ask a colleague to read your draft press release and check for errors.

#### Follow up

- Phone to check they received the release.
- Offer photos and other materials as necessary.
- Archive the press release where you and your colleagues can find it.

#### 7. Utlilising other key advocacy tools

If you have not done it before, introducing your organisation, events or issues you feel are newsworthy to the media can sometimes seem daunting or overwhelming. Here are a few other key advocacy tools that you can use to effectively garner news coverage:

- Media Advisory: a brief announcement about an activity or event issued to the media several days in advance – for local media, 1-2 days' notice is sufficient.
- Letter to the Editor: a letter written to a newspaper editor by a private citizen in response to content or an issue covered by the press outlet. Generally, no more than 250 words in length.
- Op-Ed: an opinion piece written by a newspaper or magazine's reader on issues relevant to the outlet's audience. Often these people are experts in their field. Typically, no longer than 750 words in length and published opposite the editorial page.

#### 7.1 Writing an effective media advisory

Follow these tips when crafting media advisories:

- Start by typing "MEDIA ADVISORY" in bold, capital letters in the top left-hand corner of the page. Underneath that, put the date.
- Place your contact information in the top right-hand corner of the page. This
  includes your name (or the name of the person who will be handling media
  inquiries), a phone number, and your email address.
- Then, you'll need to craft and add your headline. To do this, skip a line and type your headline. Format it to be centred and bold. This headline should briefly describe your event and grab the media's attention. Example: Key findings of a report on tea sector indicates major changes in government policy a must.
- Next, write the word "WHAT" in bold, capital letters. Tab over. Write what the
  event is. Limit the information to one or two lines. Write in the briefest way
  possible, giving the media only what is essential to know.
- Next, space down. Write the word "WHO" in bold, capital letters. Tab over and write who will be involved or who is invited. Keep it brief and limit it to one line if possible. Follow suit for "WHEN" and "WHERE."
- Add a space, and center "###" or "-30-" at the bottom of the page. This indicates to the press that the media advisory is over.

Figure 3: Example of a media advisory

MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Mary Namfua

Phone #(254) 555-36413

Email: mnamfua@bmo.org

#### **MEDIA ADVISORY**

## Key findings of tea sector report indicates major changes in government policy a must

**WHAT:** The Kenya Tea Growers' Association (KTGA) has commissioned a ground breaking report, which gives clear guidelines on policies, which are a must in the sector.

**WHO:** The KTGA Chairperson and Board of Directors will give key speeches on the findings at a press conference in Nairobi.

WHEN: Wednesday, 14 March 2018 at 1:00 p.m.

WHERE: Southern Sun Hotel, Westlands, Nairobi

###

#### 7.2 Writing an effective Letter to the Editor

Here are a few things to keep in mind, before you start crafting your letter:

A letter to the editor can be used to impact policy or legislation, to generate coverage of an issue, to set the record straight, or to deliver a message. Before writing, be clear about what messages you want to convey. You might want to refute or support specific statements; address relevant facts that are ignored. Make sure you support your facts but keep it concise. Make it pointed and punchy. Keep your letter to 250 words or less.

Here are the steps you should follow to write your letter to the editor:

- Start with the salutation "Dear Editor"
- Choose ONE ISSUE for your letter. Example: Amend the law to prevent fake seeds from flooding the markets.
- Write a sentence or two identifying your organisation and/or interest in the issue. Example: As the Chairperson of an agricultural business member organisation, which supports farmers by giving technical support and market knowledge, we have found that the use of adulterated seeds is the biggest barrier in hampering efforts to improve the livelihoods of poor farmers in

parts of Kenya. Our association is advocating for government not only to ban the infiltration of fake seeds on to the market, but also to monitor and investigate how they get into the country in the first place and put a stop to this practice. Often poor and vulnerable farmers are led to believe these seeds are genuine, improved seeds, and may spend their entire savings on them only to find that their crops fail and they are unable to feed their families.

