

# Publicity Pointers

*A Kit for Improving Quota Club Public Relations Efforts*  
*2020 Edition*

## Contents

***The Importance of Publicity....Page 2***

***First Step: Assessment....Page 3***

Publicity Self-Quiz

***Helpful Tips for a Media Makeover....Page 4***

1. Research, Develop, and Connect with Media Contacts
2. Prepare News Releases that Get Noticed
3. Plan PR in the Project
4. Generate Media-Worthy News
5. Get Social Media Savvy
6. Invest in Advertising
7. Raise Awareness with Quota Public Awareness Campaigns
8. Work Together

***Let's Get Started....Page 13***

Tips from a Successful Club Publicity Chair

## The Importance of Publicity

Service is the heart of Quotal. In working together to improve the lives of others in our own community, Quotarians enjoy fun, fellowship, and opportunities for personal growth. It's important we share this news!

Here are a few reasons why we must share our story through publicity and public relations:

### ***Recruitment and Retention:***

A key element in member recruitment and retention is spreading the word that Quota cares and that we take action. While this kind of publicity attracts new members, it encourages current members by recognizing their service. As member morale grows, Quota becomes stronger.

### ***Awareness:***

Increased attention to Quota and the work we do also increases awareness of our service areas—hearing health and changing the lives of women and children in poverty through education, training, and caring. Increased awareness of local needs will create opportunities for Quota to help more people by inspiring:

- donations
- volunteerism
- new service ideas

### ***Increased Support:***

Media coverage and publicity of Quota service increases support within our communities. When people hear and read about Quota, especially stories about the way we change lives, Quota's name will be associated with warm feelings and good deeds. The public image that develops from positive press increases:

- fund-raising profits
- opportunities for service and fund-raising
- pride within the community
- member morale.

Reasons are many for sharing the good news about Quota. This packet is designed to help you assess the effectiveness of your club's public relations efforts—and then create a publicity plan that suits your needs, in your community. Although the process can become tedious at times, stick with it! Focus on the end result: more hands to help in service, more support for your efforts, and a strengthened organization as you move Quota into the future.

## First Step: Assessment

Before you can begin to make a publicity plan, you must first analyze past efforts as well as your club's overall approach to publicity. This assessment is best done in a group, so gather your publicity committee or create an ad-hoc committee on public relations to take a close look at your situation. Consider including club members who work in the communications field (PR, news, advertising, media) for invaluable insights!

Begin by looking at all of the coverage your group received last year—newspaper articles, stories and public service announcements on local broadcast channels, notices in newsletters and church bulletins, etc. (Does your club maintain a publicity notebook and file? If not, make that the first part of your plan!)

*Is your club getting well-deserved kudos? Enough attention?*

If the answer is no, then pinpoint and correct your problem areas before moving into a more comprehensive publicity strategy. The following quiz should make evident where to make adjustments in the way you present Quota to the media.

### **Publicity Self-Quiz**

1. How did our club contact the media? News Releases? Phone Calls? Faxes? E-mail?
2. Do we know the names of the persons responsible for assigning news coverage at our local newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations, and cable company? Do we have the correct spelling of these names? Did we use the names in our letters, phone calls, and e-communications?
3. Do we have the correct mailing address (or e-mail) for each news outlet?
4. Do we know the deadlines and timelines for certain types of publicity, such as listings in community calendars?
5. Have we sent something out about each event? Did we send it far enough in advance?
6. Did we follow up on every first contact with an editor or reporter?
7. Did we offer photographs or ask for a staff photographer to attend? Were the photographs we offered good enough to publish?
8. If I were an editor, would I include this story in my coverage? Why? Why not?
9. Do we have a website and/or Facebook page? Did we update our website and/or Facebook page on a regular basis? Did we refer media contacts to these updates?
10. Did we Tweet? Is there room for improvement? Did we invite media contacts to "follow" us on Twitter?

