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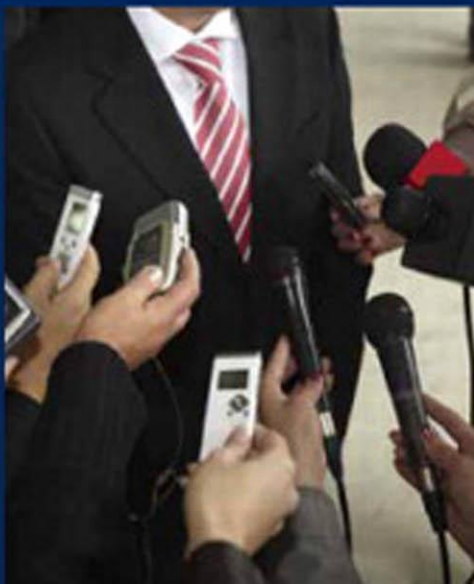
PUBLIC RELATIONS

Strategies and Tactics

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Public Relations

Strategies and Tactics

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Public Relations

Strategies and Tactics

Eleventh Edition

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data is on file with the Library of Congress.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

PEARSON

ISBN-10: 0-205-96064-2
ISBN-13: 978-0-205-96064-4

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Preface

A textbook should be more than packaged information arrayed in page after page of daunting gray type that makes a reader's eyes glaze over. It should be written and designed to engage readers with attractive photos and charts, concise summaries of key concepts, and plenty of practical examples from today's practice that actively engages the reader. It must have clear learning objectives for every chapter and actively engage students in critical thinking and problem solving.

That's why this new edition of *Public Relations: Strategies & Tactics* continues its widely acclaimed reputation as the most readable, comprehensive, up-to-date, introductory public relations text on the market. This 11th edition, like others before it, continues to successfully blend theory, concepts, and actual programs and campaigns into a highly attractive format that is clear and easy for students to understand.

Students will find interesting examples, case studies, and illustrations throughout that will encourage them to actively engage in learning the basic concepts of professional practice. This text will also challenge them to develop their creative problem-solving skills, which is essential for a successful career in public relations.

The book also appeals to instructors who want their students to thoroughly understand the basic principles of effective public relations and be able to apply them to specific, real-life situations. Indeed, many instructors report that this text does an outstanding job of instilling students with a deep understanding of what it means to be a public relations professional with high standards of ethical responsibility.

This new edition, like others before it, is consistent in offering a comprehensive overview of today's public relations practice, the issues facing the industry, and highlighting programs and campaigns that set the standard for excellence. Students learn from award-winning campaigns, but they also learn from situations where an organization's efforts were less than successful and have even bordered on a lack of ethical responsibility. That's why the "good, the bad, and the ugly" is included in this book.

New in the 11th Edition

The authors have considerably revised and updated every chapter of the book to reflect today's diverse public relations practice on the local, national, and international level. The suggestions of adopters and reviewers regarding the 10th edition have been given serious consideration and have helped make this edition even better than the last one.

Consequently, this edition contains the best of previous editions but, at the same time, has replaced all dated material with new information and case studies that reflect the pervasive use of the Internet and social media that has revolutionized the public relations industry. This makes this edition particularly relevant to students and instructors. The following highlights the new approach and content:

New Coauthor

We are pleased to add Dr. Bryan H. Reber, professor of public relations at the University of Georgia, as our new co-author. He is an experienced academic with more than 15 years of professional experience that and teaches a range of undergraduate

and graduate courses in public relations. This not only gives him expertise but valuable insights on how to write and present material that help students learn and clearly understand basic concepts. He is well-known among fellow academics for his research and is highly regarded as a leader in public relations education.

New Social Media in Action Features

The use of the Internet and social media in public relations is pervasive throughout this new edition, but a new feature, Social Media in Action, spotlights particular programs that extensively used social media to accomplish their objectives or issues that involved the use of social media by various organizations. Some examples include the following:

- An ad agency hires interns through a Twitter campaign (Chapter 1)
- Dealing ethically with consumer websites (Chapter 3)
- Sterling Vineyards finds the perfect online host (Chapter 4)
- Google analytics guides a tourism campaign by New Brunswick (Chapter 5)
- Using social media in a national campaign for Hilton Double Tree hotels (Chapter 6)
- Nestle gets in social media fight with Greenpeace (Chapter 7)
- Chevy at SXSW (Chapter 8)
- Changing nutrition perceptions about McDonald's (Chapter 9)
- Getting the word out via social media after a tornado (Chapter 10)
- Clorox develops "potty humor" for moms (Chapter 11)
- FCC goes after celebrity social media endorsements (Chapter 12)
- Marriage equality symbol goes viral (Chapter 13)
- Samsung introduces its new Galaxy Note (Chapter 14)
- Red Bull uses website for "storytelling" (Chapter 15)
- Registering for conventions and events on the Web (Chapter 16)
- Social media helps Duke Energy communicate in wake of Hurricane Sandy (Chapter 17)
- A royal birth generates record Web traffic (Chapter 18)
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) gets help from Zombies (Chapter 19)

New Features on Ethical Practice

Ethical practice in the real world is rarely a black-white situation. These new features focus on questionable practice and ask students to evaluate the situation from their own perspective and what they have learned about professional standards. Some samples:

- Facebook and its public relations firm conducts a stealth campaign against Google (Chapter 1)
- Was Ivy Lee less than honest during labor problems at a Colorado mine? (Chapter 2)
- Cash "bribes" for coverage in China (Chapter 3)

- Wal-Mart drops public relations firm for ethical lapse (Chapter 4)
- A grassroots campaign pits business against environmentalists (Chapter 6)
- Word-of-Mouth (WOM) campaigns raise concerns (Chapter 7)
- Lowe's stumbles on sponsorship of All-American Muslim (Chapter 11)
- Employers standards for employee blogs, social media outreach (Chapter 13)
- The blurring line between "earned" and "paid" media (Chapter 14)
- Student loan industry does "aggressive" lobbying (Chapter 19)
- Would you buy a T-shirt made in Bangladesh? (Chapter 20)

New Features Highlighting Award-Winning Campaigns

A key selling point of this new edition is new casebooks that make today's practice of public relations more "real" to students. A special effort has been made to focus on campaigns that would interest students and include brands that are familiar to them. Some samples include the following:

- A Miami Cuban restaurant celebrates its 40th anniversary (Chapter 1)
- IBM has a global birthday celebration (Chapter 4)
- 7-Eleven celebrates its birthday with free Slurpees (Chapter 4)
- Chase bank creates awareness of its new, premier credit card (Chapter 6)
- Infographic about using cell phones on the toilet is a hit (Chapter 7)
- Pampers campaign makes every Hispanic child special (Chapter 11)
- Ben & Jerry's celebrates same-sex marriage (Chapter 11)
- Social media fuel a solar decathlon by the U.S. Department of Energy (Chapter 13)
- Campaigns by Adidas, Singapore tap social media (Chapter 13)
- Video warns young people about decorative contact lenses (Chapter 15)
- A winning promotional strategy for a Picasso exhibit (Chapter 16)
- Mini-cases on promoting beer, garlic and even vibrators (Chapter 16)
- Fifty shades of tourism promotion: four mini-cases (Chapter 18)
- "Above the Influence" campaign by Drugfree.org (Chapter 19)

New Insights about Working in Public Relations

The theory and principles of public relations are important, but students considering a career in public relations also need to know about current trends and issues in the field, including guidelines on how to do a specific tactic. The following are a sampling of highlighted features that give students such insights:

- Traits needed to succeed in a public relations career (Chapter 1)
- The social media of the reformation in the 15th century (Chapter 2)
- The characteristics of a typical woman who is a VP of public relations (Chapter 2)
- A global study identifies the top issues facing public relations executives (Chapter 2)
- Three examples of foreign clients served by U.S. public relations firms (Chapter 4)

- Kenya issues a Request for Proposal (RFP) to promote tourism (Chapter 4)
- The “big picture” of how to do a program plan (Chapter 6)
- Are women better communicators than men? (Chapter 7)
- News releases are still valuable in the digital age (Chapter 7)
- How Ketchum evaluated its Double Tree hotels campaign (Chapter 8)
- How companies can become more “authentic” (Chapter 9)
- How to communicate with various ethnic groups (Chapter 11)
- Are conversations between clients and public relations counsel legally protected? (Chapter 12)
- The top ten organizations with Facebook and Twitter followers (Chapter 13)
- How to write a multimedia news release (Chapter 14)
- Edelman annual survey finds low trust about business (Chapter 17)
- The Super Bowl: An economic engine on steroids (Chapter 18)
- Obama’s campaign team becomes a policy promotion team (Chapter 18)
- Google increases its Washington lobbying (Chapter 19)
- Crowdsourcing as a new way of fundraising (Chapter 21)

Updated Stats about the Public Relations Industry

This new edition provides the latest published statistics about the public relations industry and advances in the Internet and social media. Some samples include the following:

- The most recent salaries based on experience, gender, and job level (Chapter 1)
- The Global Alliance for Public Relations sets new standard of professional responsibility in the Melbourne Mandate (Chapter 3)
- The top ten public relations firms in the United States by income and employees (Chapter 4)
- Internet penetration and use throughout the world (Chapter 13)
- Share of audience by the leading social media sites (Chapter 13)
- The top four languages in the world in terms of speakers (Chapter 20)
- A breakdown of charitable giving in the United States by sources and recipients (Chapter 21)

Expanded Information on Diverse and Multicultural Audiences

Communicating with diverse, multicultural audiences is a necessity in today’s society. A sampling of the following features will help students better understand the opportunities and the pitfalls:

- A campaign to highlight Hispanic lifestyles (Chapter 6)
- Minorities assure Obama’s re-election (Chapter 11)

- Pepsi sponsors a global Latin music festival (Chapter 11)
- Educational levels and income of various ethnic groups (Chapter 11)
- Broadcast media has large Hispanic audience (Chapter 15)
- Chinese tourists flood the world (Chapter 18)
- Reaching out to the Muslim world (Chapter 20)

