

PROMOTING YOUR FUNDRAISING EVENT

HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

The more people who know about your fundraising, the more money you'll raise so it's worth investing time in getting the word out there.

GETTING MEDIA INTEREST

To spread the word, think about getting interest from your local newspaper, radio station or TV news channel.

To get them interested, talk about YOU... that's what makes your fundraising story stand out. Are you doing something quirky or attempting a record? Perhaps you have a celebrity on board or there's something that makes your event particularly challenging.

If you are a veteran or have friends or family whose time in the Armed Forces has inspired you to fundraise for us, it's worth sharing your motivation. Or is there something about the issues that veterans face that mirrors your own life experience?

Your personal story could be what clicks with a journalist – just make sure you're comfortable with sharing your story.

Step 1 – write your press release

The key points to include in your press release are:

- **What** – Provide clear details of what your fundraising event/activity is. Explain what you are doing, why it's different etc.
- **Who** – Tell your own story to give context to the event. Talk about your training/preparations, share any interesting/funny stories etc. Also, be sure to provide your contact details so that journalists know how to get in touch.
- **Why** – Why are you doing this event? Why have you chosen to support us, and how much are you hoping to raise?
- **When and where** – Journalists need know when and where you'll event will, this will enable them to write about it accurately, or possibly even attend. If you have a fundraising page make sure you include a link to it, which will help drive donations.

The template below shows how to lay out your press release, it also provides charity information that's useful to include. This will make it easy for people to understand what we do and the difference their donation makes to wounded veterans, serving personnel and their families.

Step 2 – research your local media

Use your local knowledge to identify newspapers, radio stations and TV news channels that you and your friends consume locally. Search their contact pages for someone in editorial or on the news desk.

Step 3 – get in touch

Email over your press release. Be sure to include clear contact details and an offer for them to chat to you to find out more. If appropriate, invite them to attend. Include a high-quality photo that also tells the story (e.g. a picture of you on your bike in Help for Heroes kit).

Give them a call the next day to make sure they received it and answer their questions. Journalists receive a lot of emails so it can take a bit of extra effort to make sure they look at yours.

Once you've completed the event you should also send an updated press release and some more good photos. Make sure you get permission from all people featured in your photos before you share them. Also include the amazing total that you've raised and be sure to mention there's still time for people to donate.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact our Supporter Care Team by calling: **0300 303 9888**, or email: fundraise@helpforheroes.org.uk.

This is a press release template you can use and adapt to promote your fundraising event. Either before it happens to drum up interest, or afterwards to showcase how much money you raised. Make sure you include good quality photos with your release, but please don't copy the logo above onto your press release.

PRESS RELEASE [INSERT DATE XXX]

HEADLINE: Include place name, stand-out info on the fundraiser, amount raised and that it was for Help for Heroes. Try not to duplicate the introduction. The headline can include a play on words pun to grab the reporter's attention!

E.g. Manchester gardener sows seeds to grow funds for Help for Heroes

PARAGRAPH 1: Introduction Contains a summary of the key information including WHO, WHAT, WHERE, HOW. If the challenge was unusual/humorous or the fundraiser was very young, or elderly then mention this.

E.g. A (WHO) gardener from Fallowfield hopes to (WHAT) raise £250 (HOW) by selling homegrown flowers in Help for Heroes shades of red and blue.

PARAGRAPH 2: Provide more details to the information outlined previously including WHEN, WHERE and WHY. Include the fundraisers age if appropriate (reporters love as much detail as possible!).

E.g. Lucy Smith, 32, is an avid gardener and will take orders for her blooms in exchange for donations (WHERE) via her JustGiving page (ADD THE LINK) at JustGiving/fundraising/lucysmith01 until (WHEN) she reaches her £250 goal (WHY) in aid of Help for Heroes. Her green-fingered efforts are part of a bigger fundraising challenge as she has pledged to raise £2,000 for the charity, in memory of her grandmother.

PARAGRAPH 3: Provide information about your event to give context about why you are fundraising.

E.g. When her grandmother died, Lucy wanted to fundraise in her memory for Help for Heroes – a cause close to her grandmother's heart. Lucy's love for all things outdoors started with her grandmother. She has so many wonderful memories of helping her in the garden – sowing seeds and watching beautiful things grow – she couldn't think of a better way to share some joy and raise some money in aid of a wonderful cause.

PARAGRAPH 4: Add a quote from the fundraiser to add credibility to the story. Make it as personal as possible and add link to Help for Heroes if relevant. Remember to include speech marks!

E.g. Lucy said: "My grandad served in the British Army and fought at the Battle of the Somme, and my grandmother, who died recently, was a nurse during the war and always remembered nursing the wounded soldiers, so this was my way of giving something back in her memory. She taught me to garden when I was young, and it was something we did together. I've had so many compliments for the flowers and vegetables I've grown over the years, and thought why not kick-start my fundraising doing something I already love. I have lots of ideas for my fundraising activities, and my plan next is to offer gardening advice in return for donations."

PARAGRAPH 5: Use this information about Help for Heroes:

Help for Heroes supports veterans to take control of their recovery journey and have the best possible future. From funding adaptations to veteran's homes, to providing counselling for their mental health, and offering support to their loved ones - Help for Heroes is there to change lives for the better.

PARAGRAPH 6: Use this quote at the end of the story (this is an approved quote that you can use):

Clare McDermott, Fundraising Director at Help for Heroes, said: "The last few years have been hard on everyone – especially so for the veteran community. The need for mental health and physical support is greater than ever. As we receive almost no funding from the Government, we rely on the spirit and generosity of people like (insert name) and volunteers to help those who need it. We and all the veterans that we support are exceptionally grateful to (INSERT NAME) for every penny (HE/SHE) has raised which will provide vital support to our wounded heroes."

ALTERNATIVE PARAGRAPH 6: You may prefer to use this approved quote at the end of your story in addition to (or instead of) the quote above:

Veteran Derek lost both his legs when his vehicle hit a roadside bomb in Afghanistan. For he and his wife Ana, life changed beyond recognition; Derek was told he would never walk again. But against all odds, he did learn to walk again, and just five years after being injured, was selected to represent Team GB at the Paralympic Games.

"Life has changed so much, but all the support we've had has had such a positive impact and we will be forever thankful for that. It hasn't just helped me physically, it's helped both us mentally too, to adapt and to overcome any challenges that come our way. Help for Heroes and its amazing supporters, alongside all the wonderful support we've had from family and friends, have made that happen. They have such a special place in our hearts."

ABOUT HELP FOR HEROES

- Help for Heroes supports men and women who have been physically or psychologically wounded whilst serving in the British Armed Forces. The charity provides the help they and their families need to live healthy and secure lives with purpose.
- Since the charity was set up in 2007 it has supported more than 27,000 people.
- Help for Heroes relies on public donations for 97 per cent of its income
- For more information, visit www.helpforheroes.org.uk

PARAGRAPH 7: Contact information – add a name, email and phone number of the person to be contacted for any media enquiries.