

Encyclopedia of
**PUBLIC
RELATIONS**

Robert L. Heath
Editor

VOLUME 2



Encyclopedia of
PUBLIC
RELATIONS

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**PUBLIC
RELATIONS**

Editor

Robert L. Heath
University of Houston

VOLUME 1

A SAGE Reference Publication

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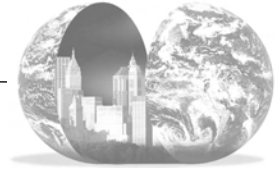
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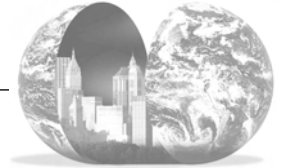
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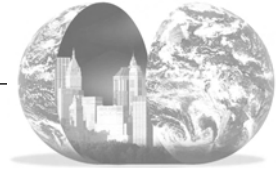
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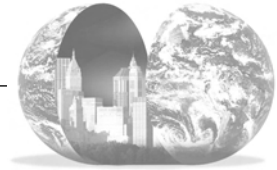
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Activism: Unidentified activists from the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP) stage a demonstration on July 11, 2000, in Durban, South Africa, at the 13th International AIDS Conference. ACT UP called on the World Health Organization (WHO) to distribute antiretroviral treatments to poor countries.

Asia, practice of public relations in: *Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER)* journalists, British citizen Rodney Tasker (*left*) and United States citizen Shawn Crispin (*right*), attend a press conference at the Thai Immigration Bureau in Bangkok on February 27, 2002. Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra insisted that Thailand had the sovereign right to expel the two foreign journalists over an article they wrote that touched on the government's relations with the country's revered monarchy.

Barnum, P. T.: A portrait of P. T. Barnum on a Barnum and Company circus poster that advertises an exhibit featuring "Great Jumbo's Skeleton."

Berlowe, Phyllis: Photo

Bernays, Edward: Photo

Bogart, Judith S.: Photo

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Committee on Public Information: Poster for "Under Four Flags," one of a series of films by the Committee on Public Information promoting the United States' efforts in World War I. Such films

were used both as propaganda and as fundraisers for the war effort.

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Consumer/customer relations: Figure 1. Ten phrases to attract return customers.

Co-orientation theory: Figure 1. Co-orientation model.

Crisis and crisis management: Joe Allbaugh, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), briefs reporters on September 15, 2001, about the ongoing operations at the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Workers started to remove the collapsed portion of the Pentagon shortly after the briefing.

Crisis communications and the Tylenol poisonings: James Burke, Johnson & Johnson executive, displays a new tamper-resistant Tylenol bottle on November 11, 1982. Nearly eight months earlier, six Chicago-area people died of cyanide poisoning from tainted Tylenol tablets.

Cultural topoi: Table 1. Cultural Topoi Compared

Cutlip, Scott M.: Photo

Drobis, David: Photo

Dudley, Pendleton: Photo

Ellsworth, James Drummond: Photo

Environmental groups: Protesters at a 1990 Earth First! protest hold up a banner reading “Stop Redwood Slaughter.”

Exxon and the Valdez crisis: Cleanup workers spray oiled rocks with high-pressure hoses after the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground on March 24, 1989, spilling more than 10 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound.

Exxon and the Valdez crisis: An Exxon memo proclaims the rules of zero tolerance, posted after the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in Alaska.

Federal Trade Commission: The former R.J. Reynolds cigarette advertising mascot, “Joe Camel,” plays pool and smokes cigarettes in an advertisement for Camel cigarettes that covers a billboard in a field. The FTC and antismoking advocates pressured R.J. Reynolds to eliminate the “Joe Camel” campaign in 1997, accusing the company of using a cartoon character to attract young smokers.

Focus group: As a focus group in Needham, Massachusetts, watches an interview of Monica Lewinsky on televisions in 1999, members’ reactions are displayed directly on screen in graph form.

Four-Minute Men: A 1917 poster for one of the Four-Minute Men speeches. President Woodrow Wilson recruited 75,000 speakers called Four-Minute Men to give short talks on United States war aims to the public at theater intermissions and other venues.

Frede, Ralph E.: Photo

Hammond, George: Photo

Health Belief Model: Figure 1. Health Belief Model.

Hill, John Wiley: Photo

Hoog, Thomas W.: Photo

Hunter, Barbara W.: Photo

Image restoration theory: Table 1. Image Restoration Strategies

Industrial barons (of the 1870s–1920s): Industrial baron J. P. Morgan (1837–1913), founder of U.S. Steel, shakes his cane at a passerby on a city street. Although Morgan is alleged to have said, “I don’t owe the public anything,” he called upon early public relations practitioner Theodore Newton Vail

to help save the American Telephone & Telegraph Company in 1902.

Integrated marketing communication: Table 1. Strengths of Alternative IMC Tactics

Involvement: Figure 1. Motivation-ability-opportunity model for enhancing message processing.

Labor Union Public Relations: Local 600 of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) electrical workers electrocuting an effigy of Hitler in a 1942 Labor Day parade. Public relations philosophy, strategies, and tactics have been used in struggles for organized labor and its goals.

Lucky Strike Green Campaign: Lucky Strike Cigarettes used a variety of campaigns to sell products in the 1930s, from promoting green—the color of their cigarette packaging—as fashionable for women to featuring Santa Claus as a customer, as in this 1936 advertisement. “Luckies are easy on my throat,” Santa is quoted as saying. “There are no finer tobaccos than those used in Luckies, and Luckies’ exclusive process is your throat protection against irritation . . . against cough.”

Muckrakers (and the age of progressivism): American journalist and political philosopher Lincoln Steffens (1866–1936), who published many articles exposing urban political corruption. He was prominent among the writers Theodore Roosevelt called “muckrakers.”

National Investor Relations Institute: Chairman of the Board of the General Electric Company, Ralph J. Cordiner (*center*), pounds the gavel here to open a meeting of share owners of the firm. Some 2,500 owners attended the 68th annual meeting of the firm. Flanking Cordiner are Robert Patton (*left*), President, and Ray H. Luebbe, Secretary. Cordiner established the first efforts at formalizing a company’s communication program with shareholders in 1953.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs): Members of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) wave fliers during a protest outside the conference room of the opening session of the World Trade Organization (WTO) conference in Doha on November 9, 2001.

Page, Arthur W.: Photo

Page, Arthur W.: Arthur W. Page’s book, *The Bell Telephone System* (1941), explained the company’s

the financial policy and how it affected the company's mission to serve, including the public relations function. Nearly 200,000 copies of the book were sold in hardcover and in paperback.

Perjury: Senator Karl Mundt (R) of South Dakota, who was acting chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) when the first testimony on the Alger Hiss–Whitaker Chambers investigation was heard, is shown in his office scanning the headlines that tell him of the jury's January 21, 1950, verdict in Hiss's second perjury trial. Chambers, a senior editor from *Time* magazine and an admitted ex-communist, identified Hiss and several other federal officials to HUAC as having been members of a communist cell whose purpose had been to infiltrate the U.S. government. The conviction made Hiss liable to a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and fines totaling \$4,000.

Plank, Betsy: Photo

Political action committees (PACs): United States President Bill Clinton addresses the 54th annual meeting of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA) while in Chicago, July 30, 2000. The ATLA is regularly one of the top-spending political action committees (PACs).

Postcolonialism theory and public relations: An Indian protester uses a megaphone during a demonstration against the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy in New Delhi on August 27, 2003. Scholars have pointed to the Bhopal tragedy as an example of postcolonialism because most mainstream public relations literature continues to depict how the company dealt with the crisis and maintained its line of communication with its shareholders and investors, while the voice of the victims of the tragedy is rarely heard.

Psychographics: Figure 1. Generational influences.

Public Affairs Council: Table 1. The Public Affairs Council, in Profile

Public Affairs Council: Table 2. Membership Composition

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Public Affairs Council: Table 4. The Components of Public Affairs: The Public Affairs Council's Fields of Expertise

Public health campaign: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' *Healthy People 2010: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Outcomes* is one of the major engines driving the prioritization of specific efforts in current health services and research.

Public Relations Field Dynamics (PRFD): Figure 1. Field diagrams of the perceived relational landscape.

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Roberts, Rosalee A.: Photo

Rules theory: Figure 1. Rules compliance continuum.

Spin: Prince Charles on a walkabout in Sheffield in 1998, with his Deputy Private Secretary Mark Bolland behind him (holding files). Described by the British newspapers as the prince's "spin doctor," Bolland left Charles's employ soon thereafter to set up his own public relations agency.

Sweden, practice of public relations in: Table 1. Some Facts About the Swedish Public Relations Association

Traverse-Healy, Tim: Photo

Vail, Theodore Newton: Photo

Warfare and public relations: President Woodrow Wilson (*left*) and George Creel, Committee on Public Information (more commonly known as the Creel Committee) leave the Royal Train at a station in the Alps on January 2, 1919, for exercise. Wilson formed the committee during World War I, made up of leading newspaper editors, advertising writers, and members of the public relations field as a means of spreading propaganda.

Wire service: A United Press International (UPI) Unifax machine was an early type of fax machine that used early photocopier technology, enabling the sending of picture data over phone lines and turning UPI into a "wire service."

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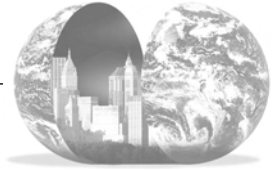
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Preface



Some may wonder why public relations is a deserving topic for the extensive analysis it receives in this encyclopedia. After all, many might think, it is “just PR.” In the view of some or even many, public relations is the art of sham, spin, buzz, sandbagging, and “being nice.” Others fear it as deep-pockets lobbying that gives privilege to powerful companies and special interests. Having said that, some critics and many in the general public might be satisfied. They may take a dismissive attitude. That attitude, however, can be counterproductive. Public relations does not slink into the corner because it is dismissed. It is there to be seen and to exert influence. Thus, engaged and thoughtful analysis of the profession may be required before a final opinion is formed on the ethics and societal role of the practice. Otherwise, critics and students of public relations may make a couple of serious mistakes.

First, a dismissive attitude toward public relations often is based on a narrow and considerably naïve sense of what public relations is and what practitioners do. This sort of flippant dismissal can lead one to miss the darker side of the practice, which indeed adds evidence to support many of those claims. However, such dismissal causes one to avoid considering the reality that when mispracticed, public relations can divert attention from the real issue, giving a false sense of how popular and favorable a product might actually be. Endless public relations efforts exist, some heavily masked or even

dismissed by the half-sibling of public relations, marketing. Thus, when we watch the Super Bowl or the Academy Awards (or any of the endless list of similarly high-profile events), we may fail to recognize the hand of public relations being played. Publicity and promotion are the often silent tools of public relations; some will argue that the best public relations is that which is not recognized as such.

The second mistake is failure to understand that public relations also plays a large role in public policy issue debates. In fact, during the 1970s, when the term *issues management* was coined, that aspect of the practice was started in large part by advertisers who believed that issue advertising could combat the critics of large business activities. This was not a new era in public policy debates. Many senior practitioners had a long reputation of working in the public policy arena. Many believe that the enormous, society-defining debates in the last decades of the 19th century spawned much of the practice as we know it today. But practitioners quickly realized that issue advertising had limited likelihood of appeal and impact as a means of narrowing the chasm between corporate performance and public expectations. In such debates, members of various segments of the general public and opinion leaders may be more interested in the arguments made in a well-crafted editorial or book by an expert—or a feature article—than an advertisement. Thus, the work of the public relations practitioner came to the fore—once again.

Society could exist without public relations, but it won't. This means that public relations, for better or for worse, is here to stay. What we think of as public relations may not be in dispute, but what practitioners do and the good or bad they accomplish will be the subject of debate. The challenge facing the profession of public relations, and the men and women who serve as practitioners, is to earn the trust and respect of critics and the general public. Senior practitioners and academics do not take this challenge lightly.

Public relations gained professional and academic status during the 20th century in the United States and from there it spread to much of the rest of the world. That is the good news. In that regard, public relations in the minds of many people and academics came to be viewed as a positive way for organizations to get their message before markets, audiences, and strategic publics, the critics and supporters of such organizations. In a positive sense, then, public relations helped organizations build mutually beneficial relationships with customers, critics, and other stakeholders. This effort will continue. However, because of its contemporary origins, it has often been associated with propaganda—a label that senior practitioners tend to avoid and reject.

The bad news is that public relations, in the minds of some or many, is the dark art of manipulation and confusion. For some, it is a shifty business. It occurs in the White House as well as board rooms of businesses, nonprofits, and governmental agencies. It has been characterized as “a stealth bomber” that can deliver persuasive messages in ways that get through people's defenses. Seen in this way, public relations can be viewed as a tool that large organizations have and will continue to use to engineer consent. That means that people should not trust public relations or its practitioners if they are sneaky, manipulative, deceptive, and dishonest—if they do not tell the truth, if they engage in spin, or if they are expert sandbaggers and flacks.

The *Encyclopedia of Public Relations* is a vehicle that may help the field to reach a wide array of readers who can serve as opinion leaders for improving the image and ethics of the practice. This

work intends to provide an honest but positively biased treatment of public relations. It strives to give a sound, insightful, and appreciative view of what public relations is and does as well as the ethical challenges it must meet to be seen as a positive force in society. From its launch, this project has been a substantial, even daunting, undertaking. Like all edited projects, this one has been a difficult and exciting journey. The most fascinating part has been wrestling with the list of practitioners who should be featured with their own biographical entries. Talk to 20 senior practitioners and academics, and you will get a list of names they believe deserve recognition in a work such as this. Some people will be on all lists. Some lists will be substantially different. Some people will argue that certain people should not be featured, although others will insist that such a work would be inadequate without them.

Consequently, we created a list of names of extraordinary practitioners who have helped define the profession by what they have said and done. The next problem was getting authors. Many of the people who were qualified to write certain biographical entries deserved entries themselves. So we did some trading. Some potential authors of various entries were not in a mental or physical state to contribute. We even had some people pass beyond this physical existence during the process. Often the “only person” who could write an entry was unable to do so, but never unwilling. For the subjects of some entries, documents and other source materials simply were not available or were in storage somewhere unknown to the authors. In some crucial instances, the person featured in the entry was mentally or physically unable to provide additional information.

Out of these difficulties, however, we did find worthy entries and came to see this document as the most authoritative reference source on many of the persons who crafted the profession in the 19th and 20th centuries. In finding subjects and authors, we were even able to reach beyond the boundaries of the United States and feature key players in other countries, such as Great Britain and Germany. Public relations neither started in the United States nor does it reside exclusively there. So we were

fortunate to give voice to the presence of the practice and key practitioners in other countries.

Still, there are omissions. Some will never be recovered. Facts get lost in time. We were fortunate, if for no other reason than this, to undertake this project when we did. The lives and careers of these pioneers are fleeting. And most of the people who made the profession what it is today lived and worked in the 20th century.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: WHAT'S IN A TERM?

Other than the people who made their livings from public relations, what is this book about? One of the longest entries is devoted to a terribly inadequate definition of the profession. People in public relations can't universally agree on what the practice constitutes or what the term means. For this reason, the definition of public relations is offered as a dialogue on public relations to help students, practitioners, academics, and people in general appreciate the scope and purpose of the term. If the book helps readers to think about the meaning of the term and consider its many facets, then those of us who contributed to the definition will feel satisfied. We simply don't like the term to be treated as a stereotype. And for the most part, practitioners and academics prefer the term *public relations* to *PR* because the latter is invariably associated with the dark side of the profession.

As long ago as the 1970s, attempts were made to sort out definitions. Senior practitioners such as Edward L. Bernays and John W. Hill had by then published books in which they offered their definitions. By the early 1970s, the term had been defined by the Public Relations Society of America. Several textbook authors had tried their hand at defining the term. Endless efforts at definition have occurred in journal articles and critical comments by journalists.

As is true of many crucial words for professions in society, this one passes through history, professional practice, academic classes, media commentary, and everyday conversations. The passing flows as easily and unstoppably as water through cupped hands. It just won't stay put. But just as medicine once was generally referred to as quackery, public

relations practitioners in some circles are known as flacks and journalists are called hacks—a term that was used in that context long before it was made popular in reference to cyber-intruders.

Some practitioners and academics have tracked the various definitions of this wily beast as hunters pursue their prey. Writing in 1977, Dr. Rex Harlow observed, using the start of the 20th century as his benchmark,

A review of the history of the definition of public relations shows that the definition has changed considerably over the past 70 years. This historical review reveals how inextricably the development of the definition has been and is bound to the movement of thought and action of the society in which the public relations practitioner does his [or her] work. It shows the present form, content and status of the public relations definition, but even more the effect of environmental factors and change upon its development during the past quarter of a century. (p. 49)

Without a doubt, then, a discussion of public relations is necessarily a discussion of the society or societies in which it is practiced. We can't discuss this topic without considering the human drama of change, markets, public policies, and the public policy "fistfights" that go along with all of that. We added the word *her* to Harlow's comment because today the public relations professional is more likely to be a woman than a man.

ELEMENTS OF THE PRACTICE AND STUDY: WHAT MAKES UP THE PRACTICE?

One of the goals of this book is to make the practice of public relations more adequately understood by an array of readers, including the general public. For better or worse, public relations plays a vital role in commerce, nonprofit activities, and the processes of government. Movies such as *Wag the Dog* give people a shocking view of how people might be able to manipulate the media by manufacturing news that shapes policy—thereby manipulating what people know, think about, and end up doing. That's a lot of power. It must be guided by a strong sense of professionalism and sound

ethical principles. In the conduct of their business, practitioners have a lot of “tools” in their kits. Each day, they get more. What’s in the tool kit?

Mission/Vision

Organizations craft mission and vision statements to help them know where they are going and to chart their plans to achieve those outcomes. Public relations is a useful tool to help frame missions as well as to accomplish those ends. Also, persons who practice public relations operate out of stated and unstated mission and vision statements. Organizations such as the Public Relations Society of America and the International Association of Business Communicators voice their own mission and vision statements to serve as broad guides for the practice of professional communicators.

Strategies

Perhaps the broadest tools in the kit are strategies. It is here that public relations’ reputation for manipulation is often deserved. One of the strategies available to practitioners is manipulation. Practitioners have made the small seem large, and the large seem small. They create buzz to compete with disinterest. At their worst, they can be masters and mistresses of attracting attention and framing statements—manufacturing reputations and crafting images that may be far from reality. They have created pseudo-events. Many of the entries in this book look at the strategies of public relations.

In a broad sense, some of the strategies include publicizing, promoting, engaging in issue debates, informing, persuading, and working to create mutually beneficial relationships. They can entail negotiation, collaboration, and cooperation.

On the down side, just as practitioners know how to open the flow of information, they also may stop that flow through spin, sandbagging, and diversion. Practitioners may cover up as well as uncover.

Functions

The functions of public relations often are part of the list of services announced by agencies. They

may be job descriptions and divisions in large corporate public relations departments.

Functions are used to accomplish or implement strategies. Thus, for instance, if publicly traded companies are required by the Securities and Exchange Commission to communicate with shareholders, they have an investor relations function.

Nonprofits engage in fundraising or development, a function. All organizations engage in media relations, another function. They may have a customer relations or employee relations function. They may engage in issues management. Universities and colleges have sports information functions, marketing functions, development functions, student relations functions, and so on.

Counseling is a vital function. Counseling is the stock and trade of the senior practitioner. Such persons work to position organizations to help them earn respect and support and to avoid collisions with opinions and competing interests. Acting wisely and ethically, the counselor can help the organization to operate in ways that do not offend the sentiments and expectations of key publics. Engaged in as manipulation, counseling can help an organization to appear to be something quite different from what it is and thereby enable it to earn falsely deserved rewards. In the worst sense, perhaps, such counseling can keep a politician from being found wanting or help a business to seem to be worth much more than shareholders would otherwise suspect.

A function is a broad category of tools to achieve specific strategies for a particular purpose in working with some definable audience, market, or public.

Perhaps the ultimate function of public relations is the creation of meaning. Here also, practitioners and academics confront thorny ethical issues. What meaning needs to be created to help build and maintain mutually beneficial relationships? How can practitioners help shape the meaning that strengthens community through diverse voices and alternative opinions?

Academics tend to look at process more than meaning. Practitioners never forget the importance of meaning. The meaning may center on the favorable attributes of a product or service. Meaning may seek to foster a favorable image of an organization. Employee relationships depend on meaning. So do

donor relationships. The list is long. The challenge is great.

Serious, ethical, and responsible practitioners know they cannot manipulate meaning. Meaning must be based on sound judgment, high ethical principles, and a mutuality of interests.

We may add ethical decision making to the list of functions. That notion may baffle critics. Practitioners, however, are in an excellent position to hold and apply sound, ethical principles to guide the organizations they serve.

Tools and Tactics

How a function works to implement strategies depends on and defines the tools or tactics that are specialized to that function. Thus, for investor relations, one of the tools is the annual financial report. Another tool, used especially by companies that manufacture chemicals, is the health, safety, and environment report.

The media release—what used to be called the press release—is a standard tool practitioners use to feature newsworthy facts and opinions for the use of reporters and editorialists.

Events, or what some call pseudo-events, are vital tools. Many newspapers carry regular features giving the details of some fundraiser. A charity for children might hold a gala to raise funds and honor those who work hard to raise those funds. The practitioner makes sure that a photojournalist gets the obligatory shot of three or four—never more—of the persons who help publicize the event. From the most ancient times, manufactured events have been a vital part of society—business and government administration. That trajectory is unlikely to change soon—if ever.

Press conferences are a counterpart of media releases, as are backgrounders. Practitioners create media kits and groom Web sites. They create 1-800 hotlines and FAQs for Web site home pages.

Practitioners engage in crisis prevention, planning, and response. During a crisis, we like to have practitioners and others help us understand what happened, why it happened, and what we should do. During a hurricane or a chemical release, we like to have emergency plans to execute to know how to be safe. Practitioners help us in these ways.

We may appreciate learning about cures and treatments, as well as the symptoms of ailments. Medical researchers discover medical facts and offer treatments, which professional communicators may publicize and promote.

ONWARD INTO THE FOG—BUT PERHAPS WITH A LANTERN TO LEAD

Public relations as demonstrated in this encyclopedia is timeless. And it is here to stay. Some see it as the essence of a democratic society, where all sides of an issue can be contested, examined, and weighed. But it is also a tool usable by the worst despot to manufacture his or her image and craft support for his or her regime.

Ethics and social responsibility are key concerns of our day and age. That is not new, but corporate scandals and attempts by government officials to manipulate public opinion have emerged as deep concerns. Some observers watch for missteps and call for remedies. But a cynical culture that convinces itself that no one tells the truth and that believes in no one can be even more of a threat to civil society.

As much as it features the positive service and contributions of practitioners, this work also attempts to display the theoretical and ethical concerns that consume academic and professional attention and consideration. Because of the role practitioners have in society, they must be attentive to such concerns. So must the academics who work to shape and guide the profession—as well as educate the next generation of practitioners.

In that vein, the *Encyclopedia of Public Relations* may serve some as a primer. Others may find refreshing or even disappointing comments and concerns. However, we hope the book advances the dialogue that can make the profession ever more healthy. It is here to stay. It serves society best by asking more and more of itself.

—Robert L. Heath

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Acknowledgments



At various times during the creation of this encyclopedia, I reflected on its progress—slow, steady, tedious, and painful at times. In my reflection, one of my favorite popular movies seemed to capture the essence of the project. It is *Witness*, which stars Harrison Ford who for a while tries to blend into an Amish community. In one scene, the members of the community in a symphony of workmanship assemble and erect a barn. In its construction, each barn builder knows the job and does it with skill. There is little oversight. Micromanagement is not part of the scene. While some workers toiled on the construction, others performed their own symphony of preparing simple, wholesome, and beautiful food. It is abundant and prepared with love. At the end of the day, the sun sets on work well done. Congratulations were not as important as self-satisfaction. The effort of each contributed to the collective good of the community.

So, too, was the creation of this book—a work of skill with very little coordination. It was a symphony of preparation: simple, wholesome, and beautiful. It is abundant in its provision and prepared with love. It grew one entry at a time. I am indebted to many people, starting with the Advisory Board and including a host of friends and colleagues who volunteered for entries. They offered entries that I and the Advisory Board had not thought to include. Key members of the Advisory Board not only wrote an abundant number of entries, but they also worked to help find the best authors for other entries. For their

efforts above and beyond, I tip my hat twice to the following members of the Board: Shannon Bowen (who helped with ethics, systems, and collaborative decision making), Tim Coombs (who helped sort out the research topics), Kirk Hallahan (who advised sagely and wrote proficiently), Kathy Kelly (who helped with biographies), John Madsen (who helped find authors for business related topics), Elizabeth Toth (who brought the biographies of women practitioners to fruition), and Betteke van Ruler (who helped sort out the nuances of Europe). Thanks to my other friends and colleagues who wrote well and in a tight time frame.

Two practitioners were invaluable. Thanks to a handoff by George Hammond, Richard Truitt bailed me out when I lost an author for the Carl Byoir entry. Then he offered lists of names to contact, contact information, and biography suggestions. Betsy Plank was steady in her influence. She offered valuable advice on biographies and authors. She was endless in her praise for the value of the project. She truly is a grand lady of public relations.

The timing of this project was just right—almost too late. For some, it might have been too late. We know that some biographies might have been developed had we not lost contributors or subjects of their own biographies. I had many conversations with contributors who tried to help me find authors for some public relations legends who were not included. Their omission was not because of a lack of commitment to them, but a failure of the system

to provide sufficient information or a willing and capable author to choose the words to capture their contribution. Many of us recognized that a generation of legends was nearing its end before our very eyes. We were reminded of how fragile the telling of history can be. We did the best we could and hope to catalyze others to plow the fields, cultivate, and harvest more biographies to honor as well as evaluate the contributions of the men and women who crafted public relations into a honed profession during the 20th century.

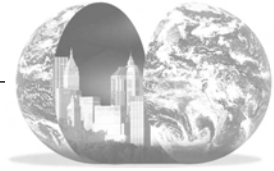
Along this journey we lost travelers: W. Howard Chase and George Hammond—two legends. At the beginning of the project, Bill Adams played a vital role in recommending entries, especially biographies, and was quick to take on the writing of entries. His career was a valued blend of academic and practitioner.

Many of the people who helped create this “barn” were only known to me by phone and Internet. I know a lot of the contributors and thank them profusely for their help. Others took me on “spec.” They only met me by e-mail or phone. They must have asked themselves, “Who is this nut?” Thanks to all of you who trusted me. I believe the proof is in the pudding.

Thanks to the many folks at Sage Publications. Margaret Seawell dreamed up the project and thought I could pull it off. Paul Reis stepped into the project as a developmental editor and picked up the slack at a crucial moment. He dealt with an endless array of niggling details, especially the entry contracts. He was cheery and efficient. Because of his work ethic and responsiveness, I logged endless responses and encouragement from him in the “in” and “out” boxes of the Internet. He helped in the final harvest of entries. Paul was inspired and aggressive in finding pictures and ancillary documents that help tell the story of public relations and demonstrate the abundance of material relevant to the field. And lastly, I thank Diane Foster for guiding the project through the production process.

Some critics may fault the work that follows. They will say that the encyclopedia paints a rosy picture of a profession dedicated to manipulation, spin, deceit, and flack. The persons who contributed to this work know those criticisms and recognize the challenge to make this influential practice worthy of praise and respect. This challenge is best met by moving standards up rather than wallowing in despair, denial, disgust, or doubt. Practitioners and academics have met and will continue to meet the challenge.

About the Editor



Robert L. Heath (Ph.D., University of Illinois) is Professor of Communication at the University of Houston, Director of the Institute for the Study of Issues Management, and former Advisory Director of Research for Bates Churchill Southwest. His *Handbook of Public Relations* won the 2001 PRIDE Award for best publication. With co-editor Elizabeth Toth, he won the PRIDE Award in 1992 for *Rhetorical and Critical Approaches to Public Relations*. He won the Pathfinder Award in 1992 and the Jackson, Jackson, and Wagner Award in 1998.

His other books are *Management of Corporate Communication: From Interpersonal Contacts to External Affairs* (1994); *Human Communication Theories and Research: Concepts, Contexts, and Challenges* (1992, with Jennings Bryant); *Strategic Issues Management* (1988); *Realism and Relativism: A Perspective on Kenneth Burke* (1986); *Issues Management: Corporate Public Policymaking in an Information Society* (1986, with Richard Alan Nelson); and *Strategic Issues Management* (1997), which also won a PRIDE Award.



ACCOMMODATION: CONTINGENCY THEORY

Accommodation occurs when public relations practitioners attempt to meet the needs of their organization *and* a stakeholder group through dialogue, negotiation, and compromise. Contingency theory defines pure accommodation as the polar opposite of pure advocacy in public relations. Advocacy occurs when public relations practitioners attempt to meet the needs or desires of their organization *or* a stakeholder group to the exclusion of the needs or desires of the other side.

Accommodation is a central tenet of contingency theory. The contingency theory of accommodation in public relations has been under development since 1997 by a team of researchers led by Glen T. Cameron at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. Contingency theory posits that ideal public relations practice is constantly influenced by variables ranging from the experience of the public relations staff to the credibility of an external public.

An accommodation continuum ranging from pure accommodation to pure advocacy was developed to illustrate contingency theory and the dynamic nature of public relations practice. A key phrase in early contingency theory literature was “It depends.” The ideal stance of an organization in a particular situation

depends on a variety of contingencies. Cameron and associates argued that at any particular time a practitioner’s position may shift toward or away from accommodation or advocacy, depending on the presence of influential internal or external variables. Contingency theory claims there is no one-size-fits-all normative approach to public relations practice. It suggests that public relations practice is ever changing. Evidence that contingencies affect accommodation in *normative* public relations practice is the primary contribution of contingency theory.

Contingency theory also suggests that there are ethical implications to accommodation. Contingency theorists argue that there are times when it would be ethically inappropriate to accommodate a public. They have noted that any accommodation of “the Hitlers of the world” (Yarbrough, Cameron, Sallot, & McWilliams, 1998, p. 40) would be unethical.

Accommodation has been compared to symmetrical public relations practice, whereas advocacy has been compared to asymmetrical practice. Symmetry and asymmetry are concepts articulated by James E. Grunig and colleagues in their seminal program of public relations theory building known as the Excellence study (*see* Excellence theory).

Contingency theorists introduced 86 variables that they suggest influence whether a specific public

relations position will be more accommodation or more advocacy. Variables in contingency theory are categorized as external and internal. External variables fall into the subcategories of external threats, industry environment, characteristics of the external public, and the specific issue at hand. Internal variables are subcategorized to address characteristics of the organization, the public relations department, management, individuals, relationships, and internal threats.

As the program of research unfolded, external and internal variables were further subdivided into predisposing and situational variables. Predisposing variables are those that are always present in an organization and set the tone for the organizational response to stakeholder groups. Predisposing variables are more influential than situational variables. Situational variables are responsive to specific circumstances and settings and are therefore more subject to rapid change.

Strong predisposing variables include size of the organization, organizational culture, and inclusion of public relations in the dominant coalition of decision makers. Strong situational variables include characteristics of the public and its claims, potential threats, and the cost or benefit of a particular organizational position.

Case studies, depth interviews, and surveys have been used to test contingency theory. Case analyses of communication episodes during the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games illustrate the challenges of accommodation when an organization is faced with two or more diametrically opposed publics. In this instance, contingency theory highlights the back-and-forth, give-and-take nature of public relations practice. When an organization, such as the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, is faced with demands from two opposed publics, accommodation of the two publics is likely impossible. Another Olympic Games case shows how the relative power of an organization and an external public can affect the organization's willingness to accommodate.

The Cameron team used depth interviews to examine variables that affect the level of accommodation by an organization. Practitioners at larger corporations reported that the corporation's size

often made them more likely to accommodate a powerful external public such as consumer activists. Corporate culture variables such as the position of the CEO in a specific public relations situation were also identified as potentially strong influences on the level of accommodation.

With the use of 86 variables central to contingency theory to define in detail the impediments to and supports of accommodation in practice, some scholars have suggested that the theory is unwieldy. Attempts to bring some parsimony to the theory have included identifying proscriptions to accommodation. Regulatory agencies, moral convictions, legal constraints, contending publics, and jurisdictional issues have been identified as proscriptions to accommodation of a public.

Recent developments in contingency theory include scale development for select internal and external, predisposing and situational variables, and exploring emotional "weight" and "heat" at different points on the continuum.

Some public relations scholars have suggested that contingency theory is simply an extension of excellence theory. They have argued that models such as the mixed-motive games model promoted by Priscilla Murphy and the new model of symmetry as two-way practices outlined by David M. Dozier, J. E. Grunig, and Larissa A. Grunig address the dynamic nature of practice within the framework of the symmetry/asymmetry paradigm. Contingency theory scholars have acknowledged that contingency theory extends excellence theory, but they argue that it provides unique contributions to public relations theory through analysis and description of the dynamic nature of public relations practice, evidence that ideal and ethical practice is conditional and depends on a number of contingencies, and identification of specific contingencies to accommodation.

—Bryan H. Reber

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ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

The term *account executive* (AE) refers to the practitioner within an agency or public relations firm who is responsible for day-to-day contact with a client or clients. As such, the AE is responsible for managing all agency-client initiatives, including publicity, press relations, special events, crisis communication, the creation and production of communication messages, and media buying and placement. In many instances, AE or assistant AE is the title of the entry-level position in public relations agencies.

In the earlier days of the profession, the AE's function was viewed as the agency's liaison with a client or clients. It was the AE's job to represent the agency to the client. However, in today's consumer-driven environment, the AE is seen as

functioning best as the client's representative within the agency. In that role, it is the responsibility of the AE to ensure that the interest of the client is foremost in all initiatives undertaken by the agency on behalf of the client.

Activities performed by the AE include the following:

- Developing and maintaining expertise in the client's business and industry
- Understanding the structure and policies of the client organization
- Scanning the economic, political, and social environment for challenges and opportunities vis-à-vis the client
- Maintaining an ongoing base of information concerning competitors for the client's interests
- Developing relationships at a minimum of three levels within the client organization
- Acting as consultant to the client with regard to communication planning and implementation, including advertising, media relations, Web content, media planning, and other activities
- Maintaining day-to-day contact with the client's representative(s) to maintain goodwill and keep the client "in the loop" regarding all activities on its behalf
- Representing the agency at client meetings
- Coordinating activities with the agency's creative director and media director as appropriate
- Monitoring and protecting the agency-client relationship
- Working with the client to develop planning documents
- Summarizing agency-client meetings for distribution within the agency and to the client organization
- Ensuring that all creative messaging and other initiatives are fully supported by the client prior to implementation
- Making certain that all members of the agency team assigned to the client's account understand the needs of the client and act accordingly
- Ensuring that all creative is "on target" (*creative* refers to the text, graphics, pictures, and other tactical tools that are crafted for each client as contracted)

However, the central focus of the AE has always been—and always will be—to effectively and

efficiently manage the relationship between the client and the agency to protect the interests of both and to ensure mutual benefit. Moreover, the agency tenure of an AE is directly linked to the maintenance of that relationship.

The appropriate educational background includes public relations, advertising, or journalism.

—John A. Ledingham

See also Account manager/account management; Client/agency relationships; Public relations agency

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 Public Relation Society of America (PRSA), 33 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003–2376, www.prsa.org
 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, www.stats.bls.gov

ACCOUNT MANAGER/ ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

The term *account management* refers to the coordination, billing, and evaluation of all activities undertaken by a public relations agency or firm on behalf of a client or client organization. Unlike the account executive (AE), who is in day-to-day contact with a client, the account manager (AM) acts as a higher-level planner and coordinator, working within the agency environment with various AEs and creative and media directors to assess the future needs of the client, to develop strategic plans to meet those needs, and to put in place evaluation strategies to determine the success or failure of programmatic initiatives. In agency tradition, AEs report to AMs. A central concern of the AM is to look for opportunities to grow the agency's business through the expansion of current work undertaken for the client, or by working with the client to develop new initiatives. Moreover, the AM may be responsible for several accounts at the same time.

As a senior member of the executive team, the AM also is responsible for initiating, nurturing,

and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships between the agency and the client. Research indicates that these relationships follow a familiar pattern of growth and decline. The effective AM must understand and appreciate this process and be able to recognize the current phase of the relationship and how to alter that relationship, if necessary, to ensure that it is positive. Moreover, research has demonstrated that the dimensions of openness, trust, involvement, commitment, and investment are crucial in managing the agency-client relationship. In this context, "openness" is the degree to which the agency and the client share plans for the future with each other. "Trust" refers to the degree to which the agency or the client can be relied on to do what it says it will do. "Involvement" refers to the willingness of the agency to become actively involved in the business of the client. "Commitment" addresses the need to demonstrate an ongoing interest in helping the client organization achieve its goals. "Investment" concerns the amount of time and energy the agency is willing to put into maintaining the agency-client relationship. A simple "relationship audit" can provide an illustration of the state of the agency-client relationship as well as indicate areas for improvement.

Despite a substantial increase in the number of AM positions, many companies continue to report dissatisfaction with the ability of the AM to build sustaining relationships with strategic clients. To a large degree, responsibility for the inability to sustain a relationship is claimed to rest, not surprisingly, with the selection of a client. This usually can be traced to a "poor fit" between the agency's and the client organization's business.

—John A. Ledingham

See also Account executive; Client/agency relationships; Public relations agency

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ACTIVISM

Activism is the process by which groups of people exert pressure on organizations or other institutions to change policies, practices, or conditions that the activists find problematic. Activism has generally been seen as one of the catalysts for the growth of the public relations profession, because some of the most significant periods of development in the field have featured high levels of activism. More recently, public relations has been seen as necessary for activist organizations both to make their case and to sustain their organizations. Activists generally practice public relations “from the bottom up,” using the strategies and tactics of the field to achieve goals that are not that dissimilar from those of other, more institutionalized organizations.

Activism generally arises when members of a public perceive some problematic situation. Sociological explanations of activism typically identify major social divisions, such as race, gender, or economic differences, as the preconditions for activism. This view also privileges ideological motivations for activists, that is, the position that those who engage in activism are driven by political, religious, or economic ideology. This has led to the common perception that most activists are radical reformers, when, in fact, activists come in all ideological stripes and may actually seek to resist social change. Although it is true that many activist organizations are ideological, not every activist public is driven by ideology. From a public relations standpoint, problematic situations arise when people perceive some adverse impact of an institution’s actions or policies. For example, when an organization appears to be responsible for something that harms the public, activists call for some corrective action. Whereas some activists are motivated by

ideology, others are simply reacting to what they interpret as impositions from organizations. For example, the NIMBY (“not in my back yard”) phenomenon often pits otherwise docile community members against organizations that they see as creating problems in their communities. The resistance to the construction of a new Wal-Mart store in a particular area seems grounded more in the perceived impact that the store would have on older businesses than in any anticapitalist harangue.

Activists share many of the traits that James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt have identified as *characteristics of active publics*. Activists recognize some problem and feel empowered to take some action, to seek information, and to communicate with each other and with the institution they deem responsible for the problem, and are likely to organize to address that problem.

Activism has been one of the catalysts for the development of public relations throughout the field’s history. During what is generally seen as the period of the field’s inception, activism played an important role. In the late 19th century, progressive and populist groups in the United States sought to limit the power and scope of monopolistic organizations. The press, partially prompted by activists, sought to reveal problematic conditions caused by corporate practices. Groups seeking fair and safe treatment for workers, the vote for women, sanitary practices in food and drug production, and other social goals pressured organizations through either direct confrontation or increased government regulation. In response, corporations hired the first public relations counselors or established departments designed to tell the organization’s story. Ivy Lee, for example, was hired by the Rockefeller family to help craft responses to labor activism.

During the 1950s and 1960s, American corporations were again forced to respond to a wave of activism. A number of significant activist movements reached their peak of influence and public attention. These included the women’s rights movement, the civil rights movements, the consumer safety movement, environmentalism, and the anti-Vietnam War protests. What distinguished these confrontations from those of the seedbed years of the public relations field was the presence of

television. The muckraking reporters of the earlier period begat those who carried cameras and microphones. Public opinion was galvanized around specific issues and corporations, and government officials were pressured to solve problems. Corporations, which had largely been using public relations to support the marketing function, turned to public relations professionals to defend companies in the court of public opinion. The need to anticipate problematic situations and to engage in public debate with activists gave rise to issue management and crisis communication. Scholars and practitioners alike began to examine the development of activist organizations and the tactics they employed.

Activists themselves began to notice the need for a more sophisticated approach to communicating with supporters and opponents alike. For example, Saul Alinsky's 1972 book, *Rules for Radicals*, offered practical suggestions for activists in organizing, making their case before the public, and engaging in a productive public debate.

In the first few years of the 21st century, activism has taken several forms. On one hand, activism has become almost institutionalized. Many of the reforms sought by 1960s activists were enacted into law or regulation, spawning government agencies such as the Consumer Product Safety Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency. Activists continue to raise issues and monitor the performance of these government agencies. Although this is important work, it often does not generate much public attention, which leads to the impression that the level of activism has waned. On the other hand, activism is embraced by a variety of publics with a sometimes dizzying range of agendas. Cultural norms and shifts in public opinion, as well as greater access to organizations, has empowered many activists. There is such a broad range of empowered activist groups that virtually no corporate decision can be made without taking into account activists' likely reaction.

As with most other communication functions, inexpensive computers and the development of the Internet and the World Wide Web have revolutionized activism. Activists use e-mail chains and

Web sites to share information about issues and to organize collective action. This trend has necessitated an increasingly sophisticated response on the part of organizations engaged by activists.

Activism has been so closely linked to important developments in public relations that it is now seen as one of the preconditions for the field. Larissa A. Grunig, J. E. Grunig, and David Dozier argued that "a turbulent, complex environment with pressure from activist groups stimulates organizations to develop an excellent public relations function" (2002, p. 16). Krishnamurthy Sriramesh and Dijan Vercic indicated that activism is one of the essential characteristics that shape the creation and development of public relations internationally.

Despite the importance of activism to the development of the field, public relations practitioners or scholars do not universally value or respect activists. The strategies used by organizations in response to activism run the gamut from attacks and resistance to the formation of cooperative relationships. Christine Oliver outlined five strategic responses organizations typically adopt toward activists: (1) acquiescence, which involves giving in to the activists' demands; (2) compromise, which occurs when the organization negotiates with activists to resolve problematic situations; (3) avoidance through concealing problems or otherwise erecting barriers between the organization and outside pressure; (4) defiance, which involves actively engaging opponents in debate, challenging new regulations or proposals for change, or attacking the organization's opponents; and (5) manipulation, typically through co-optation, which involves making cosmetic changes to an organization's practices without changing their substance.

The shape of an organization's response to activism depends on the assumptions of the company's managers toward both public relations and activists. Many organizations resist being "managed from the outside" and thus resist pressure from activists. For example, when the Clorox Company devised a crisis communication plan in response to environmental activism, some of the strategies included questioning the activists' motives and undermining the credibility of the activist group.

Other corporations have observed a strategic benefit in working with activists to pursue common goals. Merck Pharmaceutical Company and the AIDS activist organization ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) worked together to persuade the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to speed the approval of AIDS treatments. The drug company was able to get its product to market faster, and the activists saw an effective treatment become available sooner.

Activist groups compel organizations to create excellent public relations programs, but they also can be viewed as a locus for public relations activities themselves. Activists use public relations strategies and tactics to pursue two general goals. The first is to influence public opinion and behavior to rectify the situation they see as problematic. The second is to create and maintain organized, structured, and coordinated efforts. These goals are not that different from those of other organizations, which use public relations both to pursue their strategic goals and to maintain the organization.

The area that has received the most attention from practitioners and scholars is the strategies that activist groups use to pursue their goals. Activists often seek to “make an issue” out of the problematic conditions they have identified. Whereas the study of issue management has often examined how institutionalized organizations proactively or reactively deal with issues, the study of activist groups focuses on the creation and promotion of issues. Michael Smith and Denise Ferguson claimed “through its public relations activities, an [activist] organization communicates its positions on issues, solicits support for action, and . . . engages target organizations in policy discussions” (2001, p. 294).

Activists use a range of strategies to pursue their goals. The iconic images of activists tend to involve mass protests or violent demonstrations. Media accounts of the so-called new activism of the late 1990s invoked images of violent confrontations between antiglobalization protestors and authorities in Seattle; Washington, DC; and several foreign cities. However, activists use a variety of strategies and tactics to pursue their goals. Some tactics are confrontational, including boycotts, demonstrations,

and symbolic events, which are often designed to dramatize an issue or galvanize public attention. For example, anti-handgun groups staged symbolic demonstrations outside the premises of gun manufacturers one Memorial Day. The activists lined the fences outside the sites with the shoes of victims of gun violence. Pictures of the event were featured in newspapers around the country.

Other strategies are more informational, designed to raise awareness and increase understanding of an activist group’s issues and proposals for resolving those issues. These tactics typically involve media relations, including news conferences and interviews. Groups with sufficient resources can run issue advertisements. For example, an animal rights organization wanted to claim that animals being raised for food were often treated poorly. The activist organization ran an ad that played off the notable “Pork: The Other White Meat” campaign and claimed that the “other white meat has a very dark side.” Web sites allow activists not only to provide a great amount of information about their issues, but also to direct members and others on how to take action to promote policy solutions. Throughout the legislative process, for example, activists regularly update the media and other interested publics as the bill moves through committee to wider consideration by the legislature.

The final set of strategies employed by activists involves building relationships with the institutions or organizations that the activists hold responsible for a problematic situation, with the goal of negotiating an outcome satisfactory to all parties. As with corporations’ use of symmetrical approaches to public relations, this approach is not as widely practiced as the ones described previously. In the early 1990s, Vermont’s Deerfield River generating plant spent four years negotiating with environmentalists, business owners, fishermen (who wanted calm water for angling), and kayakers (who wanted rough water for training) to craft a mutually beneficial agreement for controlling the flow of the river through the plant.

As with other strategic public relations practices, the strategy that activists select depends on how those who run the organization value the role of

public relations. Often, the choice of strategies is prompted by the response of the target of the activists' efforts. The 2003 dispute between the National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO) and the Augusta National Country Club, host of the Masters Golf Tournament, became confrontational only after Augusta's president publicly chastised the NCWO for urging the private club to accept women members. The dispute escalated quickly once Augusta National went public.

Activist groups use public relations strategies and tactics not only to promote their causes, but also to maintain themselves. Activist movements tend to pass through various stages of development. At each stage, the organization faces various communication and organizational challenges. One fertile area of research has been the identification of the various stages in the "life cycle" of activism. Robert L. Heath, for example, identified five stages. The first stage, strain, happens even before organizations form and consists of publics recognizing and defining issues. Once issues are identified, activists move to the second stage, mobilization, which is when organizations are formed, issues are promoted more widely, and the activists begin to marshal resources to correct the issue. Activists then seek to confront corporations and/or the government in order to resolve problems. Following this is negotiation, during which the parties involved exchange messages designed to reach some agreement. Finally, the activist group enters the resolution stage, during which the controversy is resolved, perhaps only temporarily. A number of issue management scholars have noted that although issues may disappear from the public's agenda, the conditions that led to the issues may still exist. Thus, activist groups often continue to exist with the goal of monitoring issues and making sure the resolutions are carried out.

The organizational and communication challenges facing activist groups are many and change as the groups move through the life cycle of activism. An activist group must recruit members, gather resources, and establish the organization as a legitimate advocate for an issue during the strain and mobilization stages. In addition to gaining

public attention for their issues, activists also create communication networks designed to alert members to coordinated action, from organizing rallies and training sessions to urging people to contact elected officials regarding legislation. A number of organizations establish so-called rapid response networks through which members can be contacted quickly.

During the confrontation and negotiation stages, activist groups must maintain member motivation over the course of long campaigns. They also have to compete for members and resources with other activist groups pursuing similar issues. As issues are seemingly resolved and fall lower on the public agenda, activists often see membership and financial resources decline. The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) went from publishing a four-color, tabloid-style newsletter to a photocopied two-page briefing paper when peace treaties were signed. Sometimes activist groups cease to exist altogether.

Activists use a variety of internal publications, including newsletters and Web sites, to maintain contact with followers, sustain interest in issues, or redefine the issues that the group addresses to those that are higher on the public agenda. For example, when the United States and Russia signed nuclear weapons accords in the early 1990s, the anti-nuclear weapons group SANE-Freeze changed its name to Peace Action and began to redefine nuclear weapons issues as an environmental problem just as the environment was becoming a hot issue.

—Michael F. Smith

See also Co-optation; Follower/member newsletter; Issues management; Lee, Ivy; Social movement theory; Strain

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Unidentified activists from the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP) stage a demonstration on July 11, 2000, in Durban, South Africa, at the 13th International AIDS Conference. ACT UP called on the World Health Organization (WHO) to distribute antiretroviral treatments to poor countries.

SOURCE: © AFP/CORBIS

ACTUALITY

An actuality is an audiotape recording of a human news source that is intended to be played as an integral part of a news story prepared for broadcast in an electronic medium. The term is often used interchangeably with *bite* (or *sound bite*), although purists among media workers consider the two terms distinct in their definitions and proper use. Specifically, the second edition of the *Broadcast News Writing Stylebook* (2002, p. 93) notes that *actuality* is a radio term whereas *bite* is a television term. Of course, the latter would include video.

Nevertheless, those in radio today commonly use the term *sound bite*, so any subtle distinction may be lost on many electronic media news people. Common usage in television coverage of politics also seems to have popularized the term *sound bite* among the lay public, whereas *actuality* seems to be a term that is used and understood mostly among media workers.

Both *actuality* and *bite* (*sound bite*) describe the actual sound of someone talking as a part of a news narrative, for example, the recorded speech of a source from the public relations practitioner's organization who is a newsmaker or who is being used as a secondary source for a news story. An actuality is analogous, indeed equivalent, to a direct quote in print media and thus adds credibility and interest; furthermore, a colorfully expressed actuality often provides a unique—and highly effective—means to emphatically express a fact or point of view.

An actuality may be part of a story narrative that is being prepared by an electronic media journalist to be aired on a newscast, but such recording of an actuality often is included in a media release being prepared by the public relations practitioner for a news release to be submitted to electronic media as an information subsidy for broadcast news programs.

Actualities or bites are to be differentiated, nevertheless, from natural sound, background sound, ambient sound, and other types of sound that may be used as background under the voice track of a reporter or news source. Such background sounds can give the listening/viewing audience a sense

of being at the news site but do not include recognizable, or at least primarily important, speech.

The public relations practitioner must use caution in preparing and coaching her or his organization's people in acting as sources for actualities, whether the actuality is being produced by the public relations practitioner to be included in a news release to electronic media, whether the source is a speaker at a news conference being hosted by the practitioner's organization, or whether the source is simply participating in an unexpected interview sought by an electronic media news reporter because the representative is a credible or important source for news that involves the practitioner's organization.

If the public relations practitioner produces the actuality, the utmost care must be taken to exercise technical excellence in recording the spoken words. Poor technical quality may prevent an actuality that accompanies a news release from being used by electronic media or, at best, will detract from the message that the source is trying to convey.

—Dean Kruckeberg
and Marina Vujnovic

See also Interview as a communication tool; Media relations; Sound bite

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ADVANCE

An advance is a story that public relations professionals and others send to the news media to announce upcoming meetings, performances, speeches, sports events, news conferences, fundraisers, hearings, rallies, conferences, and other activities. The goal is to tell people about the event in an

interesting way so they can decide whether or not to attend. A good practitioner will avoid hyperbole, which puts people off—particularly the editors who decide whether or not to publish the advance.

A good advance begins with the event's main topic (what the speaker plans to say or the main agenda item), the main purpose (to raise funds for a charity, for example), or a key personality (such as the star of a musical performance). This is followed by the time, day (date), and place (with room number) of the event. An advance also reports the exact name of the group holding or sponsoring an event, background information about the speaker or primary issue, other important items on the agenda for a meeting, and mention of other key personalities.

An advance for a print publication or Web site typically is no more than two or three paragraphs long. This allows an editor to slip it in almost anywhere in a newspaper, newsletter, magazine, or Web page. An advance for broadcast typically is no more than 25 words or so and is written as a public service announcement. This also can be used to fill space during a broadcast. An advance writer must always remember that a release that doesn't get published or aired is worthless.

In olden times, before 1995 or so, advance stories were mailed or faxed to newspapers and some broadcast outlets. The distribution process today is more sophisticated. Advances may still be mailed or faxed to local news media, but some editors prefer to receive advances electronically. A writer creates the advance in a word processing program, pastes it into an electronic mail message, and sends the story. A recipient can paste the advance into his or her word-processing program, and no retyping is required.

An advance writer also can bypass the middle-person by posting all advances in prominent positions on the organization's Web site with links to a speaker's biographical information, background material to be discussed at a meeting, and other relevant information. It's a good idea to send advance stories to interested parties on listservs. News media writers may be on the listserv, but the list will include names of people who are simply interested

in the organization's activities. Advance writers should make sure their lists are accurate and current, for this is a good way to get the advance to the people most likely to attend the event.

—Michael Ryan

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ADVERTISING

Advertising, as a tool used in public relations, involves the purchase of paid space or time in newspapers, magazines, radio, television, out-of-home media, or the Internet to communicate messages to target audiences.

More broadly, advertising encompasses an array of other, ancillary promotional tools to promote interest in products, services, organizations, candidates, or causes. These include *direct response* (including direct mail) and *sales promotion* (including point-of-sale materials, collateral, sweepstakes and contests, advertising specialties, and special events). Advertising can be contrasted with *publicity*, that is, unpaid coverage in the news or entertainment portion of media.

Public relations practitioners use advertising when they want complete control over a message—including when and where the message will appear. In contrast to publicity and many other public relations techniques, audiences often are skeptical about advertising because they attribute its purpose to *persuading* rather than *informing*. As a result, people often avoid, resist, or discount advertising messages.

TYPES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ADVERTISING

Public relations advertising takes several forms.

Institutional advertising promotes an organization (versus merely a product or service) and typically is used to announce a new corporate identity, to

attract investors, to enhance an organization's overall reputation, or to reach out to local communities by promoting the sponsor as a good citizen engaged in social concerns such as the environment.

Financial advertising is used by for-profit corporations to announce new financial developments. Securities underwriters routinely publish simple *tombstone ads* when new securities are offered for a client. These ads are published as a matter of public record as reputation enhancement, not as an offer to sell or a solicitation to purchase securities (which requires receipt of a prospectus). Many firms try to attract investor interest through ads that tout their financial performance. Other financial ads are used in contested tender offers, where proponents or opponents of an acquisition urge shareholders to either sell or not sell their shares to the acquirer. Minority shareholders and activists also use advertising to sway shareholder votes in proxy fights or other actions to be considered at corporate annual meetings.

Issues advertising enables an organization to speak out on an important social problem or situation in which it has a stake. Advocacy advertising is being used with increased frequency as part of issues management programs to sway public opinion on public discussions of social issues. Issues ads also can be run as part of government relations programs to influence voters in local ballot measures, referenda, and initiatives and to reach congressmen, state legislators, and local officials when votes are pending on important legislation.

Political advertising is used to lend support to political candidates that a sponsoring organization supports (or to undermine or attack a candidate they oppose). Such *independent expenditures* are permissible under federal election laws (and under state laws) but have been the focus of intense scrutiny in recent years as labor unions, corporations, and advocacy groups have become major factors in elections.

Crisis advertising involves the use of print ads or broadcast commercials to inform people about how an organization is responding to an adverse situation—such as a natural disaster, strike, or other event that disrupts service or relationships.

Events advertising is intended to promote public attendance or participation in special activities that organizations want to promote. Not-for-profit organizations (sometimes funded by their for-profit partners) use paid ads to create public support for upcoming fundraising activities.

Not-for-profit organizations use *public service advertising* to promote social causes and ideals (also referred to as *social marketing*). Public service announcements (PSAs) take the form of print ads or broadcast commercials in the non-editorial portions of public media as well as messages that appear in out-of-home media (billboards, transit ads, etc.). Media organizations donate the space or time as a public service—to engender themselves to audiences and to demonstrate social responsibility to their regulators.

Public relations advertising differs from traditional product or service advertising by its focus on promoting an organization's image or advocating a position on a particular topic. However, fully separating product/service promotion from organizational goals is often difficult. Many product advertising campaigns, for example, seek to enhance the organization's reputation while also selling products. Similarly, some public relations firms provide product advertising and related promotional services as part of an integrated marketing communications program for clients.

ADVERTISING MESSAGES

Effective advertising messages focus on a single topic and include a clear call for action. When developing ads, sponsors confront several basic creative decisions. The most important of these is to develop a "big idea" or creative concept around which the message will be constructed. Sponsors also must choose how direct they wish to be. A *direct* message strategy uses hard-hitting language and images that leave little doubt about an ad's purpose; *indirect* strategies are more subtle so that the intent is less obvious.

Another major creative decision involves whether to use *rational* or *emotional* appeals. Both techniques can be effective. Rational advertising

appeals focus on logic and argument strength and rely on facts, figures, and illustration. Rational ads can be particularly effective with audiences that possess the ability and motivation to process complex arguments. Emotional advertising appeals to the *heart* (versus the *head*) and tugs at people's affective responses by relying on illustrations, anecdotes, and related devices. Emotional appeals often draw the interest of people with little previous involvement in a topic.

Ads also can be structured as lectures or dramas. In a *lecture*, a speaker addresses the audience using a first-, second-, or third-person narrative. In a *drama* format, the audience eavesdrops on a scenario involving others and participates vicariously. Dramas invariably provide lessons that are inferred by the audience and reinforced in the ad's closing.

ADVERTISING FORMATS

Print advertising

Effective print ads follow generally accepted conventions but can vary considerably in terms of design (layout, typography, color scheme, etc.). Print ads use a large headline or strong graphic device to attract attention. Headlines telegraph the key message to audiences and are sometimes followed by overlines (secondary headlines that appear above the main text). The ad's body copy then presents explanatory or supporting arguments. Most ads end with a strong call to action and a signature element identifying the message's sponsor. Advertising slogans and organizational logotypes serve as continuity devices between messages. Legally required (known as *mandatory*) disclosures and other pieces of information generally are included in fine print at the bottom.

Print ads are most useful when a complex or detailed argument needs to be presented or when people must respond using coupons or forms. Newspapers and magazines usually sell ads in standardized formats. Most public relations advertising in newspapers strive for page dominance by using standard advertising units (SEUs) that are at least one-quarter of a page in size, preferably larger. In

magazines, half- and full-page ads are the most frequently used formats. Other formats include double-truck ads (a two-page spread), multiple-page series, and inserts. Smaller formats can be used in both newspapers and magazines but often fail to generate sufficient attention. Smaller ads are also less efficient generally because they cost more on a per-inch basis.

Broadcast advertising includes radio and television commercials. Broadcast messages must be especially cogent, draw people into the message quickly, restate the key points several times, involve the audience, and clearly describe the actions to be taken. Broadcast advertising uses a variety of devices to attract attention—sound, music, a familiar voice, or (in television) strong visuals. All of these elements play a critical role and must be used imaginatively and integratively to create a persuasive message that can be told in 10, 30, or 60 seconds—the typical lengths of broadcast commercials. On radio, critical points must be repeated orally; on television, text can be added to emphasize key points (such as an 800 number to call). Text can be superimposed over video and frequently takes the form of a billboard or closing title (signature) of a TV commercial.

Internet advertising is becoming increasingly popular. Various types of ads can be purchased on sites operated by third parties (search engine sites, media sites, and many special-topic portal sites). Banner, skyscraper, pop-up, and superstitial ads create awareness of an organization or offer (in ways similar to the use of outdoor billboards) and can drive traffic to a sponsor's own site using a hyperlink. However, click-through rates generally have disappointed sponsors.

ADVERTISING MEDIA PLANNING

Much public relations advertising involves purchasing time and space on a one-time or very limited basis. In such cases, the appropriate media outlets—such as a particular local newspaper or a handful of trade/financial publications—are quickly identifiable. However, when advertising is used to sway public opinion over time or in more than a single

media market, advertisers need to follow basic media planning principles (the same ones used by product advertisers) to maximize their impact and avoid wasting precious advertising dollars.

The focal concept in media planning is the *impression*—the opportunity for one person to be exposed to one of a sponsor's messages. Cumulative exposures are calculated as *gross impressions* by adding together the total impressions created in any particular media buy. The number of exposures created can be expressed in actual numbers of impressions or, more commonly, as ratings. A *rating point* represents 1 percent of the total potential audience for a message. A particular vehicle's *rating* is the percentage of total audience reached by that newspaper, magazine, or radio or TV show.

Gross rating points (GPRs) are the total percentages reached over a particular time frame when two or more messages appear in combination, whether in the same or in different advertising vehicles or media. The calculation of gross rating points provides a metric for ascertaining the cumulative total number of unduplicated impressions in an advertising effort. Generally, advertisers strive to generate the largest possible GRPs that a budget will allow (but avoid overspending).

Generally, advertisers seek to maximize a campaign's *reach*, or the number of distinct individuals exposed to a message at least once (eliminating duplication). Advertisers also want to optimize *frequency*, or to create multiple opportunities for an audience to be exposed to a message. More than one exposure to a message is usually necessary for people to pay attention and understand an ad message, but excessive exposure can waste dollars because no additional persuasion effect occurs. Excessive exposure can also annoy audiences so that they disregard or respond negatively to a message. Thus, frequency involves balancing the need for wear-in of a message and the avoidance of wear-out.

Advertisers generally want to gain maximize *effectiveness* by spending the least total dollars possible in a campaign. In choosing media, advertisers also strive for optimal *efficiency* by selecting media that deliver the largest audience (on either a duplicated or nonduplicated basis) for the same

dollars. An important consideration here is timing. Some campaigns rely on *continuous* exposure, that is, repeating the message in steady increments over a period of days, weeks, or months. However, in many instances advertisers can create or maintain *share-of-mind* awareness among audiences by staggering exposure. Total expenditures can be stretched by alternating between periods of high and low levels of exposure (*pulsing*) or between periods of nonexposure and exposure during key time blocks (*flighting*). Because of the high costs of advertising, many public relations advertisements are purposely timed to appear in a specific time period, such as the days before an event, election, holiday, or critical legislative vote. With a few exceptions, such as evergreen public service campaigns, most public relations-oriented advertising uses flighting schedules to optimize exposure and minimize costs. The absence of ads during periods of low or no exposure is offset in part by advertising's *carryover effect*, in which people remember a sponsor's name or message.

Cost per thousand (CPM) is the shorthand index used to compare the cost efficiency of two or more media. CPM is computed by dividing the total expenditure for an ad in a particular vehicle by the number of people in the audience and multiplying the result by 1,000. The result is an easy-to-compare dollars-and-cents figure. When two media are considered, a \$3.50 CPM would compare favorably with a \$4.25 CPM, suggesting that the first medium is more efficient—if it can be assumed that the quality of the audiences reached is the same. CPM rates of \$5 to \$10 are common in consumer advertising, but the cost per thousand can escalate in business-to-business and other situations where the audiences are small and the rates charged by media for advertising are comparatively high.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Integrated marketing communication; Online public relations; Public service announcements (PSAs); Publicity; Third-party endorsement.

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ADVERTISING EQUIVALENCY

Advertising equivalency involves calculating the value of public relations-generated media coverage by determining what the air time/print space would have cost if the organization had had to pay advertising rates for it. For example, if a print medium charges \$200 per column inch for an advertisement, a five-column-inch story generated through public relations efforts would have an advertising equivalency of \$1,000. For broadcast media, if a 30-second spot costs \$10,000, then a 15-second news mention would be worth \$5,000.

Although many organizations have used advertising equivalency in an attempt to assign a value to public relations efforts, the practice is fraught with problems. First, most newspapers, for example, don't sell ad space on the front page of a business section, where strong public relations efforts often appear. Comparing such a placement to an advertisement is thus an apples-and-oranges situation. There is no true basis for calculating the cost of the space.

A second issue is the credibility difference between an advertisement and an objective, third-party story. The majority of the public today has enough media savvy to understand that ads are controlled in both content and placement by the organizations that pay for them. People tend to be more skeptical about the veracity of and motivation behind ads. A news or feature story, however, has the credibility boost of being produced by an independent, third party. Although there have been

notable media honesty scandals, for the most part people still seem to trust mainstream media sources. Generating a placement in such a source has inherently more credibility than a paid advertising placement. A multiplier is sometimes applied to the advertising rate to compensate for this difference. However, the question then becomes, what is the appropriate multiplier? How much more credible is a story on the front business page written by a business reporter than an ad on the third page of the section produced by a company? Such an attempt to demonstrate the value of public relations efforts can produce more skepticism than it alleviates with an analytical manager or client.

Clearly, the need exists for an adequate and appropriate manner through which to value public relations efforts. Although still used, advertising equivalency is not that method. The inherent differences between advertisements and independent coverage make advertising equivalency too imprecise to reflect the value and credibility of public relations efforts. If asked to provide such a figure, a practitioner should explain to the client or manager the limits of this method.

—*Maribeth S. Metzler*

AFRICA, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

The public relations profession in Africa achieved momentum only during the last two decades. As in other parts of the world, many African practitioners enter the profession through journalism, often being trained abroad since few facilities exist locally.

African public relations practitioners have a different role than their U.S. counterparts. In the West, it is assumed that public relations practitioners will be socially responsible. In the Third World, public relations practices are designed to be consistent with political ideologies, levels of development,

and sociopolitical controls. African public relations practitioners are thus expected to be team players on the side of the government. In politically unstable Africa, governmental public relations is used to present an image of a unified country.

The development of public relations on the African continent has been influenced by the availability of mass media. For example, Nigeria, with its extensive system of mass communication, has a thriving, professional public relations community. The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) was established in 1963, and after the oil boom, public relations exploded. By 1993 the NIPR had 2,000 members as well as a constitution and a code of ethics. The NIPR's current president is Bobo Brown of Shell Petroleum Nigeria (bobo.s.brown@spdc.shell.com).

Egypt—for reasons of history, culture, and geography—has influenced public relations beyond its borders. The “godfather” of the public relations profession in Egypt, Prof. Dr. Mahmoud El Gohary, founded the Arab Public Relations Society (APRS) in 1966, first in Egypt and then in other Arab and African countries. For 28 years he was chairman of its public relations institute, editor-in-chief of its journal, and chairman of the International Academy for Public Relations and Information.

The field of public relations in Egypt is still rather misunderstood. There is confusion between public relations, marketing, and advertising; many organizations see sales as the primary goal for public relations. In many instances, publicity is paid for outright. Public relations departments have no power to answer the questions of journalists and have to seek answers from superiors. Maybe because of a lack of formal education, only 10 percent of individuals in the public relations business are considered to be skilled professionals. If offered at universities, public relations is limited to a single course in the business or communications department.

The Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations (ZIPR) was founded in 1957 and has made enormous progress. Among the principal players were George

Author's Note: This entry reports on African countries (excluding South Africa) for which information on public relations practice and education was available electronically. In some instances, the information is likely dated. It is not certain that all of the educational institutions and public relations associations mentioned still exist.

Foot (who retired from the IPRA board in 1993 and received an IPRA Gold Medal for his work on the Consultants Committee) and Helen Tinker (president of ZIPR in 1993, who received both an IPRA Golden Award and a UN Award for a public relations program on AIDS awareness). By 1993 ZIPR had 207 members, most working in the capital city, Harare. Over 75 percent were in-house practitioners in the industrial and commercial sectors, and less than 15 percent were consultants.

In other countries in southern Africa, professional organization in public relations started later than in Zimbabwe, and public relations is served by few practitioners. Swaziland has its own public relations association, and PRISA has recently formed chapters for practitioners in Namibia and Botswana.

The Public Relations Society of Kenya (PRSK) was established in 1971; its current president is Fatuma H. Mohammed of Nation Media Group (fhmohammed@nation.co.ke). The Sudan Public Relations Association was founded in 1973, and the Public Relations Association of Uganda originated in 1976. The current president of the Ghana Institute of Public Relations is K. O. Bimpong (osebimpong@ssnit.org.gh). By 1981, 9 of the 56 national public relations associations in the world were in Africa. The public relations associations of Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, Uganda, Cameroon, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe are registered with IPRA.

FAPRA (Federation of African Public Relations Associations) was formed in Nairobi in 1975 with the aim of uniting the Francophone and Anglophone parts of Africa. Some say that FAPRA has had little effect on the development of the profession—largely because of a lack of resources, communication difficulties, and the lack of general professional direction in the field of public relations. The current secretary-general is Kabir Dangogo (kabirdangogo@hotmail.com) from Nigeria, and its president is J. E. Allotey-Pappoe (jeap200@yahoo.com) from Ghana. The 16th FAPRA public relations conference, which took place in Accra, Ghana, in March 2003, was attended by more than 200 members from the African continent. Addressing this conference, Ghana's President Kufuor called on FAPRA to assist African leaders in managing the image of the

continent globally. This annual event was held in May 2004 in Abuja, Nigeria, and will be held again in Nigeria in 2005 and in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2006.

The East African Public Relations Association (EAPRA), in cooperation with the PRSK, hosted the second EAPRA Conference in Nairobi, Kenya, on November 27–28, 2003. The theme was “Excellence in Public Relations—Opportunities and Challenges Towards Successful Strategic Public Relations.”

EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN AFRICA

Public relations education in Africa ranges from formal tertiary diploma, degree, and postdegree courses to in-service training by employers and government ministries (such as the Tanzanian government's initiative to train their most senior communication officials in strategic public relations in 2003). Formal public relations education is most active in Egypt, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Nigeria.

At the tertiary level, many public relations programs in Africa are taught as part of a bachelor's degree in communication, mass communication, or journalism (e.g., in Egypt). The University of Nigeria started public relations training in 1960 and now offers a M.Sc. degree program in public relations, in association with the professional association. Public relations courses in Nigeria are also an integral part of mass communication programs; in 1992 there were more than 40 schools of journalism/mass communication in Nigeria. At that time, the University of Nigeria was the only institution offering mass communication training up to the doctoral level.

Some universities teach public relations to complement other disciplines, such as marketing and business management. A number of distance learning public relations programs are also available in Africa. South African courses include degree and postgraduate courses offered by UNISA; as well as diplomas offered by the IAC and Technikon SA. British courses include the CAM in communication studies, the CEM diploma in public relations, and the MSc distance learning program offered by the University of Stirling.

A variety of short courses are offered by professional institutes and private colleges. Foreign governments and development agencies also sponsor communication-related training in African countries (e.g., the Dutch government, the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation, UNICEF, UNESCO, SIDA [Swedish Development Agency], CIDA [Canadian Development Agency], and the Ford Foundation of the United States).

RESEARCH IN AFRICA

Public relations research is practically nonexistent (or does not get published). Database searches produced only a few articles in local or international academic journals. Private companies and government ministries occasionally contract international consultants to do ad hoc research projects (sometimes funded by the UN Development Program).

In a search of the database of African Theses and Dissertations (a project of the Association of African Universities), only one master's thesis in public relations was found—written by Margaret Gyan. She was of the opinion that public relations, as a practice and an academic subject, has received little attention in Ghana. Before independence in 1957, typical public relations functions were performed by organizational departments such as personnel, administration, welfare, and sales. After 1957, the need for black intermediaries was fulfilled by information officers who practiced press agency.

Currently, practitioners study through the Ghana Institute of Journalism and the School of Communication Studies, Legon. However, public relations still occupies an insignificant place on the list of professional bodies in Ghana and is quite low in the organizational hierarchy.

Betsie Ferreira, a senior lecturer at the Port Elizabeth Technikon in South Africa, conducted an ad hoc research project on the state of public relations education in Africa (excluding South Africa) between 1994 and 1998. Information was solicited from 45 countries, and information was obtained on 28 countries.

Gené van Heerden, a lecturer in communication management at the University of Pretoria in South

Africa, is currently completing her master's thesis on public relations practice and education in Africa (including South Africa).

CONCLUSION

It is difficult to comment on public relations in Africa because there is little information available. It is, however, clear that there are pockets of excellence in public relations practice and education on the African continent.

—Benita Steyn

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AGE OF DEFERENCE (END OF)

At some point during the 1960s, the United States experienced a sharp trend that led to the end of the age of deference. The point when deference ended is not clearly marked in the sands of time, but it

clearly is the result of reduced belief in the honesty and ethics of American business practices as well as government policy. The age of deference ended when people moved from trusting to distrusting large companies for what they did, for the values they used to guide operations, and for what they represented.

One of the strongest indicators of the end of deference can be found in poll data results. In 1966, 55 percent of the public had a great deal of confidence in the management capability and ethical standards of American business executives. A decade later the confidence level had fallen to 16 percent. Tracking the status of executive managements on these indicators, polling companies such as Gallup found that after post-World War II highs, company executives and other societal leaders have tended to receive very low honesty and ethics ratings for over three decades.

American business leaders used much of the last part of the 19th century to create a rationale supporting the concentration of capital as the operating financial and business arrangement. Tug-of-wars occurred between executives, media reporters, labor leaders, consumer advocates, civil rights advocates, and government leaders during the early years of the 20th century. The Great Depression dampened this corporate effort, which was lifted to new heights by World War II. During the war effort, American industry contributed to democracy, prosperity, and the dream of a new lifestyle. Public relations practitioners featured in this encyclopedia helped to position companies through counseling during these years of the 20th century. They communicated messages for and listened to concerned citizens. Slowly, deference was earned and granted by statement and deed.

After having worked successfully to create and then restore confidence in large business practices, many executives and senior practitioners were caught off guard by the events of the last half of the 20th century. They saw a slow erosion of faith in the American dream that had been created by capitalistic concentration of publicly held wealth and that had produced what many thought was the most envied lifestyle of the world.

Not only had business executives suffered a loss of deference, but so had many other categories of societal leaders. Gallup poll data revealed that legislators, government executives, reporters, news anchors, advertisers, marketers, and others had high honesty and ethics ratings with only a small fraction of the public. None of these categories enjoyed high ratings with more than a third of the population, and many of these positions were associated with honesty and ethics ratings in the single digits.

Many factors account for this slide. People in the United States were looking for a morale rebound after the despair of the Great Depression. World War II gave a substantial boost to the collective feeling of well-being and goodwill. Industry had excelled in its ability to innovate, invent, and manufacture materials. A new lifestyle was created by the abundance of goods and materials, research and development achievements, and the manufacturing capacity created during the war.

Women and minorities had gone to work in large numbers. The loss of servicemen to death and wounds had created jobs after the war. The GI Bill trained men and women for new occupations that changed their lives and the national lifestyle. The nation felt that its role in the war had been righteous. Words such as *freedom* and *democracy* became the hallmarks of the age—and the challenge.

The civil rights movement was sparked by many events during the war, but protest was unpatriotic. Postwar criticism focused on the disparity between claims of a new country dedicated to freedom and democracy. In marked contrast were myriad institutional and cultural barriers against people of color. Thus, the civil rights movement began to scrutinize every aspect of American business and government looking for gaps between promise and delivery. Many gaps were found, and substantial opposition arose to efforts to close these gaps. The 1950s and 1960s witnessed an era when civil rights leaders examined the ability of government and business to deliver on promises.

Without a doubt, the civil rights movement created a foundation for the dozens of activist movements that occurred over the latter half of the century. The antiwar efforts examined the rationale and strategic

military choices made in Vietnam. Deference toward the presidency of the United States hit a low when college students and other antiwar activists chanted, “Hell no, we won’t go” and “Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?”

During the last three decades of the 20th century, more regulation and legislation was enacted to constrain corporate actions than had been put into place during all of the rest of U.S. history. Activists from all points of view converged on the federal and state capitals with a list of grievances about corporate behavior. They also doubted that congresses and city governments had much stomach for constraining corporate actions. They became prone to sue government to force them to create and implement regulatory and legislative change.

This outburst signaled that the era of deference had ended. No longer were significant parts of the society willing to trust business or government. The ringing call for “power to the people” shouted by civil rights activists had become the soul of American politics.

Businesses and government agencies were caught off guard by this sudden and profound change. The initial reaction in the late 1960s and 1970s was to dismiss the critics and denigrate their motives. Some of the denigration brought up Cold War claims of communistic leanings. Reactivity was the spirit of the day.

Eventually, more proactive measures were innovated and implemented. One of the innovations was the creation of issues management as a strategic response discipline and corporate program. This move followed a similar initiative that included the creation of the concept and practice of *public affairs*, a term coined by larger companies to reshape the public relations discipline to make it more responsive to government relations. The traditional approach to public relations, these innovators believed, had been slanted toward publicity responses and reputation management rather than the public debate of the merits of various issues of fact, value, and policy. Legislatures became the battlegrounds for dealing with complex issues related to every aspect of society. Topics ranged from civil and human rights to environmental quality and product safety.

Governments responded by creating new government agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Regulatory powers and budgets grew rapidly as government was given new charges to protect the public interest.

In addition to the creation of issues management and public affairs, other measures were implemented. The most important of these measures was the broad and deep reexamination of corporate ethics. Some of the 1970s and all of the 1980s saw a surge of interest in the generic topic of business and society. Dozens of books and hundreds of articles discussed the new operating standards that must be considered by executive managements. Blue ribbon panels were created to formulate standards and new directions to meet this challenge. Executives were offended by the accusations they were destroying human rights, consumer interests, and the environment. But the indictments stuck and responses other than offense and denial were needed.

Corporate responsibility received considerable attention and took on new meaning during this era. First calls asked for responsiveness—businesses must be sensitive and responsive to the interests of their stakeholders. This discussion elevated to the demand for responsibility. A new sense of corporate responsibility carried organizations into thinking in terms beyond merely paying salaries and taxes (reluctantly, according to some pro-corporate thinkers, such as Milton Friedman), providing goods and services, and sponsoring visible philanthropy. Now calls came for organizations to achieve an even higher moral standard, rectitude. They had to consider higher-level values focusing broadly on considerations of fairness, equality, safety, and environmental quality. Executives and their counselors could not simply defend themselves by pointing to the goods and services provided and the cost that change would cause. Defenders of corporate policy learned that some methods of response were clearly outdated, such as responses by electricity generators that the critics could just “freeze to death in the dark.”

Generations of public relations practitioners had fostered corporate sensitivity to the quality of

relationships with members of the public. Now two changes had occurred that strained or ruptured those relationships. One was the failure on the part of business to recognize that values of American society had changed. Progress was no longer the single rationale for business activities based on executives' preferences. The quality of goods and services had been engineered to the point where planned obsolescence had prompted a high level of consumer dissatisfaction. The American automobile industry, for instance, had been so focused on style and cost reduction that they failed to realize that the public was more concerned with safety and quality than with style and price. Imported automobiles set a high standard on both counts. The slogan "Buy American" now rang hollow because that meant going along with American businesses for their sake rather than the interests of customers. The incentive to increase profit margins for the company had led to a loss in buyer confidence. Relations were asymmetrical, with the balance going toward the interests of business.

The other dramatic change resulted from the creation of new standards of operation and environmental excellence. Slowly, various publics had developed a higher sense of value on all aspects of corporate operation. Each critical statement by activists added to growing zones of meaning regarding operating standards. People were offended by discrimination in hiring and promotion of women and people of color. They came to criticize many business practices as being unfair. They looked at the environment and indicted various industries for health and aesthetics violations. The right of wild animals to a natural habitat came to take precedence over corporate desires and plans to harvest timber in the most cost-effective manner.

Once the demise of the age of deference began, the role of the public relations practitioner changed and smart companies realized that many new functions were needed. An old, and now outdated, sense of public relations and reputation management argued that reporters could say anything they wanted about businesses as long as they got the names correct. This approach to public relations held that favorable publicity could combat unfavorable

publicity. Advertising dollars were assumed to mute or soften media criticism. Industry held an elite status with the media. Neither could exist without the other; criticism could only go so far, or it would kill the goose that was laying the golden eggs. This tension has not stopped, but more and more practitioners are in a counseling position to caution managements that if they "like that planning decision they are opting for, they will be happy to see it on the front page of the newspaper or at the top of the hour on radio or television news."

During the change from deference to doubt, the United States witnessed a 180-degree change in the definition and locus of responsibility. Once caveat emptor—buyer beware—had been the standard. Industry softened this harsh reality by using their earned deference to say, "Trust us." People, thus, were responsible for the safe use of automobiles—which were built to safety standards preferred by Detroit executives. If consumers hurt themselves or were hurt, they were responsible for their injuries. The bias in understanding and attributing responsibility favored industry. Today, the equation has reversed. No one is responsible for any misuse of a product because they can and do argue they were not properly warned of the hazards in using the product.

In the public policy arena, the debate continues in legislatures and regulatory hearings over corporate operations, planning, and policy. However, much of this debate has now fallen into the hands of litigators, judges, and juries. Class action suits with damages in the billions have become so standard that juries make awards at levels that could cripple the industry or company, if not put it into bankruptcy. A list of the products and industries that have been slammed by such litigation would be too long to print, but two products—*asbestos* and *tobacco*—are indicative of this trend.

Trust is basic to the business transaction—the relationship between vendor and customer, between vendor and citizen. After having worked hard to build trust and demonstrate that they had earned the public's trust, American industry failed to maintain the level of deference they had earned. Whether the indictments against it are fair or unfair is moot.

What is real is the evidence that managements, including public relations counselors, now operate in an era where deference must be earned, not taken for granted.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Corporate social responsibility; Executive management; Government relations; Hearing; Issues management; Proactivity and reactivity; Public affairs; Public policy planning; Publics; Stakes; Symmetry; Zones of meaning

AGE OF PROGRESSIVISM

See Muckrakers (and the Age of Progressivism)

AGENDA ONLINE

Imagine the details required to plan an event. The challenge of event planning increases if the event is scheduled to occur out of town. Agenda Online (www.agendaonline.com) is one answer to the planning challenges of making an event occur in a seamless fashion. To an extent, the site is an e-commerce link to help event planners make contact with vendors, most particularly hotels, convention centers, and other key elements of an event.

As stated in its Web site, “Agenda is a business-to-business directory providing relevant information about sites and services that event planners need to plan and produce special events of any size. Agenda also offers its readers a free referral service to help corporate planners plan their events. This service is entirely free to planners and their resources and always helpful.”

One of the close companions for event management is the hospitality industry. A diverse array of professionals in that industry create and offer services that assist event planners to make arrangements in as efficient a manner as possible. Traditionally, event planners might be specialists in the public relations industry or the hospitality industry—or both. Even with specialists, organizations planning events had to rely on a plethora of

directories for cities where they might want to hold an event but with which they were not familiar.

Agenda Online is a Web-based service that can help bring the planner together with persons who will help to make arrangements and deliver services to make the event pleasant and productive. It features the relevant contacts and services for various major cities and convention sites.

The Web site includes advertisements for attractions in those cities that might appeal to the event participants and their families. A bookstore is also available at the site. The user will find a bulletin board and an e-bulletin board, as well as events calendars. This part of the site allows planners and schedulers to make contact with one another and to coordinate their efforts. The site also includes referrals and agenda contacts.

One of the most helpful parts of Agenda Online is the tips it provides. This window is designed based on various categories where the planner—however skilled—can get relevant advice such as beverage services convenient to the locale of the event and group activities. It includes such tantalizing options as tips for holding events on yachts and ways to choose the right floral designer.

—Robert L. Heath

AGENDA-SETTING THEORY

The focus of social science and the new field of mass media research on the social and psychological effects of new, widespread media technologies and vehicles dominated communication theory and research during the first 50 years of the 20th century. In mid-century, however, University of North Carolina researcher Maxwell McCombs and his partner Donald Shaw returned to an original theme focusing on the power and effects of media itself. Their three presidential election studies explored the relationship between media presentations of news and the resulting importance recipients of that news assigned to it. Thus was born the theory of agenda setting, which McCombs continued to study for the next four decades. This theory advances

the theme that reporters serve as gatekeepers to filter news events and by their reporting set an agenda. The agenda results from the kind and amount of attention that are given to news events, especially in the context of elections, where candidates chase news to keep their views before the voters.

The original agenda-setting proposition was a direct reflection of 1920s public opinion scholar Walter Lippman's statement that the press formed "pictures in our heads" (Lowery & DeFleur, 1995, p. 266). McCombs and Shaw tested that idea in an exploratory study of the 1968 presidential election coverage in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. What they discovered was a high correlation between what the news media reported as issues and what voters identified as issues. Their findings helped clarify the definition of agenda setting—focusing on the cognitive (awareness) level rather than the affective (feeling) level; in other words, media make voters aware of the issues, but do not tell them how to think or feel about the issues. Also identified were suggestions about media's limitations in the process, specifically the impossible task for media outlets of covering all issues. These findings refocused attention on the media as a powerful force in its own right, rather than just another variable in the viewers' social and psychological processes.

McCombs and Shaw then used the 1972 presidential election to conduct a more comprehensive study of agenda setting in Charlotte, North Carolina. They expanded the scope of the 1968 study to include voters' information from other people as well as from the media, voters' own personal characteristics, the influence of time on setting agendas, and the role of politics in agenda setting. This study confirmed the general hypothesis about creating awareness from the 1968 study and led them to concentrate on awareness and information as critical stages in opinion formation. It also reconfirmed media limitations in covering all events and issues, and clarified how these limitations influenced the complex process of how and why media make decisions to cover or not cover certain issues.

Next came the study of the entire 1976 presidential election year in three communities: Indianapolis,

Indiana; Evanston, Illinois; and Lebanon, New Hampshire. This study revealed more contributing factors: (1) newspapers and television influence voters more in the early campaign stages; (2) voters did seem to rank the importance of issues in the same sequence as the media did; and (3) voters with personal characteristics such as higher educational levels, more political knowledge, and more interest in political matters were more inclined to use media on a regular basis, making them more likely to be influenced by the media.

These three studies spawned more than 200 studies exploring agenda setting during the next 25 years. Significant studies include the following:

- Doris Graber's 1980 study looked specifically at the strength of the media's influence on voters' judgments; she found that the influence varied depending on environmental circumstances as well as media content.
- Dominic Larsorsa and Wayne Wanta's 1990 study added interpersonal experience to the agenda-setting paradigm of newspaper and television news on issues' importance.
- Scott Hays and Henry Glick's 1997 study extended the agenda-setting idea from its news effects to policy adoption effects, and concluded that when environmental conditions in the political entity (the state) and media influences are similar and convincing, "the policy in question is more likely to be adopted" (p. 511).

McCombs then expanded his study to the international arena, studying the 1996 general election in Pamplona, Spain; the 1994 Taipei mayoral election; and the 1993 Japanese general election. He concluded that the idea of what the media presents to voters as issues holds across cultural differences.

McCombs identified two levels of agenda setting: a level that embodies the original concept that media tells voters what to think about, and a second level that adds the idea that media select attributes to cover to the exclusion of others, creating a way of thinking about what is presented.

From his extensive research, McCombs further refined the roles of agenda setting in terms of how the news media builds consensus. He suggested the

media play four roles in agenda setting and thus must exhibit four traits to build informed communities:

1. The media should be professionally detached, reporting the facts and not determining the pros and cons of issues.
2. One of the functions of news media is to recognize their targeted involvement in putting issues on the agenda.
3. The media are the precursors of issues.
4. The long-term effect of media involvement in issues is the creation of a public agenda.

Criticisms of the agenda-setting focus range from the strength of the media influence to recognition of the effects of interviewing variables on voters' attitudes and behaviors. Everett Rogers and James Dearing identified three distinct agendas: media agendas, public priorities, and policy priorities. They contended that the three agendas interact at various times and to various degrees, rather than assuming that the media agenda is always the dominant factor. Denis McQuail claimed that there is insufficient evidence to show a causal connection between different issue agendas, and that the perspective needs more long-term information on party platforms correlated with long-term public opinion panel data.

Sharon Lowery and Melvin DeFleur developed a list of concerns related to the agenda-setting concept, including the influence of different audience categories, the individual characteristics of voters, the role and influence of interpersonal communication on voters' opinions, differences in the importance of issues, and the effects of political candidate advertising in relation to news coverage.

Perhaps one of the greatest contributions of the agenda-setting hypothesis is the variety of related theories and perspectives it has spawned. The following studies can all trace their theoretical foundations to agenda setting.

Shanton Iyengar and Donald Kinder's 1987 work described media priming as "an extension of agenda setting (that) addresses the impact of news coverage on the weight assigned to specific issues" (McQuail,

2000, p. 456). They concluded, for example, that priming in news portrayals causes politicians to try to associate themselves with the issues they appear strongest on and disassociate or distance themselves from issues on which they appear weaker to create congruence with the perspectives that the media have presented.

Dearing and Rogers combined agenda setting with other media effects, such as bandwagon, spiral of silence, diffusion of news, and media gatekeeping, in an effort to include the social and psychological components of the social science realm.

Framing theory, however, is one of the most visible extensions of agenda-setting theory. Originally proposed by James Tankard, Laura Hendrickson, Jackie Silberman, Kriss Bliss, and Salma Ghanem in 1991, the concept holds that entities can create a media frame to convey a central idea in a chosen context; in other words, they can stage the idea and plan the format in advance. Robert Entman advanced the framing idea to include highlighting certain elements within the frame—in essence, including the most salient ideas to the targeted audience while excluding others.

These adaptations of agenda setting have moved the concept of media influence into the repertoires of other media practitioners, particularly in public relations and advertising, which rely on creating awareness as a condition for motivating behavior.

McCombs is still involved in exploring and refining the future of agenda setting. In a turn-of-the-century review of his work, he outlined two major directions he sees for agenda setting. First, agenda-setting research will continue to move from its journalistic roots to other areas such as public relations and advertising: "Public issues are not the only objects that can be studied from the agenda-setting perspective" (McCombs, 2000, n.p.). Second, agenda-setting research will continue to study the relationships among factors influencing individuals' decisions on how to vote and other issues.

In addition to McCombs's defined directions, a third major direction should be considered: the international study of agenda-setting effects. McCombs's own Spanish election research and other scholars' work in different cultural and political settings

provides yet another vast arena to explore how media and people interact to decide what's important and how to think about it.

—Barbara DeSanto

See also Diffusion of innovations theory; Framing theory

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AILES, ROGER EUGENE

Roger Eugene Ailes has been referred to by politicians, media personnel, and media critics as the most effective conservative political consultant and media manager of the last 40 years of the 20th century and the early part of the 21st century. His work on behalf of conservative candidates, personalities, and causes has affected the political and media spectrum in the United States through the election of three conservative presidents and the establishment of significant and successful news organizations.

Ailes, a 1962 graduate of Ohio University, began his television career in Cleveland, Ohio, where he was the producer and director of a local talk/variety show called *The Mike Douglas Show*. He became the executive producer for the show and led it to national syndication. The show would eventually win two Emmy awards. According to Linda Lee Kaid, it was in this milieu that Ailes met Richard Nixon, a show

guest, who at the time was out of office. Kaid wrote that Ailes, in a spirited interchange, convinced Nixon that television was more than a gimmick and that Nixon would need to develop a television persona if the former vice president were to return to prominence in American politics. When Nixon gained the Republican nomination for president, Ailes was appointed the executive producer of television for the successful campaign.

Following the success of the Nixon campaign, Ailes formed his own political consulting firm, Ailes Communication, Inc., in 1969. For the next 23 years, Ailes successfully consulted with a large stable of local, state, and congressional candidates as well as a number of successful business and media corporations. Ailes returned to presidential politics in 1984, when he was asked to coach President Ronald Reagan in his second debate with Democratic candidate Walter Mondale. Reagan's performance in the first debate was considered by many to be lackluster. In the second debate, Reagan was able to use humor to successfully upstage his rival in the eyes of political critics and the American voters. The performance put the Reagan campaign back on track toward a landslide victory in November.

Ailes was again active in the 1988 campaign, mentoring George W. Bush. Bush had trailed early in the campaign but finished strongly with effective attacks on Democratic candidate Michael Dukakis. Ailes did not consult for Bush's losing 1992 campaign.

While effectively working in the consulting field, Ailes was also pursuing his interest in television. His abilities were recognized in 1977 with an Emmy nomination for his production and direction of *Feiini: Wizards, Clowns and Honest Liars*. In 1984 he was awarded an Emmy as the executive producer and director of the television special *Television and the Presidency*. In 1988 Ailes wrote, with Jon Krausher, *You Are the Message: Secrets of the Master Communicators*. In that volume he outlined his strategies for successfully dealing with the public media. Following his 1992 announcement that he would no longer be active as a political consultant, Ailes returned to television.

Named as president of CNBC in 1993, Ailes built the NBC cable network into a successful news organization. He is credited with increasing the ratings by 50 percent and tripling the network's income. While in this position, he developed a new all-talk network for NBC, called America's Talking. The network debuted in 1994.

In 1996, Ailes was named chair and chief executive officer of FOX News and the FOX News Channel, and he is credited with building the network into a serious competitor with the established networks ABC, CBS, and NBC. Ailes was able to convince a number of reporters, commentators, and talk show hosts with conservative viewpoints to join the organization. The network also was able to post substantial ratings against their more established competitors. Several media critics and politicians have condemned the network for its conservative perspective. However, Ailes and his allies argue that the network is an effective counterbalance to the generally accepted liberal perspective of other television networks and print news media.

Ailes is not a legendary public relations practitioner in the strictest sense, but he is typical of the sort of political strategist who sets the tone and style for winning campaigns. He knows how to read voters' preferences and cast candidates in a light that is most favorable.

—John Madsen

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ALUMNI RELATIONS

Alumni are graduates of or former students who did not graduate from a school, college, or university. Alumni relations, a function of public relations, centers around relationships—not only forming them, but nurturing and maintaining them throughout their duration. Most institutions have an entire department devoted to alumni relations, and many

of the large institutions have separate organizations that exist to support alumni activities.

Using the proper terminology when addressing or referring to alumni is critical, especially for the public relations practitioner who is employed by an alumni organization or an educational institution. An alumna is a woman graduate or former student of a school, college, or university. The plural form of *alumna*, used to refer to more than one woman graduate or former student, is *alumnae*. The singular form of *alumni* is *alumnus*. When referring to a male graduate or former student, use *alumnus* as the singular form and *alumni* for the plural.

According to the *American Heritage Book of English Usage*, coeducational institutions usually use *alumni* to refer to graduates of both sexes.

The word *alum* refers either to one of two colorless crystalline aluminum-containing compounds or a colorless aluminum salt used to purify water. Therefore, this word should not be used when referring to graduates or former students of a school, college, or university.

Although students who attend or graduate from a school, college, or university are automatically considered alumni of that particular institution, they most likely will be asked to pay dues to join an alumni organization or association (not paying dues does not mean that a person cannot claim alumni status of a particular institution). This is where the role of public relations becomes essential. Alumni organizations exist to help sustain a particular institution. Here the notion of “giving back” to an institution comes into play, and the role of the public relations practitioner is to identify those alumni who are willing and able to give (not just financially) and facilitate the ways in which alumni are recognized for their efforts.

Often, alumni organizations or associations offer various levels of membership, with increasing increments of membership dues. Many associations offer a “life” membership, often at a high dues level, to those alumni who are financially able and willing to support the organization at a higher level. Memberships at all levels are an important aspect of alumni relations, especially the acknowledgment of all donors, whether they can give \$10 or \$1,000.

Upon joining an alumni organization or association, alumni undoubtedly expect to receive benefits as dues-paying members. Benefits such as continued use of the university's library services or free parking in student lots should appeal to local alumni. When the objective is to appeal to nonlocal alumni, benefits will mean less; but if they support the university, they should join regardless of whether they intend to continue to use the university as a resource.

Public relations practitioners who work in the area of alumni relations are faced with the critical task of directing, implementing, and evaluating all communications with alumni. Equally challenging is the fact that alumni tend to be scattered across the globe, and communications cannot be limited to local alumni. Keeping track of alumni who graduated more than 30 or 40 years ago is not easy, and part of the responsibility falls to the alumna or alumnus to provide the alumni organization with updated personal contact information. If alumni organizations offer services and benefits that appeal to alumni, then those alumni should *want* to keep their information current so that they may be contacted about upcoming events, such as reunions and homecomings, and stay current on news about their former institutions.

Another way to keep alumni connected who do not live close to the university area is to form constituent groups of alumni who are based in other regions of the country or world, such as the Southeast or Southwest. This enables alumni who live near one another to meet and hold events and still feel connected to the university and other alumni.

Research is essential to learn what alumni want and how to effectively maintain relationships with them. Making assumptions is risky. Surveys are important and simple ways for alumni organizations and universities to gain an understanding of how their alumni view their respective institutions and how willing they are to support them, whether financially, as volunteers, as mentors to current students, or most important, as spokespersons. Their experiences and the way they were treated bear heavily on their decision to stay connected and

also determine how and if they will support the university financially.

Constant and continuing communications with alumni are perhaps most important to maintaining healthy relationships, and it is the role of the public relations practitioner to guide the organization in these communications. Alumni magazines published quarterly or alumni newsletters published monthly are essential to maintaining contact. Offering a section within these communications pieces for class updates and personal information encourages alumni to keep in touch with their former classmates. In the world of electronic communications, alumni Web sites provide easy ways for alumni to register and keep their contact information current, as well as allowing them to connect to their former institution on a daily basis. The job of the alumni organization is to build the bridge to make this possible. Capturing multiple e-mail addresses for alumni may prove to be more effective than trying to capture physical mailing addresses, especially in view of possible complications such as job uncertainty and relocation.

Alumni recognition plays a huge part in maintaining healthy alumni relationships. Recognizing alumni achievements and support, and not only those of alumni in high positions, goes a long way in showing that the organization cares and takes a vested interest in each individual who represents it and the institution he or she attended.

Most universities maintain a list of "famous alumni" to display the prestige of the university, as well as of the alumni organization. This is to be expected, as all universities and schools encourage their students to continue on and make their mark in the world. From a public relations standpoint, recognition of alumni at all levels will serve the organization well.

—*Kelly M. Papinchak*

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ANNUAL COMMUNITY REPORTS

Increasingly, the relationship between a manufacturing facility and its community is scrutinized, challenged, validated, measured, and ultimately redefined as the public's expectations of the performance of industrial neighbors evolve. One indication of a socially responsible facility is the extent to which it engages in dialogue with the community, typically using a combination of face-to-face, printed, and electronic communication tools. One of these tools, a community annual report, can be particularly effective when it addresses local issues and concerns, and is produced as one component of an overall communications strategy.

Community annual reports have been around for decades in one form or another, and the good ones—those that have credibility with their target audiences—go well beyond being public relations vehicles for the publishing facilities. A public that has grown comparatively more astute and less accepting over time now requires, and in some cases demands, the good, bad, and ugly of facility operations that affect their quality of life. And depending on the historical operations of a facility—including its ability to quickly communicate in response to incidents that directly impact neighbors, such as noise, odor, lights, and possibly emergencies—even a comprehensive *annual* report may not be sufficient. Recurring or significant problems that disrupt quiet residential life are clear justifications for more frequent communications.

The starting point for a community annual report is understanding what constitutes community relations and social performance; who are the key, relevant stakeholders; and what constitutes meaningful dialogue with the community. Only then can a baseline be established and a go-forward strategy implemented that are critical to measuring the ongoing effectiveness of a community annual report.

Community relations is the active management of the relationship between a facility and the local community interests around it. Community relations may mean no more than “getting to know your neighbors,” talking with them and inviting them to visit. It might involve good site management—ensuring

that neighbors are satisfied that when issues occur their concerns are handled promptly and professionally. Two valuable benefits of good community relations are goodwill and trust, which are almost always achieved through sincere effort, action, and alliance with community residents. Not to be overlooked are the employees, including retirees, who can be among the best community ambassadors.

Social performance includes all the ways a facility's activities affect society. At a local level it includes employment, contracting, operations, community involvement, security, social investments, and health, safety, and environmental issues. It also reflects the local priorities and issues of significance as identified through stakeholder engagement. Nationally it might include the impact on U.S. economic and social development; globally it may include the impact and contribution of the company's products and activities.

A *stakeholder* is anyone who has an interest in or can influence a business or facility. Stakeholder cooperation or involvement is needed for the facility to obtain and maintain its “license to operate.” Stakeholders may be shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, contractors, families of workers, business partners, people whose livelihoods are dependent on the facility, and people who live and work near the facility—the community—which includes local media, elected officials, activists, civic leaders, schools, and residential and industrial neighbors. It is this community stakeholder group, along with employees and retirees, who are the primary audience for a community annual report. These people are at the front line of a facility's efforts to develop and sustain community goodwill and trust, also known as reputation management. In good times, this bank of reputation receives deposits through good operational performance and relationship building; on the other hand, reputation hits or withdrawals occur when facility performance negatively affects the community, such as during an accident that requires public action or, at the very least, when operations are more noticeable than usual to nearby residents. Slow response to and public perception of indifference to a problem

caused by a facility, particularly through inadequate communication, also can drain the reputation account.

Dialogue with the community means engaging stakeholders and listening to what they tell facility representatives. Good dialogue sets the stage for a community annual report and other communication tools. Done well, it provides for mutual understanding and respect, clear and open lines of communication, opportunities to identify common ground, and other benefits. One limitation to dialogue is the inability to reach everyone who feels he or she has an interest in facility operations. Some people or communities farther away from the facility, or special communities of interest within the facility's operational area, may feel excluded. A community annual report mailed to homes and businesses by zip code is a way of reaching stakeholders beyond traditional community boundaries.

Fit-for-purpose best describes the approach for determining the content and appearance of a community annual report. In some cases a letter from the facility manager to the community outlining business and operational performance may be adequate. At the opposite and more expensive end of the spectrum, an elaborate full-color brochure with graphs, photos, and text covering such issues as health, safety, environmental impacts, taxes, economic and other issues of local significance, employee volunteerism, and philanthropic endeavors—emphasizing with examples the facility's commitment to be a good neighbor—may be the way to go. Again, producing an effective and well-received annual report can be leveraged by up-front analyses of community relations, social performance, stakeholder identification, and dialogue as they pertain to the facility-community relationship. A disconnect occurs when the facility's communication messages do not meet the community's expectations, are regarded as insincere or self-serving, or simply are written at a level that is inappropriate for the readers (the communication relies on corporate/industry jargon and acronyms, misses the mark on topics addressed, etc.).

As its name implies, a community annual report is a communication tool that is produced and distributed yearly. However, given today's available

technology and the information-dependent public, interim reports may be appropriate for the full annual report stakeholder distribution list or subsets of that list. These can take the form of printed pieces, e-mails alone or with links to a Web site, open meetings with the community, one-on-one with influential stakeholders, and other methods. Consideration must be given to the relationship between the facility and the community—"hot" issues that need attention—logistics, demographics, staff required to do the work, costs, and other factors. Also, recognition must be given to the possible barriers of each interim approach; for example, everyone on the stakeholder list may not have an e-mail address. Whether it be a stand-alone annual report or a more comprehensive approach with several elements, it is better to start slow and build momentum than to launch an aggressive communications program and curtail it later due to resource limitations.

Finally, the value of a community annual report is enhanced when readers have an opportunity to provide feedback on the content, style, and frequency of the publication. A postage-paid tear-out postcard is an easy way for readers to rate the effectiveness of the community annual report. Keep it simple, with boxes to check and a space for general comments and suggestions. Formal readership surveys also can be productive, as can focus groups and informal sensing of stakeholders. Options for feedback include printed (mailed or faxed), electronic (e-mail or responses to a Web site), and in-person (individual or group settings) formats.

Community annual reports can be an effective way to stimulate meaningful dialogue between a facility and its community. Basic or slick in format, mailed to homes or distributed electronically, if the result is open communication about issues and concerns of mutual interest, and used in conjunction with other regular communications that incorporate the principles of stakeholder engagement and dialogue, a community annual report is a worthwhile outreach tool.

—David B. McKinney

See also Community relations; Dialogue; Goodwill; Mutually beneficial relationships; Stakeholder theory

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

There is probably no investor communications tool discussed and “cussed” more in corporate American boardrooms today than the annual report. Beyond the document’s historical baggage, evoking many to describe it as the “Rodney Dangerfield” of financial publications, today’s intense disclosure environment—due in large part to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act—has prompted a whole new role for the annual report.

But first things first. What is the annual report, and why are 12,000-plus U.S. public companies spending literally billions of dollars each year to produce such a document?

Simply stated, and as defined by the New York Stock Exchange, the annual report is the formal financial statement issued yearly by a publicly owned corporation. The report shows assets, liabilities, revenues, expenses, and earnings. The report also shows the company’s financial condition at the close of the business year and other basic information of interest to shareholders.

Although there is no prescribed format for the annual report, most companies organize their report in four main sections: the president’s letter to the shareholders, the “pretty pictures” section or operations review, the management discussion and analysis, and the really boring but most important stuff—the financials and footnotes. In his *Investor Relations: The Professional’s Guide to Financial Marketing and Communications*, author William F. Mahoney likened the annual report to a multicourse gourmet dinner.

If the shareholders’ letter is the main course, the financial statements/footnotes are the *piece de resistance*. The operations review makes up the side dishes. The management discussion and analysis is the special salad. Not to be overlooked . . . are the corporate profile (the appetizer), financial highlights (the soup), and investor information (the sorbet or fine assortment of fruits and cheeses, as you wish). (1991, p. 286)

Although the genesis of the corporate annual report can be traced as far back as oral presentations made at annual meetings of medieval craft guilds,

its modern form emerged from the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, which required all publicly traded companies to provide yearly financial reports to investors. But there has never been a legal requirement for annual reports to become the show-place publications many are today. This landmark legislation specified only that publicly held companies make full financial disclosure of details relevant to the current and future value of the company to shareholders on a yearly basis. It did not say that companies could turn their annual report process into a beauty contest, spending billions yearly on lavish graphics while being less than candid about their financial doings.

Somehow, over the decades, Congress’s seemingly clear and reasonable expectation has been lost on corporate America. Whereas the remainder of the 1930s and the 1940s brought cautious, colorless reporting, the 1950s marked the Renaissance, when “make it pretty” became the standard in annual report design. The 1960s produced annual report Impressionism. “Use color,” one designer would say. “Just a little dab will do it.” The annuals of the 1960s brought drama and zest in design, but they were blatantly shy of what the SEC Act mandated: facts, figures, and analysis.

The 1970s and 1980s—the age of seriousness—saw financial market turmoil and a corresponding impact on annual reports, forcing companies to become more cautious and thrifty in their spending. The 1990s and opening years of the new decade may well become known as the new age of corporate governance and transparency, as corporate America was brought to its knees by an unprecedented flurry of accounting and reporting scandals.

Except for the 2000 passage of the Regulation Full Disclosure (Reg. FD), which restricted selective disclosure of material information to analysts and investors prior to its availability to the general public, Congress and the SEC basically had stood aside as corporations maintained their free-spirit form of financial disclosure. For its part, the annual report continued as a showy marketing tool rather than a serious investor information document.

Then, in October 2001, the world learned that a high-flying energy trading company, Enron, was under SEC investigation for its accounting practices. Within weeks the company collapsed, costing shareholders and employees billions of dollars, and taking with it the long-esteemed accounting firm Arthur Andersen. Over the next several months, accounting scandals swept across corporate America, destroying several major Wall Street favorites.

Multiple issues were blamed: aggressive accounting practices to meet quarterly earnings “consensus” forecasts, conflicts of interest between research and investment banking, weakness in board oversight, a compensation system ill designed to align management’s interest with that of shareholders, and conflict of interest between auditing and consulting in major accounting firms.

Enron’s collapse, exacerbated by the other scandals, triggered the most extensive wave of congressional legislation and SEC regulations dealing with disclosure seen on Wall Street in 60 years. Heading the list was the 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which, in its simplest definition, required public companies to validate the accuracy and integrity of their financial management. Moreover, the SEC began pumping out 18 rule proposals beginning in 2001 designed to help restore investor confidence. Although some see Sarbanes-Oxley and the other rules as just more compliance burdens, many see them as opportunities to make real improvements in governance and transparency.

Enter the annual report. With mandates for improved information and new financial reporting standards, the annual report certainly takes on new importance as a financial communications conduit between public companies and their myriad financial audiences. Despite its maligned past, the annual report remains probably the most important financial information tool in a company’s communications arsenal. Two major studies conducted nearly a decade apart seem to support the annual report’s continuing importance. In 1994 this writer surveyed several hundred institutional investment security analysts and found that the corporate annual report, more than any other major communication tool, was indeed meeting their financial information

requirements. In August 2003, Rebecca Aguilar published similar findings of institutional analyst support for the informational value of the annual report in her master’s research thesis for the University of Houston School of Communication.

Accordingly, the challenge now for annual report producers is not in providing more information—that’s easy. The real challenge is to produce an annual report that doesn’t bury information in page upon page of complex legalese, financial voodoo, and corporate jargon. Moreover, the challenge is to provide information in a way that all investors and potential investors—not just financial professionals—can understand. That’s *real* disclosure and transparency.

And although the following three communication dicta have been around as long as dirt, they still serve as guidelines to helping meet the transparency challenge.

- Use plain English. Direct, easy-to-understand, short sentences remain the foundation of clear communication.
- Keep it simple. The KISS rule lets investors know where to look for important information, and then helps them understand it.
- Tell it like it is. Be honest, open, and candid. Evasive reporting will get you nothing but trouble, and probably worse.

Is all this necessary? The answer is clearly yes for companies who want to pull away from the pack with meaningful disclosure and transparency.

—H. R. Hutchins

See also Appendix 5, “The Corporate Annual Report: An Evolution.”

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ANNUAL HEALTH, SAFETY, AND ENVIRONMENT (HSE) REPORTS

Environmental and community activists raise doubts about companies' willingness and ability to reduce their impact on citizens' health and safety as well as environmental quality. In response, concerned companies set goals and improve their environmental performance. A second response is to communicate their corrective actions and the results of those actions to the communities where they operate.

Health, Safety, and Environment reports typically are issued annually and tell of the progress being made to change processes and procedures/practices to reduce the company's potential impact on people's health and safety as well as to protect the environment. These reports are often abbreviated HSE or SHE, to highlight their content but shorten their names. Health details relate to changes that might include discontinuing the use or emission of products associated with long-term consequences for people's health. Exposure to some chemicals in sufficient quantity, for instance, might cause respiratory problems or increase the incidence of cancer among community residents. Safety issues relate to sudden occurrences that might harm or kill area residents, such as explosions. Environmental impact statements might include reductions in emissions that change the color of the sky or produce unpleasant odors.

Industries such as refining, chemical manufacturing, and electrical generation have used trade associations to get members to set and achieve higher standards of HSE performance. They conduct, commission, and respond to research in an effort to understand the technical aspects of each issue. They want to know what chemicals are harmful and under which circumstances. They share best practices that can improve the performance and therefore enhance the image of the industry.

Some of these reports feature specific measures being taken by individual companies. They might, for instance, tell of increased maintenance routines or manufacturing procedures that have been undertaken to achieve positive HSE results. They may

report the installation of new equipment or processes to enhance performance.

A typical aspect of these reports is to state the mission and vision that guide a company's strategic business planning. In recent years, under pressures from peers, government, and activists, companies have also begun to state their mission, goals, and objectives relevant to HSE performance. For instance, they might report that specific processes are being implemented over a five-year period to reduce the discharge of harmful chemicals into water in the community. Each year they might then indicate how the changes are progressing and how discharges are being reduced to acceptable levels. In some cases, a company will publicly commit to reduce emissions beyond the levels specified in permits issued by regulatory agencies, or voluntarily relinquish the "grandfather" status of particular process units that, due to their age, are exempt from current emission standards.

Some HSE reports are highly technical and specifically tied to best business practices. Others tend to feature image more than substance. They might indicate that a company is committed to a clean, safe, and healthy environment. They even include pretty pictures of birds, sunsets, and equipment. But those reports might not indicate in a fully technical and operational way what constructive changes are being implemented. Early in the modern era of increased openness by industry, graphs illustrating downward trends of emissions were common, because they demonstrated progress over time. Companies were able to take credit for reducing emissions without always focusing on whether the current levels were still too high. As the public grew accustomed to the trend graphs, harder questions were asked, along the lines of "We see you are reducing emissions of certain chemicals; what we want to know is if the level today poses any health risks to us."

The incentive for such reports started in the 1980s when several major operating plant failures alarmed community residents and citizens around the world. The most notorious was the release of MIC by the Union Carbide Plant in Bhopal, India.

Citizens around the world feared for their health and safety if they lived near chemical facilities.

Such concern sparked legislation in the United States called Community Right to Know. People have a right to know what is occurring in their community that could affect their health or safety. Federal legislation and regulation sparked changes in operations, including communication between companies and area residents. One of the tools in this communication was the annual HSE report. For the chemical manufacturing industry, it was one of the recommendations made by the Responsible Care Program initiated through its trade association.

So that local residents could be informed, state and federal regulatory bodies required companies to indicate what amounts of specific chemicals were being released into the atmosphere. The federal Environmental Protection Agency was one of the organizations spearheading this trend. Data collected by operating plant experts are reported to the EPA and to various state agencies.

These are public data. Activist organizations such as Environmental Defense have access to these data. Once they are collected, Environmental Defense reports these data at their Web site. The data are summarized so they can be accessed by zip code. Thus, a concerned citizen could go to this Web site, enter his or her zip code, and obtain the relevant EPA-reported data.

Company versions of HSE reports were typically published documents, either pamphlets or booklets. Many more copies of such documents were printed than needed. One solution has been to include HSE reports at the company Web site. This makes the information available to any concerned citizen who wants to better understand a neighboring company's HSE plan and progress reports.

Data tell only part of the story. HSE reports give companies the opportunity to put those data in perspective and to show how changes are being made to improve the HSE conditions of the community. Under the best of circumstances, such reports become part of the community dialogue and planning process. Citizen input is obtained. Concerns are voiced and heard. Organizations use sound science and responsible operating procedures to

make and report changes and improvements. Such efforts become a vital part of these companies' community relations operations. They want to demonstrate their concern for citizens of the communities where they operate. They want to be seen as beneficial rather than harmful neighbors. They work and report to achieve goodwill. Such documents are a means by which companies demonstrate how they operate in the public interest.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Goodwill; Public interest

ANTECEDENTS OF MODERN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Conventional wisdom marks the beginning of public relations as we know it today as occurring during the 19th century, in the United States. A confluence of growing mass media outlets, a desire to reach mass markets, and a need to create public policy support for large industrial complexes fostered the practice and motivated the pioneers of the field to refine and shape the practice to the conditions of their time. Promotional giants such as P. T. Barnum used the profession as a honed art. Industries such as railroads and electric utilities used the profession to gain acceptance for uniform operations.

Important to note, however, is the fact that although the growth of media outlets offered new challenges and opportunities during the 19th century, many of the functions of the practice were well established by this time. Pioneers of the practice working in the 19th century built on a foundation that arguably reaches back to the dawn of civilizations that are hundreds and even thousand of years old. These origins are traceable by noting how staged events, including all sorts of pageantry, for instance, are virtually timeless. Such events, which include pseudo events staged purely for publicity and promotion purposes, are age-old tactics used to attract attention and make statements about the sponsors. For centuries, leaders of government, religion, and commerce have worked to inspire awe, mystery, and obedience.

Mercantile activities have required persons who can promote products, services, and business opportunities. Explorers opened trade routes and created treaty relationships to spark commerce. Shipping fleets, trade expeditions, and commercial relationships offer anthropologists insights into the forces that shaped cultures.

Governments of many types and in all regions of the globe were crafted by strong central leaders who used communication to manage their reputations, to coordinate ruling structures, and to command the loyalty of the governed. Changes in government have often been associated with traditional public relations strategies, functions, and tactics. Scholars have identified antecedents of public relations with the communication efforts to foster the War of Independence, by which some of the colonies in the new America broke away from England.

Public relations is associated with all aspects of cultural growth and change. Political campaigns are the playground of public relations. European monarchies have used pageantry, diplomacy, warfare, executions, and managed marriages to create and change governments. Colleges and universities, in places as recent as colonial America and as old as the centers of education of Alexandria and Athens, used public communication to focus attention on their educational accomplishments. The creation and propagation of new faiths also provided antecedents. Churches, perhaps most notably the Catholic Church, have used techniques to attract and keep converts loyal to the faith.

The historical antecedents of public relations, therefore, are often entangled with communication activities typically associated with what is called propaganda. Even well into the early decades of the 20th century, practitioners thought they were engaged in the practice of propaganda. Once that term became associated with manipulation, lying, and deceit, senior practitioners such as Edward Bernays and John W. Hill worked to divorce themselves and their practice from that aspect of public communication.

Out of this plethora of activities arose what we today call public relations. A brief discussion of

some of these antecedents illustrates how the practice developed long before the 19th century.

A search for the antecedents of public relations might focus on tools, tactics, strategies, functions, and outcomes that characterize the profession today. Tools and tactics include rallies, events, newsworthy stories, editorials, buildings, logos, and treatises. Strategies are timeless: inform, persuade, identify, collaborate, compete, compromise, and negotiate. The functions provide some of the strongest evidence: government relations, marketing communication, publicity, promotion, investor relations, employee relations, and student relations. Outcomes seem timeless: motivate people to buy, believe, fear, follow, live in religious faith, and support. These lists are more suggestive than definitive. The following discussion indicates various examples suggested by these lists.

The range of historical antecedents is more limited if we think only of public relations as organizations' response to and utilization of mass media. If we think of public relations more as a rhetorical process of image, reputation, control, command, marketing, and organizational—even empire—positioning, then it is likely to closely parallel the evolution of fledgling, formal, and ordered societies.

The history of public relations can then be traced to ancient empires such as Persia, Egypt, India, and China. The roots of public relations stretch back 4,000 years. They include the creation of the buildings, statues, idols, and governmental communication systems of highly sophisticated ancient societies. The ceremonial burial of leaders, even as deities, is part of the history of public relations. Throughout ancient societies, statues and other carved figures were widely used to capture the personas and personalities of government and religious leaders. Coins often carried some logo or the visage of some leader as a way of uniting that person or image with the national identity of a people.

Researchers seeking to identify the antecedents of public relations are prone to focus on instances of governments asserting power, church communication, mystery, and symbolism. One of the universal needs of people in power or those who seek power is to keep in touch with the opinions of stakeholding

publics. A key realization of the powerful is that they rule and control only by knowing and molding or conforming with the opinions of key publics. Thus, for centuries those in power or seeking power have commissioned individuals to “conduct research” into the minds, wills, and motives of targeted publics. Some of this research was conducted by using espionage and even torture.

Antecedents include church communication, used by religious leaders of all kinds to disseminate the doctrine, foster loyalty to the faith, and establish the symbols of the church as a vital part of people’s lives. The antecedents of public relations include all of those sources of power. Power is displayed not only to intimidate but also to foster a sense of loyalty, submission, allegiance, and identification. It would be incorrect to suggest that the power of emperors, kings, sultans, pharaohs, and other magnates was always unwelcome and that allegiance was not warranted. Societies often emerged as people collectively created agriculture, science, and art. Strong central governments were a source of collective power needed to advance scholarship, technology, and commerce. Some researchers will see this as part of the public relations of religion and government.

Antecedents of public relations can include the creation and manipulation of mystery, by secular and religious leaders. In particular, religious figures have maintained control and faith by demonstrating their understanding and perhaps even control of the mysteries of life. Uncertainty is uncomfortable.

In addition to religious identification, antecedents include efforts to foster national identity. Flags, armadas, great walls, giant pyramids, and other symbolic displays are vital components of national pride and allegiance. Counselors of various kinds, in the style of senior public relations practitioners, offered advice and inspired efforts to demonstrate the power and success of governmental leaders. One widely examined antecedent is the public display of opposition and appeals for regime change. Another is the display of leadership. This application of public relations runs through many of the antecedents noted.

Although lost in time or unknown because of the limitations of travel, many roots of public relations

were well established by Persian kings as well as the kings and emperors of China, Japan, and Korea. Refined pageantry, sponsorship of invention, poetry, agriculture, and scholarship, as well as military display were the public relations stock and trade of these civilizations. Magnificent structures, mystery, and physical distance separated the rulers from the people. What was known and believed often resulted from proclamations and statements circulated to the people through the contemporary version of public relations practice. These might include the commissioning of poems, sagas, and songs. Proclamations of antiquity find modern parallels in statements by corporate spokespersons and presidential press secretaries.

Once Philip II of Macedonia had subdued the regions of the Hellenic peninsula, he commissioned the creation of gold and ivory statues of himself to adorn the temples. He taught his son, Alexander the Great, similar techniques of power display. In one way or another, living beings were proclaimed or suggested to be closely connected with deities. Hannibal’s army, like the armies of the Roman Empire, moved with great pageantry. They often proclaimed themselves religious or secular deities and used cruel methods to enforce their power. Symbols of power and spiritual connection were carefully honed tools that are antecedents to modern corporate and nonprofit logos.

Displays of power are a vital part of human history. Leaders by all titles have recognized the importance of developing and disseminating the symbols of power. Such symbols have at least two purposes: to foster identification and loyalty among the faithful and to promote fear and intimidation in the enemies of the governing regime. Colors are an important part of this display of power. Generations of battle garb featuring England’s red and gold with the sign of the lion were pitted against the blue and fleur-de-lis of France. The return of victorious monarchs was carefully staged to foster identification and intimation through the display of power. Burials, without parallel in Egypt and China, constituted great events used to empower parts of the public and deity rulers. The grand cities, including famous libraries such as that at Alexandria, were

designed to celebrate the prominence, power, and judgment of those who worked to keep themselves as rulers.

The Romans were masters of the event. Thousands of people witnessed long victory processions designed to proclaim the might of Rome and its ability to spread law throughout vast regions. Although the Romans did not invent the circus, they mastered it as a technique for demonstrating political and religious views. Great arenas were created that required advanced engineering and theatrical skills. Into these circus arenas entered chariot racers, wild animals, gladiators, and victims of religious oppression. Life and death were spectacles to show how the emperor and the people could make just and final decisions, often merely for amusement but always for ceremony to demonstrate the power of Rome. Not only were such displays intended to create identification by the people with Rome, but they also were intended to show other nations and competitors for political power how decisive and warranted the rulings of the current emperor could be.

Religions traditionally focus attention on key figures. It is common for the personages of the faith to be captured and presented in various forms—statues, sacred artifacts, carvings, and paintings—including Buddhas of various sizes, including giant figures. Paintings and statuary abound displaying the figure and face of Jesus Christ. The cross is a universal symbol, as is the sign of the fish. The Star of David has been a sign of religious affiliation and affection as well as a target of hatred. In 1622, under the leadership of Pope Gregory, the Catholic Church developed the concept of propaganda as it instituted the *Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*—the Congregation for Propagating the Faith. Members of various religious orders have been sent forth to propagate the faith—proselytizing potential converts to promise their adherence and support.

This battle for the faithful was ongoing. In 1351 John Wycliffe called for reform of the Catholic Church, including the publication of the Bible in the vernacular. Control of the Bible was an essential tool to display church power. Until the printing press and moveable print appeared in Western

culture, the production of Bibles through the handwork of monks was a vital means for controlling access to the word of God. Bibles were physically as well as symbolically attached to churches.

Missionary activities are ubiquitous. Colors are often associated with religious leaders, such as the purple and saffron of the Dalai Lama. Religious buildings are part of this display, as is the ritual of religious expression. Pageantry and ritual play prominent roles in expressions of faith and allegiance to a religious creed. Parallels to secular expressions can be made. Such parallels do not intentionally undercut religious adherence, but indicate the close parallels between lay and secular forms and people's need to wrestle with mysteries.

Executions often constituted dramatic events. They attracted crowds, often as means of impressing the public with the laws and power of the state. The Reformation launched by Martin Luther began with the dramatic event of the proclamation of the wrongs of the church. On October 31, 1517, he nailed the 95 theses to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, Germany. Featured in these claims were denunciations of the role of indulgences in the daily lives of the faithful. Over the next century, many events and actions acknowledged the war among church leaders and the people. This battle included public burnings and other torturous executions of those whose faith put them at odds with the religious and secular leaders popular at the time.

Jousts were favorite pastimes in England, Germany, and France. Although they featured the prowess of individual knights, they were in many ways similar to military maneuvers and grand parades in later times. They provided opportunities for kings and others nobles to display the caliber of fighting equipment, men, and horses that could be brought to bear—sometimes in the pursuit of mercenary work.

The advent of democracy opened the doors to additional antecedents of modern public relations. In many ways, the efforts of Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury in 1215, are quite modern. He mobilized a disgruntled group of barons who confronted King John with ultimatums that eventually matured into the Magna Carta. Similar

challenges of government are instrumental to English and American history and are widely recognized as precursors to modern political campaigns. Kings sought through intrigue and pageantry to control the people of England, for instance. Their rule was challenged by the church, reformation, national identity, and the spirit of the new world.

The events leading to the American War of Independence offer historians a clear link to the origins of public relations. The effort to create the sentiment for a Declaration of Independence required a sustained campaign. It included the use of all of the forms of mass communication of the time. It introduced images, slogans, and icons. It used cartoons. It created events, such as the Boston Tea Party. It mixed ideology with flaunted displays to challenge the authority of the king. At the same time, the Revolutionaries tried hard to avoid a direct clash with the House of Commons because it wanted to showcase the virtues of popular government. Clear evidence of what would be called propaganda by the turn of the 20th century included the continuing publicity and promotion of the Revolution. Revolutionary leaders sought to create crises that would defame British control. They engaged in issues debates over principles such as local sovereignty and taxation with representation. Colonists used pamphlets, newspaper broad sheets, and clever symbols including burned effigies.

The tools and tactics of the Revolutionaries constitute a list familiar to current practitioners. It included bonfires, fireworks, heroes and heroines, victims to substantiate claims of atrocities, exhibitions, slogans, speeches, and even crude lantern slides. Legends include Yankee Doodle and The Spirit of '76. The symbols of the Liberty Tree and a chopped snake accompanied slogans such as "Don't Tread on Us." Committees were formed to create and disseminate the ideology, post lists of complaints, and organize events. Some patriots were skilled at recruiting rebels in taverns, where ample amounts of spirits hardened the patriotic resolve needed to oppose the British government at the risk of death for being a traitor.

The activism and publicity components of the formation of the new government in the United

States are often included in discussions of the antecedents of public relations. Other aspects of this effort also deserve attention. Perhaps no better example of an issues brief exists than the Declaration of Independence. It was a careful articulation of the complaints justifying resistance to the British government's authority. Particular care was given to placing blame on the king rather than on the House of Commons. Also, as the new government struggled to survive, emissary efforts by Benjamin Franklin constituted early examples of the importance of skillful government relations.

The democratic spirit of popular governance and free election opened the door to myriad political campaign techniques that have long been the stock and trade of political public relations experts. Rumors, lies, and myths provided substance to political campaigns—people born in log cabins, men of the people, and Old Hickory. Songs were crafted to praise one candidate and to defame his opponent.

Among the many antecedents, the origin of the term *public relations* is obscured. Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, as long ago as 1807 combined *public* with *relations* in a statement about the obligation of government to the governed. The more specific coinage combining those terms as a field may have occurred during an address by Dorman Eaton to the Yale graduating class of 1882. Without a doubt, universities were some of the earliest organizations to use public relations. Medieval universities announced lectures and other academic achievements. In the 18th and 19th centuries, intercollegiate athletic competition drew crowds, which resulted in media announcements and student and alumni interest. Formally, and without reservation, the term was specifically and functionally used in the naming of departments and activities by the railroad industry by the end of the 19th century. Now a fledgling profession by name was able to draw on centuries of practice as it refined techniques influenced by emerging and changing communication technologies.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Bernays, Edward; Hill, John Wiley

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AP STYLE

AP style is a standard of journalism and a public relations writing style and format that is based on rules and guidelines established by the *AP Stylebook*. In June 1953 the Associated Press instituted something that would change the history of writing for journalists, editors, teachers, and students. This innovation was named the *AP Stylebook*, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in June 2003. The 1953 edition consisted of 12,000 terms and 100 pages. It was written as a substitution for the first “16-page AP Style Book and the AP Copy Book, known as the Red Book” (Moynihan, 2003, p. 11). Today, the *AP Stylebook* contains over 400 pages.

Although the 1953 edition was the foundation for future editions, Norm Goldstein, *AP Stylebook* editor for 14 years, stated that the 1977 edition marked the beginning of the newer, more precise versions. The structure was changed and entries were organized in alphabetical order so that users could find what they needed in a timely manner. Louis D. Boccardi, Associated Press president and CEO, stated in an article on AP style that “complication of style rules was accompanied by the accumulation of so much fact and information that the effort resulted in ‘a Stylebook,’ but also a reference work” (DiNicola, 1994, p. 64).

The Associated Press defines the *AP Stylebook* as

the journalist’s “bible,” the style manual that is an essential tool for all writers, editors, students and public relations specialists. It provides guidelines on spelling, capitalization, grammar, punctuation and usage, with special sections on business and sports. Included is a guide on media law, with practical guidelines on libel law, privacy, copyright and access to places of information, and a special section on

Internet and computer terms, a comprehensive effort to unify spelling and usage of computer-related terms, from Web site and e-mail to URLs and “cyber”-prefixes. This segment also offers Internet searching tips and cautions. (Associated Press, September 15, 2003, n.p.)

The Elements of Style by William Strunk, Jr., and E.B. White is also an important book that writers use when dealing with style and word usage. This book, popularly called the “little” book, educates writers on how to use words in the proper manner, how to form meaningful paragraphs, and how to use expressions correctly. It also consists of a section that reminds writers of dos and don’ts in writing. For example, it explains the importance of rewriting and revising. It also encourages writers not to overstate their points and never to make the reader guess what you are stating. This is accomplished by clarifying what is meant in a simple, comprehensive way.

Many journalism teachers consider the *AP Stylebook* the most important tool for assisting students in their classes. It educates students on how to use certain writing techniques in different situations. For example, when using numbers, a student is taught to always spell out numbers one through nine and to use numerals for numbers 10 and above, with some exceptions, such as ages and percentages. If a student cites an address in a story, he or she must also use figures for the address number to represent the location.

The stylebook also assists students with punctuation, spelling, government matters, state abbreviations, explanations about how court cases are written, and other points. Teachers have found that certain entries within the stylebook, such as “political correctness,” can be used as learning tools. These issues open the door to dialogue and student participation about current events. Although the *AP Stylebook* does not explicitly state guidelines for inclusion of entries, it makes an effort to take into account changes in language and social norms. Public relations professionals find the stylebook very important in assisting them in their writing, since their work is routinely disseminated to journalists.

Due to the rise in Internet usage, a stylebook subscription can now be purchased online. “Editors at AP, as well as faculty at journalism schools and editors at newspapers around the world, make suggestions on style changes as they arise” (Moynihan, 2003, p. 11).

The AP Stylebook is often used as a guide for proper word usage, punctuation and spelling for news releases, news stories, annual reports, brochures, media kits, radio and television news broadcasts and all other aspects dealing with public relations. Writing for the public relations field is similar to writing for journalism, so the same rules apply. Professionals have found that AP style is just as important in the profession as it is in classroom settings. The tools learned early on are implemented throughout their career.

Whether composing a news release or a 20-second public service announcement, professionals as well as students have learned that writing is the most common form of communication. To communicate effectively, rules and guidelines must be followed. The AP stylebook sets the foundation for this. The lessons learned in the journalists’ “bible” should never be taken for granted. These lessons shape today’s and tomorrow’s journalists, writers, teachers, and public relations professionals.

—Brenda J. Wrigley

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APOLOGIA THEORY

In today’s increasingly turbulent and mediated environment, companies regularly face criticism for their actions. How they respond to allegations of wrongdoing constitutes the form of communication

generally recognized as corporate apologia. A corporate apologia is a response to accusations of ethical misconduct in which a company has as its primary motive the defense of its reputation and to which it offers discourse in self-defense that denies, explains, or apologizes for its actions. It should be noted that an apologia is not an apology, though it may contain one; rather, it is a justification of its actions that seeks to present a competing interpretation of “the facts” and, in so doing, repair an organization’s damaged reputation. Although the success of apologiae in repairing damaged reputations is arguable, a central benefit appears to be the fact that they provide a conclusion for a negative story, one whose purpose is to disentangle companies from a difficult news cycle.

The ability to navigate apologetic situations successfully is critical, given the high costs of product development and production, the aforementioned turbulent media environment in which news magazines and 24-hour news outlets are incessantly searching for more grist for the media mill, a dynamic and complicated legal environment, and the confessional nature of contemporary culture.

CRISIS SITUATIONS

The study of apologetic communication by and large has focused on understanding the situation that necessitates an apologia as well as explicating the message strategies that constitute this form of address. As to the situation that necessitates an apologia, B. L. Ware and Wil A. Linkugel defined an apologia as a response to “the questioning of a man’s moral nature, motives, or reputation” (1973, p. 274). In dealing with more organizational contexts, H. R. Ryan has expanded the concept to include allegations against not just character but also the policies of individuals and institutions. Given that there exists a “legitimacy gap” between societal expectations for corporate behavior and the reality of how such organizations are seen to act, the situation that necessitates an apologia is better conceptualized as a legitimation crisis where an apologia is needed because organizational actions are seen to have violated commonly held public values,

resulting in public animosity and antipathy toward the company. Such hostility takes the form of social sanctions whereby media, consumers, and key opinion leaders criticize said organizational actions.

APOLOGIA STRATEGIES

As to the substance of a corporate apologia, scholars have spent a great deal of time and effort to articulate the different message strategies used by organizations. One such strategy is to deny—to reject charges by characterizing them as false. Those not in a position to deny that they committed an act often find it useful to deny that they intended to do so, for intent is a key factor in gauging culpability. Concomitantly, bolstering constitutes an indentificational strategy that focuses on the strength and benefits of a past relationship. One way that corporations bolster is to remind constituents of the number of jobs they bring to a community.

Strategies of redefinition are a major category with which apologists are able to deal with the public perception of their guilt. Differentiation is one strategy, in which a narrow context is redefined into a broader one. An additional strategy of redefinition is transcendence. Transcendence differs from differentiation in that the redefinition is to a broader, more abstract context and often involves a religious dimension. Other strategies of redefinition include provocation, where an organization claims that it simply reacted to the hostilities of another; the use of defeasibility, where corporate officers claim that forces beyond their control were at work; and the good-intentions strategy, where a company claims it had good intentions in creating a specific policy that only recently has faced criticism. Finally, in minimization, an organization seeks to lessen its responsibility by claiming that the problem is actually small or insignificant.

Another strategy of redefinition includes the concept of dissociation. In using dissociation, organizations seek to deal with the problem of their guilt by claiming that criticisms are but an “appearance” and do not accurately reflect the “true facts” of the case. This dissociation often takes one of three forms. First, when the facts that precipitate an allegation

of wrongdoing are in doubt, many apologists will employ an opinion-knowledge dissociation. In such an instance, an apologist will claim that the media organizations that have leveled the charges are trafficking in the realm of opinion and do not have all the facts. A frequent corollary to this approach is to level a counterattack against the accuser. A second dissociational strategy used by apologists is a scapegoating strategy in which the apologist uses an individual-group dissociation. As a rule, organizations and corporations go through great effort and great expense to craft carefully constructed images; yet when wrongdoing occurs, such companies are quick to bifurcate such images by separating the individuals from the group and locating guilt in those individuals. Such a move, then, moves the guilt from the company as a whole to said individuals, who may then be disciplined or fired. A final form of dissociational strategy is accident-essence dissociation; here organizations find it rhetorically useful to claim that a criticized act was an “accident” and that, as such, it does not represent the essence of the organization, which is made up of dedicated employees who should not be judged on the basis of one aberrant act.

Conciliation strategies represent another major defense used by apologists. They are chosen by apologists who decide it is in their best interests to utilize a strategy of mortification in which guilt is accepted and forgiveness is sought—typically in the form of an apology. Bradford and Garrett (1995) found that a concession strategy is more rhetorically resonant with audiences than any other approach. Conciliation attempts often are coupled with two additional strategies. The first, corrective action, occurs when an organization announces steps it is implementing to fix a problem and ensure that it does not happen again; and the second, compensation, occurs when an organization reimburses victims in the form of monetary reparations.

COMPETING TENSIONS

Corporations caught in wrongdoing face two competing tensions as revealed by research into apologetic communication. On one side is the fact that an

organization has committed a wrong, and it is the impulse of organizational officials to want to “do the right thing” and own up to their misconduct. Moreover, media and consumers clamor for an apology, the absence of which causes ongoing damage to a corporation’s reputation. Finally, drawing from any number of ethical standards, it is easy to deduce that an accommodative message strategy is the preferred ethical response to the crisis situation.

Yet standing in conflict to this so-called public relations response is the argument that corporate officials realize that to apologize and accept responsibility would incur direct costs for the organization in the form of significant liability judgments. Indeed, research suggests that when a company is caught in a crisis, defensive message strategies are responded to favorably by investors and accommodative ones are viewed negatively. Hence, to meet its fiduciary responsibilities to its stockholder interests (its only interest enshrined in law), managers conclude that they *cannot* apologize. Organizations typically respond to such a quandary with equivocal communication—which often includes a statement of regret—a carefully crafted statement in which they acknowledge the tragedy or injury but carefully construct their own account to avoid assuming culpability. Such an approach puts an organization in the position of denying it has done anything wrong while promising never to do it again.

—Keith Michael Hearit

See also Crisis and crisis management; Crisis communication; Exxon and the *Valdez* crisis; Image restoration theory; Legitimacy and legitimacy gap

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APR

APR (Accredited in Public Relations) is a voluntary professional certification for public relations practitioners designed to identify professionals with demonstrated competency and experience. Practitioners holding the credential may use the letters “APR” after their names.

The credential was created by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 1964, motivated by a desire to enhance the professional image of the field. It required passing oral and written examinations and a minimum of five years’ public relations experience. Since public relations has no mandatory entry standards such as educational exams or licensing, practitioner accreditation provided a way to distinguish highly competent practitioners from others and offered some form of quality assurance to potential clients and employers. Today, the APR certification is recognized as an important step in the evolution of public relations toward professional status.

The APR program is the largest certification program for public relations practitioners in the United

States and has been most successful in producing accredited members. As of 2003, 21 percent of PRSA's members were accredited. According to PRSA, the average pass rate over the five years between 1998 and 2003 was 62 percent. Other organizations in the United States and abroad offer similar certification programs. Most notable in the United States is the International Association of Business Communicators' Accredited Business Communicator (ABC) designation. Internationally, a number of public relations professional organizations, including those in Australia, South Africa, and Great Britain, offer accreditation programs with criteria similar to those of current U.S. programs.

In the early 1980s, leaders of several public relations organizations in the United States began advocating for "universal accreditation"—the consolidation of accreditation programs that had sprung up among a number of public relations associations. A unified accreditation program would help to standardize professional expectations for public relations practitioners, as well as the consequences for accredited practitioners who violate codes of ethics. Competing interests among professional organizations stymied these efforts for nearly two decades. Eventually, PRSA and eight smaller public relations bodies forged a partnership called the Universal Accreditation Program (UAP).

In 1998, oversight for APR certification was transferred from PRSA to the new consortium. UAP partners include PRSA, the Agricultural Relations Council, the National School Public Relations Association, the Religion Communicators Council, the Society for Healthcare Strategy and Market Development, and several state and regional public relations associations. A governing board composed of representatives from these organizations develops and maintains the accreditation examination and related policies, reviews appeals, and grants the APR accreditation. Day-to-day operations are administered at PRSA headquarters in New York.

Eligibility for accreditation is limited to members of UAP partner organizations who have at least five years of paid, full-time experience in the practice of public relations or in the teaching of public relations courses in an accredited college or university.

Nonmembers who belong to member organizations of the North American Public Relations Council and who meet the same employment requirements as members are also eligible. Candidates must pay a fee of several hundred dollars and complete an application form. They may access a study guide, online self-study course, and instructions for preparing a portfolio from the Universal Accrediting Board.

Since its inception, the APR examination has required demonstrated understanding of the public relations body of knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge in practice. Until 2003, the accreditation process required a written examination and an oral interview before a panel of accredited peers. In July 2003, after a three-year period of research and testing, the UAP replaced the oral examination with a preliminary "Readiness Review," designed to assess whether candidates are likely to succeed in the written examination. The UAP also revised the written examination to cover 10 specific clusters of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Once a candidate's eligibility for the exam process has been confirmed, the candidate requests a Readiness Review through a local chapter of PRSA or partner organization. The Readiness Review is a one- to two-hour interview and portfolio presentation before a panel of accredited members. It includes a written submission addressing open-ended questions related to the candidate's position and experiences, submitted to the panel in advance; a portfolio review; and an assessment of readiness to take the exam. The review panel uses a point system employing standardized criteria to assess the candidate's responses and supporting materials, and scoring the candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities in 16 areas, including public speaking, interpersonal skills, writing skills, and management skills. If any weaknesses are identified, the panel will suggest study materials to strengthen those areas. Candidates may not take the written exam until they pass the Readiness Review. Candidates who do not pass the Readiness Review portion of the process may repeat the Readiness Review after a waiting period. Candidates are informed of the panel's decision by the UAP.

The computer-based written examination contains multiple-choice questions related to 10 competency clusters: public relations history and current issues; business literacy; ethics and law; communication theory; the public relations process of researching, planning, implementing, and evaluating campaigns; management skills and issues; crisis communication; use of information technology; media relations; and advanced communication skills such as consensus building, consulting, and negotiating skills. The typical candidate requires two to three hours to complete the written exam.

Practitioners accredited in 1993 or later must document their continuing professional growth every three years in an accreditation maintenance program that requires the accumulation of points in continuing education, professionalism, or service categories. Accredited practitioners must maintain their membership in PRSA or a partner organization in order to continue use of the APR designation.

Although the accreditation of public relations practitioners is widely viewed as a step forward toward professionalism, it alone is unlikely to lead to universal acknowledgment of the value of public relations. However, within the field, increasing recognition of the APR designation is evidenced by public relations job listings that specify “APR preferred” as a candidate qualification. Although little research exists that compares accredited and non-accredited practitioners, evidence does suggest that accredited practitioners are somewhat more likely to embrace professional values than nonaccredited members.

Accreditation remains a favorable alternative to licensing in the eyes of many practitioners, who view licensure as infringing on free speech rights and unnecessary governmental interference. Enforcement of ethical behavior remains a limitation of voluntary accreditation, however. Unlike failure to attain licensure, loss of accreditation does not prevent an individual from practicing public relations.

—Katherine N. Kinnick

See also Public Relations Society of America

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ASIA, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

Asia is the largest continent both in geographical size and in population. It is arguably the most complex region as well. Particularly in the past decade, Asian countries such as China and India have emerged as large and significant markets for multinational corporations. This process of cross-national trade in Asia continues to expand as evident during the ninth ASEAN summit that concluded in Bali, Indonesia, on October 8, 2003. At this summit, the 10-nation ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) signed mutual trade and security agreements with China, Japan, South Korea, and India. The goal is to create a huge Asian trading zone that will involve more than 60 percent of the world population. The creation of these new markets will continue to demand an increase in the level of public relations activity in the continent. However, despite its rich heritage and vast potential, Asia has largely remained a silent continent as far as public relations pedagogy is concerned. There is little doubt that conducting empirical analyses of the public relations industry in Asia and incorporating these findings into public relations pedagogy are long overdue.

PUBLIC RELATIONS IN ANCIENT ASIA

The existing, relatively small number of publications about public relations in Asia has chronicled

this continent's rich and varied history and the use of public relations since pre-biblical times (see Sriramesh, 2003, for a more elaborate review). For example, there is archeological evidence that India's Emperor Asoka used rock and pillar edicts for such things as communicating the policies of his government to his subjects, persuading them to observe those policies, creating harmony among them, and propagating Buddhism, to which he had converted later in life. In the Arabian peninsula, a circular handwritten on crude paper around 2000 B.C. is known to have advised farmers of Babylonia on ways of increasing their crop yields. Even in recent times, Arab cultures have used fora such as the *Okadh Souk* and *majlis*, where the ruler and the ruled gathered and debated issues using speech and poetry—evidence of symmetrical communication. In addition, there are references to the use of publicity techniques in the Holy Land in biblical times. Unfortunately, the lessons from this rich heritage have not yet been adequately incorporated into the public relations body of knowledge or practice.

Globalization has opened up the economies of a dozen or so Asian countries, resulting in a significant influx of multinational corporations into the region. A concomitant result has been the entry of leading multinational public relations agencies into Asia, resulting in an infusion of Western perspectives of public relations practice. Some observers have rightly commented that this development has led to an increase in the level of professionalism among public relations practitioners in the continent. However, it is also important to recognize that there has been no corresponding flow of information *out of Asia* that could help in the development of effective strategies for conducting public relations globally. It is reasonable to believe that a continent as rich as Asia, with its long heritage, has something useful to offer the public relations industry and pedagogy.

Most of the multinational agencies operating in Asia have limited their operations to about 12 countries primarily based on demand and economy. As other Asian countries develop, there is bound to be significant growth in cross-national public relations activities in those regions as well. Multinational

public relations agencies have typically used three strategies to establish their presence in Asia. Some have opened their own offices in Asian cities often under an executive from the home office while employing host country employees at lower levels. A second strategy has been to establish "exclusive representation" affiliations with well-established domestic agencies of the host country. Finally, these agencies also have bought partial or total equity in successful domestic agencies, while retaining a part of the original name and much of the local staff in recognition that retention of local staff is instrumental to success given the complexity of the Asian environment, which will be discussed presently.

TERMINOLOGY

Although public relations has been practiced since prebiblical times in different regions of Asia, the term *public relations* and the modern version of the profession can be traced to Asia's recent colonial past. The concept of public relations was alien to the Japanese until it was introduced by the Supreme Allied Command in 1945 as part of the democratization of postwar Japan. The U.S. military also introduced public relations to South Korea in 1945 when it established the Office of Civil Information in Seoul. Singapore was introduced to modern public relations by British colonists who "were primarily propagandists seeking to promote the credibility of the British especially after their defeat by the Japanese army in World War II" (Chay-Nemeth, 2003, p. 87). Sam Black noted that it was only in 1981, after Chairman Mao's death, that public relations was introduced to China in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone "through contacts with foreign joint venture partners" (1992, p. 41). Among others, Hamoud Al-Badr has noted that modern public relations was introduced to Saudi Arabia in the 1930s by the Arabian-American Oil Company (ARAMCO) to reduce the communication problems between its Arab and American employees.

As in many other parts of the world, the terms *public relations* and *PR* carry a pejorative meaning in Asia, often taken to be synonymous with *spin doctoring*. Not surprisingly, the mass media often

portray public relations negatively. For example, the premier newspaper of Singapore reported the launch of the PR Academy set up by the government principally to train government ministers in public communication with the lead “Top former White House spin doctors will be in town next week to share tips on public communications with civil service chiefs and spokesmen” (*Straits Times*, June 21, 2002, n.p.). It is also important to recognize that the modesty prescribed by Asian cultures often makes publicity a shunned, if not alien, concept, although modernization (some would call it Westernization) has been changing some of these values, at least in the urban areas of some Asian countries. Cultural factors, among others, make it imperative that new and culturally sensitive ways of conducting public relations be identified and incorporated into organizational strategies.

CULTURES OF ASIA

The cultures of Asia are steeped in religion, which is not surprising for a continent that is the birthplace of all the major religions of the world, in addition to being home to some of the most ancient civilizations, existing millennia before biblical times. Stark cultural differences are evident even within the political boundaries of the same Asian country. For example, India, seen by the uninitiated outsider as a homogeneous society, is an example of unity in diversity of culture, religion, and language. Countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia have multiethnic societies. To be effective, public relations professionals need to tailor their communication initiatives to these cultural differences.

Geert Hofstede (2001) concluded that most Asian cultures are collectivist in nature. Although this is an accurate framing of a cultural dimension of most countries in Asia, it is important to recognize that collectivism is manifested in different ways in different countries. For example, the Japanese quest for *wa* (harmony with fellow humans) makes them reticent to disagree publicly. C. Carl Pegels wrote, “The quest for *wa* is a national cultural philosophy. . . Attaining *wa* does not allow for individualism—*wa* demands considerable conformity, and the Japanese

are trained to conform from early childhood” (1984, n.p.). This cultural trait has a direct influence on public relations; this is evident in the press clubs of Japan, which ensure that all members of the club receive the same information, negating the possibility of scoops by individual reporters, for example. Press clubs also are indicative of an insular system that is based on personal influence—widely seen in Asia in different manifestations. Further, the concepts of *honne* (private self) and *tataeme* (the public persona and behavior of an individual) play a large role in maintaining harmony in Japanese society. Publicly criticizing an individual is shunned because it leads to a loss of face for the other, thus destroying *wa* (social harmony). For this very reason, the Japanese prefer to build stable personal relationships (typified by the personal influence model) by communicating in informal settings, which are ideal for exchanging *honne*.

The public relations industry in China and Taiwan, as well as other countries that have a significant Chinese population (such as Singapore and Malaysia), is influenced by *Guanxi*. Just as culture is hard to define, the term *Guanxi* defies easy definition because its practice varies from context to context. Andrew Kipnis addressed this issue succinctly:

No unchanging, single form of *guanxi* exists. [There are] urban *guanxi*, rural *guanxi*, business *guanxi*, all-female *guanxi*, owner/tenant *guanxi*, class *guanxi*, marriage *guanxi*, comrade *guanxi*, husband/wife *guanxi*, mother-in-law/daughter-in-law *guanxi*, classmate *guanxi*, and more. Each of these relationships carries its own connotations and its own social/historical specificity. (1997, p. 184)

The caste system in India, even in its modern (post-independence) manifestation, is a mixture of collectivism and personal influence mostly among members of the same class. Singapore’s culture is best described by *kiasuism* (fear of losing) that breeds the conformist outlook of most Singaporeans. David Chan described *kiasuism* as “a herd mentality where everyone goes after the same things and avoids the same things” (1994, p. 71). Many observers have noted that *kiasuism* has fostered a

culture of self-censorship in Singapore, where individuals perceive the *OB (out-of-bounds) markers* and refrain from violating them. Of late, nationalistic and religious sentiments have begun to run high in most Asian countries, which makes it imperative that communicators take extra care to design culturally sensitive messages and communication campaigns.

POLITICAL SYSTEMS IN ASIA

Although many Asian nations call themselves democracies, each country has its own version of democracy. Covert and overt government influence is so pervasive in most Asian nations that the government often becomes the most relevant, if not the sole, *public* for the public relations practitioner. For example, prior to the liberalization and democratization of South Korea (particularly after the 1988 Seoul Olympics), the term *Gong-Bo* (public relations by government) typified the public relations industry in the country. Since 1988, the word *Hong-Bo* (wide dissemination of information) has been used to describe the industry in South Korea. *Hong-Bo* originated from the *Chaebol* (business conglomerates) system that was instituted in South Korea in the early 1960s. An offshoot of the Japanese *Chaibatz* system that ended in Japan after World War II, the *Chaebol* system was set up by the South Korean government to develop a partnership between corporations and the government to promote national development. Although this was a laudable goal in principle, in reality it ensured that only a handful of *Chaebols* dominated the South Korean economy. Particularly after the 1961 revolution led by Park Chung-Hee (whose reign ended in 1979), the *Chaebols* rapidly expanded their outreach with the consent of Park's administration. In this symbiotic arrangement between the government and corporations, the *Chaebols* had near monopolistic control over different sectors of the economy while the economic development they brought helped Park stay in power. The largely unpopular *Chaebols* resorted to using *Hong-Bo* (public relations) to either evade or counter media criticism.

The political system in Singapore also has a great influence on the role of public relations in the society. Observers such as Chung-Kwong Yuen have critiqued the level of pluralism in this economically advanced democratic republic: "Singapore is a place that arouses deeply divided feelings among observers. Economically, it is one of the great success stories of this century, but it is also widely seen as an authoritarian state that limits freedom of speech and political rights" (1999, p. 1). Yuen stated that the version of democracy that former prime minister Lee Kuan Yew has proposed for Singapore and other Asian nations is based on "'Asian' values of studiousness, achievement through hard work, and *deference to authority and group* [italics added]" (p. 1). Yuen noted that Western journalists have consistently focused on "Lee's speeches and the actions of the Singapore government, hoping to detect chinks in their armours, while [members of the government] answer in kind through their various public relations channels" (p. 1).

Ho Khai Leong (2000) highlighted the minimal role that corporations play in public policy making in Singapore, and S.P. Tan observed that whatever influence corporations have on public policies is derived primarily from their use of the *personal influence* model. The impact of culture on the political system in Asia and the different worldviews of what democracy encompasses are evident from Ho's comment that the Asian version of democracy advocates community interests over individual rights and consensus over dissent.

MEDIA CULTURE IN ASIA

The direct influence that the political system has on media culture is evident in an example from Singapore where the acting Minister for Information and the Arts exhorted the media to play their "social role" as partners in nation building despite the "pressures" of globalization: "Our local media have played an important role in building modern Singapore. By communicating the government's message across to the people, it has [*sic*] helped to rally support for policies that have brought us

progress and prosperity” (*Straits Times*, March 8, 2002, n.p.).

The Western democratic notion that the mass media should operate as “watchdogs” of society is seen either minimally or not at all, even among the Asian countries that claim to be democracies. For example, in early March 2002 the World Association of Newspapers and the World Editors Forum, which represents more than 18,000 publications in 100 countries, complained to Thailand’s prime minister, Mr. Thaksin Shinawatra, that his government’s decision to expel two correspondents of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (*FEER*) was “a breach of the right to freedom of expression.” The *FEER* had incurred the wrath of the Shinawatra government when it reported on the tensions between it and the Thai monarchy. There are numerous cases from an array of Asian democracies where overt and covert pressures are placed on editorial freedom, which force public relations professionals to operate within these constraints.



Far Eastern Economic Review (*FEER*) journalists, British citizen Rodney Tasker (left) and United States citizen Shawn Crispin (right), attend a press conference at the Thai Immigration Bureau in Bangkok on February 27, 2002. Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra insisted that Thailand had the sovereign right to expel the two foreign journalists over an article they wrote that touched on the government’s relations with the country’s revered monarchy.

SOURCE: © AFP/CORBIS

ACTIVISM

Although activism resulted in the freedom from colonial rule for many Asian nations (as in the case of India, for example) and revolutionary social movements helped change political systems (as in the cultural revolution of China), until the mid-1990s activism against corporations had largely been limited to trade union movements. But the influx of multinational corporations has met with increased opposition from nationalistic interests. Not only is activism increasing within countries, but Asian countries themselves are becoming activists when global issues are involved. An example of this was evident in the leadership role that India and China took when the G-21 effectively challenged the industrialized countries at the ministerial meeting in Cancun in September 2003, which led to the collapse of the meeting. Agricultural and environmental activists have increased their activities in recent times, and this will induce organizations to pay greater attention to their role as responsible and communicative corporate citizens in Asia.

THE CHANGING STATUS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION IN ASIA

Finally, it is important to note that one of the primary reasons Asia has not been well represented in the public relations body of knowledge is the relatively small number of graduate public relations programs in Asian universities. This has resulted in an inadequate number of well-trained public relations scholars in Asia. Most of the current public relations scholars have had their graduate education in the United States or Western Europe. The majority of empirical studies on public relations in Asia have been conducted by Asian graduate students predominantly in U.S. universities. These scholars have continued their programs of research and continue to help build the fledgling body of knowledge of public relations in Asia. However, the number of these scholars is currently rather small, and they hail from a small number of Asian countries. There is a dire need to develop a larger and more diverse pool of Asian public relations scholars, and this

calls for a greater number of graduate programs in Asian universities. Even the few public relations graduate courses that currently exist in Asia are predominantly skills oriented and generally lack theoretical and methodological rigor, which inhibits efforts at advancing education and the profession. A more diverse pool of students and educators should help build a robust body of empirical knowledge of public relations in Asia in the near future.

—*Krishnamurthy Sriramesh*

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ATTRIBUTION THEORY

Understanding causality and responsibility is at the base of interpreting social behavior, and attribution

theory explains how we assess the causes of behavior, both our own and others'. In sense making, interactants reason "backward" from observed behavior to determine underlying causes, so that they may know how to proceed in specific interactions and predict future behavior.

Although primarily used to examine interpersonal processing, attribution theory has been applied in other contexts. For example, Timothy Coombs revised attribution theory definitions and concepts to apply to organizations and examined perceptions of crises and their impact on reputation. With unexpected events, such as crises, individuals strive to explain causes. If an organization is seen as responsible for an event, its reputation sustains damage. When conditions of stability (i.e., a history of such problems) and control are believed to exist, organizations are likely to be seen as responsible. Thus, attribution theory has promise for organizational and public relations research.

Three assumptions undergird attribution theory: (1) individuals assign causes to behavior they observe, (2) individuals use systematic processes in explaining behavior, and (3) once attributions are made, they influence feelings and subsequent behavior.

There are two types of attributions, internal and external. Internal attributions place the cause for behavior within a person, whereas external attributions assign the cause to some factor outside the person. In other words, internal attributions focus on some aspect of a person, including stable traits or characteristics, such as intelligence or personality; variable behaviors, such as effort; and temporary states, such as mood or exhaustion. Locating the cause outside the person, external attributions place responsibility on some force or agent in the situation or environment. Such agents include rules and restrictions, difficulty of tasks, availability of resources, and chance or luck.

Much research has examined factors affecting the choice between internal and external attributions. For example, Fritz Heider discussed differences in self versus other attributions. Individuals tend to attribute responsibility for their own failures to external causes (e.g., bad luck) and the failures of

others to internal causes (e.g., lack of intelligence), and to attribute responsibility for their own successes to internal qualities (e.g., intelligence) and the successes of others to external factors (e.g., good luck).

Widely regarded as the father of attribution theory, Heider said that like “naïve psychologists,” people work to interpret human behavior—to understand *why* people behave as they do. Because many interpretations of a given behavior are possible, he argued that we start to recognize individual patterns of perception, labeled “perceptual styles.” Heider’s theory is regarded as the first attribution theory, and it has spawned considerable theoretical extension and research.

Most research in attribution theory has revolved around two models, Harold Kelley’s and Bernard Weiner’s. Kelley’s model, or Kelley’s cube, is especially concerned with attributions regarding the behavior of others and has been the “primary paradigm for describing how people use information to make social attributions for the behavior and outcomes of others” (Martinko & Thomson, 1998, p. 271). Weiner’s work, involving the achievement-motivation model, is focused on self-attributions.

Although recognizing self-attribution, Kelley’s work primarily covers attributions made to explain the behavior of others. Two tenets underlie this work. One is the covariation principle, employed with multiple instances of behavior, which asserts that “an effect is attributed to the one of its possible causes with which, over time, it covaries” (Kelley, 1973, p. 108). That is, when an observer has more than one instance of behavior to evaluate, the observer assesses which outcomes covary (i.e., are associated) with particular causes. The other is the discounting effect, used for single instances of observed behavior, which suggests that “the role of a given cause in producing a given effect is discounted if other plausible causes are also present” (Kelley, 1973, p. 113). That is, observers assess possible causes relative to one another. These tenets assume rationality where behavior and varying possibilities are carefully examined.

According to Kelley, three types of information are employed in making judgments: consensus,

consistency, and distinctiveness. Consensus asks, “Do other people exhibit this behavior in this situation?” If so, consensus is high; if not, consensus is low. Consistency asks, “Does this person exhibit this behavior in other situations like this one?” If so, consistency is high; if not, consistency is low. Distinctiveness asks, “How does this person behave in other situations?” If the person behaves differently, distinctiveness is high; if the person behaves similarly, distinctiveness is low.

Evaluations regarding this information lead to conclusions on causes—person, stimulus, or situation. Attributions are likely to pinpoint the person when there is low consensus, high consistency, and low distinctiveness. Attributions are likely to pinpoint the stimulus (or entity, such as an organization) when there is high consensus, high consistency, and high distinctiveness. Attributions are likely to favor the situation (e.g., event) when there is low consensus, low consistency, and high distinctiveness.

Beyond the three general categories (person, stimulus, and situation), Kelley did not address how information is used specifically in refining evaluations. Although attribution to the person is one of Kelley’s categories, his model does not address varying personal attributions. Assigning cause to effort or ability is an attribution to person. However, findings suggest that these attributions lead to different responses.

Weiner’s work in attribution theory has played a major role in explaining motivation for more than three decades. His interest is in individuals’ interpretations of their achievements. The following are key achievement attributions: ability, effort, difficulty of task, and chance. In Weiner and his colleagues’ work, three dimensions of causality are used to predict these attributions. The first is control locus (i.e., internal vs. external). The second is stability, the degree to which change occurs across time (i.e., stable vs. unstable). For example, ability is seen as stable, whereas effort is variable. The third is controllability, whether something was intentional or unintentional.

First proposed by Weiner and colleagues in 1971 and later modified, this achievement-motivation

model has primarily dealt with examining one's own behavior. The resulting judgments influence future beliefs about capabilities. Whereas Kelley's model looks at processes involved in attribution formation, Weiner's concern is motivational and behavioral outcomes. Although the focus is self-attributions, especially achievement-oriented ones, Weiner's recent work includes attributions of others' behavior and social responsibility.

Though the Kelley and Weiner models have dealt with self and other attributions, they highlight different facets of related processes. Recently some attempts have been made to integrate the models.

Criticisms of attribution theory include its reliance on normative models, which assume logical processing of information, and lack of recognition of the role of emotion. Further, as Mark J. Martinko and Neal F. Thomson point out, as with other complex kinds of information processing, attributions result from the interactions of a number of variables. Several attribution biases are common, including the fundamental attribution error, actor-observer bias, hedonic relevance bias, false consensus effect, false uniqueness effect, self-serving bias, and male gender bias. Other concerns include dependence on experimental tests, issues with generalizability, and insensitivity to actual interaction.

—Joy L. Hart

See also Corporate social responsibility; Impressions; Interpersonal communication theory

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AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

The development of public relations in Australia and New Zealand can be traced from its early media origins through to its current status as a complex profession that may be broadly characterized as Westernized, localized, informal, and nonspecialized. The public relations profession in Australia and New Zealand evolved from journalists moving into the field of media relations. In Australia, public relations practitioners in New South Wales became the first to form a professional body in 1949. Today each Australian state has a division of the Public Relations Institute of Australia (PRIA), which is the national professional body. In New Zealand, the profession traces its birth date back to 1954, when a group of demobilized military press officers formed what was to become the Public Relations Institute of New Zealand (PRINZ). In the days before airmail or the Internet, New Zealand and Australia were isolated from developments elsewhere, but relevant information was sought from the United States and Europe, which were leading the field of public relations.

Public relations was originally practiced as an organizational or political function, and the primary task was to secure positive media coverage. Practitioners worked as consultants or internal organizational media and publicity experts. Anyone—regardless of education, experience or understanding of ethics—could claim to be a public relations practitioner. There is still no requirement in either country for a public relations practitioner to belong to one of the professional associations, so the role of public relations practitioner has not been regulated or standardized. Titles given to or adopted by practitioners include corporate communications,

business communications, corporate affairs, media relations, press officer, in-house journalist, external relations, and executive assistant. Titles that do not include the term *public relations* are sometimes chosen out of a desire to dissociate the position from public relations or in an attempt to elevate the position. The public relations industry in both countries is focused on achieving professional status but is subject to media disparagement.

Acknowledgment of public relations as a “profession” has been complicated by the voluntary nature of PRIA and PRINZ membership. Both professional bodies provide education and professional standards and promote the role of public relations, but practitioners are not compelled to join. In joining either PRINZ or PRIA, practitioners are arguably demonstrating their commitment to the development of public relations as a profession. However, they are also submitting themselves to the external rigor and security to be derived from an accreditation system and a code of conduct or ethical practice. In both countries, practitioners who have been accused of misconduct generally choose to avoid censure by resigning. PRINZ had a membership of 760 in October 2003, while the membership of PRIA stood at 2223. The demographics of their memberships bear striking similarities. In both countries around 60 percent of practitioners are women.

Education has been a key factor in the progress of public relations as a profession. Public relations education is now widely available in both Australia and New Zealand. Students may take degree and diploma courses at universities, polytechnics, and technical and further education (TAFE) institutes. Practitioners can select from a wide variety of short courses run by PRIA and PRINZ or any of a variety of private training organizations. PRIA also oversees an accreditation system for public relations courses, which guides students toward qualifications that have industry recognition. No similar system exists in New Zealand. PRIA and PRINZ are not, however, the sole organizations serving the interests of public relations practitioners in Australia and New Zealand. The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) has strong membership in Australia, but the New

Zealand chapter recently closed. Unlike PRIA and PRINZ, IABC does not offer accreditation examinations for practitioners, nor does it administer a disciplinary process for members who transgress the organization’s code of conduct. Accreditation examinations were initially a source of tension for PRIA and PRINZ because senior practitioners resisted the notion that they should take an examination in order to be an accredited member of the professional body, but there is now greater general acceptance of the accreditation process.

Professional public relations codes of ethics or conduct are now commonplace internationally, and within Australia and New Zealand, PRIA and PRINZ are the professional bodies that devise and implement the codes of ethics. Australia has two separate codes in operation: the Consultancy Code of Practice and the Code of Ethics. The Consultancy Code of Practice has sections on “general standards” and “client relations,” as well as guidelines for fees and income. According to the “general standards” section of the code, a registered consultancy

accepts a positive duty to observe the highest standards in its business practice and in the practice of public relations; promote the benefits of public relations practice in all dealings; and improve the general understanding of professional public relations practice. (Public Relations Institute of Australia, 2001, n.p.)

Consultancies are thus charged with responsibility for “professionalizing” public relations and strengthening its reputation. This section also binds consultancies to observe the code, to adhere to “the highest standards of accuracy and truth,” to ensure that employees adhere to the code, and to refrain from recruiting the staff of their clients.

The “client relations” section of the code sets out a framework for the conduct of relationships. This section requires consultancies to safeguard client confidences unless required by a court of law to divulge them. Consultancies are also barred from offering their services simultaneously to clients with competing interests. They may not make unrealistic promises to clients. Soliciting others to engage in unethical conduct on behalf of clients is

also prohibited. Australian consultancies are not required to either affiliate with PRIA or apply the Code of Practice. However, a register of affiliated consultancies is operated by PRIA, and only those consultancies that adhere to the code are able to list their services in this widely used directory. Thus, there is a real incentive for consultancies to affiliate. PRINZ also has a register of New Zealand public relations consultancies. However, the absence of a consultancy code of practice means that the list functions as a trade directory rather than as a mark of professionalism.

PRIA and PRINZ each have a code of ethics for individual practitioners. The PRIA code focuses primarily on the obligations of practitioners to clients and employers. Overall, the PRIA code is more extensive, with an emphasis on the activities of consultancies. The PRIA code is designed to ensure that members comply with PRIA's professional standards. Members are required to "adhere to the highest standards of ethical practice and professional competence." Key regulations include public relations practice (honesty, fairness, and confidentiality), business practice (treatment of clients and employers), and commitment to the profession (promoting the profession, building the body of knowledge, and surveillance of other members' practice).

The current PRINZ code of ethics was developed in response to concern over an ethical issue that focused media attention on the profession and tensions in organizational versus societal obligations. In New Zealand the profession faced a major problem following disclosures in a book titled *Secrets and Lies: The Anatomy of an Anti-environmental PR Campaign*. This 1998 book by Nicky Hagar and Bob Burton mapped a prominent New Zealand public relations consultancy's role in assisting industry to continue the logging of native forests. The book accused the consultancy of a range of activities, including spying, lying, media manipulation, and undermining the democratic process. Following censure, the practitioner involved resigned but has since rejoined PRINZ.

In response to the media criticism and public condemnation of such practices, PRINZ developed

a new code of ethics. The code marked a shift in understanding of the role of public relations. Public relations was no longer conceptualized and promoted simply as a communication role but was explicitly repositioned as an advocacy function that promotes an organization or client's identity, ideas, products, services, or position. The code emphasizes the sensitive judgment required for acceptable and ethical public relations practice: "We must balance our role as advocates for individuals or groups with the public interest. We must also balance a commitment to promote open communication with the privacy rights of individuals and organisations" (Public Relations Institute of New Zealand, 2001, n.p.). Although the Code does not specify how that balance should be determined, it does make it unmistakably clear that public relations obligations and responsibilities extend beyond the client to the public interest. Like the code of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the PRINZ code of ethics outlines a set of values that guide behavior and decision-making processes. The PRINZ values are advocacy, honesty, expertise, independence, loyalty, and fairness. The code then sets out the principles and standards for the practice of public relations in New Zealand. Members are required to balance advocacy and honesty as well as openness and privacy, disclose conflicts of interest, abide by the law, and act in a professional manner.

The codes of Australia and New Zealand are therefore different in orientation. PRINZ has redesigned its code to more accurately explain the advocacy role of public relations and position that role within the context of society, whereas PRIA is more concerned with client/employer relations. However, both codes aim to provide a professional standard for public relations practice and enhance the reputation of the industry. Both PRIA and PRINZ are members of the Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communications Management Associations. The Global Alliance is a framework for public relations associations to "share ideas and best practices, seek common interests and standards, and better understand the unique aspects of each culture in which practitioners operate" (Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communications

Management, 2002, n.p.). The Global Alliance has established a protocol on public relations that is based on the “fundamental value and dignity of the individual” (Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communications Management, 2002, n.p.). This individualistic focus may create challenges for public relations associations that have more collectivist, community-based values. For example, PRINZ has to balance the dominant Western individualist focus with the more collectivist values of the indigenous people, the Maori. The Global Alliance protocol is based on the principles of advocacy, honesty, integrity, expertise, and loyalty. The ethical standards of the protocol emphasize responsibility to clients, client publics, and an informed society, along with professional competence, development, and commitment to the public relations industry. As members of the Global Alliance, PRIA and PRINZ now have greater access to international networks, knowledge, a virtual ethics forum, news, and examples of best practice.

The major practice-related issues confronting practitioners are similar in Australia and New Zealand. Western global business practices have come to dominate the practice of public relations, although they are to some extent balanced by local multicultural and bicultural policies and issues. Information and communication technologies, including the Internet, e-mail, databases, mobile telephones, and personal computers, have all speeded the process of globalization. Technology has also been responsible for enabling public relations practitioners to rapidly disseminate information on behalf of their clients to wide-ranging audiences. However, in Australasia, as elsewhere, technology has also given voice to a wide range of stakeholders and stakeholder concerns, making the work of practitioners more complex and challenging. Public relations is no longer something that is the preserve of the organization. Any individual or community group with access to computers and the Internet can set up Web sites, issue media releases, and lobby decision makers.

Public relations practice in Australia and New Zealand is characterized by a small market size, which results in a high degree of informalization,

accessibility, lack of specialization, and localization. Media relations in the two countries are rendered less formal because public relations and media professionals have often been educated together and have worked together. Common backgrounds and experiences mean that public relations practitioners are able to informally approach journalists with the expectation that they will receive positive media attention and possible coverage. This degree of informality results in what Norman Fairclough termed cultural democratization, that is, greater accessibility to public figures and a reduction of elitism (Fairclough, 1995, p. 13).

Another consequence of smaller market size is that public relations practitioners are more likely to develop generalist skills rather than specializing in a particular public relations function. Within the smaller consultancies in Australia and New Zealand, practitioners must be able to undertake a range of tasks, such as lobbying, managing events, and developing corporate brand and reputation programs. Although international public relations consultancy firms have affiliates and offices in both Australia and New Zealand, the work is most often based in those countries rather than internationally. Australia has a multicultural policy, whereas New Zealand has a bicultural policy that is enshrined in the Treaty of Waitangi, a document that acknowledges the rights of the Maori. Consequently, localized public relations approaches have developed that embrace multicultural and bicultural communication and relationship challenges.

A more sophisticated understanding of public relations is evident within both public relations associations. The 2003 national president of PRIA, Liz McLaughlin, argued that Australian public relations has matured from “words to strategies to leadership” and that practitioners need to work toward being part of the dominant coalition (McLaughlin, 2002, p. 113). For McLaughlin, the challenge for public relations professionals is to balance the leadership role that public relations plays with a responsibility to society. PRINZ has indicated that public relations is centrally concerned with stakeholder management. The 2003 national president of PRINZ, Tim Marshall, promoted the role of public relations as

“stakeholder communication, public consultation and education, and reputation management” (Marshall, 2003b, n.p.). Thus, public relations has moved a long way from its early media relations beginnings to positioning itself as a professional leadership role in stakeholder management.

—*Judy Motion and Shirley Leitch*

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BACKGROUNDER

A backgrounder is one of many written public relations tactics that often supports and explains an accompanying news release. It is an in-depth document that provides an information base by offering relevant background information on the organization. Backgrounders can be a good reference tool for journalists, who want an explanation of main areas of interest relevant to their target audiences. They are often included as collateral materials in a press kit or distributed at a news conference.

Backgrounders are similar to a more detailed version of a fact sheet, usually presented in a brief “who-what-when-where-why” outline or bulleted format. The factual information is presented in that traditional list (the five W’s) of journalist topics. The details are featured to make the writing of the story easier and more orderly. Both backgrounders and fact sheets are objective in nature, which makes them different from *position papers*, sometimes called white papers. Position papers usually take a stance or position on a particular issue. A position paper uses evidence to make a case for the specific viewpoint of the organization. A backgrounder, however, is a more neutral and thorough examination of either a specific topic or the organization in general.

Backgrounders normally appear on organizational letterhead and are between one and five pages

long. They may be written in one of two styles: a concise, inverted-pyramid style; or a longer, more descriptive narrative style that provides more depth than a news release. It is important to avoid jargon and advanced, industry-specific language unless the backgrounder is designed for a specialized or technically oriented audience, as for a trade publication. Backgrounders are meticulously researched and often require the use of subheads or main points of interest so that the reader can skim and quickly digest the most relevant material.

The content of a backgrounder can include information on organizational management, organizational history, biographical information on the company CEO, target markets, products or services, testimonials, explanations or elaborations of the findings of a survey or other research, and the organization’s Web site address. Because a backgrounder often provides supplemental information to an accompanying news release, it can contain material on any topic that would help a journalist write a comprehensive story. A backgrounder is usually longer and more general in content than a news release, which is limited to information announcing a specific news item.

When composed for an external audience (such as journalists), it is essential that the backgrounder appear in a journalistically approved style. As with a news release, no payment or compensation is made

if the content of the backgrounder is published. Also similar to a news release, backgrounders are sent on the basis of news interest and timeliness for the audience. They can be very valuable for a journalist and are often kept on file for future reference by both journalists and public relations practitioners. However, they should be updated regularly to keep information current and accurate. Other external audiences for a backgrounder include opinion leaders, regulators, legislators, and special interest organizations. Backgrounders can also be used for internal audiences as an information resource for management and employees. They may supplement content for speeches, annual reports, or internal magazines, for example.

—Lisa Lyon

See also Fact sheet; Position and positioning

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BAKER, JOSEPH VARNEY

Joseph Varney Baker, born on August 20, 1908, was a South Carolinian who was once described by a newspaper as a “short, crippled, intense man” (Binzen, 1967). In 1934, Joseph V. Baker left his job at a newspaper to become the first African American public relations practitioner to gain nationwide prominence by obtaining major accounts from large corporations. It was at this time that his career in public relations was solidified and he became a communications pioneer. More specifically, to devote all of his time to his newly found professional interest in public relations, he resigned as editor of the *Philadelphia Tribune* to work as a

public relations consultant for the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. This act ultimately led him to an entrepreneurial endeavor that allowed him to start his own firm, Joseph V. Baker Associates, in 1934. An astute business mogul, Baker determined that his mission as a public relations practitioner was threefold and could be delineated as crucial in the areas of community relations, press relations, and publicity.

Arthur C. Kaufman and Baker, cited as a publicist, were given the Phi Beta Sigma annual Awards for Public Service at the fraternity’s annual Better Business Week’s dinner at the Bellevue Stratford in 1954. Baker was cited for being a public relations leader and for being active in the public relations business for over 20 years. At the time of the award, he was credited with having persuaded several large corporations to “increase qualitative opportunities for Negroes and to include that group’s purchasing power in policy planning” (“Fraternity to Honor,” 1954, p. C).

Baker traveled in journalistic and industrial circles for over 50 years. In 1955, he was dismissed or resigned as Philadelphia’s chief of Negro research and planning, a position for which he was being paid \$5,652.

Having made a name for himself in public relations, Baker became the first African American president of the Philadelphia chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 1958. He was unanimously elected. At the time of his election, his firm had been in business for 22 years. Baker was a charter member of the Philadelphia chapter of PRSA and had served as vice-president prior to assuming the helm of the organization. Furthermore, he became the first African American who was accredited by one of the premier national organizations for public relations practitioners, PRSA. Also at that time his public relations agency served as counsel to a number of leading industrial and business ventures. More and more corporations, organizations, businesses, and other entities hired his firm to design community-related events and public relations campaigns. His firm also was known for the comprehensive research on the black consumer market that it provided to its clients.

A multidimensional professional, Baker was designated as an assistant on Vice President Nixon's campaign staff by the campaign director, Robert H. Finch, in 1960. He was charged with preparing background information for Nixon's presidential campaign. At the time of Baker's appointment, Nixon was at a speaking engagement in Greensboro, NC, where he was defending the Eisenhower administration's record on civil rights.

In 1963, Baker addressed delegates who attended the American Gas Association's Mideastern Workshop, which was held on May 2 and 3. Baker was a featured speaker at the two-day workshop that was directed by Charles R. DeHaven, manager of public relations at the Philadelphia Gas Works. The workshop attracted gas industry public relations executives from 10 Eastern states. As reported in the *Pittsburgh Courier* on May 18, 1963, Baker gave a speech titled "Public Relations—Sociologically Speaking." Baker immediately captured the attention of the audience when he asserted "the Negro is at war with every vestige of the old order and everything which even vaguely reminds him of the century just passed" ("Old Order' Association," 1963). He further stated, "a hundred years ago, four million human beings who had been legally regarded for three hundred years as chattle property were set out under the skies." He then outlined the history of African Americans in the United States from 1619 to the year 1963. When he discussed the modern black community, he focused on the sizable annual disposable income and purchasing power of blacks and noted that Philadelphia was at the epicenter of a movement spearheaded by black ministers "expert in the balancing of numbers."

The public relations practitioner then turned his attention to public relations and warned that "PR men must do their homework and recognize facts—here is a people who have read the books and listened to the patriotic speeches. Here is a people with ballots and dollars and in this democracy these two sit on the right hand of the Father" ("Old Order' Association," 1963).

Baker ended his remarks by observing that "some increasing loud knocks are now being laid

upon the doors and hearts of mankind . . . as public relations people we have committed ourselves to know what these sounds will be like even before they come—it may be that some people are trying to get in the human race."

The idea that a black person was invited to speak to such an esteemed group during that period in history, a year prior to the Voting Rights Act of 1964, which gave African Americans stronger voting rights, is illustrative of Baker's influence during that time. The other distinguished panelists on the program included John McCollough, account director, art department, N.W. Ayer & Son, and president of the Philadelphia Art Directors Club; and Rev. Carter W. Merbrier, pastor of the Messiah Lutheran Church.

An article published in the *New York Times* in 1966 titled "Racial Image Challenges Big Business" spotlights Baker's views, which were often opposed to those of his white colleagues. The article focused on the fact that public relations executives thought that corporate executives were very naïve regarding the functioning and needs of their employment departments. Noting Baker's expertise regarding the employment needs of large corporations relative to blacks, the journalist recorded Baker's opposing views. "The higher you go in these corporations, the less knowledge you find. So public relations men have to be knowledgeable and they have to have the guts to transmit cold facts to their clients" (Lelyveld, 1963, p. 59). Baker proceeded to share his company's techniques for dealing with employment challenges by finding and providing corporations with exemplary black employees.

We start talking with the top management, then we drop down an echelon, then we drop down another echelon till we're talking with the personnel man who sits at the interview desk. The moment I get the guy at the top willing to understand the motives and objectives of these things, the second and third-echelon people get religion very quickly. (Lelyveld, 1963, p. 59)

The public relations guru then opined that it was much more profitable for blacks in business to specialize in areas that pertain to blacks.

In an article published in 1967 by the *Pittsburgh Courier* newspaper titled “Negro Entrepreneurs Here Face Heavy Odds, Successful Ones Say,” Baker voiced his concern regarding the growth of black businesses in Philadelphia. At that time in Philadelphia, only 27 black-owned manufacturing and wholesaling establishments existed. He did not see much of a future for black businesses in Philadelphia. “I can see Negroes in business, but not in Negro businesses,” he said (Binzen, 1967). “Top-flight Negro minds are not thinking that way. They’re committed to big business almost down to the sophomore year in college. And the big corporations have a lot more opportunities for talented Negroes today than there are Negroes to fill them” (Binzen, 1967).

A Philadelphia black opinion leader who agreed with Baker was William C. Wingate, Jr., secretary of the Wingate Beauty and Barber Supply Company. The company was founded by Wingate’s father in 1926. “You just don’t reap the harvest you’d expect for the hours you put into it,” he said. “I’m afraid that small businesses—not just those run by Negroes—are on their way out” (Binzen, 1967). Wingate agreed with Baker that “bright, ambitious, Negro businessmen will increasingly move into executive spots in big corporations” (Binzen, 1967). “Not only do Negroes lack entrepreneurial experiences,” said Wingate, “but until recently it was extremely difficult for them to negotiate bank loans.”

Another business owner who added his voice to the chorus of blacks discussing the plight of blacks in business was E. Washington Rhodes, publisher of the *Philadelphia Tribune*. At that time Rhodes was the owner of what was considered the largest and most prominent enterprise in Philadelphia. Rhodes, a former board of education member, worried about the trend that Baker and Wingate forecast.

In 1967 Baker’s agency had 19 employees and represented 12 blue-chip firms, including some of the most well-known and largest names in American business. Over the next 40 years, Baker’s firm, located in New York City, amassed a blue-chip roster of clients that included RCA, Procter & Gamble, Chrysler, Gillette, DuPont, U.S. Steel, Western Union, Scott Paper Company, Hamilton Watch, and the Association of American Railroads.

In 1968, when Baker became chairman of the board of his own public relations firm, Joseph V. Baker Associates had been in business for 34 years. A much-revered entrepreneur within both the black community and corporate America, Baker was seen as a formidable force in bridging the two constituencies. One newspaper article asserted, “Baker is the big corporation link to the Negro consumer and job market” (Binzen, 1967, p. 21). According to Baker, there were two primary reasons that big business should be interested in the employment of blacks. The first was that if blacks had jobs, they could use the money they made to make their communities financially stable. The second, he suggested, was that more money in the black community would mean more money for black businesses to borrow. He ultimately asserted that this would make the federal government, an entity that he called the biggest customer in the country, one of the biggest allies for the black consumer. “Who wants to get into an argument with the federal government?” Baker asked (Binzen, 1967, p. 21).

Baker saw a lot of opportunity in the advertising, marketing, and public relations industries for black professionals. “Big business was a leader in hiring Negro, p.r. and marketing people. Business men were smart and alert enough to see this is good business” (Ryan, 1968). He argued that many large corporations recruited Negroes as “urban affairs specialists and sales promotion executives years before the Negro revolution” (Ryan, 1968). To further substantiate his point, Baker highlighted the career path of Raymond S. Scruggs, a black man, who held a position as a personnel director for urban affairs at American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T), virtually a public relations position as described by Baker. His career began with Michigan Bell in 1939, and he joined AT&T in 1963. Baker asserted that Scruggs was of the opinion that urban affairs was developing into a public relations function and that corporations needed connections—those owned by whites as well as those owned by blacks—to guide them relative to problems occurring in the city of Philadelphia.

By 1968, Baker had owned his agency for over 34 years and employed 20 workers. He could count

among his clients DuPont, Procter & Gamble, and Western Union. Speaking tongue-in-cheek, he referred to corporate recruiting as “raiding.” Thus, he suggested that mainstream corporations had raided black public relations agencies, newspapers, the Urban League and NAACP, and black universities and colleges in an attempt to diversify their companies. To further reinforce his thoughts, he mentioned the fact that Pepsi-Cola hired a marketing professor who previously taught at Howard University and promoted him to vice president of special markets. According to Baker, the professor served as a role model for justifying the “recruiting raids” because it offered job opportunities for talented blacks. Baker had firsthand knowledge of the raids because Barbara Harris, a black woman whom he had groomed for over 30 years and who had served as president of his agency for at least 10 years, had left three weeks earlier, about mid-September 1968, to work as a consultant for the Sun Oil Company. Following Harris’s resignation, Virginia Clark was selected president of Joseph V. Baker Associates on October 7, 1968.

Baker also served as a mentor and opened the gates for the advent of African American women into the public relations profession. One of his most celebrated protégés was Barbara C. Harris, mentioned earlier. Harris began her public relations career with Joseph V. Baker Associates after completing high school. When she took on this assignment, she became the first woman of color to handle major corporate public relations accounts. While working at Baker’s firm, she handled press relations for such luminaries as Roxie Roker (a black actress on the television program *The Jeffersons* whose character was married to a white character), RCA, Johnny Hartman, Harry Belafonte, and Marian Anderson. She established and developed a Division of Women’s Information and edited a monthly publication for homemakers. In 1958, Harris became president of the firm. And following in the footsteps of her mentor, Joseph Baker, she became president of PRSA’s Philadelphia chapter.

Harris, a public relations pathfinder, later pursued her religious interest and was ordained to the priesthood in the Episcopal Church in 1980. She

thus became a trailblazer in another arena, and in 1990 became the first female bishop in the Episcopal Church. Her religious work culminated with Harris receiving the American Black Achievement Award in religion in 1989 and 1990.

Baker opened the doors to his agency in the year 1934. For his many achievements in public relations, the PRSA Multicul named one of its Excellence in Multicultural Communications Awards (EMCA) in his honor in 1990. The Joseph Varney Baker Award recognizes multiracial practitioners who have designed campaigns for corporate and business entities with budgets under \$100,000.

By the time Baker’s agency closed its doors, the society in which he operated had changed significantly. In 1934 he did not have all the rights that should have been readily accorded to all American citizens. He was classified as black, and depending on where he lived, he may not have been able to vote, use public facilities, or have equal opportunities to obtain education, housing, and employment. He may not have had the opportunity to frequent a restaurant for a meal. Thirty years later, in 1974, he had been guaranteed the right to vote, he could go to a restaurant and sit down to have a meal, and all public facilities were integrated. Some would argue that he served as a catalyst in making some of those rights a reality.

Baker had a passion for public relations, and he shared that passion with other colleagues every chance that he could. He serves as a role model for all prospective business owners, especially those who are black. He was one of the first blacks to introduce black shoppers to corporate America and to get Madison Avenue to recognize the purchasing power of the black consumer market.

Baker, who had been described as the “dean of Negro public relations men,” died on May 7, 1993, in Philadelphia.

—Marilyn Kern-Foxworth

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BARKELEW, ANN H.

Ann Barkelew has established a reputation for being one of the best public relations professionals in the field. Ms. Barkelew recently retired from her position as senior partner and founding general manager of Fleishman-Hillard Inc., an international communications agency, in 2001. She is now a senior counselor for the agency, providing expertise to Fleishman-Hillard worldwide on special projects.

Ann Barkelew was born in St. Joseph, Missouri, on March 21, 1935, to Alexander Hamilton, an engineer, and Ruth Welsh Hamilton, a teacher. At the age of 12, she moved with her family to Jefferson City, Missouri. Ms. Barkelew recalls that her mother always worked, from the time Ann was little. She characterized her as an "incredible person" (Barkelew, personal communication, October 20, 2003). Active and involved, Barkelew's mother served as a strong role model for working women. Her father's political career helped Barkelew embrace a life of service, encouraging her to not stand idly by, but to jump in and take an active role in her community. A Girl Scout throughout her public school years, Barkelew credits this experience as very important in shaping her personality. Ms. Barkelew had one brother, William Warren Hamilton, who died in 1984.

Ms. Barkelew graduated from Central Missouri State University with a bachelor's degree in 1957. After graduating, she taught English and journalism in high schools in California and Missouri until she entered a master's program in 1965. She finished her master's degree in 1966, taking a year's leave of

absence from her regular job to complete this advanced degree at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her master's thesis, which organized a program of public relations for the Santa Barbara schools, so impressed administrators that she was invited to work in the district's central office to implement the public relations program. Although Ms. Barkelew acknowledges that she never wished to be an administrator, this assignment allowed her to test her management skills and propelled her into a very successful public relations career.

She worked in community relations for the Santa Barbara schools from 1966 to 1971. From 1972 until 1981, she was the chief public information officer for the Los Angeles County Office of Education. Ms. Barkelew characterized the Compton, California, teachers' strike as the first big strike in a series of strikes in the 1970s, which created great challenges for her and for California public education. Rather than deal with strikes once they began, Barkelew encouraged administrators to work to avert strikes. This was during a period of severe enrollment decline and the closing of more than 100 secondary schools in Los Angeles County. Barkelew's formula for using communication to manage these crises included honest communication with teachers about the school district's finances. She believed in keeping school employees informed because she saw them as the most important group in the school system.

She entered the field of corporate public relations in 1981, when Munsingwear tapped her to help manage a major plant closing in Minnesota, followed by plant closings around the country. She joined Munsingwear Inc. as the vice president of corporate relations in order to build a corporate communications department. What was supposed to be a six-month leave of absence from Los Angeles County turned into a permanent move to Minnesota, a state she says she quickly came to love.

She joined Dayton Hudson as the vice president of corporate public relations in 1982 and played a major role in avoiding a hostile takeover threat to the corporation in 1987. Ms. Barkelew holds the distinction of being the first woman to be named a member of the Dayton Hudson Management Committee.

In 1984, Ms. Barkelew joined the Board of Directors of the Children's Theatre of Minneapolis. After just two weeks on the board, Ms. Barkelew and the board of directors faced an issue that would tear the artistic community apart. Just before the Theatre's Spring Show opened, John Clark Donahue, the Theatre's artistic director, was accused of sexually abusing young boys. Known for her ability to work and succeed in a crisis, Ms. Barkelew quickly convened a public relations committee to handle the situation. She and other board members met with parents, children, and donors to work through the crisis. An interim executive committee, which Ms. Barkelew chaired, helped oversee the Theatre during this difficult time. The situation was successfully managed, and today the Theatre is one of the strongest regional theaters in America. In 2003, it was the first Children's Theatre to receive a regional Tony Award. Ms. Barkelew served as chairman of the Theatre's board of directors and remained on the Children's Theatre board for 14 years.

Ms. Barkelew retired from Dayton Hudson (now known as Target Corp.) in 1994, but clients kept contacting her, and true retirement has never really been possible. Within less than a month of leaving Dayton Hudson, Ms. Barkelew had three significant clients, and in addition to her consulting work, she served on several boards of directors.

From 1995 to 1996, Ms. Barkelew was a senior counselor, offering advice to corporations in the Twin Cities and often working with Patrick (Pat) Jackson of Jackson, Jackson & Wagner. Although Ms. Barkelew had never been a big supporter of public relations agencies, Fleishman-Hillard CEO John Graham convinced her to join his firm by offering her the opportunity to create the kind of agency office she would have hired when she was in corporate America. She became the first general manager of Fleishman-Hillard in Minneapolis-St. Paul when the office opened on July 1, 1996.

Ms. Barkelew, an Accredited Public Relations Practitioner (1973), has also been involved in the advancement of the field, working to establish common accreditation standards and codes of ethics for the public relations profession. As president of the National School Public Relations Association, she co-founded a coordinating body

for professional societies in the field called the North American Public Relations Council in 1980. Ms. Barkelew is a member of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and has in the past co-chaired its National Committee on the Future of Public Relations. She was elected to PRSA's College of Fellows in 1990 and served as its chair in 1992.

In September 2003, she was presented with the Arthur B. Page Society's Distinguished Service Award. This award recognizes a person whose contributions over the years in service to the profession have strengthened the role of public relations in our society. She joins distinguished public relations legends Patrick Jackson, Jack Felton, and Betsy Plank as only the fourth person to win this exclusive designation. She is a member of the board of directors of the Arthur B. Page Society and is a former member of the PR Seminar and the Wisemen (Arthur B. Page Society, 2003).

Ms. Barkelew has received many other awards:

- 1984—President's Award, National School Public Relations Association
- 1985—One of 85 Outstanding Women in Business (*Business Week's* "85 in '85")
- 1993—Vernon C. Schranz Lecturer, Ball State University
- 1993—National Honor Roll of Women in Public Relations, Northern Illinois University
- 1995—National Public Relations Achievement Award, Ball State University
- 1995—Learning and Liberty Award, National School Public Relations Association
- 1995—Voted by international peers as "PR News Public Relations Professional of the Year"
- 1997—Public Relations Hall of Fame, Rowan University
- 1999—One of *CityBusiness's* 25 Most Influential Women in Business in Minnesota
- 2001—Fleishman-Hillard Lifetime Achievement Award

What also makes Ms. Barkelew exceptional are her public relations efforts in day-to-day work. She prefers answering her own telephone calls and does not leave work without returning every press call that she receives that day ("Corporate PR Heads," 1993).

Ann Barkelew credits her tremendous success in public relations to one thing: teamwork. “I love working with teams. I love leading things. Working together, we can make great things happen” (Barkelew, personal communication, 2003). Barkelew says she always had an advisory council wherever she worked and made sure she pulled people from all areas of the businesses in which she worked. “Teams,” she notes, “can accomplish great things” (Barkelew, personal communication, October 20, 2003).

Ms. Barkelew married James O’Hagan, an attorney, in 1988 and lives in the Twin Cities. Their blended family has six children.

—Brenda J. Wrigley

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BARNUM, P. T.

Public relations played a substantial role in the growth of America’s entertainment industry—so concluded Doug Newsom, Judy Vanslyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg in 2000. They wrote that the tactic of *press agentry*, defined as “a function of public relations that involves creating news events of a transient, often flighty sort” (Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg, 2000, p. 533), grew up with the entertainment business in the 19th century. Perhaps no one is more completely identified with that tradition than P. T. Barnum.

Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg (2000) described Phineas T. Barnum (1810–1891) as one of many “circus showmen” who practiced press agentry (p. 37). If 20th-century public relations grew out of 19th-century press agentry, then public relations practitioners should be familiar both with what press agentry was, especially as practiced by Barnum, and with the effects that Barnum’s actions had on the way that public relations is viewed today.

In *The Fabulous Showman: The Life and Times of P.T. Barnum*, Irving Wallace (1959) wrote that

Barnum considered himself more of a promoter and a “museum man” than a “circus man” (p. 226). According to Wallace, Barnum did not become a full-time circus proprietor until after his 60th birthday, and even though he “gave the circus its size, its most memorable attractions and its widest popularity,” the misconception persists that he invented the circus. In fact, the modern circus was created in England by Philip Astley in 1768.

According to the Web site www.ringling.com, Barnum joined promotional forces with James A. Bailey and James L. Hutchinson in 1881, and in 1888 the “Barnum & Bailey Greatest Show on Earth” first toured America. Barnum died in 1891, and Bailey followed him in the spring of 1906. In 1907, the Ringling brothers of Baraboo, Wisconsin, purchased Barnum & Bailey Circus, their largest competitor. In 1919, the two entities merged, forming Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey®, The Greatest Show on Earth®, as it is still known in the 21st century.

A closer look is needed to explore the years of Barnum’s life that led up to his circus days.

In the year 2000, Barnum’s autobiography, *The Life of P.T. Barnum, Written by Himself*, was reprinted (it was first printed in 1855). In the introduction, Terence Whalen (2000) wrote

For more than fifty years, Phineas T. Barnum embodied all that was grand and fraudulent in American mass culture. His life spanned nearly the entire nineteenth century, and during that period he inflicted himself upon a surprisingly willing public in a wide variety of roles. Barnum’s supporters pointed to his exemplary success as a newspaper editor, lottery agent, museum director, politician, traveling showman and distinguished public benefactor. Barnum’s detractors, however, used different names to describe his meteoric career: libeler, swindler, huckster, demagogue, charlatan and shameless hypocrite. (p. vi)

Whalen (2000) also observed that Barnum “desired and deliberately fostered this ambiguous public image” and that it was through his use of the new publishing industry and being a notable author that he made this happen (p. vi). In the 2001 update of *Introduction to Mass Communication*, Stanley J. Baran confirmed that “mass circulation newspapers

and the first successful consumer magazines appeared in the 1830s, expanding the ability of people and organizations to communicate with the public” (p. 251).

After a Danbury, Connecticut, newspaper refused to print a letter from Barnum, he decided to publish his own weekly newspaper, the *Herald of Freedom*, which commenced publication October 19, 1831. Of course, this wasn't without incident. During his three years as editor, Barnum was prosecuted three times for libel and at one point was fined and sentenced to 60 days in jail. But on the day he was released, Barnum made sure it was a “media event and public-relations triumph. He achieved this by assembling carriages for a procession, engaging a band and organizing a large celebration dinner” (Whalen, 2000, p. xiii). Whalen (2000) concluded that “in a more modern sense, Barnum acted as a prototypical spin doctor, for he understood that the social meaning of an event (or crime) was not given from the start but could instead be created or manipulated through the emergent mass media” (p. xiii).

Newsom and colleagues (2000) identified Barnum as one of the most famous and successful 19th-century press agents and credited him for creating, promoting, and exploiting the careers of many celebrities. They cited the example of Barnum exhibiting a black slave in 1835 named Joice Heth, claiming she had nursed George Washington 100 years before and reported how newspapers fell for the story, intrigued by its historical angle (Newsom et al., 2000, p. 38). Whalen (2000) claimed that although Heth was reputed to be the 161-year-old nurse of George Washington, it was, of course, “a patent lie.” He noted that whereas later editions of Barnum's autobiography “describe the affair in apologetic terms, the original version seems playfully indifferent to issues of truth and falsehood” (p. xiv).

In his autobiography, Barnum wrote that he learned of Heth in the summer of 1835 and paid \$1,000 for her possession. Whalen attributed many factors to why thousands paid to see her, including the fact that she looked the part, being “withered, blind and toothless; she had also lost the use of most of her limbs” (2000, p. xiv). Newsom et al. noted that when public interest in Heth began to die down, Barnum kept the story alive by writing letters

to the editor under assumed names, debating her authenticity. Barnum didn't care what the papers said, as long as he got space. Some practitioners today operate out of a similar philosophy. They don't care what kind of coverage their client gets as long as the client's name is spelled correctly, an all-too-common philosophy of the press agent, especially in the entertainment industry.

When Heth died, an autopsy revealed her age to be about 80. According to Whalen, even after Heth's death, Barnum continued to try to convince the public of her authenticity. He sent his associate, Levi Lyman, to James Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald* with a different story, as, Whalen notes, “Barnum had decided it would be expedient to muddy the waters and reinforce the continuing public belief in Heth's authenticity” (p. xv). Lyman told Bennett the autopsy itself had been a hoax and that Heth was alive and well in Connecticut. Bennett reacted as Barnum had anticipated. Whalen notes, “Bennett, eager to scoop a rival paper, ran the story and attacked the autopsy results. He stood behind the story for a time, but much to his dismay, he soon realized the hoax was on him” (p. xv). But several months later, Barnum's associate Levi Lyman appeared “contrite” and offered another “real” story to Bennett, who was convinced and, in a series of stories, offered a new “full and accurate account of the hoax” (Whalen, 2000, p. xv).

Whalen (2000) observed that “Barnum allowed this account to remain unchallenged until his autobiography, where, like a triumphant serial-hoaxer, he confessed to having duped Bennett a second (or third) time” (p. xvi). There was a reason Barnum waited 20 years to do this. In Barnum's words, “newspaper and social controversy on the subject (and seldom have vastly more important matters been so largely discussed) served my purpose as ‘a showman’ by keeping my name before the public” (1855/2000, p. 176).

Barnum's last sentence of the Heth chapter in his autobiography claimed that “the remains of Joice were removed to Bethel, and buried respectably” (1855/2000, p. 176), but in his book, *P.T. Barnum: The Legend and the Man*, A. H. Saxon wrote that “there is no trace today of Joice Heth in Bethel” (1989, p. 74). Newsom et al. noted that after the fraud had been exposed, Barnum claimed that he,

too, had been duped in regard to details about Heth's life. The authors asked, "Was this true? Why not? After all, 'there's a sucker born every minute'" (Newsom et al., 2000, p. 38).

What's interesting about this phrase, wrote Saxon in 1989, is that it is the one statement nearly everyone associates with Barnum, but in fact, it was never spoken nor written by him. Saxon unravels the mystery this way: A tale was told by Joseph McCaddon, Bailey's bother-in-law, who was in turn told by Captain Alexander Williams of the New York City Police Department that the expression was first used in the early 1880s by a notorious "confidence man" known to the police as "Paper Collar Joe." His real name was Joseph Bessimer. McCaddon reported the complete statement as being "There is a sucker born every minute, but none of them ever die" (Saxon, 1989, p. 336).

Whalen told the reader that the first six chapters of Barnum's autobiography are about petty frauds and practical jokes that the people of Bethel, Connecticut (where Barnum was raised), inflicted upon each other. Chapter 7 included the Heth account. Whalen concluded that "Barnum's stunning success derived from his unique ability to combine short-term sensations with a profitable, long-term strategy" (2000, p. xi) and that "although the individual scenes reek of scandal and low cunning, the narrative voice wins a measure of sympathy through frankness, audacity and irony" (2000, p. xii). Whalen observed that

in subsequent chapters, Barnum portrays himself in a more sympathetic light by showing how he occasionally gave the public its money's worth. The second half of his autobiography includes extended accounts of Barnum's three most "worthy" ventures: Tom Thumb, Jenny Lind and the American Museum. (2000, p. xix)

Charles Sherwood Stratton was a four-year-old Connecticut boy whom Barnum named "General Tom Thumb." Stratton was less than two feet tall and weighed less than 16 pounds, probably because of a condition called ateliotic dwarfism. Barnum realized the promotion possibilities with this midget were endless; he just needed to make it a really great story. In his autobiography, he writes that he upped Tom Thumb's age to 11 to emphasize that he was "really a dwarf" (1855/2000, p. 244).

The case with opera singer Jenny Lind shows that perhaps Barnum was trying to control his exaggerations. Whalen argued that Barnum negotiated a contract with Lind and from September 1850 to June 1851, she was "at the center of a carefully orchestrated media storm, and she played to packed houses throughout the nation" (2000, p. xx). Barnum wrote in his autobiography,

I may as well here state, that although I relied prominently upon Jenny Lind's reputation as a great musical *artiste*, I also took largely into my estimate of her success with all classes of the American public, her character for extraordinary benevolence and generosity. Without this peculiarity in her disposition, I never would have dared make the engagement. (1855/2000, p. 307)

Whalen had this to say about the one other example from later chapters in Barnum's autobiography: "From Barnum's perspective, old-fashioned morality was less important than professional achievement, and thus is the story of his acquisition of the American Museum at the end of 1841" (2000, p. xxii). This event included what people of today might consider deception or false advertising, but Barnum had other thoughts.

Barnum hired a band to perform at the museum, free of charge to the public. But people who came to hear the free music got less than they bargained for—and on purpose. Barnum wrote in the second version of his autobiography in 1869 (*Struggles and Triumphs: Or, Forty Years' Recollection of P.T. Barnum, Written by Himself*, as cited in Whalen),

I took pains to select and maintain the poorest band I could find—one whose discordant notes would drive the crowd into the Museum, out of earshot of my outside orchestra. Of course, the music was poor. When people expect to get "something for free" they are sure to be cheated and generally deserve to be. (2000, pp. 131–132)

Although these stories provide only a glimpse into the thought processes and dealings of P.T. Barnum, they send a message to public relations practitioners of today that distorting the facts for profitable gain at the expense of the public is not morally right or acceptable.

According to Stanley Baran, the time that the modern national political campaign was born (1896) is about the same time that public relations began to acquire its deceitful, huckster image. He concluded that “a disregard for the public and the willingness of public relations experts to serve the powerful fueled this view, but public relations began to establish itself as a profession during this time” (2001, p. 252). Some might argue that Barnum helped contribute to any misconceptions that the current practice of public relations is like his practice of press agency.

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) was formed in 1947. Although this was a little too late for Barnum, one might wonder whether he would have belonged or would have simply formed his own society. The fact remains that the world is much different than it was in the 1800s. Even if the public is gullible, it is the job of the responsible and ethical practitioner to report only what is true.

In the year 2000, the PRSA board of directors introduced a dramatically revised Public Relations Member Code of Ethics (available at www.prsa.org). Within the core values of the code is the following statement:

We adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those we represent and in communicating with the public, we are accountable for our actions, and we are faithful to those we represent, while honoring our obligation to serve the public interest.

Is Barnum just the exception to the rule? Scott Cutlip et al. offered the following interpretation of this phenomenon called P.T. Barnum:

Barnum’s showmanship was evident not only in a canny instinct that enabled him to give the masses what they wanted, but also in his ability to dictate to them a desire for what he thought they should want. . . . Every man has his star. Barnum’s star was an exclamation mark. (1999, p. 107)

—Kelly M. Papinchak

See also Insull, Samuel; Press agency

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A portrait of P.T. Barnum on a Barnum and Company circus poster that advertises an exhibit featuring “Great Jumbo’s Skeleton.”

SOURCE: © CORBIS

BATEMAN, J. CARROLL

“I believe that public relations is a profession which should concern itself not with manipulation

of people but with their continuing enlightenment” (Bateman, 1974, p. 6). So begins the credo that J. Carroll Bateman, APR (1917–1982) wrote for public relations practice. Bateman was a public relations practitioner, leader, and educator whose philosophy and leadership continue to inspire.

Bateman was a leader in public relations both nationally and internationally. He served as president of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 1967, presiding over the PRSA board meeting in Philadelphia during which it voted to establish the Public Relations Student Society of America. The national case competition administered by PRSSA is named for him. He served as president of the International Public Relations Association in 1980. He devoted his last two years to public relations education after a long and distinguished career as a practitioner.

Born July 13, 1917, in Norwood, Pennsylvania, Bateman was raised in Baltimore. He earned a bachelor’s degree from Johns Hopkins University and a master’s degree from New York University, where he wrote a thesis titled “Communications in Education.” He was a reporter and feature writer for the *Baltimore Evening Sun* from 1934 to 1942 before becoming assistant editor of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad’s *B&O Magazine*. He served in the United States Army in World War II and then returned to B&O Railroad as public relations representative, being promoted in 1951 to assistant director of public relations for the railroad. He joined the Eastern Railroad Presidents Conference in New York in 1953 as assistant chairman for public relations and advertising.

He served as public relations director of the Milk Industry Foundation in Washington, D.C. from 1955 to 1960. From 1960 to 1979 he served as general manager and president of the Insurance Information Institute, a public relations and public education organization supported by several hundred insurance companies in the property and liability field.

Bateman received numerous awards for his contributions in public relations. He was named “PR Professional of the Year” by *Public Relations News* in 1973. He received the Gold Anvil Award from PRSA in 1975 for his contributions to the profession. During

his tenure at the Insurance Information Institute, he received seven Silver Anvil Awards for outstanding public relations programs. He served as editor and sole contributor to the *Public Relations Journal’s* book review column. He was a frequent contributor to the *Public Relations Quarterly* and the *IPRA Review*, and he served in an editorial capacity with the *Public Relations Review*, *Public Relations News*, and *Journal of Commerce*. Bateman participated in several International Public Relations Association (IPRA)–sponsored World Congresses, serving as general chairman of the VII World Congress of Public Relations, held in Boston in 1976.

Bateman is revered in PRSSA for his instrumental role in founding PRSSA during his PRSA presidency. He made education one of his initiatives in his term as president of PRSA in 1967. In his acceptance speech in November 1966, Bateman “stressed the advancement of education for public relations practitioners, one of the main goals of his regime” (Simon, 1968b, p. 30). In his inaugural speech as the new president of PRSA, Bateman “stressed his intention to underscore professional advancement through education as one of his chief goals” (Simon, 1967a, p. 37).

Bateman and two other representatives of PRSA met in August 1967 at the annual Association of Education in Journalism convention in Boulder, Colorado, to discuss “the desirability of establishing a single, nationwide student organization affiliated with the PRSA” (Simon, 1967c, p. 47). Formation of the student organization was approved by the PRSA Board in November 1967. It was expected that the first chapters would be activated by the end of the following spring term.

The PRSA Board of Directors on April 4, 1968, “gave formal approval to the formation of nine chapters of the newly-organized PRSSA.” The board decision established “the first professional public relations oriented student organization in America sponsored by a national association of public relations practitioners” (Simon, 1968a, p. 30). The first chapters were at San Jose State College, The Ohio State University, University of Maryland, University of Texas, University of Florida, University of Houston, University of South

Carolina, Utica College of Syracuse, and West Virginia University. Additional student chapters were established by the end of the year.

The purpose of the student organization was, in the words of Dr. Frederick Teahan of PRSA's headquarters, to

cultivate a favorable and mutually advantageous relationship between students and professional public relations practitioners, foster students' understanding of current theories and procedures . . . and make evident and desirable membership in the PRSA—when the student subsequently becomes eligible. (Simon, 1968b, p. 31)

When Betsy Plank and Jon Riffel founded the informal organization, Friends of PRSSA (now Champions of PRSSA), in 1981, Bateman became a charter member.

Bateman represented PRSA on the American Council on Education for Journalism after PRSA became an active participant in American Council for Education in Journalism (ACEJ) in 1968. He represented PRSA on ACEJ for 11 years and was a member of more than 20 accrediting visits for public relations sequences across the country.

From 1973 to 1974 Bateman served as co-chair of the Commission on Public Relations Education and was co-author with Scott Cutlip of the commission's report titled "A Design for Public Relations Education." The Bateman–Cutlip report was considered "a very valuable contribution on the subject of public relations education" (Karl, 1980, p. 62).

A National Case Study competition was established by PRSA in 1973 to allow students in PRSSA to have an opportunity to exercise the analytical skills and mature judgment required for public relations problem-solving. Following his death, the name of the competition was changed to honor Bateman in 1983.

In September 1980, Bateman joined the public relations faculty at the University of Tennessee to provide leadership in the public relations sequence. The university's public relations undergraduate and professional master's programs were accredited in 1980. He taught courses in public relations management and public relations cases, advised

the University of Tennessee chapter of PRSSA, organized a student-run public relations firm, planned the university's first PR Day, participated in the university's College of Business Administration's Executive-on-Campus program, and convinced the PRSA's board to bring its annual Institute to East Tennessee during the 1982 World's Fair.

After his first quarter of teaching, his doctor warned him of congestive heart failure, urging him to slow down. Bateman wrote to his department head, "My own inclination is to keep going" (Bateman, 1981, n.p.). At age 64, Justus Carroll Bateman died suddenly from a heart attack on April 24, 1982. He had participated in the University of Tennessee's second PR Day the previous week. He was in Philadelphia making final preparations as a member of the steering committee and consultant for the Philadelphia World Insurance Congress. He was survived by his wife of 42 years, Marguerite, a daughter, Carol Anne, and a son, Walter Raymond.

An editorial in the University of Tennessee's student newspaper, *The Daily Beacon*, observed, "Students Lose a Friend." The *Public Relations Journal* devoted a full page to honor his memory in May 1982. He had figured prominently in the 34th national convention of PRSA in November 1981, serving on a panel discussion.

"Carroll was never really satisfied with the status quo of his chosen profession," (Bain, 1982, n.p.) said longtime friend and public relations colleague Herbert B. Bain, speaking at Bateman's memorial service in April 1982. "He always wanted to know more about it, to find better ways of doing things. He continued his university studies at night school and received his master's degree. He wrote articles and books on public relations" (Bain, 1982, n.p.). Bain acknowledged Bateman's numerous professional recognitions, "and rightly so. For no one ever did more to turn this vocation of PR into a real profession than did J. C. Bateman" (1982, n.p.).

The J. Carroll Bateman Papers are preserved in the Special Collections for American History in the Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin. The papers of this national pioneer in the public relations industry include 24 linear feet of correspondence, reports, speeches, and

manuscripts, covering the years 1940–1982 and documenting Bateman’s career as president of the Insurance and Information Institute and as innovator in the public relations field.

Bateman published a self-defined “draft” of his credo in 1963, and he continued to revise it. The following version of his credo concluded his remarks to the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Businesses at the Diplomat Resort and Country Club, Hollywood, Florida, April 25, 1974:

I believe that public relations is a profession which should concern itself not with manipulation of people but with their continuing enlightenment;

I believe that public relations practice should strive to elevate its audiences rather than to degrade them, and that communications should be addressed to reason and judgment rather than to emotion and prejudice;

I believe that sound public relations comprises policies and deeds as well as words; that it should deal in truth rather than deception; and that it should seek to clarify the issues of our times rather than to confuse them;

While I may undertake to present one side of an issue for public consideration, I believe in the right of those with opposing points of view to present their case also;

I believe that the public interest takes precedence over the interests of those I represent; and I conceive of my functions as being to assist in conforming the interests of those I represent to the interests of the public when the two do not coincide;

I recognize that the consequences of my actions are effected in the minds of men; and because the human mind has unmeasurable potentials for good and evil, I should approach my task with overriding respect for the right of the individual to make his own judgments. (Bateman, 1974, n.p.)

—Bonnie Parnell Riechert

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BATTLE OF THE CURRENTS

One of the most dramatic exchanges in the history of public relations is the “battle of the currents,” a competition begun in the late 1880s which sought to determine whether direct current (DC) or alternating current (AC) would become the industry standard for electricity delivery. Specifically, the battle pitted Thomas Edison and the General Electric Corporation against Nikola Tesla, who was backed by George Westinghouse of the Westinghouse Corporation. The exchange is significant in that it is paradigmatic of the personal, political, economic, and public relations battles that occur as new technology matures to the point whereby one form of technology becomes the industry standard at the expense of another.

ALTERNATING CURRENT VERSUS DIRECT CURRENT

On one level, the battle between alternating current and direct current was a straightforward technical

question. Direct current is the more simple and uncomplicated form. In it, current flows in one direction, such as in a flashlight, where it flows from the batteries to the light. In the battle of the currents, direct current was developed first and was already on the market—with stations in Manhattan and in other major cities—when alternating current appeared. In Edison's day, direct current required the construction of a power station every mile or two because direct current degraded as it was transmitted down a power line.

Alternating current is much more complex. Current moves not in one direction but in both directions, alternating approximately 60 times every second. Unlike direct current, alternating current at the time had been shown to be able to travel large distances with increasing success, which would allow for the development of fewer and hence more cost-effective power stations.

Two other advantages stood out for alternating current: One, it could easily be sent through narrow copper wire, unlike direct current, which at the time needed larger wire; and two, it could be “stepped up” to high velocity, which enabled large volumes to be transmitted over high tension wires, and then “stepped down” to low velocity for use in individual homes and applications.

Clearly alternating current enjoyed a technical advantage over direct current. But Edison had “gotten there first,” and believed that he had spent too much money developing direct current to abandon it, even at the urging of some of his fellow colleagues at Menlo Park. After 11 patent infringement lawsuits against Westinghouse failed, Edison decided to go public. Such a decision led to the battle of the currents.

THE BATTLE IS JOINED

The battle, depending on one's perspective, shows public relations at its most innovative and creative, or at its most desperate. As General Electric began to witness the development and popular acceptance of alternating current, Edison and his colleagues went on the offensive, with the assistance of his secretary, Samuel Insull. In particular, they claimed that alternating current was unsafe (though ironically, direct

current was responsible for the death of 400 people in the great blizzard of March 1888). Indeed, they published a bright red pamphlet, titled, “A Warning from the Edison Electric Light Company,” which purported to explain the dangers of alternating current. Harold Passer (1953) wrote

The Edison viewpoint was that alternating current endangered the lives of all members of a community where it was present. . . . The strategy of the Edison Company was to educate public opinion to the view that AC was an intolerable menace to the American people, fostered upon it by a selfish and profit seeking corporation. (p. 168)

In addition to the arguments against the form, the book contained an appendix that listed the names of those killed by alternating current.

Much of the strategy was conducted through the media-savvy Edison and his team. Most of their efforts focused on the supposed danger that surrounded alternating current. In 1887, at his Menlo Park laboratory, Matthew Josephson wrote that “in the presence of newspaper reporters and other invited guests Edison and Batchelor [an associate] would edge a little dog onto a sheet of tin to which were attached wires from an AC generator supplying current at 1,000 volts” (1959, p. 347). The implication, of course, was that alternating power was dangerous. And the fact that members of Edison's team would use the term “Westinghoused” for the act of killing the dogs did not hurt either.

In recounting the efforts by Edison against Tesla and Westinghouse, George Westinghouse recounted some of the stunts used by Edison:

I remember Tom [Edison] telling them that direct current was like a river flowing peacefully to the sea, while alternating current was like a torrent rushing violently over a precipice. Imagine that! Why they even had a professor named Harold Brown who went around talking to audiences . . . and electrocuting dogs and old horses right on stage, to show how dangerous alternating current was. (Tesla, 2003, n. p.)

Perhaps the lowest moment of Edison's storied career came during the battle of the currents. In an effort to show that alternating current was dangerous,

he engaged in a subtle, behind-the-scenes effort to get the State of New York to use alternating current to execute a criminal. Although Edison's involvement in the effort was originally thought to be limited, recent works show that he played a more direct role in its development. The primary electrician was the aforementioned Harold Brown, who led the push for the electric chair until it was adopted in 1888. When the first criminal, William Kemmler, a fellow from Buffalo who had killed his paramour, Matilda "Tillie" Ziegler, was executed on August 6, 1890, the electrocution required two different jolts of 1,300-volt alternating current; the first lasted 17 seconds, and the second took more than a minute. Indeed, after seeing it, some suggested that hanging was a much more humane way to execute criminals. One newspaper ran the headline "Kemmler Westinghoused." Richard Moran hypothesized that Edison bribed a reporter to run the story and headline (2002).

Although Edison was offensive and relentless in his efforts to promote direct current at the expense of alternating current, the Westinghouse Corporation was slow to respond and, in its efforts, tended to emphasize the technical superiority of alternating current over direct current. Indeed, H. C. Passer asserted that by the summer of 1888 Westinghouse realized that Edison's efforts were starting to be effective with a public that knew little about electricity. As a result, the Westinghouse Company finally came out with a booklet in October 1889 titled, "Safety of the Alternating System of Electrical Distribution," which hailed the benefits and safety of this form of electrical distribution. George Westinghouse also went one step further and hired a newspaperman, Ernest H. Heinrichs, a reporter who worked for the Pittsburgh *Chronicle Telegraph*, to tell the AC side of the story. In his charge, Westinghouse stated that he wanted to use advertising to correct the negative perception of the safety of alternating current and to rebut inaccurate accounts. Scott Cutlip wrote that Heinrichs led the public relations campaign for Westinghouse by "ghosting a reply to articles by Edison and Brown that had been published in the *North American Review*" (1995, p. 203), which refuted the

claims against alternating current. Indeed, research suggests that it took approximately three years of consistent advertising and communication for alternating current to begin to be recognized for its safety and advantages and for it to become adopted as the standard by many municipalities.

Most consider that the battle of the currents was not completely finished until the successful completion of two events. The first was the choice of alternating current to power the 1893 Chicago World's Fair; this was the first all-electric World's Fair in history. From then on, 80 percent of all electrical devices ordered were for alternating current. The second was the development of hydroelectric power in the late 1890s at Niagara Falls. The consortium that developed the Falls included both Westinghouse and General Electric; it chose the alternating current system to deliver electricity throughout the region.

—Keith Michael Hearit

See also Antecedents of modern public relations; Industrial barons (of the 1870s–1920s); Insull, Samuel; Issues management

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BAXTER, LEONE, AND WHITAKER, CLEM

The California-based husband and wife team of Clem Whitaker (1899–1961) and Leone Baxter

(1906–) opened the first professional political campaign management agency in the United States in 1933. Their clients included Earl Warren, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Richard Nixon, and the American Medical Association.

Whitaker and Baxter met while working on a campaign to promote California's Central Valley Water Project in 1933. Whitaker, a former journalist, was working as a lobbyist when he was hired by supporters of the water project to convince voters to approve the project in an upcoming referendum. Baxter, a 26-year-old widow, was manager of the Redding, California, Chamber of Commerce, which had a vested interest in passage of the project. Finding they worked well together, the two opened Campaigns, Incorporated, a public relations agency specializing in political campaigns for candidates and propositions, that same year. They also formed an advertising agency to handle the advertising used in campaigns run by Campaigns, Inc. Three years later, they established the California Feature Service, which sent out a weekly clipsheet of editorials and feature stories to the state's small daily and weekly newspapers. They formalized their partnership on a personal level by marrying in 1938.

Political campaigning and the hiring of publicists to manage media coverage were not new when Whitaker and Baxter came on the scene. What they brought to the table was the concept of experts managing the entire campaign. In addition to the usual publicity and advertising functions, Whitaker and Baxter provided overall strategy, campaign organization, and even financial supervision. They insisted on having complete control over the entire operation.

California served as a particularly ready market for the kind of services the two provided. Party identity in the state had been undercut by the cross-filing system, which allowed Republicans and Democrats to run in each other's primaries. In addition, progressive reforms in the first two decades of the twentieth century granted more power to California citizens through initiatives and referendums. The reforms were intended to break the stronghold of the old party machines, and they did. But by the 1930s, the number of initiatives and referendums

in each election meant electors were constantly asked to make decisions about complex issues. Reaching individual voters via the mass media, therefore, became a political necessity in California.

Whitaker and Baxter were experts at using all of the communication media available to them. In a typical campaign, they would use thousands, if not tens of thousands, of leaflets, letters to opinion leaders, advertisements, film trailers, billboards, and posters to promote their client. They were among the first to recognize the value of radio and newsreels to reach voters.

The two enjoyed remarkable success. Between 1933 and 1959, for example, Whitaker and Baxter managed 80 campaigns and won all but six of those. Their success can be credited to the way they approached their business and to their understanding of the American electorate. According to Whitaker and Baxter, a successful campaign depended on having the best candidate or the best cause. In fact, they were known to refuse candidates whom they did not feel had a chance of winning. According to the pair, there were two kinds of winning candidates: those who were fighting for a cause, because Americans love a good fight, and those who could put on a show, because Americans like to be entertained. Most often, the pair combined the two, presenting a fight in an entertaining way. But they would never allow their clients to wage a defensive fight. Candidates always had to appear to be on the offensive, even if they were not.

Once the couple took on a candidate or an issue, they secluded themselves in their home to work on their overall plan, which included a campaign budget. The most important part of the plan was the theme or appeal that would guide the rest of the campaign. The appeal had to be simple, with strong human interest potential. It had to have more "corn than caviar," a phrase used by the two to illustrate that the theme had to capture what was important to voters in their daily lives. The theme also had to appeal to voters as individuals. Whitaker and Baxter recognized that voters were not just Democrats or Republicans; they were parents, employees, veterans, club members, and churchgoers. The theme, then, had to resonate with voters on a number of different levels. Part of their

deliberations was the creation of a hypothetical plan for the opposition, which they would test out to determine the strength of their plan.

Once satisfied with their plan, they would boil the theme down to a slogan. Baxter was apparently the source of most of the slogans created by the pair. For example, for a mayoral recall in which there was no visible opponent, she created “the Faceless Man” to generate in voters’ minds the idea of a sinister and cowardly opposition. When voters were faced with the issue of legalizing gambling, Whitaker and Baxter built their campaign for the opposition on the theme, “Keep the Crime Syndicates Out.”

Believing that the success of a campaign depended in part on grass-roots organization to effectively disseminate material, Whitaker and Baxter also relied heavily on the support of allies. Alliances with organizations directly or indirectly affected by the issue meant that campaign materials reached more people. For example, when campaigning in behalf of teachers for pay raises, Whitaker and Baxter enlisted the support of parent-teacher associations and school construction companies.

One of their first campaigns, and the one that established their reputation, was to defeat Upton Sinclair, the author of *The Jungle*, in his bid for governor of California in 1934. Whitaker and Baxter spent days poring over Sinclair’s writing, finding damaging quotes that could be used against the left-wing author. They then hired an artist to create cartoons portraying typical Americans juxtaposed with quotes from Sinclair that, when taken out of context, appeared to denigrate traditional American values, such as marriage and family. The cartoons, which essentially linked Sinclair to communism, ran in newspapers and appeared on billboards throughout California. Sinclair was soundly defeated in the election.

One of their later campaigns became what sociologist Stuart Ewen has called the most underrated public relations campaign in American history. In 1945, California Gov. Earl Warren proposed a state-administered health insurance plan. Whitaker and Baxter were hired by the California Medical Association to defeat the plan. They were so successful that, in 1948, when President Truman

proposed a similar plan for compulsory health insurance at the national level, the American Medical Association approached them to handle the campaign. It was the first national campaign the two had run, and to facilitate the operation, they moved to Chicago.

From Chicago, Whitaker and Baxter directed an eleven-month campaign to doctors and the public, arguing that the government should be kept out of the doctor-patient relationship and promoting voluntary group insurance plans as an alternative. They used the slogan “The Voluntary Way Is the American Way” to get their point across and to foster the idea that compulsory health insurance was socialized medicine. Connecting Truman’s plan with socialism and suggesting it was un-American meant defeat for the national health insurance plan, a defeat that continues fifty years later.

In 1958, Whitaker and Baxter sold Campaigns, Inc. to three junior partners, one of whom was Clem Whitaker, Jr., Whitaker’s son from a previous marriage. They continued as consultants under the name of Whitaker & Baxter International until 1961, when Whitaker died. After her husband’s death, Baxter continued consulting and speaking to groups inside and outside the public relations field. In 1985, she won a Gold Anvil award from the Public Relations Society of America for her achievements and in 1990 was among the first group inducted into the PRSA College of Fellows.

—Karla K. Gower

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BEAT

A beat is the specific assignment filled by a reporter. Each beat is a general topic area, usually

relating to some special part of the newspaper, television, or radio news.

Typical beats include city hall, police, entertainment, finance, social scenes, religion, education, fashion, and sports. Weather is another beat. Some news organizations even have environmental quality and consumer protection beats. Certain news organizations have national and international beats. They might have state capital and Washington, DC, beats.

By dividing reporters by beats, news organizations can be sure that they cover all of the important topics, groups, and institutions within their community where news is likely to occur. That means that once beats are established, specific reporters are responsible for covering them—knowing what is going on in that segment of the community. This increases the likelihood that the news organization will know what is going on over the full range of news. Thus, beats allow for breadth of news coverage.

They also facilitate coverage in depth. Each reporter becomes an expert on the events, people, opinions, and issues relevant to that beat. The dynamics of a community's social scene (society page beat), for example, are quite different—even if interdependent at times—from the city hall beat. Which socialite is hosting which nonprofit event is different from what member of city council is fighting for or against some measure pending before the council. Financial reporting on business trends, economic forces, and publicly traded companies takes special knowledge and insights that differ from sports reporting. Sports reporters need to know the ERAs (earned run averages) of the baseball leagues' pitchers. The financial or business beat reporters need to know about IRAs (individual retirement accounts). And they must work to meet reporters' needs for the details they require to report the "news."

Just as beats are important for news organizations, they have a parallel importance for public relations. If a publicly held company is hosting a golf tournament, that is sports news, and it is financial news. In the sports page, the company wants its name mentioned as often as possible because that gives it name recognition and brand equity with customers. In the financial section, it wants to be seen as a company that knows how to

gain name recognition and sell products. Such an event might also make the social page if the CEO gives a large check to some charity. That news also can help drive sales and might attract investors.

The savvy public relations practitioner knows the reporters in each beat that is relevant to his or her practice. They know what each reporter believes to be newsworthy and how each reporter investigates and reports on a story.

In that sense, public relations practitioners work through skilled media relations to help reporters do their business. Media releases and photo-ops are standard tools of the practice. So are newsworthy events.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Brand equity and branding; Event; Media relations; Media release; Photo-op

BEEMAN, ALICE L.

Alice L. Beeman (1919–2003) was named in 1974 the first woman president of a national public relations association, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), a position she held until 1978.

CASE represented a merger of the American College Public Relations Association and the American Alumni Council and a shift in emphasis from college publicity to a focus on fundraising and development. Today, CASE is the professional organization for those who work in alumni relations, communications, and development.

Beeman began her communication career as a reporter for the University of Texas News Service. Also, she held university relations positions at Vanderbilt University and the University of Michigan. During her 22 years at the University of Michigan, she established a new university publications office and served as director of the Office of Publications. She was General Director of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), Washington, DC, from 1969 to 1974.

Beeman was president of the American College of Public Relations Association in 1975 and was

president of the AAUW Michigan chapter from 1955 to 1957.

She received her B.J. in 1941 from the University of Texas; her L.L.D. at Central Methodist College; and her L.H.D. from Anderson-Broadus College, 1973, and Boston University, 1978.

CASE honored Beeman by naming its annual research awards in her honor, recognizing outstanding theses, dissertations, and published scholarship on communications and education. Such research might include such areas as marketing, public relations, government relations, issues management, and institutional image enhancement. Awards are presented in two program areas—Outstanding Master's Thesis or Doctoral Dissertation and Outstanding Published Scholarship.

Former CASE President Peter McE. Buchanan repeated, upon her passing, Beeman's observation about the people of advancement in which she said, "To the degree that we convey our faith in education to others, we will be successful in our work of educational advancement" ("A legendary loss," 2003, p. 53).

—*Elizabeth L. Toth*

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BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking is the process of creating points or measures against which a public relations campaign can be evaluated. Quite simply, without some form of benchmark, evaluating public relations is not possible. A benchmark, then, is some outcome used to measure the current campaign. For example, businesses and corporations often benchmark quarters and compare how sales, unit production, and shares compare against the previous quarter, or perhaps the same quarter two years ago.

All public relations campaigns need a benchmark against which to judge progress or against which decisions are made about alternate tactics. In most public relations campaigns, there are three separate campaign phases: The *developmental phase* is the planning process of the campaign, where specific benchmarks are established. The *refinement phase* occurs when the campaign is actually underway, and during this phase measurements are taken and compared against the identified benchmarks. The *evaluation phase* occurs when the campaign has been completed and results are compared against initial benchmarks. It is through this process that benchmarking occurs.

BENCHMARK OBJECTIVES

Benchmarks are established based on the campaign's goals and objectives. A *goal* is the campaign's general expected outcome. *Objectives* are specific outputs employed tactically to obtain certain outcomes. For example, a goal may be to increase awareness of a corporation's philanthropy. The goal may be obtained through the use of press releases, brochures, articles in magazines, and so forth. The use of the various media is part of the objective—to increase awareness through these outputs—to achieve an outcome. The outcome must be measurable, must be tied to the goal, and must clearly come from the outputs. The objectives are then evaluated against the established benchmarks for the campaign.

Unlike many business objectives, which are almost always based on financial or physical objects, a public relations objective often is more abstract. Thus, public relations objectives and their benchmarks are typically of three types: informational, motivational, and behavioral. *Informational benchmarks* set the mark against how much information is getting out in the campaign. *Motivational benchmarks* establish what that information has done regarding attitudes toward the campaign object. *Behavioral benchmarks* establish whether the target audience is doing what the campaign seeks. Finally, there is the ultimate evaluation, where the actual behavior desired either occurs at the level expected or does not.

In our business awareness example, benchmarks are created during the campaign's developmental phase to be used both in evaluating the campaign's progress toward meeting its goal and to determine whether the specific informational, motivational, and behavioral objectives are being met. Developmental benchmarks are often obtained from historical and secondary data. These may come from previous campaigns or may be found in industry-wide or media-related publications. For instance, suppose the company had conducted a similar campaign five years earlier. Use of the results from that campaign could be used as a benchmark against which to evaluate the new campaign. On the other hand, a survey may have been conducted that indicated an awareness problem, and the results can be used as the benchmark against which the campaign would be evaluated during the refinement and evaluation phases. The survey (or focus group or interview data) would be considered primary data—data gathered by the company itself just prior to the developmental phase or as a part of the developmental phase. Thus, developmental benchmarks might consist of attitude surveys (primary data) or secondary data. Secondary data are gathered from other sources that would indicate how aware key customers, for instance, are of the company, its products, or its services. Primary and secondary data can be used in combination.

What is important is that the benchmarks be something the campaign can be evaluated against during its implementation. Developmental benchmarks provide data as to whether the campaign is progressing effectively in terms of messages being received and understood, whether those messages are motivating the target audience as intended, and whether the target audience will engage in the desired behaviors.

Refinement benchmarks should be established across the campaign timeline to indicate whether the campaign is working as expected. Refinement benchmarks can help to determine whether outputs are being received, and if they are, whether they are motivating the target public as expected. Good refinement benchmarks typically take the form of “by such and such a date, outcome should

be X as compared to the initial baseline.” These benchmarks are extremely important and not only provide a measure of effectiveness, but also can pinpoint errors in campaign logic. The ability of a campaign to determine whether certain outputs are working or require a tactics change may well be the difference between final success or failure.

Final evaluation benchmarks are found in the closing stages of the campaign. These benchmarks are set as close to the campaign goals as possible. Thus, final evaluation benchmarks are used to gauge whether the campaign's tactics will meet the projected goal or whether that goal should be reconsidered, the campaign revised or extended, or both. These benchmarks should clearly indicate behavioral intentions—in our example, that people will (1) have increased awareness of the company and (2) will use that awareness to do something that impacts positively on the company. Thus, final surveys or focus groups will assess whether the company's awareness has changed (hopefully for the better) and what that change may yield in terms of business objectives—again, typically financial or production-oriented.

Benchmarking provides the public relations practitioner with information as to why a campaign accomplished what it did and logic from which to explain its outcome to clients. A campaign that has no benchmarks cannot provide a client with a clear-cut and empirically related rationale for why something worked (or often more importantly, why it did not work). It does not help if a target audience approached the campaign goal, but the practitioner was unable to show how that outcome was obtained; communication and psychological researchers have found that if someone engages in an action and does not know why she engaged in it, then it is doubtful that she will do so a second time. Carefully selected benchmarks provide the data that show that a campaign's information was received, interpreted, and motivated the target audience to do what the campaign intended. They can also show where campaign tactics fell short, where they require reevaluation, or whether they were applied in an appropriate manner.

Without benchmarking, the public relations campaign is not measurable. Benchmarks provide the data points against which the campaign can be evaluated—both during the campaign (and thus providing evaluation points from which tactical change can be incorporated) and at the campaign's end. Benchmarking should be employed in all types of public relations campaigns no matter the campaign's goal: whether to win an election, to manage a crisis, or to promote a product or personality.

—Don W. Stacks

See also Focus group; Qualitative research; Quantitative research; Statistical analysis; Survey

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BERLOWE, PHYLLIS

Phyllis Harriette Berlowe was a public relations executive at a time when women were largely absent from upper management in agencies. Born in New York City on Dec. 10, 1922, she was the daughter of Louis, a businessman, and Rose Jatches Berlowe, a homemaker. Her father and several partners owned a beer distributorship that was wiped out during the Great Depression. Following this setback, he remained a salesman in the liquor industry. Phyllis had a brother, Max, and three sisters, Shirley, Yvette, and Dorothy. All of the Berlowe siblings followed creative pursuits.

Ms. Berlowe lived most of her life in New York City. She made the first step toward her career in public relations while attending New York University, where she majored in journalism and marketing. After a time, however, she went off on a

tangent for two years pursuing a premedical degree at Hunter College.

On graduating from Hunter College, Ms. Berlowe took up her first position as an editorial assistant on the petroleum publications at McGraw Hill Publishing Company in 1953. She left this position in 1955 to become head of the public relations department at Toscony Fabrics. Her agency experience included Theodore R. Sills & Co. (1959–1963), Harshe-Rotman & Druck, Inc. (1963–1965) and later work as executive vice president of Edward Gottlieb & Associates (1965–1978) and vice president at Hill & Knowlton (1978–1979).

It was at this point that she was accredited by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and steadily rose to the positions of vice president of Doremus Public Relations, in charge of their Mindshare division, and president of Padilla Speer.

Ms. Berlowe was asked to mentor a client, and thus, she left Padilla Speer in 1986 to establish her own consulting firm, The Berlowe Group. Through The Berlowe Group, Ms. Berlowe provided specialized advice in a variety of business areas, including firm management, crisis management, and marketing strategies. Her expertise lay in understanding existing and emerging trends and connecting clients with the relevant publics through these trends.

Over four decades, Ms. Berlowe worked on an array of accounts offering different kinds of products and services aimed at a range of audiences. Her clients included comedienne Phyllis Diller, RT French Company (makers of French's Mustard and other products), Armstrong World Industries, and Pfizer, for which she created a major program with Ms. Alice Fay. Her global endeavors included working for Russian, French, and Dutch governmental agencies.

Her flair for public relations led her to win the prestigious Silver Anvil from PRSA in 1977 for her "cooking for the blind" program for Thomas J. Lipton, Inc. She also received the John Hill Award for balancing her conflicting professional and public priorities. Ms. Berlowe was also made a member of the PRSA College of Fellows in 1990.

She eventually returned as an instructor in public relations and advertising to her alma mater,

New York University, and other institutions, including Russell Sage College. She was also the Chairperson of the Counselors Academy in 1981, where her monograph on effective budgeting was published.

Ms. Berlowe was a member of PRSA, Women Executives in Public Relations, the Publicity Club of New York, American Women in Radio and Television, the Society of Consumer Affairs Professionals in Business, and the World Futurist Society. Remarkably, unlike most, she was an active member of all these societies, serving as mentor, president, or secretary. She was intensely involved in the formation of the PRSA accreditation program.

Her friend and colleague, Ms. Sheila Kelley, remembers, “She was extraordinarily creative, a very strategic thinker, and widely read” (personal communication, August 26, 2003). Ms. Kelley recalls Ms. Berlowe’s love of travel, a passion that took her to the Galapagos, Africa, and Russia while Khrushchev was still in power.

Ms. Berlowe’s niece, Kathy Berlowe, also noted Phyllis Berlowe’s love of travel. Trips to China and Africa yielded prints, photographs, and carvings that found their way into every corner of Phyllis Berlowe’s West 77th Street New York apartment, the place where she grew up. Kathy Berlowe described her Aunt Phyllis’ home as lively and eclectic.

Kathy Berlowe characterized her aunt as a “champion of women” and noted that Phyllis Berlowe was very supportive of her and of other women’s careers. She remembered her aunt as “witty, funny, clever and at times mischievous” (Berlowe, personal communication, 2003). Kathy Berlowe said Phyllis loved her life and was an explorer in her own way. Feisty, she broke through the glass ceiling at a time when women were seldom seen in business, let alone in positions of power and authority.

A “real New Yorker,” Phyllis Berlowe was also known for her sense of fashion and style. Niece Kathy Berlowe recalled that she loved shoes, color, hats, and jewelry and always made a striking appearance. Modest to a fault, Kathy said her aunt seldom talked about her business successes unless



Phyllis Berlowe

SOURCE: Kathy H. Berlowe. Reprinted with permission.

prodded to do so. Kathy attributed her aunt’s success, in part, to a unique ability to bring people out, to get them to talk about themselves. Tough and a good listener, she was able to understand people’s positions and strategize to best advantage for them. She was a master at building consensus, handling crises, and resolving conflict.

Ms. Berlowe died at the age of 77 on February 9, 2000, at Lenox Hill Hospital. She had two marriages that ended in divorce and is remembered as a loving aunt and great-aunt to the descendants of her brother and sisters.

—Brenda J. Wrigley

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BERNAYS, EDWARD

Edward L. Bernays, who was born in 1891 in Vienna, Austria, and died in 1995 in the United States, was one of the founding fathers of public relations. He invented the name for an emerging profession in 1920. In 1923, he taught the first course in public relations at New York University, he wrote the first book—*Crystallizing Public Opinion*—on public relations, he published the first article on public relations in an academic journal—“Manipulating Public Opinion: The Why and the How,” and he published in *The American Journal of Sociology*—the same year. He concluded that article with the following paragraph:

This is an age of mass production. In the mass production of materials a broad technique has been developed and applied to their distribution. In this age, too, there must be a technique for the mass distribution of ideas. Public opinion can be moved, directed, and formed by such a technique. But at the core of this great heterogeneous body of public opinion is a tenacious will to live, to progress, to move in the direction of ultimate social and individual benefit. He who seeks to manipulate public opinion must always heed it. (Bernays, 1928a, p. 971)

He saw a broader social mission for the new social technology in a pluralist society. He defined it very simply: “Public relations means exactly what it says, relations of an organization, individual, idea, whatever, with the publics on which it depends for its existence” (Bernays, 1986, p. 35). For that reason, “Public relations counsel functions on a two way street. He interprets public to the client and client to public” (Bernays, 1986, pp. 35–36). Bernays envisioned public relations as a profession: “By definition, profession is an art applied to a science, in which the primary consideration is

public interest, not pecuniary motivation” (Bernays, 1986, p. 36). Although his 1998 biography by Lary Tye is entitled *The Father of Spin: Edward L. Bernays & the Birth of Public Relations*, Bernays was an articulate opponent of “image making” (Bernays, 1986, p. 53):

The interest of both public and profession demands that the word “image” referring to public relations be eliminated. Practitioners should cease use of the word to describe their activities. The word “image” makes the reader or listener believe public relations deals with shadows and illusions. This word belittles a profession dealing with hard facts of behavior, attitudes and actions, that requires ability to evaluate public opinion and advise clients or employers on how to adjust to gain socially acceptable goals and to inform and persuade the public. (Bernays, 1986, pp. 54–55)

On p. 67 this argument is repeated in a short statement: “Public relations deals primarily with advice on action, based on social responsibility” (Bernays, 1986). For that reason he was a promoter of public relations research, education, and licensing. He saw public relations as being a social technology that can be used for either good or bad purposes—and as such in need of regulation.

Edward Bernays was born in 1891 in Vienna and celebrated his first birthday on the ship with which his parents immigrated to the United States. He was a double nephew of Sigmund Freud (his father Eli Bernays was married to Ana Freud, sister of Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis; Sigmund Freud was married to Eli's sister, Martha Bernays). After graduating from Cornell University, in 1913 he traveled to Europe to meet his famous uncle. When back in the United States, Bernays corresponded with Freud and helped him with translations of his works from German into English. James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt wrote that it was because of his relations with Freud that Bernays became interested in social sciences and that he was probably the first “intellectual” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 77) in the public relations profession. This is how Bernays saw his work:

Public relations counsel . . . functions primarily as an adviser to his client, very much as a lawyer

does. . . . His first efforts are, naturally, devoted to analyzing his client's problems and making sure that what he has to offer the public is something which the public accepts or can be brought to accept. It is futile to attempt to sell an idea or to prepare the ground for a product that is basically unsound. . . . His next effort is to analyze his public. He studies the groups which must be reached, and the leaders through whom he may approach these groups. Social groups, economic groups, geographical groups, age groups, doctrinal groups, language groups, cultural groups, all these represent the division through which, on behalf of his client, he may talk to the public. . . . Only after this double analysis has been made and the results collated, has the time come for the next step, the formulation of policies governing the general practice, procedure and habits of the client in all those aspects in which he comes in contact with the public. And only when these policies have been agreed upon is it time for the fourth step. (1928b, pp. 38–41)

This fourth step is implementation, or execution of public relations programs. Here Bernays, in the contemporary literature, gets nearly mythical powers and becomes everything he was fighting against: Stuart Ewen put Edward Bernays in the very center of his *PR! A Social History of Spin* in 1996, while Tye named Bernays *The father of spin* in 1998. Bernays himself contributed to this mythology when he published his autobiography three years after retiring in 1962 and listed 229 of the most important clients he had served, among them: American Tobacco, Bank of America, CBS, General Electric, General Motors, Proctor & Gamble, United Fruit, Westinghouse, and more.

The most articulate criticism of Edward Bernays' work was published by Marvin Olasky in 1987. He wrote,

Bernays is known to some historians for naming the field that he would influence so heavily. In 1922, while Ivy Lee was still referring to himself as a publicity advisor, publicity expert, or publicity director, Bernays was describing himself as a public-relations counsel, and that is the title that caught on. . . . But Bernays did something more important: He gave public relations practitioners pride in their activities. . . . He was able to do so because of his communication skills and a

personal belief-structure made up of atheism, Freudianism, and a faith that behind-the-scenes controllers should exercise "social responsibility" by devising clever public relations campaigns to direct "human herds" into appropriate corrals. (1987, p. 80)

Although Ewen's 1996 criticism of Bernays, his work, and his writing came from the left side of a political spectrum, Olasky's criticism is from the political right; Bernays became a symbolic figure for everything to be censured in contemporary public relations, and it is very interesting to see that the United States public relations community, academic and practitioner alike, is uncomfortable dealing with Bernays. Yet, if public relations is ever to get widespread recognition for doing something socially valuable, it can achieve this only by confronting Edward Bernays and his legacy.

Bernays said in his 1955 article, "The Theory and Practice of Public Relations: A Resume," that

public relations is the attempt, by information, persuasion, and adjustment, to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement, or institution. . . . Professionally, its activities are planned and executed by trained practitioners in accordance with scientific principles based on the findings of social sciences. The dispassionate approach and methods may be likened to those of the engineering professionals which stem from the physical sciences. (1955a, pp. 3–4)

Modernist and positivist approaches to social research and education explicit in Bernays's definition of public relations are not so popular at the beginning of the 21st century as they used to be in the middle of the 20th century, but the use of public relations as social technology based on scientific research and education will become ever more present as cohorts of undergraduate and graduate students in public relations from universities around the world enter the market. Bernays' life spanned over a century, but his time is yet to come; public relations has yet to become an art applied to science.

—Dejan Verčič

See also Antecedents of modern public relations; Best practices; Committee on Public Information;

Cultural topoi; Entertainment industry publicity/promotion; Fleischman, Doris Elsa; Griswold, Denny; Image; Jaffe, Lee K.; Lee, Ivy; Lucky Strike Green Campaign; Market share; Newsom, Earl; Oeckl, Albert; Press agency; Professional and professionalism; Propaganda; Public relations; Public relations agency; Public relations education, history of; Publicist; Ross, Thomas J. "Tommy"; Society; Spin; Warfare and public relations



Edward Bernays

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BEST PRACTICES

Best practices are those that can be applied universally in public relations with assurance that such approaches will yield the most effective, responsible, and ethical performance and results. Robert Heath suggested in his *Handbook of Public Relations* that the theme of best practices drives the discipline, noting that much of the professional literature—as well as much of the field’s academic literature—addresses this central question: How can public relations practice be improved to increase practitioners’ abilities to influence desirable outcomes benefiting the organizations they are serving? Like every other human endeavor, public relations involves probabilities; best practices serve to enhance the probabilities that public relations endeavors will be effective and successful.

Best practices may emerge from the experiences and judgments of leading practitioners. They may be derived from the theory building and academic research conducted by scholars of public relations. Best practices may be defined, tested, and refined by practitioners and academics alike; in fact, it may well be that it is during this quest to identify best practices that practitioners and academics are most likely to meet and complement one another. Some suggest that if the reality that public relations is a practical, applied discipline is disregarded, then the

research and theory building of the field may risk becoming dysfunctional.

However, the fact that myriad options exist in public relations makes identifying universal best practices challenging indeed. Edward Bernays wrote in his memoirs that he had once thought the practice of public relations could be modeled after the practice of law; that public relations could be codified and, like law, practiced after precedents were established, applied, and followed. However, Bernays gave up the notion of public-relations-practice-by-precedent because he found there are simply too many variables to be accounted for in public relations practice, complicated further by the fact the variables so often are constantly changing. Bernays' assessment that public relations is too complicated to be practiced by precedent has implications for best practices. Although it is clear that there *is* a best practice for any given situation in public relations, determining *what* the best practice is can be challenging.

