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Introduction to Public Relations

Study Material for Students



Introduction to Public Relations

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN MEDIA W`RLD

Mass communication and Journalism is institutionalized and source specific. It functions through well-organized professionals and has an ever increasing interlace. Mass media has a global availability and it has converted the whole world in to a global village. A qualified journalism professional can take up a job of educating, entertaining, informing, persuading, interpreting, and guiding. Working in print media offers the opportunities to be a news reporter, news presenter, an editor, a feature writer, a photojournalist, etc. Electronic media offers great opportunities of being a news reporter, news editor, newsreader, programme host, interviewer, cameraman, producer, director, etc.

Other titles of Mass Communication and Journalism professionals are script writer, production assistant, technical director, floor manager, lighting director, scenic director, coordinator, creative director, advertiser, media planner, media consultant, public relation officer, counselor, front office executive, event manager and others.



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SYLLABUS

Introduction to Public Relations

Meaning,
Definition,
Need for P.R.,
History of P.R.,
P.R. Programme,
P.R. Public,
Tools of P.R,
Importance of P.R,
Ethics of P.R.,
Image Advisory,
Role & Function,
Importance,
Qualities of P.R.O,
Objective of P.R.,
How to conduct P.R. Campaign?



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INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC RELATIONS

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the meaning and definitions of Public Relations
- To know the significance and role of PR
- To trace the history of PR
- To understand the role of PR when acting as image advisory to an organization
- To discuss the ethics of PR
- To learn the qualities and attributes required to be a PRO
- To know the various tools used in PR

1.1. ROLE & MEANING OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public Relations PR is the business, organizational, philanthropic, or social function of managing communication between an organization and its audiences. There are many goals to be achieved by the practice of public relations, including education, correcting a mistruth, or building or improving an image.

The term Public Relations was first coined by the US President Thomas Jefferson. He used the term during his address to Congress in 1807.

One of the earliest definitions of PR was coined by Edward Bernays. According to him, "Public Relations is a management function which tabulates public attitudes, defines the policies, procedures and interest of an organization followed by executing a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance. "

According to two American PR professionals Scott M. Cutlip and Allen H. Center, "PR is a planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance based upon mutual satisfactory two-way communication".

Public relations is the art and science of managing communication between an organization and its key constituents to build, manage, and sustain its positive reputation.

Public relations is the process of aligning the perceptions of targeted audiences or publics with the current realities and reasonable prospects of another entity.

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Public relations is about building public relationships.

Public relations is the strategic art and science of connecting your story to the audiences that matter most, i.e.: key constituents, target audiences, thought leaders, and decision makers.

Public relations is business advocacy among all publics.

Some more definitions of PR:

- Edward L. Bernays: ‘Public Relations is the attempt by information, persuasion and adjustment to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement or institutions.’
- John W. Hill: ‘The management function which gives the same organized and careful attention to the asset of goodwill as given to any other major asset of business.’
- The International Public Relations Associations IPRA : ‘Public Relations is a management function of a continuing and planned character, through which public and private organizations seek to win and retain the understanding, sympathy and support of those with whom they are-or may be- concerned by evaluating public opinion about themselves, in order to correlate, as far as possible their own policies and procedures, to achieve by planned and widespread information more productive cooperation and more efficient fulfillment of this common interest.’
- The management activity responsible for the creation of favorable attitudes among key audiences.
- An ‘exercise in diplomacy’ putting the facts and viewpoints of the client to whatever ‘jury’ is appropriate-government, the buying public, share holders, a committee of inquiry, Members of Parliament or whatever.
- Something that embraces all the activities that build good relations with audiences attempting to change negative or incorrect opinions and reinforce positive or correct ones. In other words, projecting a ‘good feeling’ for an organization and turning the negative into the positive.

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Public Relations involve:

1. Evaluation of public attitudes and opinions.
2. Formulation and implementation of an organization's procedures and policy regarding communication with its publics.
3. Coordination of communications programs.
4. Developing rapport and good-will through a two way communication process.
5. Fostering a positive relationship between an organization and its public constituents.

Examples include:

Corporations use marketing public relations (MPR) to convey information about the products they manufacture or services they provide to potential customers to support their direct sales efforts. Typically, they support sales in the short and long term, establishing and burnishing the corporation's branding for a strong, ongoing market.

Corporations also use public-relations as a vehicle to reach legislators and other politicians, seeking favorable tax, regulatory, and other treatment, and they may use public relations to portray themselves as enlightened employers, in support of human-resources recruiting programs.

Non-profit organizations, including schools and universities, hospitals, and human and social service agencies, use public relations in support of awareness programs, fund-raising programs, staff recruiting, and to increase patronage of their services.

Politicians use public relations to attract votes and raise money, and, when successful at the ballot box, to promote and defend their service in office, with an eye to the next election or, at career's end, to their legacy.

1.2 NEED FOR PR

PR serve a wide variety of institutions in society such as business, trade unions, government agencies, voluntary agencies, foundations, religious institutions, hospitals. To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or 'publics' such as employees,

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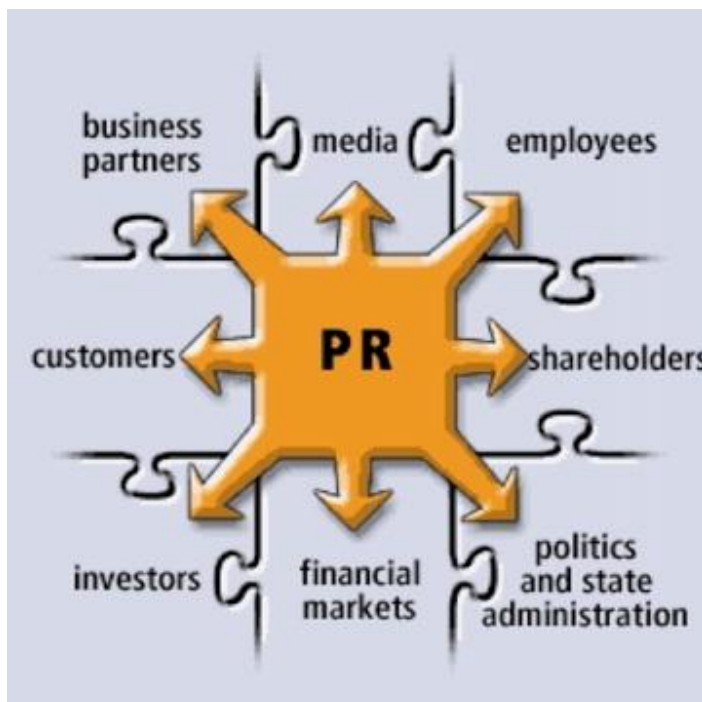
members, consumers, local communities, other institutions and with society at large.

Need for PR is inherent in the very nature of modern society. Society is made up of many groups of people, each with its own interests which are sometimes conflicting. The harmonious functioning of such a society needs the help of PR. People are conscious of their rights as citizens, as consumers, or as employees. Managements are aware of what **Philip Lesley**, the famous PR consultant, terms as the 'people factor' in all management decisions and actions. All these call for PR.

Managements realize that it is also their responsibility vigilantly to develop consciousness towards fulfilling legitimate public expectations and to be honest and considerate in all their dealings with various publics.

In PR, the word public is generally used in plurals, to denote that there are several identifiable independent, homogeneous groups with which an organization has to deal. They are the shareholders, government, central parliament, state legislature, local bodies, customers, competitors, dealers, suppliers, press, the community around, our own employees and so on.

ROLE OF PR



The PR is essentially a management function; it is the social philosophy of management expressed in policy decisions and actions resulting from these policies. PR seeks to perform its management function through effective information dissemination which is an aid to management.

Today the organizational management is not only confined to managing products, material, manpower, money and mobility, but also newer areas like instant

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communications, multiple forms of transportation, globalization of markets, computerization, automation, and active trade-unionism. New Management techniques such as management by-objectives have been developed. All these areas could be assessed and analyzed through various management techniques within the enterprise. However, the new challenges thrown up by the '**broad marketplace of ideas**' are not only intangible, but also subject to easy manipulation, charting or quantifying with any kind of managerial discipline.

The force which creates difficulties for any management could be tracked down to one source-the human climate and public attitude. Recognition of this fact has led to gradual development of approaches towards managing the human climate. Public Relations, is one such approach of molding the human climate for the ultimate benefit of the organization and its publics.

The approach can be summarized as incorporating the four primary roles of the PR:

1. **Analyzing and Predicting issues and opportunities:** the political and economic fields are the vast playing fields of public attitudes. Fighting for the pros and cons of the public policy. It is in this arena of public attitudes that the PR functions by analyzing issues of importance and relevance to the organization or predicting opportunities that have the potential to benefit the organization. Whether it be issues, crisis, emergencies or any such problems, or opportunities of any kind, it is the PR function to see these early, identify their shape and contours long before they actually mature.
2. **Information gathering and monitoring trends:** the most important force affecting all organizations today is the opinion of the people. Public opinion is constantly changing with the time and trends in society. Here, for any PR person, it becomes important to gather information and analyze the same in terms of what goes in the minds of Public investors, employers, consumers and others. Also, constant monitoring and gathering of information of changes in the present environment is a must. Information gathering and monitoring have been the fastest growing and the most significant facets of the development of the PR in the last decade. It involves the identification, evaluation and communication inward to the organization of information about the outside world that may be value to the organization in managing its affairs.

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3. **Communication planning and information dissemination:** it is yet another important function of the PR. It involves identifying the target audiences, careful planning of messages aimed at bringing about positive opinion and dispelling misunderstanding if any. It is just not enough to frame a good public policy. The challenge lies in planning and communicating all the good deeds of an organization to its public, both internal and external in a very effective manner. After gaining understanding of the public opinion about the organization, and thereby, modifying or improving the policy by influencing and counseling the policy makers, the immediate task facing a PR person is the planning of communication activities and campaigns that will explain the company, its products, and services to the publics.

4. **Advisory and counseling role of PR:** the personnel are the eyes and ears of the policy makers in an organization. Their success depends on the extent to which they can influence shaping of the management policy. Constant information gathering and processing helps the PR personnel in analyzing trends, and in predicting consequences of policy. This gives them enough information to guide and counsel public policy-formation. Today's administrators require the assistance and wise counsel of the skilled PR specialists in reshaping, organization's operations and policies, to promote goodwill, and increase productivity.

1.3 HISTORY OF PR

Studying the origins of Public Relations can provide helpful insight into its functions, its strengths and weaknesses, and its profound, although often unseen, impact on our society. The value of history lies in explaining this now influential vocation's place in society and its profound effect over time on the nation's political, social, economic, and cultural life.

The evolution of public relations practice exists from the colonial period to mid-20th century. The first actual use of the phrase 'public relations' was made by President Thomas Jefferson in 1807. While drafting his Seventh Address' to the congress, he scratched out the words 'state of thought' in one place and wrote 'public relations' instead.

Evidence of the practices used in modern day public relations are scattered through history. One notable practitioner was Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of



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Devonshire whose efforts on behalf of Charles James Fox in the 18th century included press relations, lobbying and, with her friends, celebrity campaigning. A member of the Spencer family, she shares a family celebrity trait with Diana, Princess of Wales.

Queen Elizabeth I of England who came to the throne in 1558 at 25 years of age had no previous administrative experience of any description. To realize what she was faced with, one has to consider the conditions that existed at that time. The kingdom was torn with dissension-both political and religious. The national sports was violence. The leaders of the different factions were ready to revolt on any pretext. Communications hardly existed, Elizabeth had no police force, no standing army and her subjects had nothing but disdain for women in public life. Society was geared to strong arm methods. Yet Elizabeth controlled the country for 45 years. She raised it from a third rate power to a first rate one. By the time she had completed her reign, she was the most popular monarch that had ever sat on the throne. Possibly many people realize this because it is emphasized only in history books. What is not realized is how she accomplished it.

The first thing she did on taking office was to appoint people for their ability, without regard to their background or position. Indeed, this dedicated body of men who, in most cases, have long been forgotten by history, were not only her administrators but also her **public relations men**. They, in turn, surrounded themselves with men of like dedication whose main object was to explain to the people what the government was trying to do. Elizabeth, herself, spent half the time on the throne, travelling up and down the country on appalling roads, listening to complaints of her subjects and explaining what she was trying to do.

A number of American precursors to public relations are, found in publicists who specialized in promoting circuses, theatrical performances, and other public spectacles. In the United States, where public relations has its origins, many early PR practices were developed in support of the expansive power of the railroads. **In fact, many scholars believe that the first appearance of the term "public relations" appeared in the 1897 Year Book of Railway Literature.**

Later, PR practitioners were- and are still often- recruited from the ranks of journalism. Some reporters, concerned with ethics, criticize former colleagues for using their inside understanding of news media to help clients receive favorable media coverage.

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Despite many journalists' discomfort with the field of public relations, well-paid PR positions remain a popular choice for reporters and editors forced into a career change by the instability and often fewer economic opportunities provided by the print and electronic media industry.

The First World War also helped stimulate the development of public relations as a profession. Many of the first PR professionals, including Ivy Lee, Edward Bernays, John Hill, and Carl Byoir, got their start with the Committee on Public Information, which organized publicity on behalf of U.S. objectives during World War I. **Some historians regard Ivy Lee as the first real practitioner of public relations, but Edward Bernays is generally regarded today as the profession's founder.** In describing the origin of the term Public Relations, Bernays commented, "When I came back to the United States, I decided that if you could use propaganda for war, you could certainly use it for peace. And propaganda got to be a bad word because of the Germans.. using it. So what I did was to try to find some other words, so we found the words Council on Public Relations".

Ivy Lee, who has been credited with developing the modern news release also called a "press release", espoused a philosophy consistent with what has sometimes been called the "two-way street" approach to public relations, in which PR consists of helping clients listen as well as communicate messages to their publics. In the words of the Public Relations Society of America PRSA, "Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other." In practice, however, Lee often engaged in one-way propagandizing on behalf of clients despised by the public, including Standard Oil founder John D. Rockefeller. Shortly before his death, the US Congress had been investigating his work on behalf of the controversial Nazi German company IG Farben.

Bernays was the profession's first theorist. A nephew of Sigmund Freud, Bernays drew many of his ideas from Freud's theories about the irrational, unconscious motives that shape human behaviour. Bernays authored several books, including *Crystallizing Public Opinion* 1923, *Propaganda* 1928, and *The Engineering of Consent* 1947. Bernays saw public relations as an **"applied social science" that uses insights from psychology, sociology, and other disciplines to scientifically manage and manipulate the thinking and behavior of an irrational and "herdlike" public.** "The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society," he wrote in *Propaganda*. "Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country."