- Write one or two sentences of background information. Example: A recent survey carried out by our association shows that 60 per cent of farmers across Kenya have fallen fowl of these adulterated seeds, which have a devastating impact on the lives of people living in rural communities.
- Write one or two sentences on your opinion. Example: If the government does not address this issue now, many more farmers will suffer food insecurity in the up and coming harvesting season.
- In one or two sentences, offer a solution and encourage readers, policy makers, etc. to take a specific action (eg, contacting an elected official, voting a certain way, etc). Example: I urge the Ministry of Agriculture to place checks at harbours, airports and on roads to eradicate this illegal seed trafficking. The government should amend the law to impose harsher sentences.
- Add your full name and contact information (phone, address, and email) to the end of your letter.

#### 7.3 Writing an effective Opinion-Editorial

An op-ed, like a letter, can be used to impact policy or legislation, to generate coverage of an issue, or to set the record straight or to deliver a message

Before writing, be clear about what message you want to convey. Keep your oped between 500 and 750 words (most newspapers and online publications have guidelines that fall within this range, but it might be worthwhile to contact your local media outlet to find out what their limit is before you start writing). Follow these general steps:

- Choose ONE ISSUE for your Op-Ed. Make sure you present the information in a way that qualifies you as an expert on this issue, highlighting relevant knowledge, background and supporting data.
- Identify a significant problem. Search for a specific problem within your issue that clearly threatens the general public or at least some large segment of that public. You must focus. Clearly identify the problem, the audience it affects and how you might go about solving it.
- Write a bold opening statement. Open your op-ed by making a bold statement or asking a pointed question that forces the reader to read on. Make sure it is punchy and hard-hitting because the opening statement is you one chance to grab the reader. It will determine the focus of your article. It will dictate the evidence you offer to support your statement.
- Continue writing your first paragraph. You should spend a lot of time on this.
   Weigh up whether you would read on if you saw the first paragraph of your piece in the paper. It never hurts to have a friend or trusted acquaintance read the paragraph to see how it flows.

- Defend your statement. Use facts and statistics, but only those that apply. Do
  not go off on tangents. Space is limited so you will need to craft clear, concise
  arguments in support of your bold opening statement.
- Cite sources and be emotive. Support your assertions with references to documents, studies, surveys, public statements, white papers, books, articles etc and keep in mind that facts provide the reasons to agree with the statement, but emotion moves people to take action. No emotion, no action.
- Propose a solution. Wrap up your story by proposing at least one clear, bold and practical solution to the problem you have identified. Proposing a solution to the problem demonstrates that you are not just complaining, but that you actually have crafted a solid advocacy argument. Sidestep proposing a solution and you will lose your audience.

Flick through the editorial section of your favourite newspaper, read the op-eds and gain insights. Do you agree or disagree with what has been written? Why?

#### 8. Getting your media advocacy tools into the right hands

Once your media advisory, letter to the editor, op-ed or press release is written, getting it into the right peoples' hands is of utmost importance.

Here are a few things you should consider when determining how to disseminate your press release: Social media is becoming an increasingly comfortable and convenient way to engage within communities and expand professional and personal networks. Reporters for newspapers and publications – both big and small – have embraced social media tools as a way to disseminate and more importantly, receive news and story ideas. Twitter is currently among the most popular forms of release. So, you will want to tap into the power of this media source, to get your news published in local papers.

If your organisation has a Twitter account:

- You will want to make sure you are following a few (at least two)
   business/policy reporters in the country. Make a note of their Twitter handles.
- Develop a "hook" or short description of the information you are submitting as news (no more than 280 characters in length). Example: "Kenya Tea Growers' Association meets with the government to thrash out talks to establish a better business environment" (120 characters)
- After you've developed your "hook," you will want to post your advisory or
  press release to a web page on your organisation's website. Copy the URL for
  that page. For example, the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) press
  releases page is available at: http://kam.co.ke/media-centre/press-releases/
- Then, go to www.tiny.cc (or another website that will shrink your URL, or set up your own, like BAF has) and input the link into the input area and click the "tiny" button. Copy your new tiny URL; add it to the end of your "hook." Example: "Manufacturers awarded for upholding operational excellence http://tiny.cc/itjzvy"
- Next, you can either Tweet to the specific reporter you are interested in approaching about your story by adding his/her handle to the beginning of your tweet. Example: "@NewsReporter: Kenya Association of Manufacturers

members awarded for their professionalism http://tiny.cc/itjzvy". Or do a broad tweet to all of your followers and then send a private direct message [click "Direct Messages" on the right-hand side of your page, type the message in the box and click send] to the reporters including your tweet and your contact information.

