

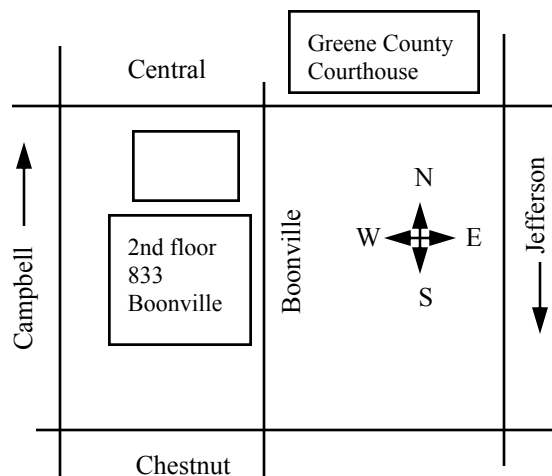
**This book may be
the best \$10 you
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“Newswriting Short Course for Non-Journalists is an easy-to-read and practical tool to help the layperson better communicate with newspapers and other media. With the fast pace required by the media in putting information together for public consumption, and with the competitiveness for time and space, this book should be a great help to both media and the sender of the information. This book is long overdue. It will help all concerned.”

**Review from the
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Examples of text and topics from the book

Essential release elements

There are seven elements every media release should have in terms of how it appears:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: These words should appear in the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead. You should capitalize every letter. Some releases use “embargo” dates which ask that the information not be used until the listed date, but these are not very effective.

Contact Information: Skip a line or two after release statement and list the name, title, telephone number and e-mail address of your spokesperson (the person with the most information). It is important to also give your home number since reporters often work on deadlines and may not be available until after hours.

Headline: Skip two lines after your contact information and use a boldface type.

Dateline: Technically, this should include the city your press release is issued from and the date you are mailing your release.

Lead Paragraph: The first paragraph needs to grab the readers attention and should contain the relevant information to your message such as who, what, when, where, why.

Text: This is the main body of your press release where your message should fully develop. Try to keep your release to one page, if at all possible.

Recap: Close with a summary paragraph about your company or organization. This is also a good place to restate your products specifications as well as additional contact information.

What *is* news?

Here are some yardsticks by which to measure the value of news:

- **Timeliness.** A story needs to be immediate or near the present. Without timeliness a news story is either history or prediction.
- **Proximity.** Close, physically or psychologically to the audience and the point of the publication or broadcast. Editors prefer “local” stories.
- **Importance.** How “big” and important is the idea, event, situation or person?
- **Conflict.** This includes all kinds of struggles. Mankind versus the environment or some of mankind versus others, etc.
- **Progress.** Improvements made by man show progress. Research development, better production methods, education, new equipment, improvements in living standards, human relations, etc.
- **Unusualness.** Does the story provide rare, odd and sometimes unforeseen ideas, events or situations?
- **Human interest.** Ideas, events or situations that touch human emotions provide human interest, which can arouse casual curiosity or incite anger, fear, joy or compassion.



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