

Pitch Letters

Opening

1. **Address the letter** to a person.
2. **Identify yourself** or your agency by name.
3. More adequately **explain why you are writing**.
4. **Allude to story ideas** in the first few sentences.
5. Spent **too much space on you** or your organization and not the story.
6. Too long—**cut to the chase**.
7. Have a smooth **transition** to the body.

Body

8. Use **concrete examples** of what you can do for the client.
9. Allude to **specific story ideas**—e.g., “the first story angle might discuss X...”
10. **Elaborate** on story ideas.
11. **Avoid jargon** all costs if possible—be sure to explain it if used.
12. **One thought per paragraph**.
13. **Letter is too long**—say it quickly, busy people do not read long letters.

Overall

14. Create **letterhead** to identify your organization.
15. **Address the letter to a person** and not the “business editor.”
16. Explain the **benefits** of the story for the news-source’s readers.
17. **Personalize/localize** the letter and story ideas.
18. **Transition** between paragraphs needed.
19. **Offer yourself as a resource** for information, photos, interviews etc.
20. **Vague** explanation, point, or suggestion.
21. **Sentences/paragraphs** are long, rambling, pedantic, or difficult to follow.
22. **Lectured editor** about what readers “should do/know” or the newsworthiness of the story.
23. **Word choice**. Think more carefully about the implicit and explicit meaning of words.
24. **Avoid** “we, them, they, their, its, the company,” etc. Be specific with references.
25. **Avoid extra words**: just, in order to, is planning to, will be able to, etc.
26. **Hackneyed** phrase—avoid clichés.
27. **Check possessives**.
28. Awkward/Unclear.
29. **Verb/tense** agreement problems.
30. **Proofread more carefully**. Esp.: spelling, spacing, grammar, run-ons/fragments.

Closing

31. **No wrap up** (make final appeal)—look back at your opening for suggestions to close.
32. **Explain the resources you bring to a story**: pictures, fact sheets, interview(s), etc.
33. **State the day and time that you will call** to discuss the story ideas.

Opening sentence creates interest in the topic and your client: _____

Statements are accurate and realistic: _____

Several story angles presented: _____

Grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation are correct: _____

You offer yourself as a resource and/or other organizational members: _____

Final sentence anchors your claim that your ideas are newsworthy: _____

Total:

Comments: