

Knowing who does what in the media is key to an effective media relations strategy. It's important to understand who to contact before you have a story for them to cover. The following definitions provide an overview of media roles.

Chief of Staff	Manages the day-to-day running of a newspaper, magazine or newsroom. Assigns staff to stories, decides on what issues and events to cover, manages administrative tasks.
Sub-editor or 'sub'	Lays out a story in a publication, develops headline and edits a story for grammar and accuracy. Also involved in arranging and producing photos or graphics. A chief sub-editor oversees all subs, with input into structure and layout of stories.
Editor	Decides on content, reviews copy to ensure it matches an organisation's style and format, writes editorials or opinion pieces. There are often different editors for different sections – news, features, photos.
Radio producer	Organises interviews and information, working with presenter to decide what topics to discuss.
Radio/TV presenter	Presents news, sports and other information, conducts interviews and introduces music/performances/special events on radio or television.
Reporter/Journalist	Collects and analyses facts about newsworthy events for newspaper, magazine, radio or television. Conducts research and interviews, writes stories for print or electronic outlets and follows up on tips to develop story ideas. TV reporters prepare pieces to camera and work with an editor to put together footage for a story.
Columnist	Writes a regular segment within a particular category.
Feature writer	Writes detailed stories at least twice the length of a news story. Can spend days or weeks researching, interviewing and writing a story.
Freelance writer	Someone who writes articles for numerous publications, often commissioned to prepare feature stories.
Editorial assistant	An entry-level position filled by a recent graduate. Some only do administrative duties (opening mail, answering phones, copying stories, replying to reader mail), but many develop writing and editing responsibilities.
Cadet	Often a starting point for a career in journalism. Cadets receive on-the-job training and often continue their study. Cadets are taught shorthand and skills while writing stories under supervision.
Newswire	A national news service that creates and distributes material on news, current affairs and features. This is made available to all media outlets for a fee. Little editing is done to these articles and they can appear in numerous publications across the country so it's essential to ensure the message in these articles is accurate and expressed appropriately.