



Strategic Writing for Public Relations

Writing is the heart of public relations.

As a PR professional, you'll need to master many types of writing to effectively communicate with diverse audiences across various channels.

This presentation will cover key aspects of PR writing, from traditional formats to emerging AI tools.

The Importance of Writing in PR

1 Essential Skill

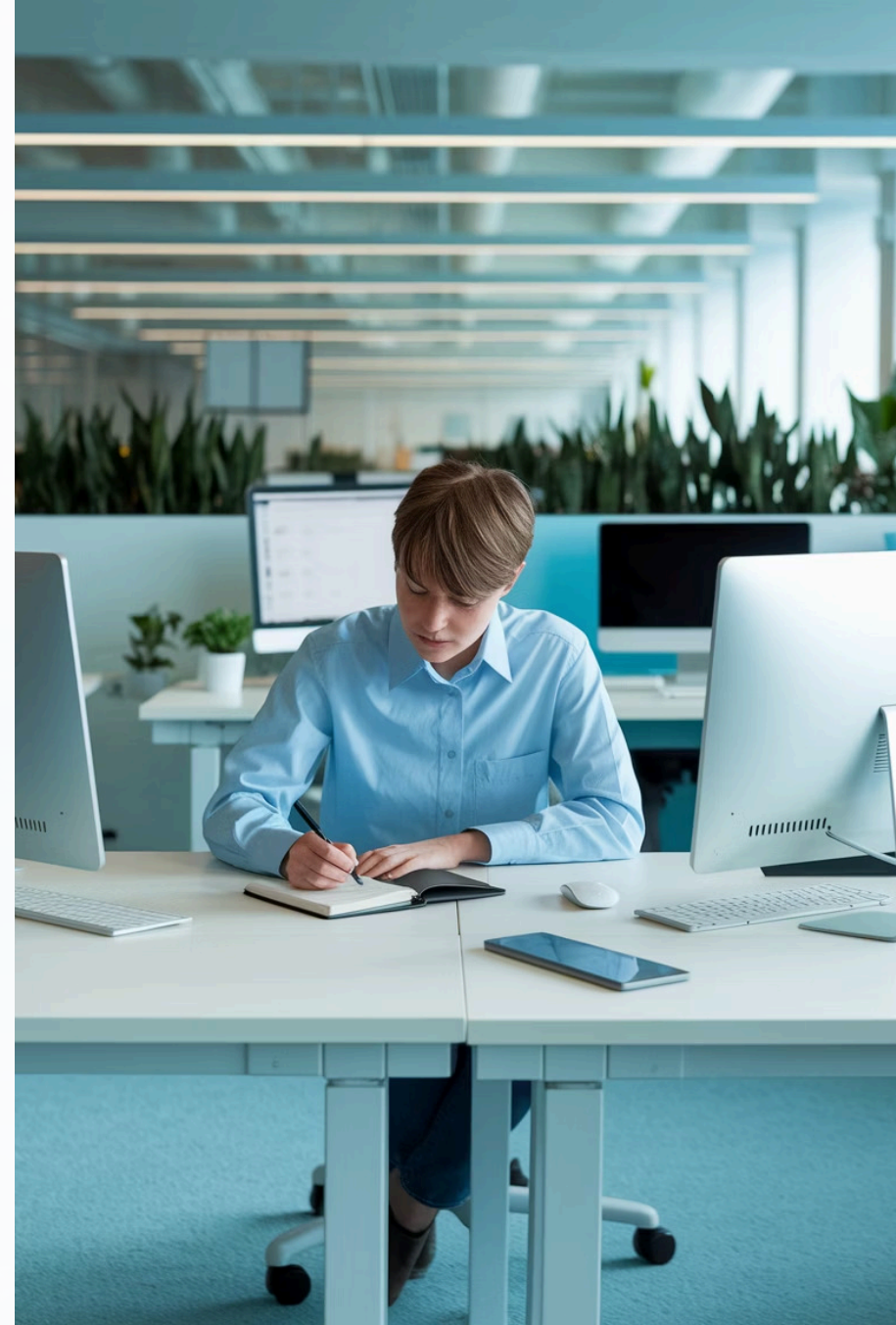
Writing is the #1 skill required by PR employers. It's crucial for persuading audiences and creating impactful messages.