New Features on Conflict and Crisis Communications

Conflict and crisis often make the headlines, and students need to know that both advocates and opponents extensively use public relations to influence public opinion and legislation. The following new features, often from yesterday's headlines, will provide students with a good context for understanding the concepts of conflict and crisis management:

- Framing fracking: What is the truth? (Chapter 9)
- Gun control advocates and opponents square off (Chapter 9)
- Benetton faces criticism for using Bangladesh sweatshops (Chapter 10)
- Changing corporate culture helps Toyota recover its business (Chapter 10)
- MillerCoors faces controversy in sponsorship of Puerto Rican Day parade (Chapter 12)
- Coca Cola battles threats from regulatory and consumer groups (Chapter 12)
- Wal-Mart deals with angry investors after a bribery scandal (Chapter 17)
- A Chinese boycott affects Japan's automakers (Chapter 17)
- Carnival lines faces a crisis when a ship gets disabled (Chapter 18)
- Syria, other nations use social media as a weapon of war (Chapter 20)
- Campaign to combat the practice of female mutilation in Africa (Chapter 21)
- Apple resigns from U.S. Chamber of Commerce over global warming issues (Chapter 21)

Expanded Information on Internet and Social Media Analytics

The buzzword, Big Data, has now entered the mainstream and public relations professionals are now using new software metrics and analytics for both research and measurement. Some examples for this new edition:

- Web analytics, use of dashboards, monitoring mentions on social media, conducting research surveys using social media (Chapter 5)
- How Hilton's DoubleTree hotels and Ketchum used research to plan a national campaign (Chapter 8)
- Measuring effectiveness on the Web (Chapter 8)
- The power and reach of Facebook by the numbers (Chapter 13)
- Does Justin Bieber really have 37 million followers? (Chapter 13)

Short Essays by Young Professionals

This new edition adds a new dimension by having young professionals tell students in their own voice about working in the trenches. Their writing style is breezy and personal, which students will enjoy.

- Robin Carr, director of public relations for Xoom, tells students to do more networking (Chapter 1)
- Kellie Bramlet, account executive at Black Sheep Agency, tells about the hectic life of working in a public relations firm (Chapter 4)
- Michelle Kraker, an experienced public relations professional, writes that being a social media manager is not all fun and games (Chapter 13)

Actual Job/Intern Postings in Public Relations

Students are curious about the type of jobs that are available in public relations. This edition provides some sample job descriptions and what qualifications are needed.

- What Ogilvy Public Relations expects in an application for an internship (Chapter 1)
- An entry-level position for a New York City public relations firm (Chapter 1)
- A Phoenix company seeks a public relations specialist (Chapter 4)
- A New York City firm seeks an experienced account executive (Chapter 4)
- A Los Angeles company seeks an event manager (Chapter 16)
- NBC Universal seeks a press coordinator (Chapter 18)
- Empire State College looking for a director of communications (Chapter 21)

Organization of the Book

This edition also continues its tradition of organizing the contents into five parts in order to give a complete overview of the field: These parts are (1) role, (2) process, (3) strategy, (4) tactics, and (5) application. Such an organization allows instructors the flexibility of selecting what parts of the book best fits the objectives and length of the course.

Part 1 is the role of public relations in society, which describes what public relations is and what kinds of specialization are available in the industry. It also gives a brief history of public relations, the development of professional practice, and how public relations department and firms do business.

Part 2 is the process of public relations that includes a chapter each on research, planning, communication, and evaluation.

Part 3 deals with strategy, which includes the concepts of public opinion and persuasion, conflict management and crisis communications, reaching diverse audiences, and the legal aspects that affect public relations practice.

Part 4 is an overview of the actual tactics used by public relations professionals such as the use of the Internet and social media, preparing materials for mass media, placements on radio and television, and how meetings and events advance public relations goals.

Part 5 shows how public relations is used by various segments of society. Corporate public relations leads off and is followed by entertainment, sports, and tourism. The last three chapters deal with politics and government, global public relations, and non-profits in health and education.

Student Learning Tools

Each chapter of *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics* includes several learning tools to help students better understand and remember the principles of public relations, and to give them the practice they need to apply those principles to real-life situations. This edition continues the tradition of providing key student learning aids at the beginning and end of every chapter. In each chapter, you will find:

- **Chapter-Opening Preview.** Learning objectives for students are succinctly stated at the beginning of every chapter.
- **End-of-Chapter Summary.** The major themes are summarized at the end of each chapter.
- **End-of-chapter Case Activity.** A public relations situation or dilemma based on actual cases is posed, and students are asked to apply what they have just read in assigned chapter. These case problems can be used either for class discussion, group projects, or as written assignments. The following are some new case activities in this edition:
 - Promoting beef jerky as a healthy snack (Chapter 1)
 - Do men and women have different perceptions of public relations as a career? (Chapter 2)
 - Three ethical dilemmas in the workplace (Chapter 3)
 - Conducting research to determine a course of action in fighting a rumor (Chapter 5)
 - Promoting increased public awareness of “fair trade” coffee (Chapter 6)
 - A new campaign to combat heart disease (Chapter 7)
 - How to evaluate the success of Mexico’s tourism campaign (Chapter 8)
 - Convincing fellow students to do fundraising for a cause (Chapter 9)
 - Business and minority groups fight a soda ban in New York City (Chapter 10)
 - A campaign to increase student diversity at a university (Chapter 11)
 - Should employers restrict social media use by employees? (Chapter 12)
 - Planning special events to promote a luxury handbag (Chapter 16)
 - Planning a corporate wellness campaign (Chapter 17)
 - Planning a promotion for a Colorado resort (Chapter 18)
 - A health campaign about a possible flu epidemic (Chapter 19)
 - A social media campaign for Goodwill Industries (Chapter 21)
- **Questions for Review and Discussion.** A list of questions at the end of each chapter helps students prepare for tests and also stimulates class discussion.

- **Media Resources.** These updated end-of-chapter lists of readings and websites give students additional references for exploring topics brought up in the chapter.
- **Useful Websites and Bibliography.** This updated collection of selected books, periodicals, and directories at the end of the book provides a more complete list of references for students wishing to conduct further research.

Instructor Resources

Name of Supplement	Description
Instructor's Manual and Test Bank ISBN: 0133809382	This comprehensive instructor resource provides learning objectives, chapter outlines, sample syllabi, class activities, and discussion questions. The fully reviewed Test Bank offers more than 700 test questions in multiple-choice, true/false, and essay format. Each question is referenced by page. Available for download at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc (access code required).
MyTest ISBN: 0133809390	This flexible online test-generating software includes all questions found in the Test Bank, allowing instructors to create their own personalized exams, edit any or all of the existing test questions, and even add new questions. Other special features of this program include random generation of test questions, creation of alternate versions of the same test, scrambling of question sequence, and test preview before printing. Available at www.pearsonmytest.com (access code required).
PowerPoint™ Presentation Package ISBN: 0133809412	This text-specific package provides lecture slides based on key concepts in the text. Available for download at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc (access code required).

This text is available in a variety of formats—digital and print. To learn more about our programs, pricing options, and customization, visit www.pearsonhighered.com.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the following reviewers for their expertise and their helpful and insightful suggestions for the development of this text:

Josh Boyd, Purdue University
 Karyn Brown, Mississippi State University
 Christopher Caldiero, Farleigh Dickinson University
 Robert A. Carroll, York College of Pennsylvania
 Jennifer Chin, University of North Carolina, Wilmington
 Janine W. Dunlap, Freed-Hardeman University
 Gregg Feistman, Temple University
 W. Gerry Gilmer, Florida State University
 Randy Hines, Susquehanna University
 Steve G. Mandel, Pennsylvania State University

Teresa Mastin, Michigan State University
Ronda L. Menke, Drake University
Maureen Taylor, Rutgers University
Kelly Kinner Tryba, University of Colorado at Boulder
Beth Wood, Indiana University
Brenda J. Wrigley, Syracuse University
Alan Adelman, Santa Monica College
Lily Ungar, University of California, Los Angeles
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What Is Public Relations?



After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

Be familiar with the global scope of the public relations industry

Have a good definition of public relations

Understand that public relations is a process, not an event

Know the difference between public relations, journalism, advertising, and marketing

Assess the skills needed for a public relations career and what salary to expect

The Challenge of Public Relations

It is 9 A.M. and Anne-Marie, a senior account executive in a San Francisco public relations firm, is at her desk getting ready for a full day of busy activity. She takes a few minutes to answer some text messages, scan her e-mails, and tweet a printing firm about the status of a brochure. She also quickly flips through the local daily, reviews the online editions of the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*, and checks her Google Alerts list to catch up on any late-breaking news or postings about the firm's clients.

She downloads a *Wall Street Journal* article about the increasing risk of tainted food from foreign suppliers and makes a note to have her student intern do some more research about this issue. One of Anne-Marie's clients is a restaurant chain, and she senses an opportunity for the client to capitalize on the media interest by informing the press and the public about what the restaurant chain is doing to ensure the quality and safety of their meals.

She then finishes a draft of a news release about a client's new tablet computer and forwards it to her supervisor, a vice president of client services, for review before it is e-mailed to the client. She will also attach a note that an electronic news service can deliver it to newspapers across the country later in the day. Anne-Marie's next activity is a brainstorming session with other staff members in the conference room to generate creative ideas about revamping a Facebook page for a microbrewery that will generate more interest and "likes."

When she gets back to her office, she finds more text messages, tweets, and voice-mails. A reporter for a trade publication needs background information on a story he is writing; a graphic designer has finished a rough draft of a client's new logo; a catering manager has called about final arrangements for a VIP reception at an art gallery; and a video producer asks Anne-Marie to preview a video clip of a celebrity giving a testimonial about a client's new designer jeans. Once the video is finalized, it will be uploaded to YouTube, the company's web page, and distributed by satellite to television stations throughout the nation.

