

Targeted Teaching Topic



PUBLICITY & THE PRESS PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Lamenting about how good news never makes the newspaper or local broadcast is a common refrain. As an entrepreneur or entrepreneurship educator, complaining is a waste of time. DO something about it, but do it right! Positive publicity doesn't just happen, it's a planned, ongoing, persistent process of cultivating relationships and keeping news reporters informed.

With National Entrepreneurship Week, entrepreneurship educators have a great opportunity to tell their story, share success stories about their students, and highlight entrepreneurs in their local communities. With that in mind, why not engage your students in publicizing either an event you are planning or actually planning something to celebrate the Week and creating the publicity or "buzz" to grab people's attention. If you need ideas for celebrating National Entrepreneurship Week, click your way to www.nationaleweek.org. It's rich in resources and ideas.

Reminder

Local newspapers and radio stations rely on events happening right in their communities to fill the news. They love events that capture the imagination or the emotions, and feel good stories about entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education are perfect during these troubling economic times.



Formula for Positive Press Releases

- ☞ Keep it 1 to 2 pages in length and double space.
- ☞ Keep the font and typeface size consistent.
- ☞ At the top left-hand margin, type in all caps: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
- ☞ Under a heading MEDIA CONTACT, include your contact information (name, organization/school, office/cell phone numbers, e-mail address, and Web site).
- ☞ Write a headline that captures your news item.
- ☞ In the first line of your release, type the community you're submitting from and the date followed by two dashes.
- ☞ The first paragraph MUST answer at least these five essential questions—who, what, when, where and why. If appropriate, answer the question "how."
- ☞ Get to the point fast! Use short sentences. This isn't a novel, it's a press release.
- ☞ The second paragraph should contain a quote or additional explanation of some key point in the first paragraph.
- ☞ Last paragraph should include a summary of your event, activity, or success story.
- ☞ Don't send press releases as attachments; make them the body of your e-mail.
- ☞ Proofread, proofread, proofread, but don't just do your own proofreading. At least 2-3 other people should carefully critique it and check for content, spelling and grammar errors.

Publicity and the Press Practices Makes Perfect

Teachers Guide

Relevant National Content Standards for Entrepreneurship

Business Functions The business activities performed by entrepreneurs in managing the business.	
L	Marketing Management Understands the concepts, processes, and systems needed to determine and satisfy customer needs/wants/expectations, meet business goals/objectives, and create new product/service ideas
Promotion	
L.27	Write a news release
L.28	Obtain publicity

Involve Your School and Community

National Entrepreneurship Week is celebrated annually during the last week in February. The special week was established by the U.S. House of Representatives in House Resolution 699 in 2006. Former Congressman Tom Osborne (NE) was the co-sponsor of this bill. Mr. Osborne was and continues to be a strong advocate for youth entrepreneurship and rural economic development initiatives.

Celebrating National Entrepreneurship Week

The Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education is the lead organization for National Entrepreneurship Week and maintains a website containing resources that you can access all year. The site is www.nationaleweek.org.

It isn't enough just to plan a wonderful activity to celebrate Entrepreneurship Week; it's vitally important to get press coverage so that others know about it in advance as well as after it takes place.

Consider using one or more of the following media to promote your local, area, or statewide National Entrepreneurship Week event(s).

- ⇒ Letters to the Editor
- ⇒ Newspapers
- ⇒ Radio stations
- ⇒ Television
- ⇒ Internet (blogs, podcasts, Facebook, school or community websites, etc.)



Engage Your Students and Teach Marketing/P.R. at the Same Time

Why not have your students develop their writing skills and communication skills by creating press releases and being interviewed by the media? If you have an event already planned, that's awesome. If not, identify an event happening locally or in the state, ask the students to do additional research about the event, and then create a mock press release.