## **Helpful Tips for a Media Makeover**

If this scrutiny of your public relations efforts revealed any shortcomings in your basic approach to getting media exposure, here are some helpful hints to guide your Media Makeover and get your club in the news.

### **1. Research, Develop, and Connect with Media Contacts**

If this scrutiny of your public relations efforts revealed any shortcomings in your basic approach to getting media exposure, here are some helpful hints to guide your Media Makeover and get your club in the news.

#### ***Keep an Ongoing List of Each Possible Outlet for Media Coverage***

List newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations, cable channels, websites that list community events, neighborhood newsletters, neighborhood websites and e-communications, company communications (including newsletters, Web sites, e-communications, bulletin boards, flyers in the coffee room, etc.), church bulletins, community center bulletin boards and newsletters, and Facebook pages. What else can you think of? Make note of every possibility.

#### ***Get Contact Information***

Create a database with your list of media outlets. Next, research and enter the contact information for each entry—every reporter, editor, director, coordinator, Webmaster you need to alert every time you have a Quota news story. Be diligent! This information is crucial.

#### ***Check Your Spelling!***

Enter every name and address correctly. Have another member proofread. Is it John Smith or Jon Smyth? Getting the name right is the first step toward a good relationship with your media contacts.

#### ***Become Familiar with Each Media Outlet***

Before you make contact with anyone in the media, make sure you are familiar with each outlet and the audiences it targets. Your knowledge will help you establish a better relationship with your contact.

#### ***Talk to Each Contact***

Schedule a convenient time to speak with each media contact on the phone or in person. Be warm and friendly, but brief and straightforward in introducing yourself and Quota. (Remember: editors are generally busy and often underpaid.) Find out how this contact likes to be contacted—and make note of it so that your club deals with this contact in that way.

It's a good idea to first discuss with the editor what your club's aims are and where it thinks newspaper or radio publicity can help in achieving those aims. This applies to local media, where most editors welcome club news.

Also, ask what she or he needs in the near future that could include a Quota—for example, a feature on youth could include a JQ story, while a section about health might feature Quota's initiative on Noise-Induced Hearing Loss. Remember: this is a person who fills a role at the media outlet; the more you can help her do her job, the more Quota stories you'll place in the news.

### ***Get the Guidelines for Submission***

Find out any specific Guidelines for Submission. The outlet may have a document ready to send you with these rules. They generally include:

- the way a news release should be received—whether by e-mail or mail;
- the acceptable file formats for electronic submissions;
- the preferred fonts and line spacing, if any (yes, believe it or not, certain editors require specific fonts and type sizes, double spacing or single spacing, etc.);
- the required format for photos and the minimum resolution for electronic photo files. (Always take high resolution photographs.)

### ***Be Persistent***

Tenacity and persistence are common traits in a good newsperson. They get it when you continue to send releases and invitations. Let the media know about every event. They likely won't cover everything you suggest, but they will know you are out there and may contact you one day as a source for a story. Editors are always looking for fillers. If the club tells them about everything, they will certainly get some notice.

## **2. Prepare News Releases that Get Noticed**

If this scrutiny of your public relations efforts revealed any shortcomings in your basic approach to getting media exposure, here are some helpful hints to guide your Media Makeover and get your club in the news.

### ***Send Well-written, Concise News Releases***

Editors cringe at some of the releases that cross their desks. Make sure your story shines and makes its way into the news rotation, not the trash bin. Newspapers do not like being used as a de facto club newsletter. The news release should be written as close to the style of a news story as possible...something non-club members of the community can relate to and find interesting. By all means get your club message across, but keep the report brief and to the point, don't let it ramble all over and lose its purpose.

### ***Send Tidy Copy***

Neatness counts in news as much as it does in any other business. Think of your news release as a resume to get Quota's foot in the editorial door. Use Quota letterhead to give a professional first impression.