2 Constant Practice

Like training for the Olympics, writing improves with regular practice over time.

3 Diverse Formats

PR pros must be skilled in writing for different formats and channels, from press releases to social media.





Key Writing Styles in PR



Persuasive Writing

The foundation of PR writing, aimed at motivating audiences to think or act differently.



Creative Messaging

Engaging content that goes beyond simple information to entertain and inspire.



Storytelling

Narrative messaging that creates memorable, shareable experiences for audiences.



Real-Time Writing

Spontaneous content creation for immediate responses to trending topics or live events.

Qualities of Effective PR Messaging

Consistency

Aligned with brand perception and values **across all channels**.

Strong Voice

Clear, recognizable style and tone unique to the brand.

Representation & Accessibility

Inclusive content that reaches all audiences.

Authenticity

Genuine messaging that truly represents the brand's purpose.



News and Press Releases



News Releases

Focus on immediate, **time-sensitive stories like product launches, earnings reports, and executive changes.**

Written in inverted pyramid style with key facts first, quotes second, and background last.

Distributed through wire services like PR Newswire for maximum media pickup.

Primary audience is journalists covering breaking business news.



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 12, 2015

Contact: Danika Wellington
Media Liaison
614-555-5678
wellington.41@columbus.gov

Empty Bowls to feed the hungry

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department will host its 18th annual Empty Bowls event to raise much needed funds for the Mid-Ohio Foodbank.

There will be 17 Empty Bowls events starting Saturday until Dec. 10 throughout the Columbus area, which will feature unique pottery and handmade soup for a \$10 donation.

Wendy Frantz, Empty Bowls coordinator at Columbus Recreation and Parks, said it is a great way to give back to the community.

"For every dollar that is raised through the Empty Bowls Project for the Mid-Ohio Foodbank

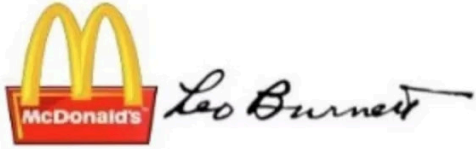
Press Releases

A press release, also known as a media release, is an **official statement delivered to members of the news media** for the purpose of providing new information, creating an official statement, or **making an announcement directed for public release.**

Press releases are also considered a **primary source**, meaning they are original informants for information.

A press release is traditionally composed of nine structural elements, including a **headline, dateline, introduction, body, and other components.** Press releases are typically delivered to news media electronically.

Key Elements of a Press Release



McDonald's and The Trussell Trust are now wrapping up hunger in London

The "Why Waste Me?" charitable campaign

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE/ EMBARGO: 10th May, 2016

LONDON, United Kingdom, May 10, 2016 – Paul Pomroy, Chief Executive Officer (McDonald's UK) announced today – McDonald's anti food waste charitable campaign "Why Waste Me?" in collaboration with The Trussell Trust, the largest organization fighting homelessness and poverty in the UK with over four hundred food banks.

The "Why Waste Me?" initiative will take place in London (#ImDonatingIt) from May 10, 2016 until June 19, 2016 with the purpose of raising awareness and nudging behavioral change towards McDonald's customers on the matter of food wasting. The franchise's strategy is to set a powerful example by starting to donate their unused ingredients that are still within the "sell-by" date to the Trussell Trust Charity. Starting today, customers will find pop-up boxes inside their restaurants where they can donate food as well, and aid to McDonald's environmental and social goal.

According to a "Waste & Resources Action Programme" carried out in 2013, the estimated annual food waste in the UK is around 12 million tonnes with a value of over £19 billion; 75% of which could have been avoided. Understandably this leads to and increases poverty, as well as leaving the homeless hungry.

http://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/UK%20Estimates%20October%2015%20%28FINAL%29_0.pdf McDonald's food waste varies from 100k to 500k products per day globally, with an average of 180kg of waste per restaurant in a week; a considerable amount of which could be donated to feed the starving people living on the streets.

<http://www.mcdonalds.co.uk/ukhome/whatmakesmcdonalds/questions/environmental-impact/waste/on-average-how-much-food-waste-is-being-separated-per-week-from-your-general-waste.html>

Headline

Focuses on the main news item

1

Lead Paragraph

Outlines the most important elements of the story

2

Body

Provides quotes and supporting information

3

Closing

Includes contact information and relevant URLs

4

Boilerplate

Brief overview of the organization or brand

5



Best Practices for Press Releases

1 Know Your Purpose

Clearly communicate **why your story matters to journalists** and their readers.

