



How to write a tip sheet

By Sandra Beckwith

A tip sheet is a news release that offers tips or advice in a bulleted or numbered format. It's one of the hardest working and most useful tactics available for generating publicity. Use a tip sheet to generate short column notes in a newspaper or magazine or to interest a reporter, editor, or producer in a feature article or talk show interview on the tip sheet topic.

Here's how to create an effective tip sheet:

1. Use a press release format. The biggest difference between a tip sheet and a traditional press release is that the body of the tip sheet will include your tips or advice in a numbered or bulleted format.
2. Start with a headline that mimics those on magazine covers - "5 ways to lose weight before June" or "6 ways to save the most at the supermarket."
3. Write your first paragraph so it explains why the tips are necessary. Think of it as stating a problem (the solution comes in your tips).
4. Quote and identify the expert source (you) in the second paragraph. This should provide more detail about why the tip sheet is necessary and establish the subject's credentials.
5. Set up your tips with a sentence - "Here are Smith's tips for saving money at the supermarket" - or a short paragraph.
6. List your tips with bullets or numbers. When tips are listed this way, rather than in a traditional paragraph format, editors can quickly scan them to see if they would be useful to readers - or not. Make sure you write your tips in an active voice with strong verbs. And make sure they provide advice, not reasons to do something or product features.
7. Finally, add the concluding boilerplate paragraph that you use in most press releases.

Look for ways to include tip sheets in your book's publicity plan; you'll soon see how easily they generate results.

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