### ***Send Pictures!***

By sending a high-quality AND...IMPORTANT....high resolution photograph of your Quota activities, the media outlet will not need to send staff. This generally increases your chances of getting the photo placed because it protects the media outlet's budget.

***Sample News Release***

**NEWS RELEASE FOR USE AFTER AUGUST 10, 2012**

**CONTACT: Mary Smith**

**Phone: (555) 555-5555 OR (555) 444-4444**

**E-mail: smithm@goodnews.net**

**Quota Club Awards Local Grants**

Quota of Great Town, a local service organization, recently disbursed \$6,000 in grants, primarily to groups serving the metropolitan community.

The Quota club provided \$2,200 for medical equipment and supplies at the Great Town Community Clinic, which offers low cost medical and dental services to individuals with low incomes.

The group also awarded \$2,200 to the Deaf School of Anywhere to purchase software for its newly installed computer network system and library resources.

Other local grants included: \$600 to Community Service Organization for video equipment intended to increase local awareness of its services to promote literacy, prevent homelessness, and meet the needs of low-income families; and \$200 to Crisis Nursery for supplies.

An additional \$800 grant was sent to Quota of Cebu in metropolitan Manila, Philippines, to further that club's work at a daycare center for disadvantaged children. The money will provide meals and health care services, such as deworming, vitamin supplements, and medical and dental check-ups.

Founded in 1919, Quota is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-sectarian service organization dedicated to making a difference locally and globally. Following their motto, "We Share," Quotarians focus service on helping deaf, hard of hearing and speech-impaired individuals, and disadvantaged women and children.

Members of local clubs are invited to grow personally and professionally by helping others and making friends along the way. For information on becoming a part of Quota, call \_\_\_\_\_, membership chair of Quota of Great Town, at \_\_\_\_\_.

### **3. Plan PR in the Project**

Think of publicity as part of a project, not an afterthought and incorporate public relations into the plan before you begin the work. For example, Quota's Weyburn club in Canada once created a simple project to get more publicity: Just Desserts, a weekly raffle of a dessert baked by a club member. Tickets were sold in the community each week, then the winner was listed in the paper. It's subtle, but it works. A lot of small publicity totals up to a big impact.

## **4. Generate Media-worthy Club News**

If this scrutiny of your public relations efforts revealed any shortcomings in your basic approach to getting media exposure, here are some helpful hints to guide your Media Makeover and get your club in the news.

### ***Develop Some Good Hooks***

Every news story needs a hook to hang on. The more relevant your story, the better your chances of making the news. What local, regional, national, or international story relates to your Quota club's service in the community? For example:

- If hearing health is a topic in the state legislature or with the local school board, you should provide the media with a local tie-in about work your Quota club is doing in this area.
- If your area is experiencing a natural disaster, let the media know about your Quota relief efforts.

In short, help the editor place your Quota story by clearly indicating how it relates to current events and to the audience that the editor serves.

### ***Get Google Alerts***

Get Google Alerts about topics related to your club service—hearing, homelessness, whatever your club focuses on. If your club includes an expert in a Quota-related area, get alerts on that as well. When a news event arises, alert your contacts about the local hook provided through your Quota club.

### ***Include Prominent Personalities***

Invite a prominent personality to speak in your community about issues related to Quota service—hearing, youth outreach, or literacy, for example. Invite the media to cover the event and meet the personality, making sure they understand that she or he is coming because Quota Cares about the topic and provides service in that area.

### ***Invite Media to Events***

Send special invitations to local reporters and editors for big Quota events in your community. Remember radio stations without news departments, too; they might like to cover it through a community service program or live on the air. Does your community have any local talk shows on radio or TV? If so, invite the host—even if you need to entice her or him with food...

### ***Invite Public Officials to Events***

Reporters may follow public officials to your Quota events, and you'll get coverage, too.

### ***What Makes a Good Story?***

The most important aspect of any story is interest. Be honest: if your story involved another group, would you really be interested in it? Why?