2 Research Your Audience

Understand the journalists and outlets you're targeting to tailor your approach.

3 Provide Value

Include **relevant quotes, background info, and supplemental content** to paint a complete picture.

4 Follow Up Appropriately

Be respectful of journalists' time when following up on pitches.

Feature Stories in PR

1

Purpose

Promote **individuals or humanize brands** through in-depth, narrative writing.

2

Format

Long-form content using **storytelling techniques**, not following the inverted pyramid structure.

3

Content

Rich details, quotes, and personal stories that create emotional connections.

4

Timing

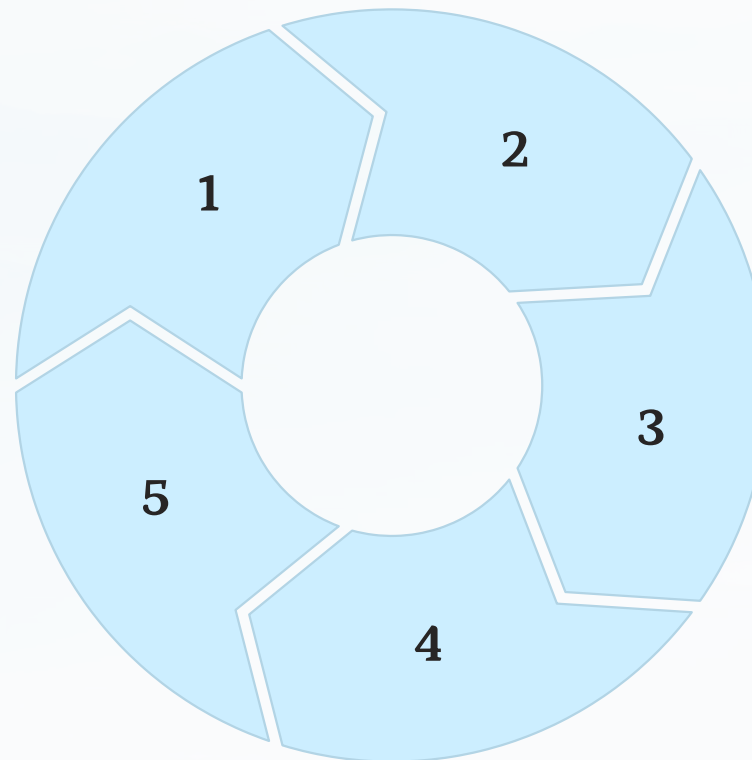
Often **published ahead of major events** or promotions to build interest.



Crafting Effective Pitches To Media Contacts

Research
Know your **media contacts** and their interests

Share Results
Thank journalists and share published stories



Concise Writing

Keep pitches **brief and focused**

Anticipate Needs

Provide readily available background info

Follow Up

Be respectful and timely in follow-ups

PR Professionals Use Fact Sheets and Infographics To Convey Updates



Fact Sheets

Concise, scannable documents highlighting essential statistics and background information about an organization or campaign.

- Executive bios and leadership profiles
- Product specifications and features
- Company milestones and market data



Infographics

Strategic visual tools that transform complex data into compelling stories through charts, icons, and illustrations.

- Annual report highlights and KPIs
- Survey results and research findings
- Impact reports and CSR metrics



PR Professionals Use Media Kits and PR Boxes To Promote Brand to Influencers and Media

Traditional Media Kit

Collection of promotional materials including press releases, backgrounders, bios, and fact sheets.

Digital Media Kit

Online version with downloadable assets, often including multimedia elements.

PR Box

Physical package sent to influencers or media, designed for "unboxing" experiences and social sharing.

PR Professionals Write for Digital and Social Media



Websites

Create mobile-optimized content with 20-30 word paragraphs. Include primary keywords every 150-200 words. Structure with H1-H4 headers and bullet points for 43% better engagement.



Blogs

Write 800-word articles with 2-3 minute read time. Include custom images every 300 words. Use subheadings every 3-4 paragraphs and end with clear call-to-action for 55% higher conversion.



Social Media

Craft platform-specific content: 240-character tweets with hashtags, Instagram carousel posts with 70-word captions, and LinkedIn articles with industry insights. Engage followers with 80-20 rule: 80% value, 20% promotion.