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One of Bernays' early clients was the tobacco industry. In 1929, he orchestrated a legendary publicity stunt aimed at persuading women to take up cigarette smoking, an act that at the time was exclusively equated with men. It was considered unfeminine and inappropriate for women to smoke, besides the occasional prostitute, virtually no women participated in the act publicly.



Bernays initially consulted psychoanalyst A. A. Brill for advice, Brill told him: "Some women regard cigarettes as symbols of freedom... Smoking is a sublimation of oral eroticism; holding a cigarette in the mouth excites the oral zone. It is perfectly normal for women to want to smoke cigarettes. Further the first women who smoked probably had an excess of male components and adopted the habit as a masculine act. But today the emancipation of women has suppressed many feminine desires. More women now do the same work as men do.... Cigarettes, which are equated with men, become torches of freedom."

Upon hearing this analysis, Bernays dubbed his PR campaign the: "Torches of Liberty Contingent".

It was in this spirit that Bernays arranged for New York City debutantes to march in that year's Easter Day Parade, defiantly smoking cigarettes as a statement of



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rebellion against the norms of a male-dominated society. Publicity photos of these beautiful fashion models smoking "Torches of Liberty" were sent to various media outlets and appeared worldwide. As a result, the taboo was dissolved and many women were led to associate the act of smoking with female liberation. Some women went so far as to demand membership in all-male smoking clubs, a highly controversial act at the time.

For his work, Bernays was paid a tidy sum by George Washington Hill, president of the American Tobacco Company.

In 1950 PRSA enacts the first "Professional Standards for the Practice of Public Relations," a forerunner to the current Code of Ethics, last revised in 2000 to include six core values and six code provisions. The six core values are **"Advocacy, Honesty, Expertise, Independence, Loyalty, and Fairness."** The six code provisions consulted with are "Free Flow of Information, Competition, Disclosure of Information, Safeguarding Confidences, Conflicts of Interest, and Enhancing the Profession.

In 1982 effective Public Relations helped save the Johnson & Johnson Corporation, after the highly publicized Tylenol poisoning crisis.

Modern public relations uses a variety of techniques including opinion polling and focus groups to evaluate public opinion, combined with a variety of high-tech techniques for distributing information on behalf of their clients, including satellite feeds, the Internet, broadcast faxes, and database-driven phone banks to recruit supporters for a client's cause. According to the PRSA,

PR Evolution

To truly understand public relations in India, one needs to look at the evolution of the PR profession in the country. PR in India has its origins in the public sector, large Indian business houses and government departments where the Public Relations Officer PRO or Liaison Officer acted as the veritable "fixer" who arranged travel, boarding of executives, took care of hospitality and handled media relations. It was only with the post-liberalization entry of multinational corporations MNC that public relations came to be viewed as an important ingredient in the marketer's campaign strategy. With the arrival of international businesses came global PR players, who opened local operations to further serve their clients. This dichotomy explains the varying levels of appreciation and understanding of PR within the market, though the globalization of Indian industry and the exposure to global markets and trends are quickly closing the gap. An indicator of the industry's move towards sophistication and maturity is the formation of the Public Relations Consultants Association of India, a trade association to encourage and promote the progression of PR in India.



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"Examples of the knowledge that may be required in the professional practice of public relations include communication arts, psychology, social psychology, sociology, political science, economics, and the principles of management and ethics. Technical knowledge and skills are required for opinion research, public issues analysis, media relations, direct mail, institutional advertising, publications, film/video productions, special events, speeches, and presentations."

Although public relations professionals are stereotypically seen as corporate servants, the reality is that almost any organization that has a stake in how it is portrayed in the public arena employs at least one PR manager. Large organizations may even have dedicated communications departments. Government agencies, trade associations, and other non-profit organizations commonly carry out PR activities.

A number of specialties exist within the field of public relations, including:

- Crisis management
- Reputation management
- Issue management
- Investor relations and labor relations
- Grassroots PR

1.4 PR PUBLIC

For any **'establishment'**, be it government, business, industry or even religion, there is no such thing as a single public.

For most trading, corporations the public can be divided into the following sections:

- Shareholders and potential shareholders of the company; together with city editors, financial writers, stockbrokers, and others whose opinion on the financial standing of the company is influential.
- Employees and potential employees of the company, and their families; appropriate trade unions; employment officers appointment boards and training officers concerned with advice on careers.
- Suppliers and potential suppliers of raw materials and other good or services to the company; any trade associations to which these suppliers belong; subcontractors wherever applicable.



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- Wholesale and retail trade customers and potential customers and any trade associations to which they belong
- Consumer customers, actual and potential; a category which may include special classes such as the housewife, the motorist or the sportsman, and also companies which are clients under contract. Under the heading may also be included school children and students in so far as they eventually become customers and the teachers who influence them.
- Other companies in the same industry, and the firm's own trade association
- Communities in which the company operates: the authorities and residents of areas who are affected by its physical presence or its activities, in ways other than by purchasing its products. Towns where the company has factories come into this category; so do places where employment is created or removed in local industry as a result of contracts or subcontracts by the company.

In marketing, the efforts are directed to winning over the **'target market'**. Advertising reaches its 'target audience' with messages. Public Relations, however, deals with more than one group. It, in fact, deals with a number of groups. These special groups, whether large or small, have different characteristics, needs, wants, etc. most importantly, they play different roles and differ in the type of relationships they share with the organization.

These different groups of people with different expectations and interests are called the 'public' of an organization. PR thus is more diversified and wide spread than advertising as it deals with total communication with all these different groups. Each such group is interested in a corporation or organization as a source of benefits:

- People want employment
- Employers want better facilities and services
- Investors want better returns
- The trade distributors, dealers and retailers want better margins
- Suppliers want orders
- The government wants financial support in form of taxes
- Voluntary organizations want the support in form of donations
- The community wants a wide variety of benefits

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Public Relations work towards fulfilling these wants and interests and maintaining better relationships with all the public. Specific communication programmes are devised and implemented for each specific public.

The success of these programmes leads to goodwill. Employee's good will result in increased efficiency, consumer goodwill leads to better returns over the investment, governmental goodwill leads to favorable treatment, community goodwill results in a better climate to work in. This way the goodwill of all the concerned public results in favorable conditions for the growth and success of the organization.

All organization differs in their way of functioning, organizational structure and the people with whom they deal. So different organizations have different types of public. However, there are few basic types of public that are common to most organizations.

These include:

- Employees: people who work for the organization, from the top management to the workers,
- Potential Employees: those who are studying or working somewhere else, but wish to work for the organization
- Consumers, users and clients: past, present and potential.



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- Shareholders, investors and other financial associates: all those people who and organizations who have financial stakes in the organization including banks, brokers, insurance companies, etc
- The trade chain: the distributors, dealers and retailers
- Suppliers: who supply goods, raw material and services, etc
- Opinion leaders: people, organizations and institutions who can influence the functioning of the organization in any way. Opinion leaders includes the industry, the government, business and industrial bodies (FICCI, CII, etc, in India) and other opinion forming groups like consumer forum, environment groups, etc
- Media: who reach the people with news and opinions and work as a link (press, radio, TV, etc)
- The community: people who live near the organization premises. Public can also be classified into several categories. These are:

Internal and External Public

Internal public are the employees from top to the bottom. External public are those who aren't directly connected with the organization like the media, government, customers, suppliers, the trade, the community, the investors, etc.

Primary, secondary and marginal public

Primary public can influence the organization directly and include the employees, investors, customers, suppliers, trade, etc. secondary public are the media and the community. Marginal public don't have any direct bearing on the organization.

Present and potential public

Public are never static and permanent. They keep changing. Today's public members may leave or dissociate themselves and new public members may join the organization.

Proponents, opponents and the Uncommitted type of public

Proponents or supporters of an organization need to be handled differently from the opponents. For proponents, PR tries to reinforce positive beliefs and attitudes. Strong and persuasive PR programmes are required to change the opponents and win them over. Different types of programmes are needed for those who are neither supporters nor opponents.



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Examples of Public

In Educational Organization:

- Employees: staff and teachers
- Customers or clients: a) Students past, present and potential b their parents c) all those organizations giving employment to the students
- Potential employees: those who wish to work for the institution
- Suppliers: those who supply books, equipments, etc
- The industry: other educational institutions
- Opinion leaders: educational bodies such as boards, departments and other funding and regulating organizations like CBSE, UGC, AICTE, etc
- Media: the press, radio and television which help others know about the educational institution
- The community: people who live around the institution

In Multinational Corporation:

- Customers
- Dealers and distributors
- Trade
- Banks and insurances
- Community neighbours
- International community
- Special interest groups
- Suppliers
- Competitors
- Investment community
- Stock holders
- Media
- Families of employees
- Labour associations
- Regulatory authorities
- Government local, state, national

1.5. OBJECTIVE OF PR

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Publicity in Public Relations is goal-oriented or activities based on objectives. The objectives of advertising are twofold, *i* as a marketing tool; *ii* as a means of persuasion.

As a tool of marketing, advertising is used to sell ideas, products and services of identified sponsor. This is achieved through communication of the product or service) features, pricing, benefits to the customers, and the image brand image) among other things. Apart from dissemination of information about products, advertising is also used a mass persuader whether for creating popularity, whether used in election or in education, advertising seeks to bring about a change in attitude and behavior. This is why advertising is also defined as controlled, identifiable information and persuasion by means of mass media. Advertising is thus tailored and executed towards achieving one or more of the objectives, depending on the product or services, the market for it, its customers, and the marketing organization behind it. The execution and its implementation in media to achieve the objectives is a science and an art in itself, requiring special skills.

The objectives of publicity are concerned with imparting information, through specific media to the specific target group. The information has to be intrinsically newsworthy, honest and credible, but made to be more authentic by the nature of the media in which coverage is obtained. The information is put across in such a way that it seems as if it is the media which are giving it out to the readers or viewers, rather than the advertiser or Public Relations man in an organization. To be able to do this successfully requires good knowledge of mass media, its editorial need and policies, the audience and the operation process. It requires planning, effective writing, and extremely good media relations to ensure that news releases receive favorable conditions.

The objectives of Public Relations comprise a subtle combination of advertising and publicity. Public Relations is concerned with achieving a shift in knowledge, perception, image and behavior. Each Public Relations programme, therefore, can have different objectives depending on the situation, the target group the 'publics' it is meant for) and the timing. For instance, the objectives of a programme directed to motivate the employees of a company will be different for each internal situation, its timing, the structure and the organization. Similarly, the objectives of Public Relations with the media i.e. of the media relations will vary from situation to situation, and company to company. Handling a crisis will demand on type of objective, whereas the launching of a new production unit will demand another type of objective when dealing with the media as a specific 'public'.



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Another difference with regard to Public Relations objectives, when compared with advertising of publicity, is that in Public Relations the target group or the 'publics' many often be more than one in a given situation-for instance, the employees, the press, the shareholders, and the government can be the target group in the case of a new project launch, or even a crisis. In advertising and publicity, the target group is generally on specific and large group-for instance, the housewives in the case of consumer product, or the shareholders in the case of a financial crisis, or the government in the case of an industry issues.

Thus, Public Relation is a management function that involves monitoring and evaluating public attitudes and maintaining mutual relations and understanding between an organization and its public. Public could include shareholders, government, consumers, employees and the media. It is the act of getting along with people we constantly come in touch with. PROs ensure internal cohesion in the company by maintaining a clear communications network between the management and employees.

Its first objective is to improve channels of communication and to establish new ways of setting up a two-way flow of information and understanding.

Public relations as a separate career option has come into existence when lots of private or government companies and institution felt the need to market their product, service and facilities. Public image is important to all organizations and prominent personalities. The role of public relation specialist becomes pertinent in crisis situations when the correct and timely transmission of information can help save the face of the organization.

In terms of career opportunities, Public relations is broadly practiced for product publicity, corporate publicity, to have better relations with the government, to publish corporate publications like newsletter, bulletins, magazines for employees etc.

UNIT 2. ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN CORPORATE IMAGE BUILDING

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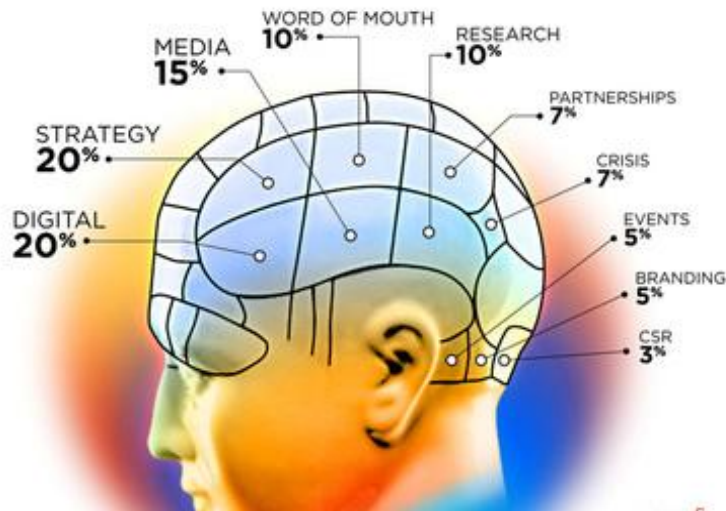


Image Advisory

Every one, be it individuals or organizations, wants a favorable image. Everybody wants to be in the good books of others. The most important factor here is that a positive image leads to a lot of goodwill and this leads to greater acceptance. And acceptance is what everyone wants in this world of cutthroat competition.

This important task of building a favorable image is entrusted to Public Relations. But PR alone, however better be the practices, cannot build a positive image. As a popular saying goes that respect cannot be demanded, it is commanded. Similarly, **a favorable image cannot be bought or made.** It is rather earned.

Think a while, TATA, Birla and other big companies have not made or bought the images they enjoy today. They have earned the positive images by way of sustained top-level performances. Of course, PR has helped by way of reaching the people, gathering information about their needs, convincing management about these and getting the appropriate plans, programmes, etc implemented. It also helps the people know what the company is doing for them.

Simply put, PR does not make images; it just helps the company earn a favorable image. Positive or negative image is all about how people perceive, what they know, and what kind of experience they have had with an organization. These things, when positive, lead to a favorable image.

PR can help only when there is substance, i.e. good performance. PR can then add style to it and present it to the public. However, no substance and all style cannot create positive images.