For example, most will agree that public relations constitutes a process. Contemplating different paradigms in public relations practice, Kirk Hallahan identified no fewer than seven different paradigmatic models of processes presently used in practice. These include (1) the *four-step process model* (Research-Action-Planning Evaluation), which Hallahan viewed as the dominant default paradigm conceptualizing public relations as an ongoing set of routine activities without time frames; (2) the *plan or program paradigm*, focusing on planned or programmed strategies and tactics; (3) the *communication/practice style paradigm*, focusing on communications produced regardless of process or plan; (4) the *organizational/managerial effectiveness paradigm*, emphasizing developing effective relationships with the organization represented and meeting organizational expectations; (5) the *behavioral paradigm*, stressing the achievement of intended behavioral outcomes among target publics; (6) the *social problems paradigm*, focusing on public relations' response to political or sociological problems and opportunities and how practitioners deal with power relationships in society; and (7) the *systems paradigm*, emphasizing internal

and external inputs and communication and action outputs designed to reduce conflict and build consensus between an organization and its publics.

Which of these or any other paradigms is the best practice in a particular public relations application will depend on a number of variables, beginning perhaps with the worldviews of key participants making the public relations decisions. For example, one study identified 87 variables that practitioners typically take into account when determining which best practices to apply in accommodating an external public in a given situation. In his elaboration of the process paradigms, Hallahan (1993) noted that none provides a unifying framework for the field, let alone a fully satisfactory overview of the field. Hallahan also pointed out that evaluations for each of the process paradigms is different—for example, for the four-step process paradigm, evaluation answers the question, “Were all the steps of the process followed?” whereas for the plan/program paradigm, evaluation answers, “Was the campaign well executed in terms of objectives, strategies, tactics, budget, and so on?” and for the systems paradigm, “Was equilibrium maintained?” (1993).

Although such variability among evaluations exists, depending on the process paradigm applied, it is clear it is a best practice in public relations to *evaluate*. Similarly, it is a best practice to conduct research when investigating the situational context necessary to define a public relations problem or opportunity; however, what type of research will constitute best practice in a particular instance will be contingent on the particular situation. Likewise, there are best practices with regard to ethics. For example, it is a best practice to conduct public relations ethically, with honesty for all parties concerned, and with loyalty to the organization and its causes represented as well as to the public. The Code of Ethics of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), in statements of professional values, reflects these best practices. Regarding honesty, the code says, “We adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those we represent and in communicating with the public,” and, regarding loyalty: “We are faithful to those we represent, while honoring our obligation to serve the

public interest” (PRSA, 2000). Although these broad statements may well be universally accepted, no doubt the finer points of many best practices of ethics in actuality would be situationally determined.

There is no single source summarizing all best practices in public relations. It is doubtful that practitioners and scholars would agree on a uniform code of best practices, at least in part due to the situational variability that characterizes the field. Certainly, best practices in public relations have evolved over time and will continue to evolve along with the field. At the same, there are a multitude of resources for practitioners and scholars to create their own compendiums of best practices to guide their individual work. For example, there are numerous textbooks about public relations. Three examples are *Effective Public Relations* (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2000), *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics* (Wilcox, Cameron, Ault, & Agee, 2003), and *This Is PR: The Realities of Public Relations* (Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg, 1996). Although none of these three textbooks index the words “best practices,” they all dedicate themselves to summarizing many best practices. A range of other recent books about the field also covers best practices. For example, the *Handbook of Public Relations* (Heath, 2001) has 16 chapters specially devoted to best practices, covering topics such as planning and organization, crisis communication, relationship building, educational public relations, and other specialties “in context,” such as health care; many of the book’s other 62 chapters also address best practices, as do books such as the *Manager’s Guide to Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (Dozier, L. A. Grunig, & J. E. Grunig, 1995) and *Management of Corporate Communication: From Interpersonal Contacts to External Affairs* (Heath, 1994).

Academic journals such as *Journal of Public Relations Research*, *Journal of Communication Management*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, and *Public Relations Review*, including the *Review’s* annual Bibliography, publish content and references concerning best practices; many of these have a theoretical grounding or framework. The professional press, such as *PR Tactics*, *PR*

Week, *Inside PR*, *Public Relations Quarterly*, and *Communication Briefings*, among many other titles, frequently offers information about best practices, sometimes featuring case studies. Online resources include a public relations Web site administered by Kirk Hallahan (available at <http://PR-education.org>) with numerous links to sources of information about best practices.

PRSA’s Professional Resources Center provides a lending library of case studies and other materials illustrating best practices for nominal fees. Continuing education professional development seminars and workshops offered by the International Association of Business Communicators, PRSA, and other national and regional professional organizations as well as their local chapters typically highlight best practices. These are just a few of the available sources of information about best practices. Finally, as this *Encyclopedia of Public Relations* is being compiled, so is a long-awaited update to the Public Relations Body of Knowledge. With that latter document, PRSA attempts to codify the field’s knowledge about best practices—a necessary condition for any occupation to be considered a profession. Copies will be available through the PRSA’s Professional Resources Center.

—Lynne M. Sallot

See also Theory-based practice

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BILL STUFFER

Bill stuffers are one of many public relations tools used to reach targeted audiences. They are especially available for utility companies and other business types that send out periodic billing statements. They are also used by nonprofits, especially activists who know that their mailing lists contain the names of people who are likely to be motivated to take specific actions.

Each month or on some other occasion, thousands of bills are mailed to customers and donors across the nation. Anyone who receives such bills often is aware of the “clutter” of stuff that accompanies the bill. Certain organizations also take these opportunities to communicate with their customers or donors.

Bill stuffers can contain information that actually is of value to many patrons. For instance, a utility company might suggest ways their customers can reduce their heating and cooling bills. For these companies, such bill stuffers can be part of their customer relations program. Activist groups might take billing time to profile the plight of some group of individuals in society, the need for increased funding, and even legislative initiatives that are favored or opposed by the sponsor who mailed the bill stuffer.

These tools can also be used to shape opinions and motivate the targeted audience. They can suggest that some opinion would be in the best

interest of their targets. Insurance companies, as an example, might call their customers’ attention to legislation or regulation that might raise—or lower—insurance rates. Activists, for instance, might indicate how research has discovered an association between a product’s design and consumer health. Utility companies have often used bill stuffers to justify support or opposition of some legislation or regulation.

One can well imagine that many bill stuffers go unread. Customers and donors have to sort through the clutter accompanying bills to find what needs to be done. They may be focused on other tasks, such as paying bills, rather than responding to appeals or seeking information. At best they reach only persons who are already cognitively involved with some issues. These people might be opinion leaders who pass information, evaluation, and advice to others.

Although such communication tools might be inefficient or ineffective because of the few people they reach—the ones who actually read and respond—they have found themselves at the vortex of controversies. One example of controversy was the era of anti-nuclear plant construction activism. Some electric generating utilities that wanted to build and operate nuclear generating facilities included pro-nuclear messages on their bill stuffers. Anti-nuclear activists argued that this use of message delivery unfairly privileged the utility companies, who could easily reach their customers each month.

Various regulatory agencies have reviewed the use of such bill stuffers. Typically the Supreme Court has ruled that these tools are not regulated or prohibited communication if they serve a larger public interest beyond the narrow commercial interest of the sponsor.

—Robert L. Heath

BIO

Bio is the abbreviation for *biography*. Bios are the life sketches of individuals who represent an organization or business entity. Although bios do not provide the entire life story of a member or leader

of an organization or company, they do contain information about a person that establishes him or her as qualified and as someone whose experience brings credibility to the organization or company.

Items to include in bios are a person's educational background; previous places of employment, with emphasis on management positions held; and awards, achievements, and professional recognitions received. A limited amount of personal data also may be included, such as spouse and children's names, as well as community involvements.

Bios are almost always included as a component of media kits. When a company or organization distributes a media kit, bios of the top executives should be included, along with other background information about the organization. Bios also may be included with a press release, especially if it is an announcement of a promotion within a company, organization, or public relations agency. Depending on whether the press release is e-mailed or sent by hard copy, headshots of the newsmakers should also be included, preferably in color fit to print. If only black and white photos are available, a note should be included that indicates when color photos will be ready.

Bios also are useful to have available for each member of an organizational team and also for each member of an organization's board of directors. Depending on the organization, bios may appear on Web sites to familiarize key publics with those that are serving them.

Most often, public relations practitioners are responsible for compiling bios and ensuring they are kept current. Having bios available will only make the public relations practitioner's job easier, as the content may be used in internal news publications, brochures, and other items.

Credentials contained within bios are crucial for providing credibility for an organization's message. For example, sources with biochemistry degrees speaking about the effects of harmful radiation are viewed as more credible than sources with world history degrees. Both degrees are meaningful, but biochemistry is more relative to the issue at hand.

Having bios readily available also enhances the public relations practitioner's credibility with

the media. When a reporter needs background information immediately for a breaking story, not having to wait for the public relations department to produce it lends credibility to the organization.

Bios most often are written in the third person. They should also avoid editorializing. They should appear on company letterhead, but without the contact information that would appear in a press release.

—*Kelly M. Papinchak*

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BLACK, SAM

Pioneering and prolific summarize the contributions of Britain's Sam Black, one of the world's first global practitioners, as well as one of the founders of modern-day United Kingdom public relations practice. Born to Russian immigrant parents in Britain in 1915, Black's career spanned most of the 20th century; the name "Sam Black" is still widely associated across Asia and Africa with the father figure in public relations.

Black's first employment was as an ophthalmic optician, from which he ventured into media work for the BBC's broadcast of the *Women's Hour from Alexandra Palace*. He then developed his professional public relations experience through organizing exhibitions and conferences in 51 countries promoting British industry. Although belittled by some of his International Public Relations Association (IPRA) colleagues for not coming up through the general practitioner ranks, it is clear from Black's writing that he recognized that his public relations specialization was an important contribution to both public relations and national development. The confirmation of the widespread influence of Black's work came in 1969 when the Crown and the British government awarded him an MBE. His

personal definition of public relations was “Public relations practice is the art and science of achieving harmony with the environment through mutual understanding based on truth and full information” (Melvin Sharpe, personal communication, November 10, 2003).

In addition to his promotion work, Black was a prolific writer, producing numerous articles and more than a dozen books, beginning in 1962 with the first edition of *Practical Public Relations* (the fourth edition was co-authored with Ball State professor Mel Sharpe in 1983). He also wrote what was arguably one of the first public relations management books in the world, *The Role of Public Relations in Management*, in 1972. His last book, *The Practice of Public Relations*, was published in 1995, but he continued to comment about the practice until his death in 1999. Black was also the organizer of some of the most successful IPRA World Congress gatherings, where more than 1,000 delegates from around the world came to hear him. He was a sought-after speaker, doing lectures in more than 100 countries on five continents, including Australia and Asia, and in countries from Nigeria to China. Black gave the keynote address at the first International Seminar on Corporate Public Relations in Shenzhen, China, in 1990, where 200 practitioners from 21 Chinese provinces listened to his lecture and then asked him questions for more than two hours. He returned to China and Hong Kong in 1992, where he worked with the Chinese Public Relations Institute and contributed to a prospectus for the China Global PR Company. He followed that in Hong Kong with work on the IPRA’s conference program.

Perhaps Black’s most enduring contribution to the development of public relations was his development and promotion of public relations education. He was particularly interested in promoting education in some of the more undeveloped regions in Africa and Southeast Asia.

In September 1980, he organized a special IPRA Educators’ meeting in Hong Kong; the proceedings of this meeting became the basis for IPRA Gold Paper No. 4, titled “Model for Public Relations Education for Professional Practice” and published

in 1982. IPRA Gold Paper No. 7, “Public Relations Education—Recommendation and Standards,” was published in September 1990. In the mid-1980s he completed a world tour that again took him to the Far East, Australasia, and Africa; along the way he received recognition for his work from a number of local and regional public relations societies. In particular, Black played an important part in helping public relations education develop in Kenya and Nigeria. He also established and conducted a summer school for the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations.

While he was spearheading worldwide public relations education efforts, he also found time to contribute to public relations in his home country. Recognized as the United Kingdom’s first public relations professor, he began work on public relations curricula in 1975 and brought into existence the country’s first graduate program in public relations in 1988 at the University of Stirling in Scotland. With the success of the residential program, Black was also involved, along with Tim Traverse-Healy, another pioneering practitioner and educator in the United Kingdom, in creating the first distance-learning master’s in public relations, initially sponsored by Shandwick Plc.

In addition to his professional and academic work, Black contributed his time and expertise to a number of professional organizations, including serving as IPRA president in 1982 and secretary general and treasurer from 1977 to 1980; being a founding member of the Institute of Public Relations (IPR); and serving as the chairman of IPRA’s International Commission on Public Relations Education in 1990. He was also the founder and editor of the *International Public Relations Review* from 1977 to 1985. In addition to his MBE, Black earned the Institute of Public Relations President’s Media in 1972, a certificate of merit from the European Public Relations Centre in 1972, and a President’s Citation from the Public Relations Society of America in 1978. Black’s MBE was not his only title; he also earned the distinction of being an IPR Fellow and a British Institute of Marketing Fellow.

Specific American activities included Black’s attendance at Edward Bernays’s 90th, 95th, and

100th birthday parties, along with lectures on the South Alabama, Southern Illinois University, and Ball State University campuses at his own travel expense.

Remembered as a modest man, Black's correspondence on a global basis was prodigious; today many of his papers are housed in the Sam Black correspondence and papers collection at the University of Stirling. As a person, Black was noted for his keen sense of humor and his membership in the Finchley Chess Club.

—*Melvin L. Sharpe and Barbara J. DeSanto*

See also International Public Relations Association; Traverse-Healy, Tim; United Kingdom, practice of public relations in

BLOCK, ED

Ed Block was senior vice president of public relations for AT&T from 1975 to 1986 and was one of the principal founders of the Arthur W. Page Society, which inducted him into its Hall of Fame in 1993.

Block became AT&T's senior vice president of public relations when a friend and contemporary who held the job succumbed to lung cancer at the age of 50. He retired from that position 11 years later, following the 1984 demise of the Bell Telephone System. In between, he led a public relations organization of more than 4,000 employees at AT&T and its 21 principal subsidiaries. He established the AT&T Foundation with the proceeds from selling the company's headquarters building and directed grants of more than \$250 million to education, community, and arts organizations. In the era before 24-hour news channels, he helped the Public Broadcasting System launch the first one-hour evening news program by making a five-year, \$50 million underwriting commitment to the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*. And when, to settle a government anti-trust suit, AT&T divested the local telephone companies through which it was primarily known, he crafted a new identity for the company and built it into one of the world's best-known brands. The trajectory of his life demonstrates

how one success builds on another when you seize opportunities others might mistake for chance, coincidence, or even bad luck.

Edward Martel Block was born on July 10, 1927, in Houston, Texas, where he was brought up and attended parochial schools. His mother gave her maiden name to each of her sons as a middle name in celebration of her Louisiana French heritage. His father was a Certified Public Accountant who counted Howard Hughes' father among his clients. Somewhat to his father's dismay and unlike his older brother, Ed had no interest in joining the family business. Perhaps inspired by family friends who were editors and columnists, young Ed always wanted to be a newspaper reporter. Nevertheless, following high school, he attended Notre Dame University to study business. However, after two semesters and as soon as he turned 17, he joined the United States Marine Corps. He had hoped to be accepted for pilot training in either the Navy or the Army, but a deformed jaw disqualified him, and he spent the last years of World War II riding a desk in Pensacola, Florida.

Mustered out of the armed services in August 1946 and uncertain about his future, he enrolled at the University of Houston. But that decision didn't last. A high school friend proposed a visit to Saint Edwards University in Austin, only a small detour from their intended destination, a country music concert. Discovering that one of his former Notre Dame professors had transferred there, he enrolled for the January semester. He became editor of the Saint Edwards student newspaper, but to placate his father, he also took business courses at Notre Dame during the summer. In the end, he switched his major to journalism and received his degree from Saint Edwards.

While in school, he worked part-time for United Press and, also, the *Austin American Statesman*, where he covered high school sports. On the Monday following his college graduation, he joined the reporting staff of the *Banner Press* in Brenham, Texas, halfway between Houston and Austin. Soon married to the former Shirley Ross Young and beginning a family, Block supplemented his \$40-a-week reporter's salary by doing evening newscasts

for \$10 a week at the newspaper's radio station and moonlighting for UP at 10 cents a word.

In 1952, a childhood friend's father, who was a noted columnist for the *Houston Post*, asked Block to participate on a panel at a meeting of the Texas Gulf Coast Press Association. The topic was the myths and realities of the newspaper business. Block's advice on how to develop and cultivate sources so impressed one of the attendees, who happened to be a public relations manager for Southwestern Bell, that he offered him a job. While not anti-business, Block was at best ambivalent about the opportunity. He had covered many of the telephone company's rate cases and was at least suspicious of its monopolistic ways. On the other hand, his first child had just been born, and he couldn't afford not to explore every career opportunity. He agreed to talk, thinking nothing would come of it.

Before he knew it, the phone company sent him a questionnaire developed by an industrial psychologist of national repute, Burleigh Gardner. Block tossed it aside, planning to fill it out in the odd moments of quiet in the newsroom or at home. Weeks later, his new friend at the phone company called to ask whether he had received the questionnaire. Block knew it was somewhere in the clippings and wire reports on his desk. Embarrassed to have taken so long to respond, he dashed off his responses and threw it in the mail. Soon after, as he was finishing his evening news broadcast, his phone rang and a sweet female voice asked him to hold for a Mister Douglas Williams, vice president of public relations for the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company. Williams, who was based in St. Louis, Missouri, expected to be in Houston in a few days. Could Block see him then? Block agreed and, when they met, Williams offered him a job in St. Louis at \$475 a month. Between his two jobs and his moonlighting, Southwestern Bell's offer would more than double Block's salary. Years later, Block discovered that, based on his responses to Gardner's questionnaire, the psychologist had recommended against hiring him because his responses indicated that he "was not a team player."

Williams was not a conformist and was not uncomfortable with people who stood out. Short,

fat, with a pocket full of pens and pencils, he was a former reporter for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* who had never lost his taste for gambling on dice and horses—nor on people. He moved them around from job to job every six or seven months until they knew how to do every assignment in the organization. Then he gave them more responsibility until he knew their limits. At one time, half of all the public relations leaders in the Bell System had reported to Williams earlier in their careers.

Block's first job was handling media relations and employee communications for the company's Missouri operations. Accustomed to simultaneously handling multiple assignments and making decisions by the seat of his pants with little or no supervision, Block was amazed by all the approvals his work required and was shocked by how slowly everything moved within the phone company. Despite his handsome salary, he shared a typewriter with another public relations person. After a year or so, he was moved to a similar assignment on the general headquarters staff, and then he was sent back to the Missouri area as a supervisor. But he never got used to the bureaucracy, and in 1956 he quit to join Gardner Advertising. Because Southwestern Bell was the agency's biggest client, its president talked to Williams about the move. To everyone's surprise, Williams considered it just another dimension to Block's training, even though he would be leaving the company's payroll. Not long after joining the ad agency, Block began to see that William's observation was more than rationalization. Faced with the chaos of the agency business, he quickly learned to manage people who didn't report to him. He learned how to work with art directors so an ad was not simply words with an illustration but a single concept expressed as language and art. He learned the discipline of writing to rigorously defined type-space and time slots. And he learned to collapse a promise into the fewest possible words with the greatest possible power and clarity.

Although he worked for clients ranging from Monsanto to Cessna Aircraft, he also wrote ads for Southwestern Bell. On a trip with the Gardner account supervisor and Williams, Williams started giving Block some assignments. Then he caught

himself and asked Block who he worked for. He had forgotten that Block had moved to the ad agency, and he wanted him back. For his part, after less than three years in the agency world, Block was ready to return to the client side. But it came with a price. Despite his apparent complicity in Block's "outside training," Williams did not want to encourage it. He told Block he would be returning with a title a notch below what it had been when he left. Swallowing his pride, Block agreed and returned. Within months he was promoted to editor of the company's magazine, which he quickly converted into an award-winning glossy picture magazine with outside art direction. Williams had made his point and Block was once again a member in good standing of Ma Bell's public relations family.

In 1962, when Block returned from vacation, his immediate supervisor called him in and made a surprising announcement. "We have a new job for you. We want you to start an in-house agency to handle our advertising." Block's reaction was immediate: "That's a terrible idea." But they had already drawn up an organization chart that Block remembers looked like "the outside plant department in Nebraska" (Block, personal communication, May 8, 2003). Convinced that they intended to move forward with or without him, Block agreed to lead the effort on three conditions: He wanted to rent space outside the telephone company building, he wanted a staff of no more than three—himself, another copywriter, and an art director—and he wanted to hire an outside agency to handle media buying. To his surprise, they agreed, and the new agency moved five blocks down the street into a rented apartment. Over the next two years, Block and his team created more ads than the company could run.

Meanwhile, one of Block's supervisors when he first joined Southwestern Bell had been moved to AT&T, and in 1964, he asked him to take a media relations job at corporate headquarters in New York. In those days, an AT&T assignment was almost a requirement for advancement in the Bell System. Block accepted. About a year after his arrival, AT&T suffered the equivalent of a torpedo to its hull. On October 27, 1965, the Federal Communications Commission initiated an inquiry into the company's

pricing practices. No one knew it at the time, but this would be the first of a series of government inquiries that would ultimately lead to the break-up of the Bell System. Block's assignment that day was deceptively simple—dream up every question that this FCC action could stimulate and find answers to them. He typed every question on a single sheet and distributed all the sheets to the operating department heads, asking them to fill in the answer by the next day. Stapled together, those questions and answers became the company's "Bible," guiding not only media responses and speeches but also the Company's response to the FCC.

When Southwestern Bell reorganized its public relations department in 1966, they brought Block back as general information manager responsible for media relations, employee communications, and speech writing across the company. It was a significant promotion, but he was not allowed to enjoy it for long. Remembering the "Bible" he had constructed on his last rotational assignment in New York, AT&T's public relations leadership called Block back to corporate headquarters in 1969. A big part of his new job was overseeing public relations for all the Bell companies' rate cases across the country.

In 1971, while in an executive development program at Dartmouth College, Block learned that he had been appointed assistant vice president of advertising, replacing a manager whom the "26th floor" (where AT&T's senior executives had their offices) felt was dabbling in "controversial" programming, such as a Simon and Garfunkel concert that featured flag burning. The Vietnam War had divided America along generational lines, and Block decided to develop not only advertising but also programming vehicles that were more in character with the company's values. The result was the "Bell System Family Theater," which launched in 1972 with a 90-minute program devoted to the music of George Gershwin and garnered a dozen Emmy Award nominations.

Block had held the advertising job for less than two years when he was asked to interview with the new Chief Executive of Illinois Bell, Charles Brown, to become his vice president of public relations. The former head of Illinois Bell public

relations, Paul Lund, had just become Block's boss in New York. "Can you start Monday?" Brown asked. Apparently, the decision had already been made.

His first day on the job in Chicago, Block attended the CEO's Monday morning staff meeting and listened to a presentation on the company's plan to file for price increases. After the presentation, Brown asked each of his officers if they had any questions or comments. There was a lot of mumbling approval until Brown looked at Block. A little uncomfortable disagreeing with a colleague so early in his tenure, Block nevertheless plunged ahead. "I think we need to go back to the drawing board," he said. "A rate case is really an exercise in public persuasion and this plan has no component for getting public approval." Seemingly eager to avoid a prolonged discussion, Brown cut in and asked Block to work with the pricing people. Later, Block was surprised to learn that not only did Brown agree with his assessment, but so did the officer who had made the presentation. Together, they fielded public surveys and translated the justification for price increases into terms the average person could understand. For example, they put price tags on lengths of cable showing how their cost had increased since the last price changes. For the first time, the company actually received favorable press coverage for one of its rate cases, and it sailed through approval.

Within two years, Charlie Brown had moved to AT&T as executive vice president and a confidant of the company's chairman, John deButts, who also had at one time been a CEO at Illinois Bell. When the head of AT&T public relations, Paul Lund, died unexpectedly, Block was offered the job. By then, the United States Department of Justice had filed an antitrust suit against the company, in addition to the FCC's continuing inquiries and dozens of private antitrust suits. The company's agenda was dominated by regulatory and legal issues, and its chairman, John deButts, was determined to resist any further efforts to open the telecommunications markets to competition.

In February of 1979, Charlie Brown succeeded deButts as AT&T's chairman and CEO. Convinced that competition was inevitable, Brown thought it

made little sense to waste time in the courthouse. He wanted to settle the antitrust case and get on with deciding what business the company was in and where it should stake its future. Setting aside the company's public utility lawyers, he brought in a senior partner of the company's outside law firm as General Counsel. Within months, the company reached a handshake agreement with the Carter White House that would have settled the suit by spinning off Pacific Bell and the companies in which AT&T had minority interests. Block even prepared a communications plan for the agreement, but Carter was not reelected president, and the deal was called off. In the Reagan administration, both the Attorney General and his chief deputy had to recuse themselves from participating in any discussions of the case. Months went by before a Stanford law professor, William Baxter, was appointed to take charge. He believed the local telephone companies were natural monopolies, and everything else was competitive. He would not negotiate around those points.

In December of 1981, Block's intercom rang and Brown asked whether he could drop by. In the hallway, he ran into the Chief Counsel, who had received the same call. When they got to Brown's office, he told them that he had decided to settle the case by spinning off all the local telephone companies. But he had two questions. For the chief lawyer: "How do we lay down our sword? What's the legal procedure?" And for Block: "I can't make this decision unless you can convince me we can explain it plausibly to the public. Get to your typewriter" (Block, personal communication, June 26, 2003).

While his legal colleague researched the finer points of precedents, Block converted the laundry room of his Manhattan apartment into a makeshift office, using the washing machine as a stand-up desk and moving his Olympia typewriter around on a rolling stand. He hired pollster Lou Harris to do a quick survey on the general terms of the settlement. Harris delivered the results within one week, equipping Block to fashion his storyline around many of the questions the settlement raised. Forcing himself to focus on the essential elements of the story,

Block wrote it as a full-page newspaper ad, which became the platform for all other communications. He then moved backward and forward from that announcement ad to develop a plan for pre-notification and follow-up with each key constituency, from employees and labor leaders to the Secretary of Defense and other public officials. When Block emerged from his laundry room with his homemade ad and his hand-typed plan, he reviewed it with Brown and then brought his staff on board one by one. To avoid leaks, AT&T's ad agency arranged to have parts of Block's ad set in type at different printers. On January 8, 1982, AT&T and the Department of Justice announced the historic settlement. The Bell System would be no more.

Ironically, only about 10 percent of the general public knew that AT&T offered long-distance service, the key business on which the company had staked its future. Before retiring in September of 1986, Block had helped increase that figure to more than 90 percent. But his most lasting contribution to public relations will probably be the establishment of the Arthur W. Page Society in December of 1983. Originally conceived as a means of bringing together public relations officers of the former Bell System, it quickly evolved into a highly select membership organization for senior public relations and communications executives across a wide spectrum of industries. Committed to the belief that public relations is a function of executive management central to a corporation's success, the Page Society seeks to perpetuate the business principles of Arthur W. Page, who was one of the foremost contributors to the modern concept of public relations. The man who brought Ed Block into public relations, Doug Williams, at one time reported to Page and taught his standards. With the Page Society, Block has returned the favor.

—*Dick Martin*

BOGART, JUDITH S.

Judith Bogart (1936–), public relations consultant, was appointed the second woman president of

the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 1983. She commented on the fact that her presidency would be followed by a third woman president, Barbara Hunter: "It's good—gets us out of feeling we *should* have a woman. This way, we're breaking precedent. Now sex can play less of a part, even if no more women take posts in the *next* 10 years" (Bogart, 1983).

Bogart's career in nonprofit public relations was atypical among PRSA's national leaders; however, Bogart pointed out that hospital public relations had much in common with corporate public relations. "Jewish Hospital of Cincinnati for example, one of the top 25 employers in Cincinnati in 1983, had an \$80 million budget" (Bogart, 1983, p. 36).

After completing an undergraduate degree at Baldwin-Wallace College, Bogart began her professional public relations career for the Girl Scout Council in Great Cincinnati. She then moved on to Arlington, Virginia, for the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital and later worked for the Great Rivers Council in Cincinnati. She was regional account executive for Education Funds, Inc. and was director of community relations for the Cincinnati Human Relations Council.

Bogart was vice president of Jewish Hospital of Cincinnati from 1977 to 1985. From 1985 to 1988, she was executive vice president of Diversified Communication Inc., Cincinnati. She then purchased the Southwest Ohio office of Diversified Communications, changing its name in 1989 to Judith Bogart Associates, Cincinnati. From 1991 to 1996 she was director of public relations for Sive/Young & Rubicam, Cincinnati.

Bogart was named Career Woman of Achievement, YWCA, in 1983; Fellow, Public Relations Society of America, in 1990; member and 1982 national headliner of Women in Communications; and president of the North American Public Relations Council in 1989. In 1995, she was on the board of governors of the Bankers Club and on the board of directors of the Institute for Community Capacity Building.

Bogart was winner of the Paul Lund national PRSA award for community service in 1999. Her career civic activities include, in addition to the Girl

Scouts of America, service on Cincinnati's International Visitors Board, the Uptown Task Force Executive Committee, Xavier University's Community Relations Advisory Board, and Northern Kentucky University and Western Kentucky University communication and journalism school advisory boards.

—Elizabeth L. Toth

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Judith S. Bogart

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BOULWARISM

Boulwarism is a pejorative term used in labor relations to describe a take-it-or-leave-it stance by a party engaged in collective bargaining. More generally, Boulwarism is the aggressive effort by management to communicate its positions on economic

and labor matters directly to (union-organized) employees and communities.

The concept stems from the no-nonsense approach to employee relations advocated by Lemuel R. Boulware (1895–1990), vice president of employees and communications at General Electric (GE) from 1947 to 1961. Boulware was a native of Kentucky who graduated from the University of Wisconsin, where he briefly taught accounting and commercial law following graduation. During his career, Boulware held posts with the Easy Washing Machine Company, Carrier Corporation, and Celotex Corporation before becoming operations vice chairman of the War Production Board during World War II. He joined GE as a consultant and also oversaw seven of its manufacturing subsidiaries.

Prior to Boulware being appointed to his corporate post, GE had undergone a bitter seven-week strike in 1946. Boulware's charge from GE management was to overcome the distrust and disapproval among employees and neighbors using innovative solutions that avoided mistakes made at other companies. Boulware's lack of experience in labor relations was considered to be a benefit because he provided a fresh perspective.

Boulware delved into his assignment with the same fervor he used in product marketing and began by conducting in-depth interviews. He identified four key groups of "contributor-claimants" (Boulware, 1969, p. 17)—customers, owners, other businesses, and employees. He quickly identified three key areas of neglect: GE had failed to explain how it benefited others, GE had not geared "its intentions, practices, manners and results as intimately as we could and should to the other fellow's viewpoint" (Boulware, 1969, p. 5), and finally, the firm had failed to manage people's expectations about what was reasonable, possible, and feasible.

Within six months, Boulware outlined a nine-point checklist of what employees wanted from their jobs. These included attractive compensation, improved working conditions, competent supervision, a feeling of job security, respect for human dignity, opportunities for promotion, information about management's goals, belief in the importance of one's job, and satisfaction about accomplishments.

Boulware aggressively promoted these ideas to employees. He also launched an economics education program that addressed the importance of profits, how jobs are created, how profits are earned, who pays the costs of doing business, the sizeable share of taxes paid by business, the causes of unemployment, and the dangers of price and wage controls. Boulware used articles and ads in employee publications and oversaw a massive program of meetings (using materials borrowed from DuPont) where 190,000 employees were paid to attend three 90-minute sessions on “How Our Business System Operates.” GE extended the message to communities by taking out full-page advertisements in plant-city newspapers.

As Boulware later explained, his objective was “the deserving and thus the regaining of favorable regard and the active cooperation of employees and neighborhoods in their own interests” (Boulware, 1969, p. 5). He later observed,

I think the real mission of General Electric or any other private business—as well as a requirement for its survival—has been and is to please people by helping them get all they have come, on the basis of enlightened understanding, reasonably to expect from the business in both material and nonmaterial ways. (Boulware, 1969, p. 5)

Boulware’s innovative strategy was grounded in solid public relations ideals. First, he strived to correct causes of people’s justified dissatisfaction “by getting them to tell us what was wrong and doing all possible not only to right any such wrongs but also to try to right them in their way and not our own.” Second, he hoped to correct information or misconceptions that caused unwarranted dissatisfaction—“no matter how far afield we had to go in our own improved education and in helping our employees update their knowledge—and no matter who of high or low estate had to be contradicted in the process” (Boulware, 1969, p. 84).

Boulware’s pro-business stance won respect from business leaders, but GE’s unions attacked the company viciously as organizers attempted to increase their power and to address displacements in the workforce in the post–World War II economy. As the subtitle of his later book on the topic

suggests, Boulware aimed for “trying to do right voluntarily.” Yet his approach was decidedly prescriptive, controlling, and anti-union.

Boulware believed employees at GE and other firms didn’t understand how many of the criticisms launched against business were rooted in socialist ideology. As Boulware enumerated his concerns, people thought that all managers and owners were brutes and crooks, that private businesses allowed the privileged to exploit helpless workers in the name of profits, and that brute force rather than individual persuasion or individual worth was a way for people to get what they wanted. Consistent with Cold War fears about the spread of socialism, Boulware was convinced that Communists had infiltrated many unions.

Boulware’s disdain for unions was particularly reflected in his views on bargaining—the aspect of his work for which he is most remembered. He believed that rank-and-file union members were uninformed, unsophisticated, and misguided by union leaders. Moreover, Boulware argued that union officials came to collective bargaining sessions with an undue advantage: Labor union claims were automatically judged to have merit and to be backed widely by employees and by the public at large. Employers, by contrast, were viewed with skepticism, had little support, and were portrayed as the “greedy, wicked and undeserving few” (Boulware, 1969, p. 107). In fact, the Wagner Act of 1935 and the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 had guaranteed labor the right to collective bargaining and outlawed industrial representation plans (also known as company unions) established in the aftermath of the Colorado coal strike of 1913–1914.

Boulware faulted business leaders for this imbalance and called on them to stand up and tell their story. Boulware later explained,

The plain fact seemed to be that the leftist intellectuals, the nosier of the more leftist union officials and their publications and field organizations, and the federal bureaucracy were operating more and more across the country as the ideological detractors of private business and of the concept of free choice, private property, and limited government on which our unique well-being had been built. (1969, p. 109)

As a champion for business, Boulware challenged attendees at the Harvard Business School's commencement in 1949 to engage in public affairs discussions. "We businessmen are bold and imaginative before commercial competitors. We are cowardly and silent in public when confronted with union and other economic and political doctrines contrary to our beliefs" (Boulware, 1969, p. 163). He added, "We have simply got to learn, and preach, and practice what's the good alternative to socialism. And we have to interpret this to a majority of adults in a way that is understandable and credible and attractive" (p. 165).

To overcome this advantage during labor negotiations in 1948, Boulware obtained permission from the unions with which GE was negotiating to lift the then customary ban on publicity by the parties involved in collective bargaining. Boulware instituted twice daily Teletype dispatches to GE's 140 plants on the progress of negotiations. These bulletins were duplicated for distribution to employees, union stewards, local press, and any other interested parties. Summaries of negotiations also were included in GE's weekly *Employee Relations News Letter*, distributed to 15,000 managers. Local managers were authorized and encouraged to talk to local media, and Boulware regularly engaged the press in New York to tell the company's side of the story.

Reflecting his disdain for the advantages enjoyed by unions, Boulware sought to break the patterns of wage settlements that characterized union negotiations until then by staunchly presenting and defending "fair but firm" proposals from the company. Boulware painstakingly researched and fleshed out what he termed a competitive "product" that he believed was both attractive to employees and within the means of the company. Union officials bristled at the tactic. For all of Boulware's talk about balancing common interests, the unions believed that GE was dictating terms and not bargaining "in good faith."

Boulware's hardball tactics soon became public knowledge; controversy ensued as media, politicians, commentators, and editorialists took sides. Boulware later explained that he was not inflexible. Indeed, only one of his opening proposals ever became a part of a GE-union contract without amendment. Boulware said he always welcomed

unions to provide "any old or new information proving changes would be in the balanced interests of all" (Boulware, cited in Peterson, 1991, p. 147).

Boulware's stance in GE's 1960 negotiations with the International Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, AFL-CIO, led the National Labor Relations Board to rule that GE had engaged in unfair labor practices. The NLRB now requires representatives in collective bargaining to negotiate "in good faith." This involves a willingness to listen to counterproposals and a prohibition against *pro forma* refusals to make changes in a package offer. Although none of Boulware's tactics were illegal in the abstract, the NLRB and subsequent court rulings found that the overall effect of GE's tactics was to circumvent the rights of unions.

Boulwarism is an example of an important business concept stemming out of public relations practice. The prohibition against Boulware's negotiation approach is a firmly established principle regularly addressed in labor law. Boulwarism also represents an important—but possibly misdirected—effort to address anti-business sentiments in modern society. One indirect effect of Boulware's work was the resurgence in pro-business sentiments in the 1980s under the presidency of Ronald Reagan. GE had hired Reagan to heighten the popularity of its weekly TV series in the 1950s, and Boulware sent Reagan on a tour of GE plants where the future president—then a liberal anti-communist—was fully indoctrinated in GE's free enterprise philosophy.

Boulware's work is also a historically important case study of how one organization recognized the importance of building mutually beneficial relationships and how management sought to establish a more balanced relationship with key constituencies. It is also an example of the failed application of what is characterized today as two-way asymmetric communication. Although Boulware's approach to employee education has never been completely assessed, his labor negotiation strategy proved unsuccessful in the long term.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Colorado coal strike; Community relations; Labor union public relations; Symmetry

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BOXED PRINT

Newspapers, magazines, brochures, pamphlets, and virtually all other publications have a variety of “makeup” options that an editor can select to communicate visually to the reader. A well-laid-out page spread (except for the front and back pages, a publication’s *page spread* of facing left and right pages should be considered as one visual unit) is not only attractive and inviting, but also directs the reader across the page spread in a way that can be predicted and controlled to showcase what the editor wants to emphasize and to direct the reader in the sequential order that the editor wants elements of the page spread to be viewed. Indeed, a knowledgeable and skilled graphic designer or layout editor can predict and control with almost complete certainty how the reader will proceed in viewing information that is presented on the page spread, using such elements of makeup as body copy (text); headlines, subheads, and editorial blurbs or pullout quotes; photographs and other art, for example, line art and accompanying cutlines and captions; and white space—all of which can be used to entice readership and to make information processing as easy as possible for readers.

Of course, different publications are used in different ways: A newspaper editor knows that virtually no one will read the whole newspaper, for example, so she presents the stories and art in a

way that will help readers to select what is most significant and what interests them most. Magazine editors likewise know that few people will read a whole magazine cover-to-cover, although they hope readers will be interested in a far greater percentage of an issue’s feature-length stories than they would read in a newspaper. Pamphlets and brochures are most often designed to be read in their entirety and are laid out accordingly—to encourage readership of the whole publication, usually front to back.

To add visual interest as well as to feature a story or article, boxes are frequently used to surround the print (i.e., the text). Traditional newspaper makeup uses boxed print on occasion to showcase a short human-interest story as well as to brighten a page, whereas *modular* newspaper makeup depends on boxed print to dramatize a large and important story, usually a box created with a quite narrow *hairline rule*, which may have squared or sometimes rounded corners and surround the story and its accompanying art (e.g., photographs and cutlines). Such use of boxed print requires at least a two-column story (some editors argue that a three-column story is better), and each page may have a boxed print (it’s usually better to have only one such boxed print per page or else all emphasis becomes no emphasis). As a visual element, boxes add “weight” to a page or page spread that helps to balance or contrast other visual elements, and thus boxed prints may appear at the bottom of a page to help create page balance.

Of course, magazines frequently use boxed prints (sometimes with a gray or colored screen inside the box on which the text is overprinted) to emphasize or to distinguish the story from others on a page spread. Brochures and pamphlets may use boxed prints as an integral part of their design theme; for example, copy (text) on each page may be inside a box, or each page may have a border box. Of course, Web sites also use boxed prints a great deal, and many of the guidelines that apply to boxed prints in printed publications are equally valid for Web sites.

Boxed prints are highly effective when used well—when they are used tastefully and with discretion to visually communicate that the text inside

each box is special in some way (e.g., it is more important or is significantly different from surrounding text). Boxed print may be a *sidebar* story to the main story; may be used to provide balance and contrast to pages; and is often used to brighten pages. The public relations person doing her own makeup of employee newspapers, magazines, brochures, and pamphlets must remember that there can be too much of a good thing, however; too many boxed prints on a page or page spread means each one loses some of its potential effectiveness.

—Dean Kruckeberg and Marina Vujnovic

See also Caption/cutline; Feature; Graphics; Layout

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BRAND EQUITY AND BRANDING

The concepts of *brand equity* and *branding* are necessarily intertwined, and they are connected with both advertising and public relations. Lisa Wood (2000) indicated that there are several different meanings of brand equity: First, it may be construed as the total value of a brand as a distinct asset. In other words, when the brand is actually sold in the marketplace or included on a balance sheet. Second, brand equity may be interpreted as a measure of the strength of consumer attachment to a brand. Finally, it may be considered a description of the associations and beliefs the consumer has about a particular brand. The distinctions in these various definitions primarily derive from accounting and marketing.

In many cases, financial accountants (preferring the first definition) will use the term *brand value* rather than *brand equity*. The brand's value, relative to the rest of the marketplace, emerges as the overriding consideration. Advertising and public relations professionals generally recognize this first definition, but they tend to be more interested in customer-brand relationships and associations. These professionals will often build on the brand

equity concept with ideas such as *brand identity* or *brand image*.

Brand image is aligned with the needs and desires of a target market by utilizing the "four P's" (product, price, place, and promotion). The combined success of these factors determines *brand strength*, the degree of loyalty or attachment customers feel toward the brand. Because there are a number of related concepts, Max Blackston (2000) summarizes them with the key principle of brand equity; a brand is necessarily intertwined with a product(s), but it is different because there is a consumer investment over time.

Brand equity consists of the incremental, added-value qualities that synergistically combine in the minds of consumers. A brand may be a product, but it can also represent an organization through the creation of a unique identity.

Blackston argued that the fundamental marketing variables (product, price, etc.) are critical values but the *added value* concept is where the success of branding is truly realized. However, this concept is difficult to define because of its intangible nature. Generally, this idea is indirectly measured or inferred in terms of the consumer's idea of the brand. Even though such inferences will continue, Blackston posited that greater understanding of brand equity may be achieved by recognizing that brand relationships are occurring, interactive processes involving both the brand and the consumer. Relationships are, of course, constructed through communication. The organization is projecting an image, and consumers are providing meaning to the messages. Thus, a relationship between the brand and the consumer flourishes or disintegrates. These brand relationships comprise two key factors that are necessary for synergistic success: trust in the brand and customer satisfaction with the brand. In other words, added value is realized when these factors are maximized.

The brand's success depends on the creation of a personal link with each consumer, and obviously, this objective is not easy to achieve, but when an organization moves from a self-centered to an "other-centered" (customer-focused) stance, success in these relationships may be eventually achieved. Blackston indicated that the brand relationship

concept has been applied to the development of advertising campaigns, but it can be extended to all areas of marketing communication, including public relations. An objective for a desired relationship with the critical stakeholders (the consumers) may provide a guide for the brand's "communication" transactions with each consumer. Because behavioral consistency is essential for long-term relationship success, the sales promotion, packaging, and public relations that are associated with a brand must be consistent. When the consumer is satisfied and trusts these consistent behaviors, he or she is likely to continue the brand relationship and, thus, added value may be achieved over time in the branding experience. Corporate branding (and brand equity) is the "true" mark of a product or organization. In other words, it can be construed as a unique declaration of identity, quality, trust, and value with the final judgment on those factors resting with the individual consumer.

With the branding concept in public relations (and related areas of communication), four process areas are often considered: (1) creating, (2) maintaining, (3) damaging, and (4) repairing. Creating unique identities for products is challenging, considering the vast array of information that consumers are exposed to in the marketplace. William Wells, John Burnett, and Sandra Moriarty (2003) provided the following suggestions for advertising and public relations professionals as they create messages about their brands:

1. Make the brand distinctive by drawing attention to its qualities/strengths.
2. Utilize a design that aligns with the brand image that you wish to project and send public relations and advertising messages that are generally consistent with other mass media messages.
3. Make the packaging as functional as possible.
4. Product packaging, advertising, and public relations should dovetail. In other words, consistency is repeatedly emphasized.

Organizations need to ensure that their resources are committed to brands that offer the greatest likelihood of success, whether those brands are

products or subunits of the organizations with their own distinct identities. As Peter Sackett and Efstathios Kefallonitis (2003) argued, creating a unique brand experience will reflect the organization's advantages over its competitors. Thus, the organization will maintain its existing customer base and also attract other consumers.

Sackett and Kefallonitis also emphasized the importance of aligning the consistency, originality, and relevance of the brand experience to the core brand value (i.e., quality or durability) that is being communicated. If this alignment does not occur, organizations will struggle to differentiate their brands in the vast consumer universe of information. They posited that creating brands involves attention to consumers' perceptions of similar brands in the marketplace and, then, designing product features that are not only distinct but also add value to those perceptions. Thus, added value is created and potentially sustained for consumers and organizations.

In many cases, organizations will conduct research (i.e., interviews and surveys) to determine the likely importance of various attributes in brand choice processes. In short, what is missing in the marketplace? What would consumers like to see as they perceive it? Subsequently, a brand is developed that addresses these needs and perceptions, and this data is aligned with information on the target market (i.e., senior citizens). Of course, not all organizations follow these procedures with brand creation, but in general, sophisticated organizations in the modern business environment engage in these rigorous market research activities.

Brian Wansink (1997) advanced some additional thoughts on the brand creation discussion by talking about "re-creating" brands or providing a revised brand perspective for consumers. Many marketing managers believe that brands, like many other natural life cycles, observe the laws of positive entropy; they are created, they grow, they mature, they decline, and they die. In some cases, brand sales and market share decline because people have lost interest due to changing conditions in the marketplace (i.e., typewriters and the advent of word processing) or because another brand becomes more salient for consumers. Wansink illustrated this re-creation with

the Arm & Hammer situation in 1969. The product's sales were declining because of reduced home baking and the introduction of ready-to-bake packaged food products. In order to address these issues, the product re-emerged as a deodorizer for refrigerators, freezers, and kitchen sink drains.

The product's sales rebounded. Even though brand creation and re-creation are distinct in terms of actual product existence, the same principle guides the success of these processes: addressing the needs of consumers and their perceptions in relation to your product or organizational niche.

Brand re-creation can also be considered, in some product cases, a natural maintenance activity. In order to maintain a successful brand relationship (as in many other relationships), some modifications may need to occur. Of course, there are cases where limited brand maintenance occurs because the product continues to address the needs of consumers in its particular niche. However, ongoing communication campaigns are always recommended so that consumers are consistently reminded about the attributes and strengths of the organization or product.

Typically, organizations have different brand maintenance strategies and tactics. For example, some organizations focus on their brand name, making it synonymous with a product class. These corporate brand names appear as the only brand identity. Corporate brands are used when a company operates in a tightly defined market (e.g., Kellogg's with breakfast cereal). Promoting related products is a brand maintenance strategy for the organization as well as for the potential variety of brand names (e.g., Raisin Bran). Standardization strategies may also be employed when companies wish to associate related products or names internationally. Additionally, corporate history can be influential when brands are leveraged or *extended*. With this strategy, a corporate brand name is maintained by association with new products. In other words, the brand name is revitalized and recreated.

As the information age continues, dynamic brand maintenance strategies are necessary. Brand leverage is an example of such a strategy, along with the more general goal of creativity. Maintaining an information-based context may also be useful. In

other words, through a medium such as a Web site, people consume, communicate, and transact with the organization or corporate brand. With Web site maintenance, the corporation's identity (and that of its associated brands) is preserved in the minds of consumers. Even though some modifications may inevitably occur, the brand is still important because a personal link to the consumer has been maintained. Brand maintenance and relationship maintenance are not distinct concepts; they are necessarily intertwined.

In some cases, damage to a brand name's reputation occurs. Malfeasance on the part of managers or the mishandling of crisis situations may provide rationales for why such damage occurs. Because organizations can be construed as brands, there are numerous examples of brand names that have endured injurious circumstances. The debacles that have plagued corporations such as Exxon (1989 oil tanker mishap) and MCI (misappropriation of corporate funds in 2001 and 2002) have been documented in the popular media. Typically, such an event creates a thriving environment for brand damage, especially if stakeholders, such as customers, perceive that the organization does not care or is mishandling the situation.

However, brand identity may also become poorly perceived in an incremental fashion. Over the course of time, without proper maintenance, brand damage will probably occur and, eventually, the brand's image cannot be restored to its prior positive state. If brand identity is perceived as poor (damaged), the brand experience that is created will be unfavorable. Corporate brand names can also be damaged by claims from internal and external stakeholder groups, such as the media, that are inconsistent with the organization's story. Such claims can damage brands. However, if the organization can distance itself from the claims and provide evidence of accountability on the part of other parties, brand damage may be limited. On the other hand, social legitimacy and financial stability may be permanently harmed.

The image restoration strategies that are employed by various organizations provide insight into the subject of brand repair, rejuvenating a damaged brand name.

W. L. Benoit (1995) provided a typology of brand repair and image restoration strategies for corporations: (1) denying, (2) evading responsibility, (3) reducing offensiveness, (4) taking corrective action, and (5) mortifying (mortification). Each of these strategies may be effective in particular circumstances. With the first two strategies, if the organization can legitimately deny or not take responsibility for a potentially damaging situation, these communicative stances may be appropriate. Benoit also provides the following suggestions for image repair discourse:

1. Avoid making false claims for brands and provide adequate support.
2. If your organization is responsible, admit this fact immediately.
3. Communicate plans to correct and prevent recurrence of the problem.

The final recommendation might be classified as goodwill, if such actions are designed to enhance a community or group of stakeholders beyond simple repair of brand damage. If customers perceive that the organization is truly acting in their best interests, brand repair will begin to occur. It should also be noted that restoration tactics may not involve a long period of time, if the organization is honest with its' stakeholders about crises and claims. In these cases, brand damage is limited because the organization assumes responsibility and provides evidence related to claims.

Audience perceptions are critical to brand repair and image restoration. In terms of perceptions, if the organization reminds stakeholders of past good works and relationships through bolstering communication strategies without addressing the critical brand-damaging issue(s), brand repair may not even occur.

Customers may quickly reject the brand, or it may eventually fade from the public scene because such reminders fall into a communicative vacuum chamber.

—Brian C. Sowa

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BRIDGE

Bridge is a term derived from the stage and journalism to mean *transition*. Usage of this word as a term of art when referring to crisis responses and media training probably results from adaptation by public relations professionals of its many definitions in the related fields of journalism, graphic design or layout, theater, and broadcasting or film.

In journalism, the term's most common definition has meaning to writers and editors alike. Both use *bridge* to mean the “logical transition from the summary information of the lead to the detailed information in the body of the story when using the inverted pyramid structure method of newswriting” (Connors, 1982, pp. 99–100). When used in this context, the term *bridge* serves to explain and expand on the information in the lead. In more general usage, writers use the term to mean “a phrase or sentence connecting two stories” (Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg, 2000, p. 519) or “a few words tying one element of news to another” (Weiner, 1996, p. 78). To editors, *bridge* refers to “a proof-reader's mark indicating that two letters or words should be connected” (Weiner, 1996, p. 78),

whereas graphic designers and layout artists use *bridge* to mean “type or art that runs across the *gutter* and links two adjacent pages, more commonly called a *crossover* or *gutter bleed*” (Weiner, 1996, p. 78, italics in original).

In theater, broadcasting, and film, *bridge* conveys not just a changing of scenes, but often a changing of emotion, as well. Public relations educators Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg define *bridge* in terms of its usage in broadcasting as “transitional program music” (Newsom et al., 2000, p. 519). According to *The Dictionary of Media Terms*, a bridge is a “music cue used to carry us from one scene or one mood to another” (Penney, 1984, p. 27). *NTC’s Mass Media Dictionary* expands on that definition and defines *bridge* as “sound effects or music used to indicate a lapse of time, or to link dramatic scenes” (Ellmore, 1991, p. 77). The *Longman Dictionary of Mass Media & Communication* summarizes these ideas with the following entry: “Narrative, sound, or music section used to transition between two scenes or to show an elapse of time or change of mood or locale” (Conners, 1982, pp. 99–100). Finally, *Webster’s New World Dictionary of Media and Communications* includes the visual with the auditory, as they include in their definition “a musical, visual, or other type of transition, particularly between scenes (*a bridging shot*)” (Weiner, 1996, p. 78, italics in original). An interesting but also germane definition of the term used in theater refers to “a narrow platform on which stage lights (*bridge lights*) are mounted, usually called a *light bridge* in the United States or *lighting bridge* in the United Kingdom” (Weiner, 1996, p. 78, italics in original). *NTC’s Mass Media Dictionary* notes, “Luminaries and projection devices are accessible during performances” (Ellmore, 1991, p. 77).

In public relations, *bridge* refers primarily to the technique used in a crisis response or while training someone to deal with the media that allows the speaker to take control of the interview. Simply stated, the speaker connects their answer to the interviewer’s question or subject to a topic of their own choosing or to their communication points or commercials. Put another way, the speaker *reframes*

the question or issue to allow the points they want made to lead the response.

Done poorly, bridging can be offensive and disingenuous to journalist and viewer alike. An example one journalist used to illustrate this point was the response Senator Warner gave when challenged about whether the Iraqis had taunted the United States in a message. His answer to the question: “I want to turn to this other thing.”

Successful use of the bridge starts with communication points, or commercials. These are the one, two, or three things the speaker wants the audience to remember, even if they don’t remember anything else. Some public relations professionals prefer message mapping instead of communication points—where all roads lead to a central point—but the intent is the same: The speaker has a message that they want heard.

Once the communication points are established, they become the point the speaker makes first in response to a question. The bridge technique then connects the communication point(s) to a more expansive explanation of the point or to another of the speaker’s communication points. Phrases such as “That’s such a complex subject . . .,” “Your question really relates to . . .,” and “You bring up an interesting point, but before I discuss that, it’s important to note that . . .” are all good bridges.

A good example of how communication points and bridges interoperate can be seen in the following mock interchange, regarding an accident that has claimed several lives:

Reporter: “Witnesses claim they saw the aircraft oscillating wildly just before it plowed into those hangers over there. What can you tell us about the maintenance standards of your company and could that have been the cause of this accident?”

Spokesperson: “Obviously, we won’t know the cause of the accident until after the investigation is completed (communication point). Your question really relates to our maintenance practices (bridge) and that is a part of our business that we take very seriously

(second communication point). We have an extensive training program that requires continual refresher courses and includes an extensive certification process. . . .”

Though allowing the spokesperson to control the interview, the effective use of the bridging technique in the interchange above helped improve the communication between the two parties by providing additional information and perspective on the issue at hand. Had the spokesperson merely stated that the accident was under investigation and provided nothing further, or worse, ineffectively used the bridging technique to try and deflect the reporter’s legitimate question, the public would not have been served well, and the relationship between spokesperson and reporter would have been unnecessarily tense and adversarial.

Effective use of the bridge incorporates many of the attributes found in definitions of the term from journalism, graphic design or layout, theater, and broadcasting or film. It connects your lead, or the most important information in the story, to the rest of the story and serves to explain and expand on the information in the lead (journalism). It conveys a changing of scenes and often emotion (theater, broadcasting, and film) when used to connect two communication points, especially if one of those points is a statement of condolence, concern, or regret. Finally, by providing additional explanation and perspective or expanding on particular points, the bridge serves to illuminate and remains accessible throughout the conversation (theater).

—Robert S. Pritchard

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BROCHURE

A brochure is a printed piece of collateral material used for public relations, advertising, and marketing purposes. Brochures are considered a communication tool or tactic and a form of direct media, such as fliers, newsletters, and posters, which reaches its audiences through distribution channels other than mass media (i.e., newspapers, magazines, radio, and television). Other terms used to describe brochures are *pamphlets*, considered a simple version of a brochure, and *booklets*, which are brochures that are produced in small, book-like formats.

Every organization, whether corporate or non-profit, needs brochures to convey key messages to particular target audiences. A brochure is a tactic with a specific objective. For example, brochures can educate an employee audience about company policies, inform customers about new products, or encourage members of a community to use a program offered by a nonprofit organization.

Brochures communicate a sizable amount of information to a single reader at a hand-held viewing distance. An orderly sequence of information is presented in stages through panels using a common design thread that visually connects all of the panels and helps entice and sustain the reader’s attention.

Brochures are commonly distributed to a target audience interpersonally, in information racks and through the mail in a standard business envelope. In order to be effective, brochures must be strategically sound, which means they need to be targeted toward a particular audience, convey an overall key message, and attempt to achieve a specific objective. Some of the most common objectives in public relations include increasing awareness about a specific organization and educating the target audience about a specific service or product.

Brochures are produced in a variety of styles, shapes, and sizes. A format often used in public relations is a simple two-fold, six-panel, 8½ × 11 brochure. Another popular format is a one-fold,

four-panel, 8½ × 11 brochure, which can be expanded by adding multiple pages. Brochures can be folded and bound in many ways. Letter, broad-side, map, and accordion folds are commonly used. A common type of binding for booklets is a saddle stitch, which involves a staple through the spine of the publication.

Brochures need to be created with a unifying design throughout the entire publication, which can be conveyed through an appropriate choice of type-face, line rules, screens and tints, clip art, and color schemes. Brochures are commonly printed in one color, spot color (usually black for the type and another color to highlight specific areas in the brochure), and full color, which is the most expensive to produce. Some public relations practitioners begin with a layout and copy for a brochure and then work with a designer and/or printer to develop the final printed piece. Other practitioners create the entire piece themselves, using any number of desktop publishing programs, such as PageMaker, QuarkXpress, and Microsoft Publisher.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Collateral; Pamphlet

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BURSON, HAROLD

Harold Burson, founder and chairman of Burson-Marsteller, one of the largest public relations firms in the world, was named the most influential public relations figure in the 20th century by *PR Week* in 1999.

Burson attributed his success to a combination of many factors, including luck and taking advantage of opportunities. “Some people get opportunities but never know how to capitalize on them,” he said (personal communication, October 10, 2002). Early on, Burson recognized the value of a supportive,

well-read father (who taught him to read at age 3) and the global vision given to him by his immigrant parents and the military, which were instrumental in shaping his career.

Burson was born February 15, 1921, in Memphis, Tennessee. Like many legendary figures in public relations, he started his career as a journalist; however, Burson started earlier than most. He was the editor of his junior high school newspaper and was appointed the Sunday high-school page reporter for *The Commercial Appeal* in Memphis. Though only 14 years old, Burson had a byline in the city’s largest newspaper.

Burson said *The Commercial Appeal* continued to influence his life throughout high school and college: “I started out working with [*The Commercial Appeal*] as a copy boy, so I could pay my way through college” (personal communication, October 10, 2002). While attending the University of Mississippi in Oxford, Burson made an average of \$60 per month as a stringer. He also headed the university’s publicity department for three semesters, which he described as “the most valuable component of my college experience” (Burson, 2003, n.p.).

After graduating in May 1940, Burson continued to work for *The Commercial Appeal*. One of the stories he covered was the construction of a mammoth ammunition plant for the War Department near Memphis. The engineer–building contractor, the H. K. Ferguson Company, found itself in a labor dispute, and the company’s owner asked Burson to take a leave of absence from his reporting job to handle press relations for the company. The dispute was resolved in a few weeks, and the owner asked Burson to join the company’s headquarters staff as publicity director. In addition to providing a substantially higher salary, the opportunity allowed the 20-year-old Burson to fulfill his dream of moving to New York City. He worked for the Ferguson Company from 1941 until 1943, traveling throughout the United States. He enlisted in the army in 1944.

During World War II, Burson first was assigned to an engineer combat group and sent to Europe, where he cleared mines off the beaches of Normandy, France. With the Ninth U.S. Army, he marched across Belgium, Holland, and Germany.

In April 1945, he transferred to the Press and Psychological Warfare Detachment of the U.S. 12th Army Group, and when the war in Europe ended, he transferred to the news staff of American Forces Network (AFN)—the military radio network—and was sent to Paris. At 24, he was selected as AFN's chief correspondent at the Nuremberg Trial, where he worked alongside such reporters as Walter Cronkite and Walter K. Smith.

During his military service, Burson decided he wanted to start his own public relations firm when he returned to civilian life. He wrote the new CEO of his former employer, the H. K. Ferguson Company, asking whether the company would become his first client. The answer was yes.

Burson was released from the army in May 1946 and started his consulting firm in New York City in August. The small firm specialized in business-to-business clients. By its fifth year, it had grown to five employees. An opportunity soon changed the firm and defined Burson's subsequent career.

In early 1952, while Burson was sitting in his office in the *New York Daily News* building, he received a telephone call from Harry Leather, a close friend at *The New York Times*. Leather called Burson to tell him that he had recommended his firm to Bill Marsteller, the owner of an industrial advertising agency based in Chicago. Marsteller said he needed the help of a public relations firm to handle a project for his agency's largest client, Rockwell Manufacturing Company (now Rockwell International).

According to Burson, W. F. Rockwell, Jr., wanted to have his picture on the cover of *Life* magazine with a helicopter he had purchased for company executives to travel to different manufacturing plants. "The project worked out well," said Burson (personal communication, October 10, 2002). Although Rockwell's helicopter did not make *Life*'s cover page, Burson's publicity efforts resulted in getting one of the company's new combination home-workshop power tools a three-page article in *Life* magazine during the 1952 Thanksgiving holiday.

After their joint success working with Rockwell, Harold Burson and Bill Marsteller formed a new company on March 1, 1953, which eventually

would become the world's largest public relations firm—Burson-Marsteller.

At the end of 2001, the firm had more than \$259 million in fees and more than 2,000 employees in 34 countries worldwide—a far cry from the \$84,000 in fees it commanded in its first year of operation. In 2003, Burson-Marsteller celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Throughout the years, Burson-Marsteller has been a major player in many public relations milestones. Citing just a few examples, the firm was influential in helping Union Carbide work through its 1984 poison gas disaster that killed an estimated 3,800 people in Bhopal, India. It also provided consultation services to Johnson & Johnson during the cyanide-laced Tylenol scare in the early 1980s.

According to Burson, his greatest contribution to public relations is that he has been "one who probably made public relations global in scope and added good-sized business practices and principles to it" (personal communication, October 10, 2002). Burson said his background helped him recognize that the firm had to become global in order to grow. He explained that as a first generation American, the son of British immigrants, "I grew up knowing the world was out there. It came more naturally to me. I took a global perspective when I was growing up. The real defining moment was in 1961 when we opened the first European office in Geneva." Burson said, "Committing to become international" was a significant event in the company's history (personal communication, October 10, 2002).

Harold Burson has received numerous honors and awards in recognition of his extensive contributions to the public relations profession, both nationally and internationally. A few of his awards are as follows: the Alexander Hamilton Medal, Institute for Public Relations, 1999; the Atlas Award, International Section, Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), 1998; Hall of Fame, the Arthur W. Page Society, 1991; Public Relations Professional of the Year, *Public Relations News*, 1989 and 1977; and the Gold Anvil Award, PRSA, 1980.

Burson's outlook for the future of public relations is that the function will be one of growing importance: "My feeling is public relations considerations

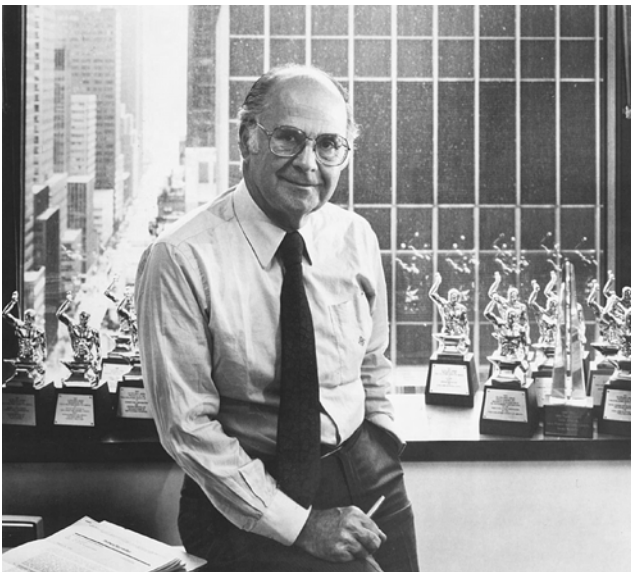
are going to be central to the decision-making process” (personal communication, October 10, 2002).

—*Kathleen S. Kelly and Jerry Mills*

See also Crisis communications and the Tylenol poisonings

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Harold Burson

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BUSINESS WIRE

Business Wire (www.businesswire.com) is a privately held company that provides services to investor relations and public relations professionals by electronically distributing their full-text news announcements and other information to news media, financial

markets, investors, and other audiences around the world. The service is one of many available today, but traditionally it has been either the leader or one of the top two such services in terms of revenue and number of customers and subscribers.

The public relations clients—called *member companies*—provide news releases, photos, regulatory filings, and multimedia and other content to Business Wire. For a fee, sometimes as low as \$125, the company will disseminate the information to journalists and other audiences simultaneously and in real time. Clients can select the most appropriate geographic market, industry audience, and editorial desk.

Subscribers—journalists at newspapers, wire services, television and radio programs, magazines, and online news services—can access the information through their newsroom editorial systems.

The company now serves more than 18,000 clients in more than 100 different industries through several dozen bureaus in the United States and Europe, reaching more than 60 news organizations.

The company also provides a variety of services to help organizations manage their corporate communications and research needs. Publicly traded companies in the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, France, and Germany can use Business Wire to meet requirements for public disclosure. Business Wire was the first newswire to offer EDGAR (Securities and Exchange Commission) filings to its public company clients. The service is also used by financial and research databases and online news organizations, which store company news releases distributed by Business Wire and make them available in company news archives.

Founded in San Francisco in 1961 by veteran journalist and public relations executive Lorry I. Lokey, the company started out with seven clients and distributed news releases to 16 news organizations in Northern California. Through the next decade, it expanded its geographic reach by forming affiliations with other wires, such as the Associated Press.

The speed at which a news service could distribute information was a major attraction of the service. By 1967, Business Wire’s ability to send

100 words per minute—which equates to sending a standard news release in about 5–10 minutes—was the fastest of any service.

A decade later, the service reached a new level when Business Wire inaugurated satellite-to-computer delivery of news releases via the Associated Press DataFeature circuit. It was the first news wire to do so, increasing its speed to 1,200 words per minute. Today, technology enables Business Wire to distribute information instantaneously.

The company continued to expand its services in the 1980s, adding 10 new offices and more employees. It also created its AnalystWire service, which connected clients with financial analysts, and SportsWire and EntertainmentWire, services that brought sports- and entertainment-related news to key sports and entertainment media.

Developments in the 1990s included the addition of Associated Press (AP) PhotoExpress service for commercial photo satellite delivery and the first commercial Web site for a newswire. In 1996, Business Wire introduced the Smart News Release, the industry's first multimedia news release.

In 2003, the company became the first commercial newswire to distribute its content over AP's Internet-based delivery platform. The service supplements Business Wire's satellite distribution and enables journalists and photo editors to view news releases directly on their desktops and to forward stories to their news production system with minimal additional intervention. Today, the company's Web site is totally compliant with the NewsML standard, enabling Business Wire to deliver more multimedia content faster to all media points.

—Catherine L. Hinrichsen

BYLINE

Byline is the term used for the signature line of a newspaper article or other contributed piece to a news publication. Bylines refer to the author or authors of a news item and appear in conjunction with the dateline and the place where the story originated, if it is not a local story. For news articles

received via a wire service, a byline is not reported and credit is given to the respective news service, such as the Associated Press. Internal newsletters may or may not allow for bylines if the articles are written by a staff member.

For public relations practitioners, securing a byline is not as important as it is to reporters. Press releases do not contain a byline; they include only contact information for reporters who need additional information. If a reporter uses a press release to write his or her article, he or she receives the byline. Even if public relations practitioners issue press releases on behalf of a client, the reporter gets the byline.

If a reporter prints a press release in its entirety, the reporter gets the byline, not the person who wrote the release. Because this sometimes happens, it is imperative that a press release contain accurate information and be written as if it were going to be printed as submitted.

Reporters have an urgency to “get the byline,” but there are certain checks in place to ensure that this need for “immediate and frequent reward” does not cause a story to be written prematurely (Mencher, 2000, p. 419).

Mencher made the point that when a reporter was given a byline, that means that he or she was *actually present* and on the scene before writing the story. Mencher refers to an “old-timer,” who commented,

In the old days, a reporter was given a byline if he or she personally covered an important or unusual story, or the story was an exclusive. Sometimes if the writing was superior, a byline was given. Nowadays, everyone gets a byline, even if the story is a rewrite and the reporter never saw the event described in the story. (2000, p. 766)

Public relations practitioners should be aware of this issue in journalism and should work to provide reporters with all pertinent facts. Although the public relations practitioner does not receive the byline for the article, it is highly likely that he or she will be quoted in the article. Whether those quotes are supplied in a press release or given through follow-up interviews with a reporter, the article's truth

will fall back on the public relations practitioner and the organization.

—*Kelly M. Papinchak*

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BYOIR, CARL

Carl Byoir created and ran, until his death in 1957, one of the largest and most successful public relations firms in United States history. The firm was unique in many ways, with little employee turnover and remarkably few client departures. There also was no new-business solicitation because Mr. Byoir (as everyone in the business called him) felt the firm would acquire new accounts by virtue of its reputation.

Other unusual characteristics of the organization captured the attention and loyalty of clients and bonded the employees. Today, long after the company's sale to Foote Cone and Belding and then to Hill & Knowlton in the mid-1980s, the unique techniques of Carl Byoir & Associates are spoken of as "The Byoir Way" by practitioners. This was, in fact, the name of the firm's elegant (and only) brochure, produced in 1977.

As an example of Byoir's business plan, all accounts were charged a uniform annual retainer fee no matter what the size of their programs. At one point, for example, Byoir represented a tiny one-product firm that made stainless steel screw settings for space capsule heat shields. The company paid the standard annual fee of \$36,000 plus the hourly charges of a few Byoir specialists who served the business from time to time.

The firm also represented the Minneapolis-Honeywell Heat Regulator Company (now Honeywell), which was Byoir's biggest client, with 22 staff members serving the account full time. Honeywell also paid the \$36,000 fee.

"That will represent our profit," Mr. Byoir said. Operating costs, ranging up to well over \$3 million a year in salaries and costs at Honeywell, were presented monthly in voluminous, highly detailed invoices, at no markup.

Another Byoir characteristic was the practice of permanently installing staff executives in client headquarters offices. At one point, 3 Byoir people worked full time at Hallmark Cards in Kansas City, 17 were located at various Honeywell locations (including one in Iran), and 6 were deployed around the country for the Road Information Program.

These workers were supported by a system of departments in the New York City headquarters devoted to such specialties as research, television, women's interests, business news, and the like. Reflecting its news heritage, Byoir employed an editorial director, a former wire service editor, who personally cleared every piece of news and feature copy before it was released to the news media.

The firm had strict requirements about the news backgrounds of employees, and most applicants had to show proof of having experienced at least four years in a newsroom.

The combination of news savvy and close client contact brought much success to the Byoir organization, represented in part by the company's skill in winning dozens of PRSA Silver Anvil awards. It also brought a collegial atmosphere that still exists long after the Byoir brand has more or less disappeared. Reunions of Byoir alumni are commonplace, and strong friendships among former staffers endure.

Most importantly, the Byoir firm, working with and in the interests of its clients, made monumental contributions to public understanding of the business function and to the documented successes of hundreds of industrial companies, associations, and public causes.

The man who created this firm in 1930 and was responsible for its news orientation and sound business base was, himself, both a newsman and a business pioneer.

Carl Robert Byoir was born on June 28, 1888, in Des Moines, Iowa. He was the last of six children born to Benjamin and Minna Gunyon Byoir, Jewish immigrants who had arrived in America in 1875

from Poland. Benjamin Byoir was not particularly successful in his efforts to run a retail clothing business or later to operate a restaurant in Des Moines, so Mrs. Byoir occasionally took in roomers for income.

Young Byoir was captivated by the contrast between the lifestyles of the rich who occupied the great houses standing along Grand Avenue in Des Moines and the grinding poverty and pitifully inadequate homes of the coal miners from nearby towns. He determined to acquire wealth of his own.

Carl Byoir began his career as a writer on the Iowa State *Register* while still a high school sophomore. After graduation, he joined the Waterloo *Times-Tribune* as city editor and became managing editor when the incumbent died unexpectedly.

But after a year, Byoir gave in to the urging of a close friend and joined him as a student at the University of Iowa. While there, he continued his enterprising ways, financing his education by continuing to write as a correspondent, selling campus items, and winning contests that offered cash.

Carl Byoir got himself elected as general manager of the college yearbook, the *Hawkeye*, and set about to create an advertising department that would build revenues for the book. In short order he devised a manual for his successors to guide them in producing the annual. When that proved useful, he set out to market the planning document elsewhere and succeeded, not only within the state of Iowa, but also at Yale, the University of Texas, and the University of Washington.

After college, Byoir joined the same friend who had lured him to Iowa and enrolled in Columbia Law School. While there, he became enchanted by the teaching methods of Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian educator. Byoir felt the Montessori system would be appealing to American mothers and might also represent a rewarding business opportunity. So before graduating from Columbia Law in 1912, Byoir had joined with Dr. Montessori to set up a United States sales program. It flourished, and Byoir made a substantial profit when he sold the enterprise one year after graduation. Byoir then decided to go into business instead of law.

What followed was a series of business ventures related to publishing. Byoir held numerous

advertising and circulation management jobs, mainly with Hearst and *Cosmopolitan* magazine. Before the age of 30, Byoir was an aggressive business operator with solid experience in advertising, promotion, and sales psychology.

Early in 1917, Byoir was summoned to Washington, DC, to serve as a major figure on the U.S. World War I Committee on Public Information, a pioneer governmental propaganda agency. This was the Creel Committee, a central agency established by President Woodrow Wilson to coordinate the wartime flow of news and information from the many sources in the nation's capital.

Surrounded by bedlam and politics at the Creel Committee, Byoir set out to do what he did best. The very ambitious George Creel had arranged for a group of eminent historians and authors to write patriotic pamphlets for distribution by the Committee, but he had no plan for printing them.

Byoir solved the problem by calling on his experience producing the *Hawkeye* and also on several friends from New York who owned printing houses. Soon thereafter, Byoir was named the committee's associate chairman.

The Byoir/Creel years probably mark the beginning of what is now known as institutional advertising. The use of paid and donated "informational" advertising by the government during World War I was monumental. Byoir himself would later use this tool to advantage with clients such as the A&P and the Eastern Railroads.

After the war Byoir and a number of other Creel Committee executives who had learned how to sway public opinion began to capitalize on the know-how they'd gained on the committee. Byoir moved to Cuba to try to get rid of his sinus problems and quickly established a promotional effort to build Cuban tourism. Key executives of the Byoir firm in later years, all of them journalists, began to join his undertaking. Gerry Swinehart, later to become chairman, joined the firm in Havana in 1930.

The Cuban tourist promotion account was Mr. Byoir's first public relations contract, and it caused him to be identified as a political supporter of dictator Gerardo Machado. As one way of reducing his identification with Machado, Byoir moved his operation to New York and began to acquire new

clients. He opened operations there in 1930 with five full-time staff. George Hammond, the longtime Byoir chairman who presided over the firm's eventual sale to Foote Cone, joined in 1932.

Most of the firm's early work was connected with tourism and travel. But knowing that he would need to expand his capabilities, Carl Byoir began to restructure his firm. He said that new accounts would not be directly solicited, and he said the firm would charge a minimum \$36,000 fee per year plus actual expenses at cost. Tongues wagged at this huge fee in 1932, but the amount held firm until it was raised to \$50,000 in the late 1970s.

Without a doubt, Carl Byoir is best known for the groundbreaking work his firm did for two of the firm's most significant early clients, the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company and the Eastern Railroads Presidents Conference, and also for his involvement with the German Tourist Information Office.

A Byoir officer signed a contract in late 1933 with the German Tourist Office to promote American tourist travel to Germany. But Byoir himself quickly realized this was a mistake. One United States congressman remarked on the House floor that Byoir's firm had a contract with agents of the German Propaganda Ministry "for the distribution in America of informative material on the 'new Germany.'"

Congress ultimately began an investigation of Nazi propaganda activities in America. Mr. Byoir, stunned by public reactions to the investigation and also to the hints that he now supported another dictator (recalling his support of Cuba's Machado), gave the Germans the agreed-upon three months' notice of resignation early in 1934. Years later Congressman Wright Patman of Texas charged Byoir on the House floor with setting up "front organizations" to represent Nazi interests in the United States.

Within weeks, Mr. Byoir was fully cleared in an FBI investigation, but he never was able to completely erase the stain that attached to a Jew who had the temerity to promote German business interests while Hitler was in power.

Wright Patman showed up once again in Mr. Byoir's life as the co-author of a 1936 amendment to the Clayton antitrust act that would seriously

restrict the market practices of the country's large chain stores and mail order houses. *Business Week* reported that Patman had "heard the cry of little wholesalers for protection against the giants." The magazine delivered a powerful editorial opposing the bill.

Immediately, owners of the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company retained the Byoir firm to work for the repeal or defeat of state anti-chain store legislation in New York and elsewhere. Byoir responded with a research effort that established two key points: Customers loved the low prices of the grocery chains, but they also favored higher taxes on the chains.

Using this paradox as the foundation of his campaign, Byoir launched a publicity attack on the anti-chain store legislation proposals in many states. Byoir made his studies of "unfair taxes" available to many groups who distributed them in their own materials.

But perhaps the most significant aspect of the Byoir campaign was a large "Statement of Public Policy" ad that first appeared in September and October of 1938 in some 60 newspapers in New York and other Eastern states. This was Byoir's first use of extensive newspaper advertising to obtain an objective rather than to build goodwill. Although the ad ran in papers with a circulation of more than 40 million, it was aimed at state legislators and members of Congress. It built huge public support for the A&P because of its low-keyed but effective revelation of the company's concern for the interests of consumers, farmers, and laborers. One magazine said this stood in marked contrast to the chain's previous stance. Byoir pointed out in a later speech that the A&P previously had failed to express its feeling accurately.

"At last business is beginning to realize that you can win public understanding and approval, no matter how big you are or how rich your success has made you, if you have done it in a fair and honest way," Mr. Byoir said in a later speech. In mid-1940, after a spirited campaign and much debate, the congressional subcommittee that had conducted hearing on the bill voted to reject it.

Perhaps the most spectacular controversy of Mr. Byoir's career centered on the struggle for

public opinion between the Pennsylvania Motor Trucking Association and the Eastern Railroads Presidents Conference. Each organization was a regional arm of a national trade organization representing the trucking and the rail interests.

The issue was weight limitations. The truckers wanted to raise the limit from 45,000 to 60,000 pounds in Pennsylvania, and the railroads saw a major threat in the increase and a resulting loss of business. They reasoned that as weight limits increased, roads would wear out more quickly, and the truckers should bear the extra cost in terms of added taxes.

The Byoir firm was awarded the railroad account in 1949. By this time, Mr. Byoir had reorganized his firm to install Gerry Swinehart as president in charge of most of its operations. Mr. Byoir had suffered a slight heart attack in 1938, at age 50, and hoped to limit his involvement to counseling senior clients.

The Byoir firm set about to build a third-party organization to provide favorable information about the railroads, following other successful Byoir programs that used this technique. In this case, Byoir directed its opinion campaigns mainly through three existing Pennsylvania organizations of farmers, town supervisors, and railroad workers.

In January of 1953, a group of Pennsylvania trucking organizations filed suit in Philadelphia, charging that Byoir and the Eastern Railroads Presidents Conference had embarked on an illegal conspiracy. The defendants said their efforts were directed only toward attaining legislative relief from the growing trucker abuse of public-supported highways.

Mr. Byoir testified at a pretrial hearing, primarily about charges that he had created sympathetic opinion groups. He said that although he was active on only three Byoir accounts at the time (A&P, Libby



Carl Byoir

SOURCE: Public Relations Society of America. Reprinted with permission.

Owens Ford, and RCA), he could not say, “no staffer had done anything that shouldn’t have been done.” But, he said, “if deception is involved, it’s no good. Integrity is the cement of our business.”

The trial was heard without jury, and in October of 1957, the judge announced against the Byoir firm and the railroads. In late 1959, a U.S. appeals court upheld the judge’s verdict.

But in 1961, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the decision, saying, “No violation of the Sherman Act can be predicated on mere attempts to influence passage or enforcement of laws.”

Mr. Byoir had died four years earlier from inoperable cancer.

—Richard H. Truitt



CAMPAIGN

A campaign is the strategic design of a series of messages sent to one or more targeted populations for a discrete period of time in response to a positive or negative situation affecting the organization. An organization or agency plans a campaign by utilizing paid messages or unpaid message outlets such as press releases or other news events to respond to a crisis affecting the organization or to create a proactive campaign that enhances the corporation's images. The key to the definition of a campaign is that it is created by an organization such as a profit-oriented corporation, a political candidate, or a social agency to communicate to a single small audience such as employees within one office or to millions of persons in multiple audiences across the nation.

A campaign cannot be assumed when news stories saturate the media covering a natural disaster or reporting a crisis that affects a corporation or an industry. For example, a flurry of news stories reporting the Exxon oil spill in Prince William Sound in Alaska or the Bridgestone/Firestone tire recall crisis are not campaigns simply because of widespread media coverage. These represent only major news stories that are picked up by media outlets across the nation. However, when Exxon and Bridgestone/Firestone began responding to the news

reports with their own messages and explanations of the crisis situations, in essence, each was conducting a campaign of strategically designed messages calculated to diminish the crisis and restore their respective corporate images.

THREE ELEMENTS DEFINE A CAMPAIGN

Three factors identify a campaign and distinguish a series of news stories from a series of campaign messages developed by an organization. Also known as the conceptualization model of a campaign, the factors of (1) campaign situation, (2) nature of organization, and (3) traits of the targeted audiences or publics are the few but crucial elements that represent the conceptualization of a campaign.

Any campaign is prompted by a campaign situation, that is, either a crisis affecting the organization or a project developed by the organization. A negative or crisis event can prompt an organization to conduct a campaign to attempt to correct any damage done to persons and the environment and, additionally, to rebuild any damage to the image of the corporation that results from the incident. A proactive, positive project such as giving additional benefits to the employees or sponsoring a fundraising campaign to benefit research into an illness or disease or to call attention to domestic violence also

demands a well-thought-out, strategic campaign to get the information out to the affected and interested populations.

The nature of the organization is also a factor in any campaign. A for-profit organization, obviously, exists on profits from sales of its products or services. A not-for-profit organization—for example, a social agency—exists to raise funds from donors and to generate goodwill to benefit its social cause. Political candidates and the organizations supporting them work to garner votes and financial support to successfully support their candidates. Understanding the various natures and characteristics of organizations leads to an understanding of the campaigns that each conducts.

The third and final element of a campaign is knowledge of and considerations of all the multiple respective audiences that relate to the organization, such as employees, stockholders, community residents, media, truck drivers, customers, activist groups, and competitors or the rest of the industry. Consideration of each audience's traits such as its needs; personality traits; dominant demographics; knowledge, attitude, and behaviors toward the organization; and all the other various images held of the organization ultimately enlightens and affects the campaign that an organization plans. Campaign messages that are most effective are those that appeal to any or all of these traits in the targeted audiences.

Background knowledge of any organization, any campaign situation, and any or all targeted populations defines an actual campaign from any succession of random messages found in the media. Knowing the role of each of these elements and how each of these factors affects the others leads to an accurate definition of a campaign and separates campaign communication from other kinds of communication.

KINDS OF CAMPAIGNS

Not only do the three elements of the conceptualization model of a campaign—campaign situation, organization, and audience—identify campaigns, but these same elements also define kinds of

campaigns. The most accepted conceptual classes of campaigns are as follows: commercial campaigns, which are advertising, marketing, and public relations; political campaigns; and social issue campaigns. For each of these kinds of campaigns, the nature of the organization, the campaign situation, and the distinct traits of the audience inherently label and identify the kind of campaign.

The three kinds of commercial campaigns are marketing, advertising, and public relations. Marketing as a field of business was created first; its purpose is to place a company's product or service in the marketplace and, hopefully, carve a unique space and create a singular demand for the product. Advertising emerged from marketing communication as a more specialized and narrow kind of campaign; the singular purpose of advertising messages is to generate interest in and sell the product or service of the corporation. For these campaigns, the organization is profit oriented, the campaign situation is product sales, and the important audiences are customers, potential customers, and retailers.

For the third kind of commercial campaign of public relations, the project or crisis campaign situation and the targeted audiences are radically different from those of marketing and advertising. In the field of public relations many more kinds of campaigns are possible, given the potential for numerous project and crisis campaign situations and given all the other populations (besides customers and retailers) with whom public relations professionals must communicate. Public relations communication is exclusively responsible for crisis communication and corporate image management. This necessitates that public relations is responsible for all kinds of campaign situations outside of sales and for all the other populations outside of customers and retailers. For political campaigns, the common campaign situation is to get a candidate elected or a piece of legislation passed. In terms of important populations, a political campaign obviously targets voters or constituencies and the media as primary audiences.

The final classification of campaign is the social issue campaign. Described as a campaign to benefit society or to benefit a social or charitable cause, it

takes two forms. The social issue campaign is a campaign to attract followers and donors to causes such as National Smoke-Out Day, various environmental campaigns, or the pro-life and pro-choice campaigns surrounding the abortion issue. The second kind of social issue campaign, which is gaining in popularity, is for profit-oriented corporations to support a social issue campaign for altruistic reasons and for image management reasons. This second move for corporations to support social issues blurs the lines between a public relations campaign and a social issue campaign. The assumed definition of a public relations campaign is to foster positive images in all the various populations, but a profit-oriented corporation supporting social causes also makes it responsible for social issue campaigns.

—*Mary Anne Moffitt*

See also Advertising; Marketing; Public relations

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CANADA, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

In Canada, as elsewhere, public relations can trace its roots to activities that predate its emergence as a distinct occupation. For example, after French explorer Samuel de Champlain returned from his first voyage along the St. Lawrence and Saguenay rivers in 1603, he published a book about his exploits that was designed to lure settlers to Quebec.

However, it is in the promotion of immigration in the late 19th century, as well as in the education of immigrant farmers in agricultural techniques appropriate to their new homeland, that one finds the rise of public relations as a distinct profession in the public and private sectors. Established in 1892, the Department of Trade and Commerce became the second government department (after the Department of

Agriculture) to place a significant focus on publicity activities.

The first government publicists made use of traveling exhibits, lectures, pamphlets, and advertising to promote Canada's agricultural, trade, and commerce interests in the United States and abroad. The federal government also sponsored visits to Canada by clergymen and farmers, then circulated their comments to more than a million citizens of Great Britain. In a grand gesture, they granted 160-acre parcels of free land to each of more than 30,000 Americans.

DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Similarly, immigration was a key factor in the rise of private-sector public relations. The railroads, especially the Canadian Pacific (CPR), were important government partners in attempting to populate the West. This cooperation was motivated, however, more by political necessity than financial strategy: Promoting immigration helped curry government support for various railroad subsidies including large land grants. By the dawn of the 20th century, the CPR had turned its promotional efforts to tourism, using such techniques as press junkets, brochures, and in-house film production.

For its part, the Canadian National Railway (CNR) was a debt-ridden, half-completed system when the government nationalized it in the 1920s. To salvage the operation, the CNR president promoted his firm as a valuable service to Canadians by introducing traveling schools and medical teams to rural communities; the firm also launched a radio broadcasting network that eventually became the foundation for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Many of the early activities in the private sector centered on internal communication. For example, the Massey Manufacturing Co. of Toronto, a farm implements maker, established what has been recognized as the first true employee publication in North America, *The Trip Hammer*. It published monthly beginning in 1885.

Early public relations efforts can often be tied to industries threatened by regulation, if not outright

nationalization. These industries developed public relations departments to foster supportive public opinion in the hope of stemming unwanted infringements on their freedom. As early as the mid-1800s, for example, Quebec brewers employed a form of public relations to counteract that province's introduction of local options on prohibition; the scenario repeated in 1917 against similar restrictive moves.

Other early adopters of public relations included utilities such as Bell Canada, which established a publicity department in 1914 shortly after ad hoc public relations helped derail proposals to nationalize telephone service. However, it has been suggested that the status of public relations at Bell ebbed once the crisis passed, a pattern that may have been true in other organizations as well.

In many cases, publicity emerged organizationally from in-house advertising departments; the hiring of ex-journalists also brought a public information orientation to marketing communications efforts. Among early journalist-practitioners were George Ham and J. Murray Gibbon of the CPR, John Yocom of British American Oil Co., Charles Fortier of Bell Canada, Yves Jasmin of Air Canada, and Toronto consultant Ruth Hammond.

The birth of public relations consulting firms, which did not lag for long, is similarly tied to people with newspaper backgrounds. The first known Toronto agency was established in 1930 by James Cowan, who had worked at the *Toronto Star*. Publicity bureaus existed in Montreal prior to that time, but there is no reliable evidence regarding dates. Probably the oldest firm still in business, OEB International, was founded in St. Catharines, Ontario, in 1936, by newspaperman Louis J. Cahill, who continued working simultaneously as a journalist for some time.

While there was sporadic growth in the private sector through the Depression, it was not until after World War II that public relations came into its own in English Canada. Public relations experience in wartime propaganda gave communicators skills that could be transferred to the private sector and to new wars against social unrest and expanding regulation.

In French-speaking Canada, public relations blossomed by 1960, when the Quiet Revolution—in essence, a turn toward secular, civil society from the

conservative, church-dominated society of the past—gave rise to a more consultative society. Local organizations found it advantageous to get their messages across, given more powerful media and the rise of government communication.

Today, public relations is routine within most private- and nonprofit-sector organizations of any size, and public relations specialists perform the same mix of managerial, strategic, and technical work as colleagues elsewhere. While some major public relations consultancies are independently owned, major international firms like Hill & Knowlton, Weber Shandwick, and Fleishman-Hillard have Canadian operations.

DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The government did little to develop public relations activities in departments other than Agriculture, Trade and Commerce, and Transport until the 1920s and 1930s, when the problems and opportunities of large scale migration into cities necessitated new social legislation. However, it was not until World War II that public relations activities in the Canadian government became truly large scale.

The history of public relations in the public sector is tightly bound to the rise and fall of central communication agencies. At the onset of World War II, the Department of National War Services established the Wartime Information Board to support Canada's war effort and to facilitate interdepartmental information sharing. The Board reported directly to the Prime Minister. At the same time, the war spurred the proliferation of information services across government. Another federal agency, the Bureau of Public Information, orchestrated speaking tours; produced articles, posters, photos, and films; and took over the printing and distribution of all government documents. The Wartime Information Board absorbed this agency in 1942. Following the war, distrust of central agencies led to the Board's being renamed the Canadian Information Service (CIS). CIS died a quiet death after the government abandoned domestic activities and transferred the organization to the Department of External Affairs.

Despite the expression of skepticism toward central agencies, public relations services were expanding and thriving, and by 1944, the federal government employed 396 publicity officers. A classification system, established in 1946, set lower end salaries (IS-1) at \$2400 and higher end salaries (IS-4) at \$4500.

After a lengthy time lapse, the next major development in public relations occurred in 1962, with the establishment of the Glassco Commission on Government Organization. The war had made Canadians fearful of organizations with too much power or control. Reflecting this bias, the Glassco Commission recommended fragmentation of the communication function. The Commission also declared the “right of the public to know”; called for communication officers to “inform” rather than “impress”; and criticized the large number of IS officers in the armed services, the volume of government press releases, and the use of the term *PR*. Commission members recommended the establishment of clear communication policies, guidelines, and training in public relations for government communicators.

After this report, public relations departments in government became known as “Information Services.” Despite the Commission’s focus on the information function, members recognized the necessity for some government departments such as (1) Health and Welfare and (2) Energy, Mines, and Resources to seek to persuade on matters related to the public interest.

Another benchmark in the history of public-sector public relations occurred with the establishment of a 1969 Task Force on Government Information, chaired by D’Iberville Fortier. Reverting to earlier patterns, task force members championed the development of a central communication agency that could act as a reference center and technical adviser to departments, learn the views of Canadians on government issues and policies, and coordinate departmental resources (especially in crisis situations). The Task Force published its recommendations in a controversial document titled *To Know and Be Known*. Authors D’Iberville Fortier, Bernard Ostry, and Tom Ford called for the creation of a comprehensive and innovative

communication policy that would include selection standards and training requirements for public relations practitioners. They also argued that the directors of Information Services should sit on department management committees and report to the highest level of each department executive. In other words, they recommended that public relations should become a management function.

Acting on the Task Force report, in 1970, Treasury Board charged Jack Donoghue (then Director of Information Services at the Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources) with developing a career path for IS officers, and subsequently, Donoghue gained Cabinet approval for a “Career Plan and Manpower Guidelines” (sometimes called the “Y” theory of IS careers) that upgraded and clarified the public relations function within government.

Also in 1970, the government made a second failed try at centralizing the communication function in the body of Information Canada, an agency that came under severe criticism from members of Parliament, government departments, and journalists. Information Canada ceased operations in 1976. Eric Miller wrote a report that explained its failure in terms of orphaned operational responsibilities, a weak and unclear mandate, a sensitive political climate in which everyone assumed a “big brother” mentality about Information Canada, lack of a clear constituency or clientele, lack of support from ministers with clout, isolation from bureaucratic realities, harsh judgments by the media, and a dependency that came with a cost recovery budget.

Nonetheless, in 1977, shortly after the separatists took power in Quebec, the government made a third effort at establishing a central agency to coordinate public relations activities. The Canadian Unity Information Office (CUIO) had a clear mission: to contribute to the patriation of the Constitution and to foster national unity. To accomplish these tasks, the CUIO established sophisticated public opinion research and media monitoring systems to track Constitutional and unity issues. Like its forerunners, the CUIO came under attack almost immediately for being a propaganda tool, partisan in mission and operations. And so the CUIO fell, within months of the conservatives coming to power in 1984.

The next significant development occurred when the Tories commissioned a management review of communications in 1987. As part of the review process, government undertook an occupational analysis of communication functions. They found that public relations specialists were acting as media liaisons, writers, editors, exhibition designers, speech writers, and in other creative positions. Subsequently Cabinet approved a series of decisions that formed the basis for the 1988 *Government Communications Policy*, authored by Assistant Secretary of Communications to Cabinet Mary Gusella with the assistance of Paul Tellier (Clerk to the Privy Council) and Jack Manion (Assistant Clerk to the Privy Council).

This document was a key development, transforming the work of the government communicator into a strategic management function. The new policy required communication officers to research and analyze the public opinion environment, engage in planning, perform an advisory function, and manage communications. Public relations specialists across the government registered in a massive retraining effort to prepare for their new strategic roles and responsibilities.

The goals of the new communication policy were to set out basic principles of communication within the context of representative government, encourage transparency and the free flow of information between government and citizens, highlight the importance of communication in achieving government objectives, establish a framework for government-wide management of communication, and provide guidelines for implementing a range of communication activities such as advertising, publishing, public opinion research, and media relations.

The most recent incarnation of a central communication agency occurred in 1996 with the establishment of the Canadian Information Office (CIO), later renamed Communications Canada. The formation of this agency followed on the heels of the Quebec referendum—a referendum that came within two percentage points of dividing Canada into French and English entities. The federal response was decisive. With ministerial approval, Treasury Board established a Corporate Identity and Government Communications Division in late 1998. The division

had a twofold mandate: to brand the Government of Canada and to renew the 1988 *Government Communications Policy*. Jean-Pierre Villeneuve was appointed to head that renewal process.

Also in 1998, Assistant Secretary of Communications to Cabinet Ruth Cardinal steered a government-wide committee that created a vision statement for the communications community. That vision statement outlined the need for communicators to develop strategic and operational communication plans, in partnership with stakeholders; implement communication plans, projects, and activities by using modern communication tools and techniques; evaluate and adjust communication plans and activities, as needed; and ensure a capacity to respond quickly and effectively to crisis situations. The committee also contributed to a competency profile for communicators, part of the Universal Classification System initiative undertaken by the Public Service Commission. The competency profile included categories related to knowledge, cognitive thinking abilities, interpersonal and partnering skills, and specialized and technical skills.

More than a decade after initiating its review of the 1988 *Government Communications Policy*, Treasury Board issued a revised policy in April 2002. That policy document resulted in a greatly expanded definition of the government communications function. According to the policy, the job duties of communicators range from informing and serving Canadians to environmental analysis, public opinion research, consultation and citizen engagement, risk communication, crisis and emergency communication, management and coordination, planning and evaluation, internal communication, Internet and electronic communication, media relations, involvement with public events and announcements, advertising, establishment of partnering and collaborative arrangements, marketing, publishing, and the production of films, video, and multimedia products.

ORGANIZATIONS

The two principal professional associations operating in Canada are the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS) and the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC).

CPRS is a federation of 17 locally based societies from Vancouver Island to Newfoundland. Its 2003 membership stands at 1,780. Like the Public Relations Society of America, with which it is loosely affiliated, CPRS fosters the interests and professional stature of the field and offers its members professional development opportunities through chapter programming, an annual national convention, an online resource library, and so on. It has an accreditation program leading to the designation APR; nearly 500 of its members are accredited. CPRS was established in 1948, linking separate bodies in Montreal and Toronto.

IABC has a strong presence in Canada, with 2,180 members in mid-2003. Its largest chapter worldwide is in Toronto. There are 14 other Canadian chapters within its two Canadian districts—including a chapter in the Caribbean whose members determined they had more in common with Canadian practitioners than with their more proximate U.S. colleagues. IABC members have access to professional development opportunities similar to those of its sister organization, as well as an accreditation scheme leading to the designation ABC (Accredited Business Communicator). Several of the association's world leaders have been Canadian. Both CPRS and IABC are members of the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management, founded in 2000. The president-elect of the Global Alliance is Canadian Jean Valin.

Canada also has a number of organizations linking practitioners in specific industry sectors. These include the Health Care Public Relations Association of Canada, with seven chapters; the Canadian Association of Communicators in Education, which embraces communicators from school boards, teachers unions, and provincial ministries of education; and the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education, whose members are drawn from the postsecondary education sector.

STATUS

Just as in the United States, public relations in Canada is an unlicensed profession. In the 1980s, surveys indicated that up to 60 percent of practitioners supported mandatory licensing, a call

echoed by several CPRS leaders such as 1987–1988 president Allan Sinclair. Nothing came of these pronouncements, however, and public relations remains open to entry by anyone, though increasing numbers have taken some form of public relations education at the postsecondary level.

The 2001 Statistics Canada census found that 4,360 respondents listed public relations and customer service as their major field of study at the university level. The figure was based on a 20 percent data sample of those at least 20 years old with a university degree or degrees.

Educational programs in public relations appear most often in community colleges. The exceptions are programs at Mount Saint Vincent, the University of Ottawa (in cooperation with Algonquin College), l'Université Laval, and the University of Quebec at Montreal, which offer the opportunity to specialize in public relations within their communication programs. The University of Guelph, McGill University, the University of Regina, l'Université de Montreal, the British Columbia Institute of Technology, Ryerson University, and the University of Lethbridge (in cooperation with Grant McEwan College) grant diplomas or certificates in public relations. (These programs do not always fall under the aegis of communication.) Courses relevant to the study of public relations also appear within a number of communication and continuing education programs in Canadian universities such as the University of Calgary.

Opportunities for graduate work in public relations are limited. Royal Roads University offers an MBA in Public Relations and Communication Management. A joint program between l'Université Laval (Quebec) and l'Institut d'Études Politiques de Bordeaux (France) grants a diploma of graduate studies in Public Affairs and Lobbying.

There is some evidence that Canadian public relations practitioners enjoy about the same status as their U.S. counterparts. A 2002 survey by IABC, for example, shows similar rankings on such measures as job satisfaction, job security, and level of managerial responsibility. Indeed, to the extent that links to senior management are a marker of status, Canadian respondents reported somewhat greater access than Americans, and they were more apt to regard the

reporting relationship as effective. The average salary of Canadian respondents in the IABC survey was about one-third lower than that of their U.S. peers, when adjusted to U.S. currency; however, they were no more likely to complain that their salary was too low for the number of hours they are compelled to work. As elsewhere, women in the field have increased in number. For example, CPRS membership in 1958–1959 was 13 percent female; at the turn of the millennium, the figure was 60 percent.

—*Peter Johansen and Sherry
Devereaux Ferguson*

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CAPTION/CUTLINE

A caption, or cutline, refers to those identifying words that appear beneath a photograph when it is used to accompany an article or to stand alone in a news publication. If a photograph accompanies an article, the caption or cutline should summarize the article, as the reader may rely only on the caption or cutline for information.

The intention is that captions or cutlines should be interesting enough to entice the reader to read the entire article. “Research repeatedly demonstrates that photographs with captions are most effective at increasing readership and understanding than news stories standing alone. Studies also show that news

stories are more effective than photographs without a caption” (Morton, pp. 17–18).

Photographs can be considered among the most effective publicity tools. Single photographs with captions or cutlines are sometimes called “wild art” by editors. These are photographs that are taken with the intent to draw reader interest.

Captions or cutlines should identify all individuals who appear in a photograph from left to right. Be sure to include their titles and their involvement as they relate to the photograph's purpose. Photograph consent forms should be obtained, especially for anyone under the age of 18.

Most often, public relations practitioners are responsible for writing captions or cutlines for their organizational newsletters or for photographs being submitted to the media. When submitting a photograph with a press release, or as a stand-alone item, submit the caption or cutline in press release format, including contact information. Write in the active tense and try to limit it to no more than three sentences.

Public relations practitioners may be responsible for taking photographs or directing a photographer at special events. Plan out the shots ahead of time by making a list of who needs to appear together in photographs. For example, if board members or staff members will be present in honor of a special guest, work to get these people together for a quick photograph during the event.

When directing or taking photographs, public relations practitioners should try not to have more than four individuals appear in each picture. Photographs that capture people in their natural state as they are talking or looking at objects are preferred over those that are posed. Avoid, if at all possible, publishing (or taking) photographs of individuals who have alcoholic drinks in their hands or are smoking cigarettes to avoid any liability issues that could ensue.

—*Kelly M. Papinchak*

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CASE STUDY

The case study is a descriptive, qualitative research method that analyzes in great detail a person, an organization, or an event. Case studies are found in most applied areas, such as business, law, and marketing, and offer insight into practices and tactics. The case study's major advantage is the detail and analysis it provides of a specific person, organization, or event. Its major disadvantage is that it cannot be generalized to situations other than the one that was studied. A major problem in using case studies is the "it worked here, it will work for me" mode—that is, trying to take specific tactics or messages from one case and apply them to another. Even in situations where cases are within an industry, trying to compare case 1 to case 2 is like trying to compare apples to oranges.

CASE STUDY TYPES

There are three major types of case studies common to public relations: linear, process-oriented, and grounded. The *linear case study* focuses primarily on the entity as the object of research from a historical perspective. Its function is, as Jerry Hendrix notes, a linear ROPE (Research, Objective, Program, Evaluation) model. The *process case study* examines the object of research as a unique event within a larger process. As suggested by Allen Center and Patrick Jackson (1995), this case study type includes feedback loops whereby campaign strategy and tactics can be revised or changed due to evaluation carried out against planned benchmarks. Both types are linked to some type of communication theory. The *grounded case study*, on the other hand, is crafted around a business objective and relies less, if at all, on communication. Its function is to demonstrate the business principles in play and typically is based on some business model, such as Management by Objectives (MBO).

CONDUCTING A CASE STUDY

The actual application of any of the three case study types follows a historical review of a public relations campaign, specific event, institution, or person. As such, a case study typically follows a *timeline format* that focuses on the events leading up to, and then follows through to, a campaign or event, or it chronicles the individual or institutional life. If the case study takes a problem-solution approach, then the case is formatted based on causes and effects, typically following a deductive logic. Regardless of format, the case study usually includes a statement of the problem, a research phase, the goals and objectives of the campaign, event, institution, or person, the communication strategy employed (if employed), and evaluation.

All public relations case studies focus on some element or problem. Defining and stating the problem or element is the first step in conducting the case study. This is typically phrased as a problem, opportunity, or situation and sets the stage for the research phase. Case studies have been conducted on economic, political, environmental, and personal problems. The handling of the Clinton-Lewinsky affair, for instance, might provide insight into how to handle a political problem on a personal level. A case study of Dell Computer Corporation might examine how the CEO influences public relations strategies and impacts the bottom line.

The research phase is an exhaustive review of all documents—published and unpublished—relevant to the case. The research phase may also include visits to sites, interviews with participants, and interviews with representatives from other publics affected by the case. Although there may be interviews, most of the case study's efforts are found in historical research. Historical research tries to examine as many primary sources—original documentation—as possible in order to paint as complete a picture as possible of the case. This requires visiting libraries and other places where documents may be found. In many instances the case study researcher will have to travel to specialized libraries, such as the mass communication collection that houses John W. Hill's personal papers at the University of Wisconsin or the archives of the

company or institution under study. The key is to obtain as much of the original material as possible. This is followed up with secondary sources: newspaper articles, reports of various industries or the government, and so forth. For instance, in a crisis management case the researcher might examine stock prices before, during, and after the crisis.

Based on this research the case's goals and objectives are formally stated and then the communication strategy used to meet the goals and objectives is examined. At this phase of the case study, a content analysis of messages may be employed and key figures may be (re)interviewed. Here the researcher attempts to state specifically the campaign or individual goals and objectives and the benchmarks against which it will be evaluated. In addition, the actual communication strategy and the various written, visual, and verbal tactics employed are addressed. Many grounded, business-oriented cases do not offer great detail here, mainly because they are more concerned with a cause-effect model. In a linear model the case would progress to the next phase, but in a process model the evaluation of benchmarks would be presented and any revisions of strategy and changes of tactics explained.

Finally, the case study evaluates whether the objectives were met and the goals achieved. This is done by reexamining the problem, opportunity, or situation, the goals and objectives, the communication strategy, and the tactics and comparing them against either the benchmarks or some other criteria that provide indications of success or failure. Given the advantage of hindsight, suggestions for improvement may be offered for objectives and goals not met as well as a critical appraisal of output tactics offered.

IMPORTANCE OF THE CASE STUDY

Case studies provide public relations practitioners with examples of good and bad public relations tactics. In some instances a case study provides insight into how a public relations firm operated, such as Karen Miller's case study of Hill & Knowlton. Others might provide insight into how public relations was not employed and the impact of that failure, such as James O'Rourke's Ford Motor Company versus Firestone. Each provides the

practitioner with examples of successful and unsuccessful strategy and tactics.

—Don W. Stacks

See also Benchmarking; Content analysis; Goals; Objectives; Qualitative research

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CAUSE-RELATED MARKETING

Cause-related marketing links a product or a company to a charitable cause. The funds that are donated to the charitable cause usually come from a portion of the sales of the product. For example, when a person buys cosmetics from Avon, a portion of the sales profit is donated by Avon to support the breast cancer research cause. In this way, cause-related marketing is an indirect form of corporate sponsorship. It is often used as part of an integrated marketing campaign since it relies on advertising as well as public relations.

The concept of cause-related marketing was first pioneered in the early 1980s. One of the first companies to use it was American Express when the company linked its marketing campaign to the refurbishing of the Statue of Liberty. A portion of profits from credit card use was donated to the Statue of Liberty Fund. Use of the credit cards increased because customers felt they were making a contribution to the cause.

The purposes of cause-related marketing are twofold, and the two purposes must be balanced for

the marketing effort to be effective. The first purpose, of course, is to increase sales. The second purpose should be a socially responsible effort on the part of the company to support a cause and to be a good corporate citizen. When the second purpose is sincere, the first—sales—is better served.

If cause-related marketing is done strategically, it can be an effective marketing tool that can increase media exposure, help a product cut through media clutter, increase sales by adding an additional benefit to the purchase of a product, and increase the chance of reaching specific audiences. A survey of 2,000 adults in the United States by Cone-Roper found that 78 percent said they would be more likely to buy a product that supported a cause in which they believed. A little more than half (54 percent) said they would pay more for a product that supported a cause they cared about, and 66 percent said they would switch brands to support a cause.

To use cause-related marketing strategically, a company must understand what charitable causes will appeal to the customers the company is trying to attract and, at the same time, find a cause that is a good fit for the company and the product. There must be a logical connection between the cause and the target market for the product, and the cause must be relevant to the consumers. But as important, there also should be a logical and strategic connection between the vision and values of the company and the cause. And finally, the relationship needs to show long-term commitment to the cause.

An example of a company that has used cause-related marketing effectively is Avon. Avon's "cause," breast cancer research and related support efforts, is a good fit for the company, the product, and the consumers. Part of Avon's mission statement reads "Our dedication to supporting women touches not only beauty, but health, fitness, self-empowerment, and financial independence" (www.avon.com). The Avon Breast Cancer Crusade matches the vision and values of the company. It also has an identifiable link to the product—cosmetics—that makes women feel good about themselves. Additionally, the company has shown long-term and genuine commitment to the cause. The Avon Foundation was established in 1955, and in the last 10 years has raised more than

\$250 million for breast cancer research, education, early detection programs, and clinical care and support services for women. The Breast Cancer Crusade is clearly identified and associated with Avon and Avon cosmetics.

One definition of public relations is "doing good and getting credit for it." For cause-related marketing to have maximum benefits for a company, information about the cause must be integrated into as many elements of the communication efforts of the company as is possible and appropriate. It is not enough to have a cause; the cause must be communicated to the customers. For instance, Avon integrates the pink ribbon—the breast cancer awareness symbol—into most of its advertisements and public relations campaigns. In some cases, whole-page advertisements are used for image and advocacy advertising, promoting the Avon Foundation Breast Cancer Crusade, rather than for advertising its products and cosmetics. In product ads, information about the crusade is included, and information about the Breast Cancer Crusade is also prominent on the company's web site and is included in product packaging.

When there is a good fit among the cause, the customers, and the company, the company's image is enhanced and the customer feels good about the product purchase. An emotional element is added to the relationship between the company and customer, which can help position the company in the customer's mind and differentiate it in a positive way from the competition. It can help make the company seem less "commercial" and more socially responsible.

A word of caution should be noted. If the cause is not consistent with the company or product's image and does not seem logical for a particular company to promote, or if the cause is not relevant to the target consumers or is not well communicated, then cause-related marketing is useless as a way to increase sales. Furthermore, if the commitment between the company and the cause does not appear to be long term and genuine, cause-related marketing can backfire. Fifty-eight percent of the people surveyed by Cone-Roper think that cause-related marketing is done only to improve the image of the company. The perception that a company is

using cause-related marketing to be self-serving rather than altruistic can result in decreased sales.

—Candace White

See also Philanthropy

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CHAOS AND COMPLEXITY THEORY

Science defines *chaos theory* along technical lines as the study of unstable, or a periodic, behavior in complex, nonlinear, and dynamic systems accounted for by relatively few rules. In other disciplines, chaos can be defined more simply as the structures and regularities underpinning irregular systems or behaviors. Such systems unfold over time in a manner different from predictably linear, cause-and-effect change. These systems tend not to repeat themselves exactly. An example is the phenomenon of being deafened by the screech of positive feedback from amplified music. Tiny adjustments may result in clearer amplification, or in making the screech louder, so that future actions cannot be plotted from past behavior. In nonlinear systems minuscule variations at the input stage, in what chaos terms “sensitivity to initial conditions,” may lead to disproportionately different outcomes later.

Public relations features many examples of perceptions of an organization altering, and crises arising, with dramatic suddenness through seemingly insignificant events. The Pentium chip’s infinitesimal mathematical errors stirred up enough of an initial Internet storm among specialists, and then through to the mainstream media, that Intel lost substantial share value. As a postcrisis rule organizational systems do revert to order, whether a return to the status quo, as Intel did by gradually restoring

investor confidence and a high share value, or to a revised status quo, as Enron did by crashing from its US\$60 billion book value in the wake of 24 days of *Wall Street Journal* reporting. Ian I. Mitroff has generalized from his study of crisis management that “signals go off all the time in organizations, but because there is no one there to recognize them or record them, or attend to them, then for all practical reasons the signals are ‘not heard’” (2001, p. 109). His associated four ubiquitous signals of crisis—internal and external people, and internal and external technical—suggest chaos-inspired future research into their finer gradations. By highlighting the potential power of small regularities, akin to those four ubiquitous signals at the outset, chaos theory holds out the promise of identifying simplified sets of interactions, or consistent patterns of neglect, before issues escalate into crises.

While running computer weather predictions, meteorologist Edward Lorenz discovered that trivial rounding errors, at the outset of an experiment, lead to huge variations in long-range forecasts. In 1973, Lorenz posed his discovery in the memorable question “Does the Flap of a Butterfly’s Wings in Brazil Set off a Tornado in Texas?” (1993, p. 181). Despite the intractable problems his question raised, it catalyzed activity across scientific and nonscientific disciplines alike. It loosened the meaning of chaos from its common language use, as “completely unstructured confusion,” to allow for the more technically influenced sense of “structured, and therefore only apparently random, movements between order and disorder” (1993, p. 181). The so-called butterfly effect influenced the study of dramatic change arising out of tiny variations, from biology and physics to business and sociology, and it demonstrated both visually, since one of Lorenz’s graphs took the shape of a butterfly, and practically, that computers could generate virtual research capable of informing empiric studies.

In addition to demonstrating the power of computer-generated insights, and the butterfly effect, Lorenz’s research typifies chaos in several areas. One is the concentration on everyday topics, such as weather. Another is the identification of consistent patterns underlying erratic real-life systems. These are accompanied by simultaneous admissions

that pattern identification, while increasing understanding of the system's processes and likely parameters, can never predict with complete accuracy. Nevertheless, in moving out of laboratories, chaos research moves away from relatively regular, and hence predictable, environments. In studying nonpredictable, real-world behavior, it departs from the deterministic impulse in the western scientific tradition that values reproducibility. Reproducibility comes at the cost of simplification, or isolation, in order to run experiments confirming predictable outcomes. Chaos highlights conventional science's lack of engagement with complicated systems that exhibit awkward nonlinear features and disturbingly unpredictable real-life turbulence.

Priscilla Murphy's seminal 1996 article on "Chaos Theory as a Model for Managing Issues and Crises" speculated on what implications chaos had for those unpredictable areas of public relations. One implication is that chaos, by analogy, can reveal persistent structures that underpin intractable problems. Accordingly, while likely parameters for activist publics can be established, those groups can never be completely controlled. These acknowledgments of the impossibility of total control mean that practitioner claims in terms of assured outcomes should remain modest. Nevertheless, Murphy concludes that "in many situations chaos theory balances out overly rational management approaches and provides useful reminders that context-sensitivity, patience, and careful timing may effect change where wholesale proactivity cannot" (1996, p. 111).

In science, chaos was succeeded by complexity, defined as "the *collective* behavior of many basic but interacting units . . . that are endowed with the potential to evolve in time" (Coveney & Highfield, 1995, p. 7). Complexity shares conceptual territory with chaos: Both foreground the loss of control by conscious entities; both acknowledge persistent unpredictability; and both engage with predominantly nonlinear behavior. Complexity extends chaos by concentrating on self-organization. In complexity theory all things tend to self-organize into systems of coherent collective phenomena and the result is "emergent properties" that provide "order for free." A classic example is when bone, neural pathways, and synapses coalesce to human

consciousness and life itself becomes an emergent property arising when certain orders of physical and chemical systems interact.

Complexity stimulated new modeling for irreducible human interaction problems in public relations (see Murphy, 2000). The models allowed for a wider range of independent component actions from differing social spheres so that "adbusters" and cultural "jammers" can be seen to impact on reputation as well as corporate copywriters. Identity emerges as the collective result of many small behaviors rather than the outcome of consciously generated organizational intentions. Chemical giant Monsanto developed agricultural biotechnology to make profits and reduce global starvation with more productive agricultural practices. They mobilized sizable communications programs to promote that view but neglected small behaviors, such as the European distrust of food regulatory bodies in the wake of mad cow disease, and the impact of activist nongovernmental organizations in shaping negative public perceptions of genetically modified (GM) food. The resulting European consumer rejection of GM food precipitated Monsanto's corporate decline. In complexity terms of "interacting agents responding to environmental feedback," Monsanto's limited recognition of the range of active agents factored into that decline.

As the vocabulary of adaptation indicates, complexity draws metaphors and models from evolution. It reconsiders relations between human and nonhuman agency with nonhuman agency assigned an active part. As a result, just as an ecosystem is greater than the sum of its flora and fauna, an organization is a complex adapting system evolving to a whole greater than the sum of its computers, personnel, and premises. In these emerging institutional systems, which are shaping and are shaped by interactions between buildings, language, and people, evolutionary metaphors impact on perceptions. Their changing imagery calls into question the power "to manage," in the sense of "to control," and strengthens ideas of "managing," in the sense of "coping with," ongoing organizational and environmental uncertainties. Economists may set clear profit margins, but returns on investment remain vulnerable to co-creation, with variables as fragile as consumer whims and currency speculators.

The business equivalent of evolution's survival-of-the-fittest metaphor is sustainable organizational success. Logically it too would emerge through coevolution with natural, social, and technological environments. Both dominant coalitions and public relations practitioners constitute important parts of organizational systems, but they are just parts. Both are highly sensitive to public opinion and its interplay with government regulation. Robert L. Heath's 1994 work on enactment in managing corporate communication established the centrality of these interactions. However, in their greater decentering of traditional command and control management, complexity perspectives point both groups toward further relinquishment of the will to control in favor of facilitating configurations for collaborative growth.

Future growth through socially responsible behavior fosters collaborations with publics and decreases the risk of government intervention. One British public relations exercise involved the Sky television channel partnering its employees and its positive youth image with an inner-city youth charity's altruism and expertise. Together the organizations motivated staff, deployed technology, and inspired young people to participate in grassroots career workshops. Along the lines of ecological sustainability models, the structured interaction of simple components led to common emergent properties greater than the sum of their individual parts. The results improved job selection skills among teenagers significantly, and expanded the charity's effectiveness, while simultaneously advancing Sky's ethical profile and brand equity. The Sky configuration demonstrates the art of complexity-aligned public relations in facilitating desirable, in the sense of socially responsible and sustainable, self-organization between discourses, materials, and people.

—David McKie

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CHASE ISSUE MANAGEMENT CYCLES

The Chase Model of Issue Management is the leading model that attempts to explain how organizations can and should respond to significant public issues. Developed by W. H. Chase along with colleague Barrie Jones, the model is composed of the following five key steps: issue identification, issue analysis, issue change strategy options, issue action programs, and evaluation of results. The assumption of the model is that instead of acting as passive reactants to the interests of advocacy groups, corporations can use their discourse as an organizational resource. Chase asserts that the tracking of issues and the organizational response to those issues constitutes a “new science,” that is, one that uses a systems approach that elevates the public relations function of the organization from an auxiliary enterprise to the strategic level. Examples of major issue management campaigns include those by the then-Mobil Corporation in the 1980s, which offered “observations” about technology, conservation, and government regulation, as well as a campaign by the Insurance Information Institute in the 1990s, which offered a public policy response to the so-called lawsuit crisis.

ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

The first stage of the Chase issue management model is that of issue identification. Issue identification “starts with consideration of trends which precede issues” (1984, p. 11). An issue is defined as an “unsettled matter which is ready for decision,” whereas trends “are detectable changes which precede issues” (1984, p. 11). This is the stage in

which a futurist research approach is taken toward issues that may affect an organization. Chase recommends that issues be classified according to their type (e.g., social, economic, political, or technological), impact and response source (e.g., business system, industry, corporation, subsidiary, or department), geography (e.g., international, national, regional, state, or local), span of control (e.g., uncontrollable, semicontrollable, or controllable), and salience (e.g., immediacy, or prominence). The idea is that since it is impossible to manage every issue, a company must develop a process by which it can classify issues.

ISSUE ANALYSIS

The second stage, issue analysis, involves the application of theory and research to analyze the identified trends and issues. The idea of this stage of the model is that social, economic, and political trends affect how issues develop. The use of quantitative (e.g., public opinion surveys, and content analyses) and qualitative analysis (e.g., statements by opinion leaders) helps to aid the process. The point of such analysis, then, is to use the data in order to make judgments about issues and to set priorities to aid in determining which issues warrant an organizational response.

ISSUE CHANGE STRATEGY OPTIONS

Issue change strategy options, the third stage of the Chase model, describe an organization's "basic decisions . . . on the corporation's response to challenges and opportunities posed by one issue within the public policy process" (1984, p. 15). Jones and Chase offered the following three potential issue stances by organizations: reactive, adaptive, and dynamic. The reactive approach is best characterized as "stonewalling" an issue. An adaptive approach indicates an openness to change that seeks to offer accommodations on emerging issues; that is, an organization seeks to participate in final public policy decision making. The third approach, and the one advocated by Jones and Chase, is the dynamic approach: "This strategy anticipates and attempts to shape the direction of public policy

decisions by determining the theater of war, the weapons to be used, and the timing of the battle itself. In other words, the company employing the dynamic strategy directs change by developing *real* solutions to *real* problems with *real* results" (1984, p. 17). The authors suggested that "the dynamic option can be used in combination with the Reactive and Adaptive to create a fourth change strategy option that is paradigmatically realistic over time" (1984, p. 17).

ISSUE ACTION PROGRAMMING

In the fourth stage, Jones and Chase advised that management must formulate a policy to support the change strategy and must operate an issue action program from within the boundaries set by the policy. Here, organizations begin with a strategic goal and specific program objectives. The action program implies strategies about research, analysis, and priority setting. At this point the organization allocates and coordinates financial and human resources toward the project. It then determines which information resources will be utilized and what messages will be communicated through which message delivery system to which target audience. Jones and Chase recommended using tracking surveys to determine if a campaign is working by creating the "desired perceptions"; if not, "the model provides for the *redesign* of communication programming" (1979, p. 21).

EVALUATION OF RESULTS

In the final stage, Jones and Chase advocated that such programs must be evaluated systematically. Here the organization must "evaluate the *real* versus *intended* program results and subject the program managers to performance review" (Chase, 1984, p. 74). Ongoing monitoring of social, political, and economic changes is also recommended.

CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult for organizations to manage an entire public policy issue of its own. Indeed, one of the ironies of issue management is that the more

successful issue managers are, the more likely they are to lose control of an issue. While it is difficult to measure the success of issue management, other justifications for engaging in issue management are the positive effects that issue management has on a company's image as well as the support that issue campaigns are able to build with strategic constituencies who might be needed at a future date.

—Keith Michael Hearit

See also Chase, W. Howard; Issue Management Council, Issues management

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CHASE, W. HOWARD

W. Howard Chase is best known for coining the term *issue management*. A man of unique intellectual and experiential depth, Chase argued for the following statement as the official definition of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in 1947: “Public relations is an operating philosophy that integrates the corporation into the daily lives of the people it serves” (Crane, 2003, p. 49). With this line of reasoning, Chase was one of a few leaders who recognized that constant change and innovation were necessary not only for how people practiced public relations, but also for how the profession was defined. He was primed in these ways to demand more responsiveness and leadership from practitioners, as businesses were sharply criticized during the turbulent 1960s. He helped revolutionize the practice in many ways during the 1970s and 1980s.