People want to know about other people doing something new or different or impressive and how that impacts the community. If you pique their interest, people want to know who, what, when, where, why, and how—the six most important words in journalism.

A good news release to the media should include all of the facts supported by interesting details and descriptions. Noting that your president wore a red dress for her installation isn't really interesting—unless she was mistaken for a fire hydrant and attracted a pack of dogs. But adding something interesting about her person, such as her job or accomplishments or that the installation marked the 75th year of Quota service in the community would be noteworthy.



## 5. Get Social Media Savvy

If this scrutiny of your public relations efforts revealed any shortcomings in your basic approach to getting media exposure, here are some helpful hints to guide your Media Makeover and get your club in the news.

### ***Create or Update Club Websites and Facebook Pages***

Give your contacts a way to check in with you at any time by making sure your club Webmaster updates your Internet spaces, including the club Web site and Facebook page. Post only good photos and provide links to publicity your club receives. Keep it positive!

#### ***Need help with launching a Club Facebook page?***

Facebook networking allows club members to make new friends from other clubs and countries, share success stories, and learn how other members define their Quota experience. To create a Facebook page for your club, follow these steps:

1. Become a member of Facebook 2. Go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>
3. In the "Create New Facebook Page" box, choose the category "Band, Product, or Organization." Then in the drop down menu, select "Non-Profit."
4. Type your page name: "Quota of \_\_\_\_\_"
5. Click the security box verifying that you are "the official representative of this person, business, band, or product and have permission to create this page."
6. Click "Create Official Page"
7. Select "Settings" to manage various aspects of your page, such as age and location restrictions, who can post to your wall, discussion boards, links, notes, and other applications. If you'd like, an electronic version of Quota's logo to use as your page profile picture can be accessed on Quota.org.
8. When your basic settings are complete, choose "Publish" to make it live on Facebook.
9. Begin building your online presence by posting information on your "wall," sharing photos and/or videos, and listing upcoming club meeting times or service activities.

### ***Tweet About Quota***

Invite your media contacts to follow your Quota tweets! Again, keep it clean and keep it positive. Your goal is to increase public attention to Quota service and membership.

## 6. Invest in Advertising

### ***It Just Takes ‘Cents’!***

In addition to free publicity your club can generate through news coverage, purchase local advertising for your Quota events. Perhaps it sounds jaded, but the news business is run on advertising revenues. An ad in the local paper or a commercial on the local radio station might help your club establish a relationship with the news outlets and encourage them to cover Quota.

Consider sponsoring a community service show on radio, TV or cable; or purchasing a “remote broadcast” for a radio personality to broadcast live from your event. You may find Quota is mentioned more often on the air or that Quota members are invited to share news about upcoming events or important service-related topics as a result.

### ***Clever Advertising Ideas***

- Tray liners in fast-food restaurants
- Screen ads at local movie theaters
- On the fence at the athletic field
- In local sporting and theater programs
- Bumper stickers
- Buttons Grocery bags
- Shop window displays
- Balloons
- Posters
- Brochures
- Quota letterhead
- Window stickers
- Road signs
- Billboards
- Direct mail
- Door hangers on doorknobs
- Flyers under windshield wipers
- Projecting Quota’s logo on a local building at night
- Web sites
- Wrist bands
- T-shirts
- Scarves
- Quota hand stamps for admissions at community events

## ***DIY...Doing it Yourself? Creating Your Own Ads for Print, Radio, or TV?***

### ***Helpful Quota Advertising Resources***

#### ***Quota Logos***

You can access the electronic version of Quota's logo to use as your page profile picture among the resources available to clubs on Quota's website.

#### ***Quota Public Service Announcements for Television***

View or download samples of Public Service Announcements that will raise Quota's visibility in your Quota community. These samples are antiquated and include the former International logo, but can serve as inspiration for clubs looking to produce their own, new Public Service Announcements for television.