Monitor those publications to see if your tweets result in a story. Email is still a very effective way of disseminating your media tools if social media is not an option. If emailing a press release, it is most important to put the text of the release into the body of the email. Avoid sending attachments to reporters as they are likely to be caught by spam filters.

After you have spent time crafting the perfect letter to the editor or op-ed, getting it printed can be a little tricky. Here are a few things you should keep in mind when trying to get your pieces placed in the media: only send to the editor one letter or op-ed at a time. Editors prefer not to be inundated with opinion pieces from a single source. Do not send query letters or call editors to discuss op-ed ideas. In most cases, completed letters to the editors or op-eds should be sent by e-mail, especially if the piece is timely and could become dated quickly.

Check the newspaper's submission policies. Op-ed editors are busy people. Many will call to let you know they plan to use a piece, but very few will contact you if they reject your submission. You should keep phone calls to editors to a minimum, and definitely not make them near the end of the day when the editor is working hard to meet their deadline. Do not harass an editor is taboo, but do follow up with the editor a week or so after submission to ask if the op-ed is under consideration. Think of your follow-up call as an opportunity to educate the editor about the issue, even if your op-ed is not published. If your rapport is good, suggest a meeting or ask if there is a reporter who should get a copy as background on the issue. The result could be a relationship with the editor, which will prove helpful for the future. If your op-ed is published, make sure to clip it, make a copy including the name of the paper and date it was published, and send it to the policy makers you hope to influence. Submitting the same letters to the editors or op-eds to multiple news outlets is strongly discouraged as most news outlets want to publish exclusive, original content. If you would like to submit opinion pieces to different outlets on the same topic, it is strongly encouraged that you craft differing letters highlighting the same key points.

#### Further reading and further information



- There are a wide range of books available on how to write a press release. Most cover the same basic ground. If you do everything explained in this handbook, you probably do not need to read any further. However, one good book on the power of narrative is Denning, S (2007), The secret language of leadership, San Francisco: Jossey Bass
- Lewis, S (2012) How to write perfect press releases, Taleist



This series of advocacy competence handbooks – divided into modules and units – is intended to support business member organisations (BMOs) to engage in public private dialogue and to advocate improvements to the business environment. You are free to use the units and other materials provided that the source is acknowledged.

#### Foundation Unit

0. Introduction to advocacy & dialogue

Module 1: The policy process

- 1.1 Understanding policy and regulation
- 1.2 Policy analysis
- 1.3 The process of formulating and reforming policy

Module 2: Policy positions

- 2.1 Identifying, understanding & framing issues
- 2.2 Preparing policy positions
- 2.3 Influence & argumentation

Module 3: Communications

- 3.1 Communications & public relations
- 3.2 Media relations & use of social media
- 3.3 Interview skills

Module 4: Written communications

- 4.1 Branding & house styles
- 4.2 Writing press releases
- 4.3 Preparing written documents

Module 5: Managing advocacy projects

- 5.1 Planning an advocacy project
- 5.2 Budgeting & financial management
- 5.3 Evaluation of advocacy

Module 6: Managing a BMO6.1 Leadership, strategy & business planning

- 6.2 Governance and ethics
- 6.3 Members and member services

Module 7: Research

7. Research methods



The Business Advocacy Network is an initiative of Irwin Grayson Associates and can be found at businessadvocacy.net. IGA can be found at irwingrayson.com and contacted at david@irwin.org. You can follow David Irwin on twitter at @drdavidirwin.