A Phi Beta Kappa cum laude graduate of the University of Iowa, Chase received the Sanxay Award granted to “the outstanding senior who gives

promise of achieving the highest career.” Postgraduate studies included the London School of Economics and Harvard University. Dongguk University, the largest Buddhist university in the world, in Seoul, Korea, awarded Chase an honorary doctoral degree in economics. He taught at Harvard-Radcliffe, Drake University, New York Polytechnic Institute, The George Washington University, and the Graduate School of Business Administration at the University of Connecticut, where Chase introduced the first course ever offered on issue management.

As the first chair of the Executive Committee of PRSA, Chase was one of many leaders of the profession who helped to found this organization of working professionals. Chase twice received the PRSA's Gold Anvil Award for “distinguished professional proficiency.”

Chase's corporate service as officer or director includes American Can Company, General Mills, and General Foods. In 1951, Chase assumed the post of political public relations director for U.S. Army Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, in charge of all Republican National Convention arrangements for Eisenhower's presidential nomination in 1952. Subsequently, he served as assistant secretary of commerce for the initial Korean War mobilization. He also served as deputy administrator for the Office of Defense Mobilization under Charles Wilson, Lucius Clay, and Sidney Weinberg. He served as a trustee at Wellesley College, Sarah Lawrence College, and Mannes College of Music in New York City.

In 1962, Chase created the Council for Management of Change, with the monthly newsletter, *The Innovation and Management of Change* (IMC), as an incubator of his ideas. The newsletter's thesis was “The principle of responsibility of senior executives today is the successful management of change itself.”

In 1976, he coined the term *issue management* as part of a robust discussion centering on the question: How should management respond to the deep and wide criticism being heaped on corporate America during the 1970s? With the publication of his 1984 book, *Issue Management, Origins of the Future*, Chase presented his signature comprehensive

approach to strategic issue management. He defined the new field's objectives, in the debut edition (April 15, 1976) of the newsletter *Corporate Public Issues and Their Management* (CPI), as follows: "to introduce and validate a breakthrough in corporate management design and practice in order to manage corporate public policy issues at least as well or better than the traditional management of profit-center operations" (Chase, 1976, n.p.). That same year, the Institute for Public Issues Management, of which Chase is founder and director, in cooperation with the Graduate School of Business at the University of Connecticut, sponsored the first of a series of seminars on issue analysis and techniques for corporate reorganization of public policy functions.

The first Issue Management Process Model, developed by Howard Chase, Barry Jones, and Teresa Yancey Crane, was published in 1977 in a special edition of CPI. (See also Jones & Chase, 1979.) The Public Affairs Council, under President Raymond L. Hoewing's leadership, held its first issues management conference for corporate public officers in 1977, and Chase was a presenter at what has since become an annual event. The Chase Award for Excellence in Issue Management, named in his honor, is annually bestowed by the Issue Management Council.

Speaking as co-founder and chairperson of the Issues Management Association in 1982, Chase offered the following widely quoted definition: "Issue management is the capacity to understand, mobilize, coordinate, and direct all strategic and policy planning functions, and all public affairs/public relations skills, toward achievement of one objective: meaningful participation in creation of public policy that affects personal and institutional destiny" (1982, p. 1). Chase stressed the proactive aspect of issues management that "rejects the hypothesis that any institution must be the pawn of the public policy determined solely by others" (1982, p. 2). In 1984, Chase defined issue management as issue identification, analysis, change strategy options, action programming, and evaluation of

results. "An issue change strategy option is a choice among carefully selected methods and plans for achieving long-term corporate goals in the face of public policy issues, a choice based on the expected effect of each method of employment, cost, sales, and profits" (p. 56). Action programming entails the use of resources to gain the strategy option selected.

Chase passed away on August 19, 2003, in Stamford, CT. In his address as PRSA president in 1956, he advised practitioners to realize that their profession entailed more than competent or even excellent communication skills. Their profession required that they be counselors to help their employers and clients to more completely win the public's approval by deserving that approval.

—Teresa Yancey Crane

See also Chase issues management cycles; Issue Management Council; Issues management; Public Affairs Council; Public Relations Society of America

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CHAT

Chat has become one of the most popular online features. Chat is real-time text-based communication between two or more users. Chats are conducted using online services such as America Online, bulletin board services, and Web sites. Chatting can also be conducted by using audio or

audio and video, but requires much greater bandwidth and the appropriate software. Most discussions about chat refer to the text-based real-time communication. Chatting is an effective and efficient way to instantly communicate with other online users.

Chat rooms are places on the Internet where chatting occurs. Chat rooms are designed for interactive messaging and most do not require special software to use. Corporations and organizations use chat rooms for a number of reasons. First, chat rooms can be used to provide convenient real-time customer service. Web sites such as Godiva.com allow users to instantly talk to customer service representatives. Although the company's responses follow a standard protocol, responses are tailored to the users' questions or requests. Some companies, such as Westlaw.com, also provide users with a transcript of the real-time dialogue between the customer service representative and the user. However, companies using chat for customer service purposes must provide their representatives with adequate training. Real-time customer service representatives who fail to adequately address customers' questions or inappropriately respond to online users could result in a public relations disaster.

Second, chat rooms can be used to conduct meetings or interviews. For example, companies can host online real-time press conferences with the media. These chat rooms can be open to the public or private. By hosting interviews or press conferences online, communication practitioners have greater control over the content of the discussion because they can write and edit responses before posting them to the chat room. Another advantage of chat rooms is the low connection cost when compared to traditional phone lines—especially when conducting interviews or conferences with international participants.

Chat rooms usually require individuals who want to participate in the discussion to register by choosing a username that will be displayed on other users' computers when they join the discussion. Some chat rooms also require users to create a password before joining a discussion. Although corporate and organizational Web sites may have only one chat room (for example, customer service),

some Web sites host multiple chat rooms based on subject or interest. For example, Yahoo!, the search directory and engine, lists hundreds of different chat rooms for users to participate in.

Starting in the late 1990s, communication practitioners began to monitor chat rooms for misinformation or negative comments about their organizations. One of the ways communication practitioners monitor chat rooms is by lurking. Lurking is entering a chat room, reading the posted messages, but not participating in the discussion. Services such as PR Newswire, or software such as ContentWatch.com, allow communication practitioners to monitor discussions in chat rooms. By monitoring relevant chat rooms, communication practitioners can keep a pulse on what online users say about their organization, products, and services and possibly prevent crises.

In using chat, communication practitioners must be aware of the expected etiquette protocol—called "netiquette" on the Internet. Although netiquette is largely based on the Golden Rule—do unto others as you would have them do unto you—different chat rooms assume different rules. In addition, these netiquette rules often change. Thus, communication practitioners are advised to learn about the appropriate netiquette for each chat room before engaging in real-time messaging with users. Communication practitioners who post unrelated content in chat rooms are considered spammers, which can lead to considerable backlash by online users.

Instant messages (IM) are a form of chat. They are a cross between chat and e-mail. Instant messaging allows users to engage in real-time text-based messaging. Instant messaging is used most often to communicate with a single individual or a very small group. Further, in order to engage in instant messaging, the user must know the other participants' instant messaging addresses, whereas with chat, knowledge of users' online identities is not required. In contrast, chat does not require users to know the usernames of the other participants before communicating with them.

—Cassandra Imfeld

See also Crisis and crisis management; Environmental scanning; Issues management

CIRCULATION

Circulation refers to the number of readers a certain publication reaches. According to the Web site for the National Newspaper Association, small-circulation newspapers reach fewer than 50,000 readers; medium-circulation newspapers reach 50,000 to 200,000 readers; and large-circulation newspapers reach more than 200,000 readers. As of June 2003, the circulation of *The New York Times* was 1.2 million readers on weekdays, while the circulation of the *Portland Press Herald* in Maine was approximately 70,000.

For the public relations practitioner, circulation figures are most important when evaluating in which publications to advertise. Since advertising is a paid form of promotion, as opposed to publicity items such as calendar listings that are generally free, chances are that the public relations practitioner's advertising budget (if even given one) will not be large enough to advertise freely in all major publications.

Although it may make sense to advertise in the publications that reach the most people, if your organization or its audiences are very specialized, then a smaller circulation in a specialized publication will serve your organization much better than reaching people who have no interest in your product or service.

When meeting with representatives from publications, it is important to gather not only circulation figures, but also the demographic information of the audience the publication reaches. If you are trying to reach a young audience with a particular message, placing that message in the *Wall Street Journal* may not be most effective. The public relations practitioner must always keep its many audiences in mind.

When considering circulation figures, it is also important to ask how many of those people are actual subscribers and how many copies are sold directly from the newsstand. Subscribers are most likely to be devoted to the publication—as is shown by the number of people who are renewing subscribers. Always request this information before committing to paid advertisements, especially since most will require at least a six-month commitment.

Public relations practitioners are also responsible for keeping their own circulation statistics to provide to interested parties, especially statistics about the number of people who receive the organizational newsletter, magazine, or annual report. These figures are also important, from an internal standpoint, to provide to management.

Although advertising is a good thing to keep in mind when comparing circulation figures, also keep your audience in mind from an editorial standpoint. The more media pitches a public relations practitioner is successful with, the more articles that will appear in a publication. Even if it is not possible to pay to reach an audience, the successful placement of a feature story, news article, or editorial in a publication that reaches an intended audience may prove more successful than any form of advertisement.

—Kelly M. Papinchak

See also Advertising

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CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEES/PANELS

Citizens advisory committees/panels (CAC/P) are composed of individuals, with membership drawn from a cross section of the community, who provide a link between the public and various organizations who operate in the region by providing counsel and recommendations on matters of public affairs and public policy.

CAC/Ps perform key functions for community residents, private interest groups, government, non-governmental organizations, and private industry. They improve the quality of services by encouraging closer ties between the public and organizations that have an affect on their community, and make for improved decision-making capabilities that involve perspectives from interested parties who participate in the process. CAC/Ps incorporate strategic community relations values such as the cooperation of key stakeholders, information and

perception exchange, and the development of trust, sense of control, credibility, and consensus making.

Through the implementation of public policy at the community level, CAC/Ps provide a level of accountability for government, nongovernmental, and private organizations, opening up decision-making and policy formation processes to concerned citizens while providing resources for citizens to participate in the public policy process.

The use of advisory committees moves the role of external input and influence to an internal advisory role working within the system. This public/private partnership facilitated by the role of the advisory committee is the “buckle that fastens the administrative process to the dominant institutions, elites, and value in society” (Cottin, 1973, p. 1140). The proliferation of and increased use and dependence upon advisory committees is a product of a response to the needs of the citizenry, the needs of government officials, and the demands of special interest groups to work together in reaching compromise and solutions to numerous public policy concerns.

Originally categorized as lay advisory committees, CAC/Ps gained a foothold in American society because, as a representative democracy, they provide a means by which citizens represent their community in addressing particular public affair issues ranging from education to land preservation.

The Western development and use of citizens committees can be traced back to England, where the use of such advisory groups for education and government was seen on a wide scale. In the United States, formal community advisory groups have been in operation since the first presidency. There was a significant increase in the number and types of community advisory groups during World War I, when many governmental commissions had citizens serving in an advisory capacity. Their role expanded during the depression of the 1930s, providing counsel on such topics as national illiteracy and emergency aid. During and following World War II, CAC/Ps expanded into areas of labor-management relations and postwar training programs for agricultural and industrial production.

The development and expansion of CAC/Ps have been driven not just by citizens’ desires to

participate in the public policy process, but also by national legislation aimed at increasing community input on vital issues. This approach is often called legislative citizen participation.

At the federal level, the 1972 Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463) defines an advisory committee as any committee, board, commission, council, panel, task force, or similar group established in the interest of obtaining advice or recommendations for the president or one or more agencies or offices of the federal government. Federal advisory committees constitute one of the most significant vehicles for special interest group representation and influence on the policy-making process of the national government. This form of government by committee has been termed the fifth arm of the federal government.

In the past 20 years there has been a tremendous growth in legislated citizen participation in many areas. At present, most federal agencies have mandated citizen participation for many of their programs. The Mental Health Systems Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-398), for example, relies heavily on the voluntary efforts of citizens who advise and govern local community mental health center programs.

Typically there are two types of CAC/Ps: Short-term committees are organized to address specific issues and concerns for a finite time period, and long-term committees address specific as well as sweeping concerns and problems, providing continuous feedback from the community.

There are some typical rules and responsibilities of CAC/Ps across a broad spectrum of organizations. Advisory committees are appointed when there is a definite function to be performed; they are appointed primarily to advise and are not typically requested to perform specific services. Their composition should represent the entire community related to the function to be performed, with membership representing various segments of community life ranging from lay representatives to acknowledged experts. Staff members typically are not appointed, but if they are they constitute a minority of any such committee and the chairperson is chosen from among the lay members. Typically the public is made aware of major

recommendations, and the board or organization to which the committee reports controls public announcements.

CAC/Ps are active in areas of education, health, manufacturing, transportation, and virtually every other facet of public policy decision making that affects communities. For example, within the chemical industry, a CAC/P consists of a group of individuals who live near or around a chemical facility and who represent their community and have made a commitment to meet with the management of the local plant on a regular basis to discuss issues of mutual interest. Members include environmental groups, civic leaders, business leaders, homemakers, hourly workers, and individuals who represent key elements of a community such as clergy, health care providers, emergency responders, and educators.

—*Michael J. Palenchar*

See also Community relations; Crisis communication; Issues management; Risk communication

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CLIENT

The client is the representative entering into a contractual relationship with a public relations firm for the purpose of securing the firm's expertise. The representative can be an individual such as a political candidate or an entertainer, a department or subsidiary of a larger organization, a corporation, and so on. Firms are hired by that client for any number of reasons ranging from general promotions to

strategic planning and issues management. Larger organizations may contract with several firms for needed specializations such as hiring one firm for international relations work and another firm for crisis management. These relationships may be short term such as for the duration of a crisis, a particular special event, or the publication of specialized collateral material, and in these cases the client sets up some project-based method of payment for the services. The business may also be long term based on providing longer-standing services through continued counseling or augmenting the organization's staff in particular areas, in which case a retainer method of payment for the services may be preferred.

The client initiates the relationship, of course, by recognizing a need for some kind of assistance in the area of public relations. The better the client can explicate its objectives, the more likely it will have an efficient and highly successful search. The search can range from informal to formal. In some cases one representative of the client handles the entire process, and in other cases the team may include several representatives of the organization. Ideally, the team will include the key contact person for the firm and the final decision maker, because these players will be critical in establishing the relationship with the firm selected.

If the search is handled informally, it may be based solely on contacts. The client may have had a productive past relationship with a firm and choose to renew that relationship. If the need for the firm is local, very specific, and specialized and the budget is limited, the search may be a matter of simply determining availability of a local firm.

In the more formal cases, the selection process may be managed either by the client or by a consulting firm that specializes in assisting groups with the details involved in a formal search of public relations firms. Time may be a determinant in whether the client organizes the search or hires out the search process. Using a consulting firm would allow the firm to identify the public relations firms most likely to be of interest, to manage the request for proposals, and to organize the formal agency proposal processes.

Regardless of whether the client or another firm manages the search, it begins with networking and

general research to identify potential firms. The firms viewed as most interesting in terms of perceived capabilities and reputations are sent requests for proposals (RFPs). RFPs are questionnaires designed to narrow the field of potential firms and may include demographic data related to the firm (size, length of time in the field, specializations, and so on) as well as a few screening questions to determine expertise in the client's area or ability to handle the issues at hand. RFPs allow the organization to examine the firms from a distance to determine the firm's expertise, its style, and especially to identify any conflict of interest in which the firm may be representing a competitor. RFPs, furthermore, allow the public relations firms themselves to "self-select" their formal participation in the search; for example, some firms may opt out of the process due to other commitments, the project being too large or, conversely, too small, and so on.

The organization then generally will choose three to five firms to interview. The client may want to consider finalists for the continued search process based on variety—of size, services (full service to boutique), location, ownership (independent to multinational)—as well as various specializations. Including a variety of firms allows the client to better assess a range of issues affecting the final decision. Smaller firms with fewer clients may be able to provide more attention to the issue, whereas larger firms with offices throughout the United States and overseas may be better prepared to manage international product introductions or other broader based public relations programs.

The firms considered as finalists in the search process are contacted and asked to put together a presentation (also known as a pitch), which may consist of general information on the firm or a specialized presentation with suggestions for addressing the prospective client's objectives. The more specific the presentation requests, the more conscientious the client must be. Clients may need to consider payment for formal presentations complete with specific program proposals; many such presentations are copyrighted and selection of one firm to implement another firm's program would likely involve legal redress.

Following the various pitches, the client then must select one firm. The selection typically focuses on which firm is best qualified to handle the account, which firm best understands the organization as well as its business or service, and which firm the decision makers feel most comfortable in working with or the "chemistry" perceived during this selection process. In some cases, the client may have difficulty choosing between two firms and may request a follow-up interview, often conducted as a conference call or through e-mail.

At this point the firm generally sets up a contract based on estimations of costs for the objectives to be accomplished. The client and the firm will agree on the contract as well as the billing procedures. Billing is frequently managed by a projected cost with monthly billable hours toward that projected cost. Projected costs may or may not include out-of-pocket expenses and commissions for any sub-contracted work (e.g., with a printer). Clients can then monitor expenditures and determine whether the firm is staying within reasonable budgeted programs or whether the progress of the program may warrant additional expenditures.

As is evident, much time is invested in initiating and establishing the firm-client relationship. Once secured, the client representatives can focus on their own jobs knowing that the firm is ably managing the public relations program. The firm formalizes the account team with a designated account executive who will be the primary point of contact between the firm and the client. Note that the ideal pitch will involve individuals who will be part of the account team. The client should proceed with caution if only the firm's CEOs manage the pitch because the relationship will be set by those who work on the account daily. On the client side, the key contact points and decision-making process should be established and streamlined as much as possible to reduce delays in approval processes.

Ideally, the firm-client relationship will stretch far into the future without the need to undergo another search. Nevertheless, the economy, management changes, and other business development may lead to a need for a different or an additional firm.

The ultimate goal of the successful firm-client relationship is to achieve what is considered the most efficient contract (per “agency theory” derived from finance and economics research). The burden of demonstrating efficiency is often placed on the agency or firm, yet the client sets the tenor of the relationships. The ideal client who ultimately finances this relationship to secure or augment available public relations expertise will stay involved and interested in the public relations program. The ideal client does not micromanage, but strikes a balance of trust in the firm and of supervision of the firm. Clients should be cautioned that some monitoring may be necessary to ensure the client interests remain paramount for the firm and to verify that all billing is appropriate and per contract. This balance can be achieved with clear expectations, regular communication, and timely payments for services rendered. The ideal firm similarly provides clear plans and programs, meets deadlines, stays within budget, and communicates regularly.

The successful relationship, then, depends on evaluation—of the public relations program as well as of the relationship itself. Clear and honest communications about the program, as well as any impending changes to the client organization are critical to managing expectations and program fulfillment. If the public relations firm does not initiate evaluations at various points in the relationship, then the client may request or implement them. The evaluations may range from informal discussions (although the evaluation should be a specified agenda item if not the sole topic of discussion) to formal checklists that would then be discussed with the agency account executive and CEO as well as key client liaisons.

—Pamela G. Bourland-Davis

See also Account executive; New business development; Public relations agency

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CLIENT/AGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

The client/agency relationship is the state of interaction between an organization (or its representative) and the public relations firm it hires to represent it. Their relationship can be the most important factor in the success of the client’s public relations program and the firm’s ability to serve the client well.

Much of the pressure to maintain the relationship rests with the agency. The ability to build a strong client/agency relationship is one of the most important skills a practitioner can offer. The agency staff must not only demonstrate public relations expertise but also constantly build a strong relationship with the client by providing excellent client service. Serving the client requires that the agency staff keep the client’s best interests in mind and share the client’s passion for their business goals, while at the same time working toward the agency’s own goals.

Some client/agency relationships have been so strong that they make history. For example, the widely praised handling of the Tylenol crisis in 1982 was the result of the bond between Tylenol maker Johnson & Johnson and its firm, Burson-Marsteller. This case is widely recognized as one of the most important in the history of the practice of public relations and exemplifies the ideal client/agency relationship qualities of mutual respect, trust, and understanding of the client’s needs.

Client confidence in the agency, free-flowing communication, willingness to compromise on both sides, and collaboration between client and agency are also key. The client wants the feeling of being top priority regardless of what other accounts the

agency is working on. The most successful account people remember that on and off the job, they represent not only themselves and the agency but the client as well, and they must exhibit professionalism at all times. In addition, thoughtfulness and consideration of both the agency staff and client contact's work and personal situations can help the relationship flourish.

The client also wants the agency to be problem solvers. Industry leader Harold Burson once said that the counselor's main objective is to identify and deal successfully with a problem. Burson also advised taking advantage of opportunities; developing a set of options and a range of their advantages/ disadvantages; honing the ability to get up to speed quickly on a problem and to listen; and knowing the client's business.

The most valuable commodity the agency can offer is its counsel—the ability to advise the client on the proper course of action. The ability to counsel comes with experience. But it also means being able to sift through issues and information and make a recommendation. Even the most junior-level staff member can demonstrate this skill.

The client and agency may not always agree. Sometimes counseling means being able to persuade a client who is not open to what the agency has to say. When the agency and client disagree, the agency must decide whether to try to push to persuade—or challenge—the client. It takes a delicate touch to know when to take that stand, and a strong relationship provides the foundation for respectful give-and-take.

Sometimes the working relationship between the client and agency creates conflict that cannot be resolved, and the result is either a reassignment of those working on the account or a parting of ways. If the client fires the agency, more often than not, it is because the client is not satisfied with the agency's performance. Sometimes the client expected too much; but in many cases, companies who fire their agencies say it is because of sloppy work. Better communication between the agency and client might prevent such an outcome.

Conversely, a firm might resign the account because of problems with the relationship such as client mistreatment of account people. Again, in a

strong relationship such behavior can be addressed and resolved, preventing the severing of ties.

Ideally, the client appreciates and draws upon the agency's level of expertise, looks to the agency to provide direction, and considers the value of the agency's work well worth the cost. A successful agency is able to produce excellent results, maintain a nourishing workplace, and meet its own business goals while nurturing its client relationships to the betterment of both client and agency.

—*Catherine L. Hinrichsen*

See also Burson, Harold; Client; Crisis communications and the Tylenol poisonings; Public relations agency

CLIP (NEWS CLIP) AND CLIPPING SERVICES

A clip, or news clip, is an actual copy of an article about an organization or company that has appeared in the media. Traditionally, news clips were limited to print articles, but today, “clippings” can consist of print, broadcast, and online media sources.

Clipping services, also known as media monitoring services, will monitor the media for references of a client's organization or company and supply the client with a compilation of the clips. These clips are essential to gauging the success of a media relations campaign because they allow the client to keep track of how many times the organization or company was mentioned and where these articles appeared. Information gained from media monitoring services allows communications professionals to gather important insight about how their organization is being portrayed in the media and what topics are deemed newsworthy, as well as what reporters are covering the topics.

There are many companies that will keep track of media “hits” for an organization on a fee-for-subscription basis. Some companies are limited to one medium, whereas others will not only keep track of all media, but will also analyze and interpret the numbers. Some of the best known clipping services include BurrellesLuce (www.burrellesluce.com), Bacon's (www.bacons.com),

Vocus (www.vocus.com), Lexis-Nexis (www.lexisnexis.com), CyberAlert (www.cyberalert.com), EWatch (www.ewatch.com), CyberScan (www.clippingservice.com), and a host of other companies that have developed in the past few years.

Originally, only print media were monitored. When Burrelle's began its service in 1888, only New York City daily newspapers were included in the service. Today, however, Burrelle's and other companies that provide monitoring services scan not only newspapers, but also magazines, radio and TV broadcasts, wire services, and various news programs found on the Internet. Additionally, media from across the United States and international sources are often included in the service.

Monitoring services have taken their products a step further and now will monitor the Internet for rumors about a company as well as search for general news stories. By catching negative chatter about a company in Internet chat rooms and discussion forums, corporations can become aware of the scuttlebutt that is circulating online and can swiftly respond to rumors if necessary.

Subscribing to these services may be cost prohibitive for small companies and organizations. Annual costs for a media monitoring service can easily surpass \$30,000; therefore, it is necessary to determine whether the considerable cost justifies the means, or if it would be possible to subscribe to a more limited service.

—Nancy Engelhardt Furlow

See also Crisis communication; Measuring/measures; Public relations research

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COALITION BUILDING

Coalition building is the process of developing working relationships among individuals, groups, organizations, or nations for the purposes of mobilizing collective action, sharing information, coordinating communication efforts, or using any combination of these functions. Coalitions are a type of an alliance; however, unlike alliances, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), members frequently organize coalitions for short-term purposes. For example, several NATO nations formed the Coalition to Disarm Iraq in 2002. In addition to government coalitions, Fortune 500 and nonprofit organizations commonly use coalitions to advance their interests. Given the frequent diversity and competing interests of coalition members, the construction and maintenance of successful coalitions requires skilled facilitation and communication by coalition organizers.

Coalition building is an important part of public relations because it can enable like-minded members to exert increased influence by working together. The synergy of coalitions can enhance credibility for a particular position by demonstrating widespread agreement. Using combined economic, social, and political resources, coalition lobbying can increase clout with key decision makers and boost mass media coverage. Communication networks among coalition members can facilitate rapid information sharing, which can serve as early warning systems for issues that arise that impact the coalition, its members, or both.

To identify coalition members, Kerry Tucker and Sharon McNerney (1992) suggested the following criteria: reputation with peers and publics, concern for the issue, position on the issue (from moderate to extreme), ability to collaborate in a consensus-seeking group, and availability of outreach methods to peers and publics. Another consideration is how potential members would enhance the coalition's credibility. According to Barry Rubin (1997), coalition organizers can attempt to increase the coalition's credibility by including unlikely members. For example, a coalition for clean energy use comprised only of gas companies or only of environmental organizations would have less credibility than a

coalition that combined these groups. Although this scenario seems unlikely, politics can lead to surprising partnerships. Coalition organizers should think creatively to diversify the membership. By crossing divisive lines such as politics, ideology, age, and geography, coalitions position themselves to present their views as representing broader interests than they would otherwise. Still, Rubin cautioned coalition organizers against pursuing diverse members that could not entirely commit to coalition goals. To avoid this situation, Rubin advised coalition organizers to inform potential coalition members of the coalition's goals and objectives. Potential members can then base the decision to join on whether the coalition's plans are in their stakeholders' interests.

How coalitions are structured is an important aspect of their formation and management. Some coalitions are created as equal partnerships; others are not. In equal partnerships, each member commits to share power from the earliest planning stages to the final efforts. Even relatively minor details, such as who gets to speak first at a dinner event, whose name appears first on an invitation, and who is quoted in press and public materials, can threaten the vitality of relationships among coalition members. Consequently, organizers should have coalition members affirm their commitment to equal control, and the coalition's decisions should be made with this principle in mind.

In unequal partnership designs, one or more members assume a majority of the responsibility for the coalition's efforts. Dominant members often fund all coalition costs, develop all public relations materials, and take full behind-the-scenes responsibility for the planning, execution, and evaluation of coalition actions. Prior to preparing materials, dominant coalition members commonly recruit new members for the coalition. Invitations can occur via face-to-face interactions, phone calls, e-mails, or Web sites. New members receive name recognition on coalition materials while the coalition enhances its legitimacy by demonstrating the support of additional members and, implicitly, their supporters. In addition, members that play minor coalition roles typically receive free media materials from dominant members; in turn, dominant members benefit

from the message being further publicized without added cost.

Among the most powerful uses of coalitions is mobilizing collective action on issues to increase their salience, influence their direction, or both. Coordinating efforts requires skilled facilitation, particularly in relation to coalition meetings. Tucker and McNerney outlined the following responsibilities of coalition facilitators at meetings: develop and carry out a plan to advance coalition members' interests, find common ground among coalition members with different opinions, prevent members' individual agendas and egos from overpowering meetings, give each member opportunities to express opinions, keep coalition members on task, remind members of the goal of striving toward the greatest public benefit, and manage all information the coalition produces. Throughout the meeting, facilitators should serve the coalition's collective interest rather than that of a particular member.

Organizers can coordinate information gathering and sharing among coalition members in different ways. One way is to have each coalition member monitor many information sources to keep updated about a particular area such as politics. Coalition members share information about their assigned areas, which together provides a comprehensive view of the environment. Another way to organize information sharing is to have each coalition member gather information on many areas from particular information sources such as community leaders or trade magazines. Coalition members report the relevant information they have learned in various areas based on the particular sources they monitor. Frederick Hunt (1993) stated that information sharing also occurs without assigned roles, particularly in cases in which the sole purpose of the coalition is to track issues together. Coalition members can share information asynchronously through mechanisms like e-mail or synchronously through ways such as conference calls and face-to-face meetings. Examples of sources that organizations can use for information include advisory boards, industry analysts, academic journals, local and national leaders, public opinion polls, trade media, and Web sites. By working together,

coalition members receive a more comprehensive sense of their environment than they would have received working alone.

When presenting the coalition's position to a wider audience, coalitions should coordinate consistent messages among members. Coalition members can reject, agree upon, and create new terms to encourage a particular position on a situation. For example, the word *so-called* typically precedes words that coalitions reject, and coalitions can encourage the media to use desired terms and place the qualifying word *so-called* in front of rejected terms. In addition to determining words to use and avoid, coalitions can develop message points for media inquiries and train experts to whom coalition members can refer these inquiries. Sometimes coalitions want to present a united front on contentious issues; however, at other times, members might prefer to coordinate communication privately. Practitioners have found creative ways to agree in public policy contexts without compromising coalition members' positions. One way is to have coalition members support a general position, which is expressed in all coalition public relations materials. Each member's specific materials can include the coalition's position accompanied by its specific stance on it.

When conflicts arise, Roger Fisher's and William Ury's (1981) work as facilitators in the Harvard Negotiation Project suggests emphasizing shared interests among coalition members. Facilitators should work with coalition members to establish ground rules before they are needed. These ground rules include how decisions will be made (e.g., consensus versus majority vote), who can speak on behalf of the coalition, and who can commit the coalition to meet with outsiders. Bill Berkowitz and Tom Wolff (2000) advised that the coalition structure should remain flexible, permitting changes when needed.

Rubin (1997) provided two excellent examples of coalition building that illustrate how diverse coalition memberships can be. The first coalition formed when automobile manufacturers wanted to oppose a proposed increase in fuel efficiency standards, which could lead to fewer large cars and vans. The manufacturers created the Coalition for

Vehicle Choice, whose members included disabled veterans' organizations and senior citizens' groups, both of which depend on large vehicles for transportation. The second coalition was the Common Ground Network for Life and Choice, which pro-choice and pro-life organizations formed in 1999. Working toward a mutual objective of increased awareness and support for adoption, this coalition achieved more visibility and progress together than either member could have done alone or with its more common allies.

—Tiffany Derville and
Katherine A. McComas

See also Collaborative decision making

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CO-CREATION OF MEANING THEORY

It was Robert L. Heath who adopted a co-creation of meaning theory for public relations in his approach to management of corporate communication. By doing this, he referred to E. M. Eisenberg as the one who stressed the need to focus on the concepts of meaning and interpretation in organizations, expanded this theory into a theory on the relationship between (people in) organizations and the outside world, and adopted a co-orientational view of meaning as opposed to a referential view:

A referential view of meaning assumes that people think of the same referent as they interpret the definition of a term or phrase. A co-orientational view of

meaning acknowledges the presence of ambiguity and assumes that one person can understand the other by knowing how that person interprets a word or phrase even if the two people hold different interpretations. (Heath, 1994, p. 25)

This co-orientational view assumes that through interaction people develop the interpretations and expectations they need to coordinate their activities. A meaning, therefore, is not an attribute of a message or a recipient but of the interaction itself. In managing corporate communication the key issue is to manage the interactions in such a way that “compatible zones of meaning” are created with stakeholders.

The co-creation of meaning theory can also be found in European approaches to public relations. Roland Burkart, for example, sees public relations as the facilitation of dialogic interaction between an organization and its publics. It is also found in organizational theory, where Stanley A. Deetz, Sarah J. Tracy, and Jennifer Lyn Simpson focused on the “enactment of meanings” (2000, p. xiii) by which learning processes are developed. In this organizational theory Deetz et al. discussed the process through which people develop their interpretations of an event. They focused on how language, stories, and ritual frame or reframe people’s understanding of an event, whereas conversations are useful in creating alternative futures and opening the business to a wider collective learning process. Ansgar Zerfass calls these dialogues “arguments in which new meanings develop” (1996, pp. 31–32). The basis of this view of public relations is contemporary rhetorical theory, which explains discourse tactics as what players use to maneuver in communicative interactions. A key aspect of this view is the creation of as many meanings as possible, which is based more on a “battle” of interests than on harmony of interest. Heath referred to this process also as the rhetorical enactment approach, reasoning “that all of what an organization does and says is a statement. It is a statement that is interpreted idiosyncratically by each market, audience, and public” (2000, p. 4). In a co-creation of meaning theory of public relations, the aim is at finding deliberate and pluralistic solutions for problems. By doing this, an organization produces

and reproduces its environment and is, therefore, a key actor itself. The key perspective is that by facilitating interactions new meanings are continually created. That is why this is an open-ended model, a learning process that never stops.

The concept of meaning is a much debated concept in human communication theory. Meaning can be explained as the “whole way in which we understand, explain, feel about, and react towards a given phenomenon” (Rosengren, 2000, p. 59). From this point of view on communication, a crucial question is whose meaning is created by whom, and what does it mean for interpreting the world? Recent approaches to the concept of communication are focused on communication as a fundamental two-way process for creating and exchanging meaning, interactive and participatory at all levels. This can be seen as a paradigmatic change from a sender/receiver orientation to an actor orientation, and the co-creation of meaning theory fits into this paradigmatic change. Regarding the character of meaning, many theorists differentiate between connotative and denotative meaning by stressing that the connotative meaning steers behavior much more than the denotative meaning does. A denotative meaning of a phenomenon is the dictionary meaning. It is the literal or overt meaning that is shared by most people. The connotative meaning refers to subjective associations. In a co-creation of meaning theory, the connotative perspective of meaning is seen as most powerful in steering behavior.

Co-creation of meaning theory is rooted in symbolic interactionism. The idea that reality is not “something out there,” but that human beings construct reality themselves was popularized by one of the most frequently cited works in social sciences, *The Social Construction of Reality*, by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966). For them reality is a quality pertaining to phenomena we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition: We cannot wish them away. Knowledge is the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess specific characteristics. The sociology of knowledge is therefore concerned with the analysis of the social construction of reality. Social structure can be seen as an essential element of the reality of everyday life.

At one pole of the continuum are those others with whom I frequently interact in face-to-face situations—my inner circle, as it were. At the other pole are highly anonymous abstractions, which by their very nature can never be available in face-to-face interaction. Social structure is the sum total of these typifications and of the recurrent patterns of interaction established by means of them. (1966, p. 48)

Languages, as the most important system of vocal signs, build up semantic fields or zones of meaning that are linguistically circumscribed. While it is possible to say that man has a nature, it is more significant to say that man constructs his own nature, or simply, that man produces himself. This self-production is always, and of necessity, a social enterprise, as Berger and Luckmann argue. Men together produce a human environment, with the totality of its sociocultural and psychological formations. It may be that a given social order precedes any individual organism's development. But social order is still a human product, or, more precisely, an ongoing human production. By playing roles, the individual participates in a social world. By internalizing these roles, the same world becomes subjectively real to him. Roles represent institutional order. Some of these, however, symbolically represent that order in its totality more than others do. Such roles are of great strategic importance in a society, since they represent not only that or the other institution, but the integration of all institutions in a meaningful world. These are the roles that have a special relationship to the legitimating apparatus of society. Historically these roles have most commonly been located in political and religious institutions. This is no longer the case, however; it is said that nongovernmental organizations and corporations now have more power than politics and religion. According to Berger and Luckmann, legitimation (the term is from Weber) as a process is best described as a "second-order" objectification of meaning. Its function is to make objectively available and subjectively plausible the "first-order" objectifications that have been institutionalized (1966, p. 110). It embodies the institutional order by ascribing cognitive validity to its objectified meanings and justifies them. But in

the modern world there is always a rivalry between definitions of reality. Social structure can predict its outcome.

In communication science, as well as in organization science, symbolic interactionism has recently inspired some scholars to take a constructionist view of reality. In 1993, German communication scholars Günter Bentele and Manfred Rühl introduced a constructivist approach to public relations theory. The basic premise of this view is that human beings reflect the other to themselves, and social reality in a dynamic process. Thus, constructing social reality is a shared process of meanings construction. In this view, reflective interpretation and conceptualization of meanings are at the forefront in a constant process of de- and reconstruction; they are a "reflection." Klaus Krippendorf, a constructionist communication scientist, mentions the "recursiveness" of communication: It is an ongoing social process of de- and reconstruction of interpretations. That is why Werner Faulstich and other constructionist public relations scholars state that public relations is not interaction between human beings, but societal action as such.

—Betteke van Ruler

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CODES OF ETHICS

A code of ethics is a formal statement of conduct or a set of rules, standards, or guidelines for appropriate member behavior that has been adopted by an organization or professional association. Ethical codes have been popular in organizations since at least the 1970s. Codes of ethics were originally created by many organizations and professional associations in the 1950s and 1960s in response to specific ethical wrongdoings. Some were even mandated by the courts as part of larger legal settlements. Other professional codes of conduct, such as the Hippocratic Oath in medicine, have ancient origins. Codes have become very common, with essentially all major organizations and professional associations having some formal statement regarding ethics and values.

Ethical codes take a variety of forms. Some are very specific legalistic documents with a mechanism for enforcement and signature pages requiring that the employee explicitly agree to abide by the code. Others are very general statements of values

or principles that the organization or association aspires to with no specific enforcement provisions. Some codes include vignettes or cases to illustrate ethical conduct. Statements of core values or mission statements sometimes serve as the organization's formal declaration of ethics. Many organizations will have both general mission statements and specific codes of ethics. Codes are typically distributed to members of the organization, may be posted on Web sites, and in some cases, are prominently displayed throughout the organization. Codes are often formally adopted by the organization's board of directors or the professional association's legislative or executive body.

Codes also serve a variety of functions, including protecting the organization from legal liability, constraining and focusing employee behavior, limiting unethical conduct, assessing and judging member behavior, and enhancing the image and reputation of an organization or professional group. In the latter sense, ethical codes themselves may serve an issue management, image restoration, or public relations function. In addition, codes also help communicate value positions and ethical standards to stakeholders and facilitate discussions regarding appropriate organizational or professional ethics and values. In this way, codes are often the most important and explicit means whereby organizational and professional values are communicated. It is relatively common, for example, for all new employees to receive copies of ethical codes. Some organizations train new employees in the ethics code and use codes to socialize members into the organization's culture. Codes and ethics programs are related to improved ethical climate and are particularly important during times of uncertainty, transition, and even crisis.

Ethical codes and guidelines function in part by explicitly clarifying issues of responsibility and accountability. Many corporate codes are also designed to clarify issues of conflict of interest, loyalty, and obligations. Some provide checklists of questions to answer in making ethical decisions. Many of the more legalistic corporate codes require that employees sign a legally binding affidavit indicating that they have read and agree to abide by the code. Some organizations have established

ethics officers or committees responsible for both promoting the code and enforcing its standards. Many organizations also use their codes or ethical guidelines to foster broader conversations about ethics and values. Richard L. Johannesen (2002) suggested that codes serve an argumentative function, “to stimulate public and professional scrutiny of major ethical issues” (p. 201). Many codes, for example, discuss the value of a good or ethical reputation and encourage members to interact in a professional and responsible manner with external stakeholders. Ethical codes and value statements, however, should not be seen as panaceas for ethical communication in organizations or among professionals. Enron had an extensive ethics code that included explicit provisions about ethical communication. The code was posted on the company Web site and often quoted by senior executives. The Enron code obviously failed to prevent fundamental ethical misconduct.

Codes of ethical conduct are also recognized as one hallmark of a professional community. They suggest that the members of that profession have reached consensus regarding professional standards and values and that members have agreed to abide by those standards. They may also help create cohesion and professional identity. These codes also allow the association to impose some minimum standards and consistency on member behavior. Although there are legal issues regarding enforcement, many professional associations will suspend the membership of those individuals who violate ethical codes. Professional groups such as in accounting, medicine, law, nursing, education, government, psychology, and public relations have generated sophisticated ethical codes and associated standards for professional conduct.

Associational and professional codes for communication professionals have been used for several years. These include codes for journalists, marketing and advertising professionals and broadcasters, as well as public relations. The Public Relations Society of America, the International Association of Business Communicators, and the International Public Relations Association have all developed elaborate associational codes for the public relations profession. These codes embody a variety

of professional values and standards and have been used to judge and sometimes publicly sanction member behavior. Public relations codes are grounded in larger communication values such as free speech and free access to information, honesty and truthfulness, and fairness. It has been suggested that public relations codes of ethics were particularly important given the somewhat sordid early history of public relations including manipulative and deceptive practices. Ethical codes have helped public relations practitioners clarify professional expectations, maintain higher standards of professional conduct, and, in general, elevate the reputation of the profession.

Recently, the National Communication Association (NCA) adopted what it described as a professional credo for ethical communication. The credo includes 10 general principles regarding what is judged as the ethical practice of communication. The NCA credo draws on broad sets of ethical traditions in communication including honesty, truthfulness, free speech, condemnation of hate speech, the ethic of care, privacy, respect, social justice, protest, responsibility and responsiveness, among others. The NCA credo also suggests an explicit link between ethical and effective communication.

Although ethical codes are clearly very popular, some observers have described them as worthless exercises in vagueness, irrelevance, and mere window dressing largely designed to avoid responsibility. Some critics have even called ethical codes exercises in deceptive public relations. It is optimistic to expect a code of ethics to resolve complex ethics dilemmas and competing values. Codes of ethics, at the very least, however, elevate the level of debate and discussion regarding ethics and lay down a formal record regarding those standards and values to which the organization or professional community aspires. They enhance the quality of decisions and behavior and provide a basis for making ethical judgments. Although codes are a critical component in improving professional and organizational ethics, they cannot alone be expected to ensure ethical conduct.

—*Matthew W. Seeger, Timothy Sellnow, and Robert R. Ulmer*

See also Codes of public relations practice; International Association of Business Communicators Code of Ethics (Appendix 2); The Public Relations Society of America Code of Ethics (Appendix 1)

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CODES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

Codes of public relations practice are formalized statements of professional obligations, standards, norms, and conduct adopted by the professional associations of public relations. One of the first initiatives of the Public Relations Society of American (PRSA), founded in 1948, was to establish an ethical code of practice for its members. The desired outcome of this code was to establish clear standards for practitioners, clarify these standards to management, and to distinguish public relations professionals from those who engage in

deceptive and unethical promotion. The importance of such codes has not diminished over the past five decades. A survey conducted by PRSA in 2000 found that half the members surveyed have at some point felt “an extraordinary amount of pressure” to jeopardize their ethical standards (Fitzpatrick, 2002b, p. 119).

Establishing a code of professional conduct and social responsibility is essential because “business exists at the pleasure of society, and its behavior must fall within the guidelines set by society” (Daugherty, 2001, p. 389). Robert L. Heath (1997) explained that public relations specialists are active players in the process of determining social responsibility. He argued that “through their comments—as well as actions that reveal their commitment to mutual interests—companies help shape the standards by which they are judged” (p. 132). Formalizing these standards into codes of practice can establish a climate of social responsibility in an organization that influences decision making at all levels.

Codes of practice offer practitioners a set of consistent standards that allow them to move beyond relying on “merely subjective judgments” (Day, Dong, & Robins, 2001, p. 406). Patricia A. Curtin and Lois A. Boynton (2001) also found that “codes also may reinforce ethical expectations to public relations novices and deter government intervention, thereby enhancing professionalism” (p. 415). The perceived benefits of such codes is manifested in the fact that businesses have “increasingly developed their own codes of ethics and have hired ethics officers to establish standards for what is right and wrong, or good and bad, within the organization” (Leeper, 2001, p. 435).

The three best known codes for public relations are PRSA’s Member Code of Ethics, the International Public Relations Association’s (IPRA) International Code of Ethics, informally known as the Code of Athens, and the International Association of Business Communicator’s (IABC) Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators.

PRSA offers the most detailed and complex code of the three organizations. The PRSA Member Code of Ethics 2000 is composed of six core values, and six code provisions. The values include

advocacy for clients and an open marketplace of ideas, honesty, expertise, independence in the form of objective council and personal accountability, loyalty to both clients and the public interest, and fairness. The six code provisions are comprised of free flow of information, competition among professionals in a manner that serves the public interest, disclosure of information in a manner that builds trust with the public, safeguarding confidences to protect privacy rights, avoiding conflicts of interest, and enhancing the profession through building trust in all levels of interaction. The code ends with its only mention of enforcement. Members sign a pledge to uphold the article of the code with the understanding that “those who have been or are sanctioned by a government agency or convicted in a court of law of an action that is in violation of this Code may be barred from membership or expelled from the Society” (Fitzpatrick, 2002b, p. 135).

IPRA’s International Code of Ethics (Code of Athens) was originally adopted in 1965 at a meeting in Athens and later revised in 1968. The organization claims that this code has been “promoted widely and presented formally to numerous Heads of State” (IPRA). The International Code of Ethics is particularly sensitive to supporting an international view of human rights. The code repeatedly advocates preserving the human rights entitled by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Specifically, the code asks professionals to perform their duties within the moral principles and rules of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to uphold human dignity, to recognize the rights of all parties involved to express their views, to act in a manner that is respectful of the parties involved—including the interests of concerned publics, and to show loyalty and integrity in order to keep the “confidence of clients or employers, past or present, and all the publics that are affected” (Matrat, 1968, n.p.). Finally, the code asks professionals to refrain from “subordinating the truth,” circulating information that is not based on “ascertainable facts,” taking any action that is “unethical or dishonest or capable of impairing human dignity and integrity,” and using exploitive techniques “to create subconscious motivations which the individual cannot

control of his/her own free will and so cannot be accountable for the action taken of them” (Matrat, 1968, n.p.).

The IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators has 13 articles and a provision for enforcement (IABC). Like the IPRA, the IABC code makes specific mention in one of its articles of the need for sensitivity to cultural values and beliefs in hopes of encouraging mutual understanding. Two articles outline the importance for the protection and use of confidential information. Other articles stipulate loyalty to the laws governing the public relations profession, honesty, precluding plagiarism, avoiding behavior considered unethical by the communicator, upholding the credibility and dignity of the profession, accuracy, and free speech. Unlike PRSA or IPRA, the IABC code includes two articles dedicated to refusing undisclosed gifts and avoiding any pledge to guarantee results beyond the certain capacity of the practitioner. The IABC’s clause for enforcement is clearly aspirational rather than punitive. The clause begins by stating, “IABC fosters compliance with its Code by engaging in global communication campaign rather than through negative sanctions” (IABC, n.p.).

There is some debate over the proper function of professional codes, such as those sponsored by PRSA, IPRA, and IABC. Some argue that effective codes should “provide the grounds for charges of wrongdoing and defenses” (Day et al., 2001, p. 406). From this perspective, critics argue that most professional codes of practice are “vague, unenforceable, or applied inconsistently” and that they cannot account for the diversity of views in a globalized society (Curtin & Boynton, 2001, p. 415).

There is evidence to support claims that professional codes are difficult to enforce. For example, K. R. Fitzpatrick (2002a) pointed out that only “five formal sanctions were imposed against members [based on violations of its code] as a result of PRSA investigations from 1954 to 2000” (2002a, p. 105). She argued that “unless one assumes that most of the allegations were groundless, the PRSA enforcement

system was clearly ineffective in adjudicating ethical misconduct” (2002a, p. 105). In response to such criticism, PRSA revised its code in 2000 so that its discussion of enforcement is limited to membership in the organization. Fitzpatrick explained that the revised code of PRSA, like code sponsored by IABC, is “aspirational and educational, designed to motivate ethical behavior rather than punish unethical misbehavior” (2002b, p. 111).

Another concern is that professional codes of responsibility are so vague that they are of limited value to practitioners. For example, Curtin and Boynton (2001) explained that the PRSA code “proscribes lying,” but it fails to provide “clear guidance on when withholding information is justified” (p. 415). Consequently, some practitioners have called for operational definitions in the code that clarify the standards and leave less ambiguity. In contrast, other practitioners argue that codes simply cannot “encompass all potential problems” and that “if they are too detailed, then they might be inflexible and unlikely to be read” (Daugherty, 2001, p. 397). Others maintain that some degree of ambiguity is an inherent part of public relations activity and that ethicality of ambiguity is dependent upon the intent of the communicator.

A final concern to be addressed here involves the capacity of professional codes to account for the diversity of the multiple cultures that are involved in international business activity. With the advent of globalization, some practitioners assert that professional codes are “unlikely to gain wide acceptance” and that such codes are “so broad as to lack pragmatic application” (Curtin & Boynton, 2001, p. 416). This issue has received considerable attention from professional organizations. For example, the IABC and IPRA dedicate considerable space to emphasizing sensitivity to intercultural issues in their codes of practice. These provisions encourage practitioners to alter their practices in order to avoid insult or insensitivity to members of any culture.

Ideally, codes of practice provide practitioners with an objective means for proactively assessing their behavior as they engage in their profession. Codes have been questioned for their inadequacy in

the areas of clarity, enforcement, and intercultural sensitivity. In response to these concerns, the codes established by PRSA, IPRA, and IABC, among others, have evolved in order to meet the challenges and to address the criticisms that have emerged over the past half century.

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COGNITIONS

See Psychological processing

COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING

Collaborative decision making entails working together rather than independently in a decision making process. Although it can refer to as few as two individuals working together to make a decision, collaborative decision making in public relations typically refers to organizations working together with one or more external publics in a shared decision-making process. Common contexts for collaborative decision making in public relations are community relations and employee relations, and instruments of collaboration range from citizen surveys and public meetings to negotiations, mediations, and search conferences. Done well, collaborative decision making can lead to greater trust among participants and higher quality outcomes that publics view as more acceptable and legitimate than decisions where publics were not involved. Done poorly, collaborative decision-making efforts can leave participants feeling used, undervalued, and distrustful of future interactions.

Although a very visible aspect of public relations today, the spirit of collaborative decision making is evident in early democratic principles, such as the right of citizens to have a voice in decisions that affect them. Early examples of collaborative decision making in the United States include the ubiquitous town hall meeting, where colonialists debated the future of the fledgling nation. The freedom to share in decision-making efforts has not always come without a struggle, however, as evidenced by the women's suffragist movement to earn voting rights or the labor movement to earn collective bargaining privileges, among others. In response to greater calls for collaborative decision making, the latter half of the 20th century saw more legislation guaranteeing the right of citizens to participate in government-sponsored decision-making processes. Private organizations also experienced greater protest from publics that resisted being excluded from decisions that affected them.

Today, the techniques used for collaborative decision making are many and varied and can be targeted at internal as well as external publics. Because different techniques will produce different

outcomes, choosing the appropriate technique requires public relations practitioners to consider carefully the context and goals of the collaboration. One of the first considerations concerns who will have the final decision-making authority. The degree of collaboration in a decision can range from consultation and advisement to full-fledged partnership and control of the decision. Ensuring that all participants in a collaborative decision-making process know from the beginning their likely impact on the decision will reduce the potential for later misunderstandings about how decisions were made. Table 1 provides descriptions of several techniques available for collaborative decision making. The table includes typical participants of the techniques, as well as typical impacts participants have on decisions.

As the table illustrates, public meetings are collaborative decision-making techniques where participants act in more of a consultant or advisory role. Rather than making a decision at the meeting, participants typically provide information or feedback to meeting organizers, who then make a decision sometime after the meeting. Benefits of public meetings are that they are open to any member of the public to attend; therefore, the decision makers can often access a wide range of knowledge from people who attend. Drawbacks include the sometimes limited nature of collaboration, which may frustrate meeting attendees who want a greater role in the decision-making process. Biased representation is also a frequent criticism of public meetings, since only those most interested in the decision—though not necessarily most impacted by the decision—typically attend.

Advisory committees and advisory panels are also methods of collaborative decision making, where publics serve as consultants to the organization. These methods differ from public meetings in that participation is usually limited to participants that have been purposively selected for their expertise or ability to represent a particular viewpoint. For instance, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) relies on its many advisory committees to evaluate research and make recommendations about issues related to foods, drugs, biologics, and medical devices. The FDA specifically chooses members for their expertise, and members meet frequently over a

Table 1 Common Techniques for Collaborative Decision Making

<i>Techniques</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Primary Purpose</i>	<i>Typical Public Impact on Decision</i>
Public meetings (public hearings, availability sessions, scoping sessions)	Open to a wide range of self-selected individuals	To provide information and obtain feedback	Limited—public serves primarily as consultant to organization, which is not obligated to follow recommendations
Advisory committees (advisory panels, advisory boards, citizen juries)	Individuals having some expertise or characteristics vital to the issue	To evaluate the situation and provide recommendations over a period of time and multiple issues	Limited—public serves primarily as consultant to organization, which is not obligated to follow recommendations
Citizen surveys (public opinion polls)	Representative sample of stakeholders	To assess attitudes from affected individuals who may not otherwise participate in the decisions	Limited—public serves primarily as consultant to organization, which is not obligated to follow recommendations
Workshops (study circles, deliberative polling, roundtable discussions)	Interest group leaders, experts, officials	To bring members of the public and organization together in a working session.	Mixed—organization is not obligated to follow recommendations
Referenda (ballots)	Self-selected sample of registered voters	To make a choice about whether to approve or disprove the issue on the ballot	Substantial—in most cases, votes are binding
Search conferences	Wide range of individuals representing stakeholders internal and external to organization	To identify shared goals and strategically plan ways of attaining them	Substantial—participants share responsibility for making and implementing decisions
Negotiations (collective bargaining, alternative dispute resolution, arbitration)	Individuals directly and/or legally involved with the issue	To find mutually acceptable solution	Substantial—in most cases, results are binding

period of years to assist the FDA in its decision making. As with most advisory panels or committees, the FDA is not obligated to follow their committees' recommendations.

Other techniques in which external publics typically have less direct impact on decisions include citizen surveys and workshops. Surveys can provide useful input from a representative sample into a

decision-making process, although some people criticize that surveys only provide a "snapshot" of opinions at a particular moment. In response, deliberative polls are a type of workshop where a representative sample is selected to attend an intense discussion, often over a weekend or other three-day period. Participants complete questionnaires at the beginning of the workshop and at the workshop's end.

Supporters of this technique have argued that this provides a truer gauge of public opinion should the public have had access to the available expertise on the issue. Both citizen surveys and workshops (with or without surveys) are typically used as a component of a larger decision-making process; therefore, their impact on the final decision will vary.

Negotiations, referenda, and search conferences are collaborative decision-making processes where external publics have comparatively more control in formulating final decisions. Negotiations entail participants working together to find some agreed-upon solution. Referenda are essentially ballots where individuals cast their input on a decision using a formulized vote-taking process. Search conferences are large gatherings where people work together to identify shared goals and strategize ways to reach them. Although serving different needs, negotiations and search conferences both have the advantage of face-to-face deliberation, which referenda do not, and many view face-to-face deliberation as an important precursor of successful collaborative decision making.

The above techniques represent commonly used processes of collaborative decision making. There are many variations among them and this list is not exhaustive. Organizers can also use more than one technique as part of a decision-making process, such as when public meetings are held to keep a more general audience apprised of a negotiation's progress. In addition to the processes themselves, many guidelines exist to enhance interaction in group decision making. Although exploring these guidelines is beyond the scope of this entry, there are some suggested readings in the bibliography.

When planning collaborative decision-making efforts, public relations practitioners should also consider legal, practical, logistical, and philosophical issues. One of the first factors is whether collaboration is legally mandated or conducted voluntarily. This is important because mandated collaboration could involve additional requirements. For instance, legally mandated government-sponsored public meetings typically occur at a specific time in a decision-making process. Although this is not always the case, mandated meetings also tend to be more formal than nonmandated meetings. On the plus side, the formal

procedures that accompany mandated collaboration could help to ensure that the process is viewed as fair by all parties. The formality of some meetings could leave some participants feeling constricted in how they can contribute. Finally, some publics could view an organization suspiciously if it only seems to be collaborating because the law says it must. In comparison, if an organization is voluntarily collaborating with publics in a decision, publics could interpret this meeting as more of a "goodwill" effort than if collaboration was required.

Practical issues relate to the topic of the collaborative decision-making effort. For instance, decisions that deal with highly technical topics may hinder participation from nontechnical publics. This may be most apparent in techniques geared to wider, more general audience participation, such as public meetings and public hearings. To offset the power imbalances that could arise from this situation, practitioners could provide nontechnical audiences with access to unbiased, technical support. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, for example, provides Technical Assistance Grants up to \$50,000 to communities to assist them in participating in decisions about eligible Superfund sites.

Logistical issues relate to the implementation of the decision-making effort. If the forum for collaboration is a public meeting, for instance, logistical issues include choosing the location, timing, and length of the meetings; soliciting participants and coordinating schedules; and preparing appropriate handouts. Choices about timing and location of meetings can send signals to participants about the degree to which their attendance is valued. Meetings held during holidays or at remote locations, for example, can result in lower turnouts for reasons unrelated to the issue at hand. In addition, if poor scheduling results in a lack of attendance, this can detract from the credibility of the process. Meetings that occur late in the decision-making process can also leave participants feeling dissatisfied and angry.

Philosophical issues refer to the incentives for participants to collaborate. Participation scholar Daniel Fiorino recounted that, traditionally, people argued that decisions—especially technical ones—should be left up to administrative officials, who would consult as necessary with the appropriate

experts, elected officials, and other representative interest groups. He summarized the argument against such an arrangement as having normative, substantive, and instrumental qualities. The normative argument states that individuals have a right to participate in decisions that affect them and excluding them from the decision-making process thus violates democratic ideals. The substantive argument states that input and knowledge from non-technical audiences can be as sound, or more sound, than experts' or officials' knowledge or input. For instance, local groups could have a much greater sensitivity to contextual factors, such as culture, which can influence the successful implementation of decisions. Finally, the instrumental argument states that involving individuals in the decision may decrease conflict and increase acceptance of decisions.

As noted in the instrumental argument, when properly executed, collaborative decision making can have the added benefit of reducing conflict among organizations and publics. This requires, however, an acknowledgment of the role that power and control play in the decision. Not everyone is inclined to collaborate with their internal or external publics, preferring to follow an elite model of decision making. Even when parties choose initially to collaborate, at some point, discontinuing collaboration could be strategically better for one or more participants. Roger Fisher and William Ury of the Harvard Negotiation Project coined the term BATNA to refer to the state when the incentives to act unilaterally exceed the incentives to collaborate. BATNA refers to the Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement. Before coming to the negotiation table, shrewd participants have identified their BATNA as well as attempted to learn the other side's BATNA. Collaboration does not necessarily mean compromise or accommodation, especially if participants have identified their BATNA. However, scholars in conflict resolution and public relations have suggested that parties in a negotiation or conflict should try to identify shared interests in efforts to reach some type of agreement.

There are several ways to evaluate the effectiveness of collaborative decision-making techniques.

Some of the criteria focus more on process-oriented variables whereas others examine outcomes. Process-oriented criteria examine the success of the implementation effort, including the number of people who participated, the degree of interaction among participants, the fairness of the procedures, and the length of time people deliberated. Outcome-oriented criteria examine the results of the procedures, including the quality of the decision, whether the decision is viewed as fair or legitimate by participants, and participant satisfaction with the decision. Recently, more attention has been given to long-term outcomes, including relationships between organizations and their publics. Rather than viewing collaboration as simply a one-time event, long-term outlooks consider the likelihood that additional interaction will occur and therefore pay attention to ways to increase trust among participants, for example.

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See also Citizens advisory committees/panels

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COLLATERAL

Collateral refers to the accessory promotional materials agencies and companies produce to accompany an advertising or public relations campaign. As a broad term, collateral traditionally has been used to encompass all nonmedia advertising work. It most often includes any print work done in addition to advertising in its traditional form, which includes print advertisements, radio spots, and television commercials. Collateral comprises all promotional materials not associated with major media and accessory nonmedia advertising materials prepared by manufacturers to help dealers sell a product, including brochures, signage, point-of-purchase displays, direct-mail pieces, catalogs, booklets, manuals, films, audiovisual materials, technical specification sheets, trade show exhibits, sales promotion materials, sales kits, and other sales aids available from the manufacturer.

Collateral services is an agency term to describe noncommissionable forms of service, such as the creation of sales promotion materials, new product studies, research, and merchandising. These types of services are usually performed on a negotiated fee basis rather than a percentage of advertising media buy.

Public relations practitioners who work in marketing communications are often responsible for collateral materials that support the marketing function. In this case, they develop customer newsletters, brochures that explain product features, and magazines geared toward the buyers of a product or service. These practitioners also ensure the proper implementation of the corporate identity system throughout all collateral materials, which may even include posters, fliers, postcards, and Web pages.

A brochure is a printed piece of collateral material used for public relations, advertising, and marketing purposes. Brochures are considered a communication tool or tactic and a form of direct media (e.g., fliers, newsletters, and posters) that reach their audiences through distribution channels other than mass media (i.e., newspapers, magazines, radio, and television). Other terms used to describe brochures are pamphlets, considered a

simple version of a brochure, and booklets, which are brochures produced in small booklike formats.

Every organization, whether corporate or non-profit, needs brochures to convey key messages to particular target audiences. A brochure is a tactic with a specific objective. For example, brochures can educate an employee audience about company policies, inform customers about new products, or encourage members of a community to use a program offered by a nonprofit organization. Brochures communicate a sizable amount of information to a single reader at a handheld viewing distance. An orderly sequence of information is presented in stages through panels using a common design thread that visually connects all of the panels and helps entice and sustain the reader's attention.

A newsletter is a type of publication produced most often by public relations practitioners. Almost all organizations—nonprofit and profit-making alike—create and distribute newsletters to members of their key audiences. With the development of desktop publishing, newsletters have grown in popularity. Although they share similar traits with magazines and newspapers, newsletters are smaller, less formal publications that are directed toward a specific audience, such as employees, customers, members of the community, donors, or volunteers.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Brochure; Direct mail; Flier; Newsletter

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COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PUBLIC RELATIONS

Colleges and universities engage in public relations to manage their relationships with key constituencies. Their public relations activities typically are divided into three areas: news, development activities, and alumni relations. The news function normally is part of a university news service housed

under the rubric of university relations or external affairs; development, also called advancement, is located within an office of development, donor relations, or a university foundation; and alumni relations work is mostly conducted within an office of alumni affairs.

Much of the difficulty in managing public relations is the diverse constituencies to which a multifaceted educational institution must address and respond. Not only must a college or university deal with internal publics such as faculty, staff, and administrators, but it also must manage external constituents as broad and diverse as parents, alumni, trustees, clubs, civic and community leaders, business leaders, neighbors, athletic boosters, legislators, governmental agencies, unions, and accreditation agencies, as well as area employers who hire graduates. With such a task in mind, universities face a challenging public relations environment as they seek to create a distinct “brand” for their institution.

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

The principal place where the public relations work of an educational institution is completed is in what is commonly called university relations. One of the major components of public relations is a university news service whose job it is to publicize the information that originates from the campus. University relations officials do this by responding to calls from media who need information, as well as fielding inquiries from the general public. This information takes the form of news releases and feature stories about significant events in a university’s existence such as hiring a new president, common and regular occurrences like commencement ceremonies, as well as to publicize the newsworthy research efforts of faculty members.

As part of its news service, many universities also produce news calls—prepackaged news stories disseminated throughout a state or region that then are accessed by broadcasters. The benefit here is that radio stations get ready-made stories at little or no cost while universities generate publicity and institutional recognition. In addition to external efforts, university relations also seeks to communicate with

internal publics through newsletters and other media. The chief spokesperson for the university is housed within a university relations department.

A second area of work in university relations is that of special events management. An educational institution is overwhelmed with special events—which can include major grant announcements, technology transfers, new building dedications, orientations, homecoming events, campus races, as well as major events like Centennial celebrations.

A third area of effort is graphic arts and Web design. Such work usually includes the control of the presentation of the institution’s name and logo, project planning, design and layout assistance for the many places across campus that need brochures and other promotional materials, and a great deal of photography, whether documentary, news related, or an updating of the school’s photo files. In addition, with the advent of information technology, the development of college and university Web pages normally falls under the purview of university relations.

A fourth area of work by university relations personnel is the creation and production of university publications, whether books or university and alumni magazines. Other types of materials produced for publication by university relations personnel are fact books and expert guides.

Finally, tasks that are not easily classified but fall under the purview of university relations personnel include the following: providing an overview of press clippings for senior level administrators, developing a campus-specific style manual, offering editorial project assistance to departments, engaging in crisis management for when matters do not go well, and offering media training to faculty and staff.

DEVELOPMENT

Development is a second area of distinct public relations activity by colleges and universities. Here the idea is to secure the future of the institution by engaging in systematic efforts to increase financial support. Colleges conduct fundraising activities in order to support their endowments, recruit faculty by creating “named” chairs, increase financial aid

for students, as well as to build and equip new buildings or renovate old ones. Frequently, gift giving is organized into honorary clubs that offer increased ranks of exclusivity in exchange for larger dollar amounts.

Although always an important part of educational public relations, with the national trend of reduced state funding and the variable nature of the business cycle, the need to develop potentially new sources of revenue has become more important. Consequently, it is now more common for universities to engage in major capital campaigns, which in the case of large universities often total over \$1 billion.

Development activities tend to fall into three types: annual funds, major gifts, and corporate relations. Annual funds consist of the once-a-year solicitation of a monetary gift through letters or a phone-a-thon. Such gifts are important beyond their monetary value; many institutional rating agencies judge alumni involvement based on participation in annual giving.

A second area of development work is in the area of major gifts—those gifts beyond the small dollar amounts typically pledged during annual fund campaigns. Here, development officers frequently spend several years cultivating donors with substantial assets in order to lay the groundwork for a direct request by the president or another senior academic official. An important component of major gifts is the use of planned giving whereby people make sizable charitable gifts through their estates.

A final area of development work, corporate and foundation relations, is designed to facilitate advancement activities by developing relationships with major corporations and their foundations. Many companies that hire a large number of an institution's graduates find it in their interest to develop and endow programs in order to create strategic joint ventures with universities. Additionally, companies may form partnerships whereby they match the giving efforts of their employees.

Development personnel usually participate in the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). Begun in 1917, CASE represents 2,400 institutions and provides services to individuals and institutions in the form of seminars, assessment services, a

certification program, awards, publications, and a placement service.

ALUMNI RELATIONS

A final area of public relations by educational institutions is the development of an alumni relations program. Alumni relations deals with a college or university's efforts to keep in contact and facilitate healthy relationships with a critical public—its alumni.

In order to develop and maintain pride in an institution, colleges and university alumni associations carry out a number of public relations activities. One task is to facilitate the ongoing communication between school and alumni. To this end, alumni associations publish magazines and newsletters that keep alumni updated on significant university activities and career milestones in the alumni ranks. Individuals in alumni relations also host a large number of special events, particularly during the homecoming season. These occasions often take the form of alumni reunions or other gatherings. Such meetings are not always located on campus; typically alumni relations personnel make efforts to meet with chapters around the region as well as in other major cities. Other types of organizational events are the creation of specific societies of alumni. They are alumni joined by a common interest or theme, such as those who worked at a campus radio station, those from a close-knit or well-known program, or those from a specific ethnic group.

Alumni often help the institution in tangible ways. Many universities seek the political support of their alumni, frequently in the form of organizing a legislative network to lobby for state support of their programs. Oftentimes alumni also get involved by meeting and recruiting potential students. Recent developments in this area also include the development of mentoring programs to help young professionals to get established in their careers.

Universities also help their alumni to stay in contact through the creation of alumni locators and directories; this helps strengthen ties to their alma mater. Finally, universities often use alumni relations as a vehicle by which to recognize their

distinguished graduates, usually in the form of distinguished alumni awards. These awards often serve as the foundation for future development opportunities for the institution.

—Keith Michael Hearit

See also Alumni relations; Employee communication; Managing the corporate public relations department; News services; Public relations department

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COLORADO COAL STRIKE

The bitter strike waged against the coal operators of southern Colorado in 1913–1914 was one of the first major tests of the emerging field of public relations in the United States.

The United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) sought to organize the immigrant workers who worked for some 70 companies in the state. However, the largest and most influential coal operator was the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company (CF&I), which was 40 percent owned by John D. Rockefeller, Sr., scion of the Standard Oil Trust. Rockefeller took comparatively little interest in the company, which he invested in as a favor to railroad tycoon George Gould. The Rockefellers actually intended to sell their stake in CF&I as soon as market conditions improved. But events on April 20, 1914, squelched any hope of doing so.

On that Monday morning, as the strike ended its seventh month, a gun battle broke out between Colorado militiamen and armed strikers, who had

been evicted from company-owned houses and were living in a tent colony near Ludlow, Colorado. Accounts vary about how the skirmish began, but by the end of the day at least eight men and one boy had been killed by gunfire before the tent colony burned to the ground. However, the real tragedy of the “Ludlow massacre” was the suffocation deaths of two women and 11 children who were consumed by smoke after hiding from the crossfire in earthen pits below ground.

The union, aided by sympathetic and sensationalistic newspapers in Denver, quickly blamed the entire affair on Rockefeller and his son, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who had assumed responsibility for the family’s business affairs. Although they were 1,500 miles away from the incident and had not been in Colorado for 10 years, the Rockefellers were labeled as personally responsible for the strike, for the attack by the militia, and for the deaths of innocent women and children.

Newspapers across the country carried glaring headlines for the first several days about the tragedy. But the real pressure came as newspapers in New York and the East covered efforts by Congressman Martin Foster and President Woodrow Wilson to seek a settlement of the strike. Rockefeller had steadfastly refused to meddle with the local managers who, like their counterparts in all other Rockefeller investments, were allowed and expected to operate the day-to-day business. CF&I was a member of a mine operators association that staunchly opposed union recognition, particularly any union led by the tawdry leaders of UMWA District 15.

Rockefeller had told a congressional subcommittee in early April 1914 that he was not opposed to unions. But JDR Jr. (and presumably his father) staunchly believed philosophically that men should not be forced to join a union and should be able to work anywhere they wished. About the strike, he had told the committee prior to Ludlow, “My conscience acquits me.” Those words would haunt him.

The Rockefellers were helplessly sucked into the fray. A well-oiled publicity campaign was launched by Walter H. Fink, publicity director of the UMWA in Colorado. Protests were also organized in Denver by George Creel and in New York City and Tarrytown, New York (home of several Rockefeller

estates) by Upton Sinclair. The socialist writer also picketed the Rockefellers' office at 26 Broadway and went to jail instead of paying a small fine in order to generate even more sympathetic press coverage. The Rockefellers received death threats from the radical members of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Sunday services at their church were disrupted. Later, a bomb intended for the Rockefellers exploded in a New York tenement house and killed four suspected protesters.

Rallies were organized in cities around the country, ministers lashed out from pulpits across the country about the brutality in Colorado, and a delegation of miners' wives toured Washington and New York to tell their tales of woe. The Rockefellers were bolstered by positive letters of support from many business people, but crank letters containing threats were also received. For nearly two months, the family's homes were under armed guard.

PUBLIC RELATIONS RESPONSE

After six weeks of intense pressure, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and his staff desperately sought ways to set the public record straight, to rectify the damage to the family's name, and to solve the underlying problem between labor and capital. To do so, in early June 1914, JDR Jr. enlisted the aid of two consultants, publicist Ivy Lee and industrial relations specialist William Lyon Mackenzie King.

Lee is often referred to as the father of modern public relations, although he always used the term "publicity" to describe his work. Lee was special assistant to the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and, in addition to his regular job, assumed the job of helping one of the nation's most powerful families.

Lee set out to tell the Rockefellers' side of the story by issuing a series of 15 bulletins that were distributed to as many as 40,000 opinion leaders across the country. The bulletins detailed previously untold aspects of the strike favorable to the coal mine operators. He also sought publicity opportunities for the bulletins to appear in newspapers and served as an intermediary with the press. Lee moonlighted for the Rockefellers as a consultant for the remainder of 1914 and then joined the Rockefeller staff for 15 months in 1915–1916 before becoming an

independent consultant with the Rockefellers as clients.

Lee gained considerable notoriety for himself and for the emerging field of publicity when information about his activities and errors pertaining to the salaries of union officials, which were contained in his bulletins, became disclosed publicly. The United States Commission on Industrial Relations (USCIR), which had been created by Congress to investigate industrial strife, grilled Colorado officials, Lee, and Rockefeller about Lee's activities. Although the USCIR's intent was to put Lee and Rockefeller in an unfavorable light, the USCIR hearings in 1914 and 1915 also shined the light of public scrutiny on the emerging power of publicity before World War I.

While Lee attended to publicity matters, King focused his attention on resolving the labor problems themselves. King proved to be a turn-of-the-century advocate for improvement of management-employee relations and proposed a mechanism for conciliation that would bring labor and capital to voluntary organization during a time before unions were guaranteed the right to negotiate.

King was almost as controversial as Lee. After being hired to study labor relations problems by the then-fledgling Rockefeller Foundation, USCIR investigators quickly questioned whether the nonprofit Rockefeller Foundation (which received a special federal charter in 1913) was misusing its resources to benefit the Rockefellers in Colorado. King had been the labor minister in Canada, until 1911, and was distrusted by American union leaders for his legislation, adopted in Canada, that required arbitration of labor disputes before any strike could be called.

The centerpiece of King's work for the Rockefellers was the Colorado Industrial Representation Plan (CIP), adopted in 1915. The CIP became a prototype for company unions that created mechanisms for dialogue between management and rank-and-file employees. The CIP served as a model for American industrial relations until 1935, when Congress passed the Wagner Act, which guaranteed the right of unions to engage in collective bargaining. Moreover, King was successful in persuading young Rockefeller and CF&I officials about the need for employees to participate in management

decisions and the value of good working and living conditions.

King, who became prime minister of Canada in 1921, proved to be more than a labor relations specialist. He also became a long-time trusted adviser to the Rockefellers. King (along with Lee) helped prepare Rockefeller for grueling testimony before the USCIR, organized a program of social welfare to improve economic conditions in Colorado, and orchestrated a highly successful three-week visit by Rockefeller to Colorado in October 1915. While in Colorado, JDR Jr. saw conditions firsthand, met with miners in their homes, spoke with community leaders, and committed himself to much needed improvements.

Industry and Humanity, a book penned by King while he served as a consultant to the Rockefeller Foundation in 1916–1918, serves as a treatise on labor-capital relationships that is a precursor of modern public relations thought. Among King's key points are the importance of two-way communication and mutual respect, the importance of stakeholders in organizations, and the value of publicity so that the activities of organizations are widely known and misunderstandings are avoided.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Lee, Ivy

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COMMERCIAL ONLINE SERVICE

A commercial online service is one of three typical ways used to access the Internet. The other two include simple dial-up, or Internet service provider (ISP) service, and local area network (LAN) service. If a user has a computer at work that is

networked, and allows access to the Internet, a LAN connection is being used.

While commercial online services and ISP accounts have a lot of overlap, commercial online services are actually a subset of ISP services. Both commercial online services and ISPs provide an entry point. An access phone number is dialed by the modem in the customer's computer, and after the connection is established, access to the Internet is had by linking through the commercial online service's (or ISP's) computers. That is where the similarity ends.

ISPs usually provide e-mail accounts, and maybe some hard drive space (on their servers) for customers to put up a Web page, but they do not offer tailored content and more complex add-on services as a commercial online service provider does. Another distinction to be made is with respect to software. Because an ISP does not provide the customer with customized (and customizable) content, the ISP will not usually have customers install software on their computers as a requirement of use.

The biggest example of a commercial online service is America Online (AOL). Subscribers get a customized entry point (gateway site) that includes both access to the Internet and content unique to AOL subscribers. The unique content includes chat rooms, games, and news. However, if subscribers seek more than what the gateway has to offer, they can access other sites through the same (AOL) connection. That is to say, they do not "hang up the phone" and dial a different connection.

There is an earlier technological example similar to commercial online services: Bulletin Board Systems (BBS). While a BBS would provide things like e-mail, chat rooms, games, and so on, BBSs were, for the most part, closed systems. There was some linking between BBSs, but users did not have the ability to go from any BBS to any other (unlike today, where a user can go from any Web site to any another). For the most part, if they wanted to visit a different BBS, they would have to disconnect from one before going to the other. Some BBSs would require paid membership, others welcomed one and all.

As computer technology continues to blend and merge mass media channels, it is important to

understand where the access points are to the Internet. With this understanding, the decision on access for the individual can best be made. For example, is it best to tailor a message and have that message available only to AOL users? If the desire is to reach everyone (including people who use smaller ISPs, for example), then a full-on Web site may be the answer. For further consideration, there is the issue of restricted access: Some people do not have a computer at home. The only way they access the Internet is through their computer at work. Access to a Web site may be blocked by the company's LAN administrator, on orders from a superior who may feel that the message conveyed by the Web site is at odds with the company's goals.

—Michael Nagy

COMMERCIAL SPEECH

Commercial speech, for purposes of First Amendment law, has been defined by the United States Supreme Court as speech that does “no more than propose a commercial transaction” or, on occasion, as expression “solely motivated by the desire for profit.” Commercial speech receives lesser First Amendment protection than does speech on political or social issues of public importance because it has traditionally been perceived as having lesser value in a democratic society and because of the desire to protect consumers from fraudulent business practices.

Advertisements for products or services clearly are commercial speech. But communication materials such as informational brochures and issue ads are harder to classify. An example of how the classification can affect public relations speech is *Bolger v. Youngs Drug Products Corp.* (1983). Youngs Drug manufactured condoms. To promote its products, it sent unsolicited direct mail pieces to the general public. One piece was an informational pamphlet on the prevention of venereal disease through the use of condoms. At the end of the pamphlet, Youngs Drug's name appeared as the producer of the pamphlet. An action was brought against Youngs Drug because a federal postal

regulation prohibits the mailing of unsolicited advertisements regarding contraception. The Supreme Court held that the informational pamphlet was commercial speech because it was included in a direct mail ad, it referred to products by Youngs Drug, and it was motivated by profit. The three factors would not be sufficient individually to turn the informational pamphlet into commercial speech, but the combination of all three supported a finding that it was, the Court said. The Court was concerned that holding otherwise would lead advertisers to combine false or misleading product information with social or political information to avoid government regulation.

In determining whether a government regulation on commercial speech is constitutional, courts apply a four-part test. Under what is known as the *Central Hudson* (1980) test from the case in which it was first enunciated by the Supreme Court, courts must consider each of the following:

- Whether the commercial speech is worthy of First Amendment protection (it must be accurate and for a lawful product or service)
- Whether the government has a substantial interest for regulating the speech (courts usually consider the government to have a substantial interest in protecting the health, safety, and morals of the public)
- Whether the regulation in question directly advances the government's interest
- Whether there is a reasonable fit between the regulation and the interest to be protected

Although the Court applies the *Central Hudson* test to all commercial speech cases, it reaches different decisions depending on the kind of product or service advertised. For example, the Court has strongly supported the right of truthful, nondeceptive advertising, even of “vice” products and services, such as alcohol, tobacco, and gambling, to protection under the First Amendment. Yet the Court has consistently limited the advertising of professionals, such as lawyers, accountants, and dentists. Professionals may advertise the price of standardized procedures but not of more complex services. The Court has also restricted the means by which attorneys may communicate with consumers.

The idea that commercial speech is entitled to any First Amendment protection is a relatively recent legal phenomenon. The Supreme Court did not even consider whether commercial speech was protected speech until 1942. At that time, the Court held that “purely commercial advertising” was outside the protections of the First Amendment. The case arose when a businessman included a political protest on the back of his leaflet advertising his business to get around a New York City sanitary code banning the distribution of leaflets except for those of a political or informational nature. The Supreme Court found that the addition of the protest did not make the leaflet political speech. The leaflet was purely commercial speech, and the Constitution imposed no restraints on government with respect to such speech. Commercial speech was simply not as valuable to society, the Court held, as was political speech, and therefore it should not be protected.

In subsequent cases, the Court clarified its reasons for denying First Amendment protection to commercial speech. First, the Court was not worried about the chilling effect of regulation on commercial speech. One of the Court’s primary justifications for protecting political speech is the fear that people will stop speaking out against the government if they can be punished by the government for so doing. But ads, according to the Court, would continue regardless of whether they were protected by the First Amendment because the desire of businesses to make a profit is so strong. Second, the Court concluded that it was easier to determine whether an advertiser’s claims were true than it was to determine whether allegations against the government were true. Therefore, while society had to tolerate a certain level of false political speech to ensure that political speech continued, society did not have to tolerate false ads.

In the 1960s, however, the Court began to carve out areas within the commercial speech doctrine that had some First Amendment protection. The Court began by distinguishing purely commercial advertising from political advertising. Political speech did not lose its First Amendment protection simply because it appeared in an advertising format, the Court held. Later, the Court would find that a

newspaper ad for abortion referral services was not “purely commercial” because it contained important factual information clearly of interest to members of the public.

The Court has continued to expand its protection for commercial speech, finding that commercial speech can be as important to people as political speech, especially in terms of their everyday lives. The Court has emphasized the right of the consumer to have access to information, rather than the right of the businesses to advertise. It is the communication itself that is protected by the First Amendment, not the speaker. Despite the movement toward greater protection of commercial speech, such speech continues to receive less protection from government regulation than does noncommercial speech.

—*Karla K. Gower*

See also Political speech

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

At the outset of United States involvement in World War I, President Woodrow Wilson issued executive order 2594 to create the Committee on Public Information (CPI). The CPI served two vital functions during the war: as the “propaganda” bureau of the administration, and to publicize voluntary censorship of national media. David Lawrence, a former student of President Wilson at Princeton, and Arthur Bullard, a reporter and novelist, had suggested to the president that he establish a publicity bureau and that he be cautious of unnecessary

ensorship efforts. Bullard's arguments for such an approach started long before the 1917 creation of the CPI, and in the early days of the CPI Bullard did considerable work to help develop the organization and its materials.

The idea of using a government agency to sell the war to the people was also advanced by George Creel. After his initial meeting with the president, Creel was appointed as chairman of the CPI and was granted full executive powers. Stephen Vaughn (1980) noted that "President Wilson trusted him (Creel) and never considered any other person for the chairmanship" (p. 17). Although Creel had the full support of the president, his appointment was questioned by others, who noted his inability to accept criticism.

John Dos Passos (1962) said that Creel was "a hardworking man with an inexhaustible self confidence, his failing was snap judgements [*sic*]" (p. 301). Creel was an activist Democrat who believed that Woodrow Wilson was one of the greatest men who ever lived. He tended to view individuals in two extremes. Those who agreed with his position on an issue were great; those who disagreed with him were skunks. In fact, Creel wrote, "It must be admitted that an open mind is no part of my inheritance. I took in prejudices with mother's milk and was weaned on partisanship" (Dos Passos, 1962, p. 301).

Creel's family had moved to Missouri from Virginia after the Civil War. Creel grew up in Independence and Odessa, Missouri. While working in Kansas City, Creel met Wilson when Wilson (who was at Princeton) spoke to local high school students. Creel worked to get Wilson nominated for the presidency and worked for his reelection in 1916. Creel was a journalist who had worked on newspapers in Kansas City and New York before returning to Missouri in 1899 to found the *Independent* with Arthur Grissom. Prior to WWI Creel moved to Denver and wrote for the *Post* and the *Rocky Mountain News* and later served as the police commissioner.

President Wilson noted the importance of strong national support for the war in his draft proclamation by arguing that "the whole nation must be a team." "To turn the whole nation into a team it was

not enough to punish the expression of the wrong opinions. It was necessary to disseminate the right opinions" (Dos Passos, 1962, p. 300). To create this teamwork it was essential to promote the war to the American people. Creel was given the job of selling the war to the citizens of the United States and many other nations.

The efforts of the CPI are important because they are one of the earliest examples of a large-scale promotional campaign. Additionally, individuals who worked in the CPI were some of the founding members of what we now call public relations. Indeed, Edward Bernays used his experiences with the CPI to create one of the early public relations firms and to start such an impressive career that he has been called one of the fathers of public relations.

George Creel and the CPI created a promotional campaign for the United States and the world. This campaign used all the channels of communication available at the time. Various accounts of their activities have been reported. The following quote from C. H. Hamlin and Charles F. Dole presented this description of the various CPI divisions and provides some evidence of the scope of CPI's activities:

This "Committee on Public Information" issued 75,099,023 pamphlets and books to encourage the public "morale." They hired the services of 75,000 speakers who operated in 5,200 communities. Altogether, about 755,190 speeches were made by these people known as the "Four Minute Men." Exhibits were given at fairs, and war films were prepared for the cinema. . . . A total of 1,438 drawings were employed to arouse popular hatred. An official daily newspaper was issued which had a circulation of 100,000 copies. A propaganda bureau was established by the United States, in the capitals of every nation in the world except those of the Central powers. (1927, p. 91)

The CPI used the press, films, and public speakers to reach its audience—the nation and the world. Through these various channels they carried the views of the president as articulated by Creel. The activities of the CPI would surely compare with those of any of the largest public relations/marketing campaigns of recent years. A detailed description of

each of the techniques used by the CPI can be found in George Creel's 1920 work, *How We Advertised America*.

The second major area of effort by the CPI involved their attempts to censor the media. In the first few weeks after the United States entered World War I, President Woodrow Wilson was granted wartime powers by the Congress. However, the ability to censor the press, which he had desired, was not included in these powers. Because President Wilson's efforts to obtain formal censorship privileges through the War Powers Act had failed, Creel and the CPI assumed the task. Creel's efforts to establish some form of control are not surprising in light of his admiration of the president and his position as the spokesperson of the administration. Creel was President Wilson's link to the Censorship Board.

The censorship efforts focused on voluntary guidelines that publishers were asked to follow. The June 2, 1917, issue of the *Official Bulletin*, a publication of the CPI, provided more than three pages of voluntary guidelines for publishers to follow so that the press could not be used by enemy nations. On page 12 of that issue's discussion of the voluntary guidelines, news was divided into three distinct categories:

Matters which obviously must not be mentioned in print; matters of a doubtful nature which should not be given publicity until submitted to and passed by the committee; matters which do not affect the conduct of the war, do not concern this committee and are governed only by peacetime laws of libel, defamation of character, etc.

Descriptions of types of news that would fall into each of the categories were provided.

In the specific regulations given on page 13 of the June 2, 1917, issue, the committee notes that "the suppression of all news matter which is obviously likely to be of direct utility to the enemy is urged and expected." The December 31, 1917, issue of the *Official Bulletin* provides revisions for the earlier guidelines. These revisions, like the initial guidelines, were mailed to all editors.

How successful were these voluntary guidelines? The CPI issued the following statement in the June 14 issue of the *Official Bulletin*. "While 99 per cent of the newspapers of the country are scrupulously observing the rules of voluntary censorship, a certain few are printing daily information that may expose American soldiers and sailors to deadly peril." This quote suggests that the vast majority of papers were observing the voluntary guidelines.

Even though the press privately expressed dissatisfaction over the techniques used by Creel, all papers, even opposition papers, remained respectful of the regulations until the end of the war. Dos Passos (1962) summarized the position of the CPI as an agency of censorship. "The CPI became the fountainhead of war news for the Washington press corps. The existence of an official press censorship was consistently denied but editors were safer if their materials had passed through Creel's hands" (p. 301).

The CPI and its chairman were successful in establishing censorship guidelines to which publishers would submit. Even though these guidelines were voluntary, adherence to them was almost universal. Publishers soon discovered that it was simply easier to submit news to the committee rather than take a chance of violating the guidelines. Although no official censorship was available, the Espionage Act made it illegal to spread false reports that would hinder recruiting. Those reports that did not match the official releases of the CPI were viewed as false.

—Charles A. Lubbers

See also Bernays, Edward; Four-Minute Men

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Poster for “Under Four Flags,” one of a series of films by the Committee on Public Information promoting the United States’ efforts in World War I. Such films were used both as propaganda and as fundraisers for the war effort.

SOURCE: Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

COMMODYING INFORMATION

Commodifying information means that organizations focus their information acquisition and public relations efforts on the cost effectiveness or productivity of supplying information to help key markets, audiences, and publics make a wide array of decisions. Many think of public relations as a discipline that provides information. The concept of commodification challenges practitioners to go the extra step of being ever more accountable for the return on investment of acquiring and using information for the interests of building mutual relationships.

People desire information to make decisions they deem valuable. Their desire for information is a function of their involvement—need or desire—to make a decision, so reasons involvement theory. People experience higher levels of involvement when they need or want to make decisions.

Organizations communicate for two broad reasons, to get out messages (containing information) that management wants to be told and to respond to the needs and wants of markets, audiences, and publics. The desire by management and its stakeholders may or may not be a close fit.

Organizations engage in public relations to supply information to people who want information. Executive managements expect public relations to provide information to targeted individuals to influence their decisions, often the choices executives want them to make. For various reasons, executives may want to withhold information desired by others. Information can drive decisions, whether it is information the organization wants people to have or whether it is information people want.

Typically, it is thought to be more costly to provide people with information the organization wants them to have if the people do not have some reason for receiving and using the information. This condition leads public relations to be thought of as a mass communication discipline, broadly casting information through the mass media to put it before some small part of the public, even if targeted. People are inundated with information. Thus, attracting attention to information and getting it to be considered is a serious strategic challenge.

A commodity is something that is bought and sold. It affords ease of transaction and convenience. In the purchase of goods and services, this concept is relevant. Most of the goods people buy are a commodity. It is standardized to make the transaction as easy as possible. People rarely barter in countries such as the United States. Goods come packaged as commodities, even fruits and vegetables. This commodification makes the transaction easier, one the buyer may feel he or she has more control over.

Services are also commodified. For instance, routine and even special dental or medical treatment is performed at standard fees. Legal and other professional fees can be commodified so that the purchaser has a reasonable sense of what the service will be and what it will cost.

As public relations practitioners seek to understand and measure their practice, they should realize the advantages of calculating how much various bits of information cost to acquire and to make available to

key publics. Thus, for instance, they can calculate the cost effectiveness of providing such information in an “on demand” format such as a Web site because typically persons who encounter information in that medium are looking for it, more so than if they were randomly skimming the mass media. They are cognitively involved in searching for, getting, and using key bits of information to make decisions. Information on demand for customers or reporters, for instance, can reduce the cost of disseminating the information.

If businesses, government agencies, or nonprofits attempt to broadly “push” information to markets, audiences, and publics, it is necessarily going to be more costly in delivery even if its cost of development remains the same.

This sort of analysis lends itself to standard productivity measures. As a mathematical formula, productivity is the result of output divided by input. If output remains the same (the price charged for a bag of apples, for instance), but costs more (more input) to produce, then productivity declines. If output increases while the level of input remains the same, then productivity rises.

To think in terms of commodifying information, practitioners need to learn to calculate the cost of getting information and providing that information in ways that serves the organization’s and its stakeholders’ mutual interests.

Output value can be assessed in several ways. One is the reduction in the saved cost of regulation or legislation that is appropriately modified or defeated based on relevant information. Another is the increased marketing impact of getting the right information to the right customers at the right time. A third is the appropriate valuation of publicly held companies because relevant information is available to investors.

—*Robert L. Heath*

See also Executive management; Involvement; Publics; Return on investment; Stakeholder theory; Target

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COMMUNICATION AUDIT AND AUDITING

A communication audit is an assessment tool used for formative, diagnostic, or evaluative research in public relations. The term audit, appropriated from the accounting field, has ambiguous meaning in public relations. Both the trade press and academic texts have used the term to describe a wide variety of research approaches with distinct objectives, methodologies, and study populations. Some describe a communication audit as a comprehensive study of all an organization’s stakeholder groups and their perceptions of the organization, whereas others define the term more narrowly. In general, all these approaches refer to a research process designed to identify perceptions of the organization or its communication vehicles and culminate in appropriate recommendations for action to management. Communication audits are commonly used by corporations, hospitals, and other large organizations to assess the organization’s image among its employees, customers, community residents and leaders, media, and other key publics. Audits are a standard offering of public relations research firms and larger public relations agencies, although various firms may define their audit services differently.

Typically, the audit process begins with an interview with top management to determine the objectives and focus of the audit, specific issues or questions that the audit should address, and key publics to be audited. Then appropriate methodologies for each group are selected and research instruments developed. Surveys, focus groups, interviews with opinion leaders, and content analysis of organizational publications and media coverage are common research techniques. Often, a package of several research techniques is employed. Data are gathered and analyzed, and a report is written that interprets the research findings and makes recommendations to management for future actions. The findings of a communication audit may serve as a tool to justify a change in strategic direction, funding for new programs, or to help a public

relations program gain management approval for such changes.

TYPES OF AUDITS

In 1977, Otto Lerbinger identified three distinct categories of audits used in public relations: public relations audits, communication audits, and social audits. These terms continue to be used, albeit somewhat inconsistently, and are joined by additional variations on the audit described in the trade and academic press in subsequent years.

Public Relations Audits

The public relations audit assesses the health of the relationships between an organization and its key publics. This type of audit provides insight into who key publics are and the images they hold of the organization. Surveys and focus groups are often used to determine key publics' levels of awareness of the organization and its products, services, programs, logos and slogans, or key personnel. Rating scales may be used to measure attitudes toward these, including characteristics that the public associates with the organization. The audit may also ask participants to describe and rate their personal experiences or interactions with the organization. Public relations audits may reveal misperceptions about what the organization is or does, and disparities between management's perception of the organization and the way the organization is actually perceived by its publics. Recommendations stemming from a public relations audit would focus on tactics to strengthen relationships with key publics.

Communication Audits

Lerbinger's (1977) definition of the communication audit limited it to research to determine whether messages have actually gotten through to intended receivers. Today, such audits focus on evaluating an organization's communication vehicles, such as newsletters, annual reports, brochures, press materials, Web sites, and video programs, in the eyes of their intended users. Typical research

methods include readership surveys, content analysis to identify predominate content themes, and measurement of text readability by using standardized formulas that determine reading difficulty based on factors such as word and sentence length. Respondents may be asked about their actual use of communication vehicles, their preferences for particular kinds of content, and whether they remember particular articles or acted on information. They often rate the effectiveness of various communication vehicles they receive on the basis of accuracy, timeliness, and usefulness.

A communication audit can identify information needs that are not being met, distrust of organizational news sources, preferences for particular communication channels, and whether a message is received, understood, and acted upon. Results of a communication audit may be used to improve the content, design, and distribution of publications, or to revamp or discontinue communication vehicles that are not achieving desired results.

Organizational Communication Audits

Communication audit is a term also used in the organizational communication field to describe research to assess employees' satisfaction with communication in their organizations. Because employee relations is often a key public relations concern, the organizational communication audit may be implemented by public relations managers. The International Communication Association (ICA) audit is the most widely used such assessment. It asks employees to rate how much information they receive on particular topics, such as job duties, pay, and their own performance, versus how much they would like to receive. Respondents also rate the amount of communication they receive from and initiate with superiors, subordinates, and co-workers, versus desired levels. An open-ended portion of the audit asks respondents to describe specific interactions they have had in which communication was particularly effective or ineffective. The data are used to make recommendations to management, and may be used to create a network analysis—a diagram depicting the path and frequency of information flow through an organization.

The organizational communication audit can reveal a great deal about the communication climate within an organization. It can identify problems with communication system design, employee information needs that are not being met, and bottlenecks in the communication flow. A limitation of the ICA audit is that it focuses on the amount of communication given and received; it does not ask employees to evaluate the specific strengths and weaknesses of existing communication vehicles. A multitude of studies employing the ICA audit in a variety of settings over the past three decades have confirmed a significant relationship between the communication climate within an organization and employee loyalty and job satisfaction. Employees' preferred source of communication is nearly always their immediate supervisor; however, employees consistently say "the grapevine" and employee publications are their most frequent sources of information.

Social Audits

A social audit evaluates an organization's social responsibility activities, such as voluntary environmental programs, community education programs, corporate philanthropy and volunteerism, and diversity initiatives. The audit measures public awareness of these programs and perceptions of the organization's performance as a corporate citizen. Most often, survey or focus group research is used to attempt to quantify the contribution of these programs to the organization's image and perceptions of the organization as a good place to patronize or work. Social audits were common in the 1970s, when they were used to assess corporate America's first large-scale social action programs. Recently, however, the term *social audit* has been less frequently used, having been replaced by more recent techniques associated with the practice of issues management such as environmental scanning.

Comprehensive Audits

Sometimes the terms *communication audit* and *public relations audit* are used to describe a

comprehensive audit that evaluates the organization's entire communication program and assesses the image of the organization based on the perceptions of all key stakeholder groups. Such an audit examines every facet of the organization's internal and external communication activities, along with the impact of these tactics on key publics. Research techniques may include interviews, focus groups or surveys with all levels of employees, consumers, community leaders and media gatekeepers, and critiques of all materials distributed inside and outside the organization, including newsletters, marketing materials, Web sites, and annual reports. This type of audit is used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the existing public relations position of the organization, to inform the development of long-term communication strategy, and to provide guidelines for future public relations programming.

Other Types of Audits

The public relations literature also describes "crisis audits" (Littlejohn, 1983) and "risk audits" (Ogrizek & Guillery, 1999), both of which are designed to help organizations identify, prioritize, and respond to potential crisis issues. "Public relations agency audits" (Croft, 1997) are described as internal performance assessments to help public relations firms gauge how well they are serving their clients.

Future Trends

The popularity of audits as a research tool in public relations reflects growing recognition of the need to quantify the value of public relations activities. More frequently, formative and evaluative research skills, such as the ability to design and conduct an audit, will be expected of communication professionals. To ensure the acceptance of audits as credible research, knowledgeable practitioners or professional research firms are needed to minimize problems inherent in any type of opinion research, such as those associated with sampling and bias in question design. An additional challenge for

practitioners is that top management may not always follow through on an audit's recommendations and make suggested changes.

—Katherine N. Kinnick

See also Interview as research tool; Issues management; Measuring/measures; Public relations research

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COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

Communication management is an umbrella concept that suggests public relations can be one of several communications functions commonly found in for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Communication management can also be defined as a set of techniques used in public relations and related activities to execute programs, campaigns, and projects.

UMBRELLA CONCEPT

Growing numbers of organizations have recognized that various communications disciplines share common purposes and have moved toward the integration of communications functions into a single unit. This convergence has resulted (a) from recognition of common strategic approaches used by public relations and related disciplines, (b) by the convergence of media and the rise of shared media such as the Internet, (c) by the blurring of the demarcation of traditional communications disciplines, including the rise of integrated marketing

communication, and (d) from efforts by organizations to achieve greater synergy and efficiency and to reduce redundancies and costs in communications operations. This centralization trend is far from complete, however. Most organizations continue to maintain separate functional units devoted to managerial communications, public relations, advertising, and technical communication. In Europe, for instance, communication management is the preferred term for traditional public relations.

In the academic arena, communication management is consistent with the umbrella concept of *strategic communication*, which involves the examination of how organizations use communications across traditional professional disciplines to achieve stated organizational goals and objectives. Both communication management and strategic communication purposely look beyond differences in disciplines and to focus on the similarity of strategic approaches found in various disciplines.

Table 1 compares six conceptual approaches to organizational communications that can be incorporated under this umbrella, although the conceptual focus and techniques that are used are somewhat different in each traditional discipline.

COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Communication management says that all communications in an organization are tools used to achieve the desired organizational outcomes. Indeed, communication represents the constitutive activity of management. Organizational strategies are explained, ideas advocated, staff motivated, and products or services promoted through communication.

Communication management is grounded in the concept of *management by objectives* (MBO), which posits that all organizational activity should be planned around the attainment of goals. Furthermore, communication management recognizes that communications efforts can emanate from the following organizational frameworks or paradigms:

Table 1 Six Domains of Communication Management

Domain (Typical Organizational Unit Involved in Communication)	Goal/Purpose	Traditional Techniques
Management communication Leadership and personnel throughout organization	Facilitate operations of organization; promote understanding of vision, goals; communicate information used in day-to-day operations, including customer and vendor transactions and customer and staff training	Memoranda, contracts, meetings, and presentations
Marketing communication Marketing staff	Create awareness and promote interest and sales of products and services; attract and retain users and customers, including intermediaries in distribution channels	Trade and consumer advertising and product publicity, direct response and sales promotion, personal selling
Public relations Public relations or publicity, human resources, finance or government relations staff	Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with key constituencies; includes consumers and customers, as well as investors, employees, community, and government	Publicity and corporate advertising in public media, interactive media, controlled media, events, personal contacts
Technical communication Technical support, training staff	Train people to reduce errors and improve their efficiency in the use of technology and procedures used in performing tasks important to organization	Procedures manuals, instructions; telephone call centers and computer-based assistance programs
Political communication Politicians, advocacy groups	Influence voting by general public in elections or decisions by lawmakers or administrators considering legislation or regulation	Political advertising, editorial coverage and editorial page opinions, printed materials, get-out-the-vote solicitations/personal contacts
Information campaigns/social marketing Not-for-profit and governmental agencies	Alter human behavior to reduce incidence of risky behaviors or to promote social causes important to the betterment of community	Public service messages, educational materials, interventions by professionals, family and friends

Programs are long-term efforts to establish and maintain communications between organizations and key audiences. Programs can include the establishment of *channels* (such as a Web site), *policies* and *procedures*, and ongoing *activities* (such as events) designed to facilitate communication over time. Program is the nomenclature most commonly associated with managerial communication, technical communication, and public relations.

Campaigns are coordinated efforts to promote particular ideas among key constituencies over a specified time. Campaigns are undertaken by an organization's own staff or with the assistance of outside specialists or consultants. Campaigns represent the basic framework used in advertising, political communication, and social marketing efforts. Some communicators prefer to use the term *programs* instead of *campaigns*. The latter word's origins in military theory suggest

that victors must triumph in a zero-sum game by conquering an enemy, which gives the word a negative connotation.

Projects are limited-purpose activities undertaken to accomplish particular outcomes within an organization. Project management, as a management tool, has received widespread attention in recent years. Unlike a long-term program or campaign, projects are of shorter duration and involve representatives of units working together to accomplish a particular purpose. Communications professionals may be participants in, but are not in charge of, various projects—annual reports, special events, Web sites, and so on. Many projects are undertaken within staffs of communications units.

ROLE OF PLANS

Central to the notion of communication management is the idea of planning or organizing communication effort. The preparation of a formal or written plan is deemed a critical element in effective management. Written plans serve both as *proposals* used to obtain client approval and as *internal control documents* for day-to-day guidance.

Communications managers become involved in the preparation of various keys of planning documents. These include the following:

Strategic plans, which guide the overall direction of the organization or the communication unit for a long-term period (often 3 to 5 years)

Annual plans, which outline specific activities to be taken within an organization's yearly planning cycle

Programs, campaigns, or project plans, which specify efforts to be undertaken to achieve particular outcomes (often without regard to yearly planning cycles)

Contingency plans, which are procedures to be followed in case of unexpected events or crises

ELEMENTS OF A PLAN

Although the specifics will vary by the domain, by the scope of activity, and by specific plan type, all communication management plans address the following:

The situation—An analysis of a problem to be resolved or the opportunity to be exploited.

Organizational goals—The desired outcome of an organization, stated in specific and measurable terms, that can be realistically achieved within a specified time frame. These might be stated in terms of sales, profitability, activity levels, or efficiency.

Communication objectives—The desired changes in human behavior (such as awareness or knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors) that will contribute to achievement of organizational goals. Common behaviors addressed include buying, investing, donating, working, and voting. Lifestyle changes might include adoption of particular spiritual or other beliefs, engagement in healthy or satisfying activities, or avoidance of risky behaviors.

Action strategies—Recommendations for changes in an organization's offerings, policies, or practices that would improve the probabilities of successful communications and thus attaining organizational goals.

Communication strategies—The overall conceptual approach to how communication objectives are to be achieved. Usually, this involves the following: (a) targeting particular *audiences*—which might be defined as market segments, publics, users, voters, or at-risk populations; (b) choosing media channels or specific vehicles to reach those audiences; and (c) development of key messages or themes that will be used in a program, campaign, or project to communicate with key audiences.

Tactics—The specification of *tasks* (including activities, events, or the preparation of materials and messages) to deliver the communication strategy.

Important details must be addressed in the day-to-day execution of a strategy, including *staffing* assignments and *calendar*ing to assure that tactics are executed efficiently and on time. As part of the implementation, *quality control* measures should be implemented to ensure that materials or messages are effective.

Evaluation—Predetermined methods for assessing whether a communication effort was successful in attaining the stated communication objectives and organizational goals.

Budget—A spending plan that appropriates the financial resources needed to achieve stated communications

objectives, that estimates costs, and that allocates spending to specific budget categories, avoiding waste.

The elements outlined are strikingly similar to those commonly found in textbook discussions of public relations campaigns. But whereas public relations conceptualizes its work as involving a four-step process, communications management adopts a (similar) model more closely aligned with general business planning.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The communication management approach places a premium on deploying resources effectively and efficiently with the same rigor and accountability as that imposed on other unit managers. Thus, along with planning, evaluation plays a critical role in the management of communication programs, campaigns, and projects.

Communication managers use the following different measures to assess their effectiveness and efficiency:

Qualitative measures include critical examination of the work product to identify deficiencies and opportunities for improvements. These often are for the internal use of the communication and to provide a benchmark for professionalism.

Output measures include examining the materials and message produced in quantitative terms. These involve examination of the extent of use of materials or tools and exposure to messages by audiences. These measures serve as a proxy (indirect) indicator of an effort's impact.

Impact measures assess the achievement of communications objectives (changes in people's awareness or knowledge, attitudes, or actions) as well as organizational goals (achievement of desired sales, contributions, productivity, voting, or risk reduction outcomes).

Financial measures include the contribution of the communication activity to the organization, including *return on investment* (ROI) and determination of the optimal *efficiency* when two or more tools are available to achieve similar outcomes.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Cutlip, Scott M.; Integrated marketing communication

COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Since humans first used sticks and charcoal to augment the human voice as a medium of communication, technologies have shaped the form, content, and dissemination of communications. Today, technology has become an increasingly important topic for public relations practitioners, who have available to them an increasingly wide array of tools to communicate ideas.

The advent of every new technology brings important changes to how public relations is practiced. The advent of printing with movable type, books, newspapers and magazines, the telegraph, photography and new illustration reproduction technologies, the typewriter, the telephone, the motion picture, radio, and television have altered the nature of advocacy, promotion, and persuasion over time. "New" communications technologies, such as the Internet, brought yet further changes.

COMPUTER-BASED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WORKPLACE

Most organizations, including the public relations units within them, now use mainframes, workstations, and personal computers connected in local area networks (LANs) for a wide range of activities, including accounting and data processing, database management, and word processing and graphic production. Computer networks are used for management reporting and for work group collaboration (e.g., using groupware and group decision support systems [GDSS] software). As result, hierarchical structures have become flattened and reporting relationships splintered. Work production itself has recentered around computer screens.

Similarly, many organizations and functions have become decentralized. Work units in dispersed geographic locations and individuals working in remote locations (e.g., *telecommuters*) share information via wide area networks (WANs) in real time.

Web technologies have facilitated this process by creating Intranets using graphical interfaces that integrate text, images, and sounds. The latest enhancements now permit Webcasting and Webconferencing. Meanwhile wireless technologies have extended these capabilities by providing even more mobility.

As a result, workers in public relations and other fields have had to become more computer savvy. In an effort to reduce costs, many routine tasks have become automated with the advent of voice mail, e-mail, automated telephone response systems, and Web interfaces to database information. Critics argue that organizations have become more impersonal as a result; others suggest employees, customers, and others find it more difficult to make sense of events in organizations today. Thus, changing communications technologies have posed new challenges for public relations as it strives to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships on behalf of organizations.

HOW TECHNOLOGY IMPACTS PUBLIC RELATIONS

Technology had impacted public relations in several ways by the beginning of the 21st century. Many public relations practitioners approached the Internet timidly and without considerable thought, yet many practitioners have embraced technology widely. In 2001, Edward J. Lordan suggested that communication technologies primarily have influenced how practitioners conduct research and then package and distribute information. Research includes access to a wide range of electronic intelligence gathering sources, including the Web, proprietary databases, and specialized research software used in surveys and content analysis that improves monitoring situations and enhances the ability of practitioners to assume the role of a true manager versus merely a technician. Packaging includes the more sophisticated production and archiving of materials in digital formats by using word processing, database, graphic design, and electronic presentation software. Distribution covers the digital dissemination of information through the Internet, voice and text messaging, facsimile,

and satellite uplinks and downlinks in addition to traditional systems.

Whether communications technology has improved the productivity and effectiveness of the public relations practice is yet to be fully understood. However, the public relations practice clearly has been impacted in the following various ways:

Volume of Information

The sheer amount of information available to people has increased and, in general, organizations are making more and more information accessible than in the past. This requires the careful management, organization, sharing, and archiving of larger and larger volumes of organizational knowledge.

Speed of Information Exchange

Information can be distributed more quickly due to real-time information delivery systems. In turn, there have been greater demands from audiences to access available information on a timely basis. This has led to the blurring of time, haste, and competitive pressures that did not exist in earlier times.

Audience Choice

A fundamental shift has occurred that shifts the decision making about information access into the hands of the audience versus the organization. Audiences have more channels available to access information and often dictate when and how they access information. Thus, many public relations operations today operate on a 24/7 basis.

Changed Relationships

Whereas technologies were thought to be tools to disseminate information, they have been shown to actually create new constituencies for organizations and new opportunities for organizations to interact with constituencies. New Internet-based technologies, for example, allow organizations to engage in true two-way communication that can equalize power relationships. Technology also enables organizations to facilitate communication *among* various constituencies important to the organizations,

not merely *between* the organization and those constituencies.

Control of Information

The breakdown of boundaries that delineate an organization from its external environment, the flattening of hierarchical structures, and the expanded sharing of organizational knowledge through the use of technology have all made it difficult for management to limit the flow of organizational information and intelligence. This problem has been exacerbated by changing social values that pertain to propriety of organizational information, confidentiality, and privacy and calls for institutions to make their activities more transparent.

Ownership of Information

A special extension of the control issue is that new technologies facilitate the duplication, archiving, and sharing of information by third parties after it has been distributed by an organization initially. Thus, possession of information is increasingly being assumed by others, leading to the perpetuation of misinformation as well as undesirable information that otherwise might fade from the public domain. This raises several concerns for organizations that can be exploited by information attackers, hackers, lurkers, rogues, and thieves.

Formats for Information Dissemination

Information is being distributed in a variety of different forms now using both analog and digital formats. Moreover, public relations professionals must provide the same information in several different forms to meet requirements of audiences, resulting in increased costs and staffing needs for many public relations operations.

TECHNOLOGY-BASED CHARACTERISTICS OF MESSAGES AND MEDIA

Theories of *technological determinism* suggest that the nature of societies, organizations, and communication is shaped by technologies employed.

Marshall McLuhan popularized this notion when he observed “the medium is the message” (McLuhan, 1964, p. 9). In deploying alternative communications technologies, public relations practitioners must be keenly aware of the technological characteristics of various media and select communications media that best match their needs.

Table 1 outlines more than a dozen criteria that might be used to differentiate media based on their technological characteristics. Although polar extremes are indicated, many of these criteria provide for a continuum of options.

Each technology offers certain advantages and disadvantages and combines these characteristics in different ways. The task confronting the practitioner in choosing a particular technology is to select technologies that are appropriate to the target audience (based on use, preference, ability, motivation, etc.) and compatible with the message (such as spoken word versus text, and simplicity versus complexity). Practitioners also want to consider technological *effectiveness* (whether a particular technology can achieve the desired impact, such as building awareness versus resolving a problem) and *efficiency* (achieving the desired impact at the lowest possible cost).

MEDIA STRATEGY AND TECHNOLOGY

Communications technology should be deployed strategically and in combination to achieve desired outcomes. In 2001, Kirk Hallahan outlined a model of five principal types of public relations media in an effort to identify the most basic types of communications media based on their technological characteristics and uses. Briefly, these include the following:

Public media—Traditional mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, and television) are operated by third parties that depend on sources for material but assume responsibility for the actual delivery of messages to audiences. People are exposed to public relations-sponsored messages through a process of incidental exposure when they read, listen to, or view media as part of their everyday lives. For that reason, public media represent the best technologies to generate broad

Table 1 Technological Considerations in Designing Messages and Selecting Media

Primary modality: Ear (sound) vs. eye (text, visuals)
Data format: Analog (nonelectronic) vs. digital (electronic)
Interactivity: High interaction (two-way communication) vs. low interaction (one-way communication)
Mediation level: Personal (nonmediated) vs. quasi-personal (partly mediated or combination) vs. nonpersonal (completely mediated)
Media richness: Rich (provides many contextual cues about message's meaning) vs. lean (few contextual cues, such as a simple data report)
Social presence: Human source present vs. implied vs. not evident
Sophistication: Simple (low-tech) vs. complex (high-tech)
Channel ownership: by a third party (e.g., mass media), by the message sponsor, or no channel ownership involved
Message selection: By third parties/producers, by audience/receiver, by sponsor/organizer, or combination of these
Audience processing involvement: High vs. low
Reach: Large audience vs. small audience
Cost per impression: Expensive vs. cheap
Best uses: Build mere awareness vs. prompting specific action

public awareness of a topic efficiently, but are not necessarily effective to promote actions.

Interactive media—These computer- and telephone-based delivery systems are distinguished from public media by the ability of users to use the technology to control media content and provide direct feedback. Examples include Internet-based technologies (e.g., World Wide Web, e-mail, discussion and newsgroups, and bulletin boards) and automated telephone response systems. Importantly, interactive media depend upon users to seek out information—an involvement level that far exceeds exposure commonly found in public media. When structured correctly, interactive media enable people to take perfunctory actions that can be completed electronically.

Controlled media—Numerous tools that are designed, produced, manufactured, and distributed by message sponsors fall into this category: printed materials, CDs, video brochures, promotional specialties, and so on. Although the technologies vary widely, the onus of delivering the message falls to message sponsors, who must make materials available for people and get materials into their hands through postal mail or package or personal delivery. Unlike the rather superficial and often limited messages delivered in public media, controlled media give sponsors complete latitude to say as much as they want to say however they want to say it. Controlled media are a comparatively costly set of technologies to create awareness and

incorporate only limited opportunities for people to act (such as filling out a coupon or form).

Events and group communication—These involve bringing people together in one geographic or virtual (online) location. In most cases, the principal tool used is oral communication where speakers make presentations or engage those in attendance in conversation. However, events are often enhanced through sound amplification and audiovisual equipment and the creation of a conducive atmosphere that engages participation and involvement—decorations, pageantry, music, and sound. Importantly, people at events learn as much from others in attendance as they do from any formal presentations and their lasting impressions are based upon their personal experience. Events and group communications, thus, are most valuable for reinforcing existing beliefs and attitudes. Many large-scale settings are not conducive to making commitments or taking personal actions.

One-on-one communication—The last group of public relations tools involves simple techniques and comparatively unsophisticated technologies in which one representative of an organization communicates on a personal level with an individual member of an important constituency or public. One-on-one communications can use oral communication in the form of personal meetings, visits or telephone conversations, as well as written (textual) communication in the

form of personal letters or e-mail correspondence. One-on-one communication is a highly involving process best reserved for situations in which negotiations or commitments are required. Overall, one-on-one communication is the least efficient approach on a cost-per-impression basis, but the most effective in prompting people to take action.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Communication management; Dialogue; Online public relations; Publics

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COMMUNITARIANISM

In 1988, Dean Kruckeberg and Kenneth Starck argued that the concept of community should be used as the basis for the theory and practice of public relations. Their book coincided with a modern communitarian movement. The debate over the proper balance between the individual and the community goes back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. In Western society, there are two fundamental approaches to explaining the world around us that have been competing for dominance—liberalism and communitarianism. While liberalism has been the dominant paradigm in American society, there has been a significant resurgence in communitarian thought with both theoretical and programmatic implications.

Three common themes among the major communitarian theorists (Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, and Michael Walzer)

include the following. First, the liberal position that the state should be neutral in regard to ends is harmful to the development of community. Second, state neutrality with regard to ends is itself a value choice that is not neutral. Third, liberalism sees human rights as transcendent and universal rather than historically contingent. In terms of a programmatic agenda, American communitarians have tended to group themselves around Amitai Etzioni, the Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies, and the journal *The Responsive Community: Rights and Responsibilities*. They argue for a “four-point agenda”: “a moratorium on the minting of most, if not all, new rights; reestablishing the link between rights and responsibilities; recognizing that some responsibilities do not entail rights; and, most carefully, adjusting some rights to the changed circumstances” (Etzioni, 1993, pp. 4–11). This agenda, in turn, leads to recommendations and lobbying on various issues including strengthening family structures and implementing neighborhood associations.

A metatheory is grouped around four elements or questions: epistemology, ontology, perspective or focus, and value. In epistemology, the communitarian approach is constructivist in approach. This approach holds that knowledge “arises not out of discovery but from interaction between knower and known” (Littlejohn, 1992, p. 32). In terms of ontological questions, communitarians see the community or society as their basic starting point, not the individual. From a perspective, or definitional viewpoint, the field of public relations is unclear. No agreed-upon definition of the field of public relations makes the issue of a foundation, or metatheory, for the field so important. Agreement on a foundational starting point might make it easier to agree upon a set of definitions that would stem from that starting point. With regard to the questions of values or ethics, communitarians hold that there are no universally valid ethical principles. Stress is on character and virtue. As a result, history and tradition play a major role in ethical analysis. (See the analysis in MacIntyre's *After Virtue*.)

Several implications are involved in accepting communitarianism as an approach to the field

of public relations. One implication impacts communication models. Communitarianism would seem to mandate a two-way symmetrical model for the practice of public relations. Strong parallels exist between the communitarian worldview and the symmetrical models as presented by James E. Grunig and between the liberal worldview and the asymmetrical models of public relations. The symmetrical models, like communitarianism, are based upon an interactive epistemology, relationships between individuals as the correct ontological approach, define the public relations world as an interactive place, hold that theory is not value free, and that a function of theory is idealistic and change oriented. Among the assumptions of communitarianism are a need for social cohesion, agreement on core values, and citizen empowerment. If the goal of public relations is bringing public and private interests into harmony as the Public Relations Society of America Code suggests, then fostering these values is important.

Communitarianism also has implications for the way publics are defined and approached. Some public relations practitioners define publics narrowly and segment them in order to better tailor their messages. But segmenting publics has consequences for the community at large within which the narrower publics are situated. The question becomes, when does tailoring messages become destructive of the commonality of the larger community, and then ultimately of the environment within which the smaller publics exist? There is also a question of whether the practice of segmenting publics to better tailor a message is consistent with the idea of symmetry. Lana F. Rakow makes the argument that such a practice is still in the "talking to" rather than in a "talking with" mode, or one-way versus two-way communication. The communitarian position is that public relations must see the general "public at the center of activity, *directing* the actions of institutions, which become its object and not the other way around" (1989, p. 178). It is only through this power reversal that true symmetry and "genuine democracy," or community, can be attained. At least a hint of this power reversal is found in the symmetrical literature.

Approaches toward a communitarian perspective can be seen within the issues of social responsibility, stewardship, and nonprofit development.

Corporate social responsibility focuses on the good of the community. As decisions are made, they are made with the goal of contributing to the social, political, and economic health of the global community. The evidence is becoming increasingly compelling that a community's perception of corporate social responsibility has a positive influence on profits. Developing strong ties with the community in which an organization is based is important for developing community support of that organization. Evidence suggests that a perception of corporate social responsibility decreases community resistance to controversial organizational initiatives within the community. If the community perceives the organization as being a valued member of the community, as opposed to someone who is simply in the community, then it is more likely to work with the organization.

Establishment of ties with the community means the organization is in the position to identify and manage issues before a crisis develops for the organization. It is always easier to manage the issues and make necessary adjustments and resolve conflicts prior to the development of the crisis. Organizations that need to convince the community that the organization is a part of the community after the crisis becomes full blown face difficult challenges.

Publics who feel they are being harmed by the corporation may appeal to the government for regulatory help with their problem. Strong community ties enable organizations to understand and make changes so that community groups are not upset and do not need to make that appeal. It is in the organization's best interests to have a relationship with their community such that the community will try to work out the problem with the organization. In fact, it has been suggested that the best shield against big government and its regulatory powers is strong communities capable of taking care of their own problems.

Such efforts will often go beyond even the most enlightened public relations theory based on symmetrical communication and reciprocity. It will

often entail the organization planning with the community, not just presenting or even discussing the organization's plan with the community. It will include more than encouraging employees to become active in their environment. It may involve the organization providing the community with information not just so the community members can engage in a meaningful dialogue with the organization, but so the community is capable of making its own, independent decisions on issues affecting the organization. Citizen empowerment decreases dependency that leads to asymmetrical relationships. This approach means that the organization does more than ask the community to trust it—it means helping the community develop resources and institutions so that it can rely on itself and not on the organization—it means provisional planning and resultant consultation, not strategic manipulation.

The concept of stewardship is appropriate within a communitarian approach. Within stewardship is a focus on responsibility for all of the assets of the organization. Because these assets include more than just financial assets, but also physical assets, relational assets, and image assets, they definitely fall within a public relations approach and are seen in aspects of social responsibility.

The creation of nonprofit organizations is a demonstration of the communitarian approach. Because nonprofit organizations are created to make the community better, they represent the assumption of responsibilities by the community to meet specific community needs, whether those needs are to provide for social services, health issues, educational issues, religious organizations, hospitals, or cultural issues. These organizations can continue to exist not only as a result of volunteer involvement within the community, but also through community financial support.

Communitarianism also has implications for public relations ethics. The communitarian critique of liberalism in the area of ethics forms a basis for the rejection of an excessive reliance on the rights approach and provides a foundation for a relational/responsibilities approach. Communitarianism theorizes that a constructivist basis for ethics is possible as opposed to reliance on consequential

calculation (utilitarianism) or on universal reason (Immanuel Kant and rule ethics). The basis for this constructivist approach is found in the reciprocity and symmetry that is necessary for the development of community, common values, and trust.

In discussing Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development, J. E. Grunig and Jon White wrote that what is needed is to recognize another stage in the development of ethics, a stage involving

interactive competence or the ability to engage in dialogue. At that stage, people base morality on responsibility rather than on rights and develop a greater sense of interdependence and relationship. In short, the more ethically developed an individual is—and also an organization—the more he or she uses the concepts of reciprocity and symmetry to decide what is moral. (1992, p. 60)

The communitarian approach to ethics seems to be a virtue approach, which puts the emphasis on character development and on Aristotle's golden mean. The teaching of this approach would necessarily involve dialogue as to what it means to be virtuous. What it means to be ethical would not focus on rule following but on the situation and the interaction of the parties involved.

Communitarianism as a movement has reemerged and reenergized the political and social debates in the Western world. The outcomes of those debates, both at the theoretical and practical levels, are important not only for the larger community but also for the field of public relations.

—Roy V. Leeper

See also Ethics of public relations; Excellence theory; Moral development; Mutually beneficial relationships; Symmetry

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COMMUNITY AND COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community and *community building* represent an alternative framework to the notion of *public* for conceptualizing public relations activities.

For most of the 20th century, the idea of “public” served as the central concept in public relations theory and practice. The term *public* is used today in varying ways to describe the entire citizenry of a country (the *general public*) as well people affected by an organization or in a position to impact the organization (*stakeholders*). Alternatively, a public is defined as prospective recipients of public relations messages (*audiences*) or as groups that organize to resolve a situation they define as problematic (*activists*).

By contrast, a *community* can be conceptualized as a group of people who share a common experience, identity, or interest and who are joined

together through their interaction or communication. Importantly, *communis* (to commune) is the root word for both community and communication. Community, as a concept, has deep historical roots in many cultures but has received increased scholarly interest since the 1980s as a way to describe groups of various sorts. The popularity of the term is evident in everyday references to such ideas as the *business community*, the *educational community*, the *minority community*, and so on.

GEOGRAPHIC VERSUS SYMBOLIC COMMUNITIES

Traditional use of the term *community* denotes a locality. A geographic community is a particular region, city, or neighborhood. Many organizations engage in community relations programs to reach out to people in geographic proximity to their operations to foster mutually beneficial relationships.

Yet communities are not bounded by geography anymore. Today, communities can be plotted along a continuum from purely geographic to purely symbolic in nature. In a symbolic community, people are tied together because they interact with one another and share common beliefs, values, and cultural artifacts of life—language, traditions, customs, mores, and so on. Whereas proximity and geographic boundaries once delineated communities, the rise of new communications technologies has redefined communities so they can operate on a global basis.

The rise of industrial life was described by early sociologist Fernand Tönnies as a transformation of human life from *gemeinschaft* or community (a small agrarian village where people all knew one another) to *gesellschaft* or society (where people live interdependently among strangers with whom they have few or only specialized relationships). Early sociologists lamented *anomie*, or an emerging sense of isolation and loss of identity among people, as a deleterious effect of modern life. Later researchers, however, recognized that people engage in various activities that help develop a sense of community and overcome alienation. Sociologists from the University of Chicago (known as the “Chicago school of social thought”),

for example, examined how people operated as small communities within the larger urban setting of Chicago.

COLLECTIVISM VERSUS INDIVIDUALISM

People in Western cultures have been described as torn between a desire for freedom (being independent and self-reliant) and a desire to belong (and thus become a part of a larger collectivity). The premium placed on freedom in Western cultures is evident in the American and French revolutions as well as in the early 19th century American literature that focused on the virtues of transcendental individualism. This rise of intellectual interest in individualism paralleled the growth of capital markets, the polis (nation-state), the nuclear family, and the early beginnings of mass society.

The second half of the 1800s, however, saw an increased awareness in the importance of communal life. This was evident in intellectual thought related to politics, morality, nature and genetics, and the nature of intellectual inquiry itself. Importantly, collectivism as a value orientation or cultural dimension never lost its importance in Eastern cultures, where collective decision making and self-identity as a member of a larger collectivity are stronger than in Western cultures.

COMMUNITIES VERSUS PUBLICS

For organizations concerned about building and maintaining mutually beneficial relations with important constituencies, the difference between publics and communities is an important one.

Communities define themselves and thus exist outside the context of any particular organization. One of the benefits of using community as a framework for public relations work, therefore, is avoidance of various conceptual problems that plague the public construct. Communities are not merely audiences and are not defined by their stakeholder relationship to the organization. Communities are the umbrella grouping within which various publics might exist and from which groups of people might form to address issues.

Communities differ from publics because they organize around common interests, not issues, and are apolitical. Their goal is usually to sustain the group, rather than to effect change. In this way, communities are proactive, not reactive. Communities have long and well-established histories and people within them routinely interact by sharing a common culture. By contrast, a public created around an issue often has a short-term life span and brings together diverse people whose only commonality is concern about a common problem.

As the term is commonly used, a public is considered to be made up of individuals, yet communities can be thought of as being composed of individuals as well as organizations and institutions. Communities are often easier to locate and to identify, compared to an issues-driven public that must first make its presence known. Importantly, a single-purpose public can evolve into a community, but the group's focus usually broadens beyond the single issue around which it might have been formed.

COMMUNITY-BASED THEORY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Several public relations theorists have called for focusing on community and community building in public relations practice.

Dean Kruckeberg and Kenneth Starck (1988) were the first to argue that public relations should be practiced as an active attempt to restore and maintain a sense of community. Such an approach places a premium on caring about and for others to create a more human and mutually supportive society. The authors challenged public relations to (1) make community members conscious of their common interests, (2) overcome alienation, (3) use technology to create community, (4) promote leisure-time activities, (5) engage in consummatory (self-fulfilling) communication that can be enjoyed for its own sake, (6) lead in charitable works, (7) help communities share aesthetic experiences, religious ideas, personal values, and sentiments, and (8) foster personal relationships.

Wilson (1996) similarly argued that creating strategic communities is a means for corporations to

foster positive relationships. The following five characteristics are required by corporations: (1) long-range vision, (2) a sincere commitment to community service, not just profit, (3) organizational values that emphasize the importance of people (including trust, respect, and human dignity), (4) cooperative problem solving and empowerment, and (5) a relationship-building approach to public relations.

Other researchers have pointed to the communitarian movement of the 1990s as a potentially ethical framework for public relations. Hugh N. Culbertson and Ni Chen, for example, outlined six major tenets in 1996. These ideas stress the importance of commitment to relationships, interconnectedness and social cohesion, common core values and beliefs, a balancing between rights and responsibilities, empowerment and involvement in joint decision making, and a broadening of perspectives to reduce fragmentation.

Although not using the term *community* per se, various theories related to symmetric communication, symmetric worldviews, two-way communication, and dialogue are all consistent with notions of community. Similarly, the development of communal (versus merely exchange) relationships and community involvement measures has been incorporated into the measure of relationship outcomes in public relations.

Although community can be situated firmly in modern thought, postmodern theorists have especially embraced community as a concept that lends itself to both critical and cultural approaches to the study of public relations. The shift away from conceptualizing public relations as an organization-centered practice to one in which various social actors engage reflects the importance of power in the community. Similarly, cultural theorists have examined the problems related to universalism versus particularism of public relations practices and how premises of public relations practice must be adapted to particular communities or cultures.

The community construct can be found in numerous aspects of the field, including adoption of new technologies (e.g., the creation of online or virtual communities), risk communication (e.g.,

community conflict and community advocacy councils), health communications (e.g., community-level interventions and community readiness to change). Other theories in which community plays an important role include public relations field dynamics (community versus self-orientation) and theories of social capital (which measure social cohesion and interaction as a basis for assessing the quality of life).

THREE DIMENSIONS OF COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community has been criticized as an abstract, idealized state that can never be achieved. Some would argue that true community can be achieved only where everyone shares an affinity or like-mindedness, where people always like one another, and where consensus is always present. Yet, such an approach to community is improbable in today's pluralistic society. Others suggest that community exists where people are conscious of others and recognize people's personal needs for expression, growth, and transformation. In such a community of otherness, many points of view are present but polarization is avoided. Such communities are functional because members support the well-being of the group so that everyone is successful and social order is maintained.

Public relations representatives of organizations can participate in and build communities in three ways.

Community involvement involves facilitating an organization or cause's participation in an already existing community—the traditional boundary spanning function commonly associated with geographic community relations. Involvement includes socially responsible gestures (such as attendance at community events) and participation in discussions and dialogues—in order to interact with others as responsible community citizens.

Community nurturing entails fostering the economic, political, social, and cultural vitality of a community where people and organizations or causes are members—beyond mere involvement. Organizations can be official sponsors of activities,

such as a Little League team or a major event. Organizations can also recruit volunteers or engage in philanthropy to help communities. Community-oriented organizations can view their involvement as matters of social responsibility (where no quid pro quo is expected), or as relationship building, or as enlightened self-interest in that some reciprocity is expected. True nurturing, however, excludes efforts by organizations that are intended simply to put a face on the organization through adroit impression management.

Community organizing involves the grassroots forging of new communities among disparate individuals or organizations with common interests. Such is the case with the creation of formal or informal groups within organizations as well as efforts to create clubs, associations, and societies outside of an existing organizational context. To the extent that efforts are rooted in social problems, community organizing closely resembles the formation of a social movement. Yet, interests—not issues—define communities.

Public relations practitioners can play varying roles in this community organizing process. In community involvement, public relations professionals are agent representatives of an organization or cause who become active participants in community activities and conversations. In community nurturing, public relations professionals act as program facilitators, orchestrators of events, producers of information, and managers or coordinators of volunteer and philanthropic activities. In community organizing, the roles are as leaders, recruiters, and advocates. The overarching metaphor for all of these roles is *community builder*.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Communitarianism; Community relations; Health Belief Model; Interpersonal communication theory; Philanthropy; Public Relations Field Dynamics (PRFD); Publics; Relationship management theory; Risk communication; Symmetry; Transtheoretical model of behavior change; Two-step flow theory; Two-way and one-way communication

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Community relations is largely a public relations responsibility focusing on the management of potential and existing communication interactive networks of organizations and publics for the benefit of both groups. This assumes that public relations utilizes communication functions to interact with intent and commitment to create *dialogue*. The framework guiding this process is grounded in the concepts of the participants’ rights and responsibilities and is “trim-tabbed” by the power of public opinion. One often views community relations as the overall tone of attitudes within a sphere of influence.

There are some general conclusions that can be drawn about community relations:

1. It has inherent factors involving rights, responsibilities, and public input.
2. It is needed before an issue or crisis is evident.
3. It is complex, and a careful and thorough analysis of relations must be conducted.
4. It is wherever the network of communications develops—local, regional, national, or global.
5. It is greatly affected by the forces in the environment requiring ever-changing strategic approaches.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS CONCEPT

The historical evolution of community relations emerged from the changing pressures in society resulting in great dissatisfaction between organizations and their publics. Originally, the concept of philanthropy in terms of educational programs or job training was considered enough effort to bring goodwill to an organization, especially corporate entities. The emergence of community relations as more dedicated to *research* and analyzing *attitudes* paralleled the increased activism of publics within communities.

In the early stages of industrial expansion, business organizations were considered a benefit to a community. New industry provided jobs from generation to generation and supplied the community with an ample tax base for developing the infrastructure of a community. However, as time passed, it became more and more evident that corporations often exacted a toll on a community in terms of layoffs, relocations, pollution, increased health problems, safety issues, the attraction of large groups of people, as well as domination of the local boards of directors. Initially, the activism was directed toward business, often corporate organizations, established within a geographical community. As technology and transportation improved, the geographical constraint was not always the central factor. The “voice” of the community was more like coalescing around an idea or concept that emerged often as an *issue* wherever the organization was located.

Groups were being established with official names like unions, service groups, and educators to organize and represent certain issues. Other groups clustered under general labels like environmentalists (e.g., Greenpeace and Sierra Club), animal rights (e.g., PETA), or senior citizens (e.g., Gray Panthers) were named to brand their coalition’s mission. The Gray Panthers, for example, do not have a main office or physical meetings. This electronic network of senior citizens lobbies for legislation, senior rights for access, and medical care through their listserv and electronic e-mails. The community is where the locus of communication exists.

These resistance and opposition groups sought to bring organizations into public disfavor. Such forces resulted in the public relations function of *issue management* emerging as a specific organizational responsibility. Community relations contributes by monitoring the emerging top social issues, a practice that documents the range and change of concerns within society on a yearly basis.

Consumer Forces

The earliest dissent groups formed were coalitions representing consumers. In the United States, particularly, the organizational power of communities resulted in many consumer laws restricting and regulating business organizations. In response, more organizations dedicated community relations resources to working with consumer activists. Internationally, too, organizations did not always respect human needs and rights and were met with severe resistance. When the United States sent unsafe or unsatisfactory products to Poland, the negative reaction cast a shadow over all future U.S. efforts—trust had been broken. Now protest groups met the organization outside its border as anti-smoking groups alerted Russia to the tobacco corporations’ intent to initiate a campaign to attract young smokers after even though the industry had been restrained severely from targeting this age group in the United States. The level of sophistication in communication effort is becoming quite complex for the organization and publics.

Customer Power

Community relations is not relegated to just corporate entities. Nonprofits and government are faced with similar social challenges. The community relations’ role in public relations is well established in nonbusiness organizations. Public relations is often central to the very survival of the nonprofit organization.

In educational dissertations, for example, principals rated community relations as the most important activity outside of classroom responsibilities. The role of community relations in the work of police and other similar groups stresses the importance of community relations.

A bias remains such that most discussions refer to corporate community relations. However, with the development of public relations in countries where there are few corporations, the need for community relations focuses more on government and service agencies to address severe social problems to assure the survival of a community.

Goals for Community Relations

Community relations involves more than appearing positive and planning. Community relations prepares an organization for meeting the challenges in a diverse often unpredictable climate. Whereas often publics seek recognition, a hearing, and sincere consideration, the public relations professional must prepare by completing the following series of stages: to initiate or reestablish a community relations intent, to research internal and external infrastructures, attitudes, requests, and so on, to build dialogic bridges, to monitor continually the environment, and to integrate the data and actions into some synergistic approach that allows for a mutually beneficial coexistence for organizations and the various publics. Both groups (organizations and publics) must create *trust* to further establish ongoing dialogue. The *stakeholders* especially need to be integrated into the dialogic process.

COMMUNICATION: A METATHEORETICAL APPROACH TO COMMUNITY RELATIONS

How this evolution of opposition and resistance has developed to stimulate the need for community relations is attributed by some to the individual who discovers power in joining groups and thus having more of a voice in issues. Robert L. Heath (1997) noted “dialogue and collaborative decision making” and stressed the “importance of two-way communication” as “these functions are the heart and soul of issues management” (p. 22). References to the community relations role of public relations in *harmonizing* society suggest that the dialogic exchange is needed to sustain trust and confidence. In these complex times, the true test of public relations will be if the discipline can sustain an ongoing impact on the major global challenges facing society today. Public

relations is involved in all phases of life such as biogenic food, aids, building a civil society, association representation, education, and health. The degree to which public relations is consulted and involved in these societal needs to lead the dialogue will attest to the depth and breadth of the community relations effort by public relations professionals.

Communication remains the single and most impactful theoretical approach to developing community relations from a public relations perspective. There have been misdirected efforts to supplant the communication metatheory underlying public relations. For example, the liberal versus communitarian debate lacks the stature to qualify as a public relations metatheory because

1. The concepts are primarily posed as a Western world discussion and, therefore, are not as useful for global public relations.
2. The statements presented reflect primarily polarized concepts—liberal versus communitarianism—and, therefore, are either unrealistic or idealized.
3. The discussion is based on a disregard for the understanding of the nature and evolution of communication knowledge.
4. It is impossible to implement or develop as a requirement of societies to conform, even if this applies only to the United States.

Another group representing a segment of the public relations academics attempted to develop the concept of “relationship” as a public relations metatheory. Philip Lesly noted this is another attempt to balkanize the field of public relations into segments (1996, p. 43). This approach, too, confuses the concept of public relations by focusing on a sublevel factor while largely ignoring the communication process. Bruber and Griffin confirm that only through dialogue is ethical communication possible as a basis for relationships. Communication ranges from public communication including debate or discussion as rhetorical or persuasive and emphasizes the more dialogic approach. Communication serves as the foundational metatheory for conducting community relations.

The agreement for a theoretical perspective for community relations comes from the centrality of



Gray Panthers' founder Maggie Kuhn gestures and screams during her address to the Poletown Neighborhood Council in Hamtramck, Michigan, circa 1980.

SOURCE: © David Turnley/CORBIS

communication to the public relations process. It is through communication that dialogue is established and the languaging constructs the conceptual possibilities. It is impossible to proceed from agreed upon common ends in dialogue because one is engaged in a creative process going from known to unknown. The dialogic approach also carries critical universal structural elements to assure the communication act is truly complete. This is different from rules or procedures because, again, this is a creative process. In community relations, communication is the core of public relations and the fundamental metatheory focused on the speech act as affected by the self, the episode, the relationship, and culture.

—Bonita Dostal Neff

See also Lesly, Philip

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COMPOSING/COMPOSITION

Composition is the process of composing (creating and arranging) type for printing, that is, the letters, numerals, punctuation marks, and other symbols that are used to create written text that appears in a printed publication. Type was assembled by hand for about 400 years after Johannes Gutenberg had invented a printing press in 1440 that used movable type to print ink on paper. Although some 19th-century inventions preceded the typesetting machine that Ottmar Mergenthaler invented in 1886, his Linotype was the first that was suitable for commercial use.

Other metal-casting typesetting machines soon followed that also created raised (i.e., relief) metal “hot-type” for letterpress printing, for example, the Intertype and the Ludlow, both of which also cast one-piece fully spaced lines, and the Monotype, which cast individual type characters in justified lines. Although such innovations were a remarkable improvement over the tedious hand composition of individual type characters, the type compositors who used these typesetting machines were laboriously slow compared with today’s typesetters, who simply use a computer keyboard to set type for offset lithography (planographic) printing—with the normal speed of creating any other type of document on a computer. Indeed, anyone today who does “desktop” printing could be considered a type compositor, albeit one lacking in the skills the craft required in past generations of printing technology.

As opposed to the creation of cast-metal hot type, a “cold-type” process evolved in the mid-20th century that ranged from “strike-on” machines that were similar to electric typewriters and that evolved into the far more sophisticated photocomposition machines that produced type on film and transferred this type directly onto a printing plate. Such cold type could be used in offset lithography (planographic) printing, which newspapers began

using as early as the late 1930s but which became common among even the largest-circulation dailies in the late 1960s and 1970s. Nevertheless, for their own job-printing needs, public relations practitioners still bought typesetting from those offering photocomposition services (often the same companies that would do the printing) until the past quarter century or so, when direct computer links to printers made even this specific skill obsolete.

To fully appreciate the evolution of type composition and the skills of the type compositors of an earlier era, the public relations practitioner must study the whole process of printing, which is changing rapidly today—more so than it has in the five and a half centuries since Gutenberg’s press first began using hand-assembled movable type. Just as was the case with their long-dead predecessors who could rapidly assemble hand-set type, those type compositors who composed type using the Linotype and similar machines of an earlier era—with their large keyboards or other mechanical type selection methods that differed greatly from today’s computer keyboards—are a disappearing breed. The few remaining Linotype compositors might only operate such machines at a history pavilion for the entertainment of those attending a state fair; nevertheless, there are tales about newspapers still using such early technologies in remote areas of lesser-developed countries as well as religious sects that eschew today’s technology. Nevertheless, the mystique of this highly skilled craft of the type compositor will never be known by those who today compose type for printing on their computer keyboards.

—*Dean Kruckeberg and
Marina Vujnovic*

See also Layout

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CONFEDERATION EUROPEENNE DES RELATIONS PUBLIQUES (CERP)

Confederation Europeenne des Relations Publiques (CERP) strives to bring practitioners and academics

together and set standards throughout Europe to strengthen the profession as practiced by professionals and to advance the education of students interested in public relations. In 1956 the Frenchman Lucien Matrat launched the idea to create a “Comité Européen des Relations Publiques” (a European Committee of Public Relations). The following year the organization became a reality when a few people from four European countries met in Luxemburg to form such a committee. Very quickly this group thought about establishing an association of the existing national public relations organizations. During the world exhibition in Brussels (1958), these contacts were strengthened and the idea gained momentum. Still, when the organization was officially established in Orléans (France) on May 8, 1959, its name given by the founding members (France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Belgium) sounded rather modest: “Centre Européen de Relations Publiques” (European Center of Public Relations).

Germany and Greece were the first countries to join the founding members. With some hesitation, the British “Institute of Public Relations” followed suit in 1965.

The hesitance of the British was due mainly to the fact that, at first, French was the only official language. Only in 1966 did English also become an official language of the organization.

In the mid-1970s, 13 national associations were “active members” of CERP. Moreover, the organization also had some 300 “professional members.” Those were corporate bodies or legal entities and individuals professionally involved in public relations. The statutes provided for three working groups. One, aimed at the active members, was CEDAN, that is, the “European Conference of National Public Relations Associations.” CEDAN endeavored to coordinate the activities of the national associations in order to reach agreement on professional principles, ethics, and practice. The two remaining working groups were aimed at the professional members; CEDET was meant for anyone involved in research and education, whereas CEDAP was the forum for independent advisers and integrated employees.

OBJECTIVES

The organization set for itself six objectives:

1. To study the public relations techniques of communication and information on a European scale
2. To develop and promote the teaching of subjects that contribute to the training of specialists
3. To establish a public relations information, research, and study center
4. To facilitate contacts and cooperation among European public relations specialists
5. To study and propose measures of cooperation and unification in matters of professional principles, ethics, and practice, and to put forward proposals for coordination of the activities of the national associations
6. To promote and to support all initiatives aimed at developing public relations on a European scale

FIRST ACHIEVEMENTS

One of the most important accomplishments of the young CERP was the approval of the "Code of Athens" in 1965. This code of professional ethics is based on fundamental human rights. All organizations that belonged to CERP had to accept this code and ensure that their members adhered to its principles. The former happened; the latter was more difficult to achieve, as the profession was nowhere officially recognized and the national associations had only limited moral authority, depending on their strength.

The meetings organized annually in the different member countries and later the triennial congresses led to a valuable exchange of professional experiences. The comparison of techniques used and the promotion of public relations on the international level are among the most appreciated achievements.

When the Danish Public Relations association joined in 1974, the organization counted 13 members and consequently covered the greater part of Western Europe.

Still, not everything was bright. The links between the national associations and CERP varied and the representation was not always "representative." Moreover, even in cases where there was a good link

with the national association, it was often only the board of the association that was reached and not the members. On top of that, CERP tended to lean too much toward the "professional members," among whom there was a strong lack of balance. Indeed, in France there were 80 members, whereas Germany and the United Kingdom counted only 20 (1974).

Consequently, French remained the dominant language, which would soon lead to problems within the organization.

FURTHER ACTIVITIES AND EVOLUTION (1975–1985)

From the end of the 1970s onward, official recognition of the profession became the main concern in different countries. CERP shared this concern and wanted to coordinate this recognition and, if possible, deal with it on a European level. But as was the case in other political, social, and economic fields, the different European countries were still thinking nationally, and the effort didn't go beyond formulating common intentions.

As recognition of the profession didn't work out, harmonization became the main objective. This didn't prove to be easy either, as most countries wanted to maintain their own definition of public relations. This is still the case today.

The most important achievement is undoubtedly a European Code of professional conduct in Public Relations (Code of Lisbon, 1978). This code established criteria that professionals must meet as they work on behalf of their clients or employees, to influence public opinion, to work with the media, and toward colleagues and toward the profession.

The then 15 member-countries of CERP agreed to this code and also agreed on disciplinary measures in case the code was not respected. The impact of this achievement obviously depended on the strength of each national association. In some countries it worked wonderfully; in others it was not much more than a recommendation.

CERP also wanted to impose a minimal level of professional experience (two years) for those who wanted to belong to a national association. However, national associations only accepted this as a recommendation.

In this period CERP also acquired consultative status within the Council of Europe (1976) and UNESCO (1983), which earned the organization some prestige.

In the meantime, a new problem arose; in some countries there was more than one national association. After long discussions it was decided (1979) that several associations from a single country could become part of the organization.

FIRST DIFFICULTIES REGARDING RESTRUCTURING

In the latter part of the 1980s, the hybrid structure of the organization was seriously questioned. CERP wanted to be an umbrella organization for all national associations in Europe, but it also aimed at being a forum where practitioners, researchers, and professors from all over Europe could meet. With regard to the first objective, the results remained limited and national associations were becoming less interested. CERP actually threatened to become an organization of and for a group of individual members with strong European interests. Even their membership numbers stagnated. Moreover, the ever-present French-language dominance hampered relations between members of some nationalities.

It was mainly under the encouragement of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom that restructuring was demanded. Very soon two camps emerged. The first was mainly rational and wanted an exclusive confederation of national associations that would determine the management of the organization. The other was more emotional and firmly defended the organization of individual members because that was the one that had achieved the most results.

After three years of discussion, a compromise was reached. CERP became a confederation of 19 national associations and 3 *autonomous* international organizations: CERP CONSULTANTS; CERP PRO (Public Relations Officers), in which the former CEDAN is clearly recognized; and CERP EDUCATION, the former CEDET. Hence, it became a confederation of 22 members (Strasbourg, 1989). In the 1990s, they were gradually joined by countries from central and eastern Europe.

These achievements signaled a new start for CERP. The trust of the national associations seems to have been regained, and the three autonomous international organizations are met with enthusiastic support.

HOW DID THE CONFEDERATION FUNCTION IN THE 1990S?

CERP strives to be the common house for advancing public relations in Europe. The members of all associations that have adhered to CERP are considered "associated members." That way CERP serves as the umbrella over 20,000 practitioners in Europe.

As one of its first objectives, the organization wants to grant those practitioners an *accreditation*. To that purpose, documents discuss the key fields of the profession. "A European Charter for Public Affairs" (1991), a document for "Consumer Relations" (1993), and a "Guideline Regarding Lobbying" (1994) are thus discussed and approved.

The intrinsic value of these documents is clear; still, even now, they only receive the character of recommendation. In some countries they are applied, in others not. The same holds for the second priority: *harmonization*. The following two means are at hand to achieve this: (1) the *updating of the code of professional conduct*, which continues, and (2) the *recognition of the public relations profession*, which has yet to be realized. It also tries to further the relations with the European community. In the course of several years a "European PR Survey" was elaborated, which gives insight into the scope of public relations in the different European countries.

The satellite organizations of CERP operate with varying success, as follows:

CERP PRO has had the most difficulties, as many integrated public relations professionals already have their own international contacts. The organization will work on a few dossiers and organize a case study contest every year.

CERP CONSULTANTS has made a strong start. It has studied the development of public relations in Eastern Europe and launched an East-West training program. Still, the organization feels the competition

of ICO (International Consultants Organization), which is well organized and aims at the same target group.

CERP EDUCATION succeeds in profiling itself: First a survey was made of all study programs in Europe. Public relations research was collected, exchanged, and stimulated. An "Educational Audit" was established to determine, in accordance with the European guideline (22.12.88), which courses would be accepted as preparing students for the profession. A glossary was created to facilitate mutual communication. The triennial seminars (Bruges, Prague, and Maastricht) are highlights within CERP history. Moreover, it is this organization that was responsible for the foundation and development of a fourth autonomous international organization within CERP: CERP STUDENTS (1993). Consequently CERP counted 23 full members from 20 different countries and 4 autonomous international organizations in 1995.

UNCLEAR FUTURE

The absence of a legal recognition of the profession, the continuing sense of independence of the stronger national associations, and the inadequate cooperation of the weaker links hamper CERP's future. On top of that, CERP receives increasingly less support from CERP PRO and CERP CONSULTANTS. Consequently, CERP EDUCATION has become too heavily burdened. This led to its separation. In 1998 it became an independent organization: EUPRERA (European Public Relations Education and Research Association). CERP PRO has been challenged to continue to exist. CERP CONSULTANTS is still going on but with limited activities.

CERP opts for a confederation in which all national associations under the leadership of their presidents would directly determine the vision and strategy of the organization. Instead, however, the link between CERP and most national associations remains very loose.

CERP mainly aims at maintaining the existing contacts and at circulating as much information as possible about what happens within the different national and international public relations associations.

Only the future will tell whether CERP can succeed in making the link between the national

members and the "common house" much more binding.

—Jos M. Willems

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflicts among stakeholders and organizations require attention and the problem-solving capabilities of public relations managers. Public relations scholars have suggested that these managers, functioning in the roles of organizational boundary spanners, often help an organization manage its response to conflict and to rapid environmental changes.

TWO-WAY MODELS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Conflict resolution in public relations evolved from the four models of public relations. The most sophisticated of the four models are the two-way asymmetrical and the two-way symmetrical models. As these two models of public relations evolved, James E. Grunig described the two-way symmetrical model as "public relations efforts which are based on research and evaluation and that use communication to manage conflict and to improve understanding with strategic publics" (1989, p. 17). In 1995, the *new model of symmetry as two-way practices* was developed, where the win/win zone uses negotiation and compromise to allow organizations to find common ground among their separate and sometimes conflicting self-interests. By doing so, it did not exclude the use of asymmetrical means to achieve symmetrical ends.

MIXED MOTIVES

Although the two-way symmetrical model would seem to be the ideal for conflict management, it is difficult to determine the exact point for appropriate behavior on a continuous scale between two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric communication. In 1991, Priscilla Murphy suggested that a "mixed motive" version of the two-way symmetrical

model might better describe what is happening in the actual practice of public relations because it incorporates both asymmetrical and symmetrical strategies. More recent studies acknowledge the more frequently practiced model is the one termed *mixed motives*.

In mixed motives, each side in a stakeholder relationship retains a strong sense of its own self-interests, yet each is motivated to cooperate to attain at least some resolution of the conflict. They may be on opposite sides of an issue, but it is in their best interests to cooperate with each other. Mixed-motive games provide a broad third category that describes behavior as most public relations people experience it: a multidirectional scale of competition and cooperation in which organizational needs must be balanced against constituents' needs. These parties are really *cooperative protagonists* in the struggle to satisfy their own interests with the knowledge that satisfaction is best accomplished through satisfying each other's interests as well. In the context of this discussion, protagonists are the main characters in the play of negotiation who seek their own values or self-interests. The question is not one of mixed motives where short-term asymmetrical tactics are combined with long-term symmetrical tactics as advocated by Dozier et al. (1995), but rather one of discovering the priority level of importance for the common self-interests of the strategic parties.

MIXED MOTIVE MODEL FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

More recently, Ken Plowman and colleagues (2001) established a number of negotiation strategies that fit into what Plowman and his group called a mixed-motive model for public relations that encompassed the entire spectrum between the two-way asymmetrical and the two-way symmetrical models. It now includes the strategies of contention, avoidance, accommodation, compromise, cooperation, unconditionally constructive, win/win or no deal, principled, and mediated or cultural.

CONTINGENCY MODEL OF CONFLICT

Since 1997, Glen Cameron and his colleagues have been developing a continuum stretching from advocacy (two-way asymmetrical) to accommodation (two-way symmetrical) as the basis for a contingency model of organization-public relationships. Accommodation is not viewed in the classic sense as giving in to the other party or the trend in the conflict literature as giving in on issues not important while retaining that which is important. Rather, they define it as "the degree of willingness to entertain change for the benefit of others" (Shin, Jin, Cheng, & Cameron, 2003, p. 9). Extending that definition to include change on the part of the opposing party or balance among the self-interests of the two parties would be closer to the two-way symmetrical definition. Research by Shin of conflicts played out in the media have shown that an organization uses the advocate strategy more when its key stakeholder advocates in an escalating spiral, indicating the media may be a separate power-brokering party. As the field of conflict resolution and public relations becomes more developed, the more complex are strategies, factors, and tactics. This is evidenced by the 86 factors developed for the contingency theory of public relations. Strategies, as mentioned under previous subheadings, refer to broad techniques to address organization-public issues. Tactics are relatively isolated tools to achieve the broader strategies.

IMPLICATIONS AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Culture is a powerful force shaping thoughts, perceptions, behavior, and communication. By its very complexity, culture initiates the negotiation tactics of contention or principled conflict resolution in many instances. The ability to successfully navigate and negotiate cross-culturally will be the key to successful public relations practice on the global scale in the future. Cultural diversity makes communication more difficult. Because knowledge is culture specific, the more a communicator understands cross-cultural differences, the easier the communication task becomes. Paradoxically, although

communication cross-culturally is often more difficult, creating mutually beneficial options can become easier. If negotiators can overcome communication barriers, mutually beneficial solutions—the cooperative tactic and win-win solutions—may become easier. Differences, rather than similarities, can form the basis of mutually beneficial solutions. Obviously, in a multicultural environment, the differences are increased. Thus, the opportunities for mutual gain are also increased.

MULTIPLE-PARTY NEGOTIATIONS

Complexity is also a major factor in multiparty negotiations that may be the next step in this type of public relations research. In 2003 Plowman undertook a qualitative quasi-experimental design with 11 graduate students taking on different roles in the hot waste issue in Utah. These students framed the issue, defined their self-interests as stakeholders, and then conducted a series of five role plays on the issue. All nine strategies were paired against each other in different combinations. Preliminary findings revealed that contention was the most used strategy, but was most often combined with the principled strategy. If those strategies were not successful, then role players turned to avoidance. During the third round, role players started using cooperation and compromise. Using these two strategies created a less confrontational atmosphere, and the role players were more inclined to discuss alternatives. The most useful strategy, however, was mediation in resolving the hot waste issue.

Most research in conflict resolution has involved just two-party disputes, but in practicality and especially for public relations, there is most often more than one stakeholder involved. Lawrence Susskind, from the Harvard Program on Negotiation, addressed public relations and conflict resolution in public disputes in 1996. His book with Patrick Field (1996) describes public relations using terms that essentially equate to one-way and asymmetrical models, then uses a version of Roger Fisher and William Ury's mutual gains approach to resolve public disputes in a symmetrical manner. The field of conflict resolution has realized that more work

must be done in multiparty disputes, and now public relations is beginning to address it.

A multiparty dispute can be defined as a simultaneous negotiation among three or more parties over multiple issues. In 1989, Saadia Touval laid out a prescriptive multiparty approach. In such negotiations, the most important work takes place before negotiations and in the prenegotiation phase. Issues that should be addressed about the negotiation itself include the identity and number of parties involved, possible coalitions among them, different possible roles, and an acceptable agenda to follow. The larger the number of participants in these multiparty conflicts, the more difficulty there will be in defining the problem and agreeing on an acceptable solution. There will be more likelihood of complexity in conflicting positions, the underlying self-interests, and the relationships—as in public relationships among the various parties involved. Mediation seems to be a common strategic direction for the field. In multiparty settings, mediators are usually a part of the negotiation. Their intervention does not alter the structure of the negotiation and is not difficult to accept by the parties involved. Such mediators can come from outside the dispute or there can be several, some acting from their roles inside the dispute.

DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Several directions for future research suggest themselves in the combined conflict resolution and public relations field. International and cultural aspects, of course, should be included. Also, consideration of public relations and the media's involvement in a conflict should be further explored as suggested by Susskind and later by Shin. Plowman also is currently conducting research of conflicts played out in the media. Do the media play a third-party mediator role, or is it another party escalating the conflict? Do certain parties gain power through the media to equalize their role in a conflict? What about comparing the notion of community negotiation (meaning negotiation with special-interest and citizen groups) in the conflict resolution literature with the activist and segmentation of publics?

literature in public relations? Such negotiation implicitly includes multiparty negotiations. It also overlaps into a newer trend in journalism of public or civic journalism, where reporters have a responsibility to help the public understand the context of the news or conflict. This is very similar to the goal of media relations within public relations, to provide information to the media to ensure balanced coverage. What about the role of the public relations manager in such a public dispute? Is it the role of advocate, mediator, third party, or ombudsman? And, finally, there is the concept of relationships among stakeholders in a conflict. How are relationships perceived differently or alike between the two fields? A new strategy is beginning to reveal itself in public relations, as well, that should be investigated. That is the strategy of aggressive meekness, or assertive pacifism.

—Kenneth D. Plowman

See also Contingency theory; Game theory; Symmetry; Two-way and one-way communication

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CONSTRUCTIONISM THEORY

In a premodern societal setting, values and norms are concrete and fundamental, even if their truths are not necessarily taken for granted. The values are institutionally fixed and, consequently, not open to reflection and relativization. In the modern world, society is institutionally pluralistic, humanly individualistic, and culturally generalized. This allows for a constructionist view of society. Although constructionism is rooted in continental European sociology, it is certainly not a typical European perspective. It was John Dewey who in 1916 argued that society is not only maintained by communication, but also constituted by it. E. M. Rogers shows in his *History of Communication Study* (1994) how the founding father of Social Science in Chicago, Small, developed his faculty into the “Chicago School,” which became famous for its constructionist approach to social science. Although strongly influenced by German thinking, they did not simply copy it. Whereas continental European scholars focused on fundamental thinking and philosophical and rhetorical theory building, U.S. scholars focused on the empirical study of society and thereby were able to develop empirical theories of social life, including the role of communication in it. Nevertheless, the fundamental critical thinking of European scholars at that time was very influential for sociology and communication studies in the United States (see Rogers, 1994). It enabled the development of what in 1937 Herbert Blumer called “symbolic interaction” (Ritzer, 2000) and is now known as constructionism (see Bentele & Rühl, 1993). But it has not yet significantly influenced theories of public relations or communication management.

The start of sociology can be located in the Enlightenment period, where reasoning was seen as a fundamental human activity for the first time. Traditional authority became unacceptable (i.e.,

“irrational, that is, contrary to human nature and inhibitive of human growth and development,” Ritzer, 2000, p. 12). Or, as Klaus Krippendorff pointed out, “Social theories must be livable” (1994, p. 102). The roots of sociology are critical to an unbalanced social structure and authority. Sociology has been based on the idea that human beings create society, and that society in turn creates its institutions, and thereby the reality for the human beings, in a dynamic process. That is where the roots of symbolic interactionism are located, and that is the basis for constructionism.

The idea that reality is not “something out there,” but that human beings construct reality themselves was popularized by one of the most frequently cited works in social sciences, *The Social Construction of Reality*, by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann. For them reality is a quality pertaining to phenomena we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition: we cannot wish them away. Knowledge is the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess specific characteristics. The sociology of knowledge is therefore concerned with the analysis of the social construction of reality. Social structure can be seen as an essential element of the reality of everyday life.

At one pole of the continuum are those others with whom I frequently interact in face-to-face situations—my inner circle, as it were. At the other pole are highly anonymous abstractions, which by their very nature can never be available in face-to-face interaction. Social structure is the sum total of these typifications and of the recurrent patterns of interaction established by means of them. (1966, p. 48)

Languages, as the most important system of vocal signs, build up semantic fields or zones of meaning that are linguistically circumscribed. Although it is possible to say that man has a nature, it is more significant to say that man constructs his own nature, or simply, that man produces himself. This self-production is always, and of necessity, a social enterprise, as Berger and Luckmann argue. Men together produce a human environment, with the totality of its sociocultural

and psychological formations. It may be that a given social order precedes any individual organism’s development. But social order is still a human product, or, more precisely, an ongoing human production. By playing roles, the individual participates in a social world. By internalizing these roles, the same world becomes subjectively real to him. Roles represent institutional order. Some of these, however, symbolically represent that order in its totality more than others do. Such roles are of great strategic importance in a society, since they represent not only this or that institution, but the integration of all institutions in a meaningful world. These are the roles that have a special relationship to the legitimating apparatus of society. Historically these roles have most commonly been located in political and religious institutions. This is no longer the case, however; it is said that nongovernmental organizations and corporations now have more power than politics and religion. According to Berger and Luckmann, legitimation (the term is from Weber) as a process is best described as a “second-order” (1966, p. 110) objectification of meaning. Its function is to make objectively available and subjectively plausible the “first-order” (1966, p. 110) objectifications that have been institutionalized. It embodies the institutional order by ascribing cognitive validity to its objectified meanings and justifies them. But in the modern world there is always a rivalry between definitions of reality. Social structure can predict its outcome. That is why, in our view, communication management must be studied from a public point of view.

In communication science, as well as in organization science, symbolic interactionism has recently inspired some scholars to take a constructionist view of reality. German communication scholars Gunther Bentele and Manfred Rühl have recently introduced a constructivist approach to public relations theory. The basic premise of this view is that human beings reflect each other to themselves, and social reality in a dynamic process. Thus, constructing social reality is a shared process of meanings construction. In this view reflective interpretation and conceptualization of

meanings are at the forefront in a constant process of de- and reconstruction (Van Nistelrooij, 2000, p. 275); they are a “reflection.” Klaus Krippendorff (1994), a constructionist communication scientist, mentions the “recursiveness” of communication: It is an ongoing social process of de- and reconstruction of interpretations. That is why Faulstiege (1992) and other constructionist public relations scholars state that public relations is not interaction between human beings, but societal action as such.

—*Betteke van Ruler*

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CONSUMER/CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Public relations and consumer relations share many commonalities. In fact, some may argue that these two functions are “first cousins” because they both seek not only to develop relationships between organizations and their key stakeholders—but also to maintain and strengthen such relationships. To observe how this era of concern for relationship management has escalated, one needs only to channel-surf via the radio or television or to skim the headlines of magazine and newspapers advertisements.

Everywhere, people are blasting out “relationship” cries of some kind. Banks, credit card companies, hotels, hospitals, automobile dealers, and the like promise that they are committed to offering “the right relationship” for you. Or type in “customer service” or “relationship management” as key words for an online Internet search; the hit count results are overwhelming.

The heightened concern for consumers can be traced to the early 1960s, when President John F. Kennedy mandated four bills of rights: the right to safety, the right to be informed, the right to choose, and the right to be heard. According to Robert J. Lampman (1988), two more have since been added: the right to enjoy a clean and healthful environment and the right of poor and other minorities to have their interests protected. Subsequent presidents have also joined forces to encourage Congress to institute policies that serve to safeguard consumers. During his 1962 congressional speech in which he declared the Consumer Bill of Rights, President Kennedy explained the important role consumers (publics) play in our society: “Consumers, by definition, includes all of us. They are the largest economic group in the economy, affecting and affected by almost every public and private economic decision. But they are the only group whose views are often not heard.”

This era of consumerism has escalated throughout the years to more than just a plea from consumers to be treated fairly and ethically by corporate America. Today, consumers seek more interpersonal communication among the organizations

they patronize. In tandem, organizations have a better understanding of the tremendous financial benefits they can potentially reap by maintaining relationships with the publics they serve. Market research consistently demonstrates that consumers no longer want to be treated as part of the “masses.” They desire individualized, personalized service in combination with individualized, personalized information. And, if they aren’t pleased with the product or service the organization provides, they are empowered to “move on.”

But what is the *value* of a loyal consumer? That question can be answered in a variety of ways and addressed from an array of perspectives. In the business world, success is measured in dollars, one way or another. From a quantifiable standpoint, the value of a faithful consumer equates to repeat business—business that is much more cost effective to capture compared with the costs associated with generating new business.

Let’s look at an example. In the lodging industry, nearly 55 percent of the business is represented by repeat customers. This means that more than half of the hotel industry’s client base revolves around the “maintenance” component. Without the implementation of strategic public relations strategies and tactics to safeguard relationships among its client base, this industry risks falling below the profitability level.

The Technical Assistance Research Program (TARP) also examined the cost to obtain a new customer versus retaining a current one. The market research firm’s results illustrate that it is five times more expensive to earn a new customer than to keep a current one. And at least 50 percent of consumers who experience problems will not complain or contact the organization; they will simply “vote with their feet” and go elsewhere.

The average organization loses 10 to 15 percent of its customers per year because of bad service experiences.

Managers need to make themselves available to listen to their consumers so they can analyze or measure organizational performance against the established marketplace standards. Implementing two-way mechanisms for obtaining feedback is a critical aspect of public relations management to

enhance customer relations opportunities (see Ledingham & Bruning, 1999). Providing customers opportunities for feedback and two-way flow of communication is an important part of the public relations process. Methods include providing customers with comments cards, a link to provide online feedback via the organization’s Web site, 1-800 consumer hotlines, focus group interviews, follow-up telephone calls, and satisfaction questionnaires. Engaging in “management by wandering around” offers another practical way to monitor the environment of an organization.

Having on-site managers available to personally talk with customers offers yet another chance for consumers to “connect” with the organization.

The previous examples clearly and quantifiably demonstrate the importance of maintaining relationships with external publics. Let us consider one of an organization’s most important internal publics—the employees. A plethora of industries monitor and measure the costs associated with turnover and employee attrition rates. Using the example of turnover costs associated with losing an employee who earns \$8 per hour, sponsoring research organizations’ results ranged from \$3,500 to \$8,000 in losses, taking into consideration direct, indirect, tangible, and intangible costs. A study conducted by Tony Simons and Timothy Hinkin (2001) illustrated that employee turnover is strongly associated with decreased hotel profits. In this study, the costs associated with turnover on a per-employee basis averaged approximately \$5,000.

Aside from quantifying employees in terms of how much it costs to replace them, many scholars and business executives refer to them as “human capital.” In short, they are part of an organization’s investment and, therefore, represent a valuable asset. Let’s put their worth in perspective by comparing them with another corporate asset. If managers of an organization make a financial commitment to purchase brand new, state-of-the-art computers for their employees, equipped with every bell and whistle imaginable, they will also expand their commitment in other ways, such as making sure that the computers are maintained and kept “healthy” by equipping them with antivirus programs, that employees are trained to use them to their full potential, and that

their property is secured safely to diminish possibilities of theft. Similarly, these managers should extend such concern for their “human” assets to make them feel safe, healthy, and motivated to work at their maximum level of potential.

One point that is constant among the consumer relations and customer service/satisfaction literature—regardless of the publics (internal or external), industry, product, or service under investigation—is that consumers are more apt to return (or stay) if they feel some kind of a personal connection to the product, service, or organization.

Relationship management plays a key role in maintaining customer loyalty and enhancing levels of satisfaction. And since public relations is a key component in supporting relationships between organizations and their key consumers, this management function aids in enhancing the consumer/employee retention rate, which, in turn, saves the organization money, thereby contributing to a lucrative bottom line.

When discussing customer service within the framework of public relations, we cannot negate the importance (and the power and influence) of word-of-mouth communication. For example, TARP research indicates that consumers who are dissatisfied tell as many as 16 friends about their negative experience. And a prominent study conducted by the White House Office on Consumer Affairs reveals that 13 percent of dissatisfied customers will tell 20 people about it. This “tell your friends” communication concept is similar to the multiplier effect, a term borrowed from the economic literature, which explains the trickling down of revenues. For example, when a person travels to a particular city for vacation, the local economy also experiences financial ramifications as well because these travelers spend money on local lodging, restaurant, entertainment facilities, and various other resources such as gasoline, clothing, and souvenirs. If their experience is a positive one, the multiplier or word-of-mouth publicity may work in that city’s favor (e.g., the visitors will return home and tell friends and family about their favorable experience). If, however, the vacationers had a bad experience, the negative word-of-mouth publicity may work against the city. In short, the visitors are

serving as informal public relations ambassadors for the destinations they visit.

Examples throughout this selection have illustrated how important it is for an organization to maintain a sound public relations program. They also demonstrate how quality customer service supports the public relations function. Mahatma Gandhi, quoted in 1890 (see the Pugmarks Web site, www.pugmarks.net), captured the essence of true customer service when he said,

A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not interruption in our work—he is the purpose of it. We are not doing him a favor by serving him. He is doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to serve him.

Consumer relations represents an important spoke on the public relations wheel—one that should not be overlooked. Public relations is the linking agent between an organization and would-be satisfied consumers. In essence, satisfied customers are the end result of a well-orchestrated public relations program.

—Lisa T. Fall

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A “Crash Course” on Customer Service

The 10 most important words: “I apologize for our mistake. Let me make it right”

The 9 most important words: “Thank you for your business. Please come back again.”

The 8 most important words: “I’m not sure, but I will find out”

The 7 most important words: “What else can I do for you?”

The 6 most important words: “What is most convenient for you?”

The 5 most important words: “How may I serve you?”

The 4 most important words: “How did we do?”

The 3 most important words: “Glad you’re here!”

The 2 most important words: “Thank you.”

The MOST important word: “Yes”

Figure 1 Ten phrases to attract return customers.

SOURCE: Adapted from: Harvey, E. (1999, August 20). 180 ways to walk the customer service talk. In *Teamwork: Your personal guide to working successfully with people*. Columbus: Ohio State University Leadership Center.

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Content analysis represents the blending of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies focusing on messages. It provides users with an ability to take the qualitative message and quantify it using percentages and frequency counts. Further, content analysis can be used as a measurement tool. Content analysis is used quite extensively in public relations evaluation to better understand messages and how key people (e.g., editors and reporters) react to those messages; that use, however, is typically in a more informal, simple analysis. Hence, content analysis probably is best considered a qualitative public relations research method. Any type of content can be analyzed, including interviews, focus group

discussions, editorials, television programming, and news releases, to name a few.

As a method, content analysis provides a way of systematically evaluating message content. If, for example, practitioners were interested in gauging news coverage regarding a promotional event, they might find all newspaper stories relating to that event and subject the stories to a content analysis. They might specifically want to see if the print media picked up a press release and, if published, how it was treated. A content analysis would provide a way to evaluate the release’s reach—how many papers published it, which is calculated as a percentage or “score.” If all 10 papers in an area picked up the release, the release would have 100 percent reach. How the release was reported, however, would require additional analysis. The analysis might focus on where the release was printed—which newspaper section, location on the page (above or below the fold, which quarter of the page, and so forth), the tone of the news article (positively reported, negatively reported, or neutrally reported), or the type of article (“straight” news, editorial, or column). Content analysis provides a way of evaluating the press release’s impact on the event, albeit in a simplistic way.

Conducting a content analysis requires more than simple counting. The method is the most systematic of all qualitative methodologies and typically requires the practitioner to follow several steps. First, the practitioner must identify the type of content, establish the unit(s) of analysis, create a category system, obtain the messages, code the data in such a way as to quantify it, and establish coding reliability and validity. Each of these phases is critical in conducting and evaluating based on content analysis, especially since the creation of computer programs that conduct the mundane and time-consuming task of coding and counting.

TYPES OF CONTENT

Ole Holsti (1969) said there are two types of content that can be analyzed. *Manifest content* is the content physically observable in the messages. It is simple and requires little analysis. For instance, manifest content might consist of a story’s column

inches or minutes of air time. It could be the number of times certain words or phrases were found in a story. *Latent content*, on the other hand, is not what is seen, but what is unseen; latent content focuses on the underlying messages found in the message or the message's theme(s). Latent content might concern the tone of the message (positive, negative, or neutral), or whether a particular theme was being followed through a campaign, or whether editorial content was good, bad, or neutral through a crisis. While manifest content is easy to code, latent content is more elaborate and often employs some measurement scheme or scale on which the theme is evaluated. Once the type of content is determined, the units to be coded must be determined.

UNITS OF ANALYSIS

Bernard Berelson (1952) suggested that content analysis employs five different units of analysis. A particular evaluation might focus on one or more of these units, the choice being determined by the questions asked. Four of Berelson's units focus on manifest content; in fact, he suggested that content analysis is best employed in evaluating manifest content. Berelson's manifest units are symbols or words, characters, items, and time and space measures; his latent content unit is the theme or thesis. *Symbols and words* are just what they appear to be: individual or company or event names, logos, types or trademarks, or articles of speech. *Characters* are units that describe such things as race, stereotypes, occupations, or personalities. *Items* are units that typically have a clear purpose, such as advertisements, editorials, television or radio programming, and forms of communication (e.g., newspapers, newsletters, and Internet chat rooms). *Time and space* measures include amount of air time given to a story, location within a newscast of a particular message, number of inches in an advertisement or story, or the physical size of a story, photograph, or advertisement. *Themes or theses* are units of analysis that must be analyzed and represent an underlying meaning; units such as goodness, badness, sexuality, appropriateness, or fairness

are latent thematic units of analysis. When latent content is being analyzed, the units must be specifically or operationally defined.

CATEGORY SYSTEMS

Once the content and units of analysis have been established, the content must be placed into appropriate categories. A good category system requires that each unit be placed in a unique category and that its placement not be dependent on other category systems. In creating a category system, the purpose of the research is reflected in the categories' meanings; the categories must be exhaustive—that is, all possible categories must be included and almost always include an “other” category; the categories must be independent of each other; and, finally, the category system must reflect a common classification system. Category systems are critical to content analysis reliability and must be defined precisely. A simple category system for adoption of a message would include the categories of “adopted” and “not adopted.” A thematic category system is more complex and requires that theme scales be created and evaluated; a fairness category might include scale items ranging from fair to unfair, negative to positive, and good to bad so that coders would make decisions based on how the message was portrayed.

OBTAINING MESSAGES

Collecting and copying the actual content can be a time-consuming phase of a content analysis. If the messages are in print, they must be duplicated for analysis; if they are electronic, such as radio or television programming, they must be recorded and duplicated. When there are few messages and they are easily obtainable, then all messages are typically analyzed. When there are numerous messages, the population of messages is usually sampled. In sampling, a representative number of messages are randomly collected and analyzed. Suppose a practitioner wanted to evaluate if local newspapers picked up a press release. After identifying all the papers, each edition for a specified period of time

would be read and articles based on the release would be noted and copied. It is important that all editions of the papers be reviewed; some papers have more than one edition and the story may have been “bumped” from a later edition due to breaking news. Further, some papers may have special editions for different regions or neighborhoods. All this must be taken into consideration when obtaining the messages.

CODING

Coding occurs once the messages have been collected. A good content analysis employs at least two people other than the researcher who have been trained in the category system to read each message and code the individual units of analysis into the coding system. Coding is as simple as counting the number of times a company’s name appears in the media or as complex as determining whether that company’s name is portrayed positively. In its simplest form, coding is the placing of the units into the appropriate category, or as in the case of a theme, placing a mark on a series of scale items.

ESTABLISHING RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Coder reliability and validity is an important feature of content analysis. It is the only qualitative method that allows for an estimation of reliability and validity. Coding reliability, a prerequisite for validity, can be computed. Typical reliability estimates are reported using Holsti’s reliability coefficient or Scott’s pi index. Both provide a reliability estimate from 0 to 100 percent; a coding reliability of at least 90 percent is desirable, meaning the coders agreed 90 percent of the time. To ensure that coding is being conducted in a reliable manner, the coders are often trained to code within an agreeable reliability. Coding validity is less quantifiable and is evaluated by the specification of the units of analysis (are they appropriate?), how the units were defined, and whether the category system meets the five criteria specified earlier.

COMPUTER-ASSISTED CONTENT ANALYSIS

There are a variety of computer programs that will do the actual placement of messages into categories. Computer-assisted content analysis reliability is, however, still dependent on the decisions made by the researcher in creating the content analysis. The computer will dependably count the units as defined to it and place them in the categories if instructed, but if the units are inappropriate or the category system flawed, then the results are questionable. Computers have not proved very useful in thematic content analysis.

—Don W. Stacks

See also Focus group; Qualitative research; Reliability; Sampling; Statistical analysis; Validity

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CONTINGENCY THEORY

The contingency theory of public relations is a theoretical lens to view what public relations is about, as a realistic and nuanced means of managing the conflict that inevitably occurs between organizations and their publics. Contingency theory explicates the conflictual and strategic relationships between an organization and its publics on a continuum from pure advocacy to pure accommodation. Advocacy concerns self-interest of either party while accommodation considers the other party’s concern. Contingencies focus on essentially conflictual aspects of organization-public relationships and lead to the strategic management of relationships under complex and changing environments. The theory gives a positive perspective of conflicts

and strategies associated with several factors in the public relations discipline and practice.

Led by Glen T. Cameron, numerous scholars have advanced contingency theory through a series of theoretical and empirical public relations studies. The theory has yielded many insights into public relations as a profession and as a social science-based domain of learning, with substantial empirical support for the theory to date. Researchers have conducted interviews, case studies, content analysis, and surveys among public relations professionals by asking what matters most in public relations. Grounded on the empirical studies, scholars have built up the essence of the contingency theory paradigm.

First, contingency theory of public relations takes into account the views of an organization and its publics in organization-public relationships. The term of mixed views not only embraces concepts of advocacy and accommodation of an organization and its public but represents a process rather than a certain static condition. It suggests a punctuated hybrid of advocacy and accommodation on a continuum from pure advocacy to pure accommodation. At a certain point, the organization-public relationship can be almost symmetrical or asymmetrical, but seldom remains static. The organization-public relationship can be best illuminated as a dynamic process at any given time. The focus is on the shifting balance in the organization-public relationships, not on the equilibrium. Public relations professionals may be accommodative of a public in one situation and adversarial in another situation involving the same public. Also, public relations professionals may try to behave symmetrically involving a public, and accordingly, may behave asymmetrically involving another public in the same situation. This is best described as a continuum delineated by advocacy at one end and accommodation on the other.

Contingency theory combines concepts such as conflict and strategy. The conflict is always located in the organization-public relationship because both an organization and its public have different and sometimes conflictual goals, roles, values, rules, processes, and desired outcomes in their relationships. The theory postulates that preferred outcomes can be obtained by strategically managing

the conflict in organization-public relationships and suggests a strategic guideline for an optimally beneficial solution for both an organization and its public, and essentially, a possible solution for an organization. When conflicts arise, an organization determines a degree of accommodation or advocacy to serve its strategic purposes. The theory suggests that the primacy of self-interest of an organization and its public is a critical evaluative factor in the organization-public relationship.

Recent work on the contingency theory paradigm addresses the stance along the continuum from accommodation to conflict management strategies illustrated by research on the strategy contingency and its relationship with stance contingency. It supports a more particular theoretical approach of how contingency change in stances leads to strategy change. Contingency theory research in public relations shows an association between the stances and strategies of an organization and its public. The more advocative stances of an organization or its public, the harder tactics such as litigation or contending both an organization and its public will employ.

Finally, the paradigm of contingency theory is that organizational effectiveness and ethical consideration of each public results from fitting many variables to explain the stances or strategies of an organization and its public. The factors affect the stance of an organization in its attempt to practice normative public relations and whether more advocacy or more accommodation will be effective in achieving departmental and organizational objectives in the short and long term. The contingent factors meld concepts with continuous variable orientation to trace the stances and strategies of an organization and its public. Contingencies include a lot of factors, for example, top management's support, representation in top management, culture of organization, level of trust, issue stakes, perception of external environment, and so on. Cameron and colleagues (2001) characterized 86 factors into 11 categories—threats, industry environment, political/social/cultural environment, external publics, issue under questions, organization's characteristics, public relations department characteristics, management characteristics, internal threats, individual

characteristics, and relationship characteristics—and into two dimensions, external factors and internal factors. The factors are arrayed into internal and external categories that affect the degree of accommodation public relations professionals may adopt in dealing with a specific issue and a particular public at a given point in time.

Contingency theory has been a major competing scientific paradigm to the excellence theory in public relations. Excellence theory has been criticized by scholars, with several reasons, such as multiple publics, regulatory constraints, jurisdictional issues, legal constraints, and so on, which qualify the normative and positive approach to public relations in the real world. One of the main criticisms centers on the array of public relations into idealism of two-way symmetry where both an organization and its public are ready to change by balancing one's interest with the other. Scholars mainly from critical and rhetorical perspectives have attacked the feasibility of the excellence theory, and some others have promoted some alternatives.

Contingency theory has grounded the main criticism and developed a body of theoretical knowledge that differentiates public relations from other disciplines. The theory enhances better understanding of public relations practice by giving depth and breadth to empirical and humanistic approaches. For further development of the contingency theory in public relations, a line of study departs from the importance of understanding the extent to which an organization and its public deal with the relational, organizational, and societal conflicts, and how they strategically manage the conflicts. The relationship between an organization and its public is a complicated process in itself and is not easily captured even with the complex interplay of contingent factors.

—Jae-Hwa Shin

See also Excellence theory; Two-way and one-way communication

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CONTROL

Control is one of several variables basic to scholarship and best practices of public relations because it is fundamental to human existence. People want control over matters relevant to their health, safety, and general well-being. They try to minimize risks or otherwise control them, for example, by learning special skills. They may take driver's education to master the operation of an automobile. That knowledge and skill allows them to calculate and adapt to the behavior of others. Traffic rules are created and enforced as a means for controlling the flow of

traffic and the operation of vehicles. Society comprises many individuals in professional roles, such as fire and police personnel, who are expected to assist citizens' efforts to control events in their daily routines.

Executive managements of companies want to control as many factors as possible that enhance their chance of business success. That is a basic principle of management. Financial reports announce controls, for example, cost control by technology innovation or personnel layoffs. Executives seek legislation and regulation that fosters control over their enterprises. Bellwether companies often advocate, through industry trade associations or government agencies, higher operating standards that can reduce the likelihood that bad-apple companies will damage the reputation of an industry. Or one industry seeks to control its operations by forcing controls onto other businesses. For this reason, the automobile insurance industry has advocated more government regulation to achieve safer automobile designs. Such designs help reduce the business liability for insurance companies, as does tighter drunk driving legislation.

Products and services are advertised and promoted to help customers increase control over various aspects of their lives. Diet medications ostensibly increase weight control. Savings plans and insurance policies give people more control over their financial future.

On the other side of the coin, activism arises from a desire on the part of citizens—publics—to control various aspects of their life. Environmental activists believe that businesses (and various governmental agencies) exert either too much or too little control over their operations. Thus, activists want to control corporate management policy by exerting control through other means, such as legislation, regulation, or consumer pressures. Legislation and regulation might force higher standards for the various substances that industries can discharge into the air or water. They might control insurance rates or utility bills through state regulatory agencies such as insurance boards or public utility commissions.

Nonprofit organizations serve society by exerting control to solve societal problems where businesses

or government fails to meet the challenge, creates the challenge, or needs special values or skills to meet the challenge. The Red Cross works to help people restore control over their lives when disaster occurs. Health-oriented nonprofit organizations such as the March of Dimes work to raise money and apply it to research, therapy, and prevention, to control disease or its impact on individual lives and community health. Fundraising is an essential nonprofit activity seeking to bring elements of each community together to exert control in the interest of the community.

Because control is a central part of human experience, it is vital to the theory and practice of public relations. The concept has received substantial discussion by scholars as well as practitioners. It has strategic and ethical implications for the ways organizations operate and foster relationships with their stakeholders.

The history of public relations is inseparable from the desire and ability of various organizations or persons to direct and control the opinions and behaviors of others. Organizations must be able to control their activities and predict how others will respond accordingly. Thus, companies seek to attract customers to help them control—bring order to—their business activities for orderly, well-managed operations. Organizations of all kinds, for instance, want to control the efforts of employees. They want to direct, regulate, and coordinate those activities. One rationale for employee communication is that it helps organizations to manage the time and talents of employees to accomplish a specific mission. In contrast, a fundamental motive for activists of all kinds is to oppose efforts by a company, for instance, to exert a level of control in some manner that offends the values and opinions of the activists. In this sense, even labor unions can be activists trying to exert control against management over wages and working conditions.

Interpersonal communication theory and research have offered insights into the nature of control and the role it plays in human communication. Carried to an extreme, control can equate with domination that is likely to harm relationships and, in the case of public relations, motivate opposition rather

than support by stakeholders. Under the best circumstances, control should be a comfortable balance between the power exerted by all parties in a relationship. For this reason, public relations can be practiced as relationship management.

Writing on interpersonal relationships, Frank E. Millar and L. Edna Rogers (1987) featured control as one of three concepts central to the quality of a relationship. The other two concepts are trust and intimacy. Trust and intimacy are relevant to the sorts of relationships public relations practitioners work to build on behalf of clients and employers. Trust refers to a person's or organization's ability and willingness not to exploit or take advantage of the vulnerability of parties engaged in a relationship. Intimacy includes liking. The equation is simply this: Control wisely used builds trust and fosters liking. Organizations must use control strategically and collaboratively as they work to build trust and to be liked—supported—rather than opposed.

Control entails the right and ability of parties to a relationship to define, direct, and limit the actions that transpire to build the relationship and results from the ways participants act toward each other as a consequence of the relationship. Trust results from the responsible use of control. In relationships, each party is vulnerable to the other in various ways. Trust results when each party is willing to support rather than oppose the other and to avoid taking advantage of the other party's vulnerability. Dominance is a function of the willingness and ability of one party to influence outcome, to exert power, without opposition.

Since control is a function of the codefinition and relationship development, it is a matter of perception and relationship comfort. The balance between the control exerted by each party in a relationship is subject to the perceptions and expectations of each party. Various publics, for this reason, may feel comfortable with the amount of control being exerted, for example, by a company or a government agency, whereas other publics may believe that too little or too much control is exerted.

One rationale for public policy battles is the clash over appropriate amounts of control. Activists seek to increase their control over corporate activities by

increased amounts of regulation or legislation. Stakes are a form of power held by the parties in a relationship. Customers hold the stake of buying power. Activists hold the stake of legislative influence. Companies hold the power of legislative influence as well as their ability and willingness to control their operations as others expect of them. For this reason, issues management has a lot to do with the clash over the dynamics of the public policy arena that lead to or away from the use of control to regulate the affairs of each society.

One remedy to control conflict is for organizations to be more willing to share control with stakeholders thereby leading to a more symmetrical relationship. Another remedy is to increase controls (such as reducing environmental emissions) or to use control for the community interest rather than for the narrower interest of the organization or industry.

Another dimension of public relations and control is the role of crisis management and response. A crisis occurs when an organization fails to exert the appropriate amount or type of control over its activities. Crisis management and response entails an organization either recognizing and acknowledging how it must control its activities, or suffering a remedy imposed from the outside. One classic crisis management response is to discuss the reason for the crisis, looking to determine whether the organization exerted appropriate amounts of control in the public interest.

By the same token, risk communication is a challenge for organizations that create risks. They are expected to share information that can help stakeholders to understand the risk and determine whether the organization is exerting appropriate controls. This dimension of risk management and communication was very much at play on the part of the airline industry after the terrorist destruction of the World Trade Center. Airlines were faulted for not exerting appropriate control over what passengers could bring onto airlines, what weapons they could obtain within the airplane, and the ease with which they could gain access to the cockpit.

Control tells a lot about a relationship, and for this reason it is essential to understanding the role and practice of public relations. People expect organizations to exert control appropriate to their role in

society. Activism is a counterresponse to what is seen as a lopsided amount of control in this relationship. Public relations practitioners see value in understanding and positioning organizations to work toward symmetry of control that fosters all stakeholders' sense of what is good for the community, a matter of public interest, achieved through collaborative decision making.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Crisis and crisis management; Fundraising; Investor relations; Issues management; Labor union public relations; Public interest; Public policy planning; Publics; Relationship management theory; Risk communication; Stakes; Symmetry; Trade associations (and Hill & Knowlton's role in); Trust

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CO-OPTATION

Co-optation is a strategy used by dominant institutions or organizations to respond to and eventually neutralize activists who threaten to disrupt the dominant group. The strategy takes a variety of forms, but essentially the more powerful organization creates the appearance that they share the less powerful group's aims and grants some concessions or shares power with the less powerful group. The effect is that the activists appear to have won concessions or even outright victory, but the underlying behavior of the dominant organization remains unchanged. Co-optation is related to public relations because the strategy often involves communication or forming new patterns of relationships. In critical studies of public relations, co-optation is viewed as a way

in which unfair power relationships in society are perpetuated. However, some of the tactics associated with co-optation may actually be good-faith efforts by organizations to seek symmetrical relationships with activist publics.

Co-optation can take many forms. One of the more common strategies is to identify the organization's opponents and their issues, then invite leaders of the opposition to meet with the organization under the guise of working together to address those issues. For example, the leader of an environmental activist group might be invited to join an environmental action group sponsored by a corporation that has been perceived as having a negative impact on the environment. The action group meets regularly with company officials, approves inconsequential changes in operations, and sponsors long-running studies on the quality of the environment. These efforts are widely publicized, and the corporation can claim that it is working with others to protect the environment. However, in the long run, the changes may be minuscule and the underlying operations of the company are largely undisturbed.

Other forms of co-optation involve borrowing the symbols or language of activist movements to make the dominant organization appear to be cooperating with activists' demands. Some environmentalists have accused corporations of "greenwashing" their products. Andy Rowell (1998) offered the examples of "environmentally friendly" automobiles and "ozone friendly" aerosols that, while appearing to be responsive to the problem of air pollution, actually mask other environmentally damaging corporate practices.

Some activists have even cast suspicion on the process of dialogue between corporations and activists, claiming that corporations use discussion as a delaying tactic or as the first step toward further co-optation. This suspicion creates a double bind for corporations that work in good faith to resolve issues with activists. Dialogue is an important component of symmetrical relationships with activists; however, some activists see dialogue as the first step toward co-opting the movement.

—Michael F. Smith

See also Activism

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CO-ORIENTATION THEORY

Co-orientation occurs when two or more individuals are simultaneously oriented to one another and to something of mutual interest. The assumption is that individuals behave toward each other based on their *perceptions* of the other's views and intentions regarding the object of mutual interest.

For example, after Senator George J. Mitchell returned from one of his many trips to Ireland and Great Britain in his role as mediator, he described the difficult environment in which he was trying to help forge the Northern Ireland Peace Accord: "Each side acts based on its assumption that the other side will not keep its promises" (Mitchell, 1999, n.p.).

Groups of individuals, then, also act toward other groups based on perceptions of other groups' views, positions, and intentions. Similarly, organizations and their publics deal with each other based on the collective perceptions of the other's views.

ORGANIZATION–PUBLIC AGREEMENT VERSUS PERCEPTIONS OF AGREEMENT

Typically, public relations practitioners use public opinion surveys to determine public knowledge and opinion related to issues important to their organizations. The results are used to determine differences between organizational orientations and positions on issues and those held by various publics. Some refer to the process as "gap analysis," meaning the differences are seen as measures of *agreement* between organizations and publics. Agreement, then, is a measure of how similar or dissimilar an organization's views are to those held by various publics.

Using what is often called a "public relations audit," practitioners first determine "what we think." Second, they attempt to measure or to estimate "what 'they' think" (publics). Third, they assess the magnitude and seriousness of differences between organization and public views. A public relations problem exists when gaps are found, leading to a recommended public relations program to "close the gaps"—to increase agreement between the orientations held by an organization and those held by its publics.

In such cases, public relations strategy typically represents a program of action and communication (usually dominated by persuasive communication). Implicit to such an approach is the assumption that a public's opinion of and its behavior toward an organization are determined by the magnitude of the gaps—the level of agreement or disagreement. Additionally, there is an assumption that if the gaps are small or there are no gaps, then public opinion and behavior will be consistent with organizational needs and views of public interest. Both assumptions are easily challenged.

ACTUAL AGREEMENT VERSUS PERCEPTIONS OF AGREEMENT

First, the extent of actual agreement or disagreement usually is not known either to those in an organization or to members of a public, as accurate information is seldom available. Consequently, both sides in organization-public relationships behave toward and react to the other based on their *perceptions* of the others' views and *perceptions* of how close they are to their own views. As T. J. Scheff (1967) pointed out in his explication of "consensus," (a) perceptions of agreement can be independent of the level of actual agreement, (b) the level of actual agreement is not known to those involved, and (c) perceptions of agreement affect the behavior of those involved in a relationship.

Using measures of actual and perceived agreement, Scheff (1967) defined *monolithic consensus* as actual high agreement that is accurately perceived by a majority of those involved. He defined *dissensus* as

the state when actual disagreement is perceived accurately by the majority. Accuracy is the key variable, however, as *false consensus* represents a state of actual disagreement that is inaccurately perceived as high agreement. Similarly, Scheff called the state when actual high agreement is perceived as disagreement *pluralistic ignorance*. When those involved have inaccurate perceptions of others' views, they behave inappropriately toward them based on what they erroneously believe to be the others' orientation.

To avoid inappropriate public relations responses and strategies based on misperceptions, organizational intelligence gathering must discern the cross perceptions held by both sides in organization-public relationships. J. M. McLeod and S. H. Chaffee's (1973) interpersonal model describes how two individuals are simultaneously oriented to an object and to each other—"coorientation" (pp. 483–485).

Their model extended previous attempts to describe relationship states by incorporating R. F. Carter's (1965) notions of "salience" and "pertinence" (pp. 203–204). *Salience* represents an individual's summary evaluation of the object of orientation. *Pertinence* is the individual's object-by-object comparisons based on attributes that objects have or do not have in common. In other words, an individual's orientations comprise both evaluations and definitions of objects (the top boxes in Figure 1). In addition, an individual holds perceptions of how the other evaluates and defines the object of mutual concern (the bottom boxes in the model).

The parallel orientations and cross perceptions are used to calculate both intrapersonal and interpersonal co-orientational variables (represented by the arrows in the model). *Congruency*, or perceived agreement, represents the extent to which Individual A's own views are similar to A's perceptions of Individual B's views. This intrapersonal variable clearly does not take into account the other person's actual views, but surely serves as the basis of A's responses and strategy for dealing with the other person.

Interpersonal *agreement* indexes the similarity of A's and B's views—both salience and pertinence—held by the parties. *Accuracy* measures the extent to which A's estimate of B's views are similar to B's actual views. The interpersonal model can be

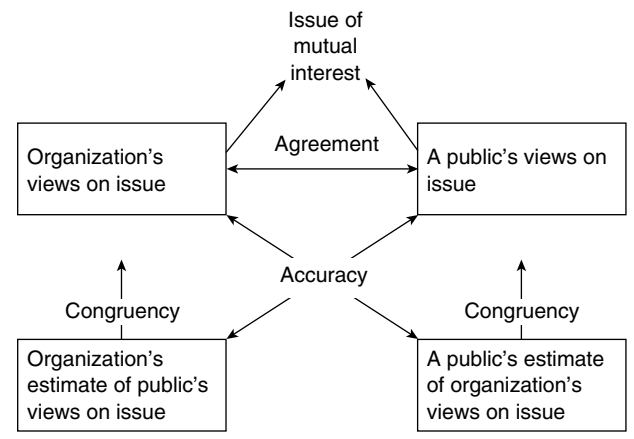


Figure 1 Co-orientation model

adapted to public relationships by substituting an organization and one of its publics for the individuals in the model.

Intraorganizational congruency represents the dominant views within the organization of how close or far apart organizational views (salience and pertinence) are from perceptions of the views held by one of its publics. *Intrapublic congruency* indicates the extent to which a majority of a public perceives a difference between public views and those held by the organization. How the organization deals with its publics, and how a particular public deals with the organization, are a function of their respective levels of congruency—perceived agreement or disagreement.

Organization-public agreement takes on two values—the extent to which an organization and one of its publics hold similar evaluations of the object or issue of mutual interest, and the extent to which they hold similar definitions of the object or issue. For example, even if an organization and one of its publics share similar evaluations of an issue, they may not agree on the details of the issue. Or they may agree on the specific attributes of the issue while disagreeing on its valence or importance. In most cases, disagreement on either evaluation or definition of issues of mutual interest creates public relations problems.

Organization-public accuracy represents the extent to which an organization's estimate of public views matches that public's actual views and vice versa. Chaffee and McLeod argued that "perfect

communication' . . . would not necessarily improve agreement . . . might well reduce congruency . . . (but) should always improve accuracy . . . to the point where each person knows precisely what the other is thinking" (1970, p. 9). Likewise, effective public relations two-way communication would lead to high accuracy for both organizational players and those in the target public.

DESCRIBING CO-ORIENTATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Co-orientational measures of organization-public relationships require data on the following:

1. How organizational management defines and evaluates the issue
2. What organizational management thinks about how each of the target publics defines and evaluates the issue
3. How each of the publics defines and evaluates the issue
4. What each of the publics thinks about how organizational management defines and evaluates the issue

These data—the boxes in the model—are necessary for calculating the co-orientational variables—the arrows in the model.

Beyond describing the levels of agreement, congruency, and accuracy separately, one can combine these variables to describe relationships. Scheff's 1967 typology of consensus, although not originally intended for this purpose, serves as a model for defining organization-public relationships from the perspectives of the parties involved.

For example, if organizational management and most of a particular public have similar evaluations and definitions of an issue of mutual concern, and they both recognize that they agree, then they have achieved the state of *consensus*. If the organization and its public do not agree on either the evaluation or the definition of an issue, and they accurately recognize that they disagree, then the state is *dissensus*. These represent the states of accurate cross perceptions. However, two qualifications apply:

(1) agreement or accuracy may not apply equally to both the evaluations and definitions of the issue of mutual interest, and (2) agreement or accuracy may not be shared, thereby producing consensus or dissensus from the perspective of only one side of the relationship.

In a case of *false consensus*, one or both sides may think that there is a higher level of agreement than actually exists. Even though there is low agreement on the issue, one or both sides of the organization-public relations perceives high levels of agreement . . . and behaves toward the other based on those inaccurate perceptions. Eventually a critical incident will force a reality check, thus revealing the actual level of disagreement. Lost time and false starts are the costs of these relationships.

Likewise, if one or both sides perceive higher levels of disagreement than actually exist, then the relationship could be referred to as *false conflict* (Scheff's "pluralistic ignorance"). In this state of low accuracy, the actors think—and act—as though they disagree, developing needless strategy based on the perceived disagreement—avoiding, challenging, undercutting, and criticizing, each other. Without outside intervention and facilitation, the parties involved may never develop appropriate strategies for dealing with one another. Waste and lost opportunities are the costs of these relationships.

The public relations problems that result from each of these states call for significantly different strategies. If the organizational actors and a public hold different evaluations or definitions of an issue, a persuasion strategy may be necessary—both inside and outside the organization. If they do not recognize that they agree or disagree, then an information-sharing intervention can increase accuracy.

Absent data on the true state of actual and perceived agreement, public relations strategy—just as behavior in interpersonal relationships—may be unnecessary or inappropriate. One can imagine effort and resources wasted on programs designed to persuade publics to accept positions to which they already subscribe. Alternatively, one can imagine situations in which publics protest imagined or rumored organizational positions that do not accurately represent the organization's actual

stance, which might be in accord with those of the publics.

Early co-orientational studies in public relations explored relationships among internal organizational publics, between schools and their community constituencies, and between public agencies and their publics. Recent studies using co-orientational designs have analyzed relationships between public relations practitioners and lawyers, and between government and corporate practitioners.

The imagery of co-orientational relationships again makes clear the important role of research in public relations. Framing responses to publics and formulating strategy for building and maintaining relationships demand that public relations counsel is informed about the actual and perceived levels of agreement on both sides of organization-public relationships. Accuracy is the critical variable, not agreement.

—Glen M. Broom

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COPY

Copy is written text that will be printed. It may be informative or persuasive in nature. It can be used in reference to articles that will appear in newspapers or magazines. It can also refer to the text of advertising.

In the context of public relations, copy may take many forms. These include press releases, fact sheets, backgrounders, brochures, newsletters, reports, speeches, position papers, and press statements. When writing copy, public relations practitioners must be mindful of the interests of the organizations they represent as well as the needs of their publics.

Public relations writers must understand the organization and its purpose for communication and know the public for whom the piece is written to write good copy. To do this, the practitioner must be certain that the copy answers all pertinent questions while emphasizing the points the organization believes to be most important. To write copy well, one must possess an intimate knowledge of spelling, grammar, punctuation, appropriate capitalization, appropriate abbreviations, and language usage. In addition, good copy is accurate, brief, and clear. It is important for a writer to be accurate because mass audiences tend to believe what they see and read in the media.

Practitioners are ethically bound to disseminate only that information that is factual and correct; many also find that their credibility and reputation depend upon it. Most writers are limited to a certain amount of space, as measured by column inches or pages, and therefore must learn the merits of brevity.

Last, clarity is an important goal because it helps mass audiences to understand the writer's intent. Copy usually follows a particular stylebook, whether that of the organization or a commonly used one such as *The Associated Press Stylebook*. Stylebooks beget consistency by establishing rules for items such as correct word usage, weights, measures, capitalization, titles, and abbreviations. Stylebooks should not inhibit creativity, but rather enhance readability via consistency.

Well-prepared copy adheres to the elements of news value such as timeliness, consequence,

prominence, and proximity. Many public relations practitioners follow the inverted pyramid style in their writing as do journalists. When using the method, copy is presented with the most important information first and additional information in descending order. This style is followed in the hopes that it will grab an editor's attention and the piece will be published. In addition, it ensures that the most important information is not cut if space is limited. Editing and rewriting are integral parts of the writing process and help writers to meet the goals of providing factual information that is brief and clear while adhering to stylebook rules.

—*Brigitta Brunner*

See also AP style; Stylebook; Writing

COPYRIGHT

Before the European Enlightenment, there was no concept of copyright. It was the product of a shift from seeing knowledge as divine revelation to seeing knowledge as created by people. In the 1500s, the issue of ownership of intellectual property was largely moot because of the licensing system, whereby the government granted a monopoly to printing companies and authors had little say in the matter if they wanted to be published. With the decline of licensing arrangements (in part because of an increasing resistance to censorship), and with both an increasing literacy and a resultant increasing demand for knowledge, the issue of ownership took on greater importance. Two justifications were offered for copyright protection for authors—natural rights and utilitarianism. The natural rights justification was that people had a natural right to dispose of, and benefit from, the product of their labor, whether mental or physical. The utilitarian justification was that copyright was the best means of encouraging the development of new knowledge that benefited society. The first copyright statute in the Western world, the Statute of Anne (1710), was a compromise between the two positions as its full title indicates—“A Bill for the Encouragement of Learning and for Securing the Property of Copies of Books to the Rightful Owners

Thereof” (Hesse, 2002, p. 38). The basis of United States copyright law, the federal Constitution, has a similar approach. As set forth in Article 1, Section 8, Congress has the power to “promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries.”

What can be copyrighted are “original works of authorship fixed in any tangible medium of expression, now known or later developed, from which they can be perceived, reproduced, or otherwise communicated, either directly or with the aid of a machine or device” (1997, 17 U.S.C. §102[a]). This includes literary works, musical works, dramatic works, pantomimes and choreographic works, pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works, motion pictures and other audiovisual works, sound recordings, and architectural works. But “any idea, procedure, process, system, method of operation, concept, principle, or discovery, regardless of the form in which it is described, explained, illustrated, or embodied” (1997, 17 U.S.C. §102[b]) cannot be copyrighted.

While it is intended that copyright would be invested in the creator of the work, this is not the case for works for hire, either within the normal scope of employment or commissioned works. In these cases, the employer is considered the author. The parties involved in the employment situation may change this by contract.

Copyright exists from the time of the creation of the work and registration is not required. To register for a copyright, a completed application form, a filing fee, and two copies of the work (one if unpublished) are filed with the copyright office. Notice in the form of some sort of recognizable abbreviation or symbol, name of the copyright holder, and the date should be placed on the work in a noticeable place. Although registration or notice are not required, there are certain advantages to registration. For example, there may be pride of ownership in claiming the creative activity, certain copyright infringement actions cannot be initiated absent registration, and no statutory damages or attorney fees can be awarded without registration. Duration of the copyright depends on such items as time when granted, whether the copyright holder is an individual or a

corporation, and so on. For individuals, generally it is the life of the author plus 70 years.

Rights of the copyright holder include the right to reproduce the work, prepare derivative works, and distribute copies. In 1990, a provision was added to the Copyright Act on “moral rights” of the copyright holder, bringing the United States more in line with international copyright laws. Such moral rights include the right to claim authorship, and to prevent intentional distortion and mutilation.

In spite of the rights of copyright holders, there are certain defenses to copyright infringements. Defenses include independent creation and, in certain situations, compulsory licensing upon payment of royalties. It has been suggested that there might be a public need-to-know defense based on the First Amendment in such areas of news photographs or videotapes (Merges, Menell, & Lemley, 2003, pp. 494–495).

An often-used defense in copyright infringement suits is the fair use doctrine. This doctrine allows for the “fair use” of copyrighted works for certain purposes such as news reporting, scholarship, and teaching. In determining whether the use is fair, the courts look at the purpose and character of the use (e.g., nonprofit or not), the nature of the copyrighted work (e.g., unpublished or published, or workbook), amount and substantiality taken, and, most important in the eyes of the law, the impact on the market for the copyrighted work. A good discussion of how these factors interact occurs in *Harper and Row Publishers, Inc. v. Nation Enterprises*, 471 U.S. 539 (1969), involving President Ford’s memoirs.

Somewhat analogous to copyright law is the law regarding trade and service marks. This is covered in the Lanham Act (1946, 15 U.S.C. §1051ff.). Among the differences between copyright and trade or service marks is that copyright protects expression whereas trade and service marks protect goodwill and reputation (Gower, 2003, pp. 96–100).

New technologies have made copyright infringement easier to accomplish and harder to enforce. Various encryption systems have been established to thwart unauthorized infringements and laws have been put in place to punish circumvention of such encryption devices, but infringements continue.

Knowledge of copyright law is important to public relations practitioners both in protecting their own creative product and in making sure that they don’t infringe on the rights of others.

—Roy V. Leeper

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CORPORATE IMAGE

The concept of corporate image is one of the most central theoretical constructs to the study of public relations. In fact, public relations communication is defined as the management of the corporate image(s) for the organization. A corporate image is any singular piece of knowledge, attitude, or behavior that an individual possesses toward an organization. Defining corporate image in this way, as a relatively singular conception, suggests that any person has the potential for multiple images—positive and negative knowledge, various attitudes, assorted behaviors—toward *any one organization*.

For example, if one reflects on the organization she or he works for, any employee holds many positive, neutral, and negative pieces of knowledge, opinions, behaviors, and other images toward the organization that employs her or him. Further, when faced with a negative situation, a person can adopt a negative image of the employer at that moment, or

when experiencing a positive issue such as a raise in pay, a person's image of the organization becomes more positive given that action. In short, any person holds multiple images of organizations; the more experience the person has of the organization, the greater the number and variety of corporate images.

CONTRASTING EARLIER DEFINITIONS AGAINST CURRENT CONCEPTS OF CORPORATE IMAGE

Known as the "collapse theory" of corporate image, this theory of image as numerous attitudes or behaviors toward an organization is a relatively new way to conceptualize image and contrasts to earlier definitions of the process of corporate image. The traditional, established views toward corporate image have been that the organization is largely responsible for its image and that the corporate image of an organization is essentially one, global construct. These traditional views toward corporate image are still around today: State Farm Insurance wants to be a "good neighbor," Budweiser wants to be the "king of beers," and Xerox wants its image to be "the document company."

While these global images are still accepted and communicated by many organizations as their corporate image, recent research into corporate image processes has called into question whether corporate image can be, in fact, one universal or global construct and whether it can be controlled by the organization at all. Several public relations researchers and professionals have discovered that both these established definitions of corporate image are misleading and that other theories of image can improve how the organization manages its images.

The move to conceptualize images as plural, and potentially ever changing, in the individual inherently privileges corporate image development also in the audience members as well as in the control of the organization. As suggested above, corporate images are all those pieces of knowledge and opinions that the individual holds toward the organization. Corporate images can certainly be developed by an organization and communicated to all the important audiences that relate to the corporation or agency. But at the same time, the organization must

recognize that any member of any audience who is important to the company has the potential for multiple, ever-changing images of the given organization, based on all the various experiences and environmental stimuli that can influence and lead to their images.

In sum, several implications of these revised definitions of corporate image processes exist for public relations scholars, teachers, and professionals. First, corporate image is, indeed, developed and delivered by organizations to all their respective and important populations: employees, stockholders, media, community residents, retailers, customers, activist groups, truck drivers, and competition. But, in addition to the somewhat global, overarching image that the organization builds its reputation on, numerous other, singular, even contrasting images can also be delivered in the messages of an organization in its public relations, advertising, or social issue campaigns.

Second, organizations need to appreciate that while they might have some control—through their design of campaign messages—of their global corporate images and supporting corporate images that they want others to accept, they cannot control how images are received in their targeted audience members. As suggested above, outside influences can cause persons to have other images of an organization besides the intended image communicated by the company. For example, an automotive insurance corporation can advertise their cost-effective rates and their speedy claim services, but if a policyholder has a personal experience of an expensive rate and a negative experience with a long, drawn-out claim, this policyholder holds negative images of the automotive insurance corporation.

In another instance, a different policyholder with this same company, given an alternative experience in another city of speedy service and reasonable rates, holds very positive images of the insurance company. The bottom line is that, while corporations can certainly communicate a corporate image or images that they want their audiences to hold toward them, other factors such as business experiences with the organization, or perhaps damaging environmental issues, legal issues, negative or

positive media stories, or crises in competitive companies can damage or enhance the image of the corporation even if these factors are out of the control of the organization.

In today's intensely competitive business environment, the public relations function of any organization must appreciate that corporate image is in both the organization and the audiences that relate to the organization. Multiple images are available to the organization and are possible in the audience members. Public relations professionals must realize that campaign messages should address multiple images and that these images relate to the interests and experiences of their audiences. And, finally, public relations communication must understand that many factors affect and influence image process and development—environmental factors, business factors, legal factors, personal factors—and that these factors are often out of the control of the organization.

CORPORATE IMAGE IN OTHER BUSINESS FIELDS

The development of the theoretical construct of corporate image in public relations research is noteworthy and adds to the understanding of the concept as it has developed up to today. Corporate image issues inform both academics as a theoretical construct and practitioners as a technical construct. Other, related fields such as advertising, marketing, or business management also share an interest in understanding the production and the reception of an organization's image.

From the standpoint of public relations, corporate image processes are inevitable, and image may be a positive and negative reality situated in both the production and the consumption of an organization's campaign messages and images. Public relations assumes the concept of image as a fluid process communicating both positive and negative, intended and unintended, strong and weak, images and messages—often simultaneously—to any given population and its members. And importantly, multiple factors from the organization, the individual, and the environment can intersect and stimulate various images in the audience membership.

Scholars and practitioners from many other business fields have struggled to define the elusive concept of corporate image. Debates over which terms adequately label the concept—identity, image, corporate image, brand image, identification, reputation, cognitions, attributes—add to the confusion about how to define a corporation's image. Research by professionals and scholars in advertising, marketing, management, and public relations reveals that the points of view of different fields toward corporate image mirror their respective views toward what populations are most important to their operation.

For advertising and marketing, the focus on sales dictates that the consumer population is the most important population—and virtually the only population—targeted by an organization's messages. For advertising and marketing, recognition of an organization's image is tied to the sale of the organization's product. The bottom-line assumption is that fostering a positive corporate image in the eyes of the consumers will inevitably lead to sales. The inherent relationship of image to the consumers for advertising and marketing is that image is primarily determined and controlled by the organization.

Business management studies agree that image is largely controlled by the organization. The inherent nature of business management is to privilege one population—the employees. For business management, an organization's positive image is cultivated in the employees to encourage their satisfaction in working for the organization. This management view contends that an organization's image is a form of social identification in which the employees feel an association with the organization.

Public relations image research has yielded findings that support the multifaceted definition of corporate image as understood today in public relations communication. Early intense study of corporate image processes recognized that image is a give-and-take, a sort of dialogue, between the organization and all the targeted and important audiences surrounding the organization. Further research built on these findings and established that many social and personal factors from the organization and from the audience members' lived experiences go into the image formation process.

Additionally, research has confirmed the capacity of any individual to hold several, perhaps contradicting, images of the same organization. One line of research recognized the image formation process as a cognitive process, privileged in the individual, where the thought processes of a person affects the relationship among the receiver, related objects, assigned attributes, other persons, rules understood for this interaction, and other pertinent time and special relationships. Others extended the personal cognition process and argued, additionally, for the power of environmental factors and cultural factors to influence persons and organizations and, eventually, the image process. The distinctive contribution of public relations research to the concept of corporate image is to recognize that corporate identity is not defined as a company's logo, slogan, name, or other name recognition elements but as a company's overall definition, direction, and distinctiveness as perceived by all its various audiences.

—*Mary Anne Moffitt*

See also Crisis and crisis management; Image restoration theory; Issues management; Psychological processing; Public relations

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CORPORATE MORAL CONSCIENCE

Public relations is sometimes considered the “conscience of the corporation” because it incorporates ethical concerns and the diverse voices of publics into the strategic decision making of an organization. If public relations does not work to include their views in organizational planning, these publics are often ignored. A power imbalance might exist that

prevents publics from participating in organizational decision making, or they might perceive the organization as uncaring toward their concerns. Including the concerns of publics is inherently ethical because it is based on dialogical communication. The public relations communicator also acts as the conscience of the organization by attempting to determine the morally correct course of action in a situation and counsel the chief executive officer and dominant coalition on this perspective. Ethical analysis often arises when the public relations practitioner is called on to address the question “How will our publics see this decision?”

Since the development of modern forms of public relations in the 20th century, practitioners have attempted to position the practice as an integral part of the moral, social, or ethical conscience of organizations. Practitioners have counseled organizations to be more open and accessible, tell the truth, and operate in ways that benefit society. A conscience should guide behavior along accepted moral principles. It represents our better self or what we should do to resolve a dilemma in terms of normative ethical guidelines. Does public relations play the corporate (or organizational) conscience role in corporations? Should it? How does public relations contribute to more ethical behavior? And what are the principles of public relations that help it serve a conscience function?

WHAT IS A CONSCIENCE?

According to Sissela Bok, the conscience “is seen as another, and more exacting, self” (1999, p. 94). Bok advised those confronted with dilemmas to engage in a dialectic dialogue with one's conscience. A conscience should provide guidance regarding what is best. However, defining what is best has always been the difficult part of ethics: Best could be defined through moral principles (derived by accepted norms or divine rules), or best can be determined by desired consequences. Regardless of which paradigm is used, moral decisions should be justifiable to those affected by the decision.

Ethical decisions involve making choices concerning competing loyalties or values. The right decision should be influenced by moral principles so

that they are explicable to publics and defensible from a rational perspective. Ethical decisions usually affect others and impact the quality of relationships between the decision makers and those affected by the decision. Because a primary function of public relations is to maintain relationships with strategic publics, public relations professionals should be concerned about the impact of organizational decisions on relationships with various publics.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE CORPORATE CONSCIENCE FUNCTION

Ivy Lee was the first to develop a statement of principles, which he issued in 1906. His declaration of ethical principles was based on the idea of truthful communication, and it encouraged transparency and mediation between corporate behavior and public expectations. Increasing public understanding became the bedrock of his counsel to the railroad and coal industries. As companies opened up to public scrutiny, they also began to respond to public pressure.

Arthur W. Page, named the first vice president of public relations in 1927, endorsed telling the truth, listening to stakeholders, and matching action to talk. Page demanded the vice president position at AT&T, illustrating the value of public relations by holding a position capable of influencing corporate policy. Congruent with later findings on public relations roles, Page believed that the impact of public relations was peripheral if limited to the spokesperson role. Page's impact was in being an active voice in policy and action that promoted integrity. His principle, "tell the truth," meant to be truthful in all situations and to all publics: customers, employees, client, and boss. Page was an advocate for telling the truth even when it is difficult, thus providing a dimension of "conscience" to the corporation.

John W. Hill was a pioneer in the idea of public relations acting as corporate conscience. Hill argued, "Good public relations has been called the corporate conscience—an indispensable attribute of modern and progressive business" (Hill, 1958, p. 173). Hill was an early proponent of public relations acting as the ethical arbiter in an

organization, maintaining that a corporation has a duty of acting with goodwill toward its publics and public relations practitioners should counsel objectively toward that end. Hill advocated integrity, sound management policies regarding employees and consumers, and disclosure in the public interest. Hill argued that facts should drive public relations, not the other way around; and that people must know what a company is doing to approve of its actions. Hill believed that public relations could serve as a corporate conscience by helping to establish policy that is ethical and socially responsible.

WHY PUBLIC RELATIONS SHOULD ACT AS THE CORPORATE CONSCIENCE

Scholars, such as D. K. Wright, Michael Ryan and David L. Martinson, Thomas H. Bivins, Roy V. Leeper, and others, have called for public relations officers to act as the ethical consciences of their organizations. Although this role is often delegated to other organizational functions such as legal, financial, or human relations, public relations can offer insight into the ethical decision-making process that other functions cannot. In fact, there are many reasons that public relations practitioners are those best suited in the organization to act as the corporate conscience; we review these below.

Public and Defensible Decisions

Ethical decisions affect others, and as such, they should be made public to those affected. John Rawls (1999) asserted that a moral decision, in order to be justifiable, must be able to be discussed and defended publicly. Rawls explained, "The point of the publicity condition is to have the parties evaluate conceptions of justice as publicly acknowledged and fully effective moral constitutions of social life" (1999, p. 115). Steven Phelps Wall described this publicity argument as "the basic justification argument" and said that "this requirement is that citizens are owed an honest, publicly accessible justification" (1996, p. 502).

Rawls argued that such justification begins with public discussion by those involved in the decision.

[Justification] presumes a clash of views between persons or within one person, and seeks to convince others, or ourselves, of the principles upon which our claims and judgments are founded. Being designed to reconcile by reason, justification proceeds from what all parties to the discussion hold in common. (1999, p. 508)

Public relations, as a two-way communication function, should be involved in facilitating the discussion between management and stakeholders. The job of a public relations practitioner in this situation is to foster dialogue and understanding between an organization and key publics, so that options for mutual gain can be discovered. The best situation is that in which public relations is used to design a mutually beneficial solution with publics and then presents that resolution to the public as required in Rawls's test of morality.

Obligation of Dialogue

Philosophers have agreed for centuries that dialogue is an inherently ethical form of communication because it reinforces the dignity and respect of both parties. R. L. Pearson (1989) based his public relations ethics on the dialogical philosophy of Jürgen Habermas. Habermas emphasized the ethical obligation of engaging in dialogue and the crucial function of dialogue in the public sphere to discover truth through discussion. Other communication scholars have continued the line of theory equating ethics with dialogical public relations. James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig (1996) included the obligation of dialogue in their reasoning of public relations ethics, using symmetry as a way of satisfying that obligation. Robert Van Es and Tiemo Meijlink argued that symmetrical communication is the "core concept" of dialogue (2000, p. 69). Symmetry is, therefore, an inherently ethical form of communication because it involves dialogue and seeks to maintain the dignity and respect of those involved.

Symmetrical public relations is achieved when "practitioners use research and dialogue to bring about symbiotic changes in the ideas, attitudes, and behaviors of both their organizations and publics" (J. E. Grunig, 2001, p. 12). Because change happens in both the organization and its public,

symmetrical communication is conceived as integrative. Practitioners act as an ethical conscience seeking truth rather than acting only as an advocate of the organization as seen in an asymmetrical approach. When practitioners have the freedom to act as the corporate conscience, they can seek to create the most ethically responsible resolution to an issue through integrating the ideas of publics with those of the organization. This role might not be possible if the dominant coalition insists on the public relations practitioner acting simply as an advocate for the organization's position. Similar to membership in the dominant coalition, the leadership of an organization must want the public relations practitioner to act as the corporate conscience and actively seek his or her counsel.

Shaping Values, Culture, and Behavior Through Communication

Public relations is the primary communication function in an organization, both with internal and external publics. This fact means that public relations can be instrumental in shaping the values, culture, and behavior of an organization through communication. The values of an organization are often expressed in a *mission statement*, ethics statement, or credo. Public relations practitioners often help to construct these documents as well as enact their tenets in organizational decision making.

When public relations practitioners enact the role of corporate conscience in their organizations, they can be instrumental in fostering an organizational culture that is supportive of ethical analyses. Shaping the organizational values and culture to include ethically conscientious behavior and regular consideration of the moral implications of decisions can result in more responsible organizational behavior. In this way, corporate social responsibility and public relations practitioners that act as the ethical conscience of the organization are linked.

More Enduring Decisions Through a Systems Theory Approach

Public relations is uniquely situated to discover, learn, and understand the views of publics around the organization. In systems theory terms, public

relations acts as a boundary spanner, collecting information from publics in the environment of the organization and using that information in organizational decision making. Acting as a boundary spanner between the organization and publics allows the public relations practitioner to form long-term relationships with publics and incorporate the views of publics into decision making. This means that publics should be more satisfied with the organization than with one that does little to incorporate the ideas and values of publics into its decision making.

Public relations practitioners can enact a dual membership role in the organization and in groups in its environment. The practitioner works to educate each side on the views of the other, while learning the values and ideals of each in a symmetrical fashion. The symmetrical model is of great importance because it allows communicators to gain knowledge of an issue from a perspective outside the organization and to incorporate that knowledge into decision making. The resulting decisions should be better considered than they would be without this boundary spanning input. Understanding the values of publics allows the public relations practitioner to counsel as the corporate conscience with a good idea in mind of how publics will view the decision in terms of its morality. These types of integrative decisions are thought to be ethical because they are based on dialogue, but they also serve to build and maintain relationships with publics.

Listening to public needs and concerns and responding to them are often overlooked but important functions of public relations acting as the corporate conscience. When the views of publics are considered in decision making, those publics are respected by the organization, which furthers the relationship. These types of decisions are more enduring over the long term because publics build trust in the credibility of the organization and see that their ideas can impact organizational policy in meaningful ways. When the views of publics are not taken into consideration, the issue is often reopened to debate. Public relations practitioners that act as the corporate conscience and incorporate the values of publics into organizational policy can

therefore save the organization resources by resolving matters effectively in a long-term manner.

Impediments to Acting as the Corporate Conscience

Even though “public relations professionals seem to be uniquely qualified and situated to gather data and to supply leadership and expertise that can help corporations develop effective and useful ethical standards,” they may not be playing that role (Heath & Ryan, 1989, p. 34). In a survey of 300 corporate public affairs officers, Heath and Ryan found that more than half were only moderately involved in developing corporate ethics programs, with a large number not being involved at all.

In Kathy R. Fitzpatrick’s 1996 survey of ethics officers, less than 7 percent of the officers had primary responsibility in public relations. They were more likely to be lawyers, human resource managers, or finance managers. Codes of ethics were considered the most helpful in ethical decisions, whereas public relations counsel and academic theories were cited least important. This raises the question, Why is public relations not more involved in ethics policy? There might be several reasons:

1. Management sometimes sees public relations practitioners in a technical role of communicator rather than management counselor.
2. A corporate conscience must affect corporate policy. If public relations is not involved in that process, it cannot fulfill this role.
3. Corporate ethical behavior is often (mis)equated with compliance—either with the law or with industry and corporate codes of ethics. Lawyers are often considered better counsel on compliance issues.
4. Fitzpatrick raised the concern of a lacking community orientation among ethics officers. These officers are internally directed regarding ethics, focused on employees rather than the larger picture of social responsibility.

According to theory and research in the discipline, each of these pitfalls can be countered and resolved by public relations. Enacting a manager

role, earning inclusion in the dominant coalition to advise on issues, learning methods of moral reasoning, and understanding social responsibility to the community allow the public relations practitioner to effectively argue for enacting the role of corporate conscience.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AS THE CORPORATE CONSCIENCE

The ever-growing mandate for corporate accountability and ethical responsibility illustrates that more ethical deliberation is needed in corporate decision making. The public demand for corporate transparency beckons communication through public relations, so the time is ripe for public relations practitioners to enact the corporate conscience role. Even with this demand, much work remains to be done in public relations before practitioners are regularly sought after as a corporate conscience and commonly prepared to enact that role. Although public relations is ideally situated to act as the corporate conscience for the reasons outlined above, it often abdicates that position to legal counsel, human relations, or other departments.

As research shows, public relations practitioners are generally seen as a corporate conscience late in their careers. More training in ethics is needed in public relations before the majority of practitioners feel adequately equipped to advise on ethical dilemmas, even at the midlevel of the organization. Several factors, such as age and reporting relationships, play a role in the practitioner's ability to function as the corporate conscience. Ethical sensitivity, or the ability to recognize the moral or ethical implications of a situation, also plays a role, as does prior practitioner training in ethics. Despite the difficulties associated with being able to function as the corporate conscience, public relations practitioners are filling this role at forward-thinking organizations, and the demand for ethical analysis conjoint with legal analysis is growing. J. D. Frances reasoned,

Professional public relations practitioners are uniquely suited to fill the apparent void in ethics and

social responsibility that exists in many organizations today. . . . The public relations professional knows how to find out what the public is thinking, relay that to management, and formulate communications programs to increase public understanding and alter public attitudes toward the organization. (1990, p. 32)

Acting as the corporate conscience involves a leadership and counseling role for public relations practitioners that would truly allow the function a maximal contribution to organizational effectiveness and ethically responsible behavior. In this role, public relations practitioners can affect the ethics of the organization both internally and externally. Cornelius B. Pratt confirmed that corporate ethics initiatives are “contingent on public relations practitioners who, as the consciences of their organizations, play an important role in ethical leadership” (1991, p. 231).

Ethical obligation demands that public relations—as the function most readily equipped to understand and involve the values of publics in organizational decision making—step forward to act as the corporate conscience. If practitioners do not meet this challenge, ethical analysis is likely to be lacking the views of key publics or equated with legal or financial imperatives rather than moral ones, costing the organization losses of credibility and resources. By acting as the ethical conscience of the organization, public relations improves the responsiveness of organizations to their publics and helps contribute to the positive social role of business in society.

—Shannon A. Bowen and Brad L. Rawlins

See also Deontology; Ethics of public relations; Excellence theory; Hill, John Wiley; Mission and vision statements; Moral development; Page, Arthur W.; Symmetry

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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

“Doing well by doing good” is the maxim for social responsibility. A greater demand for social responsibility always seems to follow periods of notorious corporate abuse. However, the real measure of social responsibility is whether organizations will act responsibly without pressure from outside entities. The concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is becoming more of a buzzword and is gaining acceptance as essential to successful business practice. However, it remains controversial despite public insistence for accountability beyond financial obligations. This entry will cover the historical development of CSR, its fundamental concepts, the criticisms of CSR, and the role public relations plays for corporations that choose to follow its precepts.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF CSR

The libertarian view that corporations exist solely for the sake of making money, and that by fulfilling this obligation they benefit society, has historically provided organizations with a justification for abuse. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several organizations were guilty of such exploitations as price gouging, monopolizing markets, producing defective or harmful products, and mistreating work forces. The code that guided business was caveat emptor (“let the buyer beware”), and the corporation’s concern for its effects on the public was expressed by William Vanderbilt’s quotation “the public be damned.” Although the view of business’s

singular responsibility, to make a profit, is not extinct—it can be found in the contemporary works of Milton Friedman—organizations are restricted from many of the past abuses because of government regulations resulting from appeals by consumer groups, unions, and environmental watchdogs.

The initiative to make corporations accountable for their actions beyond profit began in the 20th century with the progressive movement's attempts at muckraking and reform. The call for transparency by progressive reformists was grounded in the faith that organizations would be compelled to behave more responsibly if their actions were publicized. Corporations' primary responsibility was still financial, but progressives lobbied for responsible action in gaining profits.

According to Jerry L. Kinard, Michael E. Smith, and Brian R. Kinard (2003), the debate about corporate responsibilities beyond making profits began in the 1930s with influential books such as *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* by Adolf Berle and Gardiner Means (1932), *The Human Problems of an Industrial Civilization* by Elton Mayo (1933), and *The Decline of Competition* by Arthur Burns (1936). These early authors argued that as an organization gained more power through economic wealth, its potential for abuse grew along with its obligation to contribute to society. Where companies resisted reforms, government often stepped in to provide legal parameters ensuring some minimal standard of responsibility.

Social change in the 1960s and 1970s once again brought the concept of social responsibility to the forefront. According to Rogene A. Buchholz (1989), civil rights for minorities, equal rights for women, environmental protection, consumer rights, and safety and health in the workplace “had far-reaching and long-lasting impacts on business organizations” (p. 23). People's expectations about the role of corporations in society changed, and these business organizations had to adapt to the growing demand for responsibility that went beyond the narrow pursuit of making profits. Society would no longer tolerate the social costs of business's single-minded quest for economic growth, such as pollution, harmful products, and dangerous work environments.

Since the 1970s, social responsibility has grown in stature and in practice. Today's socially responsible organizations seek ways of accomplishing the financial directive through socially responsible means. The concept is still primarily an ethical one, but current researchers and philosophers repeatedly seek pragmatic verification of the need for social responsibility. Many believe what Robert C. Solomon (1992) proposed when he wrote that “business ethics, rightly conceived, is just good business” (p. 21).

THE NEED FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Corporate social responsibility simply means that organizations have responsibilities to society that extend beyond the traditional contract to produce goods and services at a profit. In today's complex and dynamic environment of conflicting interests, being socially responsible means that “corporations are more than just economic institutions and have a responsibility to help society solve some of its most pressing social problems, many of which corporations helped to cause, by devoting some of their resources to the solution of these problems” (Buchholz, 1989, p. 25). Social responsibility does not replace the financial obligations of corporations; it simply adds other responsibilities. In short, it means that corporations should act as responsible citizens because their actions can have such a substantial impact on society. Responsible citizens are expected to behave beyond strict compliance with the law. Of course, there are minimum restrictions that prevent citizens from harming others while satisfying self-interests, but responsible citizens have the additional obligation of benefiting society.

Proponents of CSR argue that organizations must acknowledge the responsibilities beyond financial obligations. Solomon (1992) contended that the values of business have become distorted by placing too much emphasis on making money while ignoring basic purposes of providing services and products for the benefaction of society. “The making of money pure and simple is not the culmination of business life, much less the fulfillment of one's social responsibilities” (p. 19). If society expects

businesses to offer more than return on investments, then businesses are obligated to accommodate these demands. After all, in a competitive market, an institution's survival depends on whether it continues to have perceived value in society. When institutions fail to live up to society's expectations, they either have to adapt or they become obsolete.

Others advocate that social responsibility provides a more long-term approach to success. Social responsibility is a commitment to the long-term public good that outweighs short-term individual self-interests and is based on the principle of reciprocity—the notion that “individuals and institutions have a moral obligation to the public's welfare, in return for which society bestows its respect and trust” (Day, 2003, p. 35). Rather than a focus on short-term profit maximization, socially responsible behavior is based on enlightened self-interest of doing something that benefits society as a whole. It may cost more in the short term to improve social problems such as health, quality of air, and education. But the success of an organization depends on the future availability of these resources. If an organization's practices deteriorate society, it will not have viable resources to successfully operate in the future. Today, more than ever before, organizations must consider their social obligations and responsibilities to increasingly educated and concerned publics.

The third argument is that businesses will benefit from a better public image by acting responsibly. Some analysts report that organizations are acting more responsibly because they are responding to the demands of the marketplace. If consumers are buying from, investors investing in, and future employees seeking employment from organizations considered more socially responsible, then organizations will change behavior to earn such a reputation. However, the value of social responsibility is diminished when corporations seek the “image” of responsibility without paying the full price for the reputation. Social responsibility requires significant investments and commitments to solving social problems. These efforts can take years to produce results and may not always result in a lot of publicity. The commitment to social responsibility

should be genuine. The resulting image will only benefit the organization if it is authentic in its efforts. Even Enron had social responsibility statements that fostered a positive image for many years until the true motivations and behavior of senior management became public.

The final, and most compelling, reason for social responsibility is enhanced autonomy. Keith Davis (1965) noted that “the social responsibility of businessmen needs to be commensurate with their social power” (p. 404). Davis added that if “power and responsibility are to be relatively equal, *then the avoidance of social responsibility leads to gradual erosion of social power*” (1965, p. 406, italics in original). This advice may be more relevant today than when Davis wrote it, because of increased value placed on a clean environment, safety, health, and equal opportunity. When organizations have not met these expectations, the media have been quick to expose the errant behavior. Subsequently, when business power is not used responsibly, government, labor groups, and active advocacy groups have acted to diminish business influence with protests, strikes, economic boycotts, and regulations. It is becoming more evident that organizations must operate in a public environment that demands more than just the pursuit of profits in order to maintain the autonomy to pursue long-term goals without outside interference.

Organizations that behave within the socially responsible parameters established by society maintain more autonomy and establish trusting relationships with their publics. Organizations that have shown their concern for society's welfare at the risk of their own, such as Johnson & Johnson and the Tylenol case, have benefited in the long run from such behavior. Organizations that have consistently abused their economic positions in the past have a more arduous task in gaining the trust of publics that have grown cynically skeptical.

CRITICISMS OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

There are many critics of the doctrine of social responsibility, and their arguments should be addressed. The primary concerns about social

responsibility are that it has been difficult to define and measure, it dilutes the primary responsibility to shareholders, it undermines the free enterprise system, and it gives too much power and control to business.

S. Prakash Sethi (1975) has written that “social responsibility . . . has been used in so many different contexts that it has lost all meaning. Devoid of an internal structure and content, it has come to mean all things to all people” (p. 58). Such definitional problems at the conceptual and operations levels raise questions about accountability. Who decides what social problems a business should address, what goals and standards should be applied, and how social responsibility should be measured? In the absence of outside standards, management could presumably make these decisions according to their own criteria. Milton Friedman (1970) questioned the right of managers of private corporations to set public policy on behalf of stockholders, consumers, and employees. He said it was tantamount to taxing these stakeholders to satisfy the social interests of management.

According to Friedman (1970), the sole responsibility of a corporation is to its shareholders. Friedman argues that organizations have only the following four basic social obligations: obey the law, provide goods and services, employ resources efficiently, and pay resource owners fairly according to the market. Since the manager of the corporation is an employee of the owners, he or she is morally bound to provide the greatest return on the owner’s investments and nothing more. Pursuing any other objectives is outside the legal and ethical purview of responsibility. Other critics claim that the doctrine of social responsibility undermines the free enterprise system and can debilitate U.S.-based corporations if they must compete against international business organizations that don’t follow the same expectations.

And what qualifies business to solve social problems? Some criticize the concept of CSR because business people are not trained to solve these problems. Will corporations seek social goals with the same gusto with which they seek financial objectives? Only if there are enough incentives tied to economic gain. Related to this argument is the

concern that businesses will gain too much power if they take over responsibilities traditionally considered under the domain of such institutions as governments and other social improvement nonprofit organizations. Should businesses become all things to all people?

Obviously, it is impossible for a single business organization to solve the world’s ills. However, if all corporations worked together then several problems could be fixed. But herein lies a dilemma: Concerted actions to solve social problems cannot happen in a competitive environment because it would result in collusion. As Buchholz noted, the only way such concerted efforts can take place is if an outside institution, namely government, creates a level playing field by enacting policy and law. And for the most part, this is what usually happens.

Moving away from reactive social responsiveness, many organizations now work proactively by engaging in issues management and public policy. Such actions identify key issues before they become crises (pollution, workplace safety, and so on) and then engage other institutions to establish public policy that promotes social responsibility while creating an equal playing field in the marketplace.

ACCEPTANCE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Public opinion research of corporate executives indicates a growing acceptance of the practice of social responsibility. This has come primarily from an increased recognition about the long-term profitability of the practice. A recent worldwide survey found that more than two-thirds of chief executive officers believed being socially responsible is important to profitability, can help prevent the loss of customers, and can attract shareholders and employees. For example, investors have exerted their influence by choosing to put money into companies with high social responsibility ratings. If being socially responsible increases profitability, then such results address Friedman’s concern about the moral imperative to provide a good return on the shareholder’s investment.

Governments are also getting on board with increased standards for reporting social impact. As

these standards become legal requirements, business adherence moves from abstract and vague definitions of socially responsible behavior to measurable criteria. Other nongovernmental organizations, such as the Global Reporting Initiative, have also encouraged companies to publish a “triple-bottom line” annual report of economic, environmental, and social responsibility outcomes. Also called “sustainability” reporting, this movement has set standards for reporting social responsibility.

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The onus for designing and implementing social responsibility plans should be shared across several organizational domains: legal, human resources, public relations, accounting, and planning. No matter where the primary responsibility lies, public relations should be an active player in these programs. Additionally, many public relations firms offer social responsibility consulting. The impact an organization has on its publics through policies and behaviors is central to the unique organizational function of public relations in managing mutually beneficial relationships with key stakeholders. Public relations also helps organizations manage their image, primarily by listening to key publics and effectively communicating corporate values, behaviors, and goals. If corporations seek financial benefits from social responsibility, public relations must be a part of the mix.

According to the Strategic Social Responsibility Section of PRSA, public relations professionals should engage in the following activities to help their organizations be more socially responsible:

- Monitor the sociopolitical-economic horizon for issues that may affect an organization
- Identify the perceptions and expectations of an organization among its key publics
- Promote best social responsibility practices in light of these perceptions and expectations

Additionally, public relations practitioners can help their organizations be more transparent by

encouraging management to publicize policies and actions that affect stakeholders. The bad news must be shared with as much effort as the good news. Through transparency, an organization gains trust and can more quickly resolve problems in ways that are socially responsible and respectful of stakeholder interests.

—Brad L. Rawlins

See also Ethics of public relations; Mission and vision statements; Moral philosophy

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COUNSELING

Counseling is the “crème de la crème” function of the public relations profession. It occurs when senior practitioners give advice to the senior members of an organization. All of that advice giving sounds much easier than it is. Advice can redirect the future of an organization as well as refine its communication functions, strategies, and tactics.

In essence, this kind of advice is intended to build, maintain, or repair a favorable relationship between the organization and one or more markets or publics. This advice is intended to guide the

senior management of the organization in its efforts to gain an advantageous position vis-à-vis its relationships with stakeholders. If proper, the advice will address problems that might strain the relationship and increase the quality of strategic relations. Such research may lead to dramatic or subtle changes on the part of the organization to make it more capable of meeting the expectations of its stakeholders. It can focus on increased standards of corporate responsibility or better ways to achieve those standards. It addresses standards of ethics and helps the management of the organization recognize what it needs to produce a good organization, so that it can communicate with character and authority with one or more of its stakeholders.

The advice may focus on what the organization needs to do as well as how it should do it. The persons receiving the counsel seek to better understand and respond to some challenge. Counseling by its nature requires experience. It is best when it brings to bear sound judgment, often based on long experience, that draws on best practices as well as sage ethical advice. Through years of experience, counselors earn the ability to offer such advice by developing and grooming their careers so that their advice is valued, as it often is quite costly in terms of billable hourly consulting rates. Such advice is often based on astute insights into case studies—both successful and unsuccessful.

Counseling can occur reactively and proactively. In the first case, a management team may call on the advice of a senior practitioner after some problem has reached the boiling point. Slowly, the relationship between an organization and one or more publics may have deteriorated. Other counseling expertise may have been used to solve the problem. But the advice has failed to solve the problem. Perhaps, someone thinks, the problem may be a “PR problem”—whatever that might mean. In such situations they may unfortunately think that one or two well-crafted messages and perhaps a slick slogan or pamphlet delivered appropriately can set the matter right. Often such strategies fail because the problem is due to something other than ineffective communication that is straining the relationship.

Counseling may be least useful when it focuses only on communication solutions.

Proactive counseling is employed to head off a problem before it starts or before it reaches the boiling point. A substantial amount of discussion, for instance, occurred in the 1970s regarding the ability of public relations practitioners to use issue monitoring and other issue management techniques to spot and respond to an emerging issue. Experts often thought that if an emerging issue could be addressed early enough, the messages the organization disseminated could allay the strain. Such studies, however, eventually realized that the strain might not be due to an emerging issue that can be “communicated away.” But thinking about, planning for, and responding in an open and constructive way may lead to a proactive, collaborative decision that can occur before combatants become recalcitrant to give in because the problem and its solution have become ego involving.

One of the other types of counsels that is sought in such situations is the advice of attorneys—thus, the concept of legal counsel. Lawyers are often trained to advise clients to respond in different ways than public relations practitioners. Lawyers focus on the status of the law and the extent to which some entity might bear the burden of proof against the organization. Such advice might also be inadequate because the problem may arise not because of a difference of legal interpretation, but due to differences that arise because of facts, the interpretation of facts, value conflicts, and preferred policies.

These latter aspects of marketing and public policy are squarely in the realm of senior public relations practitioners. They often are called on to solve or prevent problems. They may in fact bring problems to the attention of senior management. If the senior practitioner is adequately serving the interest of his or her client or employer, he or she should be tuned into the various relationships and watch for their dysfunction. Counselors need to be on guard for strains in the relationship or look for ways to strengthen those relationships. They are called on for advice—counsel to solve the problem. When they are called on, the mark of their professional skill is

their ability to offer sound and ethical strategic advice. As a senior practitioner once said,

A long time ago, I learned that when management needs advice most, you had better be ready to offer several solutions and be ready to defend each. Also, you better not raise a problem unless you think you have a sound solution. And, you must be ready to raise problems when you see them. And, you had better see them first. (personal communication, December 1992).

Some of the high-water points in the history of the profession occurred when practitioners responded soundly to the need for counsel. Likewise, some of the lowest moments of the profession occurred when the advice was not sound. Some of the worst counsel has crafted communication responses to problems that led to manipulation and even lying—what some might call the engineering of consent.

As is true of all professions, public relations is best when it serves the mutual interests of client or employer and one or more publics or markets. Done properly, it is counseling—the giving of advice—that can distinguish the profession and demonstrate its value to society. Applied improperly, it leads to pejorative definitions of the term *public relations* as fouling rather than fostering the good of society. Counseling as part of the profession does more to define its reputation than any other function. One million good counsels cannot undo the harm of one notoriously bad counsel.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Corporate social responsibility; Issues management; Mutually beneficial relationships; Stakeholder Theory; Strain

CREDITS

Credits are the texts shown at the end (and increasingly, also at the beginning) of television programs and theatrical films. With the possible exception of radio dramas (which are almost extinct), credits for radio programs are always given at the end. If

examined properly, credits can provide a wealth of information beyond the obvious, such as what actor played which character, who directed, and so on. It is the credits for above-the-line personnel that can provide additional insight into a production.

All jobs (or positions) listed in credits fall into two broad categories: above-the-line and below-the-line. Below-the-line positions are technical and production positions. They include camera operators, sound recorders, editors, and other hands-on areas with limited creative input.

Above-the-line positions include producers, directors, writers, and actors. The positions of actors, writers, and directors are fairly well defined. The title of producer, or other associated titles (e.g., executive producer or line producer) cover a lot of very important ground.

In general, a producer secures financial backing for a project. Sometimes that backing is provided by the people who want the project done (for example, a 30-minute tourism promo by a local chamber of commerce). In the case of a feature film, a producer may secure financing from a studio or go to outside investors. Outside investors range from companies and individuals who finance films for a living to individuals or small companies that provide funds because they simply “believe in” the project.

Producers also serve as liaisons between investors and the other above-the-line production members, and can also be responsible for budgeting, scheduling, and may even be making day-to-day production decisions. In some instances, the producer may delegate most of the responsibilities and simply fill a management-type role.

In the case of documentaries and other potential “advocacy” productions, the credits usually include a “Special Thanks” or some sort of acknowledgments section. In the case of independent (meaning “small budgets and no major studio backing for production”) films, there is usually a very large run of names that falls under the heading “Thanks.” The names usually included are individuals who donated time or services, low-dollar investors, and small contribution financial backers.

An examination of the credits in a production can raise important questions. The advocacy or “slant”

in a particular production could be that of the scriptwriter or the original story the scriptwriter is working from. If the lead actor's name shows up in the producer credits as well, are they simply backing a project they think will make money, or are they "true believers"? With feature films, the number of actors who also direct, co-write, and co-produce the films they are starring in continues to grow. It is not uncommon to see the scriptwriter's name in the producers' credits.

—*Michael Nagy*

CRISIS AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

The study of crisis and crisis management is a very vibrant field within public relations. There is a strong imperative for understanding crises and crisis management. All organizations should realize they are vulnerable to crises so they must prepare for the eventuality. Once management realizes crises are possible, it must grapple with what a crisis is and what constitutes crisis management.

A crisis can be defined as "an unpredictable, major threat that can have a negative effect on the organization, industry, or stakeholders" (Coombs, 1999, p. 2). This definition is derived from a synthesis of other crisis definitions and presents the three critical features of a crisis. First, a crisis cannot be predicted but it can be expected. Crisis managers know a crisis will hit but cannot say exactly when—a crisis is unpredictable. Second, a major threat has the potential to disrupt organizational operations in some way. A crisis might close a production line or require inventorying the return of defective products. This does not mean operations are always disrupted, just that the potential exists. Quick actions by the crisis management team can prevent the crisis from fulfilling its disruptive potential. Thierry Pauchant and Ian Mitroff (1992) called smaller problems "incidents." Incidents are fairly easy to cope with and will not disrupt the organizational routine. Third, the crisis can threaten the organization, the industry, or the stakeholders. The crisis can harm any or all three of

these entities. Consider an explosion at a petroleum processing facility that kills three workers. The organization may be shut down for repairs and loss of production time. The safety of the entire industry may come under scrutiny because of the publicity and investigation surrounding a high-profile accident. Nearby residents may have been evacuated after the explosion as a precaution against hazardous chemicals while customers may experience an increase in price as production levels drop.

A crisis extends over a period of time. Steven Fink (1986) described a four-step life cycle for a crisis: (1) prodromal, where warning signs appear before a crisis hits; (2) crisis breakout or acute, where the trigger event occurs or what we typically think of as the crisis happening; (3) chronic, the time it takes to attend to the damage and disruption from the crisis; and (4) resolution, in which there is evidence that the crisis is over and no longer a factor with stakeholders. Fink's work helped people to realize there is more to crisis management than simply reacting to the crisis. Crisis management could be much more proactive by attempting to prevent crises.

Crisis management is "a set of factors designed to combat crises and lessen the actual damage inflicted by a crisis" (Coombs, 1999, p. 4). Crisis management often is mistakenly equated with having a crisis management plan. Crisis management is a complex set of factors that unfold in four stages: prevention, preparation, response, and learning. The stages of crisis management were influenced by work in disaster management and Fink's life cycle of a crisis.

Crisis management begins with prevention or mitigation. Prevention seeks to identify the various risks an organization faces. A risk is a potential threat that could escalate into a crisis. Risks include weather threats, worker error or violence, and technology failures. Prevention involves attempts to identify and to mitigate the risks. Identification involves locating potential sources of risk—the organization scans for risks that could trigger a crisis.

Mitigation tries to eliminate or reduce the risks. Some risks can be eliminated. For instance, an organization uses a hazardous chemical in its production process. The presence of a hazardous chemical

presents the risks of a hazardous chemical release. The risk of a hazardous chemical can be eliminated if the organization can find a nonhazardous chemical to replace the hazardous one it uses.

Most risks cannot be eliminated. For instance, workers can always make mistakes or become violent. Training and monitoring can be used to reduce the risks that cannot be eliminated. Prevention and mitigation reinforce the need for crisis management. Managers begin to realize what can go wrong in their organization and that they cannot stop many of the risks.

Preparation means the organization is getting ready for a crisis because management realizes one might occur. Preparation is what many people in organizations think about when the term *crisis management* is used. The essential elements of preparation are a crisis management plan, a crisis management team, and practicing the crisis management plan. The crisis management plan is an outline for the organization to respond to the crisis. The value of the crisis management plan lies in the preassignment of responsibilities and precollection of critical information. Time is saved during a crisis when people already know what they are supposed to do. Time is not lost in deciding who should do what. Critical contact names and methods of contact have been collected so that time is not lost later on. The key to a useful crisis management plan is not making it too detailed or too thick. A crisis management plan must be adapted because each crisis is unique and a plan cannot cover all contingencies. A crisis management plan will include the names of members of the crisis management team and their contact information, key people or groups that may be useful during a crisis and their contact information, and forms to remind crisis team members of what to do, such as “logging” and responding to outside inquiries about the crisis or documenting actions taken to address the crisis.

To develop a crisis management plan, managers must revisit their identification of risks. The managers perform a crisis vulnerability analysis to determine which types of crises they are most likely to face; the risk analysis will indicate what crises are likely to emerge. Management tailors the crisis

management plan to fit the most likely crises. Again, the crisis management plan must be flexible because it is a living document. A crisis management plan should be revised at least once a year. During the course of a year, the composition of the team may change, key contacts may change jobs, and the crisis vulnerability may change. An out-of-date plan is of no value because the advantages derived from saving time are lost.

The crisis management team comprises those people who will enact the crisis management plan and address the crisis. The crisis management team is cross-functional, meaning it is composed of people from different sectors of the organization. On the team you want the best mix of knowledge and skills for handling a crisis. Typical crisis team membership includes legal, operations, public relations, facilities management, and security. Legal expertise is required to ensure that the words and actions of the team do not increase the legal liabilities of the organization. Operations personnel know detailed information about the production process. The crisis may raise questions about the production process, so their expertise is important. Public relations personnel are viewed as skilled in media relations. This is important when media inquiries about the crisis occur. A crisis can raise questions about the structure or layouts of a facility. Facilities management will have the knowledge to answer these questions. Security personnel are often the first to learn of a crisis and to reach the crisis scene. They may have firsthand information about the event. Security must also coordinate its efforts with emergency responders such as fire and medical teams.

Having a crisis management plan and a crisis management team is pointless if the two are never tested. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the strongest advocate of practicing crisis management plans. Only by practicing a crisis management plan can management be sure that there are no large holes in the plan (e.g., important contacts were not included), there are no mistakes in the plan (e.g., a wrong phone number or radio frequency), and that the crisis team members can work together effectively. A crisis simulation tests the plan and the team members. It is possible that



Joe Allbaugh, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), briefs reporters on September 15, 2001, about the ongoing operations at the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Workers started to remove the collapsed portion of the Pentagon shortly after the briefing.

SOURCE: © AFP/CORBIS

some team members will not be able to handle the stress of crisis management and will need to be replaced. It is recommended that an organization practice its crisis management plan once or twice a year. Regular practice helps new members of the team get up to speed and tests any modifications made to the crisis management plan. Practice is costly because people must take a day or two away from their jobs to be part of the crisis management test. However, without testing, an organization does not know if it has a functional crisis management plan or a functional crisis management team.

Response is the actual reaction once a crisis does hit. The response encompasses what the crisis management team says and does to handle the crisis. Preparation makes the response more effective

if the organization has practiced. The crisis management team faces physical and informational demands. The physical demands include addressing the damage from the crisis. Examples include injured people in need of treatment, evacuating people at risk, containing and suppressing fires, reinforcing buildings with structural damage, and salvaging equipment. The crisis management team will be coordinating its efforts with the business continuity team. The business continuity team is charged with keeping an organization functioning during a crisis or returning an organization to regular functioning as soon as possible. Business continuity teams might use alternative facilities, rented equipment, or temporary staff to help maintain an organization's ability to function. It is important that the crisis management and business continuity teams work in concert to prevent redundant actions or interference with one another.

When a crisis hits, an information vacuum is created. Stakeholders and people in the organization do not know what happened but want to know. The crisis management team collects information to discover what happened. The crisis management team is responsible for collecting and disseminating information to various stakeholders. The crisis management team is trying to find out basic information about the crisis: what happened, what was the cause, who was or might be affected, where did it occur, and how much damage was sustained. This information is necessary to help make decisions about the physical response. For instance, a crisis team must know what is in a gas cloud created by an accident and where the gas cloud will travel before determining if an evacuation is necessary and who should be evacuated. Stakeholders will contact the organization to get information. The news media, people living near the facility, suppliers, clients, and government officials all might contact the organization to get information about the crisis. The crisis management plan helps to coordinate the collection and dissemination of crisis information.

Crisis management does not end when the crisis ends. There are three key activities that must transpire after the crisis, that is, monitor and cooperate

with investigations, update stakeholders, and evaluate the crisis management effort. Many crises, such as airline accidents and chemical accidents, take time to investigate to determine their cause. The crisis management team must help investigators, typically some government agency, and keep abreast of any findings. Reporting results of investigations is one of the points that would be communicated to stakeholders in updates. Updates also include any other information that the crisis team promised to deliver to the stakeholders during the crisis. For example, an explosion at a plastic manufacturing facility halts production at that site. The crisis team promises to inform employees and the community about the cause of the accident and any corrective measures. The crisis team must also inform customers when the facility will be operational again. Once the investigation determines the cause of the accident, the crisis team can tell employees and community members why the crisis occurred and what actions can be taken to prevent a repeat of the crisis. Similarly, the crisis team can update customers as to when the facility will be operational once that has been determined.

Experts agree that the best learning experience for crisis management is a real crisis. Therefore, an organization must do all it can to learn from its own crisis experience. To learn from a crisis, the crisis management efforts must be carefully evaluated. The careful postcrisis analysis is called a *postmortem*. A postmortem is a systematic study of what the crisis management team did and the effectiveness of those actions—it assesses what was done well or poorly. Postmortems are stressful because people fear management is looking for a scapegoat. It is critical that postmortems are not a search for blame but a search for information. Once evaluated, the crisis team is briefed on its performance. The team learns what it is doing right and what it should change for future crisis management efforts. The next crisis practice should focus on the points the team should change. For instance, if there is a problem coordinating efforts with emergency responders, the next crisis practice should concentrate on the organization-emergency responder interface. The postmortem needs to be structured by having a set group of criteria. The results of the

postmortem will be better organized if the process is systematic. The results of the postmortem are then stored for future reference. The better organized the postmortem information is, the easier it will be to retrieve as a reference at some future date. Storing the postmortem information is institutional memory about crisis management and the knowledge can be referenced whenever needed.

The crisis management process is actually a circle. Learning can inform any of the other three stages. Lessons from the crisis may help in prevention (e.g., how to reduce some risks), preparation (e.g., how to improve the crisis management plan), or response (e.g., how better to deal with the news media).

New communication technology has had an impact on crisis management. The impact has been felt in information storage and dissemination. A crisis plan should be short but will include how to find information that could be critical in a crisis such as the location, amount, and types of hazardous chemicals at a facility. An intranet is a perfect supplemental source to the crisis management plan. Volumes of information can be stored on the intranet and quickly retrieved by the crisis team during a crisis. Instead of requesting information from another party, the crisis team can access information directly. Of course, this assumes the crisis team will have access to the intranet and that the intranet will remain functional during a crisis. Crisis management teaches the teams to have backups so there are alternative means for finding the requisite information. Stakeholders expect organizations to integrate the internet into their crisis communication efforts. It is now common for organizations to have either dedicated crisis Web sites or sections of their organizational Web site for crisis information. Customers, suppliers, the news media, and community members can be updated quickly by posting information to the crisis Web site. Again, this assumes that the crisis team can access the Web site during a crisis. This is a fairly safe assumption because crisis-prepared organizations will use secure, remote locations to store servers. As a result, even if a facility is destroyed, an organization will still have its intranet and Web site that the crisis team can access remotely.

Crisis management is a complex process rather than consisting of a few simple actions. For crisis management to be effective, an organization must embrace the entire concept and not declare itself crisis prepared just by creating a crisis management plan and team. Crisis management is an ongoing process as organizations monitor risks that could become crises, revise existing procedures, and practice current crisis management plans with crisis management teams.

—*W. Timothy Coombs*

See also Crisis communication; Image; Public relations research

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CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Crisis communication is like the Indian parable about the blindfolded men trying to describe an elephant. Each man describes only the part he feels, which results in very different descriptions of the animal. Crisis communication is used in a variety of ways in crisis management. Depending what article or book is read, a person can discover very different uses of the term. Broadly, crisis communication is the collection and dissemination of information by the crisis management team. There are two general

uses of the term *crisis communication*: (1) crisis communication as information and (2) crisis communication as strategy. Crisis communication as information refers to the need to collect and disseminate information during a crisis. The information is collected to fill the information void of a crisis and thereby allow the crisis management team to understand what is happening and what actions they need to take. Decisions in a crisis require accurate information if they are to be effective. Crisis communication as strategy refers to the use of messages to repair relationships with stakeholders. What an organization says and does after a crisis, crisis response strategies, affects its relationships with stakeholders. Thus, the crisis manager must carefully construct postcrisis response strategies. Crisis communication is a factor throughout the four stages of a crisis: prevention, preparation, response, and learning. (Refer to the entry “Crisis and crisis management” for a complete discussion of the crisis stages.) The crisis stages serve as a useful framework for reviewing the finer points of crisis communication.

The prevention stage involves identifying possible crisis risks and trying to reduce or eliminate those risks. Effective crisis managers are constantly collecting information about and assessing information about the crisis threats the organization faces. The crisis manager becomes the center of a crisis-sensing web. All information about crisis risks is directed to the crisis manager. For instance, the crisis manager would review safety data, environmental compliance, worker complaints, customer complaints, and other information related to crisis risks. Collecting crisis risk information is crisis communication. The crisis manager is receiving messages from other units in the organization. Collecting crisis risk information allows the crisis manager to determine what areas need further mitigation efforts and to monitor the success or failure of previous mitigation efforts. Safety data can be used to illustrate the point. If several similar, small chemical spills are occurring, this is a warning that a large spill could occur. The crisis manager identifies a risk that should be reduced. To mitigate the risk, employees could be given refresher courses in proper chemical handling and new incentives provided for reducing

spills. Collecting follow-up information would indicate whether the new safety program was actually working to reduce chemical spills.

The preparation stage centers on the crisis management plan and the crisis management team. The crisis management plan has sections devoted to crisis communication as information. The crisis management plan will have complete contact information for the crisis management team near the front of the document. The crisis management plan also contains contact information for people or groups who might have information that the team might need during the crisis. Finally, the crisis team has been preassigned tasks for the crisis. The team members know whom they should be communicating with during a crisis. The crisis team must learn how to communicate with one another during the crisis. Crisis drills will indicate if there are problems with team members such as a team member not communicating or being overwhelmed by the experience. Team members not communicating effectively with one another erode the ability of the team to succeed.

The response stage is the most visible and widely studied aspect of crisis communication. The response can be divided into the initial response and crisis response strategies. There is strong agreement among crisis experts about the initial response. The crisis team must have an initial response that is quick, consistent, open, and expresses sympathy for victims. In addition, early in the crisis communication the organization must provide instructing information and adjusting information.

Technology has increased the speed at which people communicate. The same holds true for crisis communication. Expectations are that an organization will respond within one hour of the crisis event. Also there are growing expectations that crisis teams will use the Internet as one communication tool for the initial response by posting information to a separate Web site or a special section of the organization's existing Web site.

Consistent means that an organization is providing a coordinate response that is free of contradictions. Two elements can undermine consistency. The first threat is error. The need for speed in a response can create mistakes about a factual

statement. When the crisis team must correct previous statements, the organizational response appears confused and inconsistent. The second threat is multiple spokespersons. The idea of only one person speaking for an organization during a crisis is a myth. As a crisis extends over time, one person cannot continue to speak for an organization 24 hours a day. Long crises will demand multiple spokespersons. Also, a variety of organizational experts might be needed to address questions from the news media. A workplace violence incident, for example, may require a representative from human resources and security to answer questions about preemployment screening and on-site precautions. The news media want to ask questions directly to experts and not have the information filtered through one generic spokesperson. Openness refers to the crisis team being willing to discuss the crisis with interested stakeholders and to answer inquiries. It also means the crisis team seems willing to share information rather than stonewall by hiding information. Creating trust that the organization engages in full disclosure is built prior to and not during a crisis. If an organization has a history of withholding information, why should stakeholders suddenly believe that will change during a crisis?

Crises can create a unique stakeholder, the victim. The victims are people who are somehow harmed by the crisis. The harm can be death, injuries, relocation, property damage, financial loss, stress, or being inconvenienced. The key is that the crisis negatively affects people in some way. Victims want their needs to be recognized and other stakeholders expect organizations to address victims. Crisis managers should state sympathy or compassion for victims. There is a legal issue involved here. Expressions of sympathy for the victims do not need to include accepting responsibility for their injuries. Accepting responsibility opens an organization to legal claims and financial losses. Sympathy can be expressed without incurring legal and financial liabilities. It is important that the legal department review statements of sympathy. Moreover, crisis managers should check state laws to determine if sympathy statements are exempt from use in court or if lawyers may try to use them against the organization in future

litigation. Generally, properly worded sympathy for victims will not increase legal liabilities.

Victims are the reason for *instructing* and *adjusting information*. Instructing information tells stakeholders what they must do physically to protect themselves from the adverse effects of the crisis. A consumer must know how to identify a defective product and what process they must follow to get a refund, replacement, or repair. People living near a facility must know when they should evacuate the area after an industrial accident. Adjusting information helps people to cope psychologically with the crisis. Victims and other stakeholders want to know what happened, why, and what is being done to prevent a repeat of the crisis. Of special concern is corrective action, the steps the organization is taking to prevent the crisis from happening again. A crisis will create psychological stress. Adjusting information reduces the stress by helping people to realize what happened and the efforts designed to prevent a repeat of the crisis. For example, when an airliner crashes, future travelers want to know why it crashed and what the airline is doing to prevent a similar crash. Stakeholders will be less fearful of a crisis when they understand why it happened and that it is less likely to occur in the future. One problem with adjusting information is that it can be days, weeks, or months before the cause of a crisis is known. A crisis manager may be providing adjusting information over a long period of time and have little available for the initial response.

Crisis communication as strategy uses words and actions (crisis response strategies) to shape stakeholder perceptions of the crisis or the organization in crisis. Researchers using corporate apology, impression management, image restoration theory, and situational crisis communication theory have all examined the use of crisis communication to lessen the negative stakeholder perceptions created by a crisis. Perceptions of the crisis or the organization in crisis affect future interactions between the organization and its stakeholders. By changing how stakeholders feel about the crisis or the organization in crisis, crisis managers can minimize the damage a crisis inflicts on the stakeholder-organization relationship. Three types of crisis response strategies are available to crisis managers: deny, diminish, and

deal. The deny strategies claim there is no crisis or that the organization has no responsibility for the crisis. No crisis or responsibility means the organization should experience little negative effects from the crisis. The diminish strategies try to weaken the connection between the organization and the crisis. The crisis manager maintains that the organization did not try to create a crisis, had little control over the crisis, or the crisis was minor. Reactions to a crisis are less negative if the organization could not control the event or the damage was minor. The deal strategies address stakeholder concerns directly by offering compensation or by accepting full responsibility for the crisis. These strategies offer positive words and actions in an attempt to offset the negative effects of the crisis.

The learning stage returns to crisis communication as information. The need to keep stakeholders informed often continues as investigations progress and updates are needed. The crisis team must collect information from a wide range of sources to complete a thorough postmortem of the crisis management effort. The postmortem information must be analyzed and stored in some usable fashion. Moreover, lessons from the postmortem are used to improve prevention, preparation, and response. Those lessons must be communicated to the proper people in the organization—those who can effect the desired changes. For instance, the postmortem may discover a previously unknown risk in production. Personnel in operations must be informed of the danger so that they can work to mitigate it.

Crisis communication is the lifeblood of the entire crisis management effort. Crisis communication plays a vital role in all stages of crisis management. Communication carries the vital information needed in a crisis management effort and is critical to shaping stakeholder perceptions about the crisis.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Apologia theory; Crisis and crisis management; Reputation management

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CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS AND THE TYLENOL POISONINGS

When a major crisis strikes an organization, inevitably comparisons are made with Johnson & Johnson's handling of the Tylenol poisoning incidents in the 1980s. Johnson & Johnson, the world's most broadly based manufacturer of health care products, faced the most severe tests in its history when the leading nonprescription analgesic in America, Tylenol, was poisoned with cyanide in 1982 and again in 1986.

To put these criminal incidents into perspective, the Tylenol tragedies resulted in the deaths of eight people and cost Johnson & Johnson more than \$240 million. Law enforcement officials concluded that random murders occurred when an unknown individual or individuals purchased bottles of Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules in food and drug stores, replaced the acetaminophen medication with cyanide, and put the product back on store shelves—to be purchased and ingested by innocent victims.

The company's public relations response to both incidents was coordinated by Lawrence G. Foster, a former night editor of the *Newark News* who joined Johnson & Johnson in 1957 to help form its first public relations department. In his book *Robert Wood Johnson: The Gentleman Rebel*, Foster wrote about the Tylenol poisonings in a postlude:



James Burke, Johnson & Johnson executive, displays a new, tamper-resistant Tylenol bottle on November 11, 1982. Nearly eight months earlier, six Chicago-area people died of cyanide poisoning from tainted Tylenol tablets.

SOURCE: © Bettmann/CORBIS

The senior management of Johnson & Johnson took two early steps to protect the public. From the very first call, the company was completely open and forthright with the news media and began a phased voluntary withdrawal of Tylenol capsules that would later become both nationwide and worldwide. Cooperation with the news media was seen as the most effective way to warn all consumers about the potential danger. . . . Johnson & Johnson's reputation and credibility were at stake, as was the compelling need to protect the public. (1999, pp. 619–620)

Among the lessons learned was that in times of crisis the news media, along with other concerned agencies and organizations, want to hear from the chairman or chief executive officer—or at least a very senior executive. Major crises such as the Tylenol tamperings quickly escalate to the corporate level. Although Tylenol is produced by McNeil Consumer Products, one of Johnson & Johnson's numerous decentralized operating companies, Johnson & Johnson Chairman of the Board and CEO James E. Burke swiftly assumed the leadership role.

To assist him in making scores of decisions on highly significant issues—often acting on scant

information in short periods of time—Burke formed and headed a seven-member strategy committee. Serving with him were the company president, general counsel, three executives with responsibility for the Tylenol business, and Foster, as corporate vice president of public relations.

The strategy group met twice a day for eight weeks in 1982 to deal with the crisis that emanated from Chicago, where seven people died after ingesting cyanide-laced Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules. Burke reconvened the group in 1986 when a young woman from Westchester County, New York, died from cyanide poisoning after swallowing an Extra-Strength Tylenol capsule.

Decision making in both instances was driven by the Johnson & Johnson Credo, a document written in the mid-1940s by Chairman Robert Wood Johnson that describes the company's everyday business and social responsibilities. The credo is a constant reminder of the company's obligations to all of its constituents—consumers, employees, the community, and stockholders. The first tenet of the credo begins, "We believe our first responsibility is to the doctors, nurses and patients, to mothers and fathers and all others who use our products and services." Against that backdrop, the strategy committee placed consumer safety ahead of all other considerations, including financial ones.

Company executives worked closely during the crises with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), elected officials, and various state and local health and law enforcement officials. The strategy committee's decision in 1982 to withdraw all of the company's nonprescription capsule products was at first opposed by the FBI and FDA, which did not want to give in to a terrorist act; however, both agencies subsequently concurred because of growing concern with copycat tamperings. Although the voluntary withdrawal was costly, it yielded two more bottles of cyanide-laced Tylenol capsules from the Chicago area, averting further loss of life.

Writing in the *New Jersey Bell Journal* in 1983, Foster reported, "Queries from the press on the Tylenol story exceeded 2,500. Two news clipping services generated in excess of 125,000 clippings . . . the television and radio coverage was

staggering" (p. 3). The torrent of news media inquiries ensued again in 1986 and—as during the first Tylenol crisis—efforts were made by authorized spokespersons to ensure that every reporter received a response with current information as the story evolved.

Foster later observed,

We had a relatively small but experienced corporate public relations staff, and together we handled all of the media inquiries, day and night, over a period of months. Four of us were former journalists, including Bob Kniffin, Bob Andrews and Jim Murray, so we knew the dynamics of news and how to work with the press. Moreover, the public relations department reported to the Chairman and CEO and we had the authority to deal with the news media in a straightforward, honest and cooperative way. In return, the news media gave Johnson & Johnson high marks for its handling of the two crises.

During both crises the company established free, 1-800 telephone hotlines through which consumers and retailers could receive the latest information and advisories; hundreds of thousands of calls were received. Among other initiatives, daily on-the-street consumer interviews were videotaped to keep the strategy committee abreast of the public's awareness and understanding of the Tylenol situation, and attitudes toward the company and its products; nearly 500,000 electronic messages were sent to physicians, hospitals, and other health care professionals and distributors; Tylenol television advertising was suspended; and to bolster morale, the company kept its employees and retirees updated on important information through letters, videotaped reports, and special editions of employee publications.

Just six weeks after the outset of the 1982 crisis, the company held a 30-city satellite press conference to announce the launch of Tylenol capsules packaged with three tamper-resistant seals—an outer box with glued flaps, a plastic band over the cap and neck of the bottle, and an inner foil seal over the mouth of the bottle. Backed by an offer of free Tylenol capsules in the tamper-resistant packaging, a "Thank you, America" advertising campaign, and a reservoir of public goodwill related to

its handling of the disaster, in less than a year Tylenol regained its position as the leader among nonprescription analgesic products.

Then, in 1986, the Westchester County, New York, Tylenol poisoning occurred. A pick-up and analysis of all Tylenol capsules from retail outlets within a specified three-mile radius led to the finding of a second bottle that contained five capsules of cyanide. The FBI concluded that a criminal had carefully penetrated the package's three safety seals, poisoned the capsules with cyanide, cleverly replaced the safety seals, and returned the contaminated product to a store shelf. Subsequently, the company concluded that it could no longer guarantee the safety of capsules in accord with its responsibility to consumers.

Besides implementing initiatives similar to those in 1982 to serve the public interest, Johnson & Johnson conducted three major press conferences at its headquarters during a one-week span in February 1986 to help disseminate information quickly and accurately. At the third of these press conferences Burke announced that the company would no longer manufacture or sell any capsule products made directly available to the consumer. Burke also announced that the new Tylenol caplet, a solid dosage form shaped like a capsule, would replace the company's capsule products.

In both situations Johnson & Johnson was viewed as an innocent victim that acted to protect the public safety despite enormous financial losses. Ethical behavior proved to be good for the business, as consumer loyalty returned Tylenol to its solid leadership position following both crises.

Foster, who retired from Johnson & Johnson in 1990, received numerous professional accolades for his role in helping to manage the Tylenol crises. He pointed out in his biography of Robert Wood Johnson, "The 1982 Tylenol crisis thrust the Credo into the limelight, and the news media began referring to the document as the most widely known statement on corporate responsibility in American business" (1999, p. 639). Thus Foster concluded his comments about the 1982 crisis. In his 1998 book, *Eighty Exemplary Ethics Statements*, Patrick E. Murphy, Chair of the Department of Marketing at

the University of Notre Dame, wrote, "The Johnson & Johnson credo is probably the best known ethics statement in the world, at least partially due to the central role it played in the tragic Tylenol poisonings" (p. 124).

In addition to his monumental work on the Tylenol crisis, Foster distinguished himself with leadership in the profession. Foster was Chairman of the Wisemen, a New York-based group of public relations executives from 1986 to 1990; president of the Arthur W. Page Society from 1990 to 1992; and an organizer of PRSA's College of Fellows. He received three of the highest honors in public relations: the PRSA Gold Anvil in 1989, the PRSA Atlas Award in 1998, and the Arthur W. Page Society Hall of Fame Award in 1994. *PR Week* named him one of the Ten Most Influential Public Relations Executives of the 20th Century.

—Robert V. Andrews

See also Crisis communication; Page, Arthur W.; Public Relations Society of America

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CRITICAL THEORY

Critical theory can be defined in two main ways: broadly, as a wide range of philosophical approaches that take a critical view of existing power arrangements in society; and, narrowly, as the object of attention of certain traditions of thought (e.g., the Frankfurt School and their successors). In the narrower definition of critical theory, the leading contemporary representative is Jürgen Habermas. Habermas (1984) has been featured more frequently, and had more impact on public relations thinking, than any other continental philosopher. His concept of communicative rationality, with its

core in “the unconstrained, unifying, consensus-bringing force of argumentative speech” (Habermas, 1984, p. 10), predated the allied notion of two-way symmetrical communication. His associated promulgation of the ideal speech situation, whereby all stakeholders can participate equally in dialogue resolved in favor of the best argument, has affinities with, and usefully elaborates on, ideal practitioner goals. This remains true despite the fact that both communicative rationality and symmetry tend to exist much more in theory rather than in practice.

Critical theory originated in the European Enlightenment’s *raison d’être*, summed up in Immanuel Kant’s famous dictum that enlightened people would “dare to know.” It gathered momentum as its proponents not only dared to know, but also dared to act to change the world on the basis of that knowledge. Most proponents retain elements of that optimistic starting point in the Enlightenment: the belief that applied rationality, which is free to be critical of the status quo, can influence human activities and social structures in a more democratic and life-enhancing way. In the corporate-oriented 21st century, public relations is still being challenged to recognize similar aspirations and acknowledge society itself as its ultimate stakeholder.

For Habermas, the aim of speech is to reach agreement on action and how to act. Additionally, all participants in conversation should accept a set of responsibilities as a result of taking part. These would include aspiring to agreement in a fair-minded way, encouraging open (outside of church or state or business interests) debate, listening as well as talking, and honoring any consensus reached. Participation in fair process and acceptance of its outcome becomes, in itself, a legitimating process, which he extends beyond face-to-face talk into mediated public communication. In addressing the international crises associated with the spread of the antiglobalization movement, Juliet Roper (in press) has augmented Robert L. Heath’s (1997) foundational work on issues management with Habermasian legitimation theory. Her work positions events such as the battle for Seattle in the context of Habermas’s philosophy of the public sphere, which sets out and justifies normative guidelines for

the consideration of public issues. The concept of a public sphere can be a physical place where citizens gather for a democratic exchange of ideas (e.g., a town square) or a media arena. The concept is anchored in, and partially restricted by, how he imagined the political interchanges of middle class men in the communal coffee houses of early modern Europe. In what he saw as the subsequent denigration of communication in a modern public sphere marked by consumerism, mass media, and state intrusion into the private space of families, Habermas positioned public relations as a negative, if powerful, agent in the change.

Despite—or perhaps because of—his view, Habermas’s writings add value to public relations in a number of areas. He is an informative and forceful advocate of the conditions needed for open public debate and for thinking through a process for the social legitimation of ideas. Even if, as Walter Lippman suggested as early as the 1920s, the idea of “the public,” let alone the public sphere, is a phantom, it is, at least, a useful illusion. In conceptualizing it, Habermas worked to establish necessary preconditions for democratic communication: open access; the creation of public judgment through gatherings of citizens engaged in political deliberations; and freedom to discuss matters of the state, its powers, and its exercise of those powers. He also sought to establish a philosophical foundation on which to build long-term behavioral and ethical guidelines for journalists, media policy makers, and public relations practitioners. He grounded his idealism in densely argued philosophy and in an intellectual history of public communication. That history serves as both a source of knowledge and as a prototype for public relations historians. At the contemporary end of the temporal spectrum, interest in his concept of the public sphere has recently undergone a revival. Increased Internet participation has prompted consideration of the potential of cyberspace to host open democratic discussion by “netizens,” or online citizens, debating freely in relative equality.

In the broader definition of critical theory, as examining and opposing injustices in the status quo, Habermas differed from most advocates by

concentrating on the power of rationality rather than the power of power. There has been a limited amount of that broader critical theory within public relations. What exists has tended to focus on asking tough questions about taken-for-granted inequalities. Most questions cluster around critiques of how the field minimizes, or excludes, alternative forms of expression, how it restricts access in favor of the powerful rather than the disadvantaged, and how it stays complicit with big business and political elites. Critical theory has been explicitly invoked to illuminate how high-sounding claims for the free flow of information really mean the “deregulation and privatization of publicly held or publicly regulated media, replaced with advertising-supported media” so that “information flows freely only for those entities with pockets deep enough to pay” (Dozier & Lauzen, 2000, p. 17).

Greater attention to those kinds of critical theory concerns within the field could do much to counter damaging, and widely disseminated, allegations of public relations as “weapons of mass deception” by external critics. The lessons from issues management of talking to all stakeholders, including hostile ones, and even, using Heath’s (1997) usefully suggestive term, “stake seekers,” could be applied internally by taking seriously the challenges posed by critical theorists.

Critical theory has yet to satisfy its detractors within public relations that it can reconstruct as well as deconstruct. Certain of its adherents would deny that it is required to do so. One early proponent, Theodor Adorno (1951/1974), argued that by the middle of the 20th century positive reconstruction was no longer possible. The Enlightenment dream of a rationally organized just society had degenerated into a nightmarish “iron cage” imprisoned in the “instrumental reason” of self-interested functionalism epitomized by narrow rationalization in bureaucracy, economics, and technoscience. In the wake of atomic bombs and concentration camps, Adorno practiced the cultivation of “negative thought” because the loss of hope that philosophy could change the world and teach the good life had to be abandoned in favor of reflecting from the realities of the damaged life of the time.

Nevertheless, even if that pessimism is denied, the influence of critical theory on public relations is likely to increase. One reason is its growing influence on other areas of management, especially allied areas such as organizational communication. Other reasons include the burgeoning of academic public relations literature and the associated trend toward greater philosophical breadth, depth, diversity, and openness, as well as the field’s internationalization into countries where critical theory is more common and universities can be legally required to act as the conscience of society. These combine with, above all, the continuation of powerful economic and social forces seeking legitimacy for controversial topics and interacting with public relations in the course of their search. Recent examples of critical theory in action have been critiques of the public relations efforts to gain support for the second Gulf War by self-declared “information warriors” and the persistent use of covert public relations (e.g., the setting up of Impotence Australia as a front group for drug giant Pfizer’s Viagra) by pharmaceutical companies. In such contexts, through its attachment to society itself as the ultimate stakeholder, critical theory in public relations looks set to expand rather than contract.

—David McKie

See also Ethics of public relations; Issues management; Power resource management theory; Publics; Two-way and one-way communication

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CULTIVATION THEORY

In 1968, President Johnson's National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence appointed George Gerbner to analyze the content of television shows. This began the "Cultural Indicators project," described as the longest-running continuous media research undertaking in the world. George Gerbner and his researchers perform "cultivation analysis" to determine if and how watching television influences viewers' ideas and perceptions of reality.

Cultivation analysis, or cultivation theory, wrote S. J. Baran, is the theory that

television "cultivates," or constructs a reality of the world that, although possibly inaccurate, becomes accepted simply because we as a culture believe it to be true. We then base our judgments about and our actions in the world on this cultivated reality provided by television. (2001, p. 333)

Its role has expanded beyond that of just violent acts on television. Public relations practitioners should have an understanding of this theory and be aware of how their efforts may contribute to such effects on society.

Since there is no single TV show to credit for creating the effects of cultivation analysis, it is instead the medium of television that is responsible. These authors view television shows as mainstream entertainment that are easy to access and generally easy to understand. Thus, their reasoning is that these shows provide a means by which people are socialized into society, although with an unrealistic notion of reality at times, particularly with respect to social dangers. They make the point that television seeks to show and reinforce commonalities among us, so that those who regularly watch television tend to see the world in the way television portrays it.

Not everyone is successfully cultivated by television. These authors conclude that those who watch little television are not affected. Likewise, people who talk about what they see, especially adolescents who talk with their parents, are less likely to alter their view of reality to match what they see on television.

Clearly, cultivation theory does consider that there are other influences in television viewers'

lives besides the television itself. Demographics, social, personal, and cultural aspects are also factors in considering how a viewer will interpret television programming. What it means to be a certain ethnicity, race, gender, or age, however, is defined by cultivation, and television helps define what it means to be those things in our society. The implication that cultivation theory has for public relations practitioners is that repeated messages over time are perceived as true. If what people see on television and in the news is not an accurate representation of reality, there is the chance that some people will still perceive it as truth.

Other influences on people besides the television screen include messages on the radio, in print, and on billboards. Often public relations practitioners are the people behind the creation and presentation of these messages. Whether the messages appear on television or not, it is critical that the messages contain the truth. Because repetition breeds truth, public relations practitioners must ensure that the messages they create and send, often through the mass media, on behalf of the organizations they represent, are the truth. It is one thing for a message that is the truth to be constantly repeated in society, but when the messages are not accurate, this can become a public relations nightmare.

Cultivation theory can also be observed in the way media report the news. If they repeat the same messages over and over, whether they are true or not, people tend to be left with one view to perceive as the truth. Wrote Baran,

Television newscasts never say, "Most crime is violent, most violent crime is committed by people of color, and you should be wary of those people." But by the choices news producers make, television news presents a broad picture of "reality" with little regard for how its "reality" matches that of its audiences. (2000, p. 333)

Baran concluded that "even though we cannot always see media effects, they do occur and eventually will change the culture in possibly profound ways (p. 334)."

Regardless of its criticisms, Gerbner's cultivation theory is studied by mass media, journalism, and public relations students throughout the world. The

effects of television continue to be questioned and studied, especially with the introduction of “reality TV shows.” With these shows, television cameras follow individuals around and record their thoughts and feelings while the world watches them, for example, choose to stay with a boyfriend or girlfriend or move on with their lives. Is the term *reality TV* an oxymoron, or does it provide for a more accurate perception of “reality” than shows that have come before?

—Kelly M. Papinchak

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CULTURAL TOPOI

Topoi are lines of argument that can be repeatedly used in debates (a *topos* is a single line of argument). General topoi can be employed across many subjects, whereas specific topoi apply only within a specific discourse field such as the law. Communicators use topoi to generate arguments or to anticipate arguments they must prepare to refute. Widely used topoi include stock issues of policy debate (e.g., stasis) or lists of values that audience members believe in.

This article discusses a system of topoi that was developed to characterize cultural discourse within a society. Mary Douglas (1997) recently characterized culture as an accounting system. “Think of culture as essentially a dialogue that allocates praise and blame. Then focus particularly on the blame (p. 129).” From this view, culture involves a clash between competing views of

social reality. A cultural topos is a set of coherent premises that supports a particular way of organizing social relations. These premises include perceptions of reality and value premises about what is desirable and good.

The cultural topoi framework identifies the underlying premises of competing accounting systems that participate in the discourse of praising and blaming. The premises that make up these topoi often require considerable effort to uncover because they are automatically accepted, or because they underlie second- and third-order premises that are actually voiced. The cultural premises that constitute the five competing cultural topoi are illustrated in Table 1. They are ordered from left to right in terms of the level of measurement that each cultural topos embodies.

The cultural topoi originate in different ways of life that compete with each other. Each way of life is part of a cultural ecosystem that has an inherent requisite variety. Michael Thompson, Richard Ellis, and Aaron Wildavsky (1990) wrote, “Each way of life needs each of its rivals, either to make up for its deficiencies, or to exploit, or to define itself against. To destroy the other (way of life) is to murder the self” (p. 4). The ongoing competition between the cultural forms gives a particular group its unique cultural configuration. At one point in time, a single way of life may dominate a scene, or two ways of life may form a dominant coalition. The remaining ways of life are usually pushed toward the periphery of the cultural system. Indeed, egalitarianism typically appears as an ideology that critiques the status quo. Representative democracy itself is a coalition of cultures in which each way of life has a voice within a differentiated social structure.

The egalitarian and competitive individualist topoi usually vigorously oppose one another. The egalitarian topos privileges the value of social equality, whereas the competitive individualist topos elevates the value of individual freedom. The egalitarian strongly resists reducing sacred values (i.e., human life) to a cash value, but the competitive individualist insists that everything should have a price (e.g., donor organs). However, cultural collaboration is possible even between these perennial antagonists.

Egalitarians and competitive individuals were allies in constraining the reach of the federal government in the early decades of the American republic. Egalitarians feared that a strong federal government would increase social inequality, and competitive individualists feared that a strong federal government would undermine individual liberty. Cultural collaboration is often possible, when a particular strategy serves different ends for each way of life.

The cultural topoi perspective provides several analytic advantages. It offers a richer understanding of rhetorical options than the prevailing discourse of a right/left political spectrum. It provides a parsimonious framework for describing the social construction of reality while enabling cross-cultural comparisons and descriptions of cultural change. It also allows one to anticipate opportunities for collaboration between groups that typically oppose each other (e.g., egalitarian-oriented democrats and Buchanan social conservatives uniting to oppose the North American Free Trade Agreement).

A cultural topoi framework also provides a springboard for investigating perceptions and discourse about risk. The different ways of life fear different things. Those who fear ozone depletion are not more fearful than those who fear anarchy. One's cultural premises alert one to some dangers and blind one to other dangers.

The perspective also explains how audiences come to different interpretations of the same message. To understand how a message is likely to be interpreted, one need not understand the intricacies of cognitive dynamics so much as one needs to understand which cultural topoi a message interpreter is applying. The credibility of a message depends on how closely it aligns with the receiver's underlying premises. When a message is consistent with the receiver's cultural premises, inference is facilitated. When it contains premises at odds with a receiver's cultural topoi, the message will likely be resisted.

Carl Botan and Francisco Soto (1998) have defined a public "as an ongoing process of agreement upon an interpretation" (p. 21). In many cases, the shared interpretation of a particular public stems from a shared cultural topoi. The public relations

function participates in the ongoing clash of perspectives that takes place in a democratic society. The cultural topoi perspective represents part of the tacit knowledge of astute practitioners. Such practitioners have a breadth of perspective that enables them to interact with audiences operating from different cultural premises. Public relations practitioners serve as interpretive intermediaries between an organization's management and important publics. They work to find rhetorical positions that will enable alignment and collaboration between audiences operating from different cultural premises.

The cultural topoi framework also provides a useful heuristic for characterizing public relations practice. Public relations not only participates in cultural dialogue, but the same cultural processes operate to define and prescribe for public relations practice. In particular, competitive individualist and hierarchical versions of public relations practice have contended with each other since the early decades of the 20th century. Ivy Lee is an icon of competitive-individualist oriented practice, and Edward Bernays is an icon of hierarchically oriented practice. In addition, egalitarian models of practice are emerging. Fittingly, the dialectic of praise and blame accounting, in which public relations participates, also plays an important role in constituting public relations practice.

—Greg Leichty

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Table 1 Cultural Topoi Compared

Foundational Beliefs	Fatalist Topoi	Egalitarian Topoi	Hierarchical Topoi	Autonomous Individualist Topoi	Competitive Individualist Topoi
Nature	Nature is capricious and unpredictable.	Nature is fragile; its equilibrium is precarious.	Nature is bountiful, if it has a gardener.	Nature is benevolent if you match yourself to it.	Nature is bountiful and resilient.
Human nature	Human nature is capricious and unpredictable	Human nature is good, but social inequality corrupts it.	Human nature is bent, but discipline can straighten it.	Human nature is ignorant, but it can be enlightened.	Human nature is self-seeking, but competition channels it productively.
Value imperative	Accept reality; don't try to change it.	Seek equality.	Seek order.	Seek enlightenment.	Seek liberty.
Decision principle	Let fate decide.	Seek consensus.	Legitimate authority decides. The chain of command implements.	One person, one vote.	Let the market decide.
Activity principle	Take what comes your way.	Do it for love.	Practice until you are good at it.	If you do it, avoid coercive entanglements.	Do whatever you do best.
Justice principle	Que será será.	From each according to ability to each according to his need.	Give and receive according to rank.	To each an equal portion.	To each in proportion to her contribution.
Measurement level	None	Nominal	Ordinal	Interval	Ratio

SOURCE: Leichty, G., & Warner, E. (2001). Cultural topoi: Implications for public relations. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *Handbook of public relations* (pp. 61–75). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

CULTURE

Whether in drafting a basic press release or crafting a major campaign, an awareness of culture, both that of relevant organizations and that of key publics, is critical to public relations practice. In general, culture is defined as understandings and practices shared by a group of people. Cultural knowledge plays an important role in message design and interpretation.

According to Krishnamurthy Sriramesh, despite some awareness of the important role of culture, research in public relations has placed primary attention on culture for only slightly more than a decade, and still too few studies examine links between culture and public relations. Thus, this area remains a rich and important one for future inquiry.

Stephen P. Banks suggested that although culture shapes practice, public relations is fundamental across modern societies. Several changes in and

across societies have resulted in variations in public relations practice.

CULTURE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Robert L. Wakefield (2001) asserted that in the 21st century, public relations practitioners face new challenges. Once primarily a domestic undertaking, public relations has gone global. The increased number of multinational organizations, ease of transnational and worldwide communication, and global marketplace have redefined the practice of public relations. Although some organizations and industries are more often affected, changes reverberate throughout organizational practice.

Sriramesh (2003) questioned “whether there is such a thing as *domestic* public relations anymore because of the international outreach of organizations of all sizes and types as a result of the recent spurt of globalization” (p. xxv). A previous subspecialty, international public relations is now synonymous with general practice. Thus, skills in communicating with multiple publics across differing cultures are essential.

Sriramesh (2002) noted that “PR practice in the 21st century has, and will continue to, become multinational and multicultural in nature” (p. 54). However, “precious little information exists to help multinational organizations to understand the global nature of their public relations or to guide them as they develop resources not only to get their messages out to increasingly cross-cultural publics but also to anticipate and respond to behaviors by those publics that could affect the organizations” (Wakefield, 2001, p. 639). This lack of information hampers efforts and places achieving organizational goals in jeopardy. “Multinationals need to understand the nuances of public relations between countries, or even in different regions within countries, and how misunderstandings of those nuances can bring problems on a global scale” (Wakefield, 2001, p. 640).

VIEWS OF CULTURE

Work on culture, organizations, and public relations describes two lenses used in assessment. One takes

a primarily internal focus, viewing organizations as distinct cultures, with their own beliefs and practices, emerging from and adapting to surrounding cultures. The other is more external, examining the role of public relations in adapting to and influencing culture and cross-cultural issues. Wendy Hall (1995) suggested culture and cultural difference must be addressed on two levels. The first is the organizational level. For example, some organizations, even in different nations, share similar cultures, perhaps due to their type and structure. The second is the national or individual level, which recognizes that culture varies by country with individuals, groups, and organizations being influenced. Understanding of both levels is essential.

Within the first view, each organization is seen as a distinct culture with its own value system (e.g., where particular types of behavior are more valued or particular outcomes more emphasized). Once entrenched, organizational cultures are relatively stable, though they do evolve over time (e.g., especially with key changes, such as the appointment of a new chief executive officer). If an organization diversifies into new locations, its culture shapes those facilities, but it must also adapt to local culture. Such transitions are easier when organizational and local cultures are similar, and they can be facilitated by public relations efforts.

Within the second view, general cultural characteristics and their influence on individuals are salient. National cultures are very stable, with changes taking place slowly. In addition, distinct regional variations are common. Therefore, according to Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg (2001), the successful public relations practitioner needs to understand a country’s government, power structure, laws and legal system, public and private sectors, financial system and markets, and media.

Several typologies have emerged that characterize cultural differences. Geert Hofstede’s (1980) four dimensions—individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity/femininity—are commonly employed to describe cultural variation. Hofstede added a fifth dimension, that is, long-term versus short-term orientation. Marlene Rossman’s (1994) system with eight

cultural qualities is another example. Her system included attitudes about time, formality, individualism, hierarchy, religion, taste/diet, colors/numbers/symbols, and assimilation and acculturation.

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Comparing intercultural communication and international public relations, R. S. Zaharna (2000) described three lines of research. The first, "culture-specific," seeks to pinpoint communicative behaviors common in a culture. A considerable amount of public relations work, especially from the "comparative public relations" perspective (i.e., delineating public relations practice in particular countries or regions), is indicative of this line of research.

The second, "culture-general," attempts to uncover practices common across cultures. For example, much attention has been devoted to assessing the similarity of public relations goals and functions regardless of the specific location of practice. Dennis L. Wilcox, Glen T. Cameron, Philip H. Ault, and Warren K. Agee (2003) maintained that the goals of public relations are essentially the same (e.g., creating and sustaining favorable conditions and relationships for operation, assessing the potential for and avoiding opposition and negative situations, and managing crises to minimize damage) regardless of the country or culture in which one practices. However, a variety of factors may make intercultural communication and public relations more challenging: differences in language, customs, chain of command, media and public relations practice, and perception of individuals and nations. Thus, practitioners must learn as much about local customs and culture as possible, but they also need to consult cultural insiders for guidance.

The third area, "intercultural interaction," draws from each of the previous two and examines the communication of interactants from different cultures. Thus, the focus moves "from individual *communication behaviors* to exploring . . . how different behaviors affected the *communication process*" (Zaharna, 2000, p. 90, italics in original). Examples in public relations work are studies examining how public relations programs are evaluated through cultural lenses.

Newsom et al. (2001) noted that

despite the ability to build generalizable theory by incorporating multiple cultures and disciplines, difference among cultures must be addressed. What works in one country might not work well in another country because of national culture, political and economic infrastructure, media systems, and research protocols. (p. 651)

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Kenneth Starck and Dean Kruckeberg (2001) suggested that

a major contribution that public relations educators can make is to help students become interculturally literate, for the sine qua non of this newly emerging global economy is intercultural communication. One of our major goals should be to promote intercultural literacy among present and future public relations practitioners. (p. 58)

Building and maintaining positive relationships rests on understanding cultural nuances. As Wakefield (2001) asserted, "although the interactions of diverse cultural groups can foster harmony, they also can produce opposite effects such as more entrenched stereotypes and increased suspicions, misunderstandings, tribalism, and conflict" (p. 639). Clearly, effective communication is essential and public relations practitioners can help shape outcomes.

That messages need to be adapted to audiences is an age-old principle of communication. The increasing cultural diversity of audiences makes this concept an even more important one.

—Joy L. Hart

See also Cultural topoi; Intercultural communication theory

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CUTLIP, SCOTT M.

As the senior author of a leading textbook, *Effective Public Relations*, Cutlip was regarded by many as the father of public relations education in the United States during the second half of the 20th century. He also remains the field's most eminent historian.

Cutlip introduced the study of public relations at the University of Wisconsin School of Journalism in 1946 and continued as a Wisconsin faculty member until 1975, when he became a professor at the University of Georgia, Athens. He served as dean of the Henry W. Grady School (now College) of Journalism and Mass Communication at Georgia from 1976 to 1983 and was a university professor until his retirement in 1985.

A proud native of West Virginia, Cutlip received a bachelor's degree from Syracuse University and a Ph.M. degree in journalism and political science from Wisconsin in 1941. He had worked as reporter, weekly newspaper editor, and press secretary to a

gubernatorial candidate in West Virginia prior to attending Syracuse, where he worked for three years as an assistant in Syracuse's Bureau of Public Information.

Upon graduation from Wisconsin, Cutlip served as public relations director for the State Road Commission of West Virginia. Then, during World War II, he served as a public information officer and a counterintelligence officer for the U.S. Army, attaining the rank of major.

In 1952, Cutlip and co-author Allen H. Center, an official of Parker Pen Company and later Motorola, published the first edition of *Effective Public Relations*, which was updated with new editions in 1958, 1964, 1971, 1978, 1985, 1994, and 1999. The book was widely adopted as a college textbook and translated into Italian, Spanish, Korean, and Japanese editions. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) adopted the book as the basic text for its accreditation examination. Cutlip and Center entrusted the book's legacy to Glen M. Broom, who joined them as co-author beginning with the sixth edition in 1985.

Cutlip and Center's centerpiece concept was the *four-step public relations process* as a model for organizing public relations programs. The first edition emphasized the importance of fact finding, planning, and communication. The fourth step, evaluation, was not added until the second edition in 1958. The model has been usurped by strategic communication approaches that follow more general business planning models, but continues to be the criteria for judging in PRSA's Silver Anvil Award and many regional competitions recognizing outstanding public relations programs.

Cutlip's other major early contribution was compilation of the first comprehensive bibliography of public relations, produced in 1957 and updated in 1965. Former student Robert L. Bishop produced a third edition in 1974. Annual bibliographies in the Cutlip tradition began to be published soon thereafter in *Public Relations Review*.

Cutlip is familiar to many philanthropic and fundraising professionals as the author of the most comprehensive early history of American fundraising. He also edited a volume on the public opinion for public administrators. In 1975, he co-chaired

with J. Carroll Bateman the first commission on undergraduate public relations education.

Cutlip's passion for public relations history was evident in many of his early scholarly journal articles. He also played a pivotal role in securing the personal papers of many early public relations pioneers, such as John W. Hill and Earl Newsom, which are now preserved and accessible to scholars at the Mass Communication History Center of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison.

In retirement, Cutlip compiled his extensive research on early public relations in two books. One title examined the roots of the practice before the 20th century; the second tome profiled the work of a dozen leading practitioners from the first half of the 20th century.

Cutlip was honored in 1972 with PRSA's first Distinguished Public Relations Teaching award and in 1990 with the society's Gold Anvil award for the advancement of the public relations. In 1991, he became only the 10th individual—the first in public relations—to receive the prestigious Paul J. Deutschmann Award for Excellence in Research from the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Antecedents of modern public relations; Communication management; Public Relations Society of America

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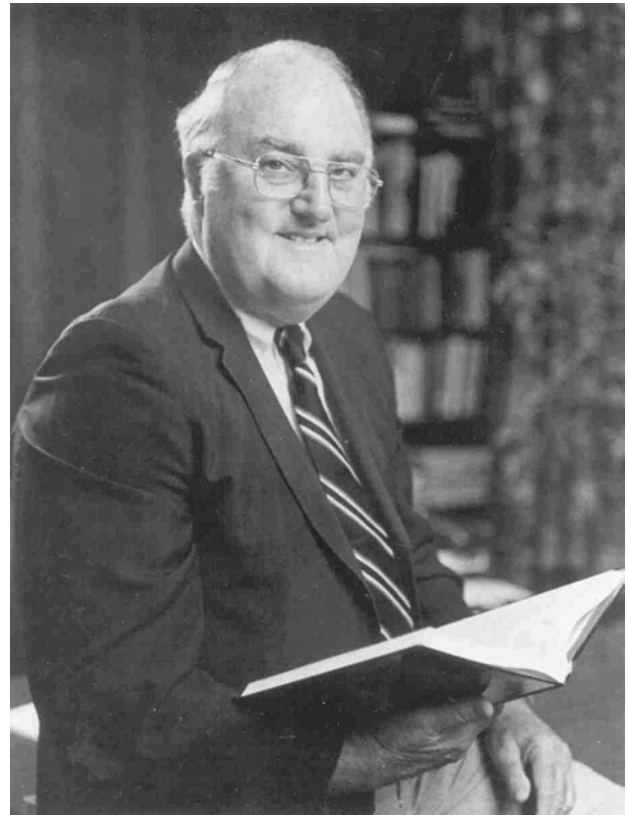
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Scott Cutlip

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DAVIS, ELMER, AND THE OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

Although primarily a journalist, Elmer Davis is important to the public relations profession because he was known nationally and internationally as the director of the Office of War Information during World War II.

Davis was born in 1890 in Aurora, Indiana. His career in journalism began when he was a boy “printer’s devil” on the *Aurora Bulletin*, but printing the newspaper was not his destiny. He enrolled in Franklin College, where he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1910. While at Franklin, he wrote articles as a correspondent for the *Indianapolis Star* and was paid \$25 per story. He went to Oxford University in 1910 as a Rhodes scholar but had to leave when his father became ill. He returned to the United States and took an editorial position with *Adventure* magazine.

A year later, he left that job to be a cub reporter at *The New York Times*, where he remained for 10 years. He reported on a wide variety of subjects. His coverage of evangelist Billy Sunday earned him fame and fortune. At the time, reporters were paid by the space their stories occupied, and the Billy Sunday stories were long for news stories and lucrative for Davis. However, readers did not consider his stories long because they were easy to read and

interesting. Samuel T. Williamson, a fellow *Times* reporter, said Davis “benefited from his facility with the English language which made it possible for him to write a long story so phrased that a copyreader couldn’t cut it much” (Burlingame, 1961, p. 69). A skillful analyst of contemporary politics, when he wrote editorials and features on American politics, he was widely read and respected. He also wrote *History of the New York Times, 1851–1921* in 1921.

Davis left the *Times* in 1923 to become a freelance writer. He tried fiction and nonfiction and published *I’ll Show You the Town* in 1924, several novels, short stories, and a volume of essays, *Show Window* (1927).

In 1939, Davis received a call from the CBS news chief asking him to fill in for one night for news analyst H. V. Kaltenborn, who was reporting from Europe. He accepted, was an immediate success, and became a full-time CBS analyst. His nightly five-minute newscast was heard by 12.5 million people, and he became known for his straightforward style and dry humor. After two and a half years, he had earned the trust of radio listeners and the confidence of newsmen. Edward R. Murrow wrote to Davis, “I’ve spent a lot of time listening to broadcasts from many countries . . . and yours stand out as the best example of fair, tough-minded, interesting talking I’ve heard” (Radio Days, 2003, n.p.).

On one broadcast Davis recommended that the government organize news information under one organization, saying that the public needed and wanted more news. He said, "The whole government publicity situation has everybody in the news business almost in despair, with half a dozen different agencies following different line. . . . Under one head, with real power, they might get somewhere" (Burlingame, 1961, p. 186).

Following the broadcast, E. B. White, in *The New Yorker*, suggested that President Franklin Roosevelt create an Office of War Information (OWI). That's exactly what Roosevelt did, and he asked Davis to be director. Davis did not feel he was requested to take the position; he felt it was an order. He said on his final CBS broadcast, "I have been called into government service." He took the \$10,000-per-year government salary, knowing he was giving up his \$52,000-per-year CBS salary.

Executive Order 9182 established the Office of War Information on June 13, 1942. A White House press release read that Davis "will have full authority to eliminate all overlapping and duplication and to discontinue in any department any informational activity which is not necessary or useful to the war effort."

Davis said, "Our job at home is to give the American people the fullest possible understanding of what the war is about . . . not only to tell (them) how the war is going and where it came from—its nature and origins, how our Government is conducting it, and what our Government hopes to get out of the victory" (Davis, 1943, p. 11).

He called the effort "three-dimensional truth"—the news that is immediate enough to get into the news media and also the background information that will help people understand the news. He planned to use radio, movies, magazines, pamphlets, posters, speeches, discussion groups—"anything to promote the public understanding."

The OWI started out coordinating the release of war news for domestic use and established an overseas branch (headed by Robert E. Sherwood) to launch a propaganda and information campaign internationally. Davis promised to give Americans not "morale-building" information but news, more

news than they had been getting, and he thought that morale would not need to be built if people understood the reasons for actions and demands.

Perhaps the greatest problem was the difference between news or truth and propaganda. Davis had to cope with people who didn't recognize the difference or refused to acknowledge the difference. The word *propaganda* has a bad connotation, and he made efforts to define the word for the American people as "an instrument which may use truth or falsehood as its material, which may be directed toward worthy or unworthy end" (Davis, 1943, p. 14). He emphasized that the OWI would only use truth and only for education, saying that there was no public hostility to the idea of education. Still, he had his battles over what the people should and should not know.

Nevertheless, in all his battles with military officers, Cabinet members, and members of the United States Congress, he referred his opponents to Executive Order 9182 and the words "The director shall have full authority . . ." He always remembered he was a journalist and fought government suppression of facts, taking one case all the way to the White House and winning. Even though he declared he was always a writer first, he never expressed any negative feelings, even in personal letters, about anyone during his three and a half years with the OWI.

Some members of Congress opposed the domestic operations of the OWI, and its funds were eventually curtailed. By 1944, the OWI operated primarily abroad. In 1945, even those overseas functions were taken over by the Department of State; the OWI and the war ended. Davis had previously said there was no reason to have an Office of War Information when there was no war.

From 1945 to 1953, Davis was a radio news analyst with the American Broadcasting Company (ABC). It was Davis on radio and Murrow on television who urged the nation to be reasonable during the campaign speeches of Senator Joe McCarthy. *The New York Times* called Davis the "Mount Everest of Commentators" as he opposed the threat to freedom of thought during the McCarthy era.

Davis later published several works, including *But We Were Born Free* (1954) and *Two Minutes till Midnight* (1955). He can be seen playing himself (a radio commentator) in the 1951 feature film *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. He died in 1958.

—Kathleen Fearn-Banks

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DEADLINE

A deadline is the day and time when a media release or other contact must be in to newsrooms if the story is to have a chance to be aired or printed on that news day. Media correspondents operate in news cycles. They work stories for a specific period of time, within one day or over several days. They have deadlines that allow them to properly prepare a story in time to go to press or go on the air.

A deadline is the time when a newspaper or a station can no longer receive a story for a specific printing or broadcast. A newspaper typically has one deadline for each day's printing. Radio might have several deadlines for the various news segments. Most television stations have news deadlines for morning, noon, evening, and nightly news. Deadlines can correspond to the kind of audience the organization is trying to reach—drive time or evening news, for instance. News television stations such as CNN may have hourly news deadlines.

Deadlines are one of the hard realities in the news and public relations businesses. Because of the preparation times that are required to gather news details and prepare stories for print and airing, news departments establish deadlines. Public relations practitioners must know the deadlines for each news venue where they would like to have a story appear.

In preparation for getting reporters' attention to their media releases, practitioners may need a campaign plan that includes set schedules. Part of setting each schedule is to *backtime*. Backtiming means that practitioners set a schedule starting from the date a campaign must be executed and scheduling backward to set the times when each element of the campaign must be started to meet the deadlines of the various reporters whose attention they seek.

A lot of preparation can be wasted if at some crucial moment the practitioners fail to have the news information to the reporters within the limits of their deadlines. Stories that are pitched too soon may be forgotten by the date of the event. Releases that reach reporters after the deadline will necessarily fail to be printed or aired as part of the regular news.

Because of the combination of campaign schedules and media deadlines, any observant reader, listener, or viewer can predict certain events by what they see happening. For instance, it is not a matter of accident or coincidence that a major star appears on early-morning or late-night talk shows just days before a release of a movie or CD featuring the artist. All of that "news" is carefully timed to meet deadlines and campaign schedules. It is intended to create interest, or buzz, about the movie or CD and enhance sales.

Thus, deadlines affect when the practitioner needs to get information to the reporters in time to pitch an event. Another variation of this theme can become a reality during crisis response. If something newsworthy happens, reporters are likely to contact a company spokesperson, for instance, seeking comment. If the comment comes too late, the story is likely to air or be printed without the company's side of the story being included. Even worse might be the inclusion of one of the following statements by reporters: "The company did not respond to our inquiries by air time" or "This reporter tried repeatedly to contact the company without success." Such comments indict the company, make it seem guilty, and damage its reputation or image. Experienced practitioners provide recorded telephone message information that allows reporters to find them, perhaps through a

pager, at virtually any hour of the day. They know that they must be available as needed to meet reporters' deadlines for a working story, especially one concerning a crisis.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Crisis and crisis management; Event; Media release

DECISION THEORY

Decision theory is the formal analysis of decision making through the systematic evaluation of decision alternatives. Understanding decision theory is important to public relations because the function involves high-level decision making and counseling the dominant coalition on decision alternatives, particularly in the area of issues management. Francis Heylighen defined decision theory in this way: "Decision theory is a body of knowledge and related analytical techniques of different degrees of formality designed to help a decision maker choose among a set of alternatives in light of their possible consequences" (1999, n.p.). This is a noteworthy definition because it covers all areas of decision making, whether based in statistics, ethics, management, public relations, or issues management. Another definition of decision theory, from the *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science & Technology*, states, "Decision Theory: A broad spectrum of concepts and techniques which have been developed to both describe and rationalize the process of decision making, that is, making a choice among several possible alternatives" (p. 66). Generally, decision theory falls into the areas of decision making under conditions of certainty, uncertainty or ambiguity, and risk. Much of the literature in the decision discipline discusses its theory as a mathematical framework for reducing uncertainty.

Decision making is a crucial concern for an organization because it impacts all individual and group efforts that take place. Practically every act in public relations is a result of a decision among alternatives. A decision alternative is a viable option in the weighing of various actions the organization could take in managing an issue.

The most commonly occurring theme in decision theory is *utility*. Utility is a measure of the benefit of each decision alternative, or what that alternative would bring about. In decision theory, expected utility is understood as the possible outcomes of a decision and their usefulness to the decision maker. Decision theory generally holds that the best decision is the one that generates the greatest utility. The concept of utility is related to the moral philosophy of utilitarianism, which holds that a moral decision is that which produces the greatest good, or utility, for the greatest number of people.

Tapan Biswas (1997) said the decision maker is normally conceived in theoretical decision models as a *utility maximizer*. However, many decision theorists have noted that in reality, people often make choices that are less than maximized, choosing things that will just satisfy their needs; they "satisfice." Satisficing is based on bounded rationality, in which the decision maker is unable to maximize because of imperfect information but makes do with the information available. Often, imperfect access to and flow of communication was the factor limiting decision making to bounded rationality, sometimes forcing the decision maker to satisfice.

Stephen P. Robbins explained satisficing as "Good enough replaces maximization as a criterion of effectiveness" (1990, p. 263). Because satisficing does not lead to optimal conditions or results, it generally renders a temporary solution. Problems that are not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, including those decisions that simply satisfice, prove an unstable base for relationship building in public relations. When decisions are made on the basis of satisficing rather than maximizing, it is common for one or more publics to be less than satisfied with the outcome. When that occurs, it is common for publics to reopen the decision to discussion and contention.

Factors that influence decision making are complex. John P. Van Gigch wrote, "The search processes by which the mind generates alternatives is still only partially understood" (1974, p. 59). One such influence is the pressure of human interaction on the decision. Ronald R. Sims stated, "Pressure toward conformity . . . is the main factor that leads individuals to make and own defective decisions" (1994, p. 56). Commonly referred to as "peer

pressure” or “group think,” the influence on the decision making exerted by social norms, role expectations, group membership, and fear of negative repercussions is considerable. Decision theory is an attempt to assuage the influences of these factors in favor of a more scientific decision-making framework. However, there are many challenges when attempting to conceptualize human decision making.

Another factor that influences decision making is the choices, or lack thereof, perceived by the decision maker as available to him or her. A decision is only as good as the best choice available to the decision maker. However, the decision maker must be free to take an option in order to consider it a viable decision alternative, worthy of analysis, investigation, and potential implementation. At this juncture, options and freedom are vitally important. Frederic Schick argued, “Choices presupposes options, and having the option of doing something implies that you think you are free to do it” (1997, p. 9).

Dealing with decisions under conditions of certainty, we can employ decision trees listing the various decision alternatives available and the probabilities associated with the outcomes of each. However, because certainty is nearly impossible in the realistic implementation of public relations, we will briefly review the two other branches of decision theory: decision making under risk and decision making under uncertainty or ambiguity.

DECISION MAKING UNDER RISK: BAYESIAN THEORY

Bayes, who lived from 1702 to 1761 in Great Britain, was a mathematician who first used probability inductively and established a mathematical basis for probability inference. Probability inference is a logical means of calculating, from the number of times an event has not occurred, the probability that it will occur in future trials. In his discussion of decision theory involving risk, Schick stated: “The maximizing-utility logic of risk is often called *Bayesian*. The Bayesian form of logic assumes precise numerical utilities and probabilities” (1997, p. 38).

This mathematical basis for decision making is called the *Bayesian Theorem*. It uses probability

theory as logic and serves as a starting point for inference problems. A logical consequence of the Bayesian Theorem is *Bayes’ Rule*, a decision-making rule whereby one acts to maximize the expected posterior utility. In simpler terms, one acts where the probability of attaining one’s goal is highest. This concept is analogous to acting on the highest expected value in a decision tree.

Although Bayesian logic is highly theoretical, its practical applications have grown. Microsoft Corporation is using a Bayesian approach, enabling software to identify problem areas and provide help to users based on the inferential probability of what is causing the problem. Bayes’ theorem is being used at an increasing rate in many branches of science and technology, such as drug trials overseen by the Food and Drug Administration, as well as in management. However, the application of Bayes’ Theorem requires advanced computing resources and, more formidably, familiarity with applying the theorem to practical decisions.

DECISION MAKING UNDER UNCERTAINTY OR AMBIGUITY

In decisions being made under conditions of uncertainty or ambiguity, the complexity of choices containing many options of varying utilities poses difficulty. Schick termed these types of scenarios “multidimensional choosing, multi-attribute or multi-objective choosing” (1997, p. 41). Complexity is compounded when we consider that decision alternatives can have unknown utility or unintended consequences. There are two types of decision making under uncertainty: the maximins rule and the subjective probabilities approach. Both of these approaches represent a way to “solve for” the condition of uncertainty.

In an attempt to reduce uncertainty, decision makers can base their choices on what is known in decision theory as “maximins” or the “max-min rule.” Schick explained this concept as the “option whose worst or *minimal* outcome is the best or *maximal* of the different worst possibles” (1997, p. 37). The concept of maximins, or choosing the option that maximizes the minimum outcome, is a principle that must be carefully implemented to avoid

limiting long-term options. In practical application, maximins means choosing the decision alternative that provides the least chance for problems and the best probability of maximum utility.

In the subjective probabilities approach, research is conducted to gather as much information as possible. Then, with the aid of historical data, experts assign projected probabilities to each decision alternative. This approach is a systematic attempt to reduce the impact of a lack of information on the decision. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to attain precision and apportion probabilities when problems are vague. Indeterminate problems can defeat the tools decision theory uses in measuring weighted averages. Decision making under conditions of ambiguity or uncertainty is an imprecise science. The possibility for error and miscalculation is high due to the subjective and indeterminate nature of this approach.

DECISION THEORY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Given the importance held by decision making, we can understand how it relates to many of the functions of public relations discussed in this encyclopedia: strategic issues management, ethics, crisis, conflict resolution, and counseling senior management, as well as day-to-day technical functions. Decision theory is applicable to almost every business pursuit.

Although decision theory is not commonly linked to public relations theory, it is clear that the application of decision theory to public relations can enhance effective management. Perhaps the most important area of application is issues management or top-level organizational decision making on matters of policy and debate. In this area, it is necessary to evaluate decision alternatives under conditions of imperfect information (ambiguity or uncertainty) and risk.

Conflict is inherent in decision making, and issues management decisions are often a contentious interplay of competing interests, such as those of activists, those of the legal department, financial concerns, management concerns, labor

interests, regulatory agencies, and so on. Decision theory provides the public relations practitioner with a coherent and methodical framework within which to analyze alternatives and maximize the efficacy of his or her decisions.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Conflict resolution; Issues management; Moral development; Moral philosophy

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DEFAMATION (LIBEL AND SLANDER)

At one time, the field of defamation was separated into libel (written) and slander (oral). This separation assumed that a more permanent record of the defamation had the potential for greater harm. But with new technologies such as radio and television, with the potential for the spoken word reaching millions of people, and with audio and video recordings being as least semipermanent, the reasons for the distinction have vanished.

The key component of defamation is a statement or inference of fact that has the tendency either to harm the plaintiff's reputation and lower the plaintiff in the esteem of the community or to harm the plaintiff's business or organization by deterring people from doing business with them. The plaintiff can be an individual, a corporation (either for profit

or nonprofit), or some other organization. However, in the United States, the government cannot sue for defamation.

The issue of defamation is important for public relation practitioners because it is the “most common, and perhaps the most serious, legal problem facing the mass communications industry. . . . Nearly every press release, news article, or advertisement holds the potential for a libel suit” (Moore, Farrar, & Collins, 1998, pp. 188–189). As noted by a number of commentators, defamation law is very frustrating and erratic. The lines are not very distinct and do not adequately protect either media or communication professionals from the costs of defending themselves in law suits, nor does the law provide adequate protection for the plaintiff who has been defamed. There have been several suggestions for improvement, such as the American Bar Association’s Uniform Correction or Clarification of Defamation Act and the Annenberg Washington Program’s Libel Reform Act, but they have not been adopted.

The elements that go into making up a defamation suit are publication, identification, defamation, and fault. The defamatory statement has to be “published” to at least one person other than the plaintiff and the defendant. The scope of the publishing goes to the issue of harm and damages. The plaintiff then has to be identified in some way; otherwise the plaintiff has not been harmed. The identification does not have to be by name if there are surrounding facts that would enable the community to identify the plaintiff. The statement also has to be capable of decreasing the reputation of the plaintiff in the estimation of a relevant community. And since 1964 in *New York Times v. Sullivan* (public officials), and 1974 in *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.* (public figures/private figures), the plaintiff has to prove fault on the part of the defendant. If the plaintiff is a public official or a public figure, either all-purpose (i.e., occupying a position of pervasive influence in society or having a name recognized by the general public) or limited (involved in a limited public controversy), the level of fault that the plaintiff has to prove is actual malice, meaning the defendant acted with knowledge that the statement was false or with reckless disregard of its truth or

falsity. If the plaintiff is a private figure not involved in a public controversy, there has to be some level of fault proven, but that level is left up to the individual state courts. It is usually some level of negligence, but it cannot be strict liability, which means that if there is publication, identification, and defamation, fault on the part of the defendant is assumed. Negligence is a much easier burden of proof for the plaintiff to meet than is malice, and often, as a result, defamation cases are decided at the threshold level of the classification of the plaintiff as either public or private.

There are defenses against defamation suits based on the First Amendment (*New York Times* and *Gertz*) that are intended to ensure that communication is protected, absent actual malice, and to ensure uninhibited and robust debate on matters of public concern. In addition, certain common law defenses are also available. These include truth that can be proven. In other words, the statement in question does not have to be absolutely true but true in the crux of the charge being made (see *Masson v. New Yorker Magazine, Inc.*, 501 U.S. 496 [1991]). There may be a privilege to disseminate the information. The privilege may be absolutely protected by law or qualified, if the dissemination is fair and accurate. Another defense is the expression of fair comment and opinion, which allows for criticism of plays, restaurants, governmental policies, and so on (see *Milkovich v. Lorain Journal Co.*, 487 U.S. 1 [1990]). There are other defenses that don’t come into play as much, such as neutral reportage, consent, and right of reply.

Often what the potential plaintiff is looking for is an apology or a retraction, but negotiations for redress are often unsuccessful, and the issue goes to court (Moore et al., p. 189). Although an injunction may be possible in some cases (usually not favored because of free speech implications), the usual remedy if the plaintiff succeeds is monetary damages. Nominal damages are awarded if the plaintiff was right but suffered little or no damage to reputation. Special damages are provable out-of-pocket losses. General or presumed damages attempt to compensate plaintiff for damage to reputation. Punitive damages tend to be large in amount and are

designed to dissuade the defendant from taking similar actions in the future. After *Gertz*, plaintiffs cannot be awarded general or punitive damages without meeting the actual malice standard.

Defamation is the most common legal concern of communication professionals. Knowledge of the basics of defamation law is essential for public relations practitioners. Changing technology will lead to even more challenges and a continuing need to keep current in the area.

—Roy V. Leeper

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DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographics represent the physical characteristics of a population, such as age, occupation, marital status, household size, geographic location, education, and ethnic background. *American Demographics* magazine uses the acronym RAGE to explain the more popular demographic variables examined by the Census Bureau and other organizations: race, age, gender, and education. For public relations practitioners in particular, demographic characteristics help one to better define target publics and to tailor messages and programs especially for them. For instance, although one organization may be interested in enhancing its awareness among preteens, another organization may be planning to focus on senior citizens when launching a new service.

Demographic information plays a key role in the research process. This information is usually requested when primary research is being conducted. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, sponsoring organizations seek to distinguish demographic characteristics for an array of variables. First, the sponsoring organization can calculate descriptive statistical analyses to examine the mean, medium, and mode in order to describe the population being researched. Further, patterns in the data can be detected.

Second, the sponsoring organization can calculate differential statistical analyses to determine whether particular characteristics serve as predictors of behavior. For instance, an organization may learn that gender significantly influences how much money a person spends on formal dress attire. Or one might determine from the results that age significantly influences the types of media its primary publics refer to when seeking information.

Valuable demographic information can also be obtained via an array of secondary resources, such as the United States Census Bureau and other organizations responsible for collecting ongoing demographic and market data about a given population. For example, various research and governmental entities collect data among a broad spectrum of segments, ranging from industry-specific (e.g., retail, health, education, and entertainment) to gender, income, age, and consumer lifestyle activities and trends. With access to the World Wide Web, a plethora of information is now available, free of charge, via the Internet.

However, demographics, independently, may not be the most feasible characteristics on which to focus. Much of the literature recommends examining demographics in tandem with various psychographic characteristics such as lifestyles, attitudes, and personal values. Together, demographic and psychographic characteristics can paint a vivid picture of a *potential* public. The practitioner also can learn valuable information about the *present* primary publics the organization is serving. For example, managers at a local convention and visitors bureau (CVB) located in Michigan may conduct survey research to learn more about vacationers who travel to this destination. From their research, they learn that most vacationers

come from neighboring states because Michigan offers travelers opportunities within a drivable distance. The data further indicate that these travelers represent families with children under the age of 18 with an average gross family income of between \$40,000 and \$60,000 and at least one parent having earned a bachelor's degree.

The psychographic portion of the research reveals that these travelers engage in outdoor recreational activities, they are very interpersonally oriented, they refer to the Internet when seeking information about making travel plans, and although they are not "cheap" per se, they do value "bang for their vacation buck." This information can aid CVB managers in developing communication programs that further enhance relationships among their key traveling publics. They also can use the information to develop promotional communication campaigns to attract potential new visitors to the area.

—Lisa T. Fall

See also Psychographics; Segmentation

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DEONTOLOGY

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), the progenitor of deontology, is among the most influential

philosophers of the Western intellectual tradition. Kant taught and wrote late in the Modern period of philosophy, defined as the 1500s through the 1700s. Kant's doctrines had such an impact on philosophy that they were considered a revolutionary approach, worthy of consideration separately from all other schools and philosophers of the Modern period.

Kant authored an enormous volume of philosophical writings on topics as diverse as geometry, political theory, the physics of time and space, metaphysics, geography, cosmology, and moral philosophy. Kant's moral philosophy and the ethical theory of deontology that developed from it are of primary concern in public relations.

WHO WAS IMMANUEL KANT?

Kant was born in Königsberg, Germany in 1724, where he lived almost exclusively until his death in 1804. He began his career as a mathematics professor at the University of Königsberg, where he was appointed to a chair of metaphysics at age 46. He went on to become "the first great professor of philosophy" (Beck, 1963, p. x). Paul Guyer wrote that "Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) shook the very foundations of the intellectual world" (1992, p. i). Kant's impact can be seen in almost all subsequent philosophical schools.

Kant was fourth of nine children of a harness maker. He was reared in a devout Protestant family. Kant was later deemed the premier philosopher of Protestantism due to his unadulterated belief in individual autonomy. Evaluations of his family's economic means ranged from modest to impoverished. Although Kant's writings were perceived as foreboding, he gained renown as an engaging lecturer who drew students from throughout Europe. A former student described Kant's "playfulness, wit, and humor" and, although Kant is often portrayed as a solitary individual, friends lauded his social graces and skill as a conversationalist.

Kant was a productive author, producing 20 books and hundreds of essays, most in German and several in Latin (Sullivan, 1989). He was also an inspiring professor; a former student remarked, "His hearers certainly never left a single lecture in

his ethics without having become better men” (Beck, 1963, p. ix).

KANT’S CONTRIBUTION

Kant radically altered the thought patterns in Western culture and turned philosophy inward toward the self. Herbert J. Paton, an emeritus professor of moral philosophy at the University of Oxford, asserted: “Kant contrived to say something new about morality. This remarkable achievement has compelled every subsequent writer on moral philosophy to examine his views” (1967, p. 15). All philosophers must now include Kant in their philosophizing and argue for or against him because his impact is so great that he cannot be ignored.

Kantian contributions to philosophy include his expositions of moral worth, duty, and good will. Moral worth and duty are arguably the most well known tenets of his doctrine, but Marcia Baron explained that these two constructs are tools Kant used to illustrate the crux of his philosophy: the good will. Baron explained, “The good will is manifested in actions done from duty” (1995, p. 183). Actions done from duty differ from actions inspired by inclination or self-interest. Therefore, Kant’s discussion of duty provides a means to analyze the good will. Kant’s exposition of the morally good will profoundly influenced the course of philosophy.

DEONTOLOGY: KANT’S MORAL PHILOSOPHY

The term *deontology* is derived from the Latin word for “duty,” indicating the central role that acting from obligation to uphold moral law plays in Kantian philosophy. Deontology is defined as “the ethical theory taking duty as the basis of morality” (Flew, 1979, p. 88). This branch of ethics asserts that an act is morally worthy if it upholds one’s moral obligation. Kantian philosophy is a prime example of a nonconsequentialist approach to ethics, meaning that actions are not justified by their consequences. The course of moral action is not determined by projecting

the consequences of the decision. Rather, the consequences of a decision are noted, but they are not the determining factor of the decision. The determining factor in Kantian philosophy is whether the act upholds a universal duty to the moral law as defined by the good will or good intention. However, deontology is too complex to be summarized so briefly, and is best understood as a synergy of its theoretical components. The core theoretical components in deontology (Bowen, 2004, p. 70) are

- Transcendentalism and rationality
- The law of autonomy
- The categorical imperative
- Dignity and respect
- Duty
- Intention—a morally good will

TRANSCENDENTALISM AND RATIONALITY

Kant attempted to show the primacy of moral decision making over logical positivism and pure empiricism, which were popular in his day. Deontology incorporates the strengths of both rationalism and empiricism and attempts to avoid the flaws in each.

Kant’s contribution to methodology was introducing what he called a *transcendental deduction*. Roger Scruton explained, “An argument is transcendental if it ‘transcends’ the limits of empirical inquiry, so as to establish the a priori conditions of experience” (1982, p. 23). Kant’s philosophy was transcendental because it arose from the elements of human cognition, which are not purely empirical but also based on sensation and intuition. Matt McCormick explained the transcendental deduction as the structure imposed by the mind on external things that makes experience possible. Reality as seen by the mind is a common concept today, but it was a revolutionary idea in Kant’s time. The importance of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* (trans. 1997) is that it restructured the way the intellectual world conceived reality.

Kant’s argument (in the 1977 book *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics . . .*) is that his philosophy

is in direct response to the moral skepticism of British philosopher David Hume. Hume held that knowledge could not be gained through reason and based his philosophy entirely on empirical experience. Disagreeing with Hume, Kant held that the rationality of the human agent was a necessary condition for moral decision making. Kant based his theory on the understanding that people have a rational, moral reason that is capable of “determin[ing] how we should act and also be able to motivate us to act on [our] judgments without relying on any prior desires” (Sullivan, 1989, p. 45). Kant defined reason as “the faculty of principles” and believed that the ability to reason was the basis for morally worthy decisions—as opposed to self-interest, greed, fiat, or similar factors. This belief in the individual decision maker forms the basis of Kant’s philosophy.

LAW OF AUTONOMY

Kant derived the maxims for his moral philosophy from his law of autonomy, which stated, “A moral agent is an agent who can act autonomously, that is, as a law unto himself or herself, on the basis of objective maxims of his or her reason alone” (Sullivan, 1989, p. 48). Kant added that universality is the key on which the law of autonomy rests; he called this “the idea of the will of every rational being as a will which makes universal law” (Kant, trans. 1964, p. 98).

The idea of a universal law includes the reversibility concept of the decision maker being on the “receiving end” of a decision. Therefore, if a rational human agent is free to act autonomously in willing his or her moral will to become universal law, then it must be a moral decision. This standard must exclude children, animals, and the mentally ill, because the agent must be a rational decision maker.

Kant articulated the theory that a person has the autonomous power to act as an independent decision maker, using only good will and rationality as the bases for a decision. Based on the deontological law of autonomy, a decision can be made through reason, rationality, and moral duty, rather than being based on the subjective concerns that promote one’s personal advantage, or the advantage of

the organization or client, which can cloud practitioner–client relationships in public relations. Kant regarded autonomy as a moral absolute and as an obligation that provides the basis for a powerful moral norm in the form of the categorical imperative.

CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE

The guide to moral decision making that Kant based on the law of autonomy is the categorical imperative. The categorical imperative is a decision guide that can be employed to address ethical dilemmas in practice. There are three forms of Kant’s categorical imperative, but the most well known is Form 1 from his *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals* (trans. 1964), which reads, “Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law” (p. 88). Kant explained that a maxim is a principle on which a subject acts.

Categorical refers to the fact that all moral agents are obligated absolutely and unconditionally, “not hypothetically or conditionally” (Sullivan, 1989, p. 49). The categorical imperative goes beyond the Golden Rule—do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Kant argued that the Golden Rule is based on merely prudential maxims of self-interest rather than a morally good will and is thus simply a norm of prudential reciprocity. Further, Kant maintained that the Golden Rule does not require “the respect owed others or duties of benevolence to them” (Sullivan, 1989, p. 204).

The categorical imperative is such a powerful norm of moral behavior because it is grounded in universal applicability. Paton argued, “To judge our own actions by the same universal standard we apply to the actions of others is an essential condition of morality” (1967, p. 73). The categorical imperative is a valuable guide for public relations ethics because it reduces the potential for subjective interpretations.

DIGNITY AND RESPECT

Form 2 of the categorical imperative is once again based on the law of autonomy, but it concentrates on the dignity and respect inherent to all autonomous

agents. It states, “Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end” (Kant, trans. 1964, p. 96).

This form of the categorical imperative is often interpreted as Kant’s law of justice because it obligates people to respect all other human beings and themselves as well. Kant maintained that all people are deserving of dignity, respect, and self-respect. Scruton clarified, “The autonomous being is both the agent and repository of all value, and exists, as Kant puts it, as an end in himself” (1982, p. 70). Every person is equal in Kant’s view, and this assertion was a radical—and dangerous—break with the prevailing view of aristocracy in Kant’s day. In fact, during the reigns of both Kings of Prussia—Frederick the Great and Frederick William II—Kant had to exercise great care in publishing such revolutionary ideas.

DUTY

Kant contended that acting according to universal duty is obligated by people’s ability to reason and act autonomously, and occurs out of reverence or respect for the moral law. Doing one’s duty to uphold the moral law results in happiness, in Kant’s view. In fact, he defined ethics as being worthy of happiness.

Kant argued that feelings and desires are subjective and that morality would be reduced to prudence if these were used to guide moral decisions. Sullivan asserted, “The categorical imperative commands us, not to allow ourselves to be ruled by our feelings and inclinations” (1989, p. 120).

Acting from duty is seen in deontology as morally worthy. Acting from compulsion is still moral but far less worthy. For this reason, codes of ethics in public relations, such as the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Code of Ethics and Professional Standards, rarely have a punitive component. Acting ethically is considered the duty of public relations professionals, and moral worth is found in desiring to be an ethical practitioner and acting accordingly out of a sense of duty.

INTENTION AND THE MORALLY GOOD WILL

A good will holds the highest moral worth in deontology. Kant wrote, “Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a *good will*” (Kant, trans. 1964, p. 61). Kant discussed the possibility of courage, happiness, and other good characteristics becoming evil when possessed by the maleficent person. Happiness, he noted, could even inspire vanity and presumption if not complemented by a good will. He concluded, “Thus a good will appears to constitute the indispensable condition for even being worthy of happiness” (trans. 1964, p. 154).

The morality of an action does not depend on its outcome because outcome is beyond control. Instead, intention is where Kant finds morality, and he deducts that a good intention begins with the will. Kant conceived of acts in terms of the motivation behind the action. People are obligated to act according to duty, but the intentions behind the action determine the action’s moral worth. Kant believed that an action has less moral worth when it is performed from obligation than from duty and a good will.

Critics of Kant often judged his theory harshly because they saw acting from duty as onerous. However, Kant’s equation of happiness and a morally good will with the ultimate value argued against this interpretation. Kant believed that a morally good will gives equally high worth and dignity to all people who possess it. Kant had great faith in the ability of reason in the common person, and he argued that one need not be highly educated to understand and possess a moral character. Sullivan explicated, “Kant’s entire moral philosophy can be understood as a protest against distinctions based on the far less important criteria of rank, wealth, and privilege” (1989, p. 197). Kant’s categorical imperative shows that he was a truly egalitarian philosopher because every person, regardless of socioeconomic status, is capable of achieving the highest known achievement—a good will.

CONCLUSION

There are several advantages in applying deontology to public relations decisions over applying a utilitarian paradigm. Utilitarianism asks the decision maker to accurately predict future consequences of a decision, often an impossible task. Utilitarianism always favors the interests of the majority, even though a small public might have valuable ethical insight into an issue that would go unattended. Utilitarianism can also be used to justify questionable activities in an “ends justifies the means” approach. Deontology suffers from none of these drawbacks; furthermore, it offers a consistent, rational, methodical approach to ethical decisions. The clear imperatives of deontology allow organizational values to be followed in a reliable manner. Such consistency can enhance the reputation of an organization as ethical, thereby building and maintaining relationships with publics.

Kantian deontology has been applied to public relations in developing theory, empirically testing deontological theory, and assessing the ethical paradigms of public relations practitioners. Deontology provides a means for practitioners to analyze ethical dilemmas that is both philosophically sophisticated and immanently practical.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Decision theory; Moral development; Moral philosophy; Symmetry; Utilitarianism

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DE-POSITIONING

Positioning a product or service in a market and differentiating it from the competition are strategies widely viewed as ethical and professional, as long as assertions made in the campaign are accurate, complete, and fair. The same cannot be said for a different practice: de-positioning, which seems to mean undermining a competitor's product or service using any means available.

De-positioning, in the view of some proponents, means attacking a competitor's new idea, product, or service the moment it surfaces. The attack begins even before all the facts are available. It means rushing to get your own new idea, product, or service out even if it isn't fully developed. It means generating sufficient chaos and confusion to discredit a competitor's new product, idea, or service or to spoil its launch.

There are many problems with de-positioning, not the least of which is the damage a de-positioning campaign can do to your own industry. If you attack product X unmercifully, consumers might start to wonder about product Y and product Z, and they might eventually get around to wondering about your product. An attack against a competitor can actually be an attack against yourself if the campaign has an unanticipated and negative impact on your product or service.

De-positioning also lowers the ethical and moral tone of society generally and of business, fundraising, and other practices specifically. This hurts any organization that is trying to get a fair hearing from the public for a product or service and makes it hard for honest businesses and nonprofit organizations to establish and to maintain high credibility with their publics.

An organization that tries to de-position the competition uses questionable techniques that, when publicized, will harm the organization's prospects. It can take years and a good deal of hard work to polish a tarnished image. When those de-positioning activities are exposed, as they surely will be, they will be described as unethical.

Consumers are poorly served by de-positioning activities. If company X really does have a super new product but cannot get it accepted because of the confusion created by company Y's de-positioning efforts, consumers will be the primary losers. Worse, consumers might buy company Y's bad product (rushed off the assembly line before it was ready just to de-position company X's product), rather than company X's superior product. All of this is good for company Y in the near term, but it is bad for everyone else, and it will be bad for company Y in the long term.

—Michael Ryan

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DIALOGUE

The dialogic approach to communication goes back to the Socratic notion of dialogue (or dialectic) as a philosophical tool for uncovering truth and discovering knowledge. Modern treatments of dialogue have described it as an interpersonal conversational technique based on respect and trust, and as an approach, or orientation, toward communication.

Dialogue as an approach to communication involves *risk* (a willingness to interact with others and to be changed), *trust* (fairness and openness), *proximity* (spontaneous, honest, face-to-face contact), *empathy* (supportiveness), *mutuality* (a recognition of shared goals and interests), and *commitment* (to ethical conversation). Rob Anderson, Kenneth Cissna, and Ronald Arnett explained, “Dialogue is a dimension of communication quality that keeps communicators more focused on mutuality and relationship than on self-interest, more concerned with discovering than disclosing, more interested in access than in domination” (1994, p. 2).

Each dialogic concept is integral to achieving “ethical” conversation. For example, when individuals or groups with divergent beliefs are interacting, each party must be able to trust that the other will not exploit them. An activist who agrees to meet with an organizational representative must be able to trust that the organization is not simply trying to distract the group while they secretly lobby Congress or take some other action. Without trust, authentic, mutually oriented communication cannot occur. Similarly, before trust can be built, interlocutors must be willing to risk, taking a chance that the other party will be honest and forthright.

Authentic dialogue is said to require spontaneous, face-to-face, interpersonal interaction. Both parties must be committed to the process of dialogue, or conversation. True dialogue is not achieved through sporadic or infrequent interactions. Trust and empathetic understanding are built over time, through repeated conversations and the pursuit of mutually beneficial goals. True dialogue requires commitment to the conversational process.

Dialogue has been studied by an assortment of scholars from diverse fields of study including communication, philosophy, political science, and psychology. As Carl Rogers suggested of his dialogic approach to therapy, dialogue is about “unconditional positive regard” for the other (1994, p. 128). Paolo Freire suggested in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, “Dialogue cannot exist without humility. . . . How can I dialogue if I am closed to—and even offended by—the contribution of others?” (1994, pp. 71–72). Similarly, Michael Kent and

Maureen Taylor (1998) conceived of dialogue as a public relations tool, with *dialogic communication* referring to any negotiated exchange of ideas and opinions. The term *dialogic* denotes a communicative give-and-take and is guided by two principles: First, individuals who engage in dialogue do not necessarily have to agree; quite often they vehemently disagree. However, what they share is a willingness to try to reach mutually satisfying positions. Second, dialogic communication is about intersubjectivity.

Implicit in the notion of dialogue is the belief that the orientation that one holds toward others influences the quality of communication, and ultimately, influences the development of relationships. When interlocutors are viewed as alien, or “other,” effective conversation (involving risk, trust, empathy, etc.) is more difficult.

One of the obstacles to using dialogue as a practical public relations tool has been the variety of ways that the term *dialogue* has been used. To political pundits, dialogue often means nothing more than talk. To political scientists, dialogue often refers to public forums where political leaders express opinions (public debates). According to Richard L. Johannesen, dialogue often refers to ethical communication that acknowledges “the *attitudes toward each other* held by the participants in a communication exchange” (1990, p. 58, italics in original).

Until recently, dialogue in public relations was equated with “two-way symmetrical” communication. The equating of dialogue with symmetrical communication, however, has primarily been the result of casual language use. More recent treatments of dialogue in public relations have focused on dialogue as a useful framework for effective (and ethical) organization–public communication.

Most public relations treatments of dialogue have made it clear that dialogue is not simply a procedural approach to effective communication. Rather, dialogue requires commitment on the part of organizations and publics to communicate ethically (according to a set of mutually agreed upon conversational rules), and to try to act in the mutual interest of organizations and publics.

—Michael L. Kent

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DIFFERENTIATION

Organizations need to stand out as unique among their various competitors. Thus, marketing, management, and communication professionals seek to differentiate their organizations from their competitors.

Differentiation results when stakeholders (markets and publics) make attributions about an organization that, at least in part, view it as different or unique in some way among its competitors. Differentiation is important for businesses. The assumption is that customers make strategic distinctions among competitors. The most obvious distinctions might be as simple as price, quality, availability, and customer relations.

Differentiation is also vital for nonprofits. They work to provide unique community-based services. Thus, some support the arts (museums and theaters, for instance). Others address needs of specific populations. For instance, nonprofit hospitals raise money to provide services that might depend on a specialty (burn treatment or cancer treatment) or for a demographic class (children or the indigent). The United Way differentiates itself by raising funds for a variety of charitable purposes. The Light House for the Blind serves individuals who have limited or no vision capability.

Differentiation occurs even in the governmental sector. Some agencies build or repair roads. Others provide emergency and safety (police, fire) response. Some protect water quality, and others handle solid waste. Various military branches compete for funding based on their unique service to the national welfare and general peace. The United States Postal Department competes with commercial package delivery rivals.

Differentiation is primarily a marketing decision. Businesses are differentiated by product line (chemical manufacturing versus farm implement manufacturing), and by product type or line (pickups, SUVs, minivans, sedans, or sub-compacts). Product positioning can include filling a market niche, such as high-cost luxury watches versus low-cost sports watches. Discount stores are different from department stores and specialty boutiques.

Placement can also be a matter of differentiation. At the counter of movie theatres one would expect popcorn, soft drinks, hot dogs, and candy, but not pickups and farm equipment. Specialty products are often sold in specialty stores, or even by brand name. Such stores are unlikely to stock the high-volume, low-cost items that are more typical of discount stores.

Positioning is also a matter of differentiation. What markets does a company serve? What markets within its industry does it not serve? Is it retail or wholesale? Is it long on service and short on product? Or is it the opposite? Quality is also a positioning decision that can differentiate products and the companies that sell them. Think of the varieties of alcoholic beverages that are available—to satisfy all tastes.

Many of the matters of differentiation mentioned above are the primary responsibility of marketing. Others come closer to the purview of public relations. Some advocate, for instance, that customer relations should be a primary function of public relations. Organizations can differentiate themselves by how well they respond to the needs, wants, and concerns of customers. Product support can be a matter of differentiation, as well as the return policy.

Organizations attempt to differentiate themselves by how they relate to the people in the communities

where they operate. Some organizations build rapport, solid relationships, with persons in the community. These relationships can differentiate the organization as one demonstrating commitment to the community. They work to prove that they operate in the public interest. That is an important focal point of differentiation. The way an organization seeks (or fails) to build goodwill can differentiate it from other organizations. Is it open? Is it ethical, aspiring to the highest standards of corporate responsibility? Does it share control with the members of the community? Is it willing to work to solve issues, or does it seek to dominate their resolution? Does it foster and work to meet values of its stakeholders, such as working toward a diverse workforce or demonstrating a commitment to environmental protection?

The identity or image of the organization features the attributes that stakeholders use when they think about it. The strongest theoretical foundation for this line of analysis can be derived from information integration theory. This conceptualization of differentiation assumes that each set of stakeholders can have different (and compatible or incompatible) views of the same organization, including products and services. Employees see it as a good place to work, because it supports employees and produces products or services that foster pride among the workforce. Customers may ignore the elements of employee relations but focus on those attributes of the organization most relevant to purchases or service use.

The list of attributes that are used to differentiate one organization from another, one industry from another, or one service group from another is both endless and fairly limited. On the one hand, terms relevant to a set of services in the military may be used to attract recruits to one branch of the military based on its differences; serving in the air force is different from serving in the navy or army. The basic attributes then may be “land,” “air,” and “sea.” On the other hand, one unifying theme across all branches (differentiating them from other organizations) might be “leadership training” and “technology training.” Thus, information integration theory suggests that people carve their experiences into discrete categories and make decisions accordingly.

Product claims are a vital part of product or service differentiation. Marketing, advertising, and public relations specialists work to decide which claims do the best job of differentiating in ways that lead, for instance, to increased sales. Soft drinks are “refreshing,” beauty products make us more “attractive,” and package delivery is “next day” and “overnight.”

Designing, producing, and getting the product or service to the customer is a marketing function. Letting the customer know about the service is an advertising or public relations function. Here publicity and promotion support advertising to get the message before the stakeholder and create awareness, recognition, and recall. Combined, these functions lead to a motivation to buy, donate, use, attend, and so on.

Beyond publicity and promotion, public relations assists the organization in communication with its myriad stakeholders, such as employees, customers, competitors, community residents, investors, legislators, regulators, and so forth. Public relations also assists organizations with their efforts to differentiate themselves on issue positions as well as to respond during a crisis.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Consumer/customer relations; Control; Corporate Social responsibility; Goodwill; Information integration theory; Openness; Public interest; Publicity; Stakes

DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS THEORY

Diffusion of innovations theory examines how new ideas, practices, or objects are adopted by individuals and organizations (or other “units of adoption”)—a field of research important to public relations practitioners advocating change.

Beginning in the 1950s, Everett M. Rogers, the leading researcher in the field, developed the most comprehensive model of how innovations are adopted. The robustness of diffusion theory is evident in how its early focus has changed from

examining the acceptance of new strains of hybrid seeds among American and developing-country farmers to Rogers’s contemporary analyses of the adoption of new communications technologies.

The major tenet of diffusion theory is that people undergo a five-step process that begins with *awareness*, followed by *interest*, *evaluation*, *trial*, and *adoption*. These steps are alternatively labeled *knowledge*, *persuasion*, *decision*, *implementation*, and *confirmation* (acceptance or rejection). The consequences of adopting a new innovation are alternatively categorized as desirable or undesirable, direct or indirect, or anticipated to unanticipated.

According to Rogers, three sets of variables influence the acceptance of innovations.

Prior conditions provide a context for the consideration of changes by adopters. Examples include previous practices, felt needs or problems, innovativeness as a characteristic of the individual or organization, and norms (expectations) of the social system in which the adoption occurs.

Characteristics of the decision-making unit relate to systemic or inherent characteristics of the adopter, suggesting that certain groups might be more open to change. Characteristics include socioeconomic factors (age, education, status, financial well-being, etc.), personality variables (curiosity, open-mindedness, etc.), and communication behaviors.

Characteristics of the innovation itself also influence acceptance. Rogers suggested that innovations are more likely to gain acceptance if they provide a relative advantage compared to the ideas they replace or to alternative solutions. Acceptance is also more likely when innovations offer compatibility with existing processes or ideas, simplicity (versus complexity), trialability (the ability to experiment on a limited and risk-free basis), and observability (being tangible and readily inspected).

Rogers posits that the adoption rate for innovations follows an S-shaped curve in which adoption begins slowly but rapidly escalates once a critical mass is achieved. Rates of adoption will then taper off after reaching a peak. The relative steepness or shape of the S-curve explains how some innovations are quickly adopted (sharp, steep rise) or

require longer times for acceptance (a wider, flatter curve).

Diffusion theory suggests that adopters can be categorized as to their rate or readiness of accepting new ideas or objects. Rogers alternatively defines and describe these groups as follows:

Innovators—adventuresome, eager to try new ideas; more cosmopolitan than their peers

Early adopters—respectable *localites* (less cosmopolitan than innovators), usually with a high degree of opinion leadership within the social system

Early majority—deliberate, interacting frequently with their peers but seldom holding leadership positions

Late majority—skeptical, often adopting an innovation because of economic uncertainty or increasing network pressure

Laggards—traditionals who are localites, including near-isolates and people whose point of reference is the past

Advocates for change, such as public relations practitioners, are designated as *change agents* in the parlance of diffusion theory. A change agent is usually a professional person who attempts to influence the adoption process in a way deemed desirable.

Early diffusion research examined the degree of homophily or similarity between the change agent and the adopter. The more these parties share common beliefs, the greater the rate of acceptance. However, most change agents are better educated and enjoy higher socioeconomic status than the people they attempt to influence. This makes these groups heterophilous. To overcome differences, change agents must find ways to establish a commonality between themselves and their target audiences. In some cases, this involves employing opinion leaders, community leaders, sales people, and local agents as third-party intermediaries.

Criticisms of diffusion theory. Although more than 4,000 published studies have been completed,

diffusion theory treats the adoption of innovations as a rational process in which people thoughtfully consider innovations. However, many low-involvement innovations don't necessarily follow the rational approach assumed in diffusion theory. Although diffusion theory provides a useful umbrella concept, the exact processes for the adoption of any particular innovation can vary, which makes generalization difficult.

Implications for public relations. Diffusion theory provides several useful ideas for practitioners as they develop strategies for public relations programs and campaigns. These include:

- The importance of stressing characteristics of innovations that increase the probability of adoption
- The importance of prior conditions and characteristics of the adopter; not all adopters are alike
- The importance of creating a critical mass of adopters, particularly by segmenting innovators and early adopters
- Recognition of public relations practitioners as change agents on behalf of their clients

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Involvement; Two-step flow theory

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DIGITAL AGE/DIGITIZATION

Digitization (sometimes seen as *digitalization*) is the process of converting information to binary form by means of using 1s and 0s. The Digital Age is the era in which the uses and effects of digitization are manifest in all levels of society.

Computers (in the general sense) predate the Digital Age. Prior to the 1950s, computers were analog, using vacuum tubes. Later, vacuum tubes were used in conjunction with diodes. Like the digital computers that came later, analog computers

used binary logic, but instead of being directly controlled by a program consisting of 1s and 0s, the state of the vacuum tube was changed by a change in voltage. The voltage change was analogous to a 1 (power on) versus a 0 (power off).

In 1956, MIT built TX0, the first general-purpose, programmable computer to use transistors. It was this transition from vacuum tubes that marked the beginning of the Digital Age. Since then, we have moved from simple transistors to integrated circuits, which have allowed us to make computers and computer systems faster, more capable, and more inexpensive.

The progress in hardware capability has allowed for equally exponential growth in software capability. Along with software becoming more powerful, feature laden, and (occasionally) easier to use, the cost has also gone down dramatically.

In 1946, computers stopped being a tool that resided exclusively in the hands of government and became commercially available. After several unsuccessful attempts, the personal computer finally took off in 1977.

It is the last 25 or so years that have come to define the Digital Age. The Digital Age has promoted a substantial transfer of power to the individual. A person with a few thousand dollars worth of equipment now can put together and present information that rivals the output of established news agencies, corporations, and governments.

Although digitization of information allows for easier information flow, it is the Digital Age that has accelerated that flow. People who embrace the Digital Age are being forced to answer a very difficult question: Are the benefits of increased information flow worth the disadvantages?

The increased information flow has allowed corporations and governments to achieve more output with fewer people. Increased information flow also has made it harder to restrict access to information. One example of an internal threat involves a large sensitive document. It would be difficult for someone to walk off with a printed copy of a 1,500-page report. However, the Digital Age has made it possible for someone to walk off with a data file copy of that same report in a memory storage unit that clips onto a key chain.

Organizations interested in maintaining an Internet presence, or who simply have decided to have their computer system hooked up to the Internet have to deal with external threats, usually in the form of hackers. If a hacker does not like a particular organization, the hacker may deface the Web site, which happened to the CIA and the White House a couple of times in the 1990s.

However, sometimes hackers engage in the total destruction of all files they can access on the Web server. Worse, they may gain access to the organization's computer system. Other hackers engage in espionage. They simply make copies of sensitive files. In the Digital Age, backup (redundant) copies of information are essential.

This still doesn't solve what is perhaps the biggest problem with the Digital Age: Is what we are seeing (and hearing) really what we are getting?

In the past, we relied on physical documentation—photographs, handwritten or typed documents, analog sound and video recordings. All of those things are, to varying degrees, difficult to fake. The Digital Age stands all of that on end. We now can make anybody look like anybody else (for example, Oliver Reed's digital replacement in the film *Gladiator*). With the right audio processing equipment, women can sound like men (e.g., performance artist Laurie Anderson). Or more subtle transformations can be made, such as "enhancing" O. J. Simpson's arrest photo on the cover of a weekly news magazine to make him look "guilty."

Public relations practitioners today have three major problems in plying their trade that are unique to the Digital Age. First, with more information and accelerated information flow, public relations practitioners have to do more to compete for the public's attention.

Second, they have to overcome an increasingly skeptical public, born in part out of a far wider range of information channels than previously thought possible.

Third, the public you are trying to engage is capable of meeting that engagement head on. They have the capability of offering a counter or alternative message to the public relations message. Sometimes it is the counter message that reaches

and holds a segment of the public's attention, not the public relations message.

—*Michael Nagy*

DIRECT MAIL

Dennis L. Wilcox reported that Benjamin Franklin used direct mail in 1744 to inform potential buyers of books he had for sale. Today, direct mail is the most prevalent form of direct marketing, but public relations practitioners use it not only to reach existing and potential customers, but also to communicate with donors, volunteers, voters, investors, and myriad other audiences. For example, public relations practitioners may want to distribute newsletters to consumers of specific products; solicit donations for civic, health, and humanitarian causes; send financial reports to potential investors; enlist support for a political issue, cause, or candidate; or distribute correspondence about a product recall.

Direct mail allows communicators to cost effectively tailor and personalize their messages directly to the audiences they choose, using the appeals deemed most appropriate for them. Databases and marketing research allow public relations practitioners to target their direct mailings with precision. Recipients may be profiled by specific demographics, psychographics, income levels, street addresses, hobbies, past purchase histories, professional associations, health problems, reading preferences, household type, voter registration, credit history, charitable contributions, pet ownership, and nearly any other documented variable or combination thereof. This specificity, computerized personalization, and the reduced costs of bulk mailings make direct mail an attractive communication tool.

Direct mail packages typically include such elements as a personalized mail envelope; a personalized letter, appeal, and call to action with various response and contact options (e.g., return mail, toll-free number, and Web site); an informational brochure, fact sheet, or pamphlet; some type of response card or form; and a postage-paid response envelope.

There are basically three types of mailing lists used by public relations practitioners: (1) those derived from in-house databases, (2) "response lists" of people who have responded to other organizations, and (3) "cold call" lists of people identified according to specific characteristics or variables. Examples of common types of marketing data collection include catalog purchases, grocery store discount cards, online inquiries, and Web searches. Companies that offer tailored mailing lists or list contact information include Standard Rate and Data Service's (SRDS) Direct Marketing List Source and Metromail, among others. List delivery options often include mailing labels, directly printed envelopes, zip disks, or CDs. Although rented lists vary in price, one might expect to pay between \$50 and \$300 for the one-time use of a 1,000-name list (Stone & Jacobs, 2001, p. 81; Wilcox, 2001, p. 401). List owners have the option of declining to sell lists to those they deem are competitors or otherwise not appropriate organizations for their customers, patrons, donors, or subscribers.

Wilcox (2001) estimated that American households receive more than 550 pieces of direct mail each year. With the October 2003 enforcement of the national marketing "do-not-call" registry, one might expect that even more direct mail will be sent to American households, creating even greater challenges for communicators trying to get audiences' attention and to avoid having their messages be seen as irrelevant junk mail. As a result, even more people might use the Direct Marketing Association's Mail Preference Service to have their names removed from national mailing lists. Such constraints make research techniques such as pretesting materials with a sample of the target audience and split message research even more critical to obtaining public relations objectives.

Other tactics used to enhance direct mail success include requesting address corrections from the United States Postal Service, so that bad or outdated addresses are returned with updated address information, when available; offering the audience options and incentives to act, when possible; getting the audience involved in the piece by asking them to do something, such as placing a stamp or sticker on an

envelope; getting the audience's attention by making the envelope appear to be handwritten; and mailing an unusually shaped package that will be enticing to the recipient. New mailing regulations allow for odd-shaped packages to be sent through the mail; however, they are more expensive to produce and send.

—Diana L. Knott

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DISCOURSE THEORY

There are numerous strands of discourse theory, each offering a competing definition and focus of study. The two principal strands comprise linguistically oriented theories and socially oriented theories. These two strands can in turn be divided between those theorists who take a critical approach and those who do not. For the field of public relations, the most promising school of discourse theory in terms of its application to the field's objects of study is to be found in the area of *critical discourse analysis* (CDA). CDA draws upon both linguistic and social theory and, as the name suggests, is critical in its perspective.

CDA is the application of critical theory to discourse and the creation of new critical theory relevant to discourse. It involves the analysis of texts in their sociocultural context. It may be distinguished from noncritical forms of discourse analysis by its inclusion of the concept of power as a central analytical lens. CDA involves a detailed examination and description of discourse, but it also moves beyond description in attempting to explain social phenomena. It is the explanatory dimension of CDA that distinguishes it from other, noncritical forms of discourse analysis. It is also this explanatory dimension that renders CDA a useful tool for both the analysis and conduct of public relations practice.

According to Norman Fairclough, there are three elements to CDA. The first element is a focus on texts.

Initially, within CDA, texts were viewed as written language, including transcripts of spoken language. However, there has been increasing emphasis within CDA upon other elements of text, such as pictures and sound. Although the primary focus remains upon language, these additional elements are now routinely included in the analysis of texts. There are numerous established methods for textual analysis, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches. There are also computer programs such as NUDIST that assist with the organization of qualitative data. These programs are particularly suited for research projects involving large texts or large numbers of texts. The selection of a method is guided by the objectives of the study. For example, Fairclough favors close textual analysis derived from linguistics, which enables a detailed deconstruction of texts.

The second element of CDA is the analysis of the discursive practices associated with the production, distribution, and interpretation of texts. These practices may be institutional, social, and personal. For example, the sending of a birthday card may be a personal interaction, but it may also be an institutional interaction between a business and its clients. The creation of the card message may involve a professional writer and a manufacturer who then distributes the card through retailers. Alternatively the card may be created by a child and personally handed to a parent. These alternative discourse practices are central to the meaning that is then derived from the card by its recipient. Discourse practices, then, actively contribute to the production of meaning.

The third element of CDA is the analysis of the sociocultural practices that provide the context for the discourse practices associated with texts. This element of CDA draws on critical social theory for its analytical frameworks. Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, and Stuart Hall are some of the major social theorists whose work underpins critical discourse theory generally and CDA in particular. From Althusser, CDA derives the view that ideas can circulate within society and ideologies can operate in ways that are relatively independent of the economic base of that society. Thus, when public relations practitioners attempt to

change the way an idea or activity is perceived, they are demonstrating an Althusserian approach to the production of ideas.

Foucault's rich body of work can be seen as part of the foundations of CDA. The view that power and knowledge are closely interrelated concepts, with each contributing to the formation of the other, is Foucauldian. The traditional axiom has been that knowledge is power. To this Foucault added that power is also knowledge and that the two concepts should be considered together. That is, what is to count as knowledge or truth in a society is to a large extent determined by those with power. In turn, that knowledge supports and enhances the powerful. Judges determine guilt or innocence on the basis of precedent established by other judges. Psychiatrists separate the sane from the insane on the basis of guidelines established by other psychiatrists. In both cases, the canon of knowledge is a source of their power, and yet they are also the sources of that canon because of their position of power. A central goal of much public relations work is to establish the legitimacy of particular institutions or actors in relation to areas of knowledge and, in the process, enhance their power.

Foucault also challenged the idea that language is simply a reflection of reality. To this descriptive function, Foucault added the prescriptive notion that the world—including the social world—is constituted within discourse. Thus in speaking about the world in different ways, we can transform the world as we know it, or we can maintain the status quo. Again, this Foucauldian view underpins any public relations practice that attempts to reframe the way in which events, activities, or objects are viewed. Thus, for example, a ban on smoking in the workplace to protect people from the effects of passive smoking may be reframed as an attack on personal freedom. In attempting to change the discourse, such campaigns aim to change the way in which people think and act.

Gramsci's primary contribution to CDA is the concept of *hegemony*. Hegemony refers to power over society exercised through the dominance of particular ideas, theories, or ideologies. When an idea is so commonly accepted in society that questioning it positions the questioner on the

fringes of society, it can be said to be hegemonic. For example, the belief in democracy could be said to be hegemonic in Western countries. Hegemonic ideas are those that are simply taken for granted and thus provide solid starting points for any new position that is seeking legitimacy. They are supported by the dominant institutions within a society, which means that to challenge hegemonic ideas is to challenge the interests of dominant institutions and potentially the entire social, political, and economic structure of a nation.

Stuart Hall, the leading theorist of the cultural studies school of thought, is in some ways similar to Foucault in terms of the significance and breadth of contributions that he has made to CDA and to social theory generally. Hall's 1988 work on effecting change within dominant discourses is, perhaps, the most important both for CDA and for public relations. Central to Hall's analysis of the shift in the United Kingdom from the Keynesian economic paradigm to Thatcherism was the concept of *articulation*. This concept refers to the way in which words may become linked to certain meanings and then shifted and attached to other meanings. Hall explored the limits of such articulations and concluded that though some elements of language are relatively free floating, others are held in place by social, economic, or political forces. An understanding of the concept of articulation is essential for any sophisticated practice of public relations.

CDA was introduced to the field of public relations scholarship in 1996 by an article in *Public Relations Review*. This article positioned public relations practitioners as active participants in discursive struggles over socio-cultural change. It demonstrated the application of many of the key concepts of CDA, which have been discussed above, in the day-to-day practice of public relations. Public relations practitioners were shown to be actively engaged in changing society through their work in transforming discourse. Since 1996, CDA has emerged as a new paradigm for the conduct of public relations research. CDA can be used to critique public relations practice, and it is particularly useful in teasing out power relationships when multiple stakeholders are involved. CDA also provides a significant toolbox for the research,

design, and implementation of public relations campaigns.

—*Shirley Leitch and Judy Motion*

See also Critical theory; Rhetorical theory

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DISCUSSION BOARD

Discussion boards are locations on the Internet where users can post and read messages. Discussion boards are known by many names, including *discussion group*, *discussion forum*, *message board*, and *online forum*. Discussion boards are most often used to share and discuss information and opinions about specific topics or interests. There are literally thousands of discussion boards available on the Internet, and topics range from Arabic religion to Zimbabwe.

The software Web sites use for discussion boards defines the parameters for the activities online users can engage in. For example, some discussion boards require users to register before posting or reading a message. Other discussion boards allow users to rate and evaluate other users' messages. In addition, some Web sites allow users to upload audio and video files to the discussion board. Discussion boards usually include

guidelines or rules for their members. Failure to comply with those rules usually results in a member being barred from posting future messages. In addition to these rules, online users are expected to engage in *netiquette*—online etiquette. Discussion boards differ from chat rooms in that chat rooms offer real-time, ephemeral, text-based communication. With discussion boards, users can read and often search for messages that have previously been posted. Most discussions boards are kept on a single server maintained by the creator of the discussion board. The location of the discussion board distinguishes it from newsgroups, which are also forums that facilitate discussions about topics and areas of interests. However, newsgroups' messages are not maintained on a single server. Instead, the messages are replicated to hundreds of servers around the world.

Discussion boards have become an integral form of communication on the Internet. Online newspapers such as *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Wall Street Journal* include discussion boards on their Web sites, as do other news organizations such as CNN, MSNBC, and Salon.com. In addition to the media, discussion boards are widely used by organizations, corporations, and communities to facilitate communication.

For communication practitioners, keeping up with information and opinions posted on discussion boards has become quite a challenge. Services such as PR Newswire's eWatch and CyberAlert monitor discussion boards that are relevant to a communication practitioner's organization. Discussion boards sponsored by disgruntled employees, advocacy and special interest groups, and online news services that can affect communication practitioners' organizations are often monitored. Further, communication practitioners and monitoring services frequently read messages posted in investor relations message boards because information and opinions posted in these communication forums can threaten a public company's share price.

Corporate "cyber-smearing" occurs when users post on the Internet false or disparaging untrue comments about a company, its management, or its stock that is intended to affect a company's market

value. Communication practitioners need to consider whether to respond to rumors and misinformation, and whether they should seek legal action against users who anonymously post false or confidential information that can harm their organization. In addition to cyber-smearing, communication practitioners monitor discussion boards for copyright and trademark infringement as well as defamatory comments about their organization.

—Cassandra Imfeld

See also Communication management; Issues management; Environmental scanning

DONOR/CONTRIBUTOR RELATIONS

See Philanthropy

DOUBLESPEAK

Doublespeak is language that is strategically chosen to distort or obscure reality. It is often associated with misleading advertising claims, unethical politicians, and public relations “spin doctors,” who use language to frame a subject in the most positive light. When doublespeak is exposed, it may generate public distrust and be counterproductive to long-term public relations goals.

William Lutz (1989) identifies four types of doublespeak: euphemisms, jargon, “bureaucratese,” and inflated language. Euphemism is language that sugarcoats negative or unpleasant realities. For example, people have their pets “put to sleep,” an overweight boy is “husky” rather than fat, and a down payment is “an initial investment.” Jargon is specialized language that may be unique to a particular industry, occupation, or social group. It may be used to intentionally obscure meaning for those who are outside the group. For example, the term *collateral damage* has been used to describe the deaths of innocent civilians in wartime. Lutz wrote that sewage sludge may be labeled “regulated

organic nutrients” (1997, n.p.). Bureaucratese is characterized by the combination of jargon with lengthy, wandering sentences that attempt to conceal the truth or confuse the listener. This type of doublespeak may be used by officials who wish to appear to be answering a question or addressing an issue, but who are in fact revealing nothing. Inflated language is intended to make the ordinary seem extraordinary. A common tactic is renaming. Store clerks may become “sales associates,” beauty parlors “day spas,” and college home economics programs “family and consumer science” majors. Sometimes doublespeak is introduced so successfully that the terms become accepted as the appropriate, standard terms to use.

Doublespeak is often associated with *newspeak*, as coined by George Orwell in his 1949 novel, *1984*, in which a fictional government attempts to control public thought through the manipulation of language. However, Orwell did not use the term *doublespeak*. The term entered the popular vocabulary in the United States in the early 1970s as anti-war sentiment spurred challenges to government characterizations of the Vietnam War. In 1972, the National Council of Teachers of English created a Committee on Public Doublespeak to expose the misuse of language by government, military, and corporate officials. The committee began publishing a newsletter in 1974 that eventually became the *Quarterly Review of Doublespeak*. Although the newsletter ceased publication after more than 20 years, the committee continues to present an annual Doublespeak Award for “language that is grossly deceptive, evasive, euphemistic, confusing or self-contradictory and which has pernicious social or political consequences” (National Council of Teachers of English, 2003). Recent awards have gone to the tobacco industry (2000), the Department of Defense (2001), and a state school system that removed references to Judaism from a literary work about Jewish life in Europe (2002).

Scholars of doublespeak agree that the growth of mass media, advertising, and public relations have contributed to the ubiquitous presence of doublespeak. In particular, demands from news media for spokesperson accessibility and quick public

comment may lead pressured officials to resort to doublespeak.

Although most scholars denounce the use of doublespeak, it has been noted that intentional ambiguity may be helpful to organizations confronted by multiple challenges in turbulent environments. “Strategic ambiguity” (1984), according to Eric Eisenberg, strikes a balance among being understood, not offending others, and maintaining one’s self-image. He contends that by employing vague, ambiguous, equivocal communication, organizations may avoid creating factions and smooth the path for organizational change. Whether the strategy is ethical, Eisenberg notes, depends on the goals of the communicator.

—Katherine N. Kinnick

See also Puffery; Spin

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DRAMATISM AND DRAMATISM THEORY

Conventional rhetorical theory tends to focus attention on how discourse influences the way people think. Formulated by Kenneth Burke, dramatism adds depth to rhetorical theory. It provides insights into how language and its connections to thought can be studied as modes of action rather than ways of conveying information. Thus, Burke devoted his massive study of language and society to the analysis of symbolic action, based on his proposition

that “language is primarily a species of action, or expression of attitudes, rather than an instrument of definition” (1968, p. 447).

In his early years in the 1920s and 1930s as a literary critic, Burke began to create his theory of dramatism to assist his ability to perform insightful literary criticism. Burke began his career as a literary critic but soon expanded that interest to analyze and critique all discourse, especially that which leads to cooperation and competition in society. This evolution saw his influence grow beyond literary criticism to social criticism. He influenced the thinking of scholars in literature, rhetorical theory, sociology, history, communication, and political science, for instance. His theory of dramatism allowed him to offer some of the richest existing critiques of how the free market system can work to the advantage of some while disadvantaging others.

In this context, Burke revealed how the term *progress* can be the guiding light for a society. Any act can be done in the name of progress. Such commitment, he reasoned, was often at the heart of the conflict between business leaders and other groups, such as laborers and environmental activists. One group’s progress might justify sacrifice on the part of another group.

This innovative contribution to literary criticism and social commentary began with a deep curiosity into the workings of the poet’s, dramatist’s, or novelist’s mind. Burke was looking for a critical apparatus that would allow him to disclose the reason or motive behind the creation of any work of literature. He believed that it was necessary to unlock the bond between the writer and the reader, a special relationship in better literature. In better literature, readers and authors participate—act—together in the experience of literature. A work of literature does not report the feelings—hope, for instance—of the author. Rather, it evokes those feelings in the reader.

He noted early in his inquiry that a poem or other literary device is not a mere report. That is, the poet who feels joy at seeing nature—a tree, for instance—writes a poem not to report or convey knowledge about that tree, but to evoke a similar experience at enjoying the symbolic tree characterized in

the poem. This line of thought led Burke to discount the element of communication by conveying knowledge—*epistemology*—as being less important than the creation of action—*ontology*. He argued that the reader does not interpret and respond to the poem as a report but as a symbolic experience—an act. The author, by this reasoning, wants the reader to participate in the experience rather than to receive a report of the experience.

By this logic, Burke argued that Hamlet's plight appealed, not because he reported his circumstances and feelings, but because Shakespeare was capable of having the audience share in the symbolic action of feeling betrayal and revenge. Attitude is the objective of literature, not knowledge gained by report.

Central to his theory of dramatism was the distinction between motion and action. A truck rolling down a hill is in motion. If a bystander decides to jump into the truck and bring it to a stop, that is action. Action is differentiated from motion by the intervention of moral choice and attitude. Motion occurs without morality. Action is the essence of morality. For this reason, Burke believed he could shed light on the moral choices being made and advocated by the voices of society.

Because of his societal interests, Burke was able to reason that property is not a thing but an action. This conclusion is substantially relevant for the application of dramatism to public relations practice and ethical inquiry. In a capitalistic society such as the United States, much of the discourse of public relations is devoted to the promotion and defense of property. Promotion and publicity dramatize the joys of ownership and participation. It is not merely knowing that a new car line is now on the market; the sponsor of such discourse is not conveying information but inviting customers to participate in—enact—the joys of property ownership. Buying is action.

Activists are likely to elevate the concept of ownership beyond the limits of property to the privileges and responsibilities of society. Thus, if a business owns property, such as a coal mine, it can do what it wants with that property, including strip mining, according to one terminology. By the

activists' interpretation of property, however, the mine is part of the total property of the nation, collectively owned. Thus, the business must act according to larger rather than smaller interests on matters of property ownership.

One of the key elements of dramatism is its awareness that words are propositional. The word *teacher* reports something about a person in that profession. More important, however, it is a command for specific action. People who share the symbolic substance *teacher* are expected to respond through action—to teach. Thus, fathers are supposed to father and mothers to mother. Preachers preach. Firefighters fight fires. Legislators legislate. Regulators regulate. Investors invest. Critics critique. Activists become active. In each case, the action implied or mandated in the role-based label goes beyond the informative report to a spirited motivation to action—to participate in the action or symbolic action.

Sigmund Freud gave Burke insights into the associational nature of words and the motives that came from those words. On social issues, Burke was prone to consider the guidance of Karl Marx, who suggested ways to disclose the hidden traps of action embedded in words. Some of the most interesting sets of terms, Burke mused, were those associated with work and workers in the 1920s and 1930s. The symbolic action of labor and management, thus having implications for employee communication, can work out so that management is boss, giving direction and determining the limits of reward and the requirements of each job. Burke opposed asymmetrical relationships of this kind. Labor should participate in the definition, and therefore, the enactment of work and reward.

Burke reasoned that motives are shorthand terms for situation. The reasoning behind this conclusion is based on Burke's experience with a photography exhibit at an art show. He was fascinated by how a photographer could take different pictures of the same subject. By using differently colored lenses, the same subject could look unique in each photograph. From this experience, Burke reasoned that people see reality through terministic screens. In other words, as each different colored lens gives a

unique view of reality, so does any terminology. Each terminology is a way of seeing uniquely and a way of acting uniquely. Terms, thus, prescribe actions. Words are not only natural, but they also add dimensions to nature. They characterize, define, and introduce attitudes into nature. Words mediate between nature and persons' minds.

As public relations practitioners, along with others, communicate about some product, service, or issue, they use words that invite the target of those messages to participate—act—in accord with the screen offered by the terminology. This kind of reasoning suggests why there is a clash between activists and corporate spokespersons. Activists call for the enactment of “environmental responsibility.” That action word challenges citizens to achieve some preferred state by acting responsibly toward the environment. Activists call for higher environmental standards by dramatizing the dire consequences of failing to do so. Companies respond with their facts and images of progress.

By this logic, Burke came to define dramatism for the *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* as “a method of analysis and corresponding critique of terminology as designed to show that the most direct route to the study of human relations and human motives is via a methodical inquiry into the cycles or clusters of terms and their functions” (1968, p. 445). He reasoned that terms become meaningful and motivational as clusters. Each cluster focuses attention on a primary term that is modified by secondary terms. In a piece of discourse, a central term might be modified by defining terms as it is developed by an artist or some other advocate.

In the realm of public relations, the central term might be *purchase*. One rationale for public relations is to increase revenue through increased sales. *Purchase* is a motive. What is to be purchased? That is the product or service promoted. Ads offer excellent examples of such symbolic action. They show “satisfied customers” using the product. Soaps and creams moisturize keeping skin healthy and young looking. The symbolic action here is the product as a fountain of youth. The car roaring across the countryside is freedom, power, and status. To buy is to participate—enact—those terms as terministic

screens. Participation joins the interests of the consumer with the seller.

As Burke argued, dramatism deals with relationships. Is the relationship of buyer and seller, in these cases, one of mutual benefit? Is the terministic screen imbalanced in its implications for the participants? Does one party benefit disproportionately? Will it lead to cooperation or to competition, which can even foster buying from the competitor or seeking the services of a litigator? Each choice is an enactment of various conflicting or competing terminologies.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Internal communication; Persuasion theory; Rhetorical theory

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DROBIS, DAVID

David R. Drobis, senior partner of New York–based Ketchum, one of the largest public relations firms in the world, epitomizes the American ideal of “working your way to the top.” Drobis joined Ketchum as an account executive in the firm’s Pittsburgh office in 1969; 23 years later he was named CEO of the firm, and he retired as chairman in 2004. Drobis also is a role model for the concept of “investing in your profession.” Through leadership and service, he helped public relations mature into a stronger and more respected field.

Drobis was born May 1, 1941, in Baltimore, Maryland. He graduated from Western Maryland College in 1963 with a bachelor’s degree in

psychology. He went on to study journalism and public relations at American University in Washington, DC, where he earned a master's degree in 1965. Later in his career, Drobis enhanced his business skills by taking courses at Harvard University Business School and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

During the four years immediately following graduate school, Drobis worked as a publications editor in the Alumni Relations Office at American University and as a press officer in the Press Information Office of Montgomery County, Maryland. Unlike most of his contemporaries in public relations, he never worked as a journalist, which may account for his longtime emphasis on managerial rather than technical skills. His decision to join Ketchum in 1969 started him on an ascending career path that he followed for the next 35 years. He helped Ketchum grow from a small, specialized firm into a top-10 global agency. Under his leadership, Ketchum expanded from North America into Asia, Europe, and Latin America and into such vertical industry categories as brand marketing, food and nutrition, health care, and technology.

Drobis's firm, Ketchum, was founded in 1923, in Pittsburgh, by two brothers who had recently graduated from the University of Pittsburgh: Carlton and George Ketchum (Cutlip, 1965/1990). Interestingly, the Ketchum brothers' firm first dealt with both public relations and fundraising, but fundraising proved to be much more lucrative than public relations and became the dominant business of the firm. Eventually, two Ketchum firms evolved, one specializing in fundraising (still headquartered in Pittsburgh but owned by a Texas firm) and one specializing in public relations—the New York firm formerly led by Drobis.

In 1996, Ketchum was acquired by the Omnicom Group, Inc., the third largest marketing communications holding company in the world. During the 1990s, Ketchum established operations in Munich, Milan, Paris, London, and Madrid. In 1997, it established its first base in Latin America, with partnerships in Brazil, Argentina, and Chile. The firm has more than 1,300 employees. Some of its current high-profile clients are FedEx, DuPont, Cingular Wireless, Estee Lauder, Wendy's, and Hanes.

Indicative of the firm's success, Ketchum won *PRWeek's* PR Agency of the Year award in 1990, 1995, 1998, and 2002. Also in 2002, *The Holmes Report* named Ketchum the number 3 large public relations agency to work for and the number 1 agency that public relations practitioners would choose to work for if they left their current firm. Under Drobis's leadership, Ketchum earned more Silver Anvils from the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) than any other agency.

The challenges Ketchum now faces, according to Drobis, are to keep up with costly technology, hire the best people in public relations, and strengthen the business in new overseas markets, such as Latin America and Asia. He believes that his success heading Ketchum is inseparable from the people he worked for and with. Being surrounded by successful people, he said, leads to one's own success. Regarding personal traits, Drobis believes his tenacity, perseverance, stamina, and concentration on what can be achieved have helped him overcome challenges.

In addition to his accomplishments at Ketchum, Drobis has been a high-profile leader in the public relations profession. In 1999, *PRWeek* named him one of the top-10 most influential people in public relations of the 20th century. In 2001, Drobis was awarded the National Public Relations Achievement Award by Ball State University.

Drobis currently is president of the International Communications Consultancy Organisation (ICCO), the international trade association for public relations firms. He is founding chairman and a member of the board of the Council of Public Relations Firms. He was the 2003 president of the Arthur W. Page Society. He is an accredited member of PRSA, an elected member of the PRSA College of Fellows, a past board member of the PRSA Counselors Academy, a member of the PRSA International Section, and past president of the New York Chapter of PRSA. Drobis also is a member of the International Public Relations Association and serves on the board of directors of the Center for Communication, an organization dedicated to communications education.

Drobis has authored many papers and articles on topics ranging from client–agency partnerships to corporate social responsibility. He also has lectured at

numerous universities and given dozens of speeches from Tokyo to Beijing, Paris to Frankfurt, Bratislava to San Francisco, and Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to Muncie, Indiana. His speeches usually focus on such topics as corporate reputation, measuring public relations effectiveness, technology, and globalization.

Globalization is a topic of particular passion for Drobis, who asserts that public relations people who helped create the profession, particularly those in the United States, need to nurture the public relations field as it develops in Asia, Latin America, India, and Africa. It is their responsibility to help practitioners in such new markets to professionalize their practice of public relations.

Drobis also is a leading commentator on public relations' continuing evolution. As he pointed out, public relations initially was only publicity and media focused. Instead of being involved in the decision-making process, public relations people often were told by management what to do. Today, public relations is growing and becoming more valuable. It has become a management function with influence over organizations' policy making. Public relations people now are better paid, more experienced, and have much greater opportunities. They also have more critical responsibilities.

According to Drobis, public relations practitioners need to serve as a barometer, providing good information and knowledge and measuring awareness and attitude changes afterward. They need to provide communication solutions—not just good publicity, which usually is only one element in a public relations program. Finally, in today's era of accountability and transparency, the objective of public relations must be trust building.

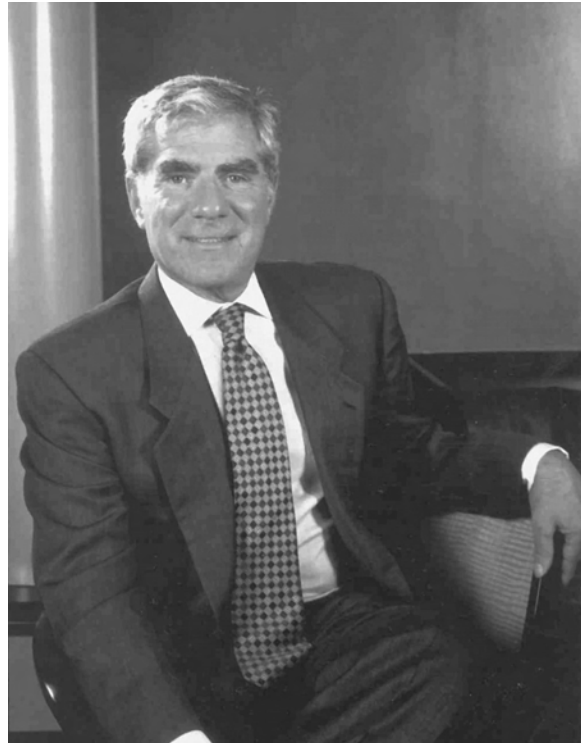
—*Kathleen S. Kelly and Yan Feng*

See also Page, Arthur W.; Public relations agency; Public Relations Society of America

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David Drobis

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DRUCKENMILLER, ROBERT T.

Robert T. Druckenmiller, chairman of New York City-based Porter Novelli International, thought he would end up in the world of big business; instead, he migrated into the realm of public relations and rose to the top of the field.

Druckenmiller was born March 15, 1942, in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics degree from Colgate University in 1964, and he graduated from the Wharton School of Commerce and Business at the University of Pennsylvania with an MBA in marketing in 1966.

Druckenmiller's first job was with the advertising firm J. Walter Thompson. His first six months

on the job, he worked out of the firm's Los Angeles office while finishing active duty with the Army Reserve. There, he reported to Bob Haldeman, who would later become President Richard Nixon's chief of staff. Afterward, Druckenmiller returned to the New York office. During his nearly five years at J. Walter Thompson, Druckenmiller handled advertising accounts for several national companies, including Scott Paper, 7Up, and Lever Brothers. He also met Bill Novelli, with whom he would later found Porter Novelli.

Druckenmiller followed Novelli to the Peace Corps, where he served as advertising director. He also worked closely there with Jack Porter, director of public affairs and another future Porter Novelli founder. Together, the three men applied commercial advertising principles to reverse a decline in Peace Corps volunteer commitments and, in turn, stumbled on the formula that would make them successful in their own firm. "It was good to fight for a cause, beyond increasing market share," Druckenmiller said of the experience (personal communication, October 7, 2002).

Druckenmiller, along with Porter, Novelli, and Mike Carberry, founded Porter Novelli in 1972 (while working their respective jobs at Henry J. Kaufman, then the largest advertising agency in Washington, DC) on the principle that one can "do well by doing good." Their idea was to take traditional marketing techniques and apply them to national social issues. They did this by creating integrated communications programs, combining concepts from the public relations and advertising worlds.

One of the first issues they tackled was the campaign to increase Americans' awareness of their blood pressure readings. Working with the National Heart, Lung & Blood Institute, Porter Novelli's integrated program for health education would be duplicated in efforts to raise awareness on cholesterol levels, smoking cessation, and various other health issues.

What made Porter Novelli stand out was the ability of its founders to monitor, research, and fine-tune their techniques to those most appropriate for their nonprofit clients. This led to the firm's becoming the foremost practitioner and pioneer of *social marketing*, which Druckenmiller defines as the

"application of commercial marketing techniques to social issues" (personal communication, October 7, 2002). After a year of working double lives, the four founders made the decision to go full-time with Porter Novelli and officially incorporated in 1973.

In 1981, the firm was acquired by Needham Harper Steers, an advertising agency from Chicago, which allowed Porter Novelli to expand domestically and operate offices in New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Porter Novelli was now Needham Porter Novelli, and the firm often provided public relations services complimentary for clients. In 1988, Needham merged with Omnicom, and this allowed Porter Novelli to expand internationally, as it was the only public relations firm in the Omnicom group at that time.

Druckenmiller was appointed president and CEO in 1992, and he was at the helm when the firm broke away and established an independent international brand as Porter Novelli International in 1996, merging with fellow Omnicom firm Countrywide Communications Group in the United Kingdom. The firm became one tightly knit brand, instead of one group under a federation of brands. The acquisition of Copithorne & Bellows Public Relations in 1999 gave the firm a leading edge in technology, and additional acquisitions have led to increased power in other specialty areas.

In 2002, Druckenmiller, the only original founder still involved with the firm, was appointed chairman of Porter Novelli International. Under his leadership, the firm has grown to more than \$200 million in revenue and ranks among the top-10 public relations agencies worldwide. Porter Novelli International has a presence in 56 countries, employs over 1,500 people, and has board members across the globe.

The firm handles accounts for such giants as Gillette and the American Cancer Society. Porter Novelli also maintains clients in the food, pharmaceutical, health care, and technology industries. Druckenmiller attributes the progress his firm has made to the quality of work that has been done previously and its ability to recruit and retain top-notch talent to carry out this work.

The firm's success, according to Druckenmiller, comes from applying a marketing-based approach

to public relations, which provides a broad strategic network upon which to work. Druckenmiller disparages the many practitioners who are media focused, which he says reduces public relations to a tactical level. His way of practice provides more options at a managerial level for changing attitudes and behaviors, defining objectives more clearly, and measuring results more effectively.

Such an approach was used in the "Truth" campaign, which encouraged teenagers not to smoke. Through work with research groups in Florida, his firm found that teens would respond if they felt outraged and manipulated by tobacco companies; therefore, Porter and Novelli created the campaign as a brand to counter the tobacco brands.

Although Druckenmiller's focus has been on social or nonprofit groups, his firm still handles for-profit clients that target consumer publics. His approach to working with these companies on problems and opportunities is the same as with social organizations: Work backward and determine who you are trying to reach and what outcome is desired, and then segment these groups, tailoring approaches to reach each segment.

An area that Druckenmiller has taken great interest in recently is the concept of corporate social responsibility. In fact, he would like to see more public relations firms and practitioners practice the concept of giving back in the workplace, much like the legal profession encourages pro bono work.

"Today, employees are more likely to expect their companies to demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility," said Druckenmiller in a presentation given to the American Marketing Association in March 2002. "Also, customers and the general public are more likely to support companies they respect and trust, especially when there are few discernible differences between good products and services. A company's commitment to a substantive program of corporate social responsibility is one way for a company to distinguish itself."

He recently added, "Public relations professionals and firms are in the best position to help companies manage their corporate brand, having managed relations with all of a company's key stakeholders and other key influentials" (personal communication, October 7, 2002).

Druckenmiller said that companies must manage not only the brand of their products or services, but also the brand of the company behind them. Unfortunately, many companies wait until they are in crisis management mode to do this.

At Porter Novelli International, Druckenmiller practices what he preaches through a program called "Kids Think Link," which helps children (especially disadvantaged ones) to learn and understand the Internet. Additionally, each regional office determines a cause for which the company matches donations at 50 cents on the dollar, and the firm also performs pro bono public relations work for various organizations. Druckenmiller said he'd like to be thought of as "introducing the quality of compassion and consideration into the workplace" (personal communication, October 7, 2002).

—Kathleen S. Kelly and Lisa C. Burns

See also Advertising; Client; Client/agency relationships; Corporate social responsibility; Integrated marketing communication; Public health campaign

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DUDLEY, PENDLETON

Pendleton Dudley started what Scott Cutlip enumerated as the fifth public relations agency launched in New York City in the early 20th century. Dudley's

career was encouraged by Ivy Ledbetter Lee, who recognized the virtue in having several public relations agencies competing for business in New York City. Having many firms gave credibility to each one. It was a profession that called on many to set their sights on using professional skills to advance clients' interests in an ethical and responsible manner. Lee also recognized Dudley's skills as a journalist and public relations practitioner.

Born on September 8, 1876, Dudley, like others of his time, responded to the joint need for mass media outlets to fill their time or space as well as the complementary desire by and need for clients to reach mass audiences. He was fascinated by the potential impact of magazines to reach audiences with news, opinion, and publicity. Long after, in 1952, he recalled the luring power that an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* had had on his young mind in Missouri. He yearned to travel to New York City to learn how to write such articles. The name of the article was "Working One's Way Through College."

Like John W. Hill and Earl Newsom, Dudley was born and raised in the Midwest (in Missouri), where he became interested in the news business and was lured to New York by the excitement, education, and prosperity the city offered. Dudley became acquainted with Lee, who inspired him with an ability to gather and present the news. Like Lee, Dudley was attracted to businessmen who did things in a big way. Industrial news had an electrifying effect on Dudley, who realized that successful competition required sound communication skills to reach targeted audiences. Publicity was a calling that drew the attention of Dudley, as it did others who forged the profession by forming successful agencies in New York City in the early 20th century.

As he began his career, he made the transition from working for publications such as the *Wall Street Journal* to serving clients. Much to his professional and ethical surprise, he learned that clients had no qualms about his remaining on the payroll of the *Journal* while being paid by clients to use his column space to promote their interests.

The agency he created in 1909, Pendleton Dudley and Associates, matured into the venerable Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy, which expired when it

was purchased by Ogilvy & Mather in 1983. At the time of its sale, the agency was owned by two of the pioneering women in public relations, Jean Way Schoonover and Barbara Hunter. As was typical of such successful agencies, this one had a long and distinguished list of industrial clients, trade associations, charities, and labor unions. AT&T was an early and continuing client. Dudley also influenced the development of the American Meat Packers Association of Chicago and the Corn Industries Research Foundation. He lent space and writing talent to two of his clients, DeWitt and Lila Wallace, who launched the *Reader's Digest* from Dudley's pony barn.

As well as establishing a successful practice, he recognized the need for a profession to have a successful organization to support its activities. He was a founder and president of the National Association of Public Relations Counsels. He was the first president of the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education of the Public Relations Association of America. He often lectured on public relations practices and their role in the success of organizations. He contributed articles on this topic in various professional publications.

He was one of many who had learned to distinguish public relations from propaganda, a point he made in an article for the *Public Relations Journal* in 1952, when he referred to it as "the biased self-pleadings of those having axes to grind" (p. 8). Out of the need to communicate, which Dudley did not believe the tycoons of the early 20th century understood very well, emerged the profession of public relations. In the same 1952 article, Dudley claimed "the giants of business and finance were inept at meeting newspapermen and apathetic to the potential importance of the news" (p. 9). The men who were starting the publicity agencies, such as George F. Parker and Ivy Lee, worked to remedy this problem. Part of the deficiency was also corrected by newspaper reporters who had no qualms in taking pay from tycoons as well as publishers of the newspapers in whose columns they used to pass along favorable financial and business information. This clear conflict of interest posed an ethical challenge that bothered Dudley immensely because he had experienced

this ethical misjudgment firsthand. People whom Dudley thought had crafted the profession were well on their way long before the popularizing of propaganda techniques by a subsequent generation of practitioners. He credited solid journalist instincts for news and the writing ability to present information objectively and with interest as the forerunner of the profession, not the clever ability to propagandize.

From these reflections on the birth and growth of the profession, Dudley saw it as growing to fill a void in society: “As society becomes more and more complex and the potential causes of misunderstanding and human disagreement multiply, the need to create an environment for mass learning has become more acute and infinitely larger” (1955, p. 25). Society is a mix of many voices, from many disciplines and ideologies. Thus, Dudley reasoned, “among these the public relations practitioner does occupy a unique position through which he can make a unique contribution. He can serve as interpreter for the interpreters, or as liaison between the communicators, or as expediter of information from source to outlet” (1955, pp. 25–26). To this end, practitioners constantly create new strategies, tools, and functions by which to serve clients and the parts of society that approve or disapprove of what clients seek to accomplish.

What will keep the profession healthy? Dudley answered, “The public relations man (and woman) must improve the quality of his product, broaden his view, temper his judgment, and enrich his knowledge” (1955, p. 112). One of the major mechanisms by which that can be accomplished, he knew, was an ever-stronger and more vibrant sense of professionalism fostered by associations such as the Public Relations Society of America. In his words, it is “a custodian of our standards of practice” (1955, p. 112).

In a 1967 memoir of Dudley’s contributions, Milton Fairman referred to him as the dean of public relations, whose demise had ended 57 years of practice. In addition to extensive daily reading of the news, Dudley consumed scholarly information on semantics and psychoanalysis to sharpen his insights into human cognition and the nature of effective expression. He firmly believed this knowledge and skill, coupled with ethical practice, would



Pendleton Dudley

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drive a profession, and he put this belief into place by his support of public relations research and professional development.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Hill, John Wiley; Hunter, Barbara W.; Lee, Ivy; Mutually beneficial relationships; Newsom, Earl; Parker, George; Propaganda; Public Relations Society of America; Publicity; Schoonover, Jean

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EDGAR ONLINE

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regarding company performance and future plans. Current reports (8-K) partially fulfill material disclosure requirements; they usually include press releases of updated information regarding changes of management, mergers, or acquisitions.

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—*Emilee V. Fontenot*

EDITING

The verb *edit* is defined in the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* as follows: “**1a.** To prepare (written material) for publication or presentation, as by correcting, revising, or adapting. . . . **c.** To modify or adapt so as to make suitable or acceptable. **2.** To supervise the publication of (a magazine, for example)” (Dictionary.com, 2003, n.p.).

The word *editor* first came into use around 1712, and the French word *editer* was established in 1784. By 1793, the word *edit* was connected with the publishing process (Dictionary.com, 2003, n.p.).

Today’s public relations professionals use editing in many kinds of publications, including newspapers, newsletters, annual reports, brochures, and news releases.

In his article, “Protect Your R.E.P.! Revise, Edit and Proofread,” Philip Vassallo stated that many factors are involved in the writing process, among them editing. Editing corrects for good sentence structure, proper word and grammar usage, and correct spelling of words and people’s names. One way to check written documents is by reading them aloud several times for errors.

The revising process is an important part of the editing process. No document is ever final. One must revise several times to improve one’s work and make it less confusing and reader-friendly. This

process is sometimes time consuming, but it has great payoffs.

Stylebooks such as the *The Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law* and *The Elements of Style* are helpful resources for editing. Both books deal with proper writing style and word usage. The importance of editing, revising and rewriting are all explained in the stylebooks. They help guide writers in the right direction by showing them a simple, comprehensive way to produce their work. With careful editing, not only is writing easy to read, but it is more widely understood.

Public relations professionals know the importance of editing. Pieces such as annual reports, brochures, and proposals all require thorough editing before the final document is printed and read by the public.

Whether the writing job is big or small, editing is necessary. Although it often requires effort and time, it is a major part of the writing and publication process. No writer can assume that his or her work is accurate and error-free on the first draft. One should always carefully read one’s work and correct errors. Using multiple editors is also a good tactic.

—*Brenda J. Wrigley*

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EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

Editor is a very broad title for people who work for organizations such as book publishers, newspapers, and magazines. Editors are usually distinguished by the particular function they oversee. Some examples of editorial titles are *executive editor*; *managing editor*; *copyeditor*; *page editor*; *section editor*; *headline writer*; and *photo chief*. Generally

editors set the editorial policy for their publication. They are responsible for determining issues such as the design, content, focus, and audience of the publication. Editors also make day-to-day decisions on what's important to readers, on content, and on ethics. They may ask questions of reporters and authors to strengthen their piece and check facts for accuracy. In addition, editors may rewrite parts of a piece or change the order of presentation to make it more readable and appealing. Some editors are involved in managerial decisions; for example, they may hire and fire personnel, and they may give input and sometimes final say on editorial budgets, including salaries, travel budgets, other expenses, and equipment budgets.

A *publisher* is typically the chief officer of a newspaper, magazine, or publication. His or her role is often determined by the nature of the publication. Publishers are the on-site authority for the organization; for example, they may set the editorial policy of the publication, including the political stance it favors. In newspapers, publishers typically reserve their editorial input for the opinion or editorial page, where writers tackle social and political issues affecting their communities. Often publishers oversee the fiscal health of the publication, thus serving the interests of a higher authority such as a newspaper chain, communications conglomerate, publishing company, or stockholders. Because these higher authorities want a return on their investment, the publisher must determine the best ways to produce a profit margin, to minimize or at least carefully control operating expenses, and to maximize market share and general revenue through such avenues as paid circulation, advertisements, commercial printing, and Internet subsidiaries. In general, publishers delegate editorial, advertising, and production oversight to subordinate editors and managers in each respective department, maintaining overall control by monitoring market share, profit margins, revenues, operating expenses, and other factors. Publishers can also be ombudsmen and address public concerns; the "public" may include readers who question the content or display of a story, photograph, or headline; readers who want to praise the newspaper or magazine for its work; and readers who complain about everything

from missed home deliveries to the opinions expressed by columnists. Often publishers become members of civic organizations, and become involved in charities and sponsor local events. They often deem it essential to be visible in the communities they serve because of the widespread belief that the publication is a community business and therefore benefits from a healthy community.

—*Brigitta Brunner*

EDITORIAL

An editorial is an article in a newspaper or magazine that presents the view of the editor or a guest columnist on a particular topic. The purpose of an editorial is to interpret, to advocate, or to entertain. Sometimes editorials are intended to persuade, and sometimes they are written to provide background on an issue so that readers may draw their own informed conclusion.

Editorializing is expressing an opinion. This is appropriate in editorials but not in news articles, in news releases, or in any unattributed statement. The news convention of objectivity requires that news articles and news releases limit their statements to reports, or statements that are verifiable. For example, the statement "More than 50 people attended the library open house" is verifiable. In contrast, the statement "A lot of people attended the open house" is a judgment and an example of editorializing. An opinion does not belong in a news article or news release (written by a journalist or public relations practitioner, respectively) unless it is attributed to a source. (For example: "'A lot of people attended the open house,' said Ann Lee, director of the library.")

Editorials appear on the editorial page in newspapers, along with columns and letters to the editor, to distinguish them from news articles, which are intended to provide objective reports. They are useful in stimulating readers to think and to reach conclusions. They also provide a personality to the newspaper, magazine, or organizational publication. In editorials, readers may find more than just the facts. John M. McClelland, editor of the *Longview (Washington) News* and past national president of Sigma Delta Chi (predecessor to the Society of

Professional Journalists), has said, “To have a personality a paper must have strong convictions and opinions. And it must support those opinions and convictions consistently” (Waldrop, 1955, p. 14).

Editorializing in a news release can be the kiss of death to good media relations. When busy editors receive news releases that include editorializing, they may discard them immediately and then in the future discard releases from the same organization even before opening them. When public relations practitioners write news releases, they should carefully avoid editorializing, or including unattributed opinions, to protect good relations and maintain credibility with news media editors.

When practitioners write columns and guest pieces submitted for a publication’s editorial page, editorializing is fine. Editorializing has its place, but it is not in the news article or news release.

—Bonnie Parnell Riechert

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ELLSWORTH, JAMES DRUMMOND

James Drummond Ellsworth was the first public relations executive on the payroll of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, serving from 1907 to 1930.

The son of a Congregationalist minister, Ellsworth was born in Massachusetts around 1863. He was raised in North Carolina, Iowa, and Illinois as his father moved from one congregation to another. In his youth, he was at various times a cowboy, lumberjack, and printer’s devil. This last job ignited an interest in journalism—or at least in the rough-and-ready reporting practiced in small towns of the time—and he wrote for the *Colorado Springs Gazette* while studying at Colorado College. His

efforts to help start a newspaper in the silver-mining town of Aspen failed when the steel bars used to turn the plates on the printing press were lost. But in his fourth year of college, he had an opportunity to take over the weekly *Enterprise* in Coal Creek, Colorado, as editor, manager, and printer. The paper had about 2,000 subscribers. Just 22 years old, Ellsworth was celebrated as the youngest editor in the state, and he never went back to college.

After a year and a half, Ellsworth moved to Denver and, over the next 4 years, landed successive reporting jobs with the *Rocky Mountain News*, the *Denver Journal*, and the *Denver Times*. In 1889, he moved back east and talked himself into a job with the *Boston Herald*. Over the next 12 years, he left the *Herald* four times for better pay or more interesting work at other papers, including one stint as ad manager and traveling salesman for a patent medicine company, but he always returned. In his last period at the *Herald*, he moonlighted as an opera singer’s press agent, placing a piece about her in his own paper. She paid him \$50 for it, substantially more than he was making at the paper.

When George Michaelis, one of the founding partners of the Publicity Bureau of Boston, approached Ellsworth about taking a job, he officially moved from journalism to publicity. The Publicity Bureau, established in 1900 by three former newspapermen “to do a general press agent business,” was the forerunner of today’s public relations firms. Its early clients were Charles W. Eliot of Harvard, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Boston Elevated, and the Fore River Ship Yard.

In 1903, the American Telephone Company, then headquartered in Boston, hired a patent attorney—Frederick Fish—as its president. At the time, the company had a reputation for poor customer service, high-handed business practices, and exorbitant prices. Fish, an excellent lawyer, had no idea what to do about it, so he was receptive when Michaelis suggested that “the situation could not be made worse by a venture in publicity and it might be made better” (Ellsworth, 1936, p. 58).

Ellsworth was assigned to the AT&T account. His first step was to analyze newspaper clippings from across the country that the Bell Company’s

“Information Bureau” was carefully cataloguing. About 90 percent were antagonistic. After 6 months, the negative media reviews declined to 80 percent, then to 60 percent and steadily lower, until, according to Ellsworth’s memoirs, they were less than 20 percent.

Ellsworth traveled extensively on behalf of his client. In Kansas City, the local newspaper had been running particularly negative stories and editorials. Ellsworth discovered that the newspaper’s owner was on the board of the Old Colony Trust Company with AT&T president Fish. He took advantage of the interlocking directorships, suggesting that Fish talk to his fellow director about the newspaper’s antagonism. It worked so well that the newspaper owner ran some of Ellsworth’s “stories” as editorials and eventually became president of the local Bell Company.

In Salt Lake City, Ellsworth discovered that one of Bell’s competitors had organized a “telephone improvement association,” which planned to meet on Christmas Eve. Ellsworth visited the editor of every paper in town and convinced them not to cover the meeting.

When Ellsworth returned from one of his tours of the operating companies in 1907, he discovered that Theodore N. Vail, who had been the company’s chief operating officer in its early days, had replaced Fish. One of Vail’s first acts was to fire the Publicity Bureau for claiming another agency’s work as its own. Ellsworth was then 44 years old and without a job. According to Ellsworth’s c. 1927 official company biography, the newspaper owner and new president of Bell Telephone in Kansas City intervened and convinced Vail to hire Ellsworth with instructions to “make a job for himself along publicity lines.”

Ellsworth continued his peregrinations, traveling as much as 30,000 to 40,000 miles a year and extending his stays in cities with particularly nettlesome public relations problems. He continued to pioneer new tactics to counter negative media coverage, some of which may seem questionable today. He shadowed the company’s critics on their speaking tours, circulating discrediting information about them. He even tried to interfere with competitors’ efforts to obtain financing. In Rochester, he spent about \$4,000 on ads touting Bell’s policies and

service investments. To influence the local editors and reporters directly, he sponsored a contest among them for writing the best ad copy. Few of the entries were usable, but every entry received an award.

The Rochester advertising was so successful that Vail hired the N. W. Ayer ad agency to place similar ads in national media in what would become the first institutional advertising campaign. Ellsworth explained his philosophy regarding this advertising in his memoirs:

From the first, our purpose was to educate the public by telling the facts about the Bell System. I, at any rate, believed that the public opposition came chiefly from a lack of knowledge. . . . Hence the fundamental policy was to give information as to our purposes, problems and progress. . . . Anyone who came into the company, and saw it at close range, became a supporter and friend. As it was impractical to take the great public into the company, we tried to take the company to the public, hoping for similar results.” (Ellsworth, 1936, p. 68)

Ellsworth participated in a string of firsts—the opening of the telephone lines between New York and San Francisco; the launch of the first commercial radio station, WEAJ; the introduction of trans-Atlantic radiotelephony; the sending of news photos by wire; and the first television broadcast over an experimental system developed by Bell’s manufacturing subsidiary, Western Electric. He produced one of the first company-sponsored films, *Spinners of Speech*. He was even involved in designing the metal Bell System signs nailed to telephone poles across the country. But his influence within the company was best demonstrated in a study he conducted to convince Vail and the AT&T board of directors to initiate a company-sponsored pension plan.

As Ellsworth himself approached retirement age, he was made assistant to the company’s president in January 1927 to make way for his successor, Arthur W. Page. Ellsworth began his AT&T career as an unapologetic press agent, but by the time he retired in June of 1930, at 66 years of age, he had defined a very different role for himself and for the practice of public relations within AT&T. He died on June 13, 1940.

—Dick Martin



James Drummond Ellsworth

SOURCE: Property of AT&T Archives. Reprinted with permission of AT&T.

See also Block, Ed; Laurie, Marilyn; Page, Arthur W.; Vail, Theodore Newton.

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EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION

Employee communication is the context in which information and messages are communicated for direct and indirect strategic purposes. Often referred to as “internal communication,” employee communication is defined by the function it serves within the corporate or organizational communication model as

well as by the channel, level, and networks used to most effectively communicate to or with employees.

Two themes are apparent in employee or internal communication. First, employee or internal communication efforts improve relationships among employees within the organization, including relationships between employees and management, employees and other employees, and management and other management. Programs are often centered around morale- and relationship-building activities. This is the relational element in managing communication within the organization. Second, employee or internal communication efforts help members be more effective and efficient in production and service. These programs focus on developing company or product knowledge, managing the work environment, and becoming more concerned with quality. This is the content element in managing communication within an organization. Although these two themes may not be mutually exclusive, depending on the nature and function of any given organization, they do provide a somewhat artificial means of distinguishing between employee and internal communication. Employee communication focuses on the relationships within the organization, whereas internal communication focuses on the content of work within the organization.

Employee communication can be understood in relation to other possible corporate or organizational communication functions. Depending upon the size, type, and purpose of an organization, the number of corporate or organizational communication functions may vary. They can include image or identity creation, advertising, media relations, marketing, financial affairs, community relations, government relations, crisis management, and employee relations or employee communication. Although some organizations may have formally established employee or internal communication programs, others may not but may still manage a variety of functions that address information sharing, morale building, and product or service understanding, among other activities. All organizations should have some form of employee communication program. In large, high-profile companies such programs constitute an entire department

and are formal, highly visible programs. In smaller companies, employee communication functions tend to be isolated, informal, and managed by a variety of personnel.

Another way to understand employee communication is to identify the channels or media in which relationships and information are managed within the organizational setting. The three most common channels used to facilitate the goals and objectives of employee communication are face-to-face channels, written channels, and electronic channels. Face-to-face channels are used most frequently in activities requiring relationship growth and development. Often employee communication programs include human resource, personnel, and training functions. Programs and information related to such topics as new employee orientation, compensation, benefits, employee assistance, continuing education, and personal and professional development training all necessitate a certain level of face-to-face interaction. In large companies these functions can be highly specialized and handled individually by numerous employees. In smaller organizations, they tend to be handled by a fewer number of less specialized employees. In some organizations, management personnel are responsible for many employee communication activities. It seems clear that such activities improve relationships within the organization and therefore require a great deal of face-to-face interaction. They also seem more suitable for relational rather than content elements of employee communication.

The second channel used to facilitate employee communication activities is the written or print channel, usually newsletters, magazines, or other forms of frequent correspondence. This form of print medium varies greatly by frequency, depth, and focus. Some organizations may produce a quarterly printing dealing with issues in great depth, whereas other organizations may produce a weekly document of less substance. Some companies, like Hallmark's corporate headquarters, produce a daily form of employee correspondence (*Noon News*) to regularly update company employees. The nature, purpose, and available resources of an organization in many ways determine the frequency and depth of such publications. Whereas face-to-face channels

work well for the relational goals of employee communication programs, print channels are a hybrid and tend to serve both relational and content goals. Many times written channels are used to announce and coordinate the relational activities of the employee communication officer in a face-to-face setting. Print publications may also help employees develop product or service knowledge, quality control, or other work environment or content issues within their organization.

Like print publications, the third medium, electronic forms, is also a hybrid channel for reaching both relational and content goals. In addition to being similar to print channels, it has become a rapidly growing means of managing employee communication functions. In particular, the use of intranets has become an important feature for developing, implementing, and maintaining a strong employee communication program. Intranets provide specific network content for those with access. This type of channel or medium use for all organizational members, especially the employee or internal communication specialist, has had a noticeable impact in three ways. First, the duties and responsibilities of the communication professional have become more electronically and technologically oriented. One who works in employee communication must be proficient in navigating the networked system of the organization. The proficiency often entails computer application knowledge in word processing, database management, desktop publishing, presentational software, the internal e-mail system, and any specialized software programs related to the function and structure of the organization. Again, in larger organizations the technical functions within the employee communication program can be quite specialized. In midsized to small companies the electronic and technological job responsibilities are often shared by a number of employees.

The second noticeable impact intranets have had on employee communication is that they have improved the accuracy and timeliness demanded in the workplace. Electronic forms of communication through intranet capabilities have greatly enhanced the communication specialist's ability to provide accurate and timely information to rank-and-file

employees, who can use this information to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of production and services. Intranets have also allowed the communication specialist to improve communication between employees and management. Many intranet systems have been structured to support employee communication functions in human resources and personnel, such as in the recruitment, selection, and retention of employees. In large organizations, intranets have helped organizations coordinate activities in an accurate and timely manner between such corporate communication functions as media relations, marketing, and crisis management.

The third impact intranets have had on the employee communication function is that they have been able to control response or interaction time. Intranets have enabled employees and management to communicate in both asynchronous and synchronous ways. Asynchronous communication (communication that is not in real time), as well as synchronous communication (interaction in real time through electronic channels), has created much flexibility for communication specialists. For example, time and space have become much more flexible to employees and management and have influenced the desire and need to interact face to face.

The level of interaction also helps explain how relationships and information are managed in the organizational setting. *Levels of interaction* refers to the number of participants in a communication encounter. For the employee communication specialist, managed interaction takes place at the interpersonal, group or team, organizational, public, and mass-mediated levels. Although mediated forms of communication such as e-mail, intranets, teleconferencing, and videoconferencing continue to be popular, management of a successful employee communication program requires substantial interaction at all levels. A distinction again can be made between employee and internal communication. Employee communication, or the improvement of relationships, is more frequently managed at the interpersonal and group or team levels. Internal communication, which improves the effectiveness or efficiency of production and service, is usually present at all levels but usually is managed at the organizational, public, or mass-mediated levels of communication.

The final influence to consider when defining employee communication is the communication network in an organization. Formal networks are the prescribed, official routes for sending messages, and informal networks carry unofficial messages when sender identity may or may not be known by other organizational members. The employee communication specialist assists management in moderating, regulating, and modifying these networks. Whereas traffic or speed of information is closely managed on the formal network, accuracy is vitally important to managing the informal network. The complexity of formal and informal networks is determined in some way by the size of organization. Larger companies tend to have more complex networks. Consequently, the functions of the employee communication specialist are determined by the complexity of the network in which they work. In addition to recognizing the level of network complexity, the employee communication specialist must assess the network's ability to improve relationships among employees and to assist members in the production or service goals of the organization.

Employee or internal communication is used to strategically communicate to or with employees. It is defined by the function it manages within the corporate communication model and is best understood by its relationship to the channels, levels, and networks it serves within a unique organizational setting.

—Terry M. Cunconan

See also Internal communication

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ENCROACHMENT THEORY

Encroachment in public relations practice and research refers to “the assignment of non-public relations professionals to manage the public relations function” (Lauzen, 1991, p. 245). It takes place “when top management hires, promotes or moves individuals laterally from some department and/or profession other than public relations into the public relations manager role” (Lauzen, 1992, p. 173). Encroachment is a serious problem to practitioners and academics when top management assigns the top public relations position to individuals with little or no training or experience in public relations and corporate communication. Because of what public relations can add to the planning and operations of an organization, its full impact can be lost if the person managing this function does not understand or appreciate what it brings to management decisions.

Three forms of encroachment have been identified: authority, structural, and functional. Authority encroachment involves assigning the wrong personnel to manage a public relations department or unit. Structural encroachment subordinates the public relations unit to other units in the organizational hierarchy. Functional encroachment occurs as other departments or units take on activities that expand into the traditional operational realm of public relations or communication management.

Two factors affect the extent to which authority encroachment takes place: (a) other units' involvement in “traditional” public relations functions and (b) the public relations practitioner's ability to serve in a managerial capacity. Units such as marketing, legal, investor relations, and fundraising may have a damaging impact on traditional public relations efforts because they deny some or much of the influence public relations can exert over corporate and communication policy. For example, Martha Lauzen observed that the more the marketing department becomes involved in traditional public relations areas, the more top management tends to

fill the managerial positions of public relations departments with someone other than a senior person in the public relations unit. Thus public relations practitioners can reduce encroachment if they are primarily responsible for media relations, promotions and publicity, employee communication, and financial or shareholder relations.

In addition, public relations' authority in the organization is likely to decline when practitioners serve in a managerial capacity less frequently. To reduce encroachment, it is vital that public relations managers take responsibility and be accountable for the success or failure of the organization's public relations program. They need to be respected by others in management so that they truly are the organization's public relations expert. They must make communication policy decisions. Otherwise, the authority of the public relations function is likely to diminish.

A number of variables increase authority encroachment. High on the list of factors are gender, length of experience, and managerial competence. The increased number of women in public relations raises concern that the profession will be “feminized” and therefore marginalized by managements that “don't take women seriously.” Practitioners also need to know their discipline as well as the type of organization they serve. If they can't bring such knowledge to bear on increasing the organization's effectiveness, they are likely to suffer encroachment. The ability to resist encroachment increases as they become more experienced in public relations. Thus they advance the influence of their department if they continue their education and training. Public relations can also resist encroachment by being unique and generating its own budget resources, rather than depending on receiving a portion of another department's budget. This is especially important if it is going to resist the encroachment of marketing.

Finally, managerial competence is a factor. Once senior management acknowledges that the organization is challenged by a wide array of stakeholders whose goodwill is needed but is not necessarily forthcoming, then public relations is more likely to resist encroachment. Unfortunately, nothing does as much good for the role of public relations than

for an organization to suffer a major crisis. Managements of many types have learned a hard lesson by not being prepared to have fully influential public relations practitioners to meet the challenges of crises or major issues. Once an organization learns that it cannot take itself for granted and must engage in two-way communication, public relations practitioners receive more access to management and are given more decision-making power because their value is recognized.

One of the most important defenses against encroachment is for public relations to be managed by a person who understands the uniqueness of the profession. It loses power and responsibility if it is subordinate to departments such as marketing or corporate legal counsel. Encroachment results when public relations practitioners are told what to do rather than asked for their planning and crisis response advice. Lauzen found that at the managerial level, as public relations and marketing units shared more domain similarity (the degree to which the two departments share the same goals, skills, or tasks) and more resource dependency (the degree to which a member of one functional area must obtain resources from another area to accomplish his or her objectives), marketers tended to become more involved in public relations activities. Further, as marketers became involved more in “managerial” public relations activities (community relations, employee communication, media relations, promotions and publicity, fundraising, public affairs and lobbying, and financial or shareholder relations), more authority encroachment occurred. Kathleen Kelly found that the knowledge and expertise required to practice two-way symmetrical and asymmetrical public relations were significantly related to functional encroachment; that is, the fundraising function increasingly took over the management of public relations.

Functional encroachment by legal counsel is likely to occur during crisis management. To explore this hypothesis, K. R. Fitzpatrick and M. S. Rubin examined 39 cases of organizational responses to sexual harassment charges. They found that the traditional legal strategy was most prevalent (simple denial of guilt or acting indignant followed by no comment or saying as little as possible). In other

words, legal counsel dominated organizational decisions regarding public communication, a public relations domain, and thereby increased functional encroachment. Organizational excellence also played a vital role in predicting encroachment. As organizations achieved a more symmetrical communication system, a more organic and participative structure, and more strategic planning, the more the public relations officers rather than legal counsels affected decision making in crisis management.

Kelly found that when senior public relations practitioners possess little managerial competencies (e.g., environmental scanning or strategic planning), the fundraising department is more likely to structurally encroach into public relations. Based on 19 in-depth interviews with public relations managers, she found that structural encroachment on public relations was substantial. In seven charitable organizations (37%), public relations was “subordinate” to fundraising structurally. She argued that even when public relations and fundraising had equal status in the formal structure (which was often imposed by the organizational headquarters), the fundraising department encroached on public relations because of the imbalance in power, access to the dominant coalition, and resources, particularly during unstable or environmentally turbulent times (e.g., less funding, layoff, recession, and economic downturn).

Academics and practitioners worry that encroachment threatens the public relations profession. Encroachment may affect identity, job satisfaction and turnover, role development, effectiveness, autonomy and control, and other related matters. For example, if a non-public-relations professional heads the public relations unit or enacts “traditional” domains of public relations, there may be a professional identity crisis or confusion over what is and is not public relations. Encroachment raises the issue of “purity” in the practice of public relations. It muddles differences between public relations and other functions.

When encroachment occurs, public relations practitioners, especially those who aspire to be managers, may be dissatisfied with their supervisor and leave the organization. Further, when public relations is managed by an individual

from another profession, attention to a variety of strategically important publics tends to be limited, such as those that result in environmental blunders. Thus encroachment can result in ineffective job performance.

In addition, encroachment threatens the autonomy of the public relations unit and the decision-making authority of public relations practitioners, potentially making them nonmembers of the dominant coalition. It can also reduce the level of specialization in organizations. It may limit new practitioners' opportunities to observe, learn, and develop into roles as public relations managers or counselors to the top management. If left unchecked, encroachment is likely to give public relations less control over its own destiny and lessen its chances of survival as a separate entity.

As academics and practitioners have discovered, protecting against encroachment is a vital professional challenge. Practitioners should ask for more responsibility and demonstrate that they add value to the organizations they serve. They do so because of the unique offerings of the profession.

—*Jaesub Lee*

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ENDORSEMENT

An endorsement is an expression of approval from a third party, usually on behalf of a product, service, cause, or candidate. Endorsements are useful persuasive tools that can appear in publicity, advertising, or other direct forms of communication. They can be either explicit (stated) or implicit (inferred by the audience).

Endorsements can influence a person's knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors in several ways. First, they are often contained in separate communications from other promotional messages. They thus provide an additional opportunity for exposure. Second, endorsements can catch the attention of audiences because they come from entities familiar to audiences, who might otherwise ignore a message direct from the entity being endorsed if it is unfamiliar. Third, audiences often perceive endorsers to be expert, trustworthy, or independent (with nothing to gain in making a recommendation). Thus endorsements can be more credible than messages disseminated directly by an endorsed entity.

MEDIA ENDORSEMENTS

Explicit endorsements involve both public approval and a *recommendation* of a product, service, cause, or candidate. Public relations practitioners often seek explicit endorsements from third parties as an important strategy in a program or campaign. Explicit endorsements (1) provide important and often prestigious exposure to reach key opinion leaders and other target audiences, and (2) provide the basis for subsequent communications that the endorsement was obtained.

Editorial Page Endorsements

Both candidates and sponsors of initiatives and referenda routinely seek editorial support from influential media. Candidates or advocates conduct *editorial board meetings* to share their positions and to seek editorial support. Endorsements are especially influential and can turn out voters in elections involving local candidates, ballot measures, and nonpartisan races where voters—especially

independents—are undecided or otherwise have limited sources of information.

Critics' Endorsements

Reviews by critics play a critical role in programs in the arts, where publicists seek recommendations of performances and exhibitions to create positive “buzz” or word-of-mouth advertising. Positive reviews can stimulate ticket sales, whereas negative reviews can reap ridicule and result in a low turnout. However, popular entertainment such as movies can attract a huge numbers of fans despite being panned by critics.

Editorial Product Endorsements

Reporters and editors routinely recommend products in stories and often create vehicles for making product endorsements that are coveted by organizations. Probably the best-known example is the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval accorded to products that meet minimum performance standards (and advertise in the magazine). Other examples include the “*Motor Trend Car of the Year*,” the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings of colleges and universities, Top 10 lists of various sorts, and the numerous “best in town” designations of local businesses accorded by local media. In magazines such as *Consumer Reports*, the product ratings have been shown to correlate with audiences’ perceptions of product quality.

Advertising Endorsements

Product endorsements by famous people have become a popular creative strategy for advertisers. The extensive research about product endorsers suggests that celebrities can attract attention and interest to messages, but their personas and experience must be congruent with the endorsed product or service to be compelling. Cynical consumers discount endorsers who are merely selling their name. Nonprofit and political organizations often enlist celebrities to appear in public service advertising and related messages because they are affected by a problem personally or believe in the cause. Celebrities, government officials, researchers or experts

in a particular field, and other notables can endorse causes by signing petitions and statements in paid advertisements, issuing statements or proclamations, appearing at special events, or being interviewed by the press.

NONMEDIATED ENDORSEMENTS

Organizations often seek out various other kinds of endorsements to bolster promotion of products, services, or causes. Although these efforts can be used in publicity or advertising, the endorsement serves other purposes as well.

Alliances

Organizations that enter into arrangements to produce or market products or services essentially provide an endorsement of one another. Joint ventures, airline code sharing, franchising, dealerships, authorized software developer designations, affinity marketing programs, and other partnerships have become prevalent because of their cross-promotional opportunities.

Ratings and designations

Organizations routinely seek out forms of public approval to distinguish themselves from others. Examples include *bond ratings* by research firms such as Moody’s and Finch’s, movie ratings, CD and electronic game *content ratings* from media review boards, *safety ratings* from organizations such as Underwriter’s Laboratories, and *performance* and *satisfaction ratings* of automobiles, computers, and other products by firms such as J.D. Powers & Associates. *Accreditation* is sought by colleges and universities as well as by many professionals who are not required by law to obtain a license to practice. Some products seek approval from professional organizations, such as Crest toothpaste’s “Seal of Approval” from the American Dental Association. In a similar way, producers of foodstuffs adhere to strict standards to be certified as Kosher, and beef producers prominently feature *gradings* such as “USDA Prime.”

Testimonials

Positive comments from satisfied users of products or services or satisfied citizens can serve as powerful endorsements that can appear in ads and editorial features (such as application stories in trade publications) or that can involve presentations, site visits, or one-on-one exchanges between endorsers and others. In a similar way, consultants, advisers, sales representative and agents, professionals in helping professions, community leaders, and other opinion leaders can guide others in evaluating products, services, causes, or candidates. The goal of a public relations program might be to encourage such endorsements by opinion leaders and other influential people.

Philanthropy

Organizations that contribute funds to social causes essentially make statements of support through their actions. That support, in turn, is used by the supported organization to demonstrate to others the breadth and depth of support that exists for its programs. The number and size of contributions and the prestige of the donors are often cited by recipient organizations as indicators of why others should become involved. In a similar way, organizations can express approval of worthy causes by sponsoring volunteer programs, providing in-kind support, offering facilities, or accepting contributed merchandise for use by the organization. Sponsorship of a philanthropic activity involves a dual endorsement process: contributors lend credence to charitable or other activities while the recipient organization recognizes and subtly endorses the co-sponsor.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Agenda-setting theory; Two-step flow theory

ENLIGHTENMENT AND MODERNITY

In northern and central Europe, public relations is rooted in the concepts of enlightenment and

modernity. In German-speaking countries, it is still called “*Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*,” which is literally translated as “working in [the] public sphere” and can be defined as “working for the public, with the public, and in public.” In many other European countries, public relations is also referred to as an organization’s obligation to “relate to [the] public sphere.” *Öffentlichkeit* is seen as an outcome, and therefore a quality of public communication in society; it means “which people talk how about what.” Although some normative elements can be found in these sociological approaches, this view differs from the community-building approach developed by Dean Kruckeberg and Kenneth Starck, who defined public relations in a normative way, as the social conscience of an organization that contributes to mutual understanding among groups and institutions and brings harmony to private and public policies. This definition reflects a premodern approach to public relations.

In many European public relations approaches, the concept of *legitimation* is used to describe how an organization, as the exponent of one of the institutions in the social system, co-produces public policies and thereby the empirical realization of institutions. An organization is legitimate as long as there is no public discourse concerning its legitimation. Although the social sciences have been used to define the concept, legitimacy is neither a moral nor an ethical principle, but rather is related to the empirical issue of what is good and justifiable for the members of society. “The legitimacy of an organization is a measure of the extent to which the public and the public sphere at a given time and place find the organization sensible and morally justifiable” (Munck Nielsen, 2001, p. 19). It is therefore a fundamental empirical and not a normative approach and is rooted in a modernist approach to society.

Franz Ronneberger and Manfred Rühl stated in 1992 that, in managing the communications of an organization, management cannot avoid having an empirical function in the development of society. Ronneberger claimed earlier that clarifying the different perspectives in public discourse, thereby furthering the development of public opinion, is the most important role of public relations. Werner

Faulstich sees public relations as interaction in society itself: It makes something publicly known and creates public discourse. Thus, we may argue that communication management is part of the “social structure of public meanings” because of its social construction of community. In this way communication management is defined as part of the larger societal communication system, much like journalism and advertising. Most of the German and Danish public relations researchers, such as Arlt, use such a social science paradigm, which can be seen as an outcome of modernist thinking.

At the end of the 18th century, reasoning was seen as a fundamental human activity for the first time. Descartes said, “*Cogito, ergo sum*” (I think, thus I exist) and emphasized individual power to create a rational world. The same idea was expressed by philosophers like Kant, who explained that in a modern world people should no longer act as national subjects of the powerful but as citizens who are able to rule the world themselves by citizenship and rational thinking and acting. Traditional authority became unacceptable and “irrational, that is, contrary to human nature and inhibitive of human growth and development” (Ritzer, 2000, p. 12).

Modernity contrasts with the premodern, traditional idea of an ideal social structure. Modernity was developed by great 19th-century sociologists such as Comte and De Saint-Simon, who maintained that human evolution should be seen as an irrefutable development toward improvement and that this improvement began in their time. The concept of modernity can explain the period of the Enlightenment. Well-known contemporary scholars devoted to modernity are Jürgen Habermas and Anthony Giddens. At the end of the 20th century they in turn were highly criticized by postmodern scholars such as Baudrillard and Foucault.

Sociologist George Ritzer characterizes the Enlightenment by the belief that people could comprehend and control the universe by means of reason and empirical research. The view was that because the physical world was dominated by natural laws, it was likely that the social world was, too. Thus it was up to the philosopher, using reason and research, to discover these social laws. Once they understood how the social world worked, the Enlightenment

thinkers had a practical goal—the creation of a more rational world, as Ritzer explains. In the Netherlands, the word *voorlichting* was until recently used as an equivalent for public relations. In the 18th century, science and knowledge were no longer seen as the possessions of the elite only, but as things that had to be diffused among all members of society. The means for this diffusion was *voorlichting*, which can be translated as “enlightening.” The idea of “*voorlichting*” is based on *sapere aude*, an expression of Immanuel Kant that literally means “dare to know” and that ultimately meant that “all people must be willing to be informed on what is going on and made enlightened, so that they can take part in the ongoing debate about and development of society.” Besides education, “*voorlichting*” was seen as the main way to help people be informed and so came to be defined as “giving full information to all people to mature and emancipate.”

Many people who were afraid of this enlightening of ordinary people expressed a more traditional view of society. They preferred to use “*voorlichting*” to show people how to behave as good citizens and to control them. The history of *voorlichting* can therefore be seen as a history of the battle between information and emancipation on the one hand, and education and persuasion on the other, but always under the (“Dutch uncle”) dogma of “knowing what is good.” In all theories of “*voorlichting*” the rather pedantic premise is that it is given for the benefit of the person or group to be enlightened, even when the persons involved do not want to be enlightened at all or at least not in this way.

In the period of the Enlightenment, the idea was that human beings create society, and that society in turn creates its institutions, and thereby the reality for human beings, in a dynamic process. This is the basis for a constructionist view of public relations.

—*Betteke van Ruler*

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ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY PUBLICITY/PROMOTION

Public relations practitioners who work in entertainment-related industries and fields often specialize in publicity and promotion. Publicity is media coverage generated in newspapers, in magazines, on radio, and on television. In most cases, the coverage is intentionally placed by an individual rather than by a news reporter covering an assigned story for publication. Publicity can be sought by any individual, but those who specialize in it are called publicists. Many public relations practitioners, even though not labeled publicists, frequently are involved in some activities that generate publicity. Some even specialize in media relations, a sophisticated specialty that involves forming ongoing positive relationships with media gatekeepers.

The entertainment industry encompasses a wide variety of organizations, including performing

arts centers, museums, orchestras, opera companies, Broadway theaters, aquariums, amusement parks, record companies, motion picture corporations, television networks, and major artists who have become corporations in themselves. All of these organizations need specialists who publicize and promote their activities. The objective for most specialists is to sell something—CDs, movie tickets, tickets to a show or concert, and even an image.

The publicity and promotion activities in entertainment-related industries are typically part of the marketing function and mix: product, place, price, and promotion. Unlike the term *publicity*, *promotion* is an umbrella word that encompasses advertising, public relations, sales, and sales promotion. Practitioners who work in entertainment may also handle advertising. In a performing arts center, for instance, practitioners create ads for center attractions that run in the local paper. They produce brochures and calendars for patrons and series subscribers that display the various attractions. They work with a sales force to develop sales materials for telemarketers who specialize in group sales or series renewals. Sales promotion techniques give the target audience an incentive to buy the product. In the performing arts, the practitioner may host an open house with showcase performances of the various groups to stimulate the interest of potential patrons. Other examples of sales promotion techniques include hosting an artists' reception for theatergoers after a performance or holding a special drawing of tickets to the various attractions.

Publicity plays a large part in entertainment. An entire field of journalists reports on the expansive world of entertainment to satisfy the public's interest. Publicists in the entertainment field focus their time on gaining coverage for their clients, attractions, or organization. They prepare press materials and pitch stories to media gatekeepers. They work with feature editors of metropolitan newspapers, associate editors of magazines, assignment editors of television news shows, producers of television programs, news directors and program directors of radio stations, and a myriad of other journalists. A skilled publicist studies the work produced by a particular journalist and the editorial environment of the publication or show in an attempt to develop

an interesting angle tailored for that particular media outlet.

Four models are widely accepted to describe the evolution of public relations: the press agency/publicity model, the public information model, the two-way asymmetric model, and the two-way symmetric model. The earliest, the press agency/publicity model, is described as one-way communication in which truth is not an essential component. The public information model focuses on publicity to the extent that disseminating truthful information is central to the practice. The two-way asymmetric model tries to persuade and relies on feedback from stakeholders. The two-way symmetric model is considered the most sophisticated form of practice because it focuses on mutual understanding, mediation, and two-way balanced flow of information.

Press agency is closely associated with publicity in the entertainment world. Press agency is the practice of attracting the attention of the press through techniques that manufacture news. Methods associated with press agency include staged events, publicity stunts, faux rallies or gatherings, spinning, and hype. A common practice in the late 1800s and early 1900s, press agency is not part of mainstream public relations. Rather, it is a practice primarily associated with major entertainment-related events, such as Hollywood premieres and boxing matches. The goal of press agency is to attract attention rather than gain understanding. Even today, however, the term *press agent* is sometimes used interchangeably with *publicist* in traditional Broadway theater and motion picture industries. Today's entertainment industries are populated with publicists rather than press agents. Publicists are individuals skilled in media relations who attempt to get the name of their clients or events in the media by carefully constructing messages that inform, educate, and persuade. Some are astute in branding and positioning strategies to aid the careers and success of their clients. In contrast, press agents want attention—good or bad—in most any form.

Press agency has been called persuasion for short-term advantage through the use of truth bending and even distortion, but it can also be simply the staging of provocative acts to get publicity and draw attention to an individual, event, or cause. Therefore,

it is understandable that one of the earliest proponents of press agency was Phineas Taylor (P. T.) Barnum, the famed American showman and promoter who put Gen. Tom Thumb on exhibit and launched a mobile circus featuring Jumbo the elephant and freak shows. Barnum was a master of press agency. For instance, he wrote letters both praising and criticizing his circus show to newspapers under an assumed name.

In the early part of his career, Edward L. Bernays was also a master of press agency. He persuaded 10 debutantes to hold up Lucky Strike cigarettes manufactured by his client, the American Tobacco Company, as “torches of freedom” while participating in New York’s Easter parade. In 1929, Bernays staged a global news event by organizing the “Light’s Golden Jubilee,” a worldwide celebration commemorating the 50th anniversary of the electric light bulb for his client, General Electric. Bernays managed to secure several prominent individuals for the event, including carmaker Henry Ford, electricity scientist Thomas Edison, and President Herbert Hoover.

Henry Rogers, one of the founders of Rogers and Cowan, the largest and most successful West Coast entertainment publicity firm, became well known when he promoted an unknown contract player for Columbia Pictures named Rita Hayworth. He contacted *Look* magazine with a telegram from the Fashion Couturiers Association of America, a fictitious group, claiming that Hayworth was the best-dressed off-screen actress. *Look* magazine took the bait and put Hayworth on the cover and published 10 pages of her photographs.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Barnum, P. T.; Press agency; Promotion; Publicist; Publicity

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ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS

Environmental groups can either be a major source of work and irritation for public relations, or a very helpful supporter. Almost all organizations today must address environmental issues at some point. Beginning in the late 1960s and extending to the present, Congress has enacted and reauthorized laws that affect all aspects of business, from raw materials used to production processes and by-products. Current practices are not the only ones impacted. Many organizations are being forced to deal with the environmental impacts of activities that took place decades ago. And for every environmental issue with which an organization must deal, there seems to be at least one environmental group ready to scrutinize its words and deeds.

In terms of the national or international environmental groups, some deal with broad environmental concerns, and some are fairly focused on a single issue. Many of these groups have clear and even stated political agendas. While a large, parent group will focus on issues with broad impact, local chapters of a group take up specific issues of local concern as well as support the larger group. Some environmental groups are not connected with a national organization and are composed entirely of local citizens who have banded together to address community concerns. Thus, in environmental matters public relations must be prepared to deal with a broad range of interests and agendas. Some general categories of groups based on their approaches to issues are discussed below.

Radical

This category includes groups such as Earth First! and Greenpeace. Although they cover a broad range of environmental issues, they are grouped together because of their very visible and often contentious approach to issues. These groups have taken a lesson from Bernays's approach by using staged events (probably more sensational than Bernays would have approved of) to generate media coverage, a major goal of such groups. They want the widest possible dissemination of their position and message, and they are willing to go to great lengths to achieve that goal. Some examples

include Earth First! members chaining themselves to trees or engaging in tree sits (camping out in a tree for weeks on end) and the presence of Greenpeace's ship, the *Rainbow Warrior*, whose 2003 detention in Spain caused international protests at Spanish embassies, or Greenpeace members driving dinghies around oil tankers to protest shipping too close to sensitive shores (directed not only at the oil companies, but at the government as well). Although they sometimes accomplish the goals of saving trees or coastal ecosystems, clearly these actions are designed to reach a mass audience through media coverage. The events have visual appeal and are unusual, two attributes public relations often strives for when trying to place a story. Sometimes it even appears that these groups understand media relations better than the public relations staffs charged with addressing the negative press these groups generate for the target organizations.

Animal rights activist groups, such as the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), are sometimes considered radical. ALF has been known to go as far as violating laws by breaking into labs or fur farms to free animals. They are quite unrelenting in their approach to their cause, advocating vegan diets and complete elimination of all animal products.

When faced with groups such as these, public relations practitioners are in a very difficult situation. These groups do not like to compromise and seem to thrive on direct confrontation. Confrontation is what they're trained for, and they know how to use it to gain even more media attention. Some organizations do try to confront these groups, with mixed to disastrous results. Others try to ignore them and hope they'll go away or the media will find a new story to cover. There is no one answer for how to deal with these groups. Each situation and the temperament of the targeted organization will to a large degree determine what public relations can and can't do. The only certain approach is to try not to do anything that will inflame the situation any further.

Mainstream Activist

Groups such as the Sierra Club and the National Wildlife Federation have broad memberships across

the United States. They are definitely more centrist than the radical groups, although they, too, have well-defined political agendas. They approach these agendas through professional lobbyists and grassroots organizing. While they certainly can, and have, approached businesses and governments in a radical manner, their typical approach is through media and political pressure and influence. Basically, these organizations are structured and behave very much the way many businesses do, with elected presidents and boards, national offices, and strategic planning for both accomplishing their environmental agenda and maintaining and increasing their membership. For example, the Sierra Club offers environmentally sound investment packages for its members. (It should be noted that many radical groups also follow such organization, but their approach to issues gives them a very different outward appearance.)

One key to understanding such groups is to understand their membership. Organizations such as the Sierra Club and the National Audubon Society (not just concerned with birds, but with habitat conservation and a range of environmental issues) have state and many local chapters and even publish magazines. Although their members do join to support an environmental cause, the groups use social functions to maintain support and cohesion. The Sierra Club offers national vacation opportunities centered on environmental themes, and local chapters have outings and activities, not all of which are environmentally related. Local Audubon chapters go bird-watching, hold annual bird counts, and have meetings with noted speakers. The end result is that people identify with the organization and thus write letters and often vote in accord with the organization's positions. National endorsements can be important, but a strong showing on local issues can have an even greater and more direct impact on organizations, because changes in the local operating environment can sometimes be more critical to organizations than national issues.

Unlike the radical groups, there are realistic possibilities for interacting constructively with mainstream activist groups. These groups must balance the pursuit of their environmental goals with the need to maintain approaches consistent with the

perspectives of their members. Certainly there are points beyond which these groups will not bend, but often there is both room and willingness to negotiate on issues. For example, if organization X is willing to preserve the most sensitive natural areas on its complex as wildlife areas, it may be able to work a compromise with the environmental group criticizing it about plans for plant expansion and even get the group to endorse the revised plans. The key to success here, as in any negotiation, is to understand the values and constraints of the other side and create a match with the organization's desires. When such a compromise can be reached, the organization should realize good opportunities for positive press about its environmental efforts.

Quiet Workers

Another type of environmental group consists of those who maintain a relatively low profile while working to achieve their goals. These groups rarely, if ever, assume the attack posture of a radical group, but they do occasionally use political and media pressure to push their point. More often than not, these groups look for appropriate partners to help them achieve their objectives. For example, the Nature Conservancy partners with government bodies and businesses to preserve important natural places through its Conservation by Design program. The conservancy uses established science to determine which areas are essential for protecting important ecosystems and then does everything it can to protect those lands. The conservancy uses everything from conservation easements to gifts of land or land purchases in its attempt to ensure stable ecosystems for the future.

The Ocean Futures Society, headed by Jean-Michel Cousteau, takes a slightly different approach. Ocean Futures, as the organization and Cousteau names indicate, is concerned with protecting the world's oceans. Membership in the society is free. It has a well-established education function that focuses mainly on children. The society provides information and experiences for youth that it hopes will impress upon them the importance of healthy oceans and the general environment to the health of humankind. The underlying goal is not only to create

a generation that values the oceans, but also to see that information passed on to parents, as children often do. Ocean Futures worked to return Keiko (the *Free Willy* orca) to the wild and ties to Nemo (the Disney/Pixar fish character) to provide information about coral reefs. These efforts are made possible through many partnerships, some of which include Icelandair, Applebee's Restaurants, Kawasaki, and UPS (all listed on the Ocean Futures Web site, www.oceanfutures.org, with links to corporate Web sites).

Clearly, environmental groups such as these provide opportunities for constructive partnerships, enabling organizations to generate positive environmental coverage for themselves. Finding an appropriate partner (there are no oil companies listed as Ocean Futures partners) is the key, and a task public relations practitioners are well suited for.

Local Community Groups

These groups form around issues of specific concern in a community. Although some members may belong to larger environmental groups and call on them for support, the focus is on the conditions in the immediate area. Examples of these types of groups include Lois Gibbs and the other Love Canal residents, inner-city groups who form to fight industrial pollution and landfills in their neighborhoods (these are often minority groups and fall under the environmental justice movement), and the many citizen groups who have come together to fight environmental problems at the United States nuclear weapons production facilities.

Members of these groups may start out without much knowledge or information, but they tend to acquire it quickly. Personal safety and the safety of one's family are key motivators to action. These groups may also lack power, particularly when compared to the organizations they often oppose. But that should not be a reason to overlook them. Lisa Crawford and the residents around the Fernald nuclear weapons plant got their problems on the cover of *Time* magazine and successfully sued the United States Department of Energy, winning compensation for lost property value, health problems, and lifetime medical monitoring. They educated

themselves about air and water pollution, the effects of radiation, and remediation technologies. They made everything that happened at the plant their business. When the media had a question about something happening at the plant, they would go to Crawford for a quote. And this group connected with groups at other weapons facilities to exchange information and tactics for dealing with their problems. The pressure exerted by these community groups, individually and as a whole, played a major role in forcing the government to begin the cleanup of the weapons facilities. Today, the cleanup organization at Fernald consults with the local citizens on most cleanup decisions, major and otherwise, rather than simply telling them what the decision is on a course of action.

The power of local community groups should never be underestimated. The media love an underdog, and there are few more appealing than a group of mothers fighting for the health of their children. Emotional appeals are very common with these groups, especially in the early stages of a conflict. An organization can rarely win such a battle, and more often than not looks extremely callous when trying to do so. The group's concerns must be taken seriously and addressed in a meaningful manner. At this point, an organization often becomes involved in risk communication. Dealing with these groups successfully, and with all other environmental groups, requires that an organization be able to support its claims with specific actions taken to address environmental concerns.

Overall, an issues management approach should be used to address environmental groups and their concerns. The ultimate goal is to be prepared through research and informed anticipation. Organizations can influence environmental regulations and anticipate objections to their actions that groups will have. Public relations can accomplish this task through monitoring national and international groups on the Web in order to track environmental concerns and also find appropriate partners for positive environmental activities. The Public Relations Society of America Environmental Section Web site (www.prsa.org/_Networking/environment/) has many useful links, not only to some of these groups, but also to sites useful for monitoring environmental legislation



Protesters at a 1990 Earth First! protest hold up a banner reading “Stop Redwood Slaughter.”

SOURCE: © Joseph Sohm; ChromoSohm Inc./CORBIS

and gathering information on environmental communication tactics. It should be a bookmark for every public relations practitioner or researcher interested in environmental groups and issues.

—*Maribeth S. Metzler*

See also Issues management; Risk communication

ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

Environmental scanning is a method of gathering information from the external environment for use in issues management and the strategic decision-making process. It’s an early warning system for changes outside the organization—a type of radar to pick up the new or unexpected in order to help top management plan for the organization’s future. In addition to detecting emerging issues, the strategic intelligence provided by environmental scanning can also help quantify existing problems.

Although environmental scanning or monitoring appears to have originated in the business management arena, David M. Dozier referred to it in the context of public relations as “the gathering of information about publics, about reactions of publics

toward the organization, and about public opinion toward issues important to the organization” (1986, p. 1).

In addition to detecting threats and opportunities for the organization, environmental scanning also encourages future-oriented thinking in the dominant coalition.

As a research method designed to bring information into the organization, environmental scanning is a function of an open system, which uses either two-way asymmetric or two-way symmetric models of communication.

Environmental scanning is important to public relations practitioners because successful management of dynamic organizations depends upon the ability of the senior leaders to adapt to a rapidly changing external environment. Because it is easy for management to become insulated from key publics, the public relations practitioner can use environmental scanning data to help keep the dominant coalition in touch with the opinions of those critical to the organization’s success or failure.

Collecting and processing intelligence about the environment also makes the communication manager a useful and necessary part of the organization’s management decision-making team. Those who don’t do environmental scanning are often not included in the dominant coalition. Dozier and Larissa A. Grunig wrote, “This is one source of power that practitioners can use to redefine the public relations function and alter its vertical and horizontal structure” (1992, p. 412).

Organization leaders or executive managements often face information overload when they have more information than they can efficiently and effectively process. Having a formal environmental scanning program can help identify the sources of information most important to the organization. Scanning, therefore, is a way of separating the wheat from the chaff.

There are few guidelines on how to do environmental scanning. Scanners should seek signs of

change; look for signals of potential events on the horizon; study forecasts of experts and indirect effects; and write abstracts to crystallize thoughts.

To develop the objectives of the scanning program, the public relations practitioner must decide if periodic or continuous scanning is needed. Interviews with key decision makers in the organization and a review of the organization's current master plan will help develop an initial list of trends and issues to monitor.

When considering the environment to be scanned, a variety of levels should be considered: the local environment, which includes the organization's current and potential stakeholders; the industry environment of the organization; and a more global environment, which includes trends and issues in the economy, politics, technology, and society.

Both informal and formal methods can be used to gather information. Samples used in casual research may not be scientifically representative but may still be beneficial. Practitioners scan by studying mass media and specialized media such as scholarly journals, trade magazines, newsletters, newspapers, recent books, the Web, and radio and TV programs. They may confer with a network of contacts, such as colleagues and experts within their industry, advisory boards, community forums, or political and community leaders. Records of phone calls, letters, or e-mails coming into the organization may be useful as well. More formal methods of gathering market research data through surveys and focus groups may be used, along with ongoing communication programs with the organization's priority stakeholders.

After information is gathered through the scanning process, it must be analyzed and interpreted for the dominant coalition to make sense of it and to incorporate it into strategic decision making.

—Phyllis Vance Larsen

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EPLEY, JOE

Joe S. Epley reflects the expression “You can take the boy out of the country, but you can’t take the country out of the boy.”

He was born in the small North Carolina town of Forest City in 1938 and spent his formative years with blue-collar workers and farmers. Today, after completing a public relations trip, Epley still returns to a sparsely populated area at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Often, when he is “in residence,” some of the best minds in public relations sit on his porch in a rocking chair to share Epley’s wisdom.

For the better part of three decades, Epley has been sharing his passion for *sound, pragmatic public relations*. He is committed to professionalism and has given time and money to educate and train young people in both the art and ethics of public relations. Epley has made major contributions to three different areas of public relations: ethical behavior, futuristic insight, and globalization.

DOING WHAT’S RIGHT

Epley was first recognized as a significant public relations leader during and immediately after 1986, when he served as chair of the Counselors Academy of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Using this platform, he became perhaps the leading advocate in the field for higher professional standards and has held a PRSA leadership position without interruption for more than 20 years.

While Epley was becoming president of PRSA in 1991, many African American members said they would not attend the national PRSA conference in

Phoenix because the state of Arizona had elected not to celebrate the Martin Luther King holiday. Moving the conference to another city would have cost PRSA about \$500,000 in contractual penalties. Nevertheless, Epley said, "We cannot have a conference at a location in which many of our members would not participate on moral grounds" (Epley, personal communication, 1991). Epley's solution was to call a special meeting that included the PRSA board, representatives of PRSA's chapters in Arizona, members of PRSA's cultural diversity committee, and other trusted advisers. Epley offered the assistance of several nationally prominent PRSA members who understood political campaigns and who would assist Arizona's PRSA members in helping to wage a statewide election that ultimately made that state the first to establish a Martin Luther King Day by popular vote. The theme of the 1991 PRSA conference in Phoenix was "What's Right?" Epley has said, "Our focus has to change from 'building awareness' to 'building relationships,' from 'educating' to 'persuading.' We do that by paying as much, if not more, attention to personal, corporate and product reputation as we do to promoting products and ideas" (1999, n.p.).

Epley has been careful to reject potential clients that do not fit his standards. For example, he was asked to counsel controversial PTL evangelist Jim Bakker when Bakker first emerged as a target of editorial criticism in the early 1980s. After conducting his own research, Epley turned down the offer, explaining, "We weren't going to work for somebody who deceived his constituents, and who we believed would not change his 'off-camera' behavior" (Epley, 1999, n.p.).

Neither has he avoided controversial clients. Rather, he has tried to present them with constructive alternatives to achieve the same type of win-win result he did for PRSA in Arizona. For instance, he convinced the chemical company Sodyeco to open its gates not only to neighbors but also to the Sierra Club for scrutiny so they could see firsthand what the company was doing to protect the environment. This tactic, which has now been employed widely, was largely unacceptable when Epley first used it. The result was public support for his client at a critical time.

Epley believes that "laws don't dictate morality. The issue for us today is to regain credibility for business and for those ethical American corporate values that built our nation . . . values built on character, honesty, fair play, and hard work." He also has said, "We can build awareness. But it won't be worth a hill of beans if everyone in an organization's management team doesn't embrace the basic principles of ethical conduct in business and corporate responsibility to society" (Epley, 1999, n.p.).

SEEING AROUND CORNERS

Epley's second contribution is insight into the future. From the early days of the Information Highway, he promoted the Internet. Long before many others, he saw clearly how the Internet would affect business and, consequently, the field of public relations. This focus on how things are communicated, as well as on what is communicated, started during his time with the Army's Defense Information School, where he was elected to the Defense Information School Alumni Hall of Fame. The firm he later created, Epley Associates, continues to focus on communication. The company became one of the best independent firms in the South, with a client list that has included John Deere, Philip Morris, Glaxo Welcome/Glaxo Smith Kline, General Electric, BB&T Bank, Union Carbide, Westinghouse Broadcasting, Carolinas HealthCare System, Sandoz Chemicals, and many other organizations such as universities and local governments. Even a few political candidates have become Epley clients, including two mayors of Charlotte, two congressmen, and a chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court.

This impressive client list is largely due to the fact that Joe Epley has always been an early adopter of new technology. This trait has provided him with a competitive edge. His monograph on hourly billing practices and daily timesheets became a standard reference for many years. Starting with dedicated word processors, the Epley firm evolved into one of the first public relations firms to automate with networked computers.

At the same time, Epley has been able to see the downside of technology. The world is drowning in an

ocean of information overload. It's awash with messages that conflict, obscure, deceive, inform, educate, promote, motivate, or just trivialize. Navigating that sea of information clutter is our job. It requires us to master the use of advanced information technology as conduits of our information. We must shape our messages to take advantage of the tools, and not let the tools rule our communication. (Epley, 1999, n.p.)

Speaking of the Internet specifically, he has said the following:

It's undisciplined, and only partially harnessed somewhat by search engines that in nanoseconds can browse through millions of documents and organize reference Web sites on any subject ranging from the ascension of Christ to Zoology. It's intellectual, educational and entertaining. It's an archival dump for news, history, rumor, and a wide array of personal opinion, often with no sense of accuracy or fair play. . . . It also has a foreboding dark side, making possible the rapid spread of false information, hatred, immorality, deceit, and rumor.

There are as many opportunities for abuse to our freedoms and sensibilities on the Internet as there are to enlighten, to educate, to manage, and to market our goods and services. The Internet is a godsend for marketers. But, a lack of discipline and control make it a very dangerous vehicle for those opposed to particular products, specific organizations or certain beliefs.

The "Net" will dominate our lives for the next 10 to 20 years—or whenever the next radical generation of technology replaces it. And that won't be far in the future. It is a vehicle that soon will be the dominant medium for public relations messages. We must learn how to take advantage of it, to engage others with it and master its growing and rapidly changing idiosyncrasies. (Epley 1999, n.p.)

BEING A GLOBAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AMBASSADOR

As impressive as his professional leadership and futuristic approach have been, it is his contribution to global public relations for which Joe Epley will best be remembered.

He believes that good public relations practice will help make a better world, that it will contribute to stronger national economies and create understanding among diverse peoples. He advocates

forcefully that public relations can create more open societies. In his words, "Public relations is the discipline that helps build better collaboration."

In the last 10 to 15 years, Epley has been speaking in remote locations to demonstrate the power of public relations. Nowhere has this been in greater evidence than in his work to help bring public relations to the former Soviet Union.

Alexander Borisov, now an important Russian diplomat, was an educator when the first American public relations techniques were introduced just before the breakup of the Soviet Union. Borisov was then dean of the School of International Journalism at a university in Moscow. He was not practicing public relations, but rather was looking for help in how to teach it. Eventually, he would become founding president of the Russian Public Relations Association. Epley helped him introduce American public relations techniques to Russia. Borisov says that Epley is an

absolutely remarkable person in the global PR community, both as an excellent practitioner and a man of vision. . . . We worked with him closely, and he signed on behalf of PRSA a letter of understanding with the newly-born Russian PR Association which helped us to start an internship program which opened the gates of knowledge for the first Russians eager to become PR professionals in their new country. (Borisov, personal communication, 2002)

Epley is credited with leading the PRSA drive to supply textbooks and curricula to the Russians, which they adopted for their first course in Western-style public relations. Epley's business associate Mike Herman, who became chair of the PRSA Counselors Academy nearly 20 years after Epley, said the following:

Joe recognized there were no mentors in Russia for this new profession. He helped set up the first public relations course in Moscow. He led an effort by PRSA to sponsor a formal internship program to train aspiring young Russian PR teachers and professionals in the U.S. When our own USIA would not help with the program in Russia, Joe personally recruited PR firms and organizations around the country to underwrite the expenses of Russian interns while in the U.S. As a direct result of his efforts, more than a dozen Russian

interns received on-the-job training in U.S. firms, many including a rotation through our firm. In addition, Joe has personally served as a mentor to practitioners in Russia, Hungary, Slovenia, China, and Argentina. (Herman, personal communication, 2003)

Over the years, Epley has participated in a number of seminars in Russia. One included a program on community relations for the Russian Ministry of Northern Territories. In acknowledgment for all these contributions, the Russian Public Relations Association bestowed lifetime membership on Epley on the occasion of its 10th anniversary in 2001.

Epley has also helped found and chair the Worldcom Public Relations Group, a consortium of independent public relations firms that include members from 35 different countries. Worldcom partner Roger Haywood, a highly respected member of the British public relations community and honorary chairman of that country's Public Relations Standards Council, recalled a keynote address by Epley at the Institute of Public Relations:

His cogent views shaped much of the discussion at that event and for some considerable time after. Many of his perspectives had proven to be central issues. . . . His belief that public relations is a core strategic function that affects corporate policy means that the practitioner must either be in the board room or directly advising the board. He also advanced the view that good public relations is fundamentally about the values of the organization, what it does and not just what it says. Also, that we as custodians of the corporate reputation must be professionals of integrity, courage and vision. (Haywood, personal communication, 2002)

Thus, Epley has been an important global ambassador for public relations and a global role model for the way the business should be practiced.

—*Davis Young*

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ETHICS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

WHY STUDY ETHICS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS?

Public relations ethics inspires much debate between public relations communicators and those suspicious of the field. Because of the weighty responsibilities of the public relations function within an organization and its ability to wield influence, public relations ethics is a vibrant topic that should be discussed, researched, and refined. First, what is ethics? Immanuel Kant wrote, "By way of introduction, I had defined ethics as a science that teaches, not how we are to achieve happiness, but how we are to become worthy of happiness" (1793/1974, p. 45). Other scholars defined ethics as the study of what is right and wrong, fair and unfair, in how we should live our lives. Simply defined, ethics is the study of morality. Ethics assumes that truth and morality exist and can be discovered through the rules, values, and principles that govern, or should govern, behavior.

POWER

Public relations has tremendous power because it involves shaping public opinion by deciding what information is important or pertinent and performing the role of liaison between the organization and its publics. The power of public relations is often debated, but its effects on attitudes and behavior are demonstrable at many levels. Therefore, public relations practitioners have the responsibility to convey honest and accurate information, because what they communicate has far-reaching ramifications. Public relations pursuits such as public affairs and lobbying, issues management, political communication, corporate communication, military communication, investor relations, and activist communication all shape the society in which we live. The power to influence society means that public relations holds enormous responsibility to be ethical. Add to this the ability to shift financial markets and alter supply and

demand, and it becomes clear that public relations is a formidable force in society.

ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE

Systems theory explains that the public relations practitioner is a boundary spanner, holding roles both inside the organization and in publics outside the organization, and thus acting as a communication facilitator. To understand the publics outside an organization, the public relations practitioner must maintain effective and open communication with them, sometimes joining their groups and meetings to understand their viewpoints. The practitioner acts as a representative or advocate of the organization's position while meeting with publics, and while meeting with management in the organization the same practitioner acts as an advocate or representative of the publics' opinions. Having this dual membership is often referred to as holding "divided loyalties," particularly by those suspicious of public relations. In reality, the practitioner is often performing a valuable role by educating the organization to the views of publics and by educating the publics to the organization's policies, priorities, and other factors outsiders could not readily discover. The relationships that the public relations practitioner maintains with publics outside the organization are unique because they provide valuable information on how those publics view certain topics, the values each public holds, and how that public is likely to react to a given decision. This input can become a crucial part of strategic decision making. It can also help to identify issues and solve them proactively before they become major problems. In general, this boundary-spanning role puts pressure on public relations practitioners to be ethical. In fact, in many organizations they counsel the CEO or the dominant coalition in ethical issues.

Critics assume that public relations holds a formidable amount of power to shape public opinion. Detractors of public relations offer cases of unethical behavior as examples of the dark arts of powerful communication effects, manipulation, or "spin doctoring." The powerful effects or "hypodermic needle" model has now been replaced by a more sound model of mediated effects, although

critics of public relations seem unaware of the mediator role communication plays in altering public opinion and behavior.

NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS

The most vehement critics of public relations are often journalists. Research analyzing how the term *public relations* was used in the print media has revealed seven different themes: public relations as creating distraction, disaster, challenge, hype, merely PR, war, or schmooze. The consistent use of the term *public relations* to suggest manipulation of the truth to a dubious end damages the credibility of the discipline. In 2003, Shannon Bowen found that even university students majoring in public relations held negative misperceptions of the discipline and misunderstood its basic responsibilities early in their course of study.

In actuality, ethics is an important consideration to both practitioners of public relations and scholars who teach and study it. The major industry associations of public relations all have codes of ethics and offer ethics seminars and training for practitioners. The discipline has many scholars who research and refine the ethics of public relations as their life's work. Ethics is a part of the public relations curriculum in classrooms around the globe. As a profession, public relations has made strident efforts to engender meaningful ethical standards in practically every industry. The dubious historical beginning of public relations, confusion of public relations with propaganda, and a contentious relationship with journalists have all contributed to the reputation of public relations as an unethical or manipulative pursuit. Although this misconception is prevalent, honest communication and discovery of the truth are utmost concerns in the public relations discipline and professional practice. Even early practitioners such as John W. Hill argued for rigorous ethical standards; he believed that public relations should be the ethical conscience in an organization.

As with any industry or discipline, cases of ethical violations exist within public relations. These cases become famous examples to which critics often refer in attempting to illustrate the "evil" nature of the profession. What those outside the discipline often fail

to realize is that public relations is in the business of solving potential issues before they become problems or crisis situations that would be worthy of media notice. This proactive problem solving is the issues management function of the field. Success in public relations often means resolving an issue before anyone complains about it, thus saving the business untold sums of money it might have spent on lawsuits, media relations, lobbying, compliance, strikes by labor unions, and endless other permutations. Success in issues management is often measured in terms of ethical decisions, averted crises, and money saved by an organization. Thus, the victories of public relations are often unsung.

APPROACHES TO PUBLIC RELATIONS ETHICS

Scholars have attempted to conceptualize an ethical body of knowledge in public relations. Related disciplines such as communication ethics, media ethics, and business ethics have contributed theories and ideas to the discussion. Public relations scholars have applied moral philosophy to public relations ethics and found it a fruitful area of study. However, public relations practice has failed to follow scholarship by basing its ethics squarely in moral philosophy. Few public relations practitioners have studied moral philosophy or ethics, and most tend to rely on situational ethics or crude cost-benefit analyses of dilemmas rather than rigorous philosophical analyses. Research found that situational ethics are the preference of public relations practitioners in the United States. A situational approach to ethics is problematic because it sees no universal or generally applicable moral norms, but looks at each situation independently. The lack of guidance given by situational ethics limits its usefulness; furthermore, it is normally employed by those with very little ethics training. Scholars found that public relations courses and texts gave little attention to the topic of ethics.

Most appropriate for the study of public relations ethics are the philosophical schools of utilitarianism or consequentialist theory, and deontology or non-consequentialist theory. Consequentialism bases the choice of what is ethical on the projected consequences of the decision. The various schools of

thought diverge on how to judge what is of highest moral worth at that phase: it might be the decision that creates the greatest happiness and minimizes harm, serves the majority, upholds the culture in which the decision is made, or serves the greater good. Consequentialism asks us to predict the possible outcomes of our decisions and perform a cost-benefit calculation among the potential outcomes. The ethical outcome is that which generally has the most positive consequences and the least negative consequences. Utilitarianism is the most popular type of consequentialist ethics, defining as ethical that which produces the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Nonconsequentialist ethics uses a different measure of what makes an act morally worthy. Worthiness is defined as doing one's duty to uphold moral principles that apply equally to all people. In this school of thought, ethical behavior is based on what is morally right in principle, rather than on the projected outcomes of a decision. The consequences of a decision are not ignored, but they are not the decision-making guide used in contemplating the correct option among alternatives. Deontology is the most prominent type of nonconsequentialist ethics. Doing one's duty to follow moral principles objectively is how deontologists define ethical behavior. For example, the maxim "It is wrong to lie" would be a universal moral principle, because a lie only works under an assumption of truth. Society would lose this assumption of truth if all people lied whenever it suited their own, subjective interests. Therefore, we can generalize that lying is morally wrong because it is not consistent with our duty as rational agents to uphold moral principles and it becomes logically contradictory when applied. To lie is unethical, regardless of the consequences of a particular lie. This type of reasoning has proven to be beneficial to the practitioners and organizations who employ a deontological paradigm.

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS ETHICS

Many public relations researchers endorsed the idea that public relations practitioners should act as the ethical conscience of their organization. They are

seen as naturally filling this organizational role because of their expertise in relationship building, conflict management, reputation management, and communication with publics. One drawback is that most professional communicators have had little formal training in ethics or philosophy. Thomas H. Bivins concluded that although the study of ethics is crucial to the future of public relations, “there is no accepted conceptual framework from which to study public relations ethics” (1989, p. 49).

Ron Pearson contributed two moral imperatives to the study of public relations ethics. First, he said that maintaining communication relationships with publics is a moral imperative; second, he said one must improve the quality of these relationships by making them “increasingly dialogical” (1989b, p. 377). Pearson advocated a “co-orientation” theory approach based on dialogue and understanding. Viewing dialogical communication as synonymous with symmetrical communication, James E. Grunig and Larissa A. Grunig concluded, “Public relations will be inherently ethical if it follows the principles of the two-way symmetrical model” (1996, p. 40).

Applying these ethical models to public relations practice and educating public relations practitioners about the approaches to analyzing a moral dilemma are primary concerns in this field. For public relations to mature, grow in responsibility, and perform the role of ethical counsel or ethical conscience of the organization, practitioners must be well versed in ethics and trained in ethical analysis. Forward-thinking organizations are embracing this idea today. The growth of public relations ethics will ensure that it can overcome a dubious beginning and perform a positive function in society by providing information and by building and maintaining relationships between organizations and the many publics that they serve.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Corporate image; Corporate social responsibility; Deontology; Issues management, Moral development; Moral philosophy; Symmetry; Systems theory; Utilitarianism

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EUROPE, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

Public relations in Europe is a thriving industry, but without European identity and representation. In 2004, Europe consisted of forty-three countries, and several new countries may emerge in the next couple of years. In many of those countries there are no professional public relations associations. Europe has no pan-continental individual membership public relations association for practitioners. Individual practitioners are members of their national associations. These associations are organized into a confederation—*Confédération Européenne des Relations Publiques* (CERP; <http://www.cerp.org/>)—which has been in crisis for years. European academics used to form a section within CERP, but they left that confederation and formed their own association: European Public Relations Education and Research

Association (EUPRERA; <http://www.euprera.org/>). Students are formally still members of CERP, but it is now probable that they are transforming their organization from CERP Students into European Association of Public Relations Students (<http://www.cerpstudents.net/>). In all, the situation in public relations in Europe is complex, underresearched, and, above all, misunderstood by other continents, which sometimes see Europe as the underdeveloped “United States of Europe.”

This does not mean that public relations is not a flourishing industry. *Public Relations and Communication Management in Europe* is an edited book in which experts from 27 countries have provided an inside view on the situation of public relations in their countries. It shows that public relations is well recognized in most of these countries (although it is rarely named as such), and all over Europe universities offer programs in public relations (communication management). Some textbooks state that after World War II modern public relations came over to Europe with the Marshall Plan. Most public relations experts in Europe believe, however, that the Anglo-American ideas are being mixed with already existing concepts of public relations, although these are never referred to as “public relations” and never studied as such. Public relations in Europe even has a history of at least one century. In 1995, Günter Bentele and Peter Szyska, for example, referred to Krups as the first company with a department dedicated to press relations, set up in 1870. In 1999, Jacquie L’Etang placed the beginning of public relations in England in the 1920s. Eric Lagerwey showed in 1997 that the first public relations departments in the Netherlands also emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century. Moreover, the Dutch claim to have the oldest professional association in the world, established in 1946.

The European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) was initiated at a meeting in Strasbourg in 1989, when CERP became a real confederation with 19 national associations, CERP PRO (an association of in-house practitioners), CERP CONSULTANTS (an association of consultants in public relations working in agencies or as independent consultants), and CERP EDUCATION (an association of educators and researchers).

With CERP collapsing in the late 1990s and other constituent interest associations disappearing, CERP EDUCATION in 1998 established itself as “an autonomous organization that aims at stimulating and promoting the knowledge and practice of public relations education and research in Europe” (EUPRERA, 2003, n.p.). In 2004, EUPRERA had 62 institutional members (primarily university departments involved in public relations teaching) and 38 individual members.

In October 1998, EUPRERA initiated the European Public Relations Body of Knowledge project (EBOK). The purpose of this project is to codify the existing body of public relations literature of European origin and to enable its fuller use and recognition, which are at present restricted by linguistic, cultural, and administrative barriers. The first question was what to include and exclude and, therefore, what the parameters and content of public relations in Europe are. With Karl Nessman’s 1995 statement in mind—that although many ideas have crossed the Atlantic, public relations theory and practice in Europe have developed rather independently—it was questionable whether the parameters of the PRSA Body of Knowledge would fit the view on public relations in European countries. EUPRERA therefore began to feel the need to understand what the United States and Europe have in common and how they differ, and to chart the public relations idiosyncracies in European countries. To investigate these issues, a project team of people from the Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, and Switzerland undertook the Delphi study, with participants from practice and science from 26 European countries. The study included three consultation rounds and was conducted in 1999 and early 2000 (for a full report of the research and the method used, see van Ruler et al., 2000, and van Ruler & Verčič, 2002, both available at www.viewebok.org). Looking at the outcomes of this expert discussion, we found some typicalities of European public relations. Here we focus on two issues, the naming of public relations in Europe, and the definition of public relations.

Names for “public relations” in Germanic and Slavonic languages mean “relations with the public and in the public” where “public” itself denotes a

different phenomenon than it is generally assumed to mean in the public relations discipline in English. Here we take the German term for “public relations” as an example, but similar explanations apply to other Germanic and Slavonic languages (and thus covering much of the northern, central, and eastern parts of the European continent). The German term for *public relations* is *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*, which literally means “public work” and is explained as “working in public, with the public, and for the public” (Nessmann, 2000, p. 220). This definition contradicts the mainstream (United States) understanding of public relations as management of relationships between an organization and its publics. Yet, it also needs to be recognized that Marvin Olasky, inspired by the German sociologist Jürgen Habermas, proposed an alternative approach to the history of public relations in 1987 as being differentiated from “private relations” (and thus giving also an alternative meaning of public relations as something different from just “relations with publics”). Ever since these Germanic and Slavonic translations of the term *public relations* were introduced, it was obvious to the inhabitants that they meant something other than the original United States English term, as Nessmann argued in 2000. However, it would be wrong to just stop here with the recognition of this difference as being a matter of language(s) only. *Öffentlichkeit* does not mean *public* as in publics, audiences, and so forth; it means first of all *public sphere* and, to be more specific, *that which is potentially known and can be debated by all*. *Öffentlichkeit* is an outcome and therefore a quality of public communication in society. By equating *public* with *Öffentlichkeit*, an analytical dimension is lost, namely, that an essential aspect of public relations is that it is concerned with issues and values that are considered publicly relevant, which means relating to the *public sphere*.

This line of public relations thinking was developed in Germany, beginning with Albert Oeckl, and in the Netherlands by Anne van der Meiden. It is also represented in other European countries. These theorists reason that not only is public relations about relations with the public(s), but it also creates a platform for public debate and, consequently, a public sphere. As Franz Ronneberger and Manfred

Rühl argued, public relations is to be measured by the quality and quantity of the public sphere, which it co-produces through its activities. Quality and quantity in the public (sphere) relate to “*öffentliche Meinung*”—which can be translated as “public opinion.” This public opinion is, however, not viewed as an aggregate of individual opinions, as conceived in public opinion polling, which is a psychological approach to public opinion. In the sociological approach it has a qualitative as well as a quantitative dimension. The quality is intended as a benchmark for public relations, as a type of democratic political authority, and is the foundation on which democracy is built. Its quantity is related to such questions as: Who is in the debate and who is not?

In this societal approach, public relations serves the same kind of (democratic) function that journalism does, since they both contribute to a free flow of information and the interpretation of that information and to the development of the public sphere: in size (“How many people are involved in public life?”), in level (“What is the level at which we discuss public matters?”), and in quality (“What are the frames used in the debates?”). This echoes what James W. Carey called a cultural approach to communication. Theory building in public relations is closely related to journalism in many European countries, not because the practitioners must deal with journalists, but because of these overlapping functions in society.

For many European scholars, public relations produces social reality and, therefore, a certain type of society. That is why many European scholars look at public relations from a sociological perspective instead of an economic, psychological, or organizational perspective. In this respect the European use of *public* and *public relations* can mean something totally different than it normally does in the United States.

Secondly, we focused on the definition of public relations in Europe. The first two rounds of the research project generated a wide variety of views on public relations per se as well as on certain roles for public relations within (or on behalf of) an organization and in society at large. It became obvious that most participants did not want to choose just one view but several views, as applicable. After studying the answers and looking for a description

of the characteristics of the domain, we therefore no longer tried to find a one-dimensional definition about what public relations in Europe could be, but we clustered all of the statements and ideas into four characteristics. We examined these clusters in the third round of discussion to find out whether they can be used to study European public relations in depth in the future. We asked the participants whether they agreed with our analysis of their input, that public relations could have four characteristics and that these characteristics could be seen as distinct aspects of public relations rather than as mutually exclusive views:

1. *Reflective*: Public relations analyzes changing standards, values, and standpoints in society and discusses these with members of the organization in order to adjust the standards, values, and standpoints of the organization accordingly. This role is concerned with organizational standards, values, and views and is aimed at developing mission and organizational strategies.

2. *Managerial*: Public relations develops plans to communicate and maintain relationships with public groups in order to gain public trust and mutual understanding. This role is concerned with commercial and other internal and external public groups and with public opinion as a whole and is aimed at executing the organizational mission and strategies.

3. *Operational*: Public relations prepares the means of communication for the organization and its members in order to help the organization formulate its communications. This role is concerned with services and is aimed at executing the communication plans developed by others.

4. *Educational*: Public relations helps all the members of the organization become competent in communication so that they can respond to societal demands. This role is concerned with the mentality and behavior of the members of the organization and is aimed at internal public groups.

The participants of this Delphi research project accepted these characteristics as a means of defining the domain. According to statements from several countries of Europe, such as Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands, and Sweden, it seems to be questionable whether public relations is

restricted to maintaining relationships with certain public groups. It became obvious that in many countries public relations is also seen as the public relationship any organization has with “society” and with the search for a “license to operate” any organization needs (see Jensen, 2000; Ronneberger & Rühl, 1992). This highlights the importance of the reflective and educational characteristics of public relations.

—*Betteke van Ruler and Dejan Verčič*

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EVALUATIVE RESEARCH

See Benchmarking; Qualitative research; Quantitative research

EVENT

Event management, also known as special event planning, provides a valuable vehicle by which for-profit and not-for-profit organizations are able to engage in specialized public relations activities. Events help organizations become recognized and establish and maintain relationships with key constituents through direct communication. Types of special events utilized by organizations include new building dedications, fundraisers, galas, product launches, receptions, and community or arts sponsorships. When executed well, events can add greatly to the organization's profile and prestige.

SPECIAL EVENTS DEFINED

Special events are those circumstances in which organizations have to deviate from traditional

public relations, advertising, and marketing efforts and meet directly with clients. Nevertheless, they should be part of an integrated public relations campaign. Some may have a non-media-related purpose, but typically they are structured to be part of the organizations' larger communication plan. They provide a vehicle by which to directly communicate with customers, often by bringing them to a place of business.

Successfully executed, a special event can enhance an organizational image by presenting a company as proficient and professional, thereby adding to its prestige. In executing special events, companies provide "ready-to-be-consumed" media images and stories that support their public relations efforts.

A major function of many, though not all, special events is that they often are organized around a fundraising theme or purpose. Many special events are designed to provide people with a meaningful experience by which they enjoy participation or entertainment in exchange for a donation to a worthy cause or to a political candidate.

EXAMPLES OF SPECIAL EVENTS

The types of special events are highly diverse; among them are press conferences, fundraisers, dedications, open houses, gala events, award ceremonies, product launches, meetings and conferences, golf outings, trade shows, contests, rallies and marches, and benefit concerts. Although the different incarnations of special events are limited only by the imagination, the primary categories of special events are open houses, fundraisers, project groundbreaking or completion ceremonies, holiday celebrations, grand openings, promotions, and commemorations and anniversaries.

FACTORS IN SUCCESSFUL SPECIAL EVENT PLANNING

To be successful in developing special events, a number of factors are worth noting. First, to generate media attention, an event should be newsworthy in its own right. Second, events tend to work best

when there is a meaningful link between a company and an event, such as when women's fitness apparel companies stage events to fight breast cancer. Third, if there is to be a product link, it should be evident but not intrusive; more direct approaches tend to turn consumers off. Finally, the event itself should be well planned and executed to make the experience distinct and memorable.

HOW TO PLAN SPECIAL EVENTS

When planning a special event, there are a number of important considerations to take into account. First, a special event needs to be a part of a larger public relations plan. It should follow traditional public relations techniques of research, planning and budgeting, implementation, and evaluation. Furthermore, the event must be effectively promoted to generate both media and public interest.

Although standard public relations techniques are necessary, special events also have a number of unique characteristics that require specific planning and focus. Attention to detail is especially critical in event management, in which perfection is in the mastery of thousands of small details.

From start to finish, there are a number of important concerns that an event planner must keep in mind. First, care must be taken in choosing the timing and the location of the event. The event also must not conflict with other major events. If the occasion will be held outside, attention must be paid to weather concerns, with contingency plans made available. Additionally, thought must be given to signage, transportation and reception, as well as to necessary banners and other promotional materials that effectively represent the organization's image. There also is the problem of providing tickets; tickets provide event managers a means by which to gauge interest and to manage attendance.

Another feature of special events is that they characteristically require production and technical assistance in the form of a stage, audiovisual equipment, microphones, and lighting. Most of this equipment, as well as tents, booths, fences, tables, and portable generators, is available for rent.

Special consideration should be given to the choice of food and beverages; the organization must take into account the image it wants the special event to promote, as well as modern drinking and dietary habits and concerns (e.g., vegetarianism and food allergies). The same concerns often surround the topic of entertainment. Entertainment must not offend, must be booked and paid for, and again, must reflect positively on the organization.

Risk management is a further concern. It clearly goes without saying that safety procedures need to be spelled out and followed. Contingencies that must be planned for include illness, heart attack, and overconsumption of food or drink; therefore, if liability insurance is not enough, necessary insurance riders for the event must be procured.

A major issue of event planning is that of security: keeping out unwanted guests or activists who would seek to disrupt the event and ensuring the safety of those who are inside.

Finally, though it is less than glamorous, sanitation is an area that requires attention. Some companies have taken to renting trailers with generous "powder rooms" to get away from the indignities of port-a-potties. Finally, additional planning must be done to handle the collection and disposal of trash.

—Keith Michael Hearit

See also Campaign; Cause-related marketing; Communication management; Community relations; Consumer/customer relations; Entertainment industry publicity/promotion; Philanthropy; Photo-op; Program/action plans; Publicity

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EVOLUTION OF PUBLICITY AGENCIES

The evolution of publicity agencies followed a natural progression. Practitioners who created the first publicity agencies learned their practice in the service of various employers or individual clients. These often were politicians, but they also included large companies and some nonprofits that were just beginning to learn the value of professional communication.

As was true a century ago, today's practitioner might start her or his practice in an agency and eventually work for a company or nonprofit. That person might start with a nonprofit and change jobs to join a firm or company. This varied pattern was not unfamiliar to practitioners of the past who decided that they could make a professional career by hanging out a shingle that essentially said, "public relations publicity for sale." They had learned the rubrics of the profession in one venue and then decided to serve various clients in a professional capacity.

Scholars and practitioners may argue over the origins of the professional practice of public relations. Such studies focus on a search for the first moment the terms *public* and *relations* were used together in a manner that could suggest an origin. Some will argue that any communication by an organization such as a government to citizens, members, followers, and even enemies serves as public relations. Therefore, they look for the motive to communicate, persons whose task it was to design and disseminate messages, a formal source that wants to get messages out to targeted audiences, a target of the communication, and a technology that would be used to convey the message. By applying this standard set of conditions, various scholars have argued that they have found the exact origins of the practice at various points and in any of several countries or civilizations.

P. T. Barnum honed the skills of publicity and promotion in mid-19th century. Publicity can also be said to go back to spectacles such as the Roman games and medieval jousting matches. Ceremonies to elect and anoint leaders are part of societal behavior. Public relations techniques have been

used to dramatize coronations and the formal enrollment of religious heads. All cultures offer ample evidence that by 1900 public communication was an established art that also included some science.

Thus, what came to be called public relations was a developing professional practice by the onset of the 20th century. The skills developed in many countries and for various reasons were now being bought and sold as professional services, through what can generically be called publicity agencies. The standard tactic of the practice was press agency.

By the dawn of the 20th century, the lore of the profession was known by practitioners, recognized by other members of society, both feared and applauded because of ethics, and taught through mentoring. Industrial barons as well as other commercial and governmental interests were learning the power of the press. They were developing skills and tactics for responding to and forging news trends. They were learning to tell narratives of their industry, governmental agency, political candidate, or nonprofit organization. These ingredients of the public relations practice were emerging from a mix of growing industrial power and the burgeoning print media—newspapers and magazines. This was a battlefield for influence, promotion, and favorable public policy.

Professional publicity and promotion occur in two forms. The practitioner either works in a hired agency-client relationship or works as an employee. The person or team is employed and charged with the responsibility of attracting attention, forming positive or negative attitudes, and motivating individuals to move toward the predictable outcomes sought by the sponsor.

This model of publicity and promotion was not unique to the 19th century, but it was tailored to the societal interests and the available means of communication of the era. What became well-established professional agencies in abundance in the 20th century started as in-house operations or one-person services in the 19th century. Thus, to understand the practice as it is known today, we need to know how agencies began and evolved.

George F. Parker contributed his journalistic skills, knowledge of the media, and desire to

achieve clients' goals to one of the first publicity agencies. By the time he helped found Parker and Lee, he had years of experience working for Democratic political organizations and major candidates. He played a key role in the election of Grover Cleveland to be president of the United States in 1884. He understood the subtleties of message positioning and media relations. He wrote and placed stories. He staged events. He created excitement and organized rallies. He knew what the reporters believed to be good news fodder and was able to provide it for his candidates and against their opponents. By the early 1890s, he had opened a small office in New York City that served as campaign headquarters. He recognized that reporters need to know where to find people who know where stories are developing. Parker was able to share these vital skills and well-honed best practices with his new partner, Ivy Lee.

Perry Heath worked for Republicans. He directed the Bureau of Publications and Printing for the Republican National Committee during William McKinley's campaign against the orator of the plains, William Jennings Bryant. This organization churned out press releases, created and implemented events, wrote speeches, provided canned editorials, and manufactured innumerable pamphlets and leaflets. Forerunners of the modern press kits were distributed in the thousands. Stories were manufactured.

The utility industry engaged local newspapermen to get stories into print that could favor one company's interests against those of another. In the battle of the currents (late 1880s and 1890s), George Westinghouse, aided by Samuel Insull, arranged for local newspapermen to write favorable stories featuring the benefits of alternating current. This engineering and business initiative was opposed by Thomas Edison, who used similar tactics to applaud the safety of direct current. Edison used a variety of publicity stunts and government relations in an effort to paint alternating electrical current as unsafe and thus an unwise industrial standard for electricity use in people's homes.

The evolution of the publicity bureaus was the natural progression of the emerging mass communication industry. News hounds and editorial

writers, as well as feature story journalists, were creating a market for news by, among other things, finding fault with the industrial barons. Bad news sells newspapers. But so does product publicity. Large industries created and responded to growing mass markets. National industrial and commercial complexes supplanted local businesses. Industrialized products began to supplant products sold by local word of mouth and established local manufacturers. To create and reach mass markets, publicity attracted attention and created brand awareness through mass media.

The Civil War was a battle of regions as well as of news stories. The careers of generals and presidents hung in the balance between favorable and hostile news stories. Out of this experience also arose the American Red Cross, through the publicity and promotion efforts of Clara Barton. She and other reformers called for corporate, government agency, and private citizen support to identify, understand, and solve social problems that were often associated with poverty, disease, and disaster.

The evolving publicity bureaus recognized the link between corporate and robber baron image and a willingness to serve society. The amassing of wealth carried with it the stigma of ruthlessness. To soften this image, countless barons made philanthropic contributions and fostered the future of non-profit agencies. Publicity bureaus were often the focal point of bringing the industrial baron and a charity together. Once the relationship was forged, publicity was used for both parties. Names such as Rockefeller and Carnegie became widely associated with philanthropy, thanks to the work of experts in publicity. Favorable publicity was often an answer to the ostensible evils of amassed fortunes, unfair labor conditions, poverty, disease, and other economic disadvantages.

The first publicity agency in the United States was formed in Boston under the name Publicity Bureau. It was the amalgamation of the talents of George V. S. Michaelis, Herbert Small, and Thomas O. Marvin. The exact history of the firm is clouded in mystery, but it formed in the first years of the new century. Its client list included Harvard University. The men who forged this agency, like decades of their brothers and sisters in the trade, came to publicity through the

experience of newspaper work. They had learned news values and the patterns of the news profession. Knowing the wiles and ways of journalism, they understood how journalists looking for stories wanted individuals to interview and copy that could be readily incorporated into the next newspaper edition or magazine issue.

Fragmentary accounts credit Michaelis with giving form and life to the practice of private publicity counseling and activities for hire. He and his partners were interested in advertising as well as publicity. In a sense, they were engaging in integrated communication long before that concept would become fashionable. In the truest sense of the word, they sought to be communicators on behalf of clients whose story deserved to be told. Higher pay and a more glamorous list of associates lured newspaper people into public relations. Beyond that base motive, however, it is fair to say that these early publicists truly believed that their clients' stories deserved to be told, and told well.

Early on, agencies realized the virtue of client relationships. They built personal and professional relationships with their clients, blending the interests of the agency and the client. They knew that the continuing and future business for their agency depended on the ability to make a difference for clients. Along the way, agencies were bound to lose clients for various reasons, but they wanted continuing business with clients. That business relationship could lead to stable business practices and a predictable payroll. The leaders of these agencies recognized that success led to more success.

The perils of agencies today, and certainly in those fledgling days, included distorting the public record and working in secrecy. Both of these charges were launched against members of the Publicity Bureau during its work for the railroad industry against the likes of Teddy Roosevelt (president of the United States) and William LaFollette (reformist senator of the United States). Industries waged battles to keep control of their financial and managerial destinies against reformers who wanted to make these industrial giants operate much more in the public interest and far less in the private interest. Well-placed stories and editorial comment could be used strategically in the interest of the

client. If these stories were bought and paid for by the industry, however, while appearing to be ostensibly the work of independent journalists and opinion leaders, the worst side of this new practice could be ruinous to its reputation. Then, as now, the ethics of the profession were questioned because the profession failed to achieve openness and balance or objectivity in the generation of facts and opinions. The ethical crux of the industry, then and now, is the ability of deep pockets industry to distort the public record and public opinion by canny public relations publicity tactics. If the playing field was the news media, then the logic went that publicity could be crafted on behalf of a narrow interest far removed from the public interest.

In 1904, one of the earliest publicity firms was formed by combining the talents of George F. Parker and Ivy L. Lee, who became legendary for the development of client relationships and tactical options. In its own right, their practice was innovative, but it built on a foundation. The firm these men created lasted, through the eventual leadership of Tommy Ross, for the better part of a century.

The evolution of the publicity bureau was natural and predictable. It simply resulted from the recognition by several key individuals that they could earn nice salaries and serve clients' interests by generating favorable publicity and fighting bad publicity. The history of public relations is inseparable from the needs of an individual or organization to get out its messages, the evolution of various media, and the recognition by certain persons that they have special skills that can be sold.

Although the voices of commercial, social, and financial critics can never be silenced, the legacy of the profession has had to address—and will continue to do so—the narrow tactical options under the heading of publicity. That became the identifying theme of agencies and independent practitioners in the late 1880s through the early 1900s. In many ways, the profession has not, and cannot, get away from the ethical challenges and mistakes associated with the early publicity bureaus. Where the profession goes and how it matures are uncertain, but what is without question is that it will forever wrestle with the aura of the professional who can influence media coverage and content. The early

publicity bureaus knew this fact and sold their services, but probably not their souls.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Barnum, P. T.; Battle of the currents; Client; Client/agency relationships; Ethics of public relations; Government relations; Insull, Samuel; Integrated marketing communication; Lee, Ivy; Nonprofit organizations; Parker, George; Press agency; Press kit; Promotion; Publicity; Ross, Thomas J. “Tommy”

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EXCELLENCE THEORY

Excellence theory is a term used to represent the theoretical knowledge and findings of a landmark study funded by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Research Foundation. The Excellence study, headed by University of Maryland’s James E. Grunig, resulted in the publication of three books: J. E. Grunig’s *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (1992) (theory and literature review), *Manager’s Guide to Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (D. M. Dozier, L. A. Grunig, & J. E. Grunig, 1995) (practical implementation of the research findings), *Excellent Public Relations and Effective Organizations: A Study of Communication Management in Three Countries* (L. A. Grunig, J. E. Grunig, & D. M. Dozier, 2002) (findings and refinement of excellence theory), and numerous journal articles. Excellence theory explains how public relations can contribute as a management function to overall organizational effectiveness. Larissa A. Grunig, J. E. Grunig, and D. M. Dozier argued, “The major premise of the Excellence theory states that communication has value to an organization because it helps to build good long-term relationships with strategic publics” (2002, p. 57).

The Excellence study spanned over a decade, studied 327 organizations, and included both qualitative and quantitative study on an international level. IABC’s \$400,000 grant funded research on public relations in organizations of all types, including corporations, government agencies, nonprofits, and associations. The team of researchers sought to identify the key factors that make public relations “excellent” in its contribution to organizational effectiveness, in its role as a management function, and in the internal composition, structure, and function of the ideal public relations department. The organizations selected to participate in the Excellence study either had records as excellent communicators and served as best-case exemplars, or had poor communications, serving as examples of what can and does impede effective public relations. By integrating the literature across many diverse disciplines, the team developed theoretical propositions that it then tested with empirical data. Those propositions helped to form the Excellence theory and were refined into the principles (or factors) of excellence. These propositions comprised assertions about the normative structure of the public relations function, organizational structure, and external variables such as relationships with publics and stakeholders.

Factor analysis of the data (mathematically searching for data clustering around underlying connections among the variables) revealed what the researchers labeled the “Excellence factor.” The Excellence factor comprises several characteristics that span organization size and type, culture, and other influences, allowing them to be labeled “generic” principles of excellence. These characteristics are the backbone of the excellence theory, providing a normative yet practical guide for how public relations can make the maximal contribution to an organization. The Excellence factor was isolated into 10 principles of excellence, and then condensed into the following eight broad variables.

1. The *value of communication*, as seen by the CEO and top management of an organization, was found to be indicative of excellent public relations. CEOs were asked to rate the value of public relations in comparison with other departments. The CEOs who placed higher value on public relations favored a communication

function in their own companies with many of the attributes of excellence described here. CEOs who highly valued public relations were likely to have more effective public relations units. Senior public relations practitioners in these organizations were likely to participate in the overall strategic management of the organization.

2. *Contribution to strategic organizational functions* is an indicator of public relations excellence that is highly dependent on how highly the CEO values communication. The organization depends on effective relationships with publics for its survival, and public relations should incorporate the views of those publics into organizational planning. Active participation in strategic planning is necessary for public relations to contribute to organizational effectiveness, but access to the high-level process is difficult to attain. Public relations contributes frequently in the organization's response to social issues and routine operations. It contributes less frequently to strategic planning, except in organizations in which the CEO places high value on the public relations function.

3. *Performing a management role* is essential to public relations being included in strategic management. Public relations roles can be divided into the broad categories of *technician* (based on a skill set, such as news writing) and *manager* (based on business management knowledge, such as research, planning, and advising). Senior public relations practitioners who perform primarily a management role rather than a technical role contribute to organizational effectiveness and excellence in the communication function.

4. A crucial component of excellence theory is the *model of public relations* preferred by an organization. Four models of public relations were developed: press agency (publicity), public information (dissemination of accurate information), two-way asymmetrical communication (scientific persuasion), and two-way symmetrical communication (mutual understanding). Both two-way models are based on research; both one-way models describe a simple output of communication from the organization. Although both the two-way asymmetrical model and the two-way symmetrical model are effective and present in excellent organizations, the two-way symmetrical model is generally indicative of excellence because it provides a vehicle for dialogue with publics. The dialogue inherent in the symmetrical model results in long-term relationship building and maintenance. Moreover, including the views of publics in

organizational decision making is believed to be inherently ethical and provides information that the organization can use in strategic planning. For these reasons the two-way symmetrical model is deemed the most excellent approach to conducting public relations.

5. The *potential* of the communication department to actually practice the ideal type of excellent public relations is another factor of excellence. Excellence theory holds that the two-way symmetrical model and the managerial role must both be employed, and the potential of the top communicator to do so is based on his or her knowledge. The *knowledge of research methods* required to implement the two-way models poses a problem for some practitioners, limiting their potential for excellence. *Knowledge of managerial functions*, such as budgeting, evaluating research, managing a staff, and planning goals and objectives, is also necessary for excellence. The Excellence study found that although knowledge of the management role and research function is about average, most departments do not have enough expertise in strategic management (segmentation and evaluation research, issues management functions). Knowledge of both research and strategic management must be present and used for public relations to contribute at the highest level.

6. *Activist pressure* on an organization forces it to communicate with external publics. The Excellence study used activist pressure to determine the impact of an organization's environment on public relations effectiveness. Organizations with higher levels of activism had higher levels of successful public relations. Often, activism is an agent of positive change or spurs the organization to be proactive in managing its issues rather than reactive. Activist pressure encourages public relations to tackle important issues of organizational policy, to proactively manage issues, and to contribute at higher levels of strategic planning in the organization.

7. *Organizational culture, structure, and other employee-related variables* were also found to be a factor of excellence. Organizations with participative rather than authoritarian cultures, and organic rather than mechanistic or highly stratified structures, produce efficacious public relations. Symmetrical, dialogical systems of internal communication and high levels of job satisfaction also contribute to excellent public relations.

8. *Embodying diversity*, particularly in relation to the *status of women* in a female-dominated profession, was the next excellence factor. Researchers hypothesized that

a diverse public relations department could better understand and represent diverse publics in the organization's environment. The study revealed that organizations that treat women well do so across the board, in career advancement opportunities, nondiscriminatory policies, a supportive work environment, and so on. The team concluded that treating female employees well is a characteristic of excellence.

These factors of excellence can be applied broadly to improve almost any public relations unit. However, they revealed what was statistically significant and did not reveal every desirable trait of normative public relations. Subsequently, based on qualitative research, a final factor of excellence was added to the list: *ethics*. Dejan Verčič wrote that the final principle of excellent public relations was "ethics and integrity" (1996, p. 58). Shannon Bowen's research reinforced the importance of an organizational commitment to ethical decision making as a crucial factor of public relations excellence. Organizations with a rigorous ethics training program and codified decision-making paradigm or model were more excellent than those that simply attempted to be ethical without investing resources in defining, training, and analyzing ethics.

Excellence theory provides a normative guide for how public relations should be conducted, structured, and implemented, and it delineates the factors that help public relations contribute to overall organizational excellence. The Excellence study also provides concrete, empirical evidence to support the theory, and it explains how and why certain factors contribute to outstanding public relations. Pressure is increasing on many public relations professionals to justify expenditures on communication, to show how the function contributes to the bottom line of the organization or the return on investment, and to show that nebulous concepts such as corporate reputation translate into a competitive advantage. Excellence theory shows that public relations does enhance the operation of an organization by maintaining two-way, balanced communication with the publics on whom the organization ultimately depends.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Ethics of public relations; Issues management; Symmetry; Systems theory

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EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

Executive management consists of the personnel at the top of the organizational chart. Many nonprofit organizations and government agencies also have a senior management team that fosters their culture, management principles, and guiding policies.

These executives set the mission and craft the vision of the organization, create and implement the budget, lead the strategic planning effort, and foster the organization's reputation and internal culture. They select operating standards, design and defend brand equity, foster the culture of the organization, and set the tone for the quality of relationships that

are developed and maintained with the organization's markets, publics, and targeted audiences. With or without the counsel of senior practitioners, executives create public relations for their organization, whether by design or default.

The executive management team is divided by function. Function heads take their titles from the unique activities for which they are responsible. Executives oversee the various functions they direct.

The person at the pinnacle of the organizational chart is the chief executive officer (CEO). In most organizations, whether business or nonprofit, this person reports to a board of directors. The CEO might be the chairman of the board, but this is not always the case. The typical executive arrangement empowers the board to fire a CEO and hire a replacement. The board helps set the direction—mission and vision—of the business, as well as advises its strategic planning. Nonprofits often have a similar arrangement; for instance, the CEO of a university is the president (or chancellor), who reports to a board of trustees. Many foundations and charitable nonprofits have a similar structural arrangement, with a board serving in a planning oversight capacity.

Beneath the CEO is a layer of executives, each one of which is responsible for her or his broad set of functions. The chief financial officer (CFO) or treasurer is accountable for the financial position of the business as well as its compliance with Securities and Exchange Commission regulations, in the case of a publicly traded company. The chief operating officer (COO) is responsible for the operations intended to make the organization successful because they generate revenue. Rare is the organization that does not have some variation of CEO, CFO, or COO—by whatever title. The CEO might also be president or the COO might be president, especially if the CEO is chairman of the board.

Various organizations, depending on their nature and position in the economy, will have additional function heads at the “C” level, or the persons at this level might hold the title of executive vice president, vice president, or manager. The specific titles are sensitive to the culture of the organization and

the industry or nonprofit sector where it operates. Persons at this level might be in charge of marketing, public relations or public affairs (or corporate communication), technology, domestic activities, global activities, manufacturing, and other areas. In the nonprofit world, a typical title at this level would be the chief development officer, who is in charge of raising money.

The key to understanding executive management is to realize that the first two or three levels in the organizational chart are accountable for all of the important functions needed to make the organization successful. Every activity that counts for the organization's success is brought together into the purview of senior management.

The executive management team creates and manages the organization using a set of strategies called management by objectives as it develops and implements a budget designed to achieve specific outcomes. In the broadest terms, it selects a set of desirable outcomes and formulates a budget to support the strategies needed to achieve these outcomes. Formulation of the budget is the means by which the organization generates the revenue it needs to achieve its mission and vision.

Executives are responsible for line and staff functions. A line function is anything that is vital for the success of an organization. For instance, in a manufacturing company, its manufacturing operations would be a line function. Staff functions are advisory to the persons who are responsible for line functions. In many organizations, legal counsel and public relations serve in staff capacities. Persons thus work in a matrix whereby key sets of line and staff functions are interdependent for the success of the organization.

In companies that are primarily committed to marketing, public relations may be a line function supporting the marketing effort. In other companies, such as multinational petrochemical businesses, public relations is likely to be under the public affairs functions and operate as staff. As such, the public relations persons are responsible for helping to create and implement the communication philosophy and strategies of the organization.

