

# Science Media Resources for IAI PDS

*This list of resources and links is a starting point for getting a handle on how to prepare good news releases for science-based materials. We call the practice science communication (sci comm) and it's the art of translating science into nontechnical terms.*

## **First, some best practices:**

1. If you have access to a creative team to help you, find them! And read this article beforehand:  
<http://crosstalk.cell.com/blog/five-ways-scientists-can-help-their-media-relations-team>
2. Before putting a single word on paper, consider:
  - a. WHO you want to reach--this is your target audience(s) and they need to be specific
  - b. WHAT you want to say to them--realistically, you can only get across a single key message with two to three main points in a news release
  - c. WHERE do you think this story could go--make a list of news media, industry publications, blogs, and other outlets with editors who may be interested
3. Before starting a news release, consider if there is a more appropriate format.  
<http://www.nextscientist.com/9-reasons-science-blog-good-for-you/>
4. Get ready to let go; you may need to relearn how to write.  
<http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2017/01/relearning-how-write>

## Start with a Seed

*Whether you're preparing a news release, speaking into a mic for an interview, or posting a tweet, all good sci comm grows from the same roots. And each story blossoms in a universal structure: a beginning, a middle, an end. News releases are cultivated in a specific way.*

**Opening:** a journalist calls this a hook, lead, or lede and catches a reader's attention.

**Key Message:** referred to as a "nut graph" where all the most important details are pulled together; if someone only reads this paragraph, they should know what the story is.

**Supporting Details:** go from most relevant to least relevant, the story lays out enough background for new findings to make sense to someone without a technical knowledge.

**Quotes:** news releases are meant to first relay information and second humanize research, so quotes are a good way to bring in researchers and key stakeholder voices.

**Visuals:** are essential; they often make or break a news release's success

## General Sci Comm Resources

Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science: <http://www.centerforcommunicatingscience.org/>

Article from the White House on #BasicResearch

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2015/06/02/value-basic-research>

From Matt Shipman, expectations for researchers and science writers:

<http://blogs.nature.com/soapboxscience/2012/01/31/what-scientists-science-writers-and-pios-should-expect-from-each-other>

Science Communication Breakdown:

[http://www.scilogs.com/communication\\_breakdown/author/shipman/](http://www.scilogs.com/communication_breakdown/author/shipman/)

Good discussion on uncertainty, challenges in communicating science and what PIOs, journalists and researchers can do:

<http://primemind.com/articles/is-most-science-news-bullshit>

Jargon is like speaking Romulan, The Plainspoken Scientist Blog:

<http://blogs.agu.org/sciencecommunication/2010/10/26/dude-you-are-speaking-romulan/>

Great and clearly written series from NIH:

<https://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/guiding-readers-through-study>

Pew Stats on scientists and public engagement

<http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/02/15/how-scientists-engage-public/>

AAAS Info on Public Engagement:

<https://www.aaas.org/pes/what-public-engagement>

Working with PIOs, The Scientist:

<http://www.the-scientist.com/?articles.view/articleNo/41694/title/Know-Your-PIO/>

Especially good blog post from PLOS:

<http://blogs.plos.org/plos/2015/03/get-paper-noticed-join-current-scientific-conversation/>