Lunch is with a client who wants her counsel on how to position the company as environmentally conscious and dedicated to sustainable development. After lunch, Anne-Marie walks back to the office while talking on her phone to a colleague in the New York office about an upcoming satellite media tour (SMT) to announce a national food company's campaign to reduce childhood obesity. She also calls an editor to "pitch" a story about a client's new product. He's interested, so she follows up by sending some background material via a tweet providing links to several websites. Back in the office, Anne-Marie touches base with other members of her team, who are working on a 12-city media tour by an Olympic champion representing Nike.

Then it's back to the computer. She checks several online databases to gather information about the industry of a new client. She also reviews online news updates and postings on popular blogs to find out if anything is being said about her clients. At 5 P.M., as she winds down from the day's hectic activities, she reviews news stories from an electronic monitoring service about another client, an association of strawberry producers. She is pleased to find that her feature story, which included recipes and color photos, appeared in 150 dailies and were also used by several influential food bloggers.

But the day isn't quite done. Anne-Marie is on her way to attend a chapter meeting of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), where the speaker will discuss trends in reputation management. It's her way of continuing her education since her graduation from college four years ago with public relations major and a minor in

marketing. After the meeting, she networks with several other members over a glass of wine and a quick dinner. It's a nice respite from the constant deluge of text messages, e-mails, and tweets on her mobile phone that must be dealt with before she calls it a day.

As this scenario illustrates, the profession of public relations is multifaceted and public relations professionals have many roles as shown in the infographic on page 17. A public relations professional must have skills in written and interpersonal communication, media relations and social media, research, negotiation, creativity, logistics, facilitation, problem solving, and strategic thinking.

Indeed, those who want a challenging career with plenty of variety often choose the field of public relations. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov/ooh) estimates that the field already employs more than 300,000 people nationwide, and its 2012–2013 *Occupational Outlook Handbook* projects a 23 percent growth rate in public relations specialists through 2020, faster than the average for all occupations. The handbook notes that the growth of the public relations occupation “. . . will be driven by the need for organizations to maintain their public image in a high-information age and with the growth of social media.” The handbook also gives a good description of what public relations managers and specialist do; as can be seen in the Insights box which follows.

More good news: A public relations although battered by the recent economic recession, seems to be somewhat resilient. Jim Rutherford, executive vice president (EVP) of private equity firm Veronis Suhler Stevenson (VSS), quipped to *PRWeek*, “The economy may have been in a downturn, but even companies in bankruptcy protection had to communicate to their stakeholders.”

on the job

INSIGHTS

The Nature of Public Relations Work

The *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2012–13*, published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov/ooh), describes the various activities of public relations specialists and managers:

Duties

Public relations managers and specialists typically do the following:

- Write news releases and prepare information for the media.
- Identify main client groups and audiences and determine the best way to reach them.
- Respond to requests for information from the media or designate an appropriate spokesperson for information source.
- Helps clients communicate effectively with the public.
- Develop and maintain their organization's corporate image and identity, using logos and signs.
- Draft speeches and arrange interviews for an organization's top executives.
- Evaluate advertising and promotion programs to determine whether they are compatible with the organization's public relations efforts.
- Develop and carry out fundraising strategies for an organization by identifying and contacting potential donors and applying for grants.

(continued)

Public relations specialists, also called communication specialists and media specialists, handle an organization's communication with the public, including consumers, investors, reporters, and other media specialists. In government, public relations specialists may be called press secretaries. They keep the public informed about the activities of government officials and agencies.

Public relations specialists must understand the attitudes and concerns of the groups they interact with to maintain cooperative relationships with them.

Public relations specialists draft news releases and contact people in the media who might print or broadcast the material. Many radio or television special reports, newspaper stories, and magazine articles start at the desks of public relations specialists. For example, a news release might describe a

public issue, such as health, energy, or the environment, and what an organization does to advance that issue. In addition to publication through traditional media outlets, releases are increasingly being sent through the Web and social media.

Public relations managers review and sometimes write news releases. They also sponsor corporate events to help maintain and improve the image and identity of their organization or client.

In addition, they help to clarify their organization's point of view to its main audience through media releases and interviews. Public relations managers observe social, economic, and political trends that might ultimately affect the organization, and they recommend ways to enhance the firm's image based on these trends. For example, in response to a growing concern about the environment, an

oil company may create a public relations campaign to publicize its efforts to develop cleaner fuels.

In large organizations, public relations managers may supervise a staff of public relations specialists. They also work with advertising and marketing staffs to make sure that advertising campaigns are compatible with the image the company or client is trying to portray. For example, if

the firm has decided to emphasize its appeal to a certain group, such as younger people, the public relations manager ensures that current advertisements will be well received by that group.

In addition, public relations managers may handle internal communications, such as company newsletters, and may help financial managers produce an organization's reports. They may help the organization's top executives by drafting speeches, arranging interviews, and maintaining other forms of public contact. Public relations managers must be able to work well with many types of specialists to accurately report the facts. In some cases, the information they write has legal consequences. They must work with the company's or client's lawyers to be sure that the information they release is both legally accurate and clear to the public.

In addition to the ability to communicate thoughts clearly and simply, public relations specialists and managers must show creativity, initiative, and good judgment. Decision-making, problem-solving, and research skills also are important. People who choose public relations as a career should have an outgoing personality, self-confidence, an understanding of human psychology, and an enthusiasm for motivating people. They should be assertive but able to participate as part of a team and be open to new ideas.

Public relations managers and specialists create and maintain a favorable public image for their employer or client. They write material for media releases, plan and direct public relations programs, and raise funds for their organizations.

—U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

A Global Industry

Public relations, however, is not just an American activity. It is also a worldwide industry. The global dimensions of public relations can be illustrated in several ways. The following gives some background on (1) the global market, (2) the number of practitioners, (3) regions of major growth, and (4) the growth of public relations as an academic discipline.

Global Expenditures on Public Relations In terms of economics, the public relations field is most extensively developed in the United States. Private equity firm Veronis Suhler Stevenson (VSS), which has been tracking the communications industry for the past 15 years, reported that spending on public relations in the United States was \$3.7 billion in 2009. CNN, however, estimated that about \$5 billion was spent by U.S. companies on public relations in 2012, a somewhat small amount compared to the \$150 billion spent annually on advertising.

A major factor in the recent growth of the public relations industry is the overwhelming presence of the Internet. According to the *Economist*, “The rise of the Internet and social media has given PR a big boost. Many big firms have a presence on social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, overseen by PR staff. PR firms are increasingly called on to track what consumers are saying about their clients online and to respond directly to any negative commentary.”

The amount spent on public relations for the rest of the world is somewhat sketchy and not well documented. One major reason is that public relations can include a number of activities that overlap into such areas as marketing, promotion, direct mail, event sponsorships, and even word-of-mouth advertising. The *Holmes Report*, which also ranks the 250 biggest PR firms in the world, estimates that public relations was a \$10 billion global business in 2012. Other research estimates that about \$3 billion of this amount comes from European spending on public relations due to the expansion of the European Union (EU) and the emerging economies of Russia, Ukraine, the Czech Republic and the Baltic nations. There is also considerable growth in other regions of the world, particularly China, which will be discussed shortly.

An Estimated 3 Million Practitioners The Global Alliance (www.globalalliancepr.org), with about 40 national and regional public relations associations representing 160,000 members, estimates that some 3 million people worldwide practice public relations as their main occupation. This includes the estimated 320,000 practitioners in the United States, and also the estimated 50,000 located in the United Kingdom (UK). It's also estimated that there are between 7,000 and 10,000 public relations firms in the United States, and the directory *Hollis Europe* lists almost 3,000 public relations firms (consultancies) in 40 European nations. In addition, there are now an estimated 10,000 firms in China, according to the *Holmes Report*.

Many of these firms are one-person operations, but also included are firms with hundreds of employees. There are, of course, literally thousands of companies, governmental organizations, and nonprofits around the world that also have in-house public relations departments and staffs.

Increased use of social media also is expected to increase employment growth for public relations specialists. These new media outlets will create more work for public relations workers, increasing the number and kinds of avenues of communication between organizations and the public.

U.S. Department of Labor

There is also about 200 national and regional public relations organizations around the world. A partial list that shows the geographic diversity includes the following: Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA), the Spanish Association of Communicators (DIRCOM), the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA), the Public Relations Society of Serbia, the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS), the Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK), the Institute of Public Relations (United Kingdom), the Romania Public Relations Association (RPRA), the Public Relations Agencies Association of Mexico (PRAA), Relaciones Publicas America Latina (ALARP), the Consejo Profesional de Relaciones Publicas of Argentina, the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI), and the Middle East Public Relations Association (MEPRA).

An Explosion of Growth in China, Other Nations Major growth is also occurring in Asia for several reasons. China is literally the “new frontier.” Since opening its economy to market capitalism 30 years ago, China today is the world’s second largest economy after the United States. And the public relations industry is increasing at the rate of 20 percent annually, according to *PRWeek*. The China International Public Relations Association (CIPRA) reports that the industry employs about 500,000 people and every major global public relations firm now has offices in the country. According to the *Economist*, the Chinese public relations market is about \$2 billion annually.

China’s membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) opened the floodgate for more public relations activity by international companies engaged in a fierce competition for the bonanza of reaching more than a billion potential customers. The biggest trend, according to the *Economist*, is now a soaring demand for public relations among Chinese companies as they actively seek local consumers, foreign investments, and international outlets for their goods. The 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Shanghai World Expo further fueled the dynamic growth of public relations in China.

Other nations, such as Malaysia, Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, and India, are also rapidly expanding their domestic and international markets, which creates a fertile environment for increased public relations activity. India has great economic and public relations potential because, like China, it has over 1 billion people and is also moving toward a more robust market economy. Africa and Latin America also present growth opportunities, stimulated in part by hosting international events. South Africa hosted the World Cup soccer championship in 2010 and Brazil will host the Summer Olympics in 2016. A more detailed discussion of international public relations is found in Chapter 20.