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Building a favorable image is concerned with confidence and credibility. This is gained through sustained and good performance. Then the next thing to do is to let people know about the good work you are doing PR is 90% good work and 10% talking about it. Talking about one's performances is of vital importance as no information means no image. Ignorance among the public about what a company is doing, often leads to mistrust, or even contempt in some situations.

Corporate image building tools, specifically for reaching out or the talking about its part, include:

- Advertising, both corporate advertising and product advertising
- Media relations
- Customer relations
- Employee relations
- Community relations

In addition to these activities, building and maintaining good relationships with all the public helps in creating a favorable corporate image. And this corporate image works like the 'binding factor' that holds the organization together specifically the multi-product, multi-division and multi-company organization and forges it ahead on the road to success.

Public relations is better than advertising at building a brand. At the time they were right; advertising had indeed lost credibility while the media still had it. But in 2006, one can no longer be so sure: in an age when video news releases regularly substitute for real news, people have learned to be skeptical about the media's objectivity.

The media is constantly pressured to compromise its impartiality. For one thing, there is a constant need to produce news, sometimes 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In addition, they are owned by mega-sized corporate entities that are in the business primarily to generate profit: the press survives by selling airtime and print space to advertisers.

These two factors together, in addition to any bias internal to the culture of the media entity itself, leave the media vulnerable to press releases and other prepackaged content put together by private agencies hoping to get the word out about their clients, especially if those clients are willing to underwrite advertising time and space. People are not stupid. When a television segment on health is

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sponsored by the same entity that is featured in it, it causes the media producer that aired it to lose credibility.

If the media is compromised in terms of its trustworthiness, then argument falls apart: **no credibility = no brand.**

The role of PR was never really to build a brand in the first place. Rather, it is to do no harm to it. **PR is inherently a tool for building a great reputation, as PR influences.** A strong corporate reputation is increasingly a PR responsibility. Image can be generated through an advertising campaign or a corporate document or the look of an organization's premise while reputation is built through developing relationships and what an organization does. It is largely what others say about you." One implication is that PR grows the reputation to protect the brand.

Reputation—which can loosely be defined as trustworthiness—is not brand. Brand is image, while reputation is reality. What this means is that everybody knows that brand is fake, or has elements of fakery, while reputation is closer to reality. Therefore, brand is best conveyed by a consistent sales/marketing/advertising "core message," while reputation is best conveyed by transparency.

Now transparency, which is the real job of a public relations professional though they may not be able to express it in practice), means to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth about the organization, and in so doing to portray the organization as trustworthy. Therefore PR is actually the antithesis of branding, which is to tell a very partial, even propagandistic, truth. Really, branding is pure selling, aimed at owning a single idea in the audience's mind. No matter how they are written up in *The Wall Street Journal* or *Fortune*, the brands of Nike, Disney, Starbucks, and Coca-Cola have little to do with the real world inside their organizations, and much to do with the image they represent to the public.

There is one exception, and that is where PR and transparency comes in. As mentioned above, PR uses transparency to build the reputation of a brand, to insulate its image against damaging attacks.

The only reason for reputation-building activities, or PR, is to protect the brand against being damaged by scandal. Nike has not been skillful in this regard, and the "just do it" image suffers from the company's association with sweatshop labor.



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Thus far, we have established that PR does not build the brand, but rather defends the brand's reputation. But one can go even further than this. To go back to the initial discussion of the media's tarnished objectivity: **PR has a new hurdle to face in defending a company's reputation, and that is to actually deliver transparency.** It is no longer sufficient for PR to develop and disseminate "white propaganda" the truth, delivered with a credible source, but emphasizing only the positive). Rather, to counter the perceived bias of the media, **PR has to deliver objective information about an organization to the media, even when that information sounds negative.** Otherwise, jaded viewers will know that the media has been corrupted by a PR message, and will simply tune out.

Advertising should not be perceived as a blockage to building a brand. For branding is an image-building activity, and advertising is explicitly an image-building technique. The audience expects advertising to try and "sell" them. In addition to this, advertising clearly acknowledges its source and sponsor, whereas this does not necessarily happen in the media.

People enjoy the brand-building activities that advertisers create. They like a good advertisement or television commercial, and they enjoy finding out about a product or service that is new and interesting. What they don't like is to be tricked, fooled, or enticed to buy something from a company that is unethical or that doesn't deliver on its promises. **Steering consumers away from those particular dislikes is the job of a good PR specialist.**

2.1. IMPORTANCE OF PR

Importance of PR and Crisis Management

Public relations and crisis management planning are not only important to the business of an organization, but they are both crucial regardless of the type of business. In today's fast-paced and ever-changing world, business is news. Plant closings, mergers and acquisitions, unemployment, strikes, labor negotiations, company expansions, building projects, construction-related accidents and catastrophes are often the lead story on the front page or the six o'clock news. Yet many organizations are totally unprepared or at least ill prepared to handle **the public relations and crisis management aspects** of these events. This unpreparedness can lead to many negative and undesirable results, for the employees, clients and customers, the company and the business and industry sector.

Many businesses always have been and always will be in a highly visible position

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to the general public and the media. For example, the building and construction industry is important to the economy, as well as the overall health, safety & welfare of the public. The media are very interested in the building and construction industry because of the potential “**high interest**” stories it can generate, both positive and negative. To succeed in today’s business world, all businesses must learn to manage rapid change and crises and work diligently to develop strong public relations and crisis management plans.

A general public relations program is important to business to: Complement advertising; provide research capabilities for marketing efforts; provide capabilities for special events to increase company & industry visibility; monitor governmental organizations; to communicate the state-of-the-industry to the public, including views on legislation, regulations, economic conditions, and other factors and events impacting the business; and to communicate with past and existing clients.

A crisis management plan, including public relations aspects, is absolutely essential to maintain a company’s credibility and positive image in the face of adversity. The company’s customers, employees, management, financial supporters, industry associates, the general public and the media need to feel that the company is well organized and have the ability to handle a crisis in a very professional manner. Crises do not afford the luxury of time to pause and think thoroughly through the specific problem. Therefore, there is a need to be prepared for every type of emergency most likely to happen.

Many crises in business, just as in our daily lives, are often foreseeable. These crises can be managed and can provide unprecedented opportunities for positive public relations. A majority of businesses are reluctant to prepare for adversity because they do not want to admit that their business organization could ever be guilty of poor performance or mistakes.

A company which does not prepare for the possibility that some plan may not work or that conditions of business may change quickly - including changes beyond their control - will soon find itself unable to deal with a crisis and therefore will suffer severe negative effects on the business and its image to the public and its clients.

The most critical time for the business, when it comes to public relations, is when a catastrophe, scandal, or some other negative event occurs which involves the business or industry sector at large. Things can and do go wrong in the best-managed companies and organizations. Therefore, accepting this fact and anticipating certain crisis may minimize the potential damage from the crisis.



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Contingency planning for crises is not only a good management practice in any organization but also; it is a mandatory practice for any business.

Many businesses today have high risk, high visibility, high impact on the public and our everyday lives, and high exposure to potential crises. Because of these characteristics, the potential damage from a crisis can be greatly multiplied. An unprepared, misinformed, or ill-at-ease company spokesperson; a disgruntled employee; and a victim of a tragedy at a building site have the potential of doing inestimable damage to your business or industry by their remarks to the media. Yet there are countless times when a company representative is thrust into the spotlight as an official “spokesperson” with little or no training in dealing with the media, especially in a crisis situation. In fact, when it comes to dealing with the media, most people would rather “be excused” from the task, because they are ill-prepared psychologically and professionally to deal with the media. In today’s world, you must become prepared psychologically and professionally.

Conducting public relations activities without a plan would be the same as someone trying to build a quality building project without plans and specifications or a business trying to manage the growth of their business without any plans. Conducting crisis communications and public relations during emergencies without a plan and training could be about the same as committing suicide or at least “shooting yourself in the foot,” because of the potential damage that could result to your company’s image, business, employees, management, etc. and to the image and impact on your industry.

If you don’t believe the potential damage that can result from what is written above, think about the effect of poor public relations efforts during the TMI accident, NASA’s Challenger tragedy, the EXXON Valdez oil spill event, or during the last major building site accident and the impact of the negative image on the companies and their industries. Or think about the effect of good public relations efforts during the Tylenol incident; during the odometer rollback incident at Chrysler; or during the last successful rescue at a construction site accident and the impact of the positive image on these companies and their industries.

It is time to truly recognize the importance of public relations and crisis management and their potential impact on the business. There is no better place to start than within your own organization and industry and professional associations by developing public relations plans, that include crisis management plans, and by training key employees on how to deal with the media. With the risks as high as they are in your business, don’t leave public relations and crisis management to



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chance or to a “seat of the pants” approach. Make a commitment and start planning for your future public relations and crisis management efforts today. The futures of your company and to your industry are at risk. With a strong commitment to good public relations and crisis management planning, the results can be tremendous. Without a strong commitment, the results can be disastrous.

2.2 Functions of Public Relations

Quite literally, public relations is managing relations with various publics, a role that grows in importance as reputation becomes ever more critical to business success. Companies can restore trust in a number of ways, many involving traditional **PR strategies**, such as:

- Using integrity and fairness as criteria for all business decisions;
- Maintaining an emphasis on quality of products or services;
- Openly sharing truthful information with all publics;
- Actively seeking input from publics and being responsive to concerns;
- Renewing a commitment to local communities; and
- Creating forums to encourage dialogue with constituencies.

The bottom line is that companies must make it a priority to value the needs of all publics, and to forge good relationships with them. The cornerstone of a good relationship is trust, and trust is based on open and honest communication. An effective public relation tells a company's story in a way that is accurate, honest, and easy to understand, helping to establish a reputation for credibility.

A good relationship also requires a willingness to listen, and a true public relations is a two-way process. PR professionals recognize that to manage relationships, they must understand and respect public concerns and viewpoints. They must also go a step further, to serve as the public's advocate within an organization.

In effect, corporate public relations professionals frequently play the role of an outsider. By questioning decisions and their impact on customers, the community, employees, and others, public relation professionals bring the public perspective to an organization, fostering its ability to be responsive to public concerns.

A company's reputation, or the essence of how it is viewed by all of its publics, is the leading factor in its ability to achieve success. With this in mind, the battered image of the corporate world is no small matter. Restoring trust and helping



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companies to earn a reputation for credibility will require sound public relations leadership. Indeed, with corporate integrity central on the minds of average citizen, the role of public relations today is more critical than ever before.

Main role of Public Relations are:

1. **Information:** there can be flaws in the kind of information given out and the kind of information suppressed. There can also be several ethical aspects to the content, timing of message and the channel used. Truth and accuracy of the disclosures influence the investment decision. Another aspect criticized is that there is too much of such information emanating from every side with conflicting claims. This does not help to resolve doubts, rather it adds to the confusion with the overloading of communication channels with contradictory messages.
2. **Persuasion:** public relations communication is aimed at bringing about a change in attitude. Basically, a public Relations person is an advocate of a cause, client, company, or institutions. Effective Public Relations describe the public relations functions in a free society 'to ethically, effectively plead the cause of a client or organization in the forum of a Public debate.

Every institution and function fares in relation to the values it provides to others, rather than in merely pursuing its own gain.

The primary functions derived from Public Relations are:

- Public Relations is a means for the public to have its desires and interests felt by the institutions in our society. It interprets and speaks for the public to otherwise, unresponsive organizations. It also speaks on behalf of those organizations to the public to help create public acceptance and recognition
- It help promotion of a company's goods or services and builds up 'image'
- Public Relations is a means to achieve mutual adjustment between institutions and groups, establishing smoother relationships that benefits the public.
- Publications Relations is a safety valve for freedom. By providing means of working out accommodation it makes arbitrary action or coercion less likely.
- It can help to attract talented personnel for the organization
- Public Relations is an essential element in the communication systems that enable individuals to be informed on many aspects of subjects that affect their lives. It can stimulate attitudes and bring about changes



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- It can help overcome public misconceptions about the organization by disseminating correct information
- Public Relations personnel can help activate the organization's social conscience and thus foster the goodwill of community
- It can help earn the goodwill of employees by showing interest in their welfare. Thus it may prevent labor problems and solve any disputes with greater ease

Public Relations, consciously practiced, are a universal activity. It functions in all aspects of life. Each of us, basically, practices principles of Public Relations in major areas of seeking the acceptance co-operation, or affection of others. Public Relations professionals only practice it in a more professional manner.

It is increasingly being recognized that **Public Relations require professional attitudes in India within the context of a rapidly changing social environment.** As the institutions of government, industry, and politics intensify their concern with increasingly articulate and preoccupied publics, the need for wish counsel and guidance is mandatory if the communications process is to be conducted with clarity. It is encouraging that a growing number of PR practitioners are becoming aware of the social and political implications of their profession. The work of the Public Relations Society of India is beginning to bear fruit. Another pointer to the growth of professionalism is that PR practitioners in India are developing '**the problem-solving approach**'. This process requires that the PR professional be able to cope with not only the increasing degree of public awareness but also the advanced sophisticated communication technologies.

In the years ahead, Public Relations and professionalism in Public Relations-are bound to increase. As the sophistication of the media grows, so must the ability of the PR persons increase to match the newer resources at their disposal? This is particularly true in this age of social transition. Since development in any sector, triggers off changes in many other sectors, the PR persons is challenged as never before.