A man with short brown hair is seen from the chest up, sitting at a desk and looking at a computer monitor. The monitor displays the text "ACTOR" and "VOICE" in a stylized font. The background consists of light blue office partitions and a green plant.

Best Practices for PR Digital Writing

1 Know Your Keywords

Use **relevant tags and hashtags** to improve searchability.

2 Align with Brand Voice

Maintain **consistency** across all platforms.

3 Optimize for Platforms

Tailor content to **fit each channel's unique features** and audience expectations.

4 Monitor and Adapt

Track reactions and adjust strategy based on performance data.



PR Professionals Use AI Tools in PR Writing

Uses

- Content personalization
- Research analysis
- Content generation
- SEO optimization

Examples

- ChatGPT for brainstorming
- Jasper for social media content
- Grammarly for editing
- Midjourney for image creation

How Do They Craft Effective AI Prompts?

Define Goal

Be specific about objective, tone, audience, and format.

Provide Context

Give clear guidelines and criteria for desired output.

Refine Output

Review, edit, and adapt AI-generated content to fit your needs.





Very Important Ethical Considerations for AI in PR

1 Disclosure

Be transparent about AI use in content creation.

2 Fact-Checking

Always verify AI-generated information for accuracy and bias.

3 Privacy

Be cautious about inputting sensitive information into public AI tools.

4 Human Touch

Use AI as a tool to enhance, not replace, human creativity and judgment.

Examples of Essential PR Writing Tools



From style guides to AI-powered editors, PR pros rely on a variety of tools to enhance their writing.

The AP Stylebook remains the industry standard, while platforms like Grammarly, Canva, and BuzzSumo help with editing, design, and content research.

Case Study: Dove's Real Beauty Campaign

Integrated Approach To Promotion



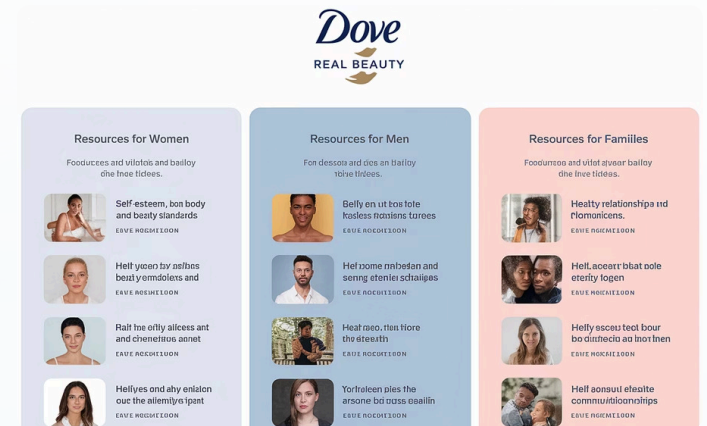
Impactful Visuals

Dove's campaign uses **powerful imagery** to challenge beauty standards.



Social Engagement

The campaign **encourages audience participation** and sharing of personal stories.



Educational Content

Dove **provides resources for parents** to discuss beauty standards with children.

The image features the Dove logo in a dark blue, cursive font at the top. Below it is a stylized golden bird icon. The background is a light green and white illustration of a group of diverse women of various ethnicities and body types holding hands in a circle, symbolizing unity and community. The women are wearing casual clothing like tank tops and jeans. The background also includes stylized green trees and a light blue sky.

Dove

Why IS Dove So Successful in PR?

1 Power of Human Stories

They use authentic, relatable narratives resonate strongly with audiences.

2 Integrated Approach

They combine traditional PR writing with modern digital tactics amplifies impact.