A Proliferation of University Courses Large numbers of students around the world are studying public relations as a career field. One study by Professor Elizabeth Toth and her colleagues at the University of Maryland surveyed English-only websites and found 218 degree, certificate, and diploma programs offered in 39 countries. In another study by Chunhui He and Jing Xie at Zheijiang University’s Communications Studies Institute, they report that more than 300 universities in China have now added public relations to their course offerings.

A similar number of U.S. colleges and universities have bachelor and graduate degrees in public relations, according to *PRWeek*. In addition, many other universities offer one or more public relations courses in such areas as communication studies and business administration. Most majors, however, are in departments or schools of journalism. In these units, the 2012 annual survey of journalism and mass communication enrollment by Lee Becker and his associates at the University of Georgia (www.grady.uga.edu/annualsurveys) reported that almost a third

of the students (66,000) were studying public relations, strategic communications, or advertising.

In Europe, an estimated 100 universities also offer studies in the subject. Unlike the United States, however, many courses are taught in a faculty of economics or business. Public relations study is popular in such nations as the Netherlands, Germany, Serbia, Romania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland. Many Asian universities, particularly those in Thailand, Korea, Indonesia, India, and the Philippines, also offer major programs. Australia and New Zealand have a long history of public relations education.

In South America, particularly in Argentina, Chile, and Brazil, public relations is taught at many universities. South African universities have the most developed public relations curriculum on the African continent, but programs of study can also be found in Nigeria, Ghana, and Kenya. The Middle East, particularly the United Arab Emirates, introduced public relations into university curriculums during the mid-1990s. In sum, public relations is a well-established academic subject that is taught and practiced on a global scale.

A Definition of Public Relations

Public relations has been defined in many ways. Rex Harlow, a Stanford professor and founder of the organization that became the Public Relations Society of America, once compiled more than 500 definitions from almost as many sources. The definitions ranged from the simple, “Doing good and getting credit for it,” to more verbose definitions. Harlow’s collective definition, for example, is almost 100 words.

One early definition that gained wide acceptance was formulated by the newsletter *PR News*: “Public relations is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual or an organization with the public interest, and plans and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and patience.”

Other definitions are provided by theorists and textbook authors. One of the first major textbooks the field, *Effective Public Relations* by Scott Cutlip and Allen Center, stated, “Public relations is the management function that identifies, establishes, and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the various publics on whom its success or failure depends.” The management function was also emphasized more than 25 years ago in *Managing Public Relations* by James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt. They said, “Public relations is the management of communication between an organization and its publics.”

National and international public relations organizations, including the PRSA, also have formulated definitions. Here are two examples:

- “Public relations is influencing behaviour to achieve objectives through the effective management of relationships and communications.” (British Institute of Public Relations, whose definition has also been adopted in a number of Commonwealth nations)
- “Public relations practice is the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders, and implementing planned programs of action which serve both the organization’s and the public’s interest.” (1978 World Assembly of Public Relations in Mexico City and endorsed by 34 national public relations organizations)

Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics.

Public Relations Society of America

The PRSA definition and other modern definitions of public relations emphasize the building of mutually beneficial relationships between the organization and its various publics. A more assertive approach, however, is offered by Professor Glen Cameron, at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. He defines public relations as the “strategic management of competition and conflict for the benefit of one’s own organization—and when possible—also for the mutual benefit of the organization and its various stakeholders or publics.”

It isn’t necessary, however, to memorize any particular definition of public relations. It’s more important to remember the key words that are used in most definitions that frame today’s modern public relations. The key words are:

- **Deliberate.** Public relations activity is intentional. It is designed to influence, gain understanding, provide information, and obtain feedback from those affected by the activity.

- **Planned.** Public relations activity is organized. Solutions to problems are discovered and logistics are thought out, with the activity taking place over a period of time. It is systematic, requiring research and strategic thinking.

- **Performance.** Effective public relations is based on actual policies and performance. No amount of public relations will generate goodwill and support if the organization has poor policies and is unresponsive to public concerns.

- **Public interest.** Public relations activity should be mutually beneficial to the organization and the public; it is the alignment of the organization’s self-interests with the public’s concerns and interests.

- **Two-way communication.** Public relations is not just disseminating information but also the art of listening and engaging in a conversation with various publics.

- **Management function.** Public relations is most effective when it is a strategic and integral part of decision making by top management. Public relations involves counseling, problem solving, and the management of competition and conflict.

To summarize, you can grasp the essential elements of effective public relations by remembering the following words and phrases: deliberate . . . planned . . . performance . . . public interest . . . two-way communication . . . strategic management function. The elements of public relations just described are part of the process that defines today’s public relations.

Other Popular Names

Public relations is used as an umbrella term on a worldwide basis. Most national membership associations, from the Azerbaijan Public Relations Association to the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations, identify themselves with that term.

Individual companies and other groups, however, often use other terms to describe the public relations function. The most popular term among Fortune 500 companies is *corporate communications*. This description is used by such companies as McDonald’s, BMW of North America, Toyota, Walt Disney, and Walgreens. Other companies, such as GM and Xerox, just use the term *communications*.

A number of corporations also use combination titles to describe the public relations function within the organization. IBM, for example, has a senior vice president (SVP)

of marketing and communications. At Facebook, the public relations executive is in charge of *communications and public policy*. Johnson & Johnson goes with *public affairs and corporate communications*, while L'Oreal USA uses *corporate communications and external affairs*. Other companies think in more global terms. The public relations executive at Coca-Cola, for example, is in charge of *worldwide public affairs and communications*, and FedEx uses *worldwide communications and investor relations*.

The use of *corporate communications* is based, in part, on the belief that the term is broader than *public relations*, which is often incorrectly perceived as only *media relations*. Corporate communications, many argue, encompasses all communications of the company, including advertising, marketing communications, public affairs, community relations, and employee communications.

Public information and *public affairs* are the most widely used terms by nonprofits, universities, and government agencies. The implication is that only information is being disseminated, in contrast to persuasive communication, generally perceived as the purpose of public relations. Social services agencies often use the term *community relations*, and the military is fond of *public affairs*. Increasingly, many nonprofits are using the term *marketing communications*, as they reorient to the idea that they must sell their services and generate donations in a highly competitive environment.

Other organizations use a term that better describes the primary activity of the department. It is clear, for example, that a department of investor relations deals primarily with stockholders, institutional investors, and the financial press. Likewise, a department of environmental affairs, community relations, or employee communications is self-explanatory. A department of marketing communications primarily emphasizes product publicity and promotion. The organization and functions of communications departments are discussed in Chapter 4.

Like departments, individuals specialize in subcategories of public relations. A person who deals exclusively with placement of stories in the media is, to be precise, a *publicist*. Publicists are specialists that concentrate on finding unusual news angles and planning events or “happenings” that attract media attention—a stunt by an aspiring Hollywood actress, for example, or an attempt to be listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* by baking the world’s largest apple pie. *Publicist* and *Press Agent* are honorable terms in the entertainment and celebrity business, but such titles are rarely used by the mainstream public relations industry. Chapter 18 discusses the work of New York and Hollywood publicists.

Public Relations Hollywood Style

Samantha Jones (Kim Cattrall) leads an glamorous life as the owner of a public relations firm in the television series *Sex and the City*. In the second movie sequel, she even goes to Abu Dhabi to plan a public relations campaign for a luxury hotel. Public relations work, however, requires more than wearing designer clothes and going to dinner parties.



Stereotypes and Less Flattering Terms

Unfortunately, the public often has a much different image of public relations. A common stereotype is that public relations is a glamorous field because public relations practitioners meet exciting and interesting people, go to parties, and generally spend the day doing a lot of schmoozing.

The reality, of course, is less glamorous. CareerCast, for example, lists “Event Coordinator” as the sixth most stressful job in America, followed by “PR Executive” in seventh place. The major stress, reports CareerCast, is that “these professionals are in a very competitive field, which often includes highly visible, tight deadlines.” In addition, “. . . some PR executives are required to interact with potentially hostile members of the media, especially after a disaster.” Practitioners also have to deal with the stress of working with clients and employers who often have unrealistic expectations.

Women, in particular, are stereotyped. “Pop culture,” says Adrianna Giuliani of Devries Public Relations, “is chock full of stereotypes of women in PR. All you have to do is tune into E!, HBO, and TBS to see ‘power girls’ wield control at the doors of parties. . . .” She adds, “The danger of these portrayals is that, as we all know in our business, media not only reflects popular opinion but it shapes it. While sensationalized images of women living in ‘spin city’ might be more entertaining to watch . . . I would say the ‘PR girls’ that rule today are more likely to worship hashtags than shoes.”

Other television programs and movies also give somewhat negative stereotypes about public relations. An early example of glamorizing the field was Samantha Jones (Kim Cattrall) as the owner of a public relations firm in the television series *Sex and the City*, plus two movie sequels, who seemed to spend most of her time meeting men and wearing designer clothes. ABC’s *Spin City*, on the other hand, featured Michael J. Fox as the deputy mayor of New York, who protected his bumbling boss from the media and public. More recently, Bravo launched a reality show, *Kell on Earth*, that the *New York Times* described as “a reality show that follows a publicist, Kelly Cutrone, as she bullies and cajoles her way through the underbelly of the New York fashion world.” *Mad Men*, a series about an advertising firm in the 1960s, has also portrayed public relations as a somewhat dubious activity with no moral compass.

Some films are satires, but still project a negative image of public relations. *Thank You for Smoking*, a movie adapted from the book by Christopher Buckley, is a particularly good satire about a public relations person defending the tobacco industry. *Wag the Dog*, starring Dustin Hoffman and Robert DeNiro, is also a satire focusing on how an embattled president creates a fake war with the help of public relations pros to improve his image. A more recent film, *Bruno*, with leading actor Sacha Baron Cohen, played up the “dumb blonde” syndrome. At one point in the film, Sacha’s fictional character asks two sisters who run a public relations firm in Los Angeles, “What charities are hot now?” They replied, “Darfur.” He then asked them where Darfur is, and they didn’t have a clue.

Other negative stereotypes are perpetuated by journalists who use terms such as “PR stunt” or “PR fluff.” One journalist once described public relations as “the art of saying nothing.” Joe Nocera, a business columnist for the *New York Times*, once expressed his frustration with Apple public relations reps by writing “This is another Apple innovation: the robotic spokesman who says only what he’s programmed to say.” See the Insights box about Apple being accused of doing a “PR stunt.”

Nocera and other journalists often express frustration when they feel that public relations personnel are stonewalling, providing misleading information, or not being readily accessible to fully answer questions. This is traditionally a problem of effective media relations and, quite frankly, incompetence occurs in all fields, including public relations. Chapters 14 and 15 discuss the responsibilities of public relations personnel to provide assistance to media personnel.

Public relations is also referred to as *spin*. This term first appeared in a 1984 *New York Times* editorial about the activities of President Ronald Reagan’s reelection campaign. In the beginning, the meaning of *spin* was restricted to what often were considered the unethical and misleading activities and tactics of political campaign consultants. Today, however, the media widely use the term to describe any effort by an individual or organization to interpret an event or issue according to a particular viewpoint. On occasion, however, spin can lead to a question of ethics, which is highlighted in the Ethics box on page 13. A more academic term for spin is the concept of *framing*. Multiple research studies show how journalists, as well as public relations personnel, “frame” issues. See Chapter 9 for more on the theory of framing.

on the job

INSIGHTS

Is Apple's Decision to Build Macs in the United States a "Publicity Stunt"?

Apple's CEO Tim Cook made headlines in December 2012 when he announced that the company would make a \$100 million investment to make Macs in the United States. Although many lauded the decision as a major contribution to the "made in America" movement, others were less than impressed, calling the decision a "PR stunt" or simply just a "PR initiative," inferring that the Apple decision didn't have much substance.

The cynics pointed out that Apple could have done more because it was sitting on more than \$120 billion in cash reserves and that the \$100 million investment was only 1 percent of

Apple's annual \$10 billion that it spends on capital expenditures. Others say the rationale for the decision was primarily a public relations decision to get some favorable press to counteract criticism by human rights groups about the safety incidents and high working hours in Chinese factories where the vast majority of its products are assembled. *San Jose Mercury News* columnist Mike Cassidy, who covers Silicon Valley, was more forgiving. He wrote, "OK, maybe it takes a little zip out the Apple-comes-to-America story. But why dwell on the negative? A journey of 1,000 miles—or from



Shenzhen to the United States, for that matter, starts with a first step."

What do you think? Was Apple's decision only a "PR stunt" without much substance or a decision by a socially responsible corporation to bring manufacturing jobs back to the United States?

Figure 1.2 Public Relations as "Image Building"

The image of an organization is made up of many factors, and public relations is only one of them. (Copyright © The New Yorker Collection 2004. Mick Stevens from www.cartoonbank.com. All rights reserved.)



on the job

ETHICS

Facebook's Attempt at "Spin" Makes No Friends

There's nothing wrong with the use of "spin," presenting information in the most favorable light for an organization, but it does raise ethical issues when there is a lack of disclosure regarding the source of the information. This was the case when Burson-Marsteller, a major public relations firm, attempted to hide Facebook as its client when it launched a "whisper campaign" to discredit Google's privacy policies.

Two B-M staffers, both former journalists, contacted major tech bloggers and reporters at major publications to offer information and help them write opinion articles criticizing Google. When several suspicious bloggers asked them the name of their client, they refused to answer. It didn't take long for *USA Today* and the *Daily Beast* to figure out that B-M was engaging a "spin" campaign on behalf of its client, Facebook.

The fallout was immediate. Many publications picked up the story and the issue went viral on the Internet. The headlines said it all: "Facebook waged stealth PR war on Google" and "Facebook unmasked as Burson-Marsteller's mystery client." Leading bloggers also criticized both Facebook and B-M for a lack of disclosure and transparency. Fraser Seitel, a public relations counselor in New York, told *Ragan's PR Daily*, "If Facebook has problems with Google, then it should have the confidence and decency to express the reasons why, from the mouth of a Facebook executive."

Others in the public relations community also slammed Burson-Marsteller for a lack of professional ethics for agreeing to hide Facebook as a client. Rosanna Fiske, chair of the Public Relations Society of America wrote that the core tenet of the PRSA code is honesty. "Under the PRSA code," she said, "B-M would be

obligated to reveal its client and disclose the client's intentions, which appear to mount an attack on Google's practices." Steve Barrett, editor of *PRWeek*, also wrote, "In not disclosing Facebook as its client, Burson engaged in activity that contravenes industry guidelines and is considered unethical."

Both Facebook and Burson-Marsteller suffered major damage to their reputations and sought to minimize the negative coverage by doing some more "spin." Facebook, for example, denied that the company had engaged in a "smear campaign" and was only trying to bring a privacy problem to the attention of the public. Burson-Marsteller, no longer representing Facebook, said that the failure to disclose its client was against its policies and that it was redistributing its code of ethics to all employees to ensure that it would not happen again.

Another term with a long history is *flack*. These words are derisive slang terms that journalists often use for a press agent or anyone else working in public relations. It's like calling a journalist a "hack." Although in recent years most publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*, have refrained from using the "F" word in news stories, columnists still occasionally use the word.

The term has a mixed history. According to Wes Pedersen, a former director of communications for the Public Affairs Council, the term *flack* originated in 1939 in *Variety*, the show business publication. It began using *flack* as a synonym for *press agent*, he says, "in tribute to the skills of Gene Flack in publicizing motion pictures." Others say the word *flack* was used during World War I to describe heavy ground fire aimed at enemy aircraft, and journalists often feel they also are bombarded with a barrage of news releases.

Within the public relations community, feeling also exists that *PR* is a slang term that carries a somewhat denigrating connotation. The late Sam Black, a public

relations consultant in the United Kingdom and author of several books on public relations, said, “The use of ‘PR’ probably originated as a nickname for ‘press relations,’” the primary activity of public relations in its early years (see Chapter 2).

Although PR is now more than press relations, the nickname is commonly used in daily conversation and is widely recognized around the world. A good compromise, which this book uses, is to adopt the style of spelling out “public relations” in the body of a text or article but to use the shorter term, “PR,” if it is used in a direct quote.

Public Relations as a Process

Public relations is a process—that is, a series of actions, changes, or functions that bring about a result. One popular way to describe the process, and to remember its components, is to use the RACE acronym, first articulated by John Marston in his book *The Nature of Public Relations*. Essentially, RACE means that public relations activity consists of four key elements, which are explained in Chapters 5–8:

- **Research.** What is the problem or situation?
- **Action (program planning).** What is going to be done about it?
- **Communication (execution).** How will the public be told?
- **Evaluation.** Was the audience reached and what was the effect?

Another acronym, ROPE, is also used to explain the public relations process. Jerry Hendrix, in his book *Public Relations Cases*, says **R** is research, **O** is objectives in terms of setting content output and impact, **P** is programming and execution, and **E** is evaluation. Yet another acronym for the public relations process is R-O-S-I-E for research, objectives, strategies, implementation, and evaluation.

In all cases, the process is a never-ending cycle in which six components are links in a chain. Figure 1.3 shows the process.

1. **Step 1: Research and Analysis.** This consists of inputs that determine the nature and extent of the public relations problem or opportunity. These may include feedback from the public, media reporting and editorial comment, analysis of trend data, other forms of research, personal experience, and government pressures and regulations.

2. **Step 2: Policy Formulation.** Public relations personnel, as advisors to top management, make recommendations on policy and what actions should be taken by the organization.

3. **Step 3: Programming.** Once a policy or action is agreed on, public relations staff begin to plan a communications program that will further the organization’s objectives. They will set objectives, define audiences, and decide on what strategies will be used on a specific timeline. Budget and staffing are also major considerations.

4. **Step 4: Communication.** Public relations personnel execute the program through such vehicles as news releases, media advisories, newsletters, Internet and Web postings, special events, speeches, and community relations programs.

5. **Step 5: Feedback.** The effect of these efforts is measured by feedback from the same components that made up the first step. Did the media mention the key messages? Did people change their attitudes or opinions? Did sales go up? Did the organization preserve or enhance its reputation?

We provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate.

—Public Relations Society of America,
defining the role of public relations in
today’s society

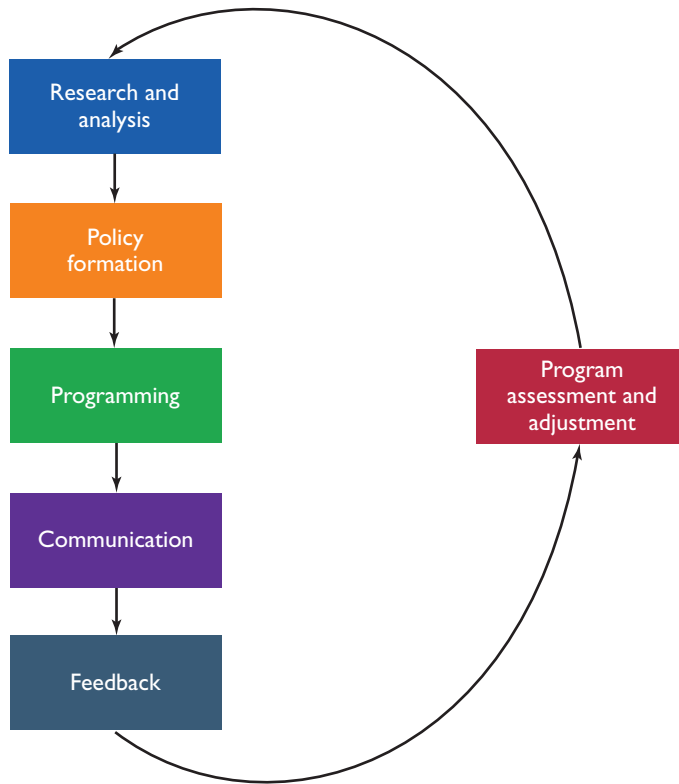


Figure 1.3 The Public Relations Process

The conceptualization of public relations as a cyclical process, feedback, or audience response leads to assessment of the program, which becomes an essential element in the development of another public relations project.

6. Step 6: *Assessment*. The cycle is then repeated. The success or failure of the policy or program is assessed as a way of determining whether additional efforts are needed, or whether new issues or opportunities must be addressed. Thus, it is a continuing loop process.

Note that public relations plays two distinct roles in this process, thus serving as a “middle ground” or “linking agent.” On one level, public relations interacts directly with external sources of information, including the public, media, and government, and relays these inputs to management along with recommendations. On a second level, public relations becomes the vehicle through which management reaches the public with assorted messages to accomplish organizational goals.

The Diversity of Public Relations Work

The basic process of public relations, just described, is manifested in a variety of ways. The PRSA Foundation lists the various aspects of public relations activity that are done by individuals working in the field. In addition, see the many roles of a public relations professional on page 17.

- **Counseling.** Providing advice to management concerning policies, relationships, and communications.
- **Research.** Determining attitudes and behaviors of publics in order to plan public relations strategies. Such research can be used to (1) generate mutual understanding or (2) influence and persuade publics.

- **Media relations.** Working with journalists and bloggers in seeking publicity or responding to their interests in the organization.
- **Publicity.** Disseminating planned messages through traditional mass media and social media platforms to further the organization's interests.
- **Employee/member relations.** Responding to concerns, informing, and motivating an organization's employees or members.
- **Community relations.** Planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organization and the community.
- **Public affairs.** Developing effective involvement in public policy and helping an organization adapt to public expectations. The term is also used by government agencies to describe their public relations activities and by many corporations as an umbrella term to describe multiple public relations activities.
- **Government affairs.** Relating directly with legislatures and regulatory agencies on behalf of the organization. Lobbying can be part of a government affairs program.
- **Issues management.** Identifying and addressing issues of public concern that affect the organization.
- **Financial relations.** Creating and maintaining investor confidence and building good relationships with the financial community. Also known as investor relations or shareholder relations.
- **Industry relations.** Relating with other firms in the industry of an organization and with trade associations.
- **Development/fund-raising.** Demonstrating the need for and encouraging the public to support an organization, primarily through financial contributions.
- **Multicultural relations/workplace diversity.** Relating with individuals and groups in various cultural groups. A good example is the 40th anniversary celebration of a Cuban restaurant in Miami on page 18.
- **Special events.** Stimulating an interest in a person, product, or organization by means of a well-planned event; also, activities designed to interact with publics and listen to them.
- **Marketing communications.** Combination of activities designed to sell a product, service, or idea, including advertising, collateral materials, publicity, promotion, direct mail, trade shows, social media, and special events.

These components, and how they function, constitute the substance of this textbook. The next sections, however, will help you more fully understand the differences between public relations and the related fields of journalism, advertising, and marketing.

Public Relations vs. Journalism

Writing is a common activity of both public relations professionals and journalists. Both also do their jobs in the same way. They interview people, gather and synthesize large amounts of information, write in a journalistic style, and are trained to produce good copy on deadline. In fact, many reporters eventually change careers and become public relations practitioners.

Figure 1.4 The Many Roles of a Public Relations Professional



Source: Alfredo Vela, TICs y Formacion, Spain (<http://ticsyformacion.com>).

This has led many people, including journalists, to the incorrect conclusion that little difference exists between public relations and journalism. For these people, public relations is simply being a “journalist-in-residence” for a nonmedia organization. However, despite the sharing of many techniques, the two fields are fundamentally different in scope, objectives, audiences, and channels.

Scope Public relations, as stated earlier, has many components, ranging from counseling to issues management and special events. Journalistic writing and media relations, although important, are only two of these elements. In addition, effective practice of public relations requires strategic thinking, problem-solving capability, and other management skills.

Objectives Journalists gather and select information for the primary purpose of providing the public with news and information. Public relations personnel also gather facts and information for the purpose of informing the public, but the objective is not only to inform but also to change people’s attitudes and behaviors in order to further an organization’s goals and objectives. Harold Burson, chairman of Burson-Marsteller, makes the point: “To be effective and credible, public relations messages must be based on facts. Nevertheless, we are advocates, and we need to remember

on the job

A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

A Cuban Restaurant in Miami Celebrates Its 40th Anniversary

Versailles Restaurant is an institution in the heart of Miami's "Little Havana" and is popularly known as "The World's Most Famous Cuban Restaurant" because of its excellent Cuban cuisine. It's not only a popular gathering place for the Cuban community, but also attracts famous musicians, film and TV actors, and even U.S. presidents.

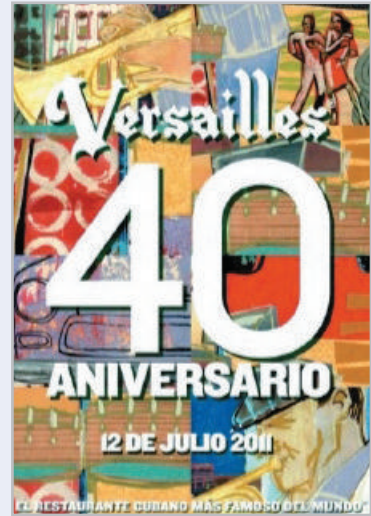
The restaurant's owners, the Valls family, decided to capitalize on its reputation by having a 40th anniversary celebration to thank the community for its support over the years. Public relations firm Republica was engaged to plan and executive the celebration. Its goals were (1) celebrate Versailles' iconic role within the community, (2) make Versailles top-of-mind among all generations, (3) reaffirm its renowned position, (4) thank the community for its devoted support throughout the last 40 years, and (5) own the claim, "World's Most Famous Cuban Restaurant."

Republica started by creating a 40th anniversary logo that included the tagline, "World's Most Famous Cuban Restaurant" that was used on all collateral materials. A block party was also organized that gave customers items from its original 1971 menu at 1971 prices. It was also an opportunity to announce renderings of Versailles' upcoming renovations and distribute commemorative 40th anniversary posters and branded coffee cups.

An invitation to a second event, held in a large tent adjacent to the restaurant, used "Spanglish" text to

represent the look and feel of Miami 40 years ago and was sent to VIPs, elected officials, friends, and family. More than 600 Invited guests were given complimentary valet service and provided with a VIP entrance to the celebration banquet. During the evening, Florida's governor and local officials presented a number of proclamations honoring the family and their contributions to the Miami community.

The anniversary celebration was a success. It received extensive media coverage in the local, national, and international media, including CNN and the Associated Press (AP). In addition, the restaurant's website rose to 3,000 unique visitors a month, and its Twitter account generated about 1,000 postings during the evening of



the banquet. It also received a Silver Anvil Award from the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in the category of events and observances.



Felipe Valls, Sr. is interviewed by the media at the 40th anniversary celebration of the family-owned restaurant, Versailles.

that. We are advocates of a particular point of view—our client’s or our employer’s point of view. And while we recognize that serving the public interest best serves our client’s interest, we are not journalists. That’s not our job.”

Audiences Journalists write primarily for a mass audience—readers, listeners, or viewers of the medium for which they work. By definition, mass audiences are not well defined, and a journalist on a daily newspaper or a TV station, for example, prepares material geared to a general audience. A public relations professional, in contrast, carefully segments audiences into various demographic and psychological characteristics. Such research allows messages to be tailored to audience needs, concerns, and interests for maximum effect.

Channels Most journalists, by nature of their employment, reach audiences primarily through one channel—the medium that publishes or broadcasts their work, or even a Web news site such as *Huffington Post*. Many, of course, also have their own blog or Twitter account, but the fact remains that public relations professionals use a variety of channels to reach a variety of audiences. The channels and platforms used may be a combination of traditional media outlets—newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. Or they may also include direct mail, brochures, posters, newsletters, trade journals, special events, podcasts, blogs, websites, Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube, and even mobile-enabled apps.

Public Relations vs. Advertising

Just as many people mistakenly equate publicity with public relations, there is also some confusion about the distinction between publicity (one area of public relations) and advertising.

Although publicity and advertising both utilize mass media for dissemination of messages, the format and context each uses are different. Publicity—information about an event, an individual or group, or a product—appears as a news item or feature story in the mass media or online. This is called *earned media* because editors, also known as gatekeepers, make the decision to use the material as a new item and the organization doesn’t pay for the placement.

Advertising, in contrast, is *paid media*. Organizations and individuals contract with the advertising department of a media outlet to buy space or time. An organization writes the content, decides the type and graphics, and controls where and when the advertisement will be used. In other words, advertising is simply renting space in a mass medium or on a website. The lion’s share of revenue for traditional media and even Facebook or Google comes from the selling of advertising space.

Other differences between public relations activities and advertising include:

- Most advertising is placed in mass media outlets such as television, radio, magazines, and newspapers. Public relations, however, often relies on what is called *owned media*. In other words, organizations produce and distribute content for media platforms “owned” or controlled by the organization. This can include newsletters, brochures, podcasts, websites, intranet, blogs, Facebook brand pages, Twitter handles, and videos.

We’re beginning to see research that supports the superiority of PR over advertising to launch a brand.

—Al and Laura Ries, authors of *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of Public Relations*

- Advertising is primarily directed to potential buyers of goods and services; public relations presents its message to specialized external audiences (stockholders, vendors, community leaders, environmental groups, and so on) and internal publics (employees) that are not necessarily purchasers of the product or service.
- Advertising is readily identified as a specialized communication function; public relations is broader in scope, dealing with the policies and performance of the entire organization, from the morale of employees to the amount of money given to local community organizations.
- Advertising is often used as a communication tool in public relations, and public relations activity often supports advertising campaigns. Advertising's primary function is to sell goods and services; public relations' function is to create an environment in which the organization can thrive. The latter calls for dealing with economic, social, and political factors that can affect the organization's brand or reputation.

The major disadvantage of advertising is the cost. A full-page color ad in *USA Today* on a week day is \$200,000. Advertising campaigns on network television, of course, can run into millions of dollars. Advertisers, for example, paid \$3.8 million for a 30-second Super Bowl ad in 2013. Consequently, companies often use a tool of public relations—product publicity—that is more cost effective and often more credible because the message appears in a news context. One poll by Opinion Research Corporation, for example, found that online articles about a product or service were more persuasive than banner ads, pop-up ads, e-mail offers, and sponsored links.

Public Relations vs. Marketing

Public relations is distinct from marketing in several ways, although their boundaries often overlap. Both disciplines deal with an organization's external relationships and employ similar communication tools to reach the public. Both also have the ultimate purpose of ensuring an organization's success and economic survival. Public relations and marketing, however, approach this task from somewhat different perspectives or worldviews.

Objectives The purpose of marketing is to sell goods and services through attractive packaging, competitive pricing, retail and online promotions, and efficient distribution systems. The purpose of public relations is to build relationships with a variety of publics that can enhance the organization's reputation and establish trust in its policies, products, and services.

Marketing is transaction oriented. While public relations can be part of a marketing strategy, it has a much larger responsibility within the organization.

—Dave Imre, an executive at Imre Communications, Baltimore

Audiences The primary audiences for marketing are consumers and customers. Public relations (often called “corporate communications”) deals with a much broader array of audiences, or publics. They may include investors, community leaders, environmental groups, vendors, government officials, and even employees, who can affect the organization's success and profitability through boycotts, legislation, and the generation of unfavorable publicity.

Competition vs. Opposition Marketing professionals tend to rely exclusively on competitive solutions, whereas public relations professionals often perceive the problem as effectively dealing with opposition. When meeting opposition to a product, marketing often thinks the solution is lower pricing or better packaging. However,

public relations professionals realize that pricing doesn't make any difference if consumers perceive that the product has defects or the company is associated with poor environmental practices or the use of sweatshop labor in developing nations.

Role in Management An organization, to be successful in the marketplace, must pay constant attention to its reputation and have policies that enhance trust and credibility among its multiple publics. Public relations, in its ideal form, directly deals with upper management to shape and promote the organization's core values. In sum, a brand is created through the expression of an organization's values, actions, and effective public relations strategies—not through a glitzy ad or marketing campaign.

How Public Relations Supports Marketing

Philip Kotler, professor of marketing at Northwestern University and author of a leading marketing textbook, says public relations is the fifth “P” of marketing strategy, which includes four other Ps—Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. As he wrote in the *Harvard Business Review*, “Public relations takes longer to cultivate, but when energized, it can help pull the company into the market.”

When public relations is used to support an organization's marketing objectives directly, it is called *marketing communications*. Thomas Harris, author of *The Marketer's Guide to Public Relations*, prefers the term *marketing public relations*. This, he says, distinguishes the function from *corporate public relations* that defines the corporation's relationships with its noncustomer publics.

Dennis L. Wilcox, in his text *Public Relations Writing and Media Techniques*, lists eight ways in which public relations activities contribute to fulfilling marketing objectives:

1. Developing new prospects for new markets, such as people who inquire after seeing or hearing a product release in the news media
2. Providing third-party endorsements—via newspapers, magazines, radio, and television—through news releases about a company's products or services, community involvement, inventions, and new plans
3. Generating sales leads, usually through articles in the trade press about new products and services
4. Creating an environment for a new product by raising an issue or situation that can be solved through using the new product or service
5. Stretching the organization's advertising and promotional dollars through timely and supportive releases about it and its products
6. Providing inexpensive sales literature, because articles about the company and its products can be reprinted as informative pieces for prospective customers
7. Establishing the corporation as an authoritative source of information on a given product
8. Helping to sell minor products that don't have large advertising budgets

Toward an Integrated Perspective

Although well-defined differences exist among the fields of advertising, marketing, and public relations, there is an increasing realization that an organization's objectives can be best accomplished through an integrated approach.

This understanding has given rise to such terms as *integrated marketing communications (IMC)*, *convergent communications*, and *integrated communications*. Don Schultz, Stanley Tannenbaum, and Robert Lauterborn, authors of *Integrated Marketing Communications*, explain the title of their book as follows:

A concept of marketing communication planning that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines—e.g., General Advertising, Direct Response, Sales Promotion, and Public Relations—and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency, and maximum communication impact.

Several factors have fueled the trend toward IMC. (See the IMC model in Figure 1.5.) First is the downsizing of organizations. Many of them have consolidated departments and have also reduced staff dedicated to various communication disciplines. As a result, one department, with fewer employees, is expected to do a greater variety of communication tasks.

Second, organizational marketing and communication departments are making do with tighter budgets. Many organizations, to avoid the high cost of advertising, look for alternative ways to deliver messages. These may include (1) building buzz via word of mouth, (2) targeting influentials, (3) Web marketing, (4) grassroots marketing, (5) media relations and product publicity, and (6) event sponsorship.

Third is the increasing realization that advertising, with its high costs, isn't the silver bullet that it used to be. The problem is the increasing clutter of advertising, the fragmentation of audiences among multiple media, and a general lack of credibility among consumers.

Al and Laura Ries, authors of the popular book (at least among public relations people) *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR*, write, "We're beginning to see research that supports the superiority of PR over advertising to launch a brand. A recent study of 91 new product launches shows highly successful products are more likely to use PR-related activities than less successful ones."

It comes down to economics. If you're coming up with one idea that can be used across five different marketing disciplines, it just makes the idea much stronger, that much more cohesive when you are communicating it to your audience, and it makes your dollar work that much harder.

—Andrea Morgan, EVP of consumer brands for Euro RSCG

Figure 1.5 The IMC Model

This illustration shows the components of an integrated marketing communications model.



Fourth, it is now widely recognized that the marketing of products and services can be affected by public and social policy issues. Environmental legislation influences packaging and the content of products, a proposed luxury tax on expensive autos affects sales of those cars, and a company's support of Planned Parenthood or health benefits for same-sex partners may spur a product boycott.

The impact of such factors, not traditionally considered by marketing managers, has led many professionals to believe that organizations should do a better job of integrating public relations and public affairs into their overall marketing considerations. In fact, David Corona, writing in the *Public Relations Journal* some years ago, was the first one to advance the idea that marketing's sixth "P" should be public policy.

The concept of integration, therefore, is the ability of organizations to use a variety of strategies and tactics to convey a consistent message in a variety of forms. The metaphor might be the golfer with a variety of clubs in her bag. She may use one club (public relations) to launch a product, another club (advertising) to reinforce the message, and yet another club (Web and social media marketing) to actually sell the product or service to a well-defined audience.

The golf metaphor also reflects a realization on the part of management and marketing executives that public relations is an effective strategy in several important areas. A *PRWeek* survey of marketing executives, for example, found that public relations ranked higher in effectiveness than advertising or marketing in nine areas: (1) brand reputation, (2) corporate reputation, (3) cultivating thought leaders, (4) strategy development, (5) launching a new product, (6) building awareness, (7) generating word of mouth, (8) message development, and (9) overcoming a crisis.

A good example of an integrated marketing campaign is Sony's PlayStation campaign to get a wider audience for its game, *Uncharted 3: Drake's Deception* series. The creative idea was to feature the hero, Nathan Drake, as an example of the "half-tucked shirt" look that was becoming a fashion trend in Hollywood. The campaign was launched during New York Fashion Week and Sony took a tongue-in-cheek approach, using Drake to parody the new half-tucked shirt fashion trend.

The integrated communications team hosted a pop-up half-tuck dressing room in New York's Herald Square and invited people on the street to receive a Nathan Drake half-tuck makeover. The team also released celebrity photos illustrating the half-tuck look in popular culture and also engaged a fashion expert, Jay Manuel, to talk up the trend in various media interviews. The company also purchased a half-tuck Facebook tab and placed a humorous half-tuck ad on a Times Square billboard during Fashion Week.

The campaign is a good example of what is now called *brand journalism* or what others call *content marketing*, in which advertising (paid media) played a minor role. It generated almost 300 news stories in game publications and mainstream consumer publications and was covered by E!, NBC, and the *Today Show*. As a result, Sony exceeded sales expectations and shipped 3.8 million copies on the launch day of the new game.

A Career in Public Relations

The growth of public relations as a career field has spawned any number of public relations courses, sequences, and majors.

The Commission on Public Relations Education, which includes public relations educators and representatives from all of the major professional organizations, has

set the standard by specifying a minimum of five courses that should be required in a public relations major. They are:

- Introduction to public relations (including theory, origin, and principles)
- Public relations research, measurement, and evaluation
- Public relations writing and production
- Supervised work experience in public relations (internship)
- An additional public relations course in law and ethics, planning and management, and case studies or campaigns

PR people are the story tellers. It's our job to help find the authenticity at the core of our companies and clients, and tell those stories to the world in real words that will really be heard.

—Fred Cook, president of Golin Harris public relations

In addition, the Commission highly recommends that students take courses in such areas as marketing, management, economics, social psychology, and multicultural communication. Other experienced professionals agree that coursework is important, but also feel networking skills should not be overlooked. See the Insights box about a first-person account.

Public relations in the United States has traditionally been taught in departments and schools of journalism. Consequently, a number of journalism graduates also consider employment in public relations, as job opportunities on newspapers and other traditional media continue to decline. Lindsey Miller, in a www.ragan.com article, writes, “As curricula diversify and career options widen, many J-school grads are seeing the more stable and better-paying corporate communications field as fertile ground for their skills. They’re armed not only with the ability to write a good article, but they can also tell a good story on a range of platforms, using a variety of media.”

on the job

INSIGHTS

Networking: The Key to Career Success

By Robin Carr

We all take different paths to reach our professional and personal goals. Whatever you do, be sure to network, network and network some more. Every job I have ever had has been the direct result of networking and I cannot stress this enough.

And while social media sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter are

great tools to network and learn, there's nothing like getting out and meeting people face to face. Go to monthly luncheons, mixers and attend business conferences with interesting speakers and panels. Collect business cards, follow up with an email or LinkedIn invitation, and your network will grow.

Even while you are still in school, take the time to go to various mixers and events and meet people. IABC (International Association of Business Communicators) and PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) have open events and you don't have to be a member.

Social channels have realized the importance of face-to-face



Robin Carr

interaction. LinkedIn, for example, has hundreds of online groups that you can join and they often have meetings and conferences. They can be for PR or whatever other interests and hobbies you may have. Same with Twitter and their “tweet-ups” and Google+ gatherings—these all great examples of the best of both on and off-line interactions.

While in school, get actively involved with your PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) chapter. Often times,

The terrific thing about public relations as a discipline is that you can apply it to practically anything.

your area PRSA chapter will host PRSSA students and create professional partner programs. This is an excellent way to not only network, but find a mentor or two.

After graduation, I worked at a PR agency for nearly two years to get general experience in the work world. Agencies are very good places for PR graduates to start. There are a variety of clients and you can learn and discover what your interests are and, of course, network. There are many agencies that have different specialties: start-up companies, technology, environmental, consumer products, and hospitality, to name a few.

While I learned a lot at my time at the agency, my first love was sports, so I was able to land an informational interview with the Publicity Director for the San Francisco Giants. There are very limited PR openings in sports, however, and while I felt discouraged at the time, I was told to be patient and wait for an available opportunity. Sure enough, about six months later, I attended a Giants game and I ran into the gentleman I had interviewed with. He said “call me tomorrow—my assistant quit today!” So I got the job as an administrative assistant in the publicity department. It was very entry level, but it was a foot in the door. And the Giants had always promised me that I would

move up and I was promoted several times. I worked there 10 years, before moving on to Nike and EA Sports.

The terrific thing about public relations as a discipline is that you can apply it to practically anything. I worked in sports public relations for 18 years; however, my career path has included video gaming, retail, technology and fashion. There are also networking events besides PR groups that you can join that are catered to your field of PR. For instance, I’m a member of the Association for Women in Sports Media, WISE (Women in Sports/Entertainment) and the National Sports Marketing Association.

Finally, if possible, do more than one internship—two preferably. Take advantage of opportunities when they come up and get in on the ground floor if you have to. Be patient—if you really want to move up to the next level, work hard and prove yourself. It will pay off.

Robin Carr has worked almost 30 years in public relations, including stints at the San Francisco Giants, Nike, EA Sports, Ubisoft, Gap, Inc., and Kodak. She is currently director of public relations for Xoom, a global digital money transfer company in San Francisco. Robin is a graduate of the public relations degree program at San Jose State University.

Such skills, of course, are important in public relations work, but there’s some debate whether journalism majors have the training and temperament that lead to higher management positions in public relations. Richard Mintz, managing director of the Harbour Group in Washington, D.C., told an *Atlantic* magazine blogger, “Journalists, by their nature, don’t make great advocates or public relations people, because they’re trained to be objective rather than take sides. They also tend to work alone,

and they have no business experience.” And journalist Mary Ellen Arch who decided to get a master’s degree in public relations after being laid-off from a newspaper told a *New York Times* reporter, “Working in the newsroom does not prepare you for a job in public relations.” Many journalists, however, have found that their talents are somewhat in demand by organizations who are using “brand journalism” and “content marketing” to reach consumers with informative articles about their organizations, products, and services.

In sum, there are many paths to a career in public relations. Majoring in public relations, or at least taking some basic courses in the subject, is considered the best preparation, but majors from other fields such as journalism, communication studies, and marketing also have skills that are valued by many employers. Former TV news producer Bev Carlson, a board member of Nebraska’s chapter of the PRSA, told www.ragan.com, “It all depends on the person and their willingness to be flexible and learn.”

There’s also some thought that public relations courses should be in a school of business instead of a journalism department or school. The argument is that today’s public relations is no longer exclusively a journalistic-type activity that involves working with the media. James Lukaszewski, a well-known consultant and speaker in the public relations field, is quite blunt. He wrote in *The Strategist*, “At minimum, PR programs belong in marketing sequences rather than journalism sequences. The sooner we can reflect a more management-like perspective, the more quickly we’ll find ourselves called in for our advice and counsel.” Some success along this line has occurred as the result of efforts by the Public Relations Society of America and the Arthur W. Page Society, a group of senior-level public relations executives, to have public relations included in MBA programs.

Many European universities, for example, offer a public relations curriculum as part of a business curriculum. At the University of Belgrade in Serbia, for example, public relations is located in the Faculty of Economics. And in Latvia, the strongest public relations program in the country is taught at Turība Business University. Management schools in India also offer the most courses in public relations and corporate communications. In the United States, however, the vast majority of public relations programs continue to be part of schools or departments of journalism or communication.

Essential Career Skills

A student’s choice of a major in college is important, but equally important is participating in campus clubs, taking internships, and even working part-time at jobs that develop essential skills for a successful career in public relations. The essential skills are (1) writing skill, (2) research ability, (3) planning expertise, (4) problem-solving ability, (5) business/economics competence, and (6) expertise in social media.

1. Writing skill. The ability to put information and ideas onto paper clearly and concisely is essential. Good grammar and good spelling are vital. Misspelled words and sloppy sentence structure are unacceptable. The importance of writing skill is emphasized in a career advice column in *Working Woman*: “I changed careers, choosing public relations as having the best potential, but found it difficult to persuade employers that my writing and interpersonal skills were sufficient for an entry-level job in the profession.”

2. Research ability. Arguments for causes must have factual support instead of generalities. A person must have the persistence and ability to gather information from a variety of sources, as well as to conduct original research by designing and implementing opinion polls or audits. Too many public relations programs fail because the organization does not assess audience needs and perceptions. Skillful use of the

on the job

INSIGHTS

Do You Have the Right Personality for a Career in Public Relations?

Take a look at this checklist. How many of the personality traits do you have? Check each item that you think accurately describes you. If you check fewer than 15 of the 25 items, a career in public relations may not be the best fit for you. If you check 20 or more, then such a career may fit you like a hand in a glove.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have a good sense of humor? | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you able to easily persuade people? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you consider yourself curious or interested in a variety of subjects? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Are you generally positive and optimistic? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you present yourself professionally? Do you maintain a well-groomed, business-like appearance? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you enjoy reading on diverse subjects? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is it easy for you to meet people? Do you consider yourself “friendly”? | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you a showman? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you have a determination to bring projects to completion? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you converse easily with most anyone? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you like creative endeavors? | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you a high-energy person? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do you handle rejection and frustration well? | <input type="checkbox"/> Would friends describe you as considerate and tactful? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you deal well with emergencies or crises? |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you a skilled wordsmith? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you view mistakes as a way to learn? |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you able to gain and maintain the trust of your boss? | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you good at being factual and objective? |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you like being with people? | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you respectful of others’ points of view? |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you a good listener? | <input type="checkbox"/> Do friends think you’re perceptive and sensitive? |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Do you like solving problems for people? | <input type="checkbox"/> Are you a quick learner? |

Internet and computer databases is an important element of research work. Reading current newspapers and magazines also is important.

3. Planning expertise. A public relations program involves a number of communication tools and activities that must be carefully planned and coordinated. A person needs to be a good planner to make certain that materials are distributed in a timely manner, events occur without problems, and budgets are not exceeded. Public relations people must be highly organized, detail-oriented, and able to see the big picture. Caryn Alagno, vice president of Edelman Worldwide, adds, “Pay attention to details . . . and when it comes to the ‘small stuff,’ make sure you treat all tasks like a big deal.”

4. Problem-solving ability. Innovative ideas and fresh approaches are needed to solve complex problems or to make a public relations program unique and memorable. Increased salaries and promotions go to people who show top management how to solve problems creatively.

5. Business/economics competence. The increasing emphasis on public relations as a management function calls for public relations students to learn the “nuts and bolts” of business and economics. According to Joel Curren, senior vice president of CKPR in Chicago, “The greatest need PR people have is understanding how a business

Students should not only know how to use social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter, but also how to apply critical thinking to the selection, implementation, and evaluation of such tools in achieving client or employer goals

Commission on Public Relations Education

and, more importantly, how a public company operates.” Rachel Beanland, a professional interviewed by *Public Relations Tactics*, noted that almost all of the recent public relations grads she talked to wished they had taken a marketing course. In sum, students preparing for careers in public relations should obtain a solid grounding by taking courses in economics, management, and marketing.

6. Expertise in social media. Employers still value expertise in mainstream media relations, but it’s now just as important to have social media savvy. A survey of employers by online MarketingVOX found 80 percent of the respondents agreed that knowledge of social networks is either important or very important. The three most important skills for job applicants are social networking, blogging, and tweeting. Employers also prefer job applicants who know about podcasting, search engine optimization (SEO), e-mail outreach, Web content management, and social bookmarking.

It should be noted, of course, that all jobs in public relations don’t require all these essential skills in equal proportion. It often depends on your specific job responsibilities and assignments. Other skills required for today’s practitioner are in the Insights box below. You may also want to take the personality quiz on page 27.

on the job

INSIGHTS

How to Succeed in Public Relations

Various research studies have identified the personal characteristics that lead to a successful career in public relations. The following list was compiled by the Commission on Public Relations Education (www.commpred.org):

- A high-quality liberal arts education
- A cosmopolitan worldview
- Intellectual curiosity
- Excellent mass and interpersonal communication skills
- Depth and breadth knowledge of public relations theory
- An interest in life-long learning
- A fascination with the public relations environment, both within the organization and external to it
- Empathy, wisdom and understanding of diverse populations
- Focus on a professional role, both within the organization as well as its external environment
- Analytical problem-solving skills
- Respect for the frequent need for urgency in practitioners’ responsibilities
- An orientation to goal achievement while thriving on hard work
- An ability to complete multiple tasks that are often a combination of strategic, tactical and technical responsibilities, all of which have tight deadlines
- A strong work ethic
- The understanding that public relations practitioners commonly work hours far in excess of a traditional 40-hour week