2.3. PR Techniques

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Public relations campaigns and Programmes are a blueprint for achieving desired business and communications objectives. The first critical step in campaign creation is pinpointing what the organization hopes to achieve as an end result. Does the business wish to generate awareness of a new program or product? Position itself as an industry expert and resource? Change attitudes and opinions? Whatever the objective, **Public Relations is committed to delivering results with structured campaigns** that include:

- Conducting research to define the situation
- Determining the audience(s)
- Creating a strategy to provide direction for the PR program
- Developing tactics to meet the strategy
- Creating a timeline
- Outlining a budget
- Evaluating the program's results

All communication-big or small in terms of size and effort in Advertising, Publicity and Public Relations- involves significant financial and manpower



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resources. Both are, today, not only scarce, but expensive. Hence, advertising, publicity and Public Relations must be effective to the core. This requires professional programming and planning in the following areas:

1. **Objective Orientation-** All advertising, publicity, and Public Relations programmes must have pre-defined short-term and long-term objectives as a pre-requisite. These must be agreed to and accepted by the management.
2. **Target Group Orientation-** For any campaign or even single but important activity, the target group to be reached must be clearly identified. There should be no ambiguity or vagueness in this. The definition of the target group should be in demographic and psychographic terms.
3. **Media Selection-** the media to be used must be those which reach the right target group, at the right time and at the minimum cost. Waste in reach must be minimal and this is today easily possible with the detailed data and planning at the disposal of a professional. The right media have a significant role to play in publicity and Public Relations, where the communication is largely situation-led and the messages are broad-based and different, unlike advertising.
4. **Message Selection-** the message to be communicated must be directly linked with and focused upon the objectives to be achieved (awareness, image, announcement, shift in attitude, behaviour, etc) in respect of the target group and the media in which it is going to be transmitted. There must be a perfect match between the two to achieve the desired results.
5. **Creativity and Innovations-** The more creative and innovative one can be within the professional guidelines, the better one's message will be noticed and the better will be the chance of being able to achieve the desired goals. Creativity and innovation should be an objective on its own, in all forms of business communication, today and in the future.
6. **Manpower Back-up-** Whatever your objectives and financial resources, the professional manpower support in advertising, publicity and Public Relations is most essential for the planning and execution of programmes and campaigns.
7. **Adequate Resources-** one of the biggest shortcomings in advertising and Public Relations is that companies tend to economize on the financial outlay. This often results in unsustained or sporadic communications. To be effective, and to make the desired impact, advertising, publicity and Public Relations programmes must be sustained and backed with adequate financial resources in creating the message as well as sending it out through the media.

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It is often recommended that if you do not have adequate resources, it may be better that you do not undertake the programme, rather than do a half-hearted and low impact job.

2.4. Nature of work of PR Person

An organization's reputation, profitability, and even its continued existence can depend on the degree to which its targeted "publics" support its goals and policies. Public relations specialists—also referred to as *communications specialists* and *media specialists*, among other titles—serve as advocates for businesses, nonprofit associations, universities, hospitals, and other organizations, and build and maintain positive relationships with the public. As managers recognize the importance of good public relations to the success of their organizations, they increasingly rely on public relations specialists for advice on the strategy and policy of such programs.

Public relations specialists handle **organizational functions** such as media, community, consumer, industry, and governmental relations; political campaigns; interest-group representation; conflict mediation; and employee and investor relations. They do more than "tell the organization's story." They must understand the attitudes and concerns of community, consumer, employee, and public interest groups and establish and maintain cooperative relationships with them and with representatives from print and broadcast journalism.

Public relations specialists **draft press releases and contact people** in the media who might print or broadcast their material. Many radio or television special reports, newspaper stories, and magazine articles start at the desks of public relations specialists. Sometimes the subject is an organization and its policies toward its employees or its role in the community. Often the subject is a public issue, such as health, energy, or the environment, and what an organization does to advance that issue.

Public relations specialists also **arrange and conduct programs** to keep up contact between organization representatives and the public. For example, they set up speaking engagements and often prepare speeches for company officials. These **media specialists** represent employers at community projects; make film, slide, or other visual presentations at meetings and school assemblies; and plan conventions. In addition, they are responsible for preparing annual reports and writing proposals for various projects.

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In government, public relations specialists—who may be called press secretaries, **information officers**, public affairs specialists, or communication specialists—keep the public informed about the activities of agencies and officials. For example, public affairs specialists in the U.S. Department of State keep the public informed of travel advisories and of U.S. positions on foreign issues. A press secretary for a member of Congress keeps constituents aware of the representative's accomplishments.

In large organizations, the key public relations executive, who often is a vice president, **may develop overall plans and policies with other executives**. In addition, public relations departments employ public relations specialists to write, research, prepare materials, maintain contacts, and respond to inquiries.

People who handle publicity for an individual or who direct public relations for a small organization may deal with all aspects of the job. **They contact people, plan and research, and prepare materials for distribution**. They also may handle advertising or sales promotion work to support marketing efforts.

Some public relations specialists work a standard 35- to 40-hour week, but unpaid overtime is common. Occasionally, they must be at the job or on call around the clock, especially if there is an emergency or crisis. Public relations offices are busy places; work schedules can be irregular and frequently interrupted. Schedules often have to be rearranged so that workers can meet deadlines, deliver speeches, attend meetings and community activities, and travel.

Relationship & Duties of the PR Practitioner - Value of IPR Code & the International Codes of Conduct

One must have excellent communication skills; both spoken and written so have to express thoughts clearly and simply. An effective personality and the ability to get along with a wide range of people both inside and outside an organization are necessary. Must, be polite always as he has to work under pressure or provocation. An organizing ability is required too, as one may have to organized press conferences, lectures, exhibitions, and events. Must, have self-confidence and far sightedness. He must be able to understand human psychology and take decisions apt to the situation. Analytical skills are required to interpret research information and plan activity.

Public relations officers have to work within and outside the organization. Within the concern they have to conduct management-employee meets, to inform



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organizations policies, activities and accomplishments. Outside he has to liaison with government departments, trade unions, press etc whose cooperation is required for the smooth functioning, and also have to manage complaints from the consumers, organized events like fairs, exhibitions etc. The work involves keeping management aware of public attitudes and concerns of the many groups and organizations with which they must deal.

In addition, public relations departments employ public relations specialists to write, research, prepare materials, maintain contacts, and respond to inquiries.

Another important area of work in this field is to create public identity or an image for public figures like political parties, models, and film stars. It include advising them on every aspect of personality, including dress code, behavior, statement given in press, public appearances etc.

Lobbying, a new field in this career, involves bringing about the passage of laws favorable to the special interest group they represent like a company, industries, government etc. It is a strategy used to raise public consciousness and influence policy makers in areas like environment, human rights, education etc. This is an interesting area of work in public relation.

Public relations officers build up and maintain a good reputation for an organization in the eyes of the public and the media. Typical duties include preparing press notices, organizing visits, and arranging exhibitions and conferences.

Public relations PR) involve building awareness and maintaining goodwill and understanding between an organization and its public.

Some public relations officers are responsible for promoting an organization, or product. Other PROs work for organizations like charities and promote a cause. In both cases, this involves a number of tasks including writing reports and speeches and preparing press releases. PROs must develop good contacts with the media and encourage them to cover the client's news.

Other duties include planning activities such as exhibitions, writing magazine features, and attending meetings and conferences, often giving presentations. The PRO may also be responsible for organizing the production of videos, films, and multimedia programmes.



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PROs have to work closely with other members of their organization in order to obtain information and carry out research. They are also involved in researching public opinion and the effectiveness of their PR campaigns. PROs may be required to travel locally, nationally, and even internationally depending on the profile of the company they work for.

Employers look for skills in negotiation, public speaking, and the ability to cooperate with other members of a team. You must have the capacity to speak and write clearly and persuasively, and a level of sufficiently to coping with budgeting. An understanding of design, layout and printing, as well as some knowledge of film and video presentation techniques is an advantage.

Getting desirable news and feature coverage in the media is an essential function and duty of a PRO. It is something of an art and practicing this art requires a **multitude of talents**. These are:

- A flair for creativity
- An eye or ear for the interesting or unique story
- An understanding of media
- Solid knowledge of the company, the issues under discussion, or product being presented to the media as newsworthy

Future Job Prospects

Public relation officers can find employment in the corporate sector, public sector, government agencies, tourist agencies, hotels, banks and other financial institutions, private consultancy firms etc. Nowadays they can find work even with individuals like political figures, models, and film stars who want their pictures, profiles, and interviews published in magazines and need agents who can do the work for them so as to have an image in front of general public.

There are no defined standards for entry into a public relations career. A college degree combined with public relations experience, usually gained through an internship, is considered excellent preparation for public relations work; in fact, internships are becoming vital to obtaining employment. The ability to communicate effectively is essential. Many entry-level public relations specialists have a college major in public relations, journalism, advertising, or communication. Some firms seek college graduates who have worked in electronic or print journalism. Other employers seek applicants with demonstrated communication skills and training or experience in a field related to the firm's



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business—information technology, health, science, engineering, sales, or finance, for example.

Many colleges and universities offer Bachelor's and postsecondary degrees in public relations, usually in a journalism or communications department. In addition, many other colleges offer at least one course in this field. A common public relations sequence includes courses in public relations principles and techniques; public relations management and administration, including organizational development; writing, emphasizing news releases, proposals, annual reports, scripts, speeches, and related items; visual communications, including desktop publishing and computer graphics; and research, emphasizing social science research and survey design and implementation. Courses in advertising, journalism, business administration, finance, political science, psychology, sociology, and creative writing also are helpful. Specialties are offered in public relations for business, government, and nonprofit organizations.

Many colleges help students gain part-time internships in public relations that provide valuable experience and training. A portfolio of published articles, television or radio programs, slide presentations, and other work is an asset in finding a job. Writing for a school publication or television or radio station provides valuable experience and material for one's portfolio.

Creativity, initiative, good judgment, and the ability to communicate thoughts clearly and simply are essential in this occupation. Decision-making, problem-solving, and research skills also are important. People who choose public relations as a career need an outgoing personality, self-confidence, an understanding of human psychology, and an enthusiasm for motivating people. They should be competitive, yet able to function as part of a team and open to new ideas.

Some organizations, particularly those with large public relations staffs, have formal training programs for new employees. In smaller organizations, new employees work under the guidance of experienced staff members. Beginners often maintain files of material about company activities, scan newspapers and magazines for appropriate articles to clip, and assemble information for speeches and pamphlets. They also may answer calls from the press and the public, work on invitation lists and details for press conferences, or escort visitors and clients. After gaining experience, they write news releases, speeches, and articles for publication or plan and carry out public relations programs. Public relations specialists in



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smaller firms usually get all-around experience, whereas those in larger firms tend to be more specialized.

Make a Good Impression

Every contact PRO has with someone makes an impression. When you're with a patient, speaking to someone, sending an email message to a friend, being interviewed, or writing an Op-Ed, people are coming to conclusions about you and your profession. We all know the adage "One bad apple spoils the bushel". **PRO's armor against that apathy and negativity is pride in the profession and an ability to do the job.** When we have pride in our profession, it's easy to take an active interest in it and do what we can to make things happen.

A good PRO is:

1. An ex-journalist or media person who has had some working knowledge of the media, and who knows and recognizes its needs, as well as the tricks of the trade.
2. Someone who has an unaccomplished approach
3. A person with a neat and tidy mind-a lot of PR is tying up loose ends, and administration
4. Someone who gets on well with people
5. Someone who doesn't mind being at the beck and call the media for 24 hours a day. The communications industry doesn't work 9-5
6. Someone for whom nothing is too much trouble
7. Someone who can string several paragraphs together in their proper order to form an interesting story. Lack of this ability is the major complaint from the media
8. Someone with patience and commonsense

Code of Ethics for PR firms

Members of the Council commit to standards of practice that assure clients, the public and media, employees, and business partners and vendors the highest level of professionalism and ethical conduct in every relationship with a Council member. This commitment is a requirement for application and continued membership in the Council.

Member firms will serve their **clients** by applying their fullest capability to achieve each client's business objectives, and charging a fair price for that service. Members will avoid representing any conflicting or competing client interests



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without the expressed approval of those concerned. Council firms and their employees will respect client confidences and the privacy of client employees, and will refrain from recruiting employees of their clients.

In communicating with the **public** and **media**, member firms will maintain total accuracy and truthfulness. To preserve both the reality and perception of professional integrity, information that is found to be misleading or erroneous will be promptly corrected and the sources of communications and sponsors of activities will not be concealed.

Council members will respect the personal rights of their **employees** and former employees. They will provide employees the necessary tools to serve their clients and opportunities to develop their professional skills. They will safeguard the privacy and protect the professional reputation of current and former employees.

Commercial relationships with business **partners** and **vendors** will be handled in a businesslike manner, and credit will be given for ideas and services provided by others.

2.5. Ethics of PR

During the early growth of Public Relations there were quite a few people posing as Public Relations persons but working as press agents who indulged in puffery and other unethical practices to achieve their ends. This wrought brought considerable damage to the discipline and it has been difficult for Public Relations profession to outgrow such labels as 'white washing', '**sugar coating**', '**fixing**', '**propaganda**' etc even today.

The PR man in his relations with his colleagues, his competitors, and his employers, is on surer ground. It is accepted that it is unethical to injure the reputation or practice of a fellow public relations man, to endeavor to supplant him with his client or employer, or to encroach upon his business in any ways. This includes the soliciting of work by unfair means, such as misrepresenting another's ability or reputation, or implying that his work could be performed better or cheaper.

There will always remain issues that cannot be decided by rule or even by generally accepted practice. These must be a matter for the social, moral, and professional conscience of the individual. The responsibility of the public relations man is to remain alert at all times to the ethical aspects of his work, to act honestly



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and decently, to guard his loyalties, and to respect the integrity of other. When all else fails, and his attitudes, advice, and opinions are not respected, his ultimate action must be to resign from the job.

Some basic code of ethics a PR person should have is:

1. A public relations person should have the highest professional standards. They should conduct their professional life in a manner that does not conflict with the public interest and the dignity of the individual, with respect for the rights of the public.
2. A Public Relations member should deal fairly and honestly with the communications media and the public. They should neither propose nor act to improperly influence the communications media, government bodies, or the legislative process. Improper influence may include conferring gifts, privileges, or benefits to influence decisions.
3. The highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth, should be maintained. They should not make extravagant claims or unfair comparisons, nor assume credit for ideas and words not their own.
4. A Public Relations member should deal fairly with past or present employers/clients, with fellow practitioners, and with members of other professions and not intentionally damage another practitioner's practice or professional reputation.
5. A PR person should be prepared not to disclose the name of their employer or client for whom public communications are made and refrain from associating himself or herself from anyone that would not respect such policy.
6. A PR member should not represent conflicting or competing interests without the express consent of those concerned, given after a full disclosure of the facts. They should not permit personal or other professional interests to conflict with those of an employer/client without fully disclosing such interests to everyone involved.
7. A PR person should not personally accept fees, commissions, gifts, or any other considerations for professional services from anyone except employers or clients for whom the services were specifically performed.

Functions of PR Department & Manager

Serving the "5 Masters"



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When faced with an ethical dilemma, look first within **yourself** at your own values. These will guide decisions based on what you truly believe is right or wrong. Ask yourself, "Can I sacrifice my own personal values for the client, for my employer, for my profession, or for society?"

The **client** is generally the first loyalty beyond self you can substitute the word "organization" if you don't do work for clients. Decide if you are doing work for the client or organization, or if it's for the "cause" that they represent. Remember—as long as you work for a client, there are some confidences that you must keep. Ask yourself, "Knowing what I know, can I represent the client, do what has to be done, and still sleep well at night?"