#### ***Quota Public Service Announcements for Radio***

View scripts for radio public service announcements among the resources available to clubs on Quota's website. Your club can customize and use these to promote Quota in your community. Resources include scripts for general recruitment, Quota Cares Month, and special club event announcements.

#### ***Quota Musical Jingles***

Check out the musical jingles created for Quota International and linked on our website. Though they will be unsuitable for publication after International's dissolution, these can still be used as inspiration by clubs wishing to create your own club radio or TV public service announcements.

## **7. Raise Awareness with Quota Public Awareness Campaigns**

Take a Quota Shortcut! Save time by using Quota-created public awareness campaigns for clubs. These campaigns include planning guides, ready-to-use presentations (PowerPoint slides provided), handouts that you can print and distribute, and so much more. Both of the programs listed below will help you raise awareness about Quota and assist with recruitment.

### ***Listen Up, Turn It Down Public Awareness Campaign on Noise-Induced Hearing Loss***

Download a planning guide, resources, and ready-to-use PowerPoint presentations for three different age groups on the topic of Noise-Induced Hearing Loss. Educate children, their parents, and your community on this important topic.

### ***Quota Cares Month Public Awareness Campaign***

Plan a newsworthy service or fundraising project in March along with other Quota clubs worldwide. Our handy guide contains ideas for projects and how to get press and recruit members.

## **8. Work Together**

Partnering increases the chance of publicity and raises the profiles of both groups. The chance of getting news coverage is greater when more than one group is involved. Quota's Weyburn club in Canada, for example, enjoys small roles in many events. They offer trophies, prizes, scholarships, and sit on boards of other organizations. When the community relies on Quota for something, it helps all publicity efforts. Later, when the club needs coverage for something else, it is easier to get.

## Let's Get Started!

Now that you're convinced of the benefits of publicity for the club and for the people you serve, let's get started on a publicity plan!

1. Correct all of the shortcomings discovered in taking the Publicity Self-Quiz.
2. Make appointments to speak to local editors, talk show hosts, and program directors about their news and public service needs and how your club can help.
3. Work with the programs and events coordinators in your club to include publicity in the year's activities.
4. Find a good photographer in the club. Consider purchasing a good club camera to use and pass down from year to year. Always take HIGH RESOLUTION photos. You can always resize them.
5. Create a club Facebook page and/or Web site.
6. Decide on a budget for all paid publicity efforts and figure out how much will be left over after necessary event publicity is purchased. Develop a strategy for spending the remainder of the money for greatest impact possible based on your community and your image in it. What is the most effective place to advertise your club? Why?
7. Based on information from the editors, inform them of every event. If they asked for news releases, write them well and send them in plenty of time to meet the deadlines.
8. For other helpful hints, check out the resources that have been made available on Quota's website.

### ***Advice from a Successful Publicity Chair***

Quota of Kirksville, Missouri, USA, has cracked the code on publicity in their town. The key, says past president Linda Frazee, is to *identify* and *communicate*! “We constantly seek ways to identify our club with everything we do. This way, we say that we are strong, we are a team, we are active, caring, proud, and enthusiastic about being Quotarians.”

### ***Publicity Strengthens Clubs***

Linda says the publicity has increased the club’s desire to serve. “Because of community awareness for our club, our members have gained an intense eagerness to do more as a team — for our club and for our community. Communication makes current members proud and enthusiastic. It encourages planning and caring, promotes teamwork and fellowship. People want to be part of such an active, fun group doing so much for the community. New members mean fresh ideas, more workers, more activity, and a constantly growing treasury that allows even more community service!”

### ***Publicity IS Service***

The Kirksville club is seen in the local paper, on television, and heard on radio. In fact, an article in The Quotarian led the Kirksville Daily Express to put an article and photograph on the front page highlighting the club’s service projects. The attention allowed the club to help more people.

Says Linda, “Media attention benefits the community because we are reaching people in need who were unaware of us previously. Individuals and organizations contact us now! We are here to serve, and community awareness allows us to do just that.”