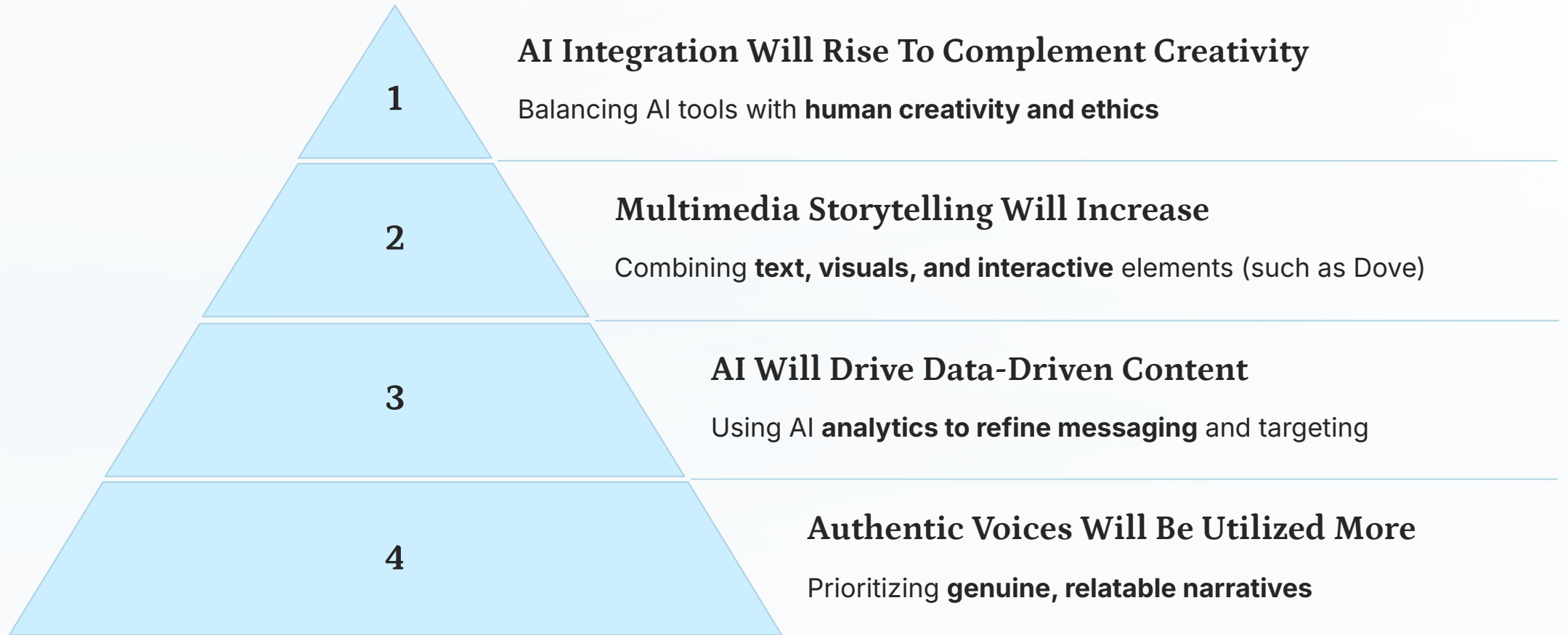
3 Consistent Messaging

They align all content with core brand values builds trust and recognition.

4 Providing Value

They offer practical resources extends the campaign's reach and usefulness.

What Does The Future of PR Writing Look Like?





Class Activity: Final Touches LinkedIn Branding

Review and enhance your LinkedIn profile by completing the following steps. Work in peer-review pairs to provide feedback to each other.

1 Profile Audit

Review your headline, summary, and experience sections. Ensure they reflect your PR expertise and career goals.

2 Content Check

Examine your featured section, recent activities, shared posts, and articles. Verify they align with your professional brand.

3 Visual Elements

Update your profile and background photos. Ensure they convey professionalism and match your personal brand.

4 Peer Review

Exchange profiles with a partner and provide constructive feedback using the PR writing principles we've discussed.

5 Main Items To Review For Your Peer-Review Partner:

- ☐ Is their **Profile Picture** professional?
- ☐ Is the **Background Photo** related to their field or UCF?
- ☐ Is there **About** section complete with a thorough description of their academic/professional accomplishments?
- ☐ Do they have at least 3 items in their **Featured** section with visuals exemplifying their successes?
- ☐ Do they have at least 3 posts in their **Activity** section related to their career goal?
- ☐ Is there **Experience** section filled out with bullet points describing and quantifying their accomplishments?
- ☐ Did they list the full name of their UCF degree in the **Education** section?
- ☐ Do they have professional **Recommendations**?
- ☐ Did they list any **Certificates** relevant to their field/major? (Use LinkedIn Learning)
- ☐ Did they list any **Projects, Volunteering, or Organizations** they are involved with?
- ☐ Did they add at least 3 **Skills**?