Your **employer** signs your paycheck. No work, no public relations ethics decisions. It's as easy as that. But if you knowingly allow harmful work to continue, you'll be violating your duty to the public, which many would agree takes precedence over duty to employer. Ask yourself, "Is the work I'm being asked to do harmful to the public?"

As public relations **professional**, you are obligated to support your colleagues. You are obligated to be responsible to your peers. To produce unprofessional work is unethical. Allowing others to produce unprofessional work borders on being unethical. Ask yourself, "Is what I'm about to do professional? Is it what my role models would do?"

Finally, **society** is the key component to ethical public relations decisions. We must serve the public interest. Ask yourself, "Will my decision benefit society, even if I hurt myself, my client, my employer or my profession?"

That is the toughest question to answer. But nobody said this was easy. There are no rights or wrong answers. There are only courageous decisions.

It's a pretty scary world we work in these days. Public relations activities of influence and that include such simple activities as communications meant to educate are being closely scrutinized. More and more, people are paying attention to what public relations professionals are doing.

But they have every right to. After all, public relations are an advocacy profession. Their ultimate goal is to influence public opinion and ultimate objective is to get people to take positive action on behalf of the client, organization, or cause. And that in it is controversial. It's quite a powerful position they hold and because of



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this power, the public relations profession faces tremendous challenges. They are counted on and trusted to provide accurate information to our publics.

When it's all said and done what you do in your own particular situations will be judged by your bosses, by yourself, and by the general public in the court of public opinion. Whatever you do, whatever your choices are, choose well, and represent yourself well in this court of public opinion, because -you will be judged. And as public relations practitioners, you represent the entire profession. How you respond to your particular ethical dilemma will invariably affect your colleagues' livelihood.

UNIT 3 . PR PROGRAMME PLANNING

It sounds mundane, tedious, and humdrum. The deed does not immediately place you in the publicity spotlight. But, development of a thorough, well-thought-out list of media you wish to target is the first and crucial step in beginning a publicity program or a **PR Campaign**.

Before you start, it's essential not to get "**caught up**" in the excitement and target media outlets that don't make sense. Really, why be on "Oprah," as glamorous as that sounds, if you market a product used in metalworking plants, even if the item is the only one of its kind?

Or, say you need to increase consumer sales of your new cookie product. An item in The Wall Street Journal may be great for the ego, but a story sent to newspaper food editors via the national Associated Press news wire can more precisely reach the country's cookie monsters and shoppers.

To begin, **you must determine which media are read, viewed and listened to by your target audiences**. Hopefully, you already have a clear understanding of just who your target audiences are.

Okay, you've identified the audiences; how do you develop this media list? There are several techniques:

Get to know media you believe would reach your target audience: Familiarize yourself with bylines, columns, and special sections. If you're in real estate, know who the real estate editor and/or reporter are for the local newspaper. If you seek a story about an innovative marketing technique your company offers, and coverage in Inc. magazine would reach your audience, you should know that the magazine



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has a special column on marketing called "Hands On, Sales & Marketing". Plus, learn the name of the editor of the column.

Call a media outlet directly to pinpoint its editorial focus: Ask who would be the appropriate person to receive your press materials and can be contacted. Media people appreciate companies that take the time to identify names of reporters and the news beats they cover. And, always be sure to spell their names accurately.

Update lists periodically: There's a high turnover rate in the media. So, you will need to update your target list periodically. This is accomplished by always reviewing bylines, maintaining personal contact and, if directories are used, receiving updates from those companies.

A large number of hours will be spent planning and shaping your publicity campaign for the media market. **The preparation of the media market research and the polishing of the media release may seem painstaking, but when done right, they are well worth the effort.** After the initial launch of the campaign, be prepared to spend at least an hour or two each day maintaining it: conducting numerous media follow-ups and making new media pitches, emails, faxes, mailings and phone calls; fulfilling media requests forwarding product photos, media kits/product samples, arranging interviews and tracking/clipping articles and features.

When it comes to generating publicity for a product, business or website, one of the hardest decisions entrepreneurs have to make is whether to launch the campaign themselves. What makes it tough is trying to determine the amount of time it might take to launch and maintain a successful publicity campaign.

There are PR campaigns that needed the blast of just a few weeks of publicity and there are also lengthy campaigns that generated media exposure for years. A single distribution of a media release is rarely effective. Most times, editors and reporters are working on multiple stories at once and need some time to consider your pitch. Although your release may indeed be interesting and newsworthy, the editor may simply not have the space to use your pitch at that point in the media outlet's editorial calendar. So make sure he/she sees it again when that editorial calendar opens up a few weeks down the line. Keep in mind also that because media outlets receive so many media releases and story pitches these days, it can sometimes take them weeks before they actually get to something you may have sent their way. That's why it's important to conduct extensive media follow-ups over the course

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of several months to ensure media reception, proper media digestion, and hopefully media acceptance of your release or pitch.

One of the keys to determining the length of a successful campaign knows when you have fired all your publicity bullets; when it's time to re-pack the chambers or when you should move onto other marketing targets.

- *1 - 2 month campaigns are most often timely, date-sensitive campaigns* -- a release or message tied to a current event that may be outdated in 6 - 8 weeks.
- *Most new product publicity campaigns are best suited for the 3 - 6 month time frame* -- allowing for the often drawn out lead-times of some media outlets. Having said that though, some product campaigns can be extended for several more months based on media reaction and subsequent consumer interest.
- *The longest campaigns are for those clients whose businesses or expertise are "evergreen and regenerative"* - meaning they are not tied to the shelf life of a new product launch; aren't linked to a specific date; and can be restocked for a new round of media interest every few months.

3.1 Evaluating results of PR work

Why do so many PR campaigns fall flat, failing to attract the media attention that their creators crave? For the same reason that a loaf of bread falls flat if you leave out the yeast. You've failed to add a small, but vital ingredient. Like baking bread, creating news requires us to follow a recipe. The secret but indispensable ingredient of that recipe – the ingredient that the flacks will ignore, overlook, or avoid – is controversy.

Controversy is really nothing more than conflict combined with crisis. To understand why controversy is so vital to your success, you must understand the nature of news.

As presented in today's media, the news is not simply a rehashing of yesterday's events. When a reporter writes or broadcasts the news, what he is really doing is fabricating a story.

By “story,” the PR means, **“an interesting tale filled with characters, action, plot and suspense.”**

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Every major news story – whether it's the Gulf War, the Monica Lewinsky scandal, the World Trade Center attack – is an ongoing soap opera filled with larger-than-life characters, plot twists and high drama. On a much smaller scale, the same is true about a local fire, a city council meeting, or a school board election. Take a house fire. It's the firefighters versus the consuming blaze, battling to save property and to preserve human life.

There are many things that occur at a council meeting that never appear in a news story. For example, few newspapers are likely to report that the council approved the minutes of the previous meeting. Why? Because, there is no controversy. But if the mayor is fighting with the council over whether to approve pay raises for the police department that changes everything. Now you have a story. Now you have **controversy**.

This is the recipe for all news: big and small, hard or soft, national or local.

The raw materials of news are a change, a conflict, an aberration, or a problem. These materials must then be presented as an on-going story that involves characters, action, plot, and suspense. But the catalyst – the secret ingredient that will transform your media campaign into major news coverage – is controversy. And lots of it.

If you want proof, pick up any daily newspaper in America. Study the articles you find there. You will find that every news item contains a story, just as certainly as will a Danielle Steel novel or a Steven Spielberg movie.

The news story will be told in the language of journalism: who, what, when, where, why and how. The writer will apply one of the standard structures of journalism, whether it's the Associated Press' inverted pyramid or the Wall Street Journal's feature formula.

But the article is still a story with heroes and villains, problems and solutions. The story will also include a controversy. **Bigger the controversy, the bigger the news.**

Indeed, without some kind of controversy, there is no real news.

If a toddler falls down in her backyard, that's not news. But if that same toddler falls down an abandoned oil shaft, and the local emergency crews spend two days digging her out, now it's national news.



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Most PR specialists make sure they include the Five Ws and the H in every news release. Most are careful to portray their clients or companies in a favorable light. But you can accomplish all of this with advertising. If you want publicity, if you want to attract a reporter's attention, then you must add controversy. And you must directly connect your company, its product, or its service in some way to that controversy.

Now many intelligent, well-meaning executives will shudder at the idea of allowing their companies to be associated with a controversy. After all, doesn't a controversy mean "negative news?" Not necessarily. The key is to position your company as the solution to the controversy, not as the cause. Do that, and your company becomes a hero while someone else or something else becomes the villain.

Basically, it's the difference between a mortar shell and a skyrocket. Both are made from explosives. But a mortar shell will destroy a building. A skyrocket will light up the night with beauty and wonder. It's all in how you package the ingredients.

The same holds true with controversy. **Package it badly, and it will blow up in your face. Package it expertly, and you'll draw applause.**

3.2. Employee Relations

A company's employees are more than just a means to a profitable year. They mean more to a company than just a computer-generated page full of personnel expenses that can be juggled to meet quarterly goals as management sees fit.

A business organization can be described in many ways; let's look at it in terms of human physiology. The following list is for you to get the idea:

- **Management** serves as an organization's **central nervous system**. It creates the intelligence, the strategy and the tactics, and communicates it throughout the organization.
- **Financial capital** is the company's **lifeblood**. It keeps things moving smoothly. It creates products that bring in nourishment to the organization and its various component parts.
- **Employees** are its **vital organs**. If there is nothing or no one to produce products and services, then the best ideas, the best strategies will wither and die in the organization.

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Management, capital and employees. Which is the most important? Management? No organization can survive without sound business strategy. Capital? No business can survive without positive cash flow. Employees? No company can survive unless someone does the work. So which is most important?

All three are equally important. All three present unique challenges to an organization's success. Why then, are employees generally given short shrift when it comes time to downsize, to re-engineer?

Employees represent the largest and most important investment a company can make. Look at a company's list of expenses. Wages and salaries are right up there at the top. Therefore, doesn't it make sense that responsible management should do everything it can to nurture and protect its investment?

By virtue of their function, employees are a company's most important public. They are stakeholders in every sense of the word. The quality of their work, the depth of their commitment, the pride they hold for the company -- these all earn them the right to know, and help determine, the destiny assigned to them by management. When a company needs to communicate, it should communicate first with its employees.

The public relations profession should participate in this two-way communication, this inter-relationship between management and employees. We have a responsibility to do so, because we have consciously and with considerable forethought accepted the roles of counselor, facilitator and mediator. We have laid claim to this turf, so we'd better put our money where our mouth is.

What is the ultimate behavior we expect our audiences to exhibit when we communicate with them? How can we tailor our delivery to ensure that the message is presented at a time when it will be most optimally accepted? We need to prove our value in employee relations strategy. The stakes are higher there. And honestly **we owe it** to the employees.

Here's an example of how to think strategically so employees benefit:

1. **Observation:** Employee turnover is horrendous. We're losing all of our young talent too early in their careers. What are we doing wrong?
2. **Supposition:** The young people are being lured away by competitors, with promises of a more prestigious title, increased responsibility and more money.

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3. **Validation:** How do we know this? They're telling us in their exit interviews.
4. **Conscious Decision:** We need to find a way to intercept their thought process before they decide to leave.
5. **Strategy:** Talk to them continuously from the moment they join the organization. Ask questions of ourselves, and of them. What are they looking for in a career? What will keep them with the company? How can we help them achieve their personal and career goals?
6. **Tactic:** Create a mentor-protégé program. Assign a seasoned professional to serve as guidance counselor, sounding board, a shoulder to lean on, confidant, and someone on whom the young employee can vent his or her frustrations.
7. **Result:** Over time, we will learn what the problems are. Only when we know what they are, can we fix them.

Responsible employee relations go beyond the traditional suggestion boxes, newsletters, memoranda, exit interviews, work stoppages, and rewards and recognition.

To be sure, these aspects of employee relations are vital and should not be discarded. It's just that someone else can do some of this work -- HR departments, freelancers -- especially in these difficult times of downsizing and re-engineering. Companies cannot continue their traditional paternal existence. Maybe sometime in the future, but for now, times are tough. You can do more for your employees there than you can by writing about them in the employee newsletter or publicizing their promotions in the local newspaper.

Since employee requirements are no different from the normal human requirements, a company that meets its employees even halfway is sure to generate.

Some basic guidelines on Effective Communication with employees:

- Do the right thing, then earn awareness and understanding of your actions
- Make supervision people the main channel of employee communication
- Give bad as well as good news
- Use simple language
- Have definite reasons for communicating, whether the issue involved is short or long-range
- Provide for two way communication

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- Know and reach the worker's family
- Find out what employees want to know and, as fully and frankly as possible, give them answers
- Emphasize events of significance to employees
- Employ the best possible communications tools; use several for conveying major messages

3.3. The News Release

A press release is a written statement distributed to the media. It is a fundamental tool of public relations. Press releases are usually communicated by a newswire service to various news media and journalists may use them as they see fit. Very often the information in a press release finds its way verbatim, or minimally altered, to print and broadcast reports. If a media outlet reports that "John Smith said in a statement today that...", the "statement" usually originated in a press release, or a direct quote from an interview with a John Smith.

The text of a release is usually but not always written in the style of a news story, with an eye-catching headline and text written standard journalistic inverted pyramid style. This style of news writing makes it easier for reporters to quickly grasp the message. Journalists are free to use the information verbatim, or alter it as they see fit. PR practitioners research and write releases that encourage as much "lifting" as possible.

Many journalists believe it is unethical to copy from a press release—they believe it is a lapse of good judgment for instance, a direct quote, as in: *Senator Smith said, "This is the most fiscally irresponsible bill that the Congress has passed since the Buy Everyone A Mercedes Act."* In this case, a journalist may copy the quote verbatim into the story, although ethical reporters prefer to try soliciting an individual quote from the speaker before filing their story. Public relations professionals believe that press releases and other collateral material aid a journalist's job, and it is the job of the journalist to decide whether or not reprinting material verbatim tells the real story.

Since press releases reflect their issuer's preferred interpretation or positive packaging of a story, journalists are often skeptical of their contents. The level of skepticism depends on what the story is and who's telling it. Newsrooms receive so

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many press releases that, unless it is a story that the media are already paying attention to, a press release alone often isn't enough to catch a journalist's attention.

