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# **Get Free Publicity by Knowing How to Handle Journalists**

If you want to get free publicity, you need to know how to deal with journalists. They are very busy and are always under constant pressure to meet deadlines. These tips can help you open doors and establish a long-term successful relationship with reporters and editors.

When you call, immediately ask if they are on deadline. If they are, ask them when you can call back, then politely get off the phone.

Be brief. Don't be chatty. Get to the point right away and when you've finished-you guessed it-get off the phone.

Ask if they are the right person to talk to about your story pitch.

Ask them what their contact preference is--phone, email, fax or snail mail.

Ask if it's okay to follow-up with them in a week or two. Some journalists will say yes, some no. If yes, call back, but not too soon. In general, wait at least a week after they have received a press release, unless they have indicated otherwise.

Be polite and friendly.

Know your subject matter. Reporters and editors are too often pitched stories by someone in an organization who has no clue about the product or service or what the story is all about. If you want to get free publicity, be knowledgeable.

Be available, especially when they are on deadline for your story. When compiling their stories, journalists often think of new questions to ask or need clarification on some aspects of the story you have given them, either in a press release or during the course of the interview.

There should be one main contact person for the journalist. But you should also have a backup in case that person is not available and the journalist needs a quick answer to a question.

if you can, offer to do more. When a journalist asks you a question, unless it is highly technical and beyond your understanding, answer it, offer to research it, or have an expert in your organization get back to them. Do NOT tell them where they can go find the information for themselves. Journalists are almost always on a deadline, so don't try to create more work for them.

Danek S. Kaus is a an experienced journalist and publicist, and the author of "You Can Be Famous! Insider Secrets to Getting Free Publicity. Want more secrets of how to [Get Free Publicity](#) and learn how you can [Be Interviewed on Radio Talk Shows](#)

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