

## HOW TO WRITE A FACT SHEET

### What is a fact sheet?

A fact sheet is an important, at-a-glance tool used in public relations to provide an overview of your chapter. Though fact sheets can stand alone, they are more commonly used to supplement a news release, anchor a press kit, or replace a brochure.

### What are its elements?

A fact sheet is generally one or two pages and includes “the who, what, when, where, why and how” about a chapter or event. Components of a fact sheet include the following:

- Your chapter name, address and phone number should be on the upper left. If using chapter letterhead, disregard this step.
- A contact name, title, and phone number should be on the upper right.
- Triple space down and type the name of the subject. This should be centered and in upper case letters.
- Double space down and type “Fact Sheet,” which should also be centered.
- The body of the fact sheet is set up in two columns. The left side includes the headings, such as history, vision, mission, purpose, future, etc., all in upper case lettering. The right side contains the heading descriptions. The descriptions should consist of short sentences that align under the second column.
- If the document is longer than one page, type “-more-” at the center of the bottom of the first page.
- At the end of the fact sheet, “###” should be centered and inserted.
- Finally, double space down and type the month and year, flush right.

Once you have a completed fact sheet, create a clear and specific distribution plan so you can ensure that your target publics receive the information. Begin with deciding which publics you want to receive the item and the best way to get it into their hands. For example, you may want to include the fact sheet in new member mailings, emails, and on your Web site.

### Why is it used?

The point of a fact sheet or action alert is to get the reader to do something. Providing more information than you need to convince him or her is a waste of the reader's time and

risks losing his or her attention. Make it as easy as possible for him or her to take your action. If you want the reader to make a call, give the number.

### **How long should it be?**

- One page is best
- Make it readable - use at least a 12 point font
- Keep the text brief - no one wants to read tons of information in a small font
- Keep the most important information in the first paragraph - what the issue is, what action is needed, and label the main message(s)
- Give references for more information - in electronic communications you can offer links
- The fact sheet must be self-contained - do not refer to previous documents or assume that the reader remembers the information
- Use bullets when you can
- Leave lots of white space
- Make it very clear what you want the reader to do - bold type face, text boxes, and graphics add emphasis
- Give the reader all the tools he/she may need to take action -- do not say "call for more information"; instead give the reader all the information he/she will need