With the advent of modern electronic media and new technology, press releases now have equivalents in these media video and audio news releases. However, many television stations are hesitant to use press releases that appear canned and are not newsworthy. Most press releases today are optimized for internet release, given the immediacy of communication the medium allows. Many companies are also beginning to use 'social media releases', a next-generation press release format distinctive for tying together various copy elements e.g., headline, key messages, quotes, multimedia elements and social sharing options e.g., social bookmarks, web feeds in one place. This enables the journalist or anyone else) to view easily and/or “re-mix” story elements and share the story with others.

Writing a press release is, not too different from writing any other document. We are going to discuss the content of your press release and how it should be formatted. Certain rules must be followed to ensure that you are including all the necessary information. In addition, it must be laid out in a manner that will not negatively affect the reader's interpretation.

In order to write a press release, you must determine the subject of your story. It can be about an event that affects your industry, or it can be about a change in your company that will affect your customer base. Whatever you choose to be your story, you must remember to cover the basics. Your press release must always tell who, what, where, when, and why.

A mistake that is often made in the development of a press release is the misunderstanding that a press release is an advertisement. It must be understood that, even though a press release can assist your company in acquiring customers, it should not be your focus. The primary purpose of your press release is to deliver a newsworthy story about your company to the reader.

Once you have answered the important questions, it is time to begin writing. Like any other paper, you should always start off with your thesis. Your thesis is the purpose for why you are writing the press release. Make sure that you express this thought in a manner that is of interest to your prospective reader. Readers are very picky; if they do not see relevance in your press release immediately, they will discard it.

3.3.1. The Layout for your News Release:

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First, open with a **strong headline** to grab the reader's attention. The headline along with your opening paragraph should tell a gripping story. This is essential to keeping the reader's interest as they read through the detail section of the release that follows.

Second, stick to the **facts**. Make it **interesting**, but avoid embellishments. Also, when giving the details of your press release, be sure to **illustrate the story** to your reader. Use real life examples that they will be able to relate to or visualize.

Next, **select an appropriate angle** for your press release. By this I mean, try to make it relevant. Keep in mind what's going on with social issues and current events and sculpt your press release accordingly. This will make your story even more attractive and worthwhile to potential readers.

Finally, **be concise and grammatically correct**. Avoid adding extra fluff words that distract from the true meaning of your press release. Don't include clichés and jargon that may not be understood by the general reader. Make sure that you have permission to use any quotes or inside information. This will prevent there being any conflicts that may result in your press release being pulled. Be sure to check you release for punctuation and grammatical errors. Take a look at some other press releases to make sure that you have followed the proper format.

How to write your own News Releases

1. Make sure the information is newsworthy.
2. Tell the audience that the information is intended for them and why they should continue to read it.
3. Start with a brief description of the news, and then distinguish who announced it, and not the other way around.
4. Ask yourself, "How are people going to relate to this and will they be able to connect?"
5. Make sure the first 10 words of your release are effective, as they are the most important.
6. Avoid excessive use of adjectives and fancy language.
7. Deal with the facts.
8. Provide as much Contact information as possible: Individual to Contact, address, phone, fax, email, and Web site address.
9. Make sure you wait until you have something with enough substance to issue a release.
10. Make it as easy as possible for media representatives to do their jobs.

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A Press Release is used in different ways:

1. As a general news story for local newspaper and/or radio and/or television
2. As the basis for a feature story, perhaps in combination with a ‘back grounder’ release. The news release, once received, may be handed to the features editor who will be expected to investigate the story further and develop a longer article to appear at a later date.
3. As the basis for press conferences. These are held only to discuss controversial matters or to make special announcements, and consist of single meetings of the media with your organization’s spokesperson. Don’t organize them unless they are absolutely necessary; press conferences are the ulcer-inducing part of a PRO’s life.
4. As the basis for a media event. Non-controversial yet newsworthy happenings can become the subject of a media event; for example a special function organized solely to obtain publicity, such as company celebrations or milestones or anniversaries. Unless you bring these events to the media’s attention they will most likely go unnoticed.
5. As the basis for a face-to-face interview. A personal interview between a journalist/broadcaster, the PRO and someone from your company will probably have been set up by you. Alternatively, as a result of you release the editor may have decided that a journalist should conduct a personal interview to discuss the release in more detail.

Developing a rapport with members of the media is the first step in establishing an effective public relations programme. The time spent gaining mutual trust and respect is your investment in future favorable publicity. If you know your media, you will know who is most likely to be interested in the story.

3.4. Role of Photography in PR

One photograph, it is said, can be worth a thousand words. While the claim may sound something of an exaggeration, there is no denying the tremendous PR value of photographs. **Photographs stimulate interest.** Editors position photographs in their publications to give visual impact.

PR professionals quite rightly, often spend hours of time working on ‘**photo opportunities**’. Why? Because readers almost always notice photos, and that means the caption and accompanying articles stand a better chance of being read; even if they merit only a cursory glance, you have gained more attention value than



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you would have done with a printed story alone. Do not, however, get carried away. Study the photographs used in your local media or in the nationals and you will see that very seldom do they blatantly ‘**plug**’ a product that is left to the trade press. The photo idea must involve more than just an opportunity for you to plug your product. The skill is being able to incorporate the product either by the photo telling the whole story or the photo stimulating the recipient to read on.

If you are supplying the photographs remember to check whether the publication requires black-and-white, colour print or colour transparencies. For many years, colour reproduction in magazines required a colour transparency but nowadays-new printing technology is moving towards the colour print.

Remember, press photographers are under no obligation to turn up to your photo call-the pictures/news desk may put them on a potentially better story at the last moment- so you must always have your own photographer present. Your own photographer should be one of the first people you consult regarding, a photo-call. Ask them how they would present the event photographically, discuss options and props. After all, they will know your product and the image you wish to project. They can advise you on the technical side of the photographic session; also your photographer can take the shots you want-the press may not.

If for any reason there is a safety aspect to the venue, then be sure to hold a briefing session, both with your colleagues and invited journalists/photographers to this effect prior to the taking of any photographs.

However, placing a photo in a newspaper or magazine is difficult for several reasons. First, most newspapers employing a photographic staff want to take their own pictures. The few non-staff photos used include agency wire shots (from AP, UPI, etc), ‘mug shots’ of executives in the business pages and rarely- a publicity photo set up by a corporate PR department or PR consultancy. Enquire of those journalists turning up without their staff photographer if your own photographer can take an exclusive shot for their publication.

Then there is the lack of space. Photographic space is even more at a premium than space for words and there is considerable competition for it, so it is essential to use creative thinking if you hope to interest a newspaper in accepting and publishing one of your pictures, or sending their own staff photographer to take a picture.

Here are some tips to help you gain the most out of **Photo opportunities**:



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- The idea has to be good. Some stories have natural visual aspects, and the job of a good PR person is to bring these to the attention of a reporter or editor. As in all aspects of PR, don't waste the media's time.
- Planning is **essential**. You might have to create both a photo opportunity and convince people in your organization that photos are worth their time and trouble. You may find yourself having to carry heavy props to a site convenient for a photographer. Sometimes, the photographer's schedule will not match your chairperson's schedule, so diplomacy and patience will be needed to achieve what you want.
- Dreaming up photo possibilities is more difficult than you imagine. Don't be too blinkered. Be sure to involve the person in charge of the project and if necessary 'brainstorm' ideas: have everyone submit suggestions while you note them. What you want are the unusual, or the incongruous, visual ideas. Prepare props in advance.
- It is also important to treat the photographer on an equal footing with a journalist: introduce them to the chairperson, guest of honour, etc. often the photographs of the PR event are 'for the record', and no more. A good photographer will have special 'exclusive' requirements from your event; pay attention to them. A positive move is to meet with your local newspaper or trade photographer and have a general discussion on how to help get the best out of your PR event. Find out what sort of picture they will run with.
- Even if you have all the press turning out, you must still have the first photo planned. If it is good, the photographers will expand on the idea, otherwise they will quickly shoot it before moving on to their own ideas. A useful rule is to ensure your 'cast' is doing something: an action photograph is far better than a static photograph.

Finally, remember that photographers attend PR events every day of the week, every week of the year. **The more you plan and prepare the shoot, including providing props, the more co-operation you will get from the photographers who will then be fighting on your side to get the photo used by their picture editors.**

What sort of photograph will editors use?

- Ask them
- News value and exclusivity will appeal to any editor
- Check back-issues
- Keep group small: two or three, four at the most, if they have to be named



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- People: come in close; faces matter, even if the background is important
- An action photograph, with props or products. People doing something
- Avoid cluttered background
- Fill the whole picture area; draw a sketch beforehand if necessary
- Colour: strong colours reds and yellows stand out
- Fun or ‘unusual poses’ shots
- Crisp, sharp-professional-photographs
- Good head-and-shoulders, shadow less white background
- Pictures that arrive on time

3.5. Importance of Marketing Research for the PR practitioner

It is absolutely no use trying to implement a PR plan unless you know the market for which you are catering and the market you are out to satisfy. PR efforts should be directed at the traveling salespersons who do not already know of your organization’s existence and the facilities it can offer them.

This can be done through magazines devoted to the sales and marketing sectors of the community, and through the business/commerce columns of national newspapers.

It could be, on the other hand, that while occupancy rates at your organization during the week are excellent, the place practically ‘dies’ at the weekends when the business guest are not around.

Once you have established the market you want your PR to reach, it is important to appraise your products honestly, and determine its strengths and weaknesses- in particular any USP Unique selling points. Very few aspects of life, of course, are unique, but if you take a good, long look at your product you should be able to come up with some plus points that distinguish it from the competition.

Having determined the market you are seeking and the USPs you believe should do the trick; make yourself familiar with the media which could be useful to you, whether it be business press, sales/marketing magazines, local radio, women’s magazines or whatever. The reference section of your library will have directories giving not only complete listings of the media but circulation figures, copy deadlines and the like.

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Step two is to create a PR angle that is likely to interest the targeted media, based on your product's USP. If for example, the best thing about a hotel is its restaurant, in which you are employing, at vast expense, a very bright and innovative young chef, your target media will be not only your local newspapers and radio stations, to encourage more local diners, but also specialist food writers from national media, particularly the up-market magazines. Getting your restaurant mentioned in good publication can ensure its success for years.

So how do you create a PR that might interest the media in your restaurant? Simply inviting a representative of the target media to come and sample a meal is not enough, indeed, since food writers are inundated with invitations to try the thousands of new restaurants constantly springing up in all parts of the country, an initiation from you, unless given the PR treatment, is quite likely to fall by the wayside. The answer is to make the restaurant seem excitingly different, either in ambience or food, or preferably, both.

PR done skillfully is an expensive and time-consuming practice, but one, which can, and does, produce excellent results. There is absolutely no reason that the basic PR principles cannot be applied by business organizations. PR is basically a matter of common sense, doing your homework, and being realistic about what you hope to achieve, and how you are going to achieve it.

3.6. PR as distinguished from Marketing, Sales Promotion & Advertising

Publicity

Publicity and public relations are terms that are used interchangeably by most professionals in the marketing communications industry today.

But a leading publisher of advertising and public relations publications provides the following PR definitions:

Publicity noun - published information regarding a person, corporation, product/service, and related facts that is published in the media as a result of a media relations effort conducted by a public relations firm or publicity agent.

Public Relations - activities of persons or organizations intended to promote understanding of and good will toward themselves or their products or services.

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Press Release - a news release that is written by PR professionals on behalf of their client which contains the official messages communicated through the marketing communications process.

Public relations are often confused with publicity, which in simple terms mean making things public or bringing things to the public notice. Many tools including word of mouth to the mass media to advertising to the Internet are used for publicizing information. However, publicity is only one part of public relations.

Many marketing experts put public relations under publicity. Thus, publicity is an important part of public relation. Many tools are used for publicizing information and facts. The major and most effective ones are the mass media. **Publicity coverage could be in the form of news stories, news analyses, interviews, features, articles, and editorials in printed media and in news bulletins, interviews, discussions or special programmes on radio and television.**

Another form of publicity is the paid variety. This basically involves advertising for which the organization has to pay to the media for the amount of space and time. Yet another variety involves what are called *advertorials*. An advertorial is an advertisement disguised in to form of a news story or feature.

Unpaid publicity is considered to be more credible than paid publicity. The paid variety of publicity advertising being initiated by the organization is considered to be motivated and one-sided. On the other hand, unpaid publicity, which includes news stories and other editorial content, has more credibility and believability.

Many experts consider advertising to be entirely different and not part of publicity. Advertising is paid-for and involves control over what is said, how it is said, to whom it is said, where it is published, broadcast or placed, and the frequency of placement. Publicity or the unpaid variety does not offer any such control. Publicity material supplied to the media is subject to being screened, edited and even may not even be used.

On the plus side, publicity offers two important benefits:

1. It costs very little-only time and efforts are required, and
2. Publicity is considered more objective than advertising, which is considered to be self-serving. Also publicity enjoys the implicit endorsement of the mass media in which it appears.



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Areas of Publicity: The areas and activities of business that are publicized are:

Announcing a new product or service

Such announcements to be effective should be made before advertising. If they follow advertising, their news value is lessened considerably.

Reorganizing or repositioning old products

In case of existing products, advertising does not work very well. For revitalizing old products, various publicity tools like staged events, sponsorship, etc are used.

Explaining a complicated product

Advertisements often do not facilitate a lot of details. So they don't work well for products and services that require a lot of explanation like in case of insurance, banks and other financial institutions. Here publicity provides enough space for the details and the product stories messages can be told fully and effectively.

Enhancing the organization's reputation

Advertising of products goods, services and ideas, etc) is okay. But when it comes to selling the organization as a whole, advertising can be limiting. Often organizations are involved with a lot of philanthropic works like charities or promoting good causes and ideas. Advertising these activities does not look good. So organizations depend on publicity through mass media.

Crisis management

In crisis situations, publicity is the fastest and most credible means of response.

3.7. VEHICLES OF PUBLICITY

From small tabloids to television to sky writing, publicity uses many channels or vehicles. However, the most effective and commonly used vehicle is the newspaper. Even in today's time of TV and the Internet, newspaper is rated to be the most credible and effective mass medium. This credibility is because of the power of the printed word. Other reasons of newspaper's popularity as a vehicle of publicity are the widely diversified and in-depth coverage. Then there is variety. Newspapers range from small weeklies to giant dailies.

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Other vehicles used for publicity include radio, TV, news agencies, the Internet. Publicity also involves interviews of key personnel of the organization, news conferences, news releases, media trips, special events, exhibitions and fairs, sponsorships, etc.

**Don't leave
your public relations
to chance**



Advertising is just not for information, but for a purpose. This purpose is to motivate a desired action. People use advertising to achieve a variety of objectives. The broad functions are to inform, educate, and persuade. The subsidiary functions are to create awareness, change attitudes and generally to gain acceptability. In case of product and service advertising, the objective is to inform the consumers and generate demand. Institutional and ideas advertising are designed to create a favorable attitude and acceptability. Thus, the functions/roles/purposes of advertising are many:

1. **Marketing-** Marketing is the strategic process in business that is used to satisfy consumer needs and wants through goods and services, to reach its target audiences, marketing use many tools of promotion. Also known as marketing communication, these tools include personal selling, sales promotion, public relations and of course, advertising. Advertising is the most widely used and most visible of promotional tools in marketing.



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2. **Communication-** Advertising is a commercial form of mass communication. It transmits different types of marketing information and tries to match buyers and sellers in the market place. Advertising not only informs prospective buyers, it also transforms the product by creating a personality for it. Using visuals, words, music, drama and lot of other things, advertising creates an image for the product that goes beyond mere facts.
3. **Economic role-** Advertising play an important role in the economy by helping the society to achieve abundance by informing and persuading people about products, services and goods. Advertising assists in the development of judgment on the part of consumers in their purchase practices. Simply put, advertising helps consumers make informed buyers decisions. Others believe that advertising is a source of information that increases the price sensitivity and stimulates competition.
4. **Social role-** Advertising plays a number of social roles. It informs us about new and improved products. Sometimes it tells us how to use certain products. It also helps us compare products and services.
5. **Improve sales-** Advertising can also be for winning back the lost consumers, by announcing some improvements, new schemes, attractive packages, or better quality of the product or services. It might be necessary to reduce prices to hold on the consumers against competition.
6. **Provide satisfaction-** A consumer buys a product or service for the satisfaction it provides. The interest is not in the product or service for itself, but in the satisfaction it provides. It can be psychological too. If one buys a soap which is advertised as the beauty soap of the stars, one knows very well that one cannot become a film star by using the soap or even acquire the complexion of the film star. The psychological satisfaction is of the self-delusion that one uses the same toilet soap as a film star.
7. **Sells Lifestyle-** Advertising also sells lifestyle. This is very true of the advertisements of such products as pressure cookers or gas stoves. These might be described as conveniences products. Thus, advertising creates demands for the new products and hence creates a lifestyle.
8. **Provide Employment-** Without advertising, products and services could not be sold in sufficient quantities. Without sales, factories would close down



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causing unemployment. Thus advertising stimulates economy by providing employments to many people.

9. **Revenue for Media**-It is true that newspapers, periodicals and even the electronic media depend on advertising as a major source of revenue.
10. **Influences Public Opinion**-Advertising today has become a very powerful instrument for motivating public opinion and action. That is why it is used for political campaigns as well.

Sales Promotion

Products and services need to be promoted. In the present era of cutthroat competition and consumer awareness, no business enterprise can sell its products unless the products are made known to the customers. The various techniques, methods and strategies adopted to familiarize products and services are known as **sales promotion**.

The objectives of sales Promotion are:

1. To introduce or launch new products
2. To induce new customers
3. Accelerate sales during off season
4. Creating goodwill amongst customers
5. Creating favorable image of products
6. Creating demand for the products

Sales Promotion Methods

1. Price-off offer: 10% or 20% off on purchase of goods. Price-off are generally allowed during off seasons
2. Free- sample: customers are given free sample to use and consider buying the product and services.
3. Gift-schemes on purchase
4. Lucky Coupons
5. Discount Coupons
6. Contest on purchase
7. Stamps: stamps are issued to the customers of each purchase; say 1% of the purchase value. After the stamps are collected for an amount of say Rs.100, the same may be exchanged for any product for the value of the stamps.



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8. Displayed Goods: are tastefully decorated and displayed in the display windows of showrooms
9. Fairs and Exhibitions
10. Clearance Sale

Need of Sales Promotion

1. To create awareness
2. To update and educate customers
3. To induce customers
4. To improve sales
5. To establish product
6. To create place and image for the products
7. To differentiate products

'Tricks of the trade' Remember 'AIDA' - Attention Interest Desire Action

Advertising and Promotion

Here are some guidelines on planning and managing advertising and promotion activities for small businesses. The principles are obviously transferable to very large businesses.

Availability of mix of methods

Advertising is a complex business and an ever-changing science. New ideas and media uses are being devised all the time, and as the advertising industry switches emphasis from media to media, and as new technologies and lifestyle trends develop, so new advertising and promotional methods need assessing and comparing with traditional available methods as to which is more or less cost-effective for your given purposes. For example through the 1980's and 1990's there was a huge trend towards direct mail junk mail, which seems to show no signs of abating - many very large consumer brands switched significant advertising spending into direct mail, often switching away from TV.

TV on the other hand is increasingly attractive to small local businesses. Loyalty schemes demonstrated significant success rates through the 1990's through to present times. Internet advertising is arguably now more popular than radio advertising - the importance of websites and Internet listings are very significant now for small local businesses just as much as larger corporations. 'Viral marketing' exploiting electronic communications and the 'word of mouth' instinct



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is an example of a new method of advertising that simply never existed until about the mid-1990's. Advertising methods change with lifestyle and technology

Choose methods according to cost, targeting and response

Any campaign can be broken down in terms of cost per thousand, and if you are seeking a direct response, it should be monitored according to cost per response and also cost per conversion. Advertising cost per thousand includes cost of origination design, production printing if relevant and media such as local radio, display advert, list procurement and postal fulfillment. Generally you will pay a higher cost per thousand for better-targeted methods, but in return you should expect a higher response rate, so the cost per response can be lower than cheaper methods.

Choose advertising and publicity methods that suit your targeting. Organizations selling advertising are able to provide a lot of information about their readership/audience, and you can look at other advertisers that repeatedly using various media to gauge how effectively it's working for them, which will provide some clues as to how well it might work for you. Are they targeting the same audience as you?

UNIT 4. TOOLS OF PR

PR also involves all the things we do to build a connection with people. **You do PR every day, through your actions, your attitude, your words, and your reputation.**

When we talk of PR tools, these are nothing but the means, media, and practices PR persons use to communicate with public. And a PR person's communication is not only confined to the conventional communication, but it is done through spoken words, written words, audio cassettes or video cassettes, exhibition, etc. these also include actions, activities, incentives, etc.

4.1. Communicating with the employees

The main purposes of employee communication are:



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- To keep them informed about the developments through circulars, notices, briefings, etc
- To keep the communication effective so that the employees develop a sense of belongingness

Thus, this communication needs to be very honest, and must make the employees feel that the organization belongs to them. It is essential that an average employee should develop a feeling that his services are also honored in the organization.

Circular: the most conventional communication channel for employee communication is the circular. Office authorities issue circulars from time to time. Even if circulars are basically official still the language can be warm. These circulars provide instructions, which have some urgency. Each circular should be properly dated and numbered so that it can be traced easily.

Posters: they have a unique advantage as the message on a poster gets repeated as the audience sees it again and again. Also they are capable of stirring the desired emotion of the employees.

Notice Boards: they are the common tools of an organization where the office displays the notices for its employees. Employees normally at least glance through the notice board. This way it becomes a useful tool in reaching the employees. Lengthy notices should be avoided because employees by nature do not spend more time in front of the notice board.

Periodicals: newsletters, newspapers, magazines, or several other types of different periodical publications are used as a tool of communication. The number of such periodicals, their types, etc varies considerably depending on the size of the organization and the funds available.

House Journal: a house journal is a very effective tool of employee relations. A good house journal is always a complementary to the efforts of the public relations department. A house journal reflects professionalism of a PR department and mirrors the entire philosophy of the organization. House journal is a publication of the organization for internal circulation and is made a platform for its employees to:

- Ventilate the views of the employees
- Highlight their suggestions
- Accommodate their and their family members literary skill

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- Publish about the talents among the employees by which they get due recognition
- Facilitate two way communication among the authority and the employees
- Introduce columns which demands lot of participation from its audiences employees

Normally, house journals carry the viewpoint of the top management. The pages are filled with the speeches and photographs of the top brass of the organization.

A house journal should also be a storehouse of all the information about the organization. This way the house journal can provide all the relevant information to the employees.

Audio-video programmes: in case the people in authority want to speak something to the employees they can talk to the camera and the cassette can be played before the employees. Video production has become more common, in organizations and the basic philosophy is that the employees must get a feeling that they are in touch with the developments of the organization they are serving.

Meetings and briefings: regular personal meetings of the authority with the employees solve many problems, which no other tool can achieve. Hence the PR departments organize regular administrative meetings and briefings. Many organizations celebrate annual day and other such occasions where the employees with their families participate and different awards are given recognizing the talents of the employees.

4.2 Communication with Investors

People invest money in a company in form of shares. There are two types of shareholders, first being the institutional investors and the other is an individual. These institutional normally collect money from different individuals in the form of savings, which they invest in a company. So these investors are very important public. The primary job of the PR department is to communicate effectively with its investor's explaining the background in order to attract understanding and maintain the organization's credibility. It is also important that this understanding should extend to ensuring that the audience appreciates what is being done and why. Because sometimes even successful businesses are not always fully appreciated, so openness should always be maintained to appreciate the investors regarding its strengths.



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In these days of image orientation, companies always try to remain in the news. Time to time they make major announcements about acquisition or disposal, changes in major shareholders, rights issues, and whenever there is a major change at board level. Again, throughout the year, except during the closing periods, the directors, meet the media, analysts, and institutional investors to discuss the progress of the organization.

Annual general meetings: they give proper opportunity of talking about the future. In the annual general body meeting, an investor, however small his holding might be, gets a chance to ask questions and meet the directors of the company.

Newsletters: this is another medium to keep the investors and of course the analysts and financial journalists who write for different financial journals and newspapers abreast of developments. Newsletters need not carry all the financial information or documents. However, it can update readers on new products, major investments, etc.

Visits: these are always very effective tool of communication. To make a person appraise of the prosperity or development of a company, he should be given an opportunity to assess it for himself. To get a better deal from the analysts and financial journalists they should be taken for a visit to the premises of the company.

Communicating with the Media

Again most of the public gets information about the company through media. Thus, in most instances it is through the media that the message is channelized to the ultimate target audiences.

4.3. PRESS RELATION & ITS PRINCIPLES

Communicating with the Media Media Relations

Communication with the press is very important. It is the media through which people forms an opinion about a company. Again most of the public gets information about the company through media. Thus, in most instances it is through the media that the message is channelized to the ultimate target audiences.

Research and planning: media relations begin with research. A PR practitioner has to answer questions like, what makes the firm's activities more interesting than



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its competitors. What is the company's expertise? Thus, a PR practitioner should know which of these possible elements would translate most effectively into a news story that will help achieve the overall communication goals. Once the PR practitioner is confident of the objectives of the programmes and the themes or ideas to be presented then the appropriate media is to be identified. Media directories are available. However, one needs to go beyond this. Care should be taken regarding stories that need to be dealt with some newspaper exclusively according to the geographical area or field of interest.

News Kit: it includes news release, glossy black and white photographs with identifying information attached to each print, color film clips or slides for television also clearly identified, color transparencies with suggested captions for magazines or newspapers that are printed in color.

Other things that should be included are maps, charts, graphs, speeches, biographical information on individuals mentioned in the news release, newsletters, company magazines, brochures, annual reports, list of sources to contact for additional information. Distribution itself is very important. It could be done during the press conference, or through regular mail, through special messengers or personal delivery by the PR practitioner himself.

Spokesperson: not all the people are gifted with that talent to deal effectively with the media. Not all can be comfortable with media. However, today it is a well-accepted practice for corporate spokespersons to receive special training in handling interviews and conferences. Such training is widely available from PR firms as well as from consultants who specialize in working with speakers and spokespersons.

Print Media: a PR man must pick up recent copies of the publications and study them, determine the editorial treatment they give, subjects emphasized who the editor is, how the publication treats photographs. It is very useful to have this kind of information in hand before approaching publications.

Putting Words to Paper: Press Releases, Media Alerts, Pitch Letters, and OpEds

Press releases give reporters everything they need to know to write a short news item. Media Alerts tell reporters about events and photo opportunities that are happening within the next 24 to 36 hours. A pitch letter introduces the press to a



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compelling person or fact and lets them know you are willing and able to help the press tell that story.

Op-Eds or bylined articles are the editorials or opinion articles you find in the main section of your local newspaper. When you have an opinion on something that affects respiratory care, you can send it to your paper's editorial board for consideration. If they believe your article is well thought-out, organized and your opinions are backed up by facts or logical conclusions, they may print it.

Electronic Media: television and radio are the most influential medium. In dealing with television, public relations practitioners distinguish sharply between ideas for network television and those for local stations. Because television is a visual medium, it seeks out stories with visual impact. So while planning for television publicity, PR practitioners look for the story with dramatic or at the very least, interesting visual quality. Without something eye-catching, an idea has little chance of making it to the television screen.

The FM boom has helped radio regain its popularity. The primary opportunity for publicity in radio lies in the great number of talk shows that interview guests. Radio stations cover a wide variety of interests like business, general news, entertainment, and hobbies.

There are several ways to reach the media. These include:

Press Release: A press release also called a news release) is a document issued to

A good marketing strategy is like a fine cocktail. It is the perfect mix of several discrete components, but all in the right balance to give that desired effect. Press Releases are one such powerful component, which when used in the right balance can do wonders for your business. Through careful study and research we have come to the conclusion that press releases today are being given nothing less than a step-motherly treatment. "Everyone issues press releases but why are only a few highlighted?" The answer is quite simple. It has nothing to do with your press release but definitely something to do with the way it is managed and delivered. One needs to give the press release that extra edge and make sure that it translates into real time business returns. The mantra here is simplicity. Have specifically designed press releases to make accessing and publishing press releases as simple as possible.

the media, financial community, trade and industry analysts, investors, and

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consumers to announce a product, partnership, acquisition, event, personnel announcement, or other newsworthy item. Public companies issue press releases to the financial community when they need to disclose "material" information simultaneously. Editors, reporters, and journalists depend on press releases to alert them to unique products, trends and changes in the business landscape. Press releases, normally written by a company's public relations professional or by a company's public relations firm, are delivered to journalists and analysts for review. If the journalist or analyst finds the announcement of value they may contact the company for more details and/or an interview. This may result in the company being mentioned in an article or broadcast.

For an announcement to be considered newsworthy it must have a broad, general interest to the target audience and a strong news angle e.g. material information, new development, drama, human interest, local angle, consequence, etc.. In addition, your release needs to be written in a journalistic rather than marketing style. It should be objectively written as though a reporter were writing the story for you. Most importantly, your release needs to "inform" people, not just sell them something.