Use this Activity Guide and the accompanying resources to inform them about the ins and outs of writing effective press releases. Then have each student write one or more press releases. You could even have a mini-competition to pick the most effective one(s) and then **USE** it/them for your actual E-Week events.

More News Release Tips

Basic elements that every press release should have:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Should appear in the upper left-hand margin, just under your letterhead. Capitalize every letter.

Contact Information: Skip one or two lines and list the name, title, telephone, e-mail and fax numbers of the event spokesperson. This is the person with the most information. It is important to give a home or cell number since reporters often work on deadlines and may not be available until after hours.

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

Dateline: This should be the city your press release is issued from and the date you are mailing your release.

Lead Paragraph: The first paragraph needs to grasp the reader's attention and should contain the absolutely crucial information (who, what, when, where, why).

Text: The main body of your press release where your message should fully develop.

- Avoid using acronyms or jargon that only "insiders" would recognize.
- If appropriate, include one or two quotes from organization or community leaders. This enhances your credibility.

Why Newspapers and Radio?

Because newspapers and radio stations tend to be the easiest and most accessible media outlets, this Targeted Teaching Topic focuses on working with them. However, don't neglect the "big media" outlets of television (both broadcast and cable) and "non-traditional" internet media (blogs, podcasts, websites and Facebook). Be sure to check your local school district's policies for contacting the media and to assure that you and your students are allowed access to that media. This is especially important when considering the Internet.



Letters to the Editor

One way of promoting entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education in general is to write letters to the editor of your local newspaper and newspapers with statewide circulation. In Nebraska, the Omaha World Herald is widely considered the statewide newspaper. A letter to the editor of the Omaha World Herald can be submitted online or by regular mail. Your local newspaper will have its own guidelines and stipulations for submission. Be sure to check first so you'll know what they will or will not accept. Using the World Herald as an example, they stipulate the following:

Letters must include the writer's first and last names and bear the writer's address and telephone number. (Neither addresses nor phone numbers are published.) The use of pen names is rarely permitted. Letters may be edited for reasons including taste, clarity and space. Shorter letters are preferred, in any event not longer than 200 words. Letters containing substantial misrepresentation of fact are not considered. We will not knowingly print letters sent to other publications. Materials submitted for publication in the Pulse or on the More Commentary page may be reproduced or distributed by print, electronic or other means. – Source: Omaha World Herald (1/29/09)

Additional P.R. Tools

- Banners
- Email
- Flyers
- Handbills
- Letters to other school and community organizations
- Posters
- Public Service Announcements
- Table tents
- Word of mouth





***** MEDIA ALERT or MEDIA RELEASE *****
PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: _____
(Date)

Source: _____
Name, phone number with area code, e-mail address

(City)

Give a hook to get attention

Example: Nebraska Youth Entrepreneur Wins International Import/Export Challenge Contest

Photo Opportunity of _____ and Chance to Interview _____

WHAT:

- Describe the event in 2-4 clear sentences
- The event will include photo opportunities of _____ and interviews and opportunities with _____.

WHEN:

- From what time until what time
- Day and Date

WHERE:

- Complete and accurate address
- Include room numbers or building names if appropriate

WHO:

- List names and positions of those who will speak and be available for photos and interviews.
- List any major groups or sponsors involved in the event.

WHY: Tell in 2-4 sentences why this event merits media attention.

CONTACTS: Always include day of event contact info!

Name:
Organization
Phone: Cell:
Email:
Website:

Name:
Organization:
Phone: Cell:
Email:
Website:

This quick and simple press alert/release format was adapted from a resource submitted to the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education by Ronni Cohen, Executive Director of the Delaware Financial Literacy Institute, Delaware Money School. The original resource is available at www.nationaleweek.org.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: _____

(Date)

Source: _____

Name, phone number with area code, e-mail address

(City)

CONTACT(S):

Name:

Organization

Phone:

Cell:

Email:

Website:

Name:

Organization:

Phone:

Cell:

Email:

Website: