

Rockford News Personnel Provide a List of Pet Peeves

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Published by [Rockford Register Star](#)

Monday, October 24, 2005

One of the most popular columns I wrote was over a year ago when we provided a list of common mistakes of communications professionals when working with the media. We decided to ask again and local media weren't shy about sharing these 'pet peeves' with us.

- Don't go through the media's sales department to try and get a story placed. Sales and editorial are two different departments.
- Don't have a contact person on the news release who does not want to comment, cannot be contacted or cannot put the media in touch with a spokesperson.
- If the news medium deems your story non-newsworthy for them, don't keep calling or pushing the story with others in their news department.
- Don't issue a news release without providing after-hours phone numbers or contact information, especially for weekend events/activities.
- Don't overwhelm the news desk with lots of "extra" details on the first page of your news release. Keep the front page simple with date, time, and location. Remember, news departments get overwhelmed with scores of releases each day.
- Understand that news departments and public service/promotions people are different people in different parts of the building. E-mail or fax info to each if you want news coverage and promotional assistance.

Keep these in mind as you approach the media for story coverage; it will help your credibility and likely pay off in gaining coverage for your organization.