In most cases your headline is the first thing an editor sees when reviewing your release. An effective headline can make a difference between an editor covering your story or hitting the delete button. To create an effective headline considers the following pointers:

- Limit your headline to no more than one line. Many newsrooms have a limit on how many characters they can receive in a headline and their systems are programmed to "bounce out" releases that exceed this limit.
- The headline should provide an editor with a tantalizing snapshot of what the press release is about. This is critical as many journalists view releases over their wire system by headline only, then pick and choose when they want to view the full text of the release.
- The headline should include the name of the company issuing the release.
- Do not include the terms "Company", "Incorporated" or "Limited" or their abbreviations unless they are necessary to clearly identify the organization, i.e. Tandy Corporation vs. Tandy Brands.
- Do not use exclamation points or dollar signs.
- Attribute critical, controversial, or judgmental statements.



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A press release can be used to announce a variety of information. Consider the following examples:

- New product
- Significant modification to an existing product
- Changes in corporate identity, such as company name or logo
- Joint venture
- Changes in corporate structure new division or subsidiary
- Corporate opinion on industry trends
- Features
- Events open houses, tradeshow involvement, speaking engagements, award ceremonies
- New funding
- Personnel changes
- Corporate philanthropy volunteer work, donations
- Hiring of agencies public relations, accounting, law firm
- New partner
- Significant new customer
- Media advisories
- Milestones customers served, years in business
- Round of funding received by the company
- Increase in market share or revenue

Interview: When the subject matter is important enough, when questions that must be answered by an authority, or when publicity for an individual is the goal, interviews are necessary.

Press conference: It is in the press conferences, that a number of media representatives cover an event or an announcement as it is reserved for especially newsworthy events. While deciding the news conferences the PR men must ask if the information can be disseminated as effectively in any other way. If the answers are truly no, then only a news conference is in order. A basic checklist of activities includes site selection, refreshments, audiovisual equipments, speeches, invitations, media lists, dates, confirmation calls, press materials, and staffing.

Meeting the Editors: sometimes meeting with the editors gives the spokesperson an opportunity to influence future editorial opinion and to provide editors with solid background information. Such meeting usually does not generate immediate media coverage nor are they expected to do so.

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Media Tours: they are effective ways to target a message to specific geographic markets. A lead-time of six to eight weeks should be allowed for the planning before a media tour. The spokesperson should be thoroughly rehearsed to deliver key messages. Also, the visits of media groups should be well planned and coordinated with meticulous detail. The PRO should be prepared to be present with the group at all times.

Case Histories: Case histories or success stories are often publicity stimulators, particularly for trade publications, whose readers are generally interested in how the companies in their industry have solved problems, initiated new sales or marketing strategies.

4.4. Press Event & organizing them

This is an informal gathering of the media to cover an event staged by your company or organization, such as a celebration or anniversary, where, for example, local newspaper photographers are invited to capture the event. Invitations must be sent to news editors of local papers, radio and televisions, and it is also advisable to send an invitation to the picture editors of local newspapers since is they who control the staff photographers and decide which photographs will be used in the newspapers.

A news release should be given to all media, including the photographers, on their arrival. This should give details of the event, the organizers, and any other relevant information.

Giving the Media Something to Talk About!

Event Planning: Another option is to approach the promotions or community relations' directors at your local television and radio stations. You organize the event and they become the media sponsor for the event translation: they get to put their banner(s) up at the event and have their logo in any ads you get produced in exchange for promoting the event. With radio stations, that could get you on the air with their DJs, more radio spots than you would normally get and their physical presence at your event a DJs personal appearance or their promotions crew hanging out in a van with their giveaway items. Whatever you want to get out of a partner, always negotiate all the details up-front and have the agreement in writing.

When planning a local event you should:



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- Determine what you want to accomplish.
- Review the opportunities.
- Determine the news value.
- Determine costs, staffing/committee/volunteer workers, timing, and location.
- Develop a detailed schedule and task list of responsibilities.
- Appoint someone to handle publicity.
- Prepare news release/media alert.
- Make follow-up calls to media.
- Provide the media not attending with any post-event information, photos.

4.5. Internal PR

Internal PR is often as important as your external PR. The moral of employees and their exposure to company information can play an important part in productivity. An internal PR campaign include identifying training gaps, communicating with staff at all levels and ensuring every member of staff feels part of a forward thinking team.

PR is two directions oriented, internally and externally.

External PR: for outsiders that have a certain connection to the organization.

Internal PR: Organization and it's inside world, for activating people inside the network.

Spend some energy and time on those people and integrate them deeply. It means communication with possible new members and with your own local's members as well. This will help to strengthen the motivation factor, due to which members will act with more enthusiasm and efficiently; it is about activating people inside the organization.

Internal PR is needed both permanently and on special occasions crisis situations, events.

This kind of PR is:
- Information



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- Communication
- Motivation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Promotion

Define your target group well. It can be, members of your local or members of other antennae or even belonging to other association with whom there are collaborations set. If you want to reach easily and really the target group, you must know what you want to say and achieve. Don't forget, be clear and always to the point. Draw the matter shortly and simply. Remember the 3 general indispensable factors of the message you want to relay to your members.

It has to be: - Positive
- Creative
- Attractive

And always adapt to your target group!

He/she can be the PR responsible of your local, or the HR responsible, local of the organization, the president or the secretary. The choice is yours, but this field is too important, so keep it in mind.

Take into account what might interest the new members.

Reach them through different communication channels, use "media-mix" posters, flyers, web-site, social meetings, presentations, personal contact, gazette, etc).

Local mailing list: There is no better and faster way of communication nowadays than e-mail. Almost every student uses e-mail at least weekly. Use your mailing list to inform your members about: coming events both local and national lever, activity report of the board/local, activity plans, personal experiences, summary of statutory events...etc. So, set up a yahoo mailing list for your members www.yahoo.com and offer the new members the possibility of subscription to the list, it will keep them updated about the activities and topics you discuss.

Newsletters: The best channel is the local mailing list, but leaves several copies in your office. Don't forget this is directly addressed to the members and prompts



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them to take part in the activities. **The language can be rather informal and catchy, but it's better to follow some rules of journalism:**

- The most important comes first and only then the less important
- Use short sentences and active voice instead of passive
- Put names and phone numbers italics
- Put keywords into bold character
- Small jokes or allusions, gossips are welcomed
- Mention when and where your regular meeting takes place
- Antenna's web page address and contact information are needed
- Decide how often the newsletter is going to be issued
- Apart from local activities give some info about organization activities, events
- You should also report the most important results of statutory meetings
- If some members have participated in an event, you may ask them to write something about their experiences.

Information meetings with your members: perfect opportunity to discuss personally with your local's members. You can discuss about activities you do, future plans and you can hand out some nice flyers especially for the newcomers - they like to browse through it during the meetings - even more successful are the PP presentations, if the technical equipment allows you. Don't forget always the best approach is the personal dialogue, take your time and explain everything what they want to know and try to answer all their questions.

Information board: It looks great and professional. Print various notices for your members, memos, calendar of events, postcards from different countries, and flyers of different conferences/events. for example cre ate a brochure for the travelogs, the personal experiences are always welcome). Don't forget; always keep the board and the notices updated!!

4.6. EXHIBITION PR

It doesn't matter what business you are in or what size of business you have, if you are an exhibitor at a trade show, you will all have one thing in common – an eye watering appreciation of the costs involved.



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Stand space, stand design and build, the get in and get out, staff and accommodation costs, sales staff not on the road selling. It's enough to have the Financial Director Reaching for the gallium.

However, with a little forward planning you can make the event work for you in terms of maximizing your attendance, attracting potential customers to your stand and raising the profile of your company. The key is, **harness the Public Relations opportunities and set them working for you.**

Successful exhibition PR is all about timing and your starting point should be the date of the exhibition, because you need to plan backwards. For example, if your exhibition is in June and your key industry magazine is monthly, then you need to be sending your exhibition press releases in April, because they will be working two months in advance.

PR activity around exhibitions falls neatly into two halves: your role and the role of the exhibition organizers. In terms of your role, let's start with the press pack. This should contain two or three newsworthy press releases. Don't forget to put the hall and your stand number on the front page of each release. Enclose good quality and interesting photography. Be creative, it will stand much more chance of being used if your new product shot has been taken from a creative angle. You might want to include biographical details of key personnel on the stand. Also, don't forget to put a label with details of how to find you on the pack itself.

Make sure that there is always someone on your stand who can speak to journalists about your company and the products you have on display. Tell the business editor of your local newspaper that you are going to the exhibition and send your quirky photograph and press release to them.

Here's how to make the exhibition work for you. Once you have your Exhibitor's manual, find out who has responsibility for co-ordinating PR on behalf of the organizer and make contact with them. Find out which magazines are supporting the exhibition and target them with press releases and invitations to visit you at your stand.

Ask for a list of journalists who have confirmed that they will be attending and make a point of introducing yourself to them. Check if the exhibition is going to have a daily newspaper – they are often produced by an industry magazine – and contact the editorial team. They will be hungry for stories particularly for the first edition, which will be produced before the show starts.



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Make sure that you are included in any exhibitor directories and that you are featured on the exhibition website.

Some very large international exhibitions will attract the attention of business television companies like CNBC or Reuters. Find them and keep in touch. The exhibition will have a Press Office, so make sure your press packs are on display – don't rely on Press Office staff to do this for you – it's your responsibility.

Visit the Press Office frequently to 'top up' the supply of press packs. Also, keep some packs on your stand just in case a stray journalist turns up. On Press Day usually the first day of the exhibition make sure that your key personnel are available and have someone hovering around the Press Office. Nothing is more frustrating than finding that an important journalist is somewhere in the exhibition or worse, that they have been and gone.

Once the exhibition is over, tell the media how successful it was for you. This is especially important if you have clinched an important deal, won an exhibition award or had influential visitors to your stand. And finally, many exhibitors feel that they are too small to be of interest to the media. This is a completely false impression. Journalists are always interested in small, exciting companies with interesting stories to tell.

4.7. PR in Developing countries

Developing countries has undergone one of the most drastic political changes of the late 20th century. Their tradition of public relations practice and education allows for the study of change on practice. Results indicate public relations become more important and strategic during times of change, and while affecting change it is also affected by change. Practitioners felt they made an important contribution to social upliftment and economic empowerment. The more democratic political environment forced practitioners to be more aware of important political constituencies, particularly community and grassroots publics who hold high symbolic value. Cross-cultural communication became more important due to PR practices.

SUMMARY

Public relations PR is the business, organizational, philanthropic, or social function of managing communication between an organization and its audiences.

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There are many goals to be achieved by the practice of public relations, including education, correcting a mistruth, or building or improving an image.

PR serve a wide variety of institutions in society such as business, trade unions, government agencies, voluntary agencies, foundations, religious institutions, hospitals. To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or 'publics' such as employees, members, consumers, local communities, other institutions and with society at large.

Publicity in Public Relations are goal-oriented or activities based on objectives. The objective of advertising are twofold, *i* as a marketing tool; *ii* as a means of persuasion.

When we talk of **PR tools**, these are nothing but the means, media, and practices PR persons use to communicate with public. And a PR person's communication is not only confined to the conventional communication, but it is done through spoken words, written words, audio cassettes or video cassettes, exhibition, etc. these also include actions, activities, incentives, etc.

Public relations officers have to work within and outside the organization. Within the concern they have to conduct management-employee meets, to inform organizations policies, activities and accomplishments. Outside he has to liaison with government departments, trade unions, press etc whose cooperation is required for the smooth functioning, and also have to manage complaints from the consumers, organized events like fairs, exhibitions etc. The work involves keeping management aware of public attitudes and concerns of the many groups and organizations with which they must deal.

Creativity, initiative, good judgment, and the ability to communicate thoughts clearly and simply are essential in this occupation. Decision-making, problem-solving, and research skills also are important. People who choose public relations as a career need an outgoing personality, self-confidence, an understanding of human psychology, and an enthusiasm for motivating people. They should be competitive, yet able to function as part of a team and open to new ideas.

It sounds mundane, tedious, and humdrum. The deed does not immediately place you in the publicity spotlight. But, development of a thorough, well-thought-out



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list of media you wish to target is the first and crucial step in beginning a publicity program or a **PR Campaign**.

During the early growth of Public Relations there were quite a few people posing as Public Relations persons but working as press agents who indulged in puffery and other unethical practices to achieve their ends. This wrought brought considerable damage to the discipline and it has been difficult for Public Relations profession to outgrow such labels as 'white washing', '**sugar coating**', '**fixing**', '**propaganda**' etc even today.

Every one, be it individuals or organizations, wants a **favorable image**. Everybody wants to be in the good books of others. The most important factor here is that a positive image leads to a lot of goodwill and this leads to greater acceptance. And acceptance is what everyone wants in this world of cutthroat competition.

Public relations and crisis management planning are not only important to the business of an organization, but they are both crucial regardless of the type of business. In today's fast-paced and ever-changing world, business is news. Plant closings, mergers and acquisitions, unemployment, strikes, labor negotiations, company expansions, building projects, construction-related accidents and catastrophes are often the lead story on the front page or the six o'clock news. Yet many organizations are totally unprepared or at least ill prepared to handle the public relations and crisis management aspects of these events. This unpreparedness can lead to many negative and undesirable results, for the employees, clients and customers, the company and the business and industry sector.

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. Discuss the meaning of Public Relations and give at least four definitions of Public Relations.
2. Trace the history of PR from early times and write a short note on it.
3. What are the various types of PR Publics?
4. Enlist the different PR tools being used today by organizations.
5. What ethics should a PR person following while in business?
6. How can PR act as Image Advisory to an organization?
7. Discuss the Role and Functions of PR in today's times.
8. What are the qualities and attributes required to become a good PRO?
9. What steps should be followed to conduct a PR Campaign and how can you make it a success?
10. What is the difference between PR and advertising?



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11. Name various PR techniques.
12. What is the importance of International Code of Conduct in PR?
13. What are the different parts of a news release?
14. How is Press Relations different from Public Relations?
15. What is the role of Photography in PR?
16. Write a note on Employee Relations.
17. What is the purpose of press conferences called by PRO?
18. Discuss the role of PR in corporate image building.
19. What are the various functions performed by PR?
20. Discuss the importance of PR in developing countries like India.

FURTHER READING

1. Introduction to Advertising and Public Relations Shipra Kundra)
2. Public Relations Seema Sharma, Anmol Publications