In organizations committed to issues management, senior public relations personnel are involved

in strategic planning, the development of standards of corporate responsibility, issue monitoring, and issue communication. This structure is most typical of businesses that work to positively position themselves in the public policy arena as well as engage in traditional marketing activities.

Businesses with a serious commitment to public relations may have a chief communication officer (CCO), who is responsible for the communication activities of the organization. As such, the person is likely to be a member of the executive cadre that develops the rationale and methods for fostering relationships, including dealing with activists and other stakeholding publics.

Relevant to the practice of public relations is the level in the organizational chart held by the most senior practitioner. The culture of many companies dictates the disciplines that persons must have mastered to serve at the “C,” “P,” and “V” levels. For example, multinational petrochemical companies may have an engineering or legal counsel bias that results in communication personnel not rising above the manager levels. In companies where marketing is the primary culture, public relations reports to marketing and is primarily limited to publicity and promotion activities.

For over a century, senior practitioners and leading academics have recommended that the counseling function of public relations be vital to the success of any organization. Public relations personnel can support the organization’s efforts to raise revenue, but they can also help it reduce costs if effective public relations and human resources collaborate to reduce turnover and build the organization as one that is preferred by the workers. Costs may also be reduced by having effective customer relationships and more collaborative rather than contentious relationships with activists. Activists often badger organizations into compliance by using tactics that raise costs. Public relations can help reduce such costs. The same is true for effective public relations prior to, during, and after a crisis. Senior practitioners can also serve as a vital part of the conscience of the organization, providing insight to ethical challenges.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Issues management; Management theory; Marketing; Public affairs; Publicly held companies; Publics; Securities and Exchange Commission; Stakes; Target

EXPERIMENT/ EXPERIMENTAL METHODS

An experiment is what John Hocking, Don Stacks, and Steven McDermott have labeled the *sine qua non* of all research. The experiment is a carefully controlled research study that allows the researcher to state within certain limits that a relationship exists between two elements and what causes the relationship to change. The experiment, as John Pavlik has lamented, is underrepresented in public relations, partly because of a limited theoretical base and the applied nature of public relations. Another reason for its lack of use may be the 24/7 nature of public relations practice.

The experiment is a very powerful research method that is extremely limited in its ability to generalize to other situations. The limitation is based on the fact that the experiment requires as much control as can be placed on the actual implementation of the study. When an experiment is conducted, the researcher attempts to keep all other influences constant, varying only what is manipulated (the “independent” variable) and observing its effect on the “dependent” variable. The dependent variable, then, is dependent for its result on the manipulation of the independent variable. Because most experiments attempt to test a theory that makes predictions based on the relationship(s) between the independent variable and the dependent variable, an experiment predicts—or hypothesizes—the expected relationships. On the basis of a theory, the experiment is conducted, data are collected, and the results are submitted to a statistical analysis in a way that allows the researcher to state with a certain degree of confidence that the experiment’s results were based on hypothesized relationships and not on measurement or other types of error. Error is what the experiment attempts to reduce when the researcher establishes control.

There are a number of different experiments, each based on the degree of control placed on the

study. The most controlled experiment is the laboratory experiment, where the researcher attempts to keep all possible sources of error—“spurious variables,” as Donald Campbell and Julian Stanley (1963) call them—out of the study. Relaxing control somewhat results in an experiment that simulates what happens when other variables are allowed to influence the hypothesized relationships. Relaxing the study even more results in a field experiment, where the study is conducted in a natural environment, but still with certain degrees of control.

RELATIONSHIPS, CAUSATION, AND CONTROL

To better understand what the experiment does, one must understand relationships, causation, and control. A relationship in public relations would be a tactic (independent variable) and the outcome expected (dependent variable). Thus we would expect a particular relationship if a press release were written poorly, contained explicit or vulgar language, and was the opposite of what the targeted publication typically published (this would be a negative relationship). For an experimental relationship to exist, the independent variable must cause change in the dependent variable, and there should be no other sources or extraneous variables that might have caused that change. The experiment helps to verify that cause-effect relationship by establishing that changes in the independent variable cause changes in the dependent variable, that the effect follows the cause, and that no third variable (or other unhypothesized variables) caused the change. To establish this, the researcher must establish control over the experiment.

Control, as previously noted, means that all possible sources of error—or invalidity, as Campbell and Stanley label it—have been accounted for. In an experiment, what is unknown is what the research worries about. There are seven sources of error/invalidity that the researcher attempts to control: *history* (what occurs before and during the experiment), *instrumentation* (impact of the measures used), *maturation* (how time impacts on the experiment), *mortality*

(knowing who dropped out of the experiment), *regression* (potential problems associated with choosing people due to extreme scoring), *selection* (biased sampling of participants), and *testing* (impact of being tested on later tests). If the experiment is designed in such a way as to nullify each of the seven sources of invalidity or error, then the results can state, within some margin of safety, that one variable caused a change in another.

No other research method can establish causation; indeed, that is the primary reason for conducting an experiment. Surveys, focus groups, interviews, participant observations—all lack the formal control necessary to state that changes in one variable caused a change in another.

EXPERIMENTAL AND QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

In 1963, Campbell and Stanley published a seminal work (*Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research*) that established what has become the standard set of experimental designs. They placed these designs into three classes: pre-experimental, true experimental, and quasi-experimental. The pre-experimental designs do not randomize participants to different independent variable manipulations (the “experimental conditions”) and do not provide a control group that receives no manipulation to test against for spurious relationships. The true experimental designs randomly assign participants to experimental conditions and provide a control group or groups against which to test the impact of the manipulations. Finally, the quasi-experimental designs vary between randomization and control group assignments and include what some call “time-series” designs in which the participants are observed over a number of times. Of the three designs, the true experiment is the only method that allows researchers to state that a change in one variable *causes* a change in another variable with great certainty.

The true experiment would take a group of people and randomly select them to either the experimental (manipulated) or the control (no manipulation) conditions. The classic true experimental design looks like this:

1. R O_1 ——— X —————> O_2
2. R O_3 —————> O_4

R represents random assignment to the groups O, which represent pre- and posttest measures, X represents that the people in group O_1 were exposed to the independent variable after an individual measure and then measured again at O_2 , and participants in the control group (no X or manipulation) were measured at the same time as the experimental group. If O_2 is different from O_1 , then we know that X caused the change, but could something else have had an impact (that “third” variable)? A comparison between O_1 and O_3 and O_4 would let us know if history, maturation, instrumentation, maturation, mortality, or testing could have affected the results. Selection is controlled for by random assignment to either experimental or control conditions.

The experiment is one of the most elegant research methods available to the public relations researcher. It is not often found in the public relations literature at the academic level and because of time constraints is rarely used in day-to-day practice; however, the advent of the computer has provided some experimental simulation to test potential theories.

—Don W. Stacks

See also Measuring/measures; Quantitative research; Statistical analysis; Theory-based practice

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EXTERNAL PUBLICATIONS

External publications are internally produced media used to connect a company or organization to its publics. They include newsletters and magazines and are distributed to different external constituents to inform them of relevant news, innovations, and activities within the organization. External publications vary in size, purpose, and audience, depending on the organization that produces them and the objectives for the publications. External publications are seen as more credible and consistent than advertising, and they contain articles and information written in a professional manner. Some organizations, however, do use external publications to complement advertising or marketing goals.

There are many types of external publications that organizations use to keep in contact with relevant audiences. A large entity may produce several external publications for customers and potential customers, distributors and salespeople, and shareholders and investors. The budget allotted for an external publication dictates the publication form, from a simple newsletter to a glossy, four-color magazine.

The customer publication is targeted at current and potential customers of a business and serves to entertain, inform, and maintain consistent contact. External publications are more thoroughly read than ads, and whereas advertising budgets can fluctuate, a monthly or annual newsletter can provide customers with continuity. A quality external publication can create loyalty; reinforce the company's name, objectives, products, and services; and let customers become more acquainted with the business via profiles of employees or letters from high-ranking management. Success stories from satisfied customers or information about promotions, achievements, and innovations can create and maintain interest from the customer base. An external publication is also a good way to exhibit a company's activities that differ from normal business activities, such as contributions to causes, honors, and awards. Although an external publication is not always a publicity tool, it creates a large volume of direct exposure without the invasive quality of advertising; this feature makes it an integral part of the communication plan.

The sales publication is a useful tool for keeping distributors and salespeople connected and informed about new procedures, policies, technology, and competitors' actions. If written in a less formal tone, an external publication to distributors can build morale while reminding distributors of the company's goals and correct procedures. By spotlighting different distributors, sales publications can encourage and reward salespeople and keep them motivated to contribute to marketing goals. Solving hypothetical sales problems, demonstrating sales techniques, and including tip sheets can improve business and maintain a confident, trained sales force. When distributors and salespeople are kept up to date about competitors' actions, salespeople are better prepared to field questions from customers about competitors' products and services.

The audiences most concerned with the activities of a public company are the investors and shareholders, and a publication targeting them can fortify the relationship between a company and those with a direct stake in it. Budgets are generally higher for these publications, which are usually printed as a magazine, with longer articles and more detailed descriptions of company changes, policies, and developments. It is common for these publications to have biographies of executives, and they may often contain quarterly or annual financial documents. One such publication is the Annual Report. It is crucial for a company to maintain a healthy relationship with its shareholders and investors, and producing a well-written publication can create a favorable image and help to establish goodwill.

Once it is determined that a company wishes to produce an external publication, there are several options, depending on its size and budget. A small company may choose to produce the publication within its own business by using word processing or desktop publishing software. It might get its target audience from current customers, or it may be willing to purchase a list of addresses to supplement its own collection. A larger company might have an in-house employee with journalistic experience to work exclusively on all its external publications, or it may hire several people to specialize in different ones. Hiring a public relations or advertising firm

will incur greater costs but is more likely to ensure a quality publication.

An external publication should reflect the values and image of the organization it represents. The longevity of the publication is the key factor in determining the types of articles and information it contains. If it is published on a weekly or monthly basis, the articles can be more specific, timely, and detailed. If it is an annual or biannual publication, the articles should be more generic and used as an overview of an organization and its activities. Either way, the publication should have a catchy name and a design or format that incorporates the image and marketing concepts of its company.

In some cases, a well-produced or reputable external newsletter can bring a lot of credibility and positive attention to a company. Northwestern Mutual Foundation produces an external publication every two years, *Community Report*, that showcases its contribution to the community. *Community Report* was a 2002 Platinum PR Award Winner for best external publication, and it boosted the company's falling corporate responsibility image to the top position on *Fortune's* ranking ("External Publication," 2002).

In-flight magazines are some of the most widely read external publications. Delta's *Sky Magazine* and Southwest Airlines' *Spirit Magazine* contain articles about business, sports, entertainment, and also leisure travel destinations that the airlines service.

Not all successful external publications have to come from large organizations. A local hospital could publish a newsletter about health and fitness, or a university could maintain interest in its activities with an alumni magazine.

External publications can be as varied in size and scope as the organizations that produce them. A well-written, informative, and entertaining external publication can be more credible and more thoroughly read than advertising and can give a company direct exposure to a key public.

—Brenda J. Wrigley

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EXXON AND THE VALDEZ CRISIS

On March 24, 1989, the *Exxon Valdez* oil tanker was improperly navigated through the Prince William Sound region of Alaska. The tanker hit a reef, which punctured its hull and resulted in an oil spill estimated at 240,000 barrels. The oil contaminated the water and shoreline, causing significant environmental damage. The spill instantly created an environmental crisis for Exxon that required both immediate and long-term crisis response procedures. The *Valdez* spill has become a standard example of how devastating and enduring a crisis can be. It also demonstrates the importance of crisis management, planning, immediate response, and attention to the multiple publics and stakeholders involved in the crisis.

The oil spill crisis escalated in severity immediately after the grounding of the *Valdez*. Exxon initiated cleanup efforts, but they were unprepared to cope with a spill of this magnitude. The containment equipment that was immediately available was unable to maintain the spill in an area that would allow quick extraction of the oil from the water. The Alyeska Service Company stepped in to assist with machinery to help contain the spill. Alyeska was the operator of the trans-Alaska oil pipeline. Unfortunately, eight years earlier, Alyeska had disbanded a 20-member emergency team assigned to the Prince William Sound area. Exxon and Alyeska had only moderate initial success in their efforts as the oil coated marine life and began to reach the shoreline. The initial perception was that neither Exxon nor any local entity was adequately prepared for this potential crisis. Exxon and local government agencies soon began to blame each other for apparent lack of resources in the area and delays in cleanup efforts. Exxon said it had to follow slow state bureaucratic procedures before being allowed to implement important operations.

General public reaction was nearly instantaneous. At this public relations crisis, Exxon had a wide range of audiences and stakeholders to consider in their responses. Media outlets were immediately drawn to the story, and their coverage presented a horrific view of the accident. Video footage of the spill showed numerous dead birds, fish, and other marine life. Major news magazines all carried the story, often with sad or graphic photographs of affected animals and the shoreline. Environmental groups were quick to blame Exxon for the tragedy, and their predictions for the future of the Prince William Sound environment were gloomy. Some predicted that the effect of the spill would be evident in the sound for many years. Environmental groups suggested that many animals were in danger, including otters, whales, porpoises, and sea birds. Exxon would eventually need to respond to and compensate members of the fishing industry whose businesses were harmed because of the loss of productive waters and damage to their equipment. Initial claims against Exxon ranged from a few hundred dollars to millions of dollars. Alaska governor Steve Cowper headed the group of local and state officials who challenged the efficiency of the cleanup effort and Exxon's role in the response. Individual and various interest groups across the country reacted harshly as well. Protests and boycotts of Exxon were seen throughout the nation, and the media captured footage of people cutting up their Exxon gas cards and carrying protest signs. A momentary jump in gas prices also hit the general public, and the *Valdez* spill was thought to be the cause of the increase.

Two key Exxon figures came to the forefront during this crisis. Exxon chairperson Lawrence J. Rawl was the key spokesperson for the organization. Rawl was the most visible representative from Exxon and became a focal point for attention and criticism of Exxon's efforts. Chairperson Rawl led Exxon through its initial efforts in managing the crisis; the company first reported that they were moving as quickly as possible to clean up the spill but that their efforts would be hampered by weather and the immediate lack of appropriate machinery. Blowing winds made it difficult for Exxon to place floating booms in the water to keep the slick from spreading. The remote location of the spill also

meant that equipment had to be moved from other areas to Prince William Sound. The deployment of equipment seemed to move slowly as people compared the time frame estimates of when larger-scale efforts could begin with the ever widening span of the oil slick and the growing environmental damage. Scientists investigating the damage warned that it would be years before the waters could be restored to their pristine quality before the spill. At this point, Exxon was experiencing growing external pressures from groups angered by the spill and impatient with the response efforts.

Attention to the crisis took a new direction when it was widely reported on March 27 that the *Valdez* was piloted, at the time of the grounding, by third mate Gregory Cousins instead of pilot Joseph Hazelwood. The following day, Exxon reported that Hazelwood had a history of drinking problems and that he had been legally intoxicated 10 hours after the grounding. It was revealed that Hazelwood asked Cousins to pilot the ship while the captain went below. Cousins was not as familiar with the underwater terrain of the sound and ran the ship into a hidden reef. Although this finding gave some explanation for the cause of the accident, it had minimal effect on restoring public perception of the organization. Hazelwood was quickly fired, and Exxon placed blame for the accident on his shoulders. However, the public generally refused to separate Hazelwood from Exxon and blame one and not the other for the spill.

In April 1989, Rawl published a full-page open letter in major papers throughout the country in which he stated the organization's sorrow for the accident and their commitment to the quick and complete cleanup of the spill. This letter was seen as a sign of change in the crisis management approach taken by Exxon. Rawl and Exxon, at this point, appeared to move from a response strategy that focused on Hazelwood and his failure at the helm to a focus on the spill itself and the immediate need to repair the damage that had been done. This statement by Exxon was bolstered by images of wildlife refuge sites that were finding and cleaning animals that had been stricken with the oil. Some press coverage also showed the efforts being made to scrub individual rocks along the shoreline. This

move also represented a change in the crisis response strategy, from avoiding direct blame for the incident to accepting responsibility.

The Exxon crisis continued long after the story left the front pages of American newspapers. In 1991, settlements were finalized between the federal government, the state of Alaska, and Exxon. Exxon faced a \$150 million fine, with \$125 million being eliminated because of payments Exxon had already made toward the cleanup efforts and in settling civil claims. The remaining \$25 million was divided between the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund and the National Victims of Crime Fund.

Exxon also agreed to pay \$900 million over 10 years to facilitate the restoration of the Prince William Sound area. Part of this funding was directed toward reimbursement of the Alaskan and federal government for expenditures during the cleanup. Funding also went toward habitat protection and restoration efforts. This funding allows for the purchase of land that can be maintained and restored to its previous state. The funding will also provide for decades worth of restoration efforts in Prince William Sound. Research and monitoring funds were also included to investigate the needs of different species living in Prince William Sound and how to maintain various populations. Finally, funding was set aside to cover management and facilitate public communication about restoration efforts in the area.

—Bolanle A. Olaniran
and David E. Williams

See also Crisis and crisis management; Crisis communication

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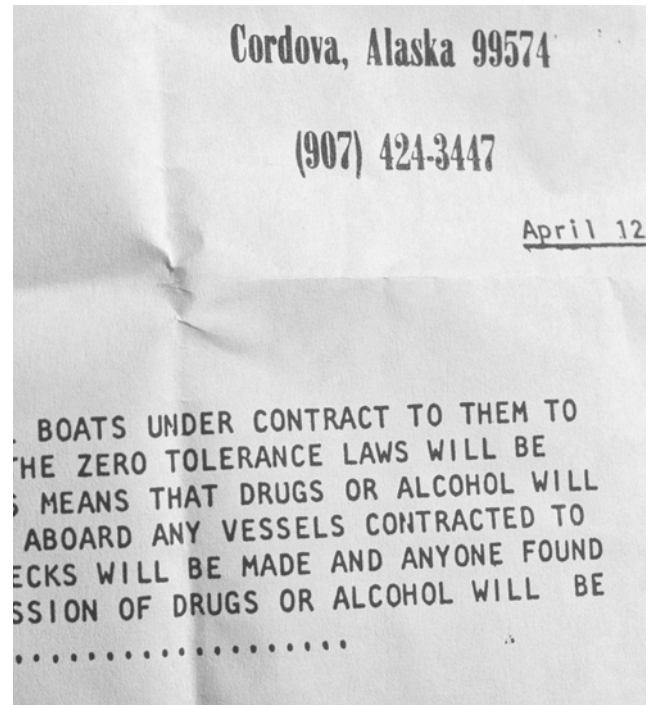
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Cleanup workers spray oiled rocks with high-pressure hoses after the Exxon Valdez ran aground on March 24, 1989, spilling more than 10 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound.

SOURCE: Courtesy of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council. Reprinted with permission.



An Exxon memo proclaims the rules of zero tolerance, posted after the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska.

SOURCE: © Natalie Fobes/CORBIS



FACT SHEET

A fact sheet is what its name implies: a compilation of facts about a certain topic. Fact sheets are typically used as supplements to news releases, to fill information requests, or as one of several pieces in a press kit. Many organizations keep them on file for standard topics (corporate history, general business facts) so that they can respond quickly to requests for information.

Fact sheets should be written with clarity and for ease of use. First, each one should be focused on one topic. The topic can be as broad as general facts about a company or as limited as facts about a specific community service program. Limiting the topic to a single subject allows for focus in the writing and precision in responding to information requests.

Next, the fact sheet should be written in as direct a manner as possible. Many fact sheets are produced as bulleted lists, with subheads to direct the reader to specific areas of interest. Such a format enables users to quickly find specific points they are looking for. This format is particularly appropriate for media users, who turn to fact sheets for additional information beyond a news release when writing a story. Full sentence style is also used, since not all material lends itself to bullet points, and some material can be presented more clearly in full sentences. As with a news release, journalistic writing style should be followed, although headings are often used. A

third possibility is a combination of the two styles: a heading, followed by a brief explanatory paragraph, followed by bullet points. Whatever writing style is chosen, the determining factor should be how to most clearly present the information for easy use.

Finally, the format of a fact sheet should mirror that of a news release. Appropriate contact information is a must, since the piece may not always be used to supplement a news release or as part of a press kit. Even in those uses, it could become separated from the other materials. The date of the most recent update of the information should also be included. This date assures the reader that the information is current and gives the public relations practitioner a quick reference point for knowing when information should be reviewed.

Increasingly, organizations are making fact sheets available on their Web sites. For example, General Electric has fact sheets on topics such as company history and company values accessible through the News Room on its home page (www.ge.com). Useful graphics and pictures are easily included through this medium. As both the media and members of the public come to rely more on the Web as a source of information, making company information available in this manner will become more of an expectation than an option.

—*Maribeth S. Metzler*

See also Press kit

FANTASY THEME ANALYSIS THEORY

Public relations executives must constantly deal with the challenge of divergent audience members who understand the world differently. When this happens, the challenge is to communicate with the audience(s) in such a manner that people with widely different backgrounds and understandings of the world all have the same understanding of the message. Ernest Bormann, originator of fantasy theme analysis theory (also called symbolic convergence theory), discusses precisely this concept. When a group of people are exposed to some communication stimulus, they often discuss it in such a way that they begin to share the same image of that stimulus. It is not a “fantasy” in the sense of dragons and fairy tales, but rather in the sense that members of a group come to share common perceptions of the world around them. Central to this theory is the notion that things that happen are not identical to our perceptions of what happens. For example, a sporting official may make a decision that is viewed as good by supporters of one team, bad by supporters of another, and differently still by audience members who have no particular allegiances. This article will give a general overview of fantasy theme analysis theory by explaining how it works in small groups and how it works in a mass public audience.

A small group might consist of anything from a sports team to a family to a project team in a corporate office place. Any small group will consist of members who think about the world differently. For example, consider a five-person project team at Corporation X. It is likely that both men and women will be represented on the team, and most corporations will have hired people from different races, ethnicities, regions, and religious groups. Each person’s background does not go away when he or she joins the group, and many “team” projects will begin with a series of individuals doing related tasks. Although they would certainly be able to share memos, conversations, and other communicative forms with one another, group members would still enter the project as individuals who look at things in different ways.

This raises the question, however, of how some corporations and other groups form effective project teams that share a single goal and a single vision. As group members go about the process of meeting with one another and completing the other tasks that are necessary for accomplishing group technical goals, they begin to have stories in common. They might be able to tell stories of an unusual event that happened in a meeting or of success in meeting some objective, or even to make caricatures of a supervisor or some other figure they had all encountered. Each of these stories becomes a “fantasy chain.” With the telling of each of these stories, group members are better able to build some sort of common identity. Each “fantasy” (story or shared experience) then “chains” into another story until the group has enough in common to form a cohesive unit. This cohesive unit might be more effective in meeting whatever their objective is.

For example, imagine that Project Team Y at Corporation X is responsible for developing the annual sales and marketing plan. Employees A, B, C, D, and E are assigned as members of Team Y, and at the beginning of the project they are unknown to one another. However, during the first meeting A recounts a funny story that had happened during a previous work assignment. This “fantasy” causes D to “chain” out and think of a particularly bad experience with a previous client. The group begins to tell progressively more important stories, sometimes including ones that have a direct impact on their work performance. Through such actions, Team Y increases group cohesion and productivity.

It is important to note that the process does not always work this way. Some groups may have worldviews that are too divergent to be reconciled, and a host of other issues can prevent fantasy chains from forming and group cohesion from being achieved. There may also be times when the symbolic worlds of a small group converge without a notable increase in task effectiveness. That said, group members who tell stories are more likely to form fantasy chains and bond with one another. Some research indicates that this will help group productivity.

Fantasy theme analysis theory does not have to be limited to the study of small groups. Indeed, it is completely possible for members of an entire nation to have similar enough stories to tell that their symbolic worlds converge and create a shared national story. Certainly political candidates seek to create this type of atmosphere—one in which people begin sharing common positive perceptions of the candidate and therefore increase their likelihood of voting for him or her. Although such a result might not enhance productivity on a national level, it might very well increase feelings of national unity.

For example, the United States is a country of widely different cultures. However, after the terrorist bombings of September 11, 2001, most citizens became fixated on a single national news event. This caused many to start talking to one another about what it means to be an American and about why an event such as this might have happened. Shortly afterwards, a marked increase occurred in overt acts of national support, such as the display of United States flags. More significantly, the numbers of people reporting approval of the job performance of President George Bush rose sharply. Fantasy theme analysis theory would explain this phenomenon by saying that people who had a common story to tell began looking for ways in which to display their unity with one another.

—William Forrest Harlow

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FAQS

Prepared by public relations practitioners and included in media kits and on Web sites, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and their corresponding answers help explain new or technical products, services, mergers, and special events or issues to journalists and other target audiences. Prepared in a question-and-answer format, FAQs are a variation of the traditional fact sheet, and they often accompany news releases, photographs, and related materials to provide additional information that journalists may need to produce stories or that other audiences may need to better understand some product, stance, organization, service, or issue. FAQs can also supplement fact sheets or technical specification sheets.

In the early days of the World Wide Web, a simple FAQ page was placed online to answer questions about companies, products, and services, but today's Web-based FAQs often incorporate embedded links to guide audiences to more specific information about a particular question and answer or to graphics, animation, charts, or video or audio files. Although standby statements and media advisories also incorporate a question-and-answer format, FAQs serve different purposes than those communication tools.

When developing FAQs, public relations practitioners should place themselves in the minds of the target audiences to identify the questions a typical journalist, consumer, employee, or other stakeholder would pose. If possible, questions can be further identified and honed by using focus groups; inquiring informally with members of the target audience; pretesting the information by distributing it and following up with the target audience to see how well the information was understood or if there are additional questions or areas of confusion; and drawing upon previous audience queries for related products, services, or stances to identify likely questions or areas of confusion and to develop the corresponding answers.

—Diana L. Knott

FEATURE

A feature story, also referred to simply as a feature, differs from a news article in tone and organizational structure. Whereas news articles are written in objective journalistic style, feature stories employ a more creative style intended to capture the interest of readers through the use of details and descriptions.

News articles are written in inverted pyramid style, with most important information first (who, what, when, where); in contrast, feature stories are written with an interest-catching beginning, a body or middle that provides background or context, and an end that makes a final point or gives perspective to the topic. In features, sometimes the most important information is saved until the end. Features are usually longer than news articles, and they are not written to “cut from the bottom” to fit the available space. Whereas news articles offer the bare facts, presented briefly, features offer more detail.

Advantages of features for public relations practitioners include their “shelf life.” Features may be written far in advance of publication and used when the topic becomes particularly timely. Feature writing can capture emotions and imaginations more effectively than can news writing. On the minus side, feature writing can be more time-consuming and creatively challenging, and sometimes finding the mass media market for features is difficult. For organizational publications, feature stories are an important communication tool.

Public relations practitioners can write features about people, organizations, programs or services within organizations, products, and issues. Organizational leaders, employees, and volunteers offer obvious subjects for feature stories. Organizational anniversaries provide a focus for feature-length organizational histories. How-to articles are another feature approach. Topics of current public interest may provide another angle for the public relations writer to address.

—Bonnie Parnell Riechert

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is the independent regulatory agency of the United States government that controls most forms of electronic communication in the United States, including radio and television broadcasting, telecommunications, satellite communications, cable television, and new technologies such as direct broadcast satellite service. Created by Congress pursuant to the Communications Act of 1934 (the “1934 Act”), the FCC consists of five commissioners who are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate for five-year, staggered terms. The president selects one commissioner to act as chair, and he or she sets the FCC’s agenda and presides over agency deliberations. Congress monitors the FCC’s activities and controls its budget, and agency rulings are subject to judicial review.

Originally, the FCC was known as the Federal Radio Commission under the Radio Act of 1927. The Radio Act introduced two key concepts that were retained in the 1934 Act and that continue to provide the justification for government regulation of broadcasting: (1) that the broadcast airwaves are owned by the public; and (2) that broadcasters are entrusted to use those airwaves for the purpose of serving “the public convenience, interest, or necessity” (Section 4, Radio Act of 1927, incorporated into Section 303 of the 1934 Act). The 1934 Act, as amended, remains the primary statute under which the FCC operates today. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 revised the 1934 Act in several important ways, most notably with respect to the relaxation of restrictions on the number of broadcasting stations that may be owned by any one entity.

As guardian of the broadcast spectrum, the FCC has played an important role in determining whether individuals or organizations are entitled to use the broadcast media to publicize their viewpoints on

matters of public interest. Almost from its beginning, the FCC evidenced concern that broadcasters be fair with respect to their coverage of public issues. For fear that station operators would use their frequencies to advance their own causes or candidates, the FCC ruled in 1941 that radio stations were prohibited from editorializing. In 1949, the commission relaxed this ban and allowed broadcasters to editorialize as long as they also made air time available to persons holding divergent opinions. In its report entitled “In the Matter of Editorializing by Broadcasting Licensees” (13 FCC 1246), the FCC articulated what became known as the “Fairness Doctrine,” stating that the public has a right to hear balanced presentations of “all responsible viewpoints on particular issues” and that broadcasters have an affirmative duty to “preserv[e] for the public generally radio as a medium of free expression and fair presentation.” Section 315(a) of the 1934 Act was amended in 1959 to include a statement requiring broadcasters to “afford reasonable opportunity for the discussion of conflicting views on issues of public importance.” As part of the Fairness Doctrine, the FCC also required broadcasters to notify those who had been subject to on-air personal attacks, and to offer them a right of reply.

Broadcasters subjected the Fairness Doctrine to legal challenge in the 1960s on the grounds that it violated broadcasters’ First Amendment rights to control the content of their programming. In the landmark case *Red Lion Broadcasting v. FCC* (395 U.S. 367 [1969]), the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Fairness Doctrine, reasoning that because broadcast frequencies are a scarce commodity, broadcasters can be required to provide a diversity of views. The Court noted that it considered “the right of the public to receive suitable access to social, political, esthetic, moral and other ideas and experiences” paramount to any First Amendment rights belonging to the broadcasters.

Under the Fairness Doctrine, public relations practitioners were afforded valuable opportunities to get their clients’ points of view heard in the broadcast media. If an organization believed it was the victim of biased news coverage, or if proponents of a particular perspective were denied broadcast media access that was granted to the group’s opponent, public relations practitioners had a remedy—they

could appeal to the station’s duty to provide balanced coverage under the Fairness Doctrine. However, most broadcasters did not support the doctrine, and many elected to avoid controversial programming altogether in an effort to escape the doctrine’s provisions. As a result, critics argued that rather than promoting robust debate regarding public issues, the Fairness Doctrine stifled such debate.

Following President Ronald Reagan’s appointment of deregulation advocate Mark Fowler as FCC chair in 1985, the commission concluded that the Fairness Doctrine failed to serve the public interest because it actually reduced the number of diverse views available to the public (1985 Fairness Report, 102 FCC 2d 145). The commission also found that the doctrine unjustifiably interfered with the editorial processes of broadcast journalists. Furthermore, the FCC argued that given the dramatic increase in the number of radio and television stations since *Red Lion* was decided, the “scarcity rationale” could no longer justify placing greater First Amendment restrictions on broadcast media than on print media. According to the commission, a free, unregulated marketplace would automatically provide the diversity of views that the Fairness Doctrine had tried to ensure. In 1987, the FCC repealed the basic provisions of the Fairness Doctrine and a Circuit Court of Appeals agreed that the commission had the authority to rescind the doctrine (*Syracuse Peace Council v. FCC*, 867 F.2d 654 [D.C. Cir. 1989]). Because the court did not base its decision on First Amendment grounds, however, Congress is not precluded from passing future legislation that would restore and codify the Fairness Doctrine’s requirements. Although Congress and several presidents have considered reinstating the Fairness Doctrine, so far those efforts have been unsuccessful.

One last remnant of the Fairness Doctrine, the personal attack rule, was repealed in October 2000 (*Radio Television News Directors Association v. FCC*, 229 F.3d 261 [D.C. Cir. 2000]).

—Nicole B. Cásarez

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FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is a five-person, independent government agency that has as its primary goal the protection of consumers from unfair or deceptive business practices. The FTC originally was created in 1914 to prohibit unfair competition, but Congress later expanded the commission's powers to include regulation of false and deceptive advertising. The commission's basic authority stems from Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act ("FTC Act"), which states that "unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce are hereby declared unlawful" (5 U.S.C. §45 [a] [1]).

Historically, the FTC was known for timidity and delay; with the consumer movement of the 1960s and 1970s, however, Congress enlarged both the agency's budget and its powers. As a result, the FTC aggressively went after some of the nation's most prominent advertisers, and by the late 1970s was viewed by many as the most powerful U.S. regulatory agency. In the 1980s, however, the FTC's influence declined after the Reagan administration significantly reduced the agency's funding. The FTC again increased its enforcement efforts in the 1990s, targeting the tobacco industry for the "Joe Camel" campaign and other advertising designed to appeal to children, as well as a number of national advertisers for false advertising in the form of program-length "infomercials." Since 1996, the agency has cracked down on Internet fraud and emphasized through enforcement actions, working papers, and law enforcement initiatives that the FTC's consumer protection mandate extends to Internet, as well as traditional, retailers.

Through its Bureau of Consumer Protection, the FTC works to shield consumers against false, unfair, misleading, or deceptive advertising. The FTC defines advertising broadly, exercising jurisdiction over much more than just standard, paid-for product publicity advertisements. Public relations practitioners must be aware that the FTC considers



The former R.J. Reynolds cigarette advertising mascot, "Joe Camel," plays pool and smokes cigarettes in an advertisement for Camel cigarettes that covers a billboard in a field. The FTC and antismoking advocates pressured R.J. Reynolds to eliminate the "Joe Camel" campaign in 1997, accusing the company of using a cartoon character to attract young smokers.

SOURCE: © Joel W. Rogers/CORBIS.

all activities or communications meant to draw public attention to a product, service, person, or organization for purposes of trade as "advertisements" and therefore subject to regulation. This definition therefore includes press and video releases, sales brochures, direct mail, product labels, and promotional contests, as well as standard media advertisements.

Since 1983, the FTC has defined deceptive advertising as "a material representation, omission, or practice that is likely to mislead a consumer acting reasonably under the circumstances." Three elements should be noted about this definition. First, a literally true statement may qualify as deceptive if by omitting a fact it thereby creates a misleading implication. So, for example, the FTC ruled that Thompson Medical's advertising campaign for its Aspercreme ointment was deceptive because the advertisements implied that the cream contained aspirin, when it did not (*In re Thompson Medical Co.*, 104 F.T.C. 313 [1984]).

Second, an advertisement will be considered deceptive if it is likely to mislead a reasonable consumer with the characteristics of the target market, even if the ad does not in fact deceive anyone. In

evaluating an advertisement directed at children or the elderly, for example, the commission will take into consideration any special susceptibilities of those groups. However, an advertiser will not be responsible for misinterpretations made by consumers who act foolishly or interpret an advertisement in an irrational manner.

Finally, even an advertisement that is likely to mislead the public is nevertheless not deceptive unless the misleading claim qualifies as “material.” According to the FTC, material claims are those that are likely to affect a consumer’s decision to purchase a product or service. Some types of claims are generally presumed to be material by the FTC, including express claims as to a product’s attributes, purpose, cost, durability, warranty information, or health benefits. Ambiguities contained in advertisements are generally interpreted against the advertiser. Whereas false statements contained in advertisements are almost always deceptive, opinion statements that are incapable of being proved true or false and that reasonable consumers would not believe to be true fall into the realm of “puffery,” and are acceptable.

Since the 1970s, the FTC has also required that advertisers provide reasonable evidence to back up verifiable product claims before those claims appear in an advertisement. Claims made without this required substantiation are considered deceptive, even if later they prove to be true. If an advertiser states that test results prove something about a product, the test must have actually been conducted in a scientifically accurate manner and the results must not be presented deceptively. Furthermore, FTC guidelines require that people, including celebrities, who make endorsements implying that they use the endorsed product must actually use those items they endorse.

An FTC investigation of an advertiser’s methods can result from either consumer complaints or the commission’s own initiative. Most often, investigations begun by the FTC end by the issuance of a “consent order,” whereby the advertiser agrees to stop running the objectionable advertisement but does not admit to any violation of the law. The FTC can also bring a formal administrative complaint

against the advertiser, which requires a hearing before an administrative law judge. The judge’s ruling in the case can be appealed to the full commission, and eventually to the U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeal. If an advertising claim is ruled to be deceptive, the FTC has three possible remedies: (1) it can issue a cease and desist order, which forbids the advertiser from making further deceptive claims; (2) it can issue an affirmative disclosure order, which requires the advertiser to provide consumers with additional information to ensure that future advertisements are not deceptive; or (3) it can order the advertiser to run corrective advertising that specifically corrects past false claims.

The FTC also has the power to issue Trade Regulation Rules that define and prohibit illegal advertising practices on an industry-wide basis.

—Nicole B. Cásarez

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FEMINIZATION THEORY

Feminization theory is a body of research-based analysis and philosophy that has developed in response to two broad concerns. One is the impact on the field of public relations that occurs when the number of practitioners who are female is larger than the number who are male. Disciplines such as nursing and teaching changed in status, for instance, when they became more female than male demographically. The second theme is motivated by a desire for a positive and constructive role for women in public relations. What has consistently emerged from this analysis is the argument that the field is healthier because of this feminist bias. In

essence, a feminist perspective increases the quality of public relations research and practice and positions public relations to better serve society.

Linda Aldoory wrote that “the impact of gender and diversity on public relations has become widespread, and today it affects practitioners, scholars and audiences” (2003, p. 222). In her analysis, Aldoory referenced *The Velvet Ghetto*, the first comprehensive gender study in public relations, published in 1986 by C. G. Cline et al. Aldoory noted that since that study, various scholars have undertaken additional studies to describe the status of women in the profession. They applied feminist perspectives to clarify and improve prevailing public relations theories as they also explored new feminized concepts and theories. One of the leaders in this effort was Elizabeth Toth, who with others developed a body of scholarship that led to a new feminist paradigm that empowered women.

Women account for almost two-thirds of all public relations specialists in the United States, according to the 1998 U.S. Department of Commerce report (Grunig, Toth, & Hon, 2000, p. 50). Nevertheless, men continue to dominate the field because they hold the more senior positions, which are traditionally associated with power, prestige, and responsibility. L. F. Rakow stated, “The feminization of public relations should now be recognizable as nothing less than a gender crisis for the whole field, triggered by the entrance of substantial numbers of women, but fed by a long-standing conflict over [masculine and feminine] ideologies” (1989, p. 295).

Many responses to this “crisis” have been and will be voiced. One of the most constructive and illustrative of the feminist perspectives is voiced by Larissa A. Grunig et al., who wrote,

The literature of sex roles in psychology paints a composite of women as more likely than men to possess characteristics, qualities, and values ideally suited to the practice of public relations. These expressive traits should lead women to practice a model of public relations characterized by two-way communication and an equal concern for the organization’s relevant publics as for the organization itself. If supported, this hypothesis should lead us to conclude that women or people

with feminist values may in turn be the most socially responsible practitioners. If so, these people would increase both the professionalism and the effectiveness of our field. (2000, p. 52)

Examples of such feminist values include “altruism, commitment, equality, equity, ethics, fairness, forgiveness, integrity, justice, loyalty, morality, nurturance, perfection, quality of life, standards, tolerance and cherishing children” (L. A. Grunig et al., 2000, p. 58).

Little empirical work has been done to support this hypothesis that feminist values, whether implemented by female or male practitioners who aspire to excellence in their field, actually enhance public relations practice, and in turn, organizational effectiveness. According to L. A. Grunig et al., one exception is Aldoory’s 1998 search for a feminist model of leadership in public relations.

Aldoory observed that

studies such as this one might help support the notion that feminization is not a negative force for the profession. If women are moving into leadership positions, bringing with them a two-way, collaborative style of communication, then public relations might improve in status and professionalism. (1998, p. 96)

Intellectual analysis can cut two ways. On one hand, it advances the cause for change. On the other, it prevents or slows change by calling attention to issues people do not want to address. Recognizing such conflicting outcomes, L. A. Grunig et al. acknowledged the 1995 thoughts of Dozier, L. A. Grunig, and James E. Grunig, who said that “the rapid and still-growing feminization of the field may threaten any hard-won gains public relations as a function has made toward this role at the highest level of organizational decision making” (2000, p. 50).

Some scholars, including those who are male, have suggested that

the most effective public relations grows out of an entire world view that is feminine. That is, public relations that is practiced as balanced, two-way communication between an organization and its stakeholder groups stands to make the greatest contribution

to organizational effectiveness. (L. A. Grunig et al., 2000, p. 59)

Additionally, L. A. Grunig et al. reported that “feminist scholars such as Rakow suggest that women’s emergence in public relations is an opportunity for more responsible and effective practice” (2000, p. 50). They also wrote that some scholars—specifically R. M. Kanter, C. Kramarae, M. Schulz, and W. O’Barr—“see management practiced in a more persuasive, domineering and unbalanced way as rooted in masculinity” (2000, p. 59).

L. A. Grunig et al. referred to the 1989 work of Barbara Wetherell to support the argument for more women in public relations to serve in managerial roles.

Femininity (whether possessed by women or men) facilitates the practice of two-way balanced public relations. . . . Wetherell (1989) determined that far more men (and masculine people) than women (or feminine people) are in the managerial role—the role that correlates with the practice of symmetrical communication. . . . To actually practice this effective, sophisticated public relations, women must acquire more knowledge of public relations and move up into management. (2000, p. 52)

L. A. Grunig et al. believed that once this happened, the whole field would benefit from a more effective and ethical practice. Drawing on 1995 research by Dozier, L. A. Grunig, and J. E. Grunig, they wrote

The knowledge base of practitioners is a critical predictor of enacting the managerial role in public relations. . . . More women than men are acquiring formal education in public relations. It follows, then, that increasingly, women are the best-qualified practitioners to manage the function. Thus, organizations that block women’s advancement will suffer from lost potential for excellence in public relations. (2000, p. 53)

One gender issue that has been analyzed is the glass ceiling effect. A glass ceiling in public relations has been identified by reports that women were more likely to be found in technical roles than in managerial roles. Reflecting on this view,

Aldoory observed, “For years, the term glass ceiling has been used to describe the invisible barriers women face when attempting to be promoted. Although women comprise 70% of the jobs in public relations today, they do not comprise this percentage of higher positions in public relations” (2003, p. 227).

To what conclusion does this line of analysis lead? Brenda Wrigley answered this question: “The glass ceiling persists for women in public relations and communications management, despite increasing feminization of these fields” (2002, p. 27). Wrigley’s findings revealed that women are “paid 68 cents for every dollar paid to a male corporate officer . . . and men make, on average, nearly \$23,000 per year more than women make in public relations” (2002, p. 28).

Paradigms provide ways of looking at life. Many feminist scholars have argued that there is a paradigm for feminist scholarship. Sandra Harding defined a feminist paradigm in her support of sciences and technologies specifically for women: “Feminists (male and female) would invent modes of thought and learn techniques and skills to enable women to get more control over the conditions of their lives” (1991, p. 5).

The implications of feminist critiques are substantial. One difference for the practice is the changing role of public relations. If it is a tactical practice, communication skills are vital. If it is to serve a counseling role, then strategic management and ethical judgment become more important. Capturing the implications of the feminist critique for this trend, Aldoory wrote,

A public relations paradigm has also developed over the last 20 years. It emphasizes public relations as a management function, rather than a technical one; examines public relations with the goal of maintaining balance between organizations and their environments; and attempts to find new ways for building relationships with publics who are critical to an organization’s success. (2003, p. 225)

Not everyone believes the feminization of the profession is good. Aldoory concluded, “On one hand, critics have argued that feminization has

negatively affected the profession and its reputation” (2003, p. 226). But using Rakow’s 1989 analysis, Aldoory also noted that “feminization has opened doors to feminist scholars, feminine ideals and a desirable transformation of the profession and scholarship” (2003, p. 226). Also, Bey-Ling Sha asserted that feminization makes public relations more ethical, “not merely in appearance, but in practice” (1996, p. 3).

—Kelly M. Papinchak

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FLACK

Flack is a derogatory term for a publicist or press agent in the entertainment industry. This slang term, primarily used in the United States, has had its use extended with the passage of time to include all public relations practitioners and activities. The origin of the term is unknown, but many attribute the coining of the term to *Variety* magazine, which some sources say began using the term as a tribute to motion picture industry publicist Gene Flack in acknowledgment of his skills in promoting movies in the 1940s.

Wes Pederson, director of communications and public relations, Public Affairs Council, in a letter to the Public Relations Society of America’s *The Strategist*, attributed the first explanation of the term in common usage to Peter Martin in a *Saturday Evening Post* article in the April 1, 1950, issue. Martin’s lead in that article, entitled “Hollywood Says: ‘Please Stay Away!’” reads, “My friend, the movie-studio flack, came back from hoofing it around the jungle of soundstages and buildings, all fronts and no backs, that was his beat.” In the very next sentence, Martin explains that “flack is Hollywood slang for publicity worker or press agent.”

However, the *Oxford English Dictionary* lists the first reference to the use of *flack* as slang to Stewart Sterling. In his 1946 Fire Marshal Pedley detective story, *Where There’s Smoke*, one of the characters announces, “That publicity flack is here.”

The first reference book to include the term, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, was Al Berkman’s 1961 *Singers’ Glossary of Show Business Jargon*. The term was defined in that reference source as “a member of the Publicity Department (usually of a motion picture studio); press agent.”

The *Morris Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins*, published in 1962, notes that “flack is a slang term common in the theatrical and

popular-music fields, meaning ‘press agent.’ We have been familiar with it in this sense for years and suspect it antedates the World War II meaning of ‘flak’ . . . ; that of anti-aircraft fire.” The *Morris Dictionary* goes on to observe that “it has never enjoyed the wide popular acceptance given, for example, the term ‘disc jockey,’ which became current in entertainment circles at about the same time.”

Almost every reference to flack includes another reference to flak, a 1938 term for an anti-aircraft gun, borrowed from the German *flak*, an acronym formed from Fl(ieger)a(bwehr)k(anone), literally airplane defense cannon. One surmises that if, in fact, there is an association between these two terms, it is meant to imply that a Hollywood press agent or publicist is a cannon of empty rhetoric.

More likely is the association with one of the now obsolete definitions at the root of the word flack. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word derives from the Middle English formation of the Middle Dutch *vlacken* and the Icelandic *flaka* meaning “to flap.” The transitive form of the word meant “to move or shake intermittently.” In agricultural usage, flack meant “to beat with a flail.”

Taken together, it seems more probable that the original slang had more to do with someone being a “mover or shaker” or actively pushing a story or client with such vigor that journalists felt they were being “beaten with a flail,” than anything to do with an air defense cannon or the type of shell it fires.

However, many an Allied bomber pilot in World War II reported that the German flak was “thick enough to walk on” and interfered with their mission, so one could make a case that the slang derives from the intensity of the publicist’s effort or the journalists’ impression that the never-ending stream of press releases “interferes” with their self-appointed mission to inform the public.

Fortunately, the term flack seems to have entered a period of remission in most mainstream publications. Wilcox, Cameron, Ault, and Agee (2003) noted that “in recent years most publications, including the *Wall Street Journal*, have refrained from using the “F” word in print.” However, they also point out that “trade publications such as *Editor & Publisher* still use it on a regular basis” (p. 11).

Although the term has found its way overseas, as many slang terms often do, it is not as prevalent there as it was in America in the 1950s and 1960s. One hopes that the increasing professionalism of public relations will reduce the perceived need on the part of journalists and others throughout the world to apply such a derogatory term to the practice of relationship building.

—Robert S. Pritchard

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FLAME

For more than a decade, *flame* has been used to describe hostile or insulting online messages, and it has become an accepted word. Flaming has important image management implications for individuals and organizations.

“Sending abusive messages to one with whom one disagrees” is considered “an aggressive use of email, bulletin boards, or chat rooms” (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant, & Kelly, 2003, p. 386) and often involves personal attacks. *The New Hacker's Dictionary* includes related terms: *flamage* (content), *flame bait* (message designed to solicit flames or provoke flame war), *flame on* (to begin or continue flaming), *flame war* (caustic altercation), and *flamer* (flame prone). *Flaming* also has been used to refer to speaking overzealously or unceasingly. Recent use dates back to 1969, and *flame* may have arisen from Chaucer’s work. *Flame on* is a pun based on the Human Torch from Marvel Comics.

Flaming is the most famous and publicized online misconduct. Further, it is one of the most enduring problems for users of computer communication. Flaming is a breach of *netiquette*, Internet etiquette (accepted conventions for behavior online). Larry Scheuermann and Gary Taylor compiled netiquette suggestions: “don’t flame,” use the Golden Rule, respond as if in person, recognize that flames detract from topics, and avoid taking offense. Other recommendations include avoiding quick responses to hostile messages, considering alternative interpretations and responses, stressing areas of agreement, softening language used to disagree, and recognizing tone and word choice. Many responses, especially if from a “rapid-fire reply key,” convey sentiments avoided in carefully crafted memos. Breaches in netiquette, such as flaming, may not result in retaliation. However, they often create negative images of the perpetrator and, if work related, of that individual’s employer. Certainly, understanding group conventions and social politeness norms gives one an advantage.

Factors influencing flaming include the degree of anonymity and the likelihood of continued interaction (e.g., whether participants frequent a list or chat room, or otherwise know each other). Further, sometimes inhibition is evidenced in flames (e.g., dots inserted in curse words and variation by context), suggesting that group norms develop.

—Joy L. Hart

See also Communication technologies; Image; Impressions

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FLEISCHMAN, DORIS ELSA

Doris Elsa Fleischman Bernays was born in New York on July 18, 1891, and died July 10, 1980, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Along with her husband, Edward L. Bernays, she was an important contributor to the founding of public relations in the early 20th century and a prominent feminist.

Doris Fleischman was born to Samuel Fleischman and Harriet Rosenthal. Her father was an attorney and, much to her benefit, believed that women should be educated and useful. She was educated at Barnard College and graduated in 1913, having studied English, philosophy, psychology and music. After completing her bachelor’s degree, she began work at the *New York Tribune* as a reporter and editor for the women’s pages and the Sunday edition. She gained notoriety at the *Tribune* as the first newspaperwoman to report a prizefight. An active feminist throughout her life, Fleischman was a member of the Lucy Stone League, the Woman Pays Club, and Women in Communications, and she “participated in the first Women’s Peace Parade in New York in 1917” (Mayeux, 1999, p. 691). In 1919, she joined Edward Bernays in the practice of what Bernays had called “public relations counsel.” Three years later, in 1922, the couple wed.

Fleischman kept her maiden name and caused quite a media spectacle when she and Bernays convinced the desk clerk at the Waldorf-Astoria to allow her to sign the guest register as “Doris Fleischman” instead of Mrs. Edward Bernays. The couple were well-known members of the Lucy Stone League, an organization committed to preserving women’s right to keep their birth name after marriage. Bernays and Fleischman achieved

more notoriety when Fleischman became the first married woman in the United States to hold a passport in her own name. Fleischman made the headlines again in 1929 when she and Bernays convinced the New York Department of Health to allow her to put her name, Doris E. Fleischman, on the birth certificate of their daughter. Fleischman and Bernays would eventually have two daughters, Doris and Anne.

After their marriage, Doris and Eddie (as only Doris called Edward) became equal partners in his business and signed legal documents to that effect. Bernays worked for years to be labeled the “Father of Public Relations.” Whether he is the originator of the profession is a point of contention; however, Bernays is the originator of the term *public relations* and was the first to use the word *publics* to describe those who have an interest in an issue. Though Bernays garnered almost all of the glory and fame from public relations, Fleischman was instrumental to the foundation of public relations. Her counsel with Bernays and her work behind the scenes helped *public relations* become a well-known word and won legitimacy for their firm. Fleischman and Bernays depended on one another professionally, personally, and intellectually. Fleischman most often was a mitigating influence on Bernays’s grand schemes, and Bernays was Fleischman’s public voice. Larry Tye believed that Fleischman’s “most valuable contribution to the practice was in the brilliant way she compensated for Eddie’s shortcomings” (1998, p. 125).

In her 1955 novel, *A Wife Is Many Women*, Fleischman refers to her and Bernays’s relationship as a “double partnership” (1955, p. 163). During the 1920s this partnership was a modern idea. Fleischman wrote, “In the early days of public relations I was an exception in a masculine world. Silk and luggage manufacturers, radium miners, science institutes accepted me with polite surprise” (1955, p. 171). The amount of work and ideas that Fleischman contributed to the partnership cannot be underestimated. While Bernays had an office at ground level where he often met with clients, Fleischman’s office was upstairs out of the public eye, and there she went daily to strategize, draft press releases and speeches, and plan campaigns.

Bernays usually consulted with Fleischman after hours, and often her only contact with clients was when she hosted them at her and Eddie’s lavish parties at their home. The one shining example of Fleischman’s work with clients was the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) convention in 1920; she traveled to Georgia to consult with the governor about the convention, which was hailed as a great success and received evenhanded treatment in both the northern and southern press. It is doubtful that Bernays himself could have handled the convention with such aplomb. Usually, however, Fleischman was planning and writing in the background, with Bernays up front with all of his charisma and self-confidence. Susan Henry argued, “They were an excellent team; they complemented and respected each other, and were able to do things together that neither person—probably no single person—could have done individually” (1997, p. 54).

Fleischman’s most significant contribution to the field of public relations was her work on strategy and planning, which are considered management-level functions. She was not only an excellent technician, writing speeches and releases, but she was also a conscientious planner and innovator in public relations campaigns, such as the Lithuanian National Council’s effort to be recognized as a state, and the Lucky Strike cigarettes Green Ball. For Bernays’s part, he happily encouraged his wife to keep her name, join feminist organizations, work in the background (as was her wish), write for the business, and even explore creative writing. Bernays wrote of Fleischman in 1965, “Over the years [Doris] has been my most valuable asset. She has contributed heavily to the policy and strategy we have advised our clients to carry out. Her balanced judgment carries overriding weight with me. And she has unique compassion and understanding” (in *Biography of an Idea*, cited in Mayeux, 1999, p. 672).

In 1961 Fleischman and Bernays moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, claiming that they were retiring. In truth they were merely scaling back and slowing down. Bernays wanted to finish his memoirs and open a small agency where they could give advice on, but not plan, public relations.

Fleischman had “left behind a circle of strong, close women friends with whom she had much in common, and she found in Cambridge few professional women with whom to associate” (Henry, 1997, p. 6). The move brought her closer to their daughters and their families living in Cambridge, but far away from the life and the friends she had in New York. Fleischman eventually found companionship through mentoring younger women and joining groups such as Theta Sigma Phi, and by writing for and running several contests sponsored by the Edward L. Bernays Foundation.

It is interesting to note that Fleischman published only a smattering of her work. In the beginning she wrote short stories in grade school and college that she claimed only Bernays had read. Early in her partnership and marriage to Bernays she began publishing *Contact*, which became the house organ for the firm of Edward L. Bernays, Counsel on Public Relations. *Contact* was published for 10 years and was circulated to over 15,000 people four times a year. It was able to get the word out about public relations in a conservative and informative fashion. She edited and published a book titled *An Outline of Careers for Women: A Practical Guide to Achievement* in 1928, and she published articles in magazines such as *Ladies' Home Journal*, *American Mercury*, *McCall's*, and *Independent Woman* that discussed topics such as working women, public relations, and feminism. Fleischman also contributed book chapters to books that Bernays wrote or edited concerning public relations. Her semiautobiographical novel, *A Wife Is Many Women*, was published in 1955 under the name Doris Fleischman Bernays. She had decided to use the name Bernays, but throughout the rest of her life she was known equally well by both names. *A Wife Is Many Women* caused some controversy because daughters Anne Bernays and Doris Bernays stated that many of the events detailed in the book never occurred. Fleischman described herself in the book as an average woman, but it is obvious that she was far from average. Significant awards that she achieved included Theta Sigma Phi's (later Women in Communication) Headliner Award and an Honorary Doctor of Law degree from

Babson College (Henry, 1998). Late in her life Fleischman wrote book reviews for the *Worcester Sunday Telegram*, and she and Bernays self-published *Progression*, a book of her poems. Her most important written contributions to the field of public relations were *Contact*, numerous speeches, and campaign plans that helped to put public relations on the map. Although she was a pioneer in the public relations field, she gained little renown during her life for her work. On July 10, 1980, Fleischman died after experiencing a stroke.

—Emilee V. Fontenot

See also Bernays, Edward; Counseling

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FLIER

A flier, also called a handout, is a one-sheet printed form of collateral material. Like other communication tactics or tools used in public relations, a flier must appeal to a particular target audience, contain a key message, and attempt to achieve a specific objective. Some objectives might include increasing awareness about a service, educating a target audience about a program, or encouraging a key public to attend an event. Often 8½ × 11 inches in size, a flier must be succinct, have few words, and include type or graphics that appear in broad strokes. Since space is limited, uncomplicated graphics and clean typefaces are preferable. They are printed on one side of a sheet, have a short shelf life, and are not folded. Fliers, along with

brochures, newsletters, and posters, are considered a form of direct media rather than mass media and are generally posted on bulletin boards, placed in information racks, and handed out interpersonally. Often they are used as miniposters, which means that the message should carry at a distance of 10 feet. If they are placed on counters or inserted into the fold of a newsletter, the information does not need to carry over a distance. As a tool of persuasion, fliers should adhere to publication principles. They should attract attention, stimulate interest, create a desire to act, and contain claims that are supported by facts.

Relatively inexpensive to produce, fliers are timely and disposable. Many have a single purpose, such as to announce an event or inform a specific target audience about something of interest. Whatever the method of distribution, fliers must be able to attract attention in a cluttered environment and should adhere to the principles of layout and design. An effective design should include a layout with proper *balance*, in which elements are arranged either symmetrically or asymmetrically along an implied axis; *dominance*, or an attention-getting element that stands out by its size, tone, or shape; *unity*, a sense that the message is an integrated and cohesive whole; *proportion*, the spatial relationship of elements similar in nature; and *flow*, which promotes eye movement and direction.

Since many public relations practitioners adhere to the writing style of the Associated Press, it is important to clarify terms. According to the *Associated Press Stylebook*, *flier* is the preferred name for a handbill. The word *flyer*, on the other hand, refers to the name associated with certain trains and buses.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Brochure; Collateral

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FOCUS GROUP

A focus group is a group of people that provides some structure to a research setting. Most focus groups consist of 5 to 15 members, a moderator, and often a moderator's assistant. Focus group sessions are almost always tape-recorded or videotaped for later analysis. Analyses can range from a simple review of what the moderator understood, to what the members discussed or concluded, to complex content analyses of transcripts from the recorded groups, which may include psychological interpretations of the members' nonverbal behaviors.

The focus group provides public relations researchers with information from a variety of people focusing on a single person, product, event, or organization. Focus groups have some similarity to in-depth interviews in that a focus group facilitator asks predetermined questions to focus group participants; they differ in that group members can add on to ("tag") another member's answers or comments, and often are encouraged to do so.

The focus group is found in public relations primarily because it can be conducted quickly and fairly inexpensively. Focus groups are also used to pretest a promotion, product, or message, to prepare for larger surveys, or to provide more in-depth analysis of a survey in order to better understand the survey's results. A focus group, then, provides information from a variety of individuals about some issue or concern under some form of moderator control.

As noted, a major advantage of a focus group is its ability to gather "rich" data from the individuals assembled to discuss the research object. The disadvantages of focus groups are the cost of moderators and the inability to generalize to larger populations, and to demographic group members. Because a focus group's results are heavily dependent on the skills of the moderator, obtaining a trained moderator is essential to conducting a good focus group. Although focus groups are typically regarded as a cheap way to gather information, the primary cost associated with them is the moderator. A good moderator can cost more than half a focus group's cost. The trained moderator, however, can overcome some of the problems associated with

members, such as over- and undertalkative members who either try to monopolize the discussion or avoid discussion altogether.

Most focus group members are volunteers, and volunteers often participate because they are interested in the topic. Volunteers do not represent the larger population; therefore, the results cannot be generalized to that population. In most focus group situations, at least two and often three different focus groups are conducted to ensure that what one group says is similar to what a second group says. The third group will be used if the first two groups differ. When the research question does not consider demographic or psychographic differences, three groups per demographic or psychographic are required.

Depending on the research question under investigation and whether it requires organizational members to participate, some of whom may be subordinate to others, focus groups may differ in how they are conducted. Most focus groups meet in an arranged room, typically around a table or chairs placed in a U-shape when the research is gauging reaction to some promotion or product. Some rooms are equipped with two-way mirrors and hidden microphones so that observers can evaluate and rate the interaction; other rooms simply have a table and chairs and a tape recorder or video recorder and cameras out in the open. In a typical focus group, moderators sit at the end of the table, or in the table's 12 o'clock position, from which they can control who speaks through both verbal questions to specific members and eye contact or head nods to encourage or discourage member participation. The typical focus group lasts between one and three hours, including planned refreshment and bathroom breaks. The moderator operates from a scripted schedule of opening statements and "key" questions; sometimes the moderator will have written probe questions to further look into member responses. To get all members to talk, a typical opening will reinforce that all conversations—even recorded ones—will be edited so that no one will know who said what, that members' comments are confidential, and that their anonymity will be maintained. This is usually reinforced as well at the end of the focus group.

In organizations where the group members may feel what they say could cause them problems later,

a different kind of focus group is used: a *known group*. In the known group people are drawn from the organization's hierarchy. The technique requires that two different meetings take place. In the first members write their responses to the moderator's questions, and in the second they meet to discuss those responses. In some instances the questions are sent to members prior to the focus group's meeting; in others, they are gathered at the first meeting. Regardless of when the responses are gathered, the real discussion takes place once the now anonymous responses have been reproduced on large sheets of paper, usually taped to the room where the group meets. Discussion is then focused on the written responses, whether they may have come from a CEO, a CFO, or a clerk. Thus, no attribution of source gets in the way of ideas being discussed. The known group method takes longer to conduct and requires additional assistance and supplies. However, it works well in situations where superiors must interact with subordinates.

Focus groups are analyzed both informally and formally. Informal analysis occurs when the researcher debriefs the moderator and/or moderator's assistant. This is an immediate debriefing after the discussion in which the moderator's feelings and intuition are put down on tape or paper for later analysis. The formal analysis is made from transcripts created from the audio- or videotaped discussions (all names or references to members are removed in the transcripts), and a content analysis is made of the group's discussion.

The focus group provides public relations researchers with a rich, in-depth analysis of perceptions toward some research object. The group's discussions are kept on track by a trained moderator and are typically recorded and submitted to message analysis. While focus groups are common in public relations and can be conducted quite quickly, they are not cheap when conducted correctly. A single focus group's discussion is neither reliable nor valid unless it has been compared against another group's discussion.

—Don W. Stacks

See also Content analysis; Interview as a research tool; Measuring/measures; Qualitative research

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As a focus group in Needham, Massachusetts, watches an interview of Monica Lewinsky on television in 1999, members' reactions are displayed directly on screen in graph form.

SOURCE: © Brooks Kraft/CORBIS.

FOLLOWER/ MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Utilized by most nonprofit organizations, including charitable nonprofits, trade associations, and political interest groups, the follower/member newsletter is an extremely popular public relations tool for fulfilling the information needs of a specific audience. This type of newsletter reaches out to members, alumni, volunteers, consumers/clients, boards of trustees, staff, and allied organizations of a particular organization in which audience members have a valid interest or formal membership.

Follower/member newsletters serve as the “voice” of the organization. Their audiences are made up of internal and external publics. Members, who pay dues, generally are defined as internal publics because they can be viewed as having an investment in the organization, similar to that of a

stockholder. Followers often are viewed as external because their expected outcome deals more with information seeking—finding out about issue positions rather than using the organization as an extension of one’s own voice in public policy discussions. Usually they do not have as strong an investment in an organization as members do, nor do they receive the special benefits that are accorded to members.

These newsletters, like other directed newsletters, strategically execute the public relations and marketing plans of an organization. The goals of follower/member newsletters can vary, but generally they are used to communicate newsworthy information about the sponsoring organization. In addition, newsletters are a valuable tool for fundraising: motivating existing donors, increasing gifts, recognizing the service contributions of volunteers, and demonstrating that the organization is a good steward of funds—an important responsibility for nonprofits. Some organizations also use these newsletters to market their services. Supplementing these common goals, follower/member newsletters seek to remind readers about the purpose of the organization, as well as to justify the existence of the organization in the community at large.

The follower/member newsletter is valuable to constituents who care about the mission of an organization. For instance, Health Plus, a New York City–based nonprofit whose mission includes improving access to health care for uninsured and underserved families, publishes a member newsletter that is available online. The newsletter is designed to provide Health Plus members with information about various health topics and health care providers. Professional associations, such as the National Futures Association, rely heavily on newsletters to keep their dues-paying members informed. Advocacy groups dedicated to particular issues provide a good example of organizations that use follower newsletters to their advantage. Citizens interested in certain social, economic, and political issues—for example, civil rights, abortion rights, economic reforms, or a particular piece of legislation—can subscribe to many of the available nonpartisan newsletters, which will allow them to follow the latest developments relating to the issue or legislation without actually being a member of the group.

The form and content of these newsletters varies from organization to organization. Some newsletters consist of one or two stories with little or no regard for design, whereas others are elaborate showpieces of color and flair. Depending on their content, they represent all four models of public relations practice. Newsletters from many human services charities, for example, are based on the press agency model. Their pages are filled with propaganda and stories designed to stir readers' emotions. On the other hand, non-profits categorized as business leagues, such as chambers of commerce, usually produce newsletters representative of the public information model.

The organization and development of a follower/member newsletter are very similar to those of other types of newsletters. Decisions on the audience (for example, members or followers), the articles to be featured, the budget, the format, the frequency of distribution, and the approval process should all be taken into consideration before beginning the newsletter. Because members will expect to receive the newsletter regularly, care should be taken to ensure that issues will be published in a timely manner. Also, because the newsletter is targeted to a very precise audience with very precise information needs, special attention must be given to see that its content addresses readers' needs. Providing information that is useless will alienate the targeted audience. Moreover, the newsletter needs to convey to readers that the organization is carrying out its mission effectively and efficiently. Finally, it is important to realize that a follower/member newsletter is not the end objective of the organization, but merely a tool for communicating with strategic publics.

The biggest change in follower/member newsletters in the past decade is that they increasingly are being published and distributed electronically. A variety of ways are used. The simplest, adopted by many of the smaller, less affluent organizations, is sending the newsletter via e-mail in text format. This allows the information to be transmitted through an e-mail program without the inconvenience of linking to Web pages. E-mail links are another option. Links are embedded in an e-mail message, allowing members or followers to access

the organization's newsletter on its Web site. Web newsletters can be graphically enhanced because the bulk of the information is not directly sent to the reader. Organizations with sensitive or private material are able to utilize sophisticated log-in programs that provide regulated access to members only. In addition to security, such programs give members a sense of uniqueness and make them feel they are a legitimate part of the organization.

Growing use of the Internet is blurring the lines between the traditional newsletter and organizational news in general. In the past, members and followers had to wait for information on a set time basis—monthly, quarterly, semiannually, and so on. Today, organizations are able to provide strategic publics with continuous, up-to-date information. Although traditional follower/member newsletters still will be needed in the foreseeable future, the Internet will continue to revolutionize the way organizations communicate with their members and followers.

—Kathleen S. Kelly and Danny Shipka

See also Newsletter; Parent/student newsletter; Press agency; Propaganda

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FONT

Font refers to a complete set of characters or type with similar shape, style, and proportions; fonts are

used in printing, graphic design, and viewing on computer monitors. For example, *The New York Times* is printed using a widely recognized font created especially for *The New York Times* in 1931, called “Times.” The font selected can have a dramatic impact on the feeling of professionalism, playfulness, or excitement engendered by a document.

Fonts are grouped into categories such as Modern (Times Roman), Old Style (Bookman Old Style), Decorative (**JUMPER**), Script (*Swing*), and text letters (Old English). Fonts are also grouped into serif fonts, or those with “serifs” (curls or flourishes on the ends of characters), and sans serif fonts, or those without “serifs” or curls or flourishes. Ariel is a sans serif font, and Times Roman is a serif font.

Fonts that share the same basic shape, style, and proportion but vary in weight, width, or size are called font families. An example of a font family is Helvetica, which includes Helvetica Regular, *Helvetica italic*, **Helvetica bold**, **Helvetica Black**, Helvetica Narrow, **Helvetica Compressed**, and others.

One of the rules of effective typography is to use only a few fonts (or a single font family) per document. By using a font family like Helvetica, an individual has the ability to create headings (using Helvetica Black, for example), or to change the aesthetic feel of a document by using a narrow typeface or reducing the character weight.

Fonts are measured in points. There are 72 points per inch. Here is Times New Roman in six different type sizes:

6 point: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

9 point: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

12 point: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

15 point: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

18 point: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

24 point: ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQ

A 12-point font will typically yield six lines per inch of text at single spacing. We say “typically” because, as Michael Bruno explains, “Corresponding letters in the same size type may vary in height. We say that the face is either small on body . . . or large on body” (2000, p. 37). For example, the following are all 24-point lowercase A’s:

a a **a** a **a** *a*
 ð **a** *a* **a**

The space between lines of type is called “leading” (pronounced *led-ding*). Although most personal computer users are accustomed to selecting “single,” “space-and-a-half” or “double” spacing from the menu bar of their word processing programs, in professional practice leading is measured in points. Twelve points of leading applied to a 12-point font (called “solid” or single spacing) will yield six lines per inch of text. Using 24-points of leading with a 12-point font will result in double-spaced lines of text, or three lines per inch of text.

Adjusting the space between characters is called “kerning” and is also measured in points. Kerning can be increased or decreased to achieve specific typographic effects.

—Michael L. Kent

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FORMATIVE RESEARCH

All public relations activities begin with formative research, an effort to understand the current situation. A public relations activity is like a journey. The better prepared a person is for a journey, the more pleasant it will be. For practitioners, the better prepared they are for a public relations activity, the more productive it will be for the organization or client. A public relations effort is driven by the needs of the situation. Practitioners try to overcome problems, or things that threaten the organization, or develop opportunities, or things that could benefit the organization. Often called other names, such as situational analysis or background research, formative research helps the public relations practitioner understand the problems or opportunity at hand. Formative research is the raw material for developing strategy. Two critical pieces of information for strategy development are stakeholders and the exact nature of the problem or opportunity.

Practitioners should know the stakeholders involved with the situation. They need to identify which stakeholders might be allies and support their efforts and which stakeholders might oppose their efforts, and they need to collect detailed information on who their target audiences might be. Detailed information about the target is critical when selecting communication channels and developing messages. Practitioners must know the target so that they can select media that will reach and messages that will appeal to the target. Practitioners also need to understand what makes a situation a problem or opportunity. They need to know the cause of a problem if they hope to solve it. Effective public relations solutions begin with a detailed understanding of the problem. Similarly, practitioners should understand why a situation is an opportunity if they are to effectively utilize it. In short, it is important for public relations practitioners to determine what harms or benefits a situation presents to an organization or client. An extended example will help to clarify the role of formative research.

MacCorp is located in a moderate-sized Midwestern town of about 50,000 people. Each year the local paper does an assessment of community needs and prints the top 10 issues that are

important to the local community. Number 5 on this year's list was a lack of park and recreation facilities. MacCorp has some unused land that would be perfect for a park: a wooded area and a level section ideal for soccer fields. The paper's survey presents MacCorp with an opportunity to improve community relations by addressing one of the community's top needs. The public relations department's first step is identifying the key players involved in the park and recreation issue. This would include all relevant local government officials, any community groups interested in parks, local sporting groups who might use the park, local neighborhoods near the proposed site, and any state or federal agencies that might have a say in the park construction, such as the Environmental Protection Agency. Next, the public relations department seeks out more information about each stakeholder, such as how strongly each is committed to the issue, what each would like to see in a new park, and whether or not some groups might oppose the company's efforts.

The public relations department then needs to specify the opportunity. It must clarify what a "need for parks and recreation" means. The focus would be on user needs—what people want from a park. Obviously understanding the key players will go a long way toward understanding the opportunity. Still, the public relations department needs to focus its efforts and make sure it understands what the opportunity really is. One starting point would be for someone from the public relations department to talk to a number of community leaders about the potential park. Let us say the leaders keep mentioning the lack of soccer fields and tennis courts in the community. The public relations department then constructs a survey that has people rate the value of 10 different park amenities, including tennis courts and soccer fields. It mails the survey to community members and tallies the results. If the survey says that tennis courts and soccer fields are the two most valued amenities, the public relations department can be confident that building those two amenities will please the community.

The formative research helps MacCorp's public relations department to develop its strategies. By researching the stakeholders involved in the situation, the public relations people know who

might help or hinder their park community relations initiative. MacCorp also knows whom they will need to target with their messages. By researching the opportunity, the public relations people can be confident that their community relations initiative will be received positively. They will know that their planned park meets the needs of the community. The next step is to convert this information into a strategy by setting objectives, specifying target audiences, designing messages, and selecting tactics.

The amount of formative research a public relations practitioner conducts depends on how much or how little the practitioner already knows about the situation. The less practitioners know about the situation, the more research they will need to conduct before they can begin the public relations activity. For seasoned public relations practitioners, many situations will be fairly routine and require very little additional research. Instead of actively searching other sources, they can draw upon past experiences and databases stored in their computer files to guide their response. The search is internal and quick. Consider the example of a manager receiving an award. The award is an opportunity to generate positive publicity for the organization. Deciding to send out a pitch letter and news release is fairly routine when someone has been doing public relations for years. Furthermore, a practitioner would have all the requisite media contact information in a database on a computer. The practitioner knows the key stakeholders (the media outlets), what types of stories they prefer, and what this opportunity means. If the situation is completely new to the practitioner, a lot of formative research is necessary before the strategic aspects of the public relations efforts can be developed.

Formative research provides the raw material needed to construct a public relations effort. Strategy becomes the map for a public relations effort. But how does a practitioner build a map? In public relations, formative research provides the information needed to construct the map. The speed at which a practitioner collects the requisite information depends on how much relevant information the practitioner already possesses and how much he or she needs to discover. Formative research is the first step in the development of a public relations activity. If a

practitioner begins by going in the wrong direction, the results of the public relations effort will probably be negative for the organization. Careful, systematic formative research points a public relations practitioner in the right direction and increases the likelihood of an effective public relations activity.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Gantt Chart; PERT Chart; Public relations research

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FOSTER, LAWRENCE

See Crisis communications and the Tylenol poisonings

FOUR-MINUTE MEN

During World War I, the Four-Minute Men were a division of the Committee on Public Information (CPI) that helped to persuade Americans to support the war effort; they did this by giving speeches, usually in movie theaters during intermissions. Theaters were particularly effective because 10 to 13 million people attended them daily. These speeches helped to mobilize support for the war and to provide for the essentials of war. The Four-Minute Men overcame the primary weaknesses inherent in other communication channels so that they could present their message to the entire nation, since broadcasting was not yet available.

Donald Ryerson originated the idea for the Four-Minute Men and was the first head of the division. The division was organized in a state-by-state network and eventually included all states in the

union and eight territories. Each state or territory had a chairman who was responsible for coordinating activities and for picking the local chairmen, who, in turn, were responsible for the selection and training of the speakers. Despite receiving no pay or reimbursement for expenses, speakers were never hard to find.

The Four-Minute Men division of the CPI maintained control over the network of speakers, including the selection of address topics and the preparation of associated materials. Speakers were trained through a series of bulletins published by the division. From May 1917 to the end of 1918, 46 bulletins were published. Ten dealt with the organization itself. Of the remaining 36, 6 messages concerned raising money and 5 discussed conserving or acquiring food. These messages were essential for the nation to create the materials necessary for war.

Although each speech topic fulfilled a specific function, the bulletins usually provided speakers with some essential elements: an opening letter of encouragement from the division head; points to be covered in every speech and suggested optional points; sample speeches; and sometimes even answers for crowd objections. The speeches presented by the Four-Minute Men were normally delivered in theaters during the intermissions and were limited to four minutes. The organization had a series of auxiliary organizations, including groups with female speakers and Junior Four-Minute Men groups in schools.

“When the armistice brought activities to a conclusion the Four Minute Men numbered 75,000 speakers, more than 755,190 speeches had been made and a fair estimate of audiences makes it certain that a total of 134,454,514 people had been addressed” (Creel, 1920, p. 85). Creel noted that if allowances are made for those communities that made no reports, a final estimate would place the figures at 1 million speeches heard by 400 million individuals for the 18 months the organization was in operation. Creel also noted that for the total government expenditures of \$100,000 for the Four-Minute Men division, the organization accrued over \$9 million in financial benefits.

—Charles A. Lubbers

See also Davis, Elmer, and the Office of War Information

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A 1917 poster for one of the Four-Minute Men speeches. President Woodrow Wilson recruited 75,000 speakers called Four-Minute Men to give short talks on United States war aims to the public at theater intermissions and other venues.

SOURCE: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

FRAME

A *frame* is a rhetorical label that encapsulates unconnected pieces of information about a subject of interest into a graphic image or a coherent story. The term naturally draws metaphorical value from the function of a cropping frame used with visual images, which limits and focuses the viewer’s gaze, while at once bestowing relevance

upon subjects within the position or scope of its borders and irrelevance upon those without. Frames illuminate matters of personal or public importance, whether they are a strategic product or an emergent outcome of ongoing communication. One important evolution in the understanding of frames is the media frame, which concerns itself with the materialization of frames in public discourse. But frames can just as easily occur within or between individuals, groups, or societies without their materialization in media.

In each of these areas, frames submit to three levels of analysis. At the level of their production, frames sustain graphic images and a common vision of worldviews or ideologies, which tend toward their own transmission or perpetuation. Nations, such as the United States, frame their symbols in a worldview that is ostensibly widely shared by citizens. At this level, the most powerful frames hold sway by virtue of their institutionalization and fixed position above societal structures. That is, the adoption and adherence to a set of values or guiding philosophy to which a group of people adhere produce a frame of understanding that is shared by the members of the group. Those members use that frame to organize and predictably qualify routine information. In one sense, the frame of “student as customer” can be thought of as a dominant frame that has expanded into the spheres of education, where it has become influential in valuation at a broader cultural level. By this cultural valuation, students are no longer thought of merely as persons who come to learn and earn a degree. They have become customers who expect treatment beyond that traditionally associated with a college education experience. If they don’t like the product or service, they are allowed—even expected—to complain and seek “customer satisfaction.” At the content level, frames import a fixed meaning to key words, ideas, or entailments and bring coherence to words and phrases within or between communications. In education, discussions of “customer service” direct dialogue, thereby implicating the frame of “student-as-customer.” Finally, at the effects level, frames become interpretive schemes used to process information, make judgments, and draw inferences, and can reveal the link between mass ideologies and policies. For example, in

education, the “customer service” frame can govern procedures that assimilate business practices, such as student evaluations.

An awareness of frames helps public relations professionals better understand general trends in society. A thorough understanding of how frames work may also aid public relations staff members in knowing their role and abilities as professionals. First, a general awareness of the power frames can assist public relations professionals in managing information so that they can clarify thinking, articulate alternative points of view, or more readily perceive less evident alternative viewpoints. Second, public relations professionals can use frames in their research and evaluation efforts to track changes, monitor events, and identify new threats and opportunities in a given environment. Third, public relations professionals may more readily express their needs and objectives with frames preferred by top management in order to accomplish organizational or public objectives. For example, public relations professionals commonly encase their agendas or activities in frames already accessible to management, such as those concerning the importance of “relationships,” or considerations of “return on investment,” “efficiency,” or “corporate reputation.” Fourth, public relations professionals can work with management groups to identify and avoid fixed perspectives preserved by lasting frames. Indeed, prior research has shown that top levels of management often become trapped in their own preferred frames and do not easily entertain alternative points of view. Working with management through the concept of frames provides a way for public relations to serve as a conscience for an organization by directing attention to the neglect of certain trends, issues, or publics. Fifth, policy advocates can enhance their success by shaping information into coherent packages with standardized prevailing values, stories, and myths. Prevailing values and the like may include “efficiency,” “capitalism,” or “rationalism,” all of which have gained considerable currency in this era as institutionalized frames. Finally, public relations professionals can use framing concepts to adapt organizational interests to the established media frame of “newsworthiness” that news workers

use in deciding what counts as news. That is, when public relations professionals are able to pitch stories or write press releases that emphasize themes favored by journalists (e.g., those characterized by “proximity,” “human interest,” or “timeliness”), such stories or press releases are more readily printed.

We are all privy and susceptible to frames, yet their effects are by no means equal. For a frame’s force at the production level determines the power of its effects. That is, those whose frames are more widely circulated, such as through public deliberation or the mass media, prevail over others. Hence, those deliberating at the policy level, such as for business or government, acquire resources by successfully funneling their interests through existing, generally accepted frames. This is especially so of those working with frames that have become tacit over time, or taken for granted. Conversely, challenging successfully promoted positions involves adopting their frames of understanding, or otherwise introducing similarly compelling values and beliefs in support of the challenge.

The use of the term *frame* as a theoretical model has origins in the work of psychologist Gregory Bateson and of the sociologist Erving Goffman. From these two can be traced stages in the evolution of the term from the conventional analogy of the picture frame into academic theory and research methods. Media sociologists Herbert Gan, Gaye Tuchman, and Todd Gitlin later disseminated their works more broadly into other disciplines.

—Craig Carroll

See also Framing theory

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FRAMING THEORY

Framing theory deals with framing, a rhetorical device that has received increased attention in public relations as a way to understand the construction of arguments and the different interpretations of arguments.

Framing is actually a metaphor that compares message construction to drawing a border around a painting or picture. The frame helps define the meaning of the message (a) by focusing attention on particular elements and (b) by excluding competing, distracting, or contradictory elements.

Framing draws upon the notions that message producers are involved in the construction of social reality and that message meanings are negotiated, not absolute; thus framing theory falls within post-modern and relativist perspectives. This approach suggests that public relations practitioners frame situations or problems in ways that are favorable to clients. Framing thus might be compared to the practice pejoratively referred to as spin doctoring.

HOW FRAMING WORKS

Framing is central to the establishment and maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships because it helps organizations and key publics to develop common *frames of reference*. A frame essentially limits or defines a message’s meaning. Both message creators and receivers are involved in the process. Frames reflect judgments made by message creators, who put information in either positive or negative frames, use particular semantic phrases, and tell stories using particular syntactical, thematic, or rhetorical devices.

Framing biases the audience’s cognitive processing of a message. Framed messages inevitably contain *contextual cues* that are intended to trigger associations with ideas stored in audience members’ memory. These memory traces can be either positive or negative or can conjure up particular recalled images that facilitate processing.

Framing also *primes* audiences to think about a topic in a particular way. For example, the abortion controversy might be framed as an issue involving (a) a medical procedure, (b) a religious or moral act,

or (c) the freedom to make choices. In fact, all three are involved, but, depending on which frame is used, audiences are prompted to interpret a message using different sets of memory traces or cognitive schemas. Framing affects cognitive processing by selectively influencing which sets of experiences the message draws upon and how audiences think about or define a particular topic.

Psychologists differ about the exact structure and operation of human memory, but most psychologists agree that people use processes of association and expectation to schematically make inferences and impute meaning that might not be manifested in the message itself. Importantly, audiences might or might not be conscious of these message-framing effects.

TYPES OF FRAMING

The robustness of framing theory is evident in the many different ways in which the framing concept is used. At least seven different models of framing have been identified that have potential applications to public relations.

Situations

Researchers from anthropology and sociology were the first to examine the communication process using a framing paradigm. In anthropology, Gregory Bateson defined a psychological frame as “a spatial and temporary bounding of a set of interactive messages” (Bateson, 1972, p. 191). In sociology, Erving Goffman used framing as the basis for defining and studying human interaction and developed an elaborate system for analyzing human interactions. This tradition has been carried forward in studies analyzing discourse, language, and literary storytelling. Framing of situations is routinely used by organizations to explain its actions. Framing is also a critical component used in bargaining and negotiations.

Attributes

Advertisers and other marketing communicators routinely use framing devices to promote particular

characteristics of objects, events, and people. This process can be evidenced in practices as simple as writing captions under photographs that call attention to particular aspects of an illustrated product. Marketers regularly choose particular attributes or characteristics that they wish to promote (such as convenience) while ignoring others (such as higher price). Advertisers often want to conjure up images based on prior experience so customers can relive their experience. Product positioning similarly uses framing to differentiate a particular brand from all other competitors in a category. Both product attributes and positioning provide the basis for the product claims contained in advertising. Some researchers have identified framing as a form of second-order agenda setting whereby media are able to influence not only what topics people think about, but how they think about them. A particularly important aspect of framing involves the best way to describe attributes. For example, the fat content in meat might be described as 80 percent lean or 20 percent fat. Research suggests that positive framing consistently leads to more favorable evaluations than negative framing of the same fact.

Risky Choices

The framing of choices, one of the most extensively researched areas of framing, is based on the classical work of psychologists Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky. These psychologists defined a frame as a decision maker’s perception of “the acts, outcomes and contingencies associated with a particular choice” (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, p. 263). They argued that human decision making is inherently irrational because the prospect of loss has a far greater impact on decisions than does the prospect of an equivalent gain. Their *prospect theory* suggests that people avoid risks when a choice is stated in terms of gains but will take greater risks when choices are stated in terms of losses. This element has particular relevance for health communicators concerned with how people will deal with health threats, as well as for risk communicators who must encourage or discourage risk taking. However, framing of choices is also relevant to decision making in organizations, to negotiation

strategies, and to other communications in which audiences are challenged to make choices. Although findings are generally consistent with prospect theory, the effect can vary based on the type and context of the risky decisions involved.

Actions

The framing of actions involves the question of how to achieve audience compliance when no risky choice is involved but when a decision might have positive or negative consequences. Take, for example, a membership organization that wants to charge different rates for attending an event based on whether registrants sign up before or after a specified date. Early sign-ups could be promoted as a discount (gain), and late sign-ups could be explained as a penalty (loss). Which is the better way to promote participation when the options are the same? *Valence framing* and *goal framing* are terms used to differentiate between propositions stated in positive terms that focus on taking a particular action, or in negative terms that focus on what will result by taking no action. Health communicators interested in getting people to quit smoking can make a strategic creative decision to either stress the benefits of a smokeless life or the deleterious effects of cigarettes on health. The findings here are generally the same as for the framing of risky choices: framing of actions in terms of negative consequences appears to have greater persuasive impact than framing that emphasizes positive consequences. However, various factors can moderate results, including the audiences' level of involvement and their sense of self-efficacy (the ability to deal effectively with a situation).

Issues

Framing plays a pivotal role in defining social problems (such as abortion) and the moral actions attendant on dealing with them. Social researchers who adopt a constructionist approach argue that social problems are best understood as issues constructed by claims makers, who use framing as a tool in agenda building to create public interest and concern about issues. Many people today are chagrined by the absence of a robust public sphere

of dialogue in which people can use philosophical and rational arguments to persuade audiences to adopt a particular position. Framing, some argue, confounds the deliberation process because people don't even agree on the definition of a problem—a necessary condition for coming to an agreement.

Frames define problems and thus delimit possible solutions. Researchers concerned with social movements have theorized extensively about the importance of framing, including the *frame enterprise* and *frame sponsorship*, the active effort of activists to position or frame a problem as being of a particular kind and source. Thus, advocates engage in a *framing competition*. Building coalitions can involve a variety of framing-related activities, including *frame alignment*, *bridging*, *alignment*, *crystallization*, *extension*, and *transformation*.

Responsibility

Framing an issue often implies both its cause and its solution. Yet another valuable rhetorical use of framing involves the framing of responsibility, or the attribution of causes to a particular actor, to the object or entity acted upon, or the environment or circumstances in which an event occurs. Attribution theory deals with how people attempt to understand the causes of events or actions. Researchers have shown that attribution processes are easily biased by inattention, the salience of particular explanations, prior knowledge and extant schemas, and personal needs and motivations. Fundamental attribution error, for example, refers to the tendency to attribute people's behaviors to stable personality factors or dispositions rather than to situations or external causes. Actor-observer bias involves people attributing their own successes to themselves, while failures are explained as caused by situations. In crises or disasters, people tend to watch to find the root cause and assign blame rather than accept such occurrences as acts of fate. Much investigative reporting, for example, focuses on finding out the cause of a problem. Along this same vein, news tends to use episodic framing in which events or problems are explained as the result of people's actions, rather than thematic framing, in which causes are attributed to systemic problems in society.

News

Finally, framing has become a focus of researchers interested in reporting and in how dominant social themes or ideas are used to shape the way news is presented by the media. A *news frame* is a central organizing idea for explaining events that uses various symbolic and framing devices that support the main idea. William A. Gamson, for example, suggested in 1993 that media routinely use metaphors, catchphrases, exemplars, depictions, and visual images that culturally resonate with audiences. These framing devices represent conventions for telling information and help media workers arrange seemingly disjointed events into a meaningful, organized interpretive package. Meanwhile, familiar frames provide mental maps to help audiences make sense of daily events. Extensive research has been conducted on how a wide range of topics have been treated by the press. These include how deviance from social norms, as represented in the coverage of disputes and protests, can be used as a tool of power to define whose view of the world will dominate. Concerns about biased media framing have usurped concerns about merely balancing coverage.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

The central idea behind framing is contextualization: Framing puts information in a situational or cultural context that delineates how people evaluate information, comprehend meanings and take action. Public relations messages must be imbued with sufficient clues so that people can make sense of a message and be persuaded by it. In developing programs, public relations professionals operate as strategists who strive to frame situations, attributes, choices, actions, issues, and responsibility in ways that achieve favorable outcomes for their clients. When conducting publicity, it is equally important to use effective news framing to present a client's story in the press.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Agenda-setting theory; Involvement; Issues management; Media relations; Psychological processing

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FREDE, RALPH E.

Ralph E. Frede, APR, Fellow PRSA, was instrumental in raising professional standards of public relations through education, accreditation, and integrity.

Born in Floydada, Texas, on September 28, 1921, Frede moved with his family to Amarillo when he was a year old, and then to Austin when he was a teenager. Frede earned a Bachelor of Journalism degree (1943) and a Master of Arts in Government degree (1947) from the University of Texas in Austin, where he was editor of the student newspaper, the *Daily Texan*, and president of Alpha Phi Omega. Between degrees, Frede was a U.S. Navy lieutenant and executive officer of an LST during World War II. He was in the first wave of small boats that went into the beaches at Normandy on D-Day.

Frede's leadership in the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) for more than three decades was directed toward establishing higher professional standards. He was a founder of the Accredited in Public Relations (APR) program, the PRSA College of Fellows, and the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education, which today does business as the Institute of Public Relations. He was the first president of the foundation, which also launched the *Public Relations Review* in 1975.

Equally known for his achievements in institutional development, Frede advanced the level of professionalism in both public relations and fundraising through his exacting standards and belief in education as a lifelong process. He brought the public relations and development disciplines together to create maximum value for the institutions he served.

A Houston, Texas, resident most of his career, Frede is recognized for his professional leadership at the local, state, and national level. He received the Gold Anvil award from PRSA, the Golden Spur award from the Texas Public Relations Association (TPRA), and the Excalibur Legacy Award from the PRSA Houston Chapter. All are the organizations' highest honors for professional achievement and contributions to the profession. He was a board member of PRSA and president of the Public Relations Foundation in 1973. He also served as Southwest District chairman of PRSA and as past president and national assembly delegate of the Houston Chapter, and he held many other top positions in professional organizations.

Frede was most widely recognized as a public relations practitioner. His awards include the Silver Anvil of PRSA (1965) and the Outstanding Texas Public Relations Practitioner from TPRA (1988).

Frede wrote the initial examination taken by individuals for the APR designation in the 1960s and worked with the testing firm to evaluate and score examinations. His basic test, with minor adjustments, was used by PRSA for 30 years. He mentored decades of practitioners who studied in workshops to prepare to pass this examination.

An unswerving advocate of public relations as a vital part of management, Frede insisted that public interest is paramount. His quotation from an article in the September 18, 1989, *PR Reporter* article titled "PR Opportunities of the Future Will Involve Ability to Help Management" summarized his view: "We must retain our integrity, a sense of what's good for the public. We want to *be*, not *seem* to be. So we must counsel with management to put the house in order. Performance must be part of the public relations process" (p. 2).

Frede had a special talent for making things simple. He believed that good public relations is as

simple as two or more parties reaching a mutually satisfying conclusion through effective two-way communications. When it came to philanthropy, he believed that most people wanted to give to causes if they had a passionate belief in them, and that effective fundraising was as simple as giving them the facts to create that passion.

He was vice president of public affairs for Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, from 1970 until his retirement in 1989. During this period, Frede's skills in combining public relations, government relations, and development helped Baylor gain hundreds of millions of dollars in public and private funding and move to the forefront among the nation's medical schools.

Frede was director of development for the University of Houston (UH) from 1956 to 1970. He also served as executive director of the University of Houston Foundation during this period and was a leader in bringing UH into the state university system of Texas.

He was a state representative for the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis in Texas and Missouri from 1950 to 1956; assistant to the Dean of Student Life at the University of Texas and director of the Student Employment Bureau from 1948 to 1950; and manager of public relations and education for the Austin (Texas) Chamber of Commerce from 1947 to 1948.

Throughout his career, Frede was active in public relations education. He taught at Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri, while at the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. At the University of Houston, he introduced and taught a course on principles of public relations in the Department of Management, College of Business Administration.

In the early 1960s, with his urging, the course was moved to the Department of Journalism (which is now the School of Communication) in the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition to principles of public relations, Ralph introduced public relations writing and public relations campaigns to provide a solid curriculum in public relations. After Frede retired on August 31, 1989, from Baylor, he continued to teach graduate courses in public affairs management and public relations management at UH.

Frede's published articles have ranged from public relations issues to church administration, and in retirement he has continued to write and consult for nonprofit institutions in Houston, Austin, and San Antonio.

Leadership positions held within the public relations profession include director of the Southwest District for the American College Public Relations Association, district conference chairman for the American Alumni Council; member, National Educational and Research Council, PRSA; member, Public Relations Division, Texas Hospital Association; president, Houston Chapter, Southwest Society of Fund Raisers; director, School of Educational Administrators, American College Public Relations Association; and vice president of the Mid-Missouri Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi (Professional Journalism Society).

Besides his professional achievements, Frede gave generously of his leadership and talent to the community and his church.

In Houston, he was a vestryman at St. Francis Episcopal Church and senior warden at Christ Church Cathedral; president of Protestant Charities of Houston; chairman of the Education Division and director of United Way of Houston; president and director of the Rotary Club of Houston; member of the advisory board, Alley Theater; president of the Rotary Club of Houston Student Education Fund, Inc.; chairman of the Public Relations Committee and director of the Sam Houston Area Council, Boy Scouts of America.

In Austin, Frede served as chairman of the Austin Rotary Foundation and was on the St. David's Church Endowment Board and on advisory committees for St. David's Hospital Foundation, the University of Texas Psychology Department, and the Texas Union.

He has received the Boy Scout Silver Beaver award; the Exceptional Achievement Award, American College Public Relations Association; the Public Service Award, Texas Optometric Association; and the Service Award, Houston Assembly of Delphian Chapters.

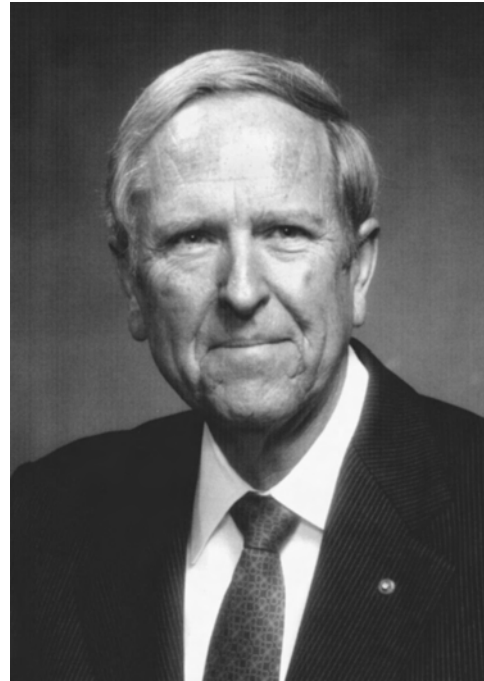
Frede and his wife, Martha C. Frede, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist, live in Austin. They have four daughters.

—Sabra H. Gill and D. Gayle McNutt

See also Institute for Public Relations (IPR); Public Relations Society of America

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Ralph Frede

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FREE MARKET SYSTEM

A free market system is one in which the basic economic questions—what to produce, how much to produce, and for whom—are answered through the unencumbered and independent actions of producers, workers, and consumers. This can be contrasted with a command economy, in which a central planner makes the decisions on where resources will be allocated, in what quantities, and with how much compensation. In an absolutely free market the economic agents make individual choices without any interference or distortion from government.

Although the concept of free markets certainly predates him, Adam Smith is widely credited with the first comprehensive discussion of this idea in *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (usually referred to as *The Wealth of Nations*), originally published in 1776. In this book, Smith first introduces the concept of the “invisible hand” of the marketplace, whereby the actions of self-interested consumers, producers, and workers result in scarce resources being allocated to their socially optimal destination without any visible external direction. Consumers buy the products that will maximize their utility (happiness) given the prices of the products and constrained by their available income or wealth. Producers respond by producing those products so that the price they receive will at least cover all of the costs of production, including opportunity costs (those costs related to forgoing the next best option for spending the productive resources, including the producer’s time and talents), and by ceasing production of unprofitable products.

A defining feature of a free market system is that of competition: competition between producers to provide products that consumers want and at the lowest possible cost; competition among consumers bidding for various goods and services; competition among workers to get their chosen jobs; and competition among the owners of capital and land in providing their factors of production to the highest bidder. It is this competition that determines where resources will be allocated and in what price and quantity.

Buyers of products, whether those products be goods and services or factors of production like land, labor, and capital, must choose from a wide array of products, all of which would increase the utility of the buyer. However, the buyer has a limited amount of resources, including money and time, with which to purchase the product. When considering whether to buy a specific product, the consumer must decide whether the marginal utility of the product, that is, the additional happiness that the product will give the consumer, is sufficient given the price paid. If it is, and many consumers agree with that assessment, there may be more

people demanding the product at that price than there is product available. In this case, competition among the demanders will push up the price of the product. In response to the higher price, existing or new producers will increase their output of the product, since they can now afford to pay more for the factors of production and bid them away from other uses and since they are receiving more for each unit sold.

If consumers find that the marginal utility of the product is not enough to justify the price paid, they will choose not to purchase it. Again, if there is an imbalance, with enough consumers making that decision that there is an excess supply of the product at that price, the invisible hand ensures that producers will engage in competition to make sure that their product is the one that gets sold by lowering their offering price. However, if the price that they must lower their product to is too low for the producer to sustain a profit in the long run, the producer will shut down, thus freeing up resources for production of other goods and services.

Market equilibrium occurs when the amount that producers/owners want to sell at a given price matches the amount that consumers wish to purchase at that price. Since consumers wish to buy less at higher prices and producers would like to sell more at higher prices, a price above this market equilibrium price will result in an excess supply of the goods. Market forces will return the situation to equilibrium by the process described. Similarly, a price below the market clearing equilibrium price will result in an excess demand for the product, whose price will then be bid back up to equilibrium by those same market forces. This equilibrium price does not guarantee any particular producer the opportunity to sell its product, nor does it guarantee that any individual consumer will be able to consume the product. In aggregate, however, the market will clear.

Of course, price is not the only determinant of how much a consumer wants to purchase or a producer wants to sell. Consumer demand is also impacted by other factors, such as income, the price of other goods, and the perceived marginal utility received from consumption of the product, while

producer supply is impacted by production costs, technology, and the perceived opportunities forgone in producing this product instead of something else. The key idea is that, in a truly free market, these factors are minimally impacted by government interference.

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

A free market does not necessarily imply lack of government involvement. In fact, some sort of government or collective power is necessary to set the rules of commerce and property rights and to enforce those rules and rights. This is required to prevent potential coercion of one of the parties in the transaction, ensuring free choice by market participants. Government intervention is also desirable when the market might fail. Market failure is possible in a number of instances, such as in the areas of public goods and externalities.

Public goods are those whose benefits are not excludable from consumers who choose not to pay for that good or service. An example would be national defense. Once a country chooses a level of national defense, it applies to all of its citizens. It is impractical, if not impossible, to exclude particular citizens from defense just because they didn't pay. Because of this property of national defense, if each person were left to choose how much to contribute to the fund, many people would choose to contribute nothing and be a "free rider" on those that do contribute. Very few people would voluntarily contribute their full share toward areas such as national defense, leaving a shortfall in the amount of money available for this undertaking.

A person would naturally think, "Why should I contribute the full amount necessary to fund this project, when my neighbor who chooses not to pay still gets the same benefit that I do?" This results in less of the product/service being provided than each individual might want. In such a case, the coercive power of government to collect taxes is necessary to force individuals to pay their "fair share." There is no consensus over which goods or services should be provided by the public sector (government) and which by the private sector (free market system).

However, candidates include police and fire protection, roads and bridges, education, and health care. Often a combination of public and private sector approaches is used, as shown by the existence of both public and private universities in the United States.

A similar role of government can arise in the case of externalities. An externality is essentially a side effect of a given product, service, or production process in which the parties involved in the market exchange do not fully bear the costs and/or reap the benefits of that exchange. Externalities may be either positive or negative.

A classic example of a negative externality is pollution. If a company, in producing its product, dumps toxins into the river, many people beyond the producer will bear the cost of that decision. Since the producer does not bear the full costs of polluting and receives little compensation for not polluting, the incentives not to pollute are weakened. This is true for each producer, thus resulting in more pollution than would occur if the producers did bear all the costs of their production processes. Producers in a free market system can choose not to pollute out of a sense of social responsibility or because they believe that polluting will lead to a consumer backlash of their product. The reality is that everyone bears the negative impact of the pollution in some way, but only those who choose to buy the product would pay to make the production process cleaner, thus bearing the burden for many nonconsumers of the product. Since most consumers would be unwilling to take on this extra burden, many producers are not pushed by market forces alone to produce in a more environmentally friendly manner. The government can then step in and either tax the producer an amount such that the total costs to the producer reflect the impact of the pollution or tax the citizens an amount necessary to then subsidize the producers to give them the incentive to reduce their negative environmental impact. Conversely, a positive externality, one in which there are positive spillover benefits to others, will be underproduced if left to the free market. To correct this, government may choose to subsidize the production of such goods and services.

—Eric P. Eller

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FREE SPEECH

In a monograph on public relations law, Frank Walsh (1988) wrote, “Democracy is fundamental to the potential of public relations. In the United States, the democratic process rests on the Constitution. Public relations without constitutionally protected free press and free speech is a misnomer. Without exception, every area of public relations practice involves legal rights and restrictions” (p. 1). The basis of the protection is the First Amendment to the Constitution, which reads, in part, “Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.” In addition to the federal constitution, freedom of speech is also protected by state constitutions, statutes, and the common law.

Although the First Amendment is phrased in absolute terms, it has never been applied as an absolute principle. For example, national security issues, fighting words, and legally obscene materials have been viewed as outside First Amendment protection. Areas that impact public relations, such as defamation, copyright protection, and privacy issues, set up conflicts between free speech rights and other protected values.

A number of commentators and textbooks have adopted the justifications for the choice enunciated by Thomas Emerson. According to Emerson, there are four justifications for guaranteeing free speech. First, “freedom of expression is essential as a means of assuring individual self-fulfillment.” Second, “freedom of expression is an essential process for advancing knowledge and discovering truth.” Third, “freedom of expression is essential to provide for participation in decision making by all members of society.” Fourth, “freedom of expression is a

method of achieving a more adaptable and hence a more stable community” (1970, pp. 6–9). Thus free speech is justified both as an individual good and as a good for society—both as an ends and a means. All four justifications find expression in various Supreme Court decisions.

Although Emerson focused his analysis primarily on the American experience and Supreme Court decisions, the justification of freedom of expression has a long philosophical history, dating back at least to the arguments in John Milton’s *Areopagitica* (1644) and advanced in John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* (1859). Although both Milton and Mill make a number of detailed arguments against censorship in favor of free speech, they can be reduced to two main arguments. The first is that the way to combat speech that is harmful is not to censor it but to counter with more speech. Censorship is never effective, leads to loss of mental toughness, and promotes conformity. More speech leads to public discussion, a greater possibility of resolving issues, and a greater chance that truth will emerge. The second argument is based on the idea of individual competence and responsibility. The basis of the arguments is that individuals are the best judges of what is in their best interest and that they are responsible enough, if persuaded or outvoted, to set that individual interest aside in favor of the common good.

But what does a guarantee of free speech mean? One of the first cases dealing with the issue was *Near v. Minnesota*, 283 U.S. 697 (1931). Chief Justice Hughes, writing for the majority, referenced William Blackstone’s (the 18th-century English judicial scholar) statement that “liberty of the press . . . consists in laying no previous restraints upon publications, and not in freedom from censure for criminal matter when published. Every freeman has an undoubted right to lay what sentiments he pleases before the public; to forbid this, is to destroy the freedom of the press” (1931, pp. 713–714). Although this statement was criticized from both directions—that some limited areas could be subjected to prior restraints and that liberty of the press that was not guaranteed in nonharmless statements could be subjected to criminal prosecution—the statement

became the basis for the idea that freedom of speech consisted in no prior restraints on communication.

As a corollary, freedom of speech entails the means to gather information from willing participants and from governmental sources via sunshine laws and freedom of information statutes. Another corollary necessary to freedom of speech is the right to distribute the message. This right has been sustained by the courts in various contexts, including public forums, mail, door-to-door situations, and the media. Some distribution methods have come under scrutiny, including computer spam, telemarketing, and unsolicited faxes.

Although there is a strong presumption against prior restraints on expression, a distinction is often drawn between expression and action. Expression is strongly protected, but action is not protected at the same level of scrutiny. The key is how to draw a distinction between the two. Courts have wrestled with drawing this distinction in such areas as mass picketing and various forms of symbolic speech. A distinction is also drawn between antispeech and nonspeech regulations. For example, a tax on the media may impact expression, but if the media are treated as any other business, the tax is considered a nonspeech regulation and upheld. Restrictions regarding the time, manner, and place of expression are also routinely upheld as long as they are content neutral, there is little discretionary power in the hands of the administrators, they are reasonable, and they advance a legitimate governmental interest. Captive audiences are generally given greater protection by the courts than are other types of audiences. (For a discussion of specific legal issues related to the law and public relations, *see* Commercial speech, Defamation [libel and slander], and other pertinent entries.)

On balance, Western democracies have chosen to place minimal legal restrictions on communication, preferring to rely instead on a sense of responsibility and relevant ethical standards and codes of conduct. That choice seems to have had positive results for the field of public relations.

—Roy V. Leeper

See also Codes of ethics; Commercial speech

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FREELANCE WRITERS

A freelance writer earns a living by writing or editing, taking photographs, or preparing graphics for broadcast stations, magazines, Web sites, newspapers, corporations, individuals, nonprofit organizations, and anyone else who needs help collecting, packaging, and disseminating information.

Public relations agencies and departments typically use freelance writers to work on special projects that the existing staff does not have the time or the expertise to handle. A freelance writer might be hired to prepare or edit an employee handbook or to develop interesting and enlightening graphics for an annual report.

The main advantage of hiring freelance writers is monetary: It costs less to hire someone on a one-time basis to complete a single project than it does to retain someone on staff to handle that job. A corporation or nonprofit organization typically doesn't have to worry about providing to freelance writers health insurance or retirement benefits. They generally aren't around long enough to use them.

Another advantage is that an organization can keep abreast of some of the latest develops in a field. A CEO who wants to add streaming video to the organization's Web site might have no idea how to do that—and he or she might have no employee who can do that. Enter a freelance writer to show how it's done.

A disadvantage of using freelance writers lies in the lack of continuity. They seldom know the organization well, and they might not care too much about its overall health. The commitment is not there to learn the organization's history, values, culture, or policies. This lack of knowledge can lead to embarrassment or to a product or service that is less useful, impressive, or compelling than it might be.

A related disadvantage is the potential lack of control over a freelance writer's work. Robin Gregg sold the *New York Post* a story (about Wal-Mart Stores dropping Kathie Lee Gifford's clothing line) that looked a good deal like a story in the *National Enquirer*. Gregg will never write for the *Post* again, according to the *Post*'s management, but the damage was done. This was not a public relations firm, but the same thing can happen in almost any media context.

Freelance writing can be viewed from an entirely different perspective: A public relations writer can be seen as a kind of freelance writer when he or she contributes material to a medium. The obvious example is the news release. Practitioners are not paid for the releases they send, but the process is the same. The practitioner, in effect, works for the television station, for example, supplying material that might be aired. It's important for the practitioner to thoroughly understand the medium and its audience, the prevailing writing style of that medium, and the length and tenor of stories accepted. The practitioner who does these things will be a successful "freelance writer."

—Michael Ryan

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FUNCTIONS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

During the 20th century, public relations steadily evolved into a structured profession based on the development of specializations. The structures of clients and agencies featured functions that resulted from the development of specialties. Today, we think of these specialties as functions. A function is a unique service, program, department, or job title.

Each function has its unique set of objectives and is designed to build, maintain, and repair relationships with specific markets, audiences, or publics. Some of the most typical functions are media

relations, corporate communication, investor relations, issues management, community relations, employee relations, donor relations, strategic philanthropy, and government relations. Sometimes these functions stand alone as departments. They may fall under public relations or public affairs departments, and even the entire corporate communication effort today may be headed by a chief communication officer (CCO). The functions of public relations may be subordinate to other departments. An organization may place various public relations functions under the marketing department, such as publicity, promotion, integrated communication, integrated marketing communication, and marketing communication, which some agencies and companies call "MarCom." Each function has the sense of being a specialty under the broad umbrella of departments with titles such as *public relations* or *public affairs*, or the functions may be positioned to support some other department, such as marketing.

As a specialty, each function is developed because of the dynamics and challenges unique to each organization and its culture, which influence how it responds to internal and external stakeholders. In contrast to organizations that have their own public relations functions, each agency is likely to position itself as specializing in key functions, or it may present itself as a full-service agency. By implication, a full-service agency can support all functions. The challenge of the professional personnel who work in support of each function is to provide a unique service—whether to their employer or as an agency bringing their resources to bear on clients' needs.

As organized into a company (or other organization) or agency, each function may have specialty personnel and a dedicated budget. For instance, a large corporation may decide to have a strategic philanthropy function that is dedicated to issuing invitations for proposals for funding out of the corporate philanthropy pot of money—the money senior management dedicates to building community goodwill by funding nonprofit organizations. This function is likely to review the applicants to determine which are worthy and to also search for and investigate worthy groups that should be given funding as part of the company's strategic philanthropy.

The specific functions an organization employs or the specialties that are offered by each agency could be strategically based on positioning in response to the unique dynamics of the environment where they operate. Some functions are a direct result of external requirements. Perhaps the most obvious of these is investor relations. Publicly traded companies are required by the Securities and Exchange Commission to communicate with current or potential shareholders in a timely, public fashion so that investors can obtain the information they might want to make decisions to buy, sell, or hold shares of the company's stock. This function is generically called "investor relations." Agencies may provide an investor relations service as one of their specialties. Some agencies only specialize in investor relations, because it requires unique knowledge of SEC regulations and must meet highly regulated challenges. This function requires careful coordination with legal and financial expertise relevant to the securities marketplace. Some agencies make no pretense of offering investor relations services because of the special requirements of that function.

Thinking about investor relations, for instance, brings up another point relevant to the discussion of functions. Some of the traditional functions are located within public relations or public affairs departments, whereas others bridge several departments. In many companies, for instance, corporate or employee communications is likely to bridge between and call on specialists from public relations/public affairs and human resources. In some instances, a function typical of public relations may be located in another department. Over the years, for instance, many investor relations functions have left the shelter of public relations departments to become subsumed under the corporate general counsel or the chief financial officer (CFO).

The function called government relations might also bridge two or more departments. For instance, it might have its primary location in public relations/public affairs. Because of the unique nature of the company, it might link to the company's general counsel (bearing on the legal concerns and expertise of the organization) as well as link to operations under the chief operating officer. Depending on the

challenges unique to the company, government relations might need to be matrixed with human resources, engineering, production, and marketing. In this configuration, the service of public relations to the marketing effort is not to sell products or services, but to link that department with the legislative and regulatory arena. Government relations, for instance, might need to gear up to monitor legislative and regulatory issues that could influence how the organization markets its products and services. The government relations function might need to support, mitigate, or oppose legislation or regulation that can affect how the organization markets its products or services.

How each company selects, organizes, charges, and budgets its functions depends on its culture, its mission/vision, and its location in the marketplace or public policy arena. For instance, companies that are largely devoted to selling consumer products are likely to have a marketing bias in their culture, planning, and operations. They are so devoted to marketing that advertising and public relations will tend to be located under the marketing department or may even report to a chief marketing officer or a senior vice president of marketing. In such companies, advertising and public relations work together to sell products or services. There public relations may be limited to a publicity and promotion function. In such situations, it is not surprising to find investor relations and government relations functions located in departments totally separate from public relations. The same may be true of strategic philanthropy and employee relations. In such an organization, the community relations function may very well be devoted to events that publicize and promote products rather than address other concerns relevant to the locales where the company operates.

One reason that *public affairs* developed as a title for the primary "public relations" program in large companies was the desire and need by such companies to deal with publics that were not markets or audiences. For this reason, those companies developed a sense of public relations functions that focused more on stakeholder relations than on marketing. Thus an industrial manufacturing

company—such as one dedicated to the steel industry, the chemical manufacturing industry, or the timber industry—might have a “public affairs” department. It might have a public relations (promotion and publicity) function under public affairs; in this configuration the work assigned to public relations is likely to be limited to marketing support. Or public relations (promotion and publicity) might be located beneath the chief marketing officer, whereas public affairs might have its own chief, for instance, a chief communication officer (CCO)—or the parallel might be the vice president of public affairs on the same organizational line as the vice president of marketing. In one more variation of this theme, the company may have marketing, advertising, and public relations all located beneath the CCO or vice president of public affairs. Large manufacturing organizations that are vertically and horizontally integrated may have public relations or public affairs located in each major operating division. Some divisions may use public relations in support of marketing, whereas other divisions of the company may use public relations primarily for governmental relations, community relations, and strategic philanthropy.

The theme that runs through the definition and design of functions, then, is that the functional location and the specific functions under public relations are selected and budgeted to be relevant to the challenges that drive the organization’s mission/vision, strategic business planning, management, and stakeholder relations. Functions are specialties that are selected, designed, and organized to help the organization increase revenues and reduce costs as a return on investment decision. Their place in markets and the public policy arena motivates managements to select, foster, and use functions to solve relational problems unique to them.

Agencies position themselves competitively. To do so, they determine what functions to offer as part of the kinds of business they want. They select and feature functional specialties based on what they want to do for clients, who in turn are dependent on what they need and want. Positioning through functions is necessary for agencies to generate revenue in a highly competitive market. For instance, some

agencies are closely associated with advertising agencies, or they may be owned as departments in advertising agencies—or marketing agencies. Some agencies are marketing communication specialists that even have advertising and graphics services. For agencies such as these, as well as their clients, events may be a substantial function, whereas they are more of a tactic for other organizations.

In contrast, other agencies feature specialties less directly related to marketing. They all will have a media relations function, as will client organizations of all kinds: businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies. In addition, they might specialize or offer a specialty in community relations, government relations, risk communication, issues management, strategic philanthropy, investor relations, or crisis communication.

Functions are not unique to businesses or agencies. Nonprofits will have various functions given their mission. For instance, a museum is likely to have a development, marketing, and publicity function—or separate functions depending on size and budget. A museum might have an educational outreach function, linking it to schools. That might be a part of its community relations function. Educational outreach is often seen as a part of its marketing and development function.

Universities and colleges have marketing, public relations/public affairs, and alumni relations departments. They will have functions: government relations, alumni relations, development, publicity, faculty relations, employee relations, student relations, parent relations, and such. The logic for each college or university may differ because of its mission and vision, but each will have functional divisions and specialties. It is not unlikely that departments and colleges will have some or many public relations functions.

Thus, functions are the structural specialties that organizations create and employ to advance their missions and visions. Agencies become complementary mirrors of the organizations they strive to serve by adding value to functions in the client organization or by offering functions the client does not have. Sometimes, the role of the agency is to provide a function that a client cannot afford. For

instance, if an organization does one major event per year, it might be cost-effective to outsource that rather than to have people devoted to events or to assume that people doing other public relations function can also do events. Shipping companies may periodically need a crisis response, but they may find it is more cost-effective to have a specialty agency on retainer than to have an in-house crisis response function. Having said that, however, practitioners in nonprofits are more likely to be “Jacks and Jills of all trades” simply because they have fewer resources to spread across the functional needs they have. For this reason, the skills possessed by a corporate practitioner might be less diverse than those of a nonprofit counterpart.

One of the functions of public relations, counseling, is the most controversial and the most demanding. Some agencies—often limited in size, but not expertise—specialize as counselors. They may draw on years of experience and conduct various kinds of research to help the organization solve a problem relevant to its positioning—relevant to various functions. In this sense, counseling might relate to refining the mission and position and even address strategic business planning to better increase revenue and reduce the costs incurred through collisions with activists and other critics. Counseling might periodically review the organization’s sense and policies on corporate responsibility to ensure that it understands and meets the expectations of its stakeholders. Counseling can also be one of the internal functions that either senior members of the public relations department or specialized members of the department can provide to others in the senior management team. Departments with an issues management culture have counseling built in. They traditionally assess, for instance, organizational ethics and standards of corporate responsibility. Based on this assessment, advice can confirm or redirect management choices in a strategic way to build, maintain, or repair relationships with their markets, audiences, and publics.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Advertising; Community relations; Corporate social responsibility; Counseling;

Government relations; Investor relations; Issues management; Marketing; Matrixing/matrix management; Media relations; Philanthropy; Promotion; Publicity

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is one of public relations’ highest paid specializations and one of the least understood. Practitioners manage relationships between one special type of organization and one special stakeholder group: charitable organizations and their donor publics. Contrary to popular belief, the purpose of fundraising is not to raise money, but to help organizations and donors fulfill mutual philanthropic interests.

A good analogy for understanding fundraising, which also is known as *development* and can be termed *donor relations*, is investor relations. Practitioners specializing in investor relations are high paid. They manage relationships between publicly owned corporations (one special type of organization) and investors, or current and potential stockholders (one special stakeholder group). Investor relations specialists do not sell stock in the corporation to generate revenue; rather, their job is to help the corporation retain and attract owners, who invest in the stock market to advance their financial interests. The two parties are interdependent; each needs the other to achieve its goals. Investors are both organizations and individuals, some of whom make major financial commitments and, by virtue of the large percentage of shares they own, hold a great deal of power in the organization–public relationship. Other investors buy only a few shares of stock and have little power individually, although their collective power is substantial. Investor relations specialists use a variety of communication techniques—from interpersonal to controlled media to mass media communication—to build and maintain these relationships.

Just as participation in the stock market is a characteristic of our capitalistic economy, America’s tradition of philanthropy pervades our society. Quite simply, donors give money to charitable

organizations not because fundraisers persuade them to give, but because giving is a customary, expected, admired, and even legally required behavior in the United States. The job of fundraisers is to retain and attract donors, who traditionally give away money to advance causes that they believe will improve society. Indeed, philanthropy and its facilitation by fundraisers are essential to what is referred to as *social capital*, which is the bedrock of civil society.

HISTORICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

Fundraising traces its beginning to the founding of the colonies that became the United States. Discussions of its history usually start with the first solicitation for Harvard College in 1641, which produced the colonies' first public relations brochure. Fundraising was conducted haphazardly by volunteers and untrained managers until the early 1900s, when specialists began to emerge. Institutionalization of the function dates back to just 50 years ago. Although fundraising has spread to almost all countries, its roots are in American democracy, which promotes a nonprofit sector and fosters philanthropy through a favorable tax system.

Fundraisers work for charitable organizations, a special type of nonprofit organization. They should not be confused with people who carry out fundraising activities for other types of nonprofits, such as political parties or electoral campaign committees. The term *fundraising* generally is reserved for bringing about *philanthropic* exchanges, meaning that the transfer of money is not based on quid pro quo (as it is in a marketing exchange) and that the money given meets the criteria of a charitable contribution, as defined by the Internal Revenue Code.

The nonprofit sector consists of tax-exempt organizations that are neither businesses nor government agencies. There are more than 1.4 million United States nonprofit organizations, of which more than 900,000, or 63 percent, are charitable nonprofits, meaning that gifts to them are deductible from donors' taxable income. Charitable nonprofits come in all shapes and sizes, from

local day-care centers and neighborhood churches to major research universities and metropolitan hospitals. Their missions, or the purpose for which they were granted tax exemption, are diverse and represent all aspects of society, including the arts, education, the environment, health, human services, and religion.

The majority of charitable organizations have annual revenues of less than \$100,000 and depend on volunteers, such as trustees, to raise philanthropic gifts. Charitable organizations with higher revenues—often millions or even billions of dollars per year—employ fundraisers, either as external consultants or as internal staff. Although no official count exists, projections based on earlier estimates place the number of full-time fundraisers at approximately 100,000.

DONOR PUBLICS

As with investors, donors consist of both organizations and individuals. Similarly, some donors make major gifts and hold a great deal of power in the organization–public relationship, whereas others make small annual gifts and hold little power unless they act collectively. The relationship is based on interdependency between the donor, who provides financial resources to carry out the charitable organization's mission, and the charitable organization, which provides the means to carry out the donor's philanthropic wishes.

There basically are three donor publics: individuals, foundations, and corporations. Individuals traditionally give more than 80 percent of all gift dollars every year. The amount of dollars given by all donors to all charitable organizations in the United States is quite impressive. It also is the envy of all other industrialized countries. For example, in 2002, Americans gave a total of \$241 billion, of which 84 percent came from individuals, 11 percent came from foundations, and 5 percent came from corporations, according to the American Association of Fundraising Counsel (AAFRC) Trust for Philanthropy.

Philanthropy by all types of donor publics, according to philanthropy and nonprofit management

scholars, is best explained by the mixed-motive model of giving, which holds that philanthropy reflects neither pure altruism nor pure egoism; it involves mixed motives: to fulfill the donor's interests in self and in a common good, as represented by the mission of the charitable organization receiving the gift.

Furthermore, the American tradition of philanthropy creates an expectation that all individuals should make charitable contributions, according to their means. Wealthy individuals are held to a philanthropic standard that is unusual in the modern world: They are expected to give away most of their wealth before or at the time of their death. The standard was outlined in the late 1880s by legendary philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, who proclaimed, "He who dies rich dies disgraced" (1889/1983, p. 108).

Corporations that give away pre-tax dollars are admired. Philanthropy is a critical element in demonstrating corporate social responsibility. The theory of corporate contributions as social currency holds that U.S. companies make gifts because senior managers are expected by their peers to contribute corporate dollars. Studies have shown that giving is the norm in many business subcultures, and managers who want to remain in the inner circles have to conform by making appropriate contributions. Finally, foundations, unlike the other donor publics, are required by law to give away each year an amount equal to 5 percent of their financial assets. Their very purpose is to provide support to charitable organizations through grants.

PROGRAMS

Fundraisers organize their activities into four traditional programs: annual giving, major gifts, planned giving, and capital campaigns. The first two are primary programs; the second two actually are strategies to raise major gifts.

Focusing on the primary programs, annual giving raises lower level gifts, whereas the major gifts program raises major gifts. Dollar amounts defining the two gift types differ among organizations. For example, universities and hospitals typically define

a major gift as a gift of \$100,000 or more, but most churches and human services organizations (such as chapters of the American Red Cross) use \$10,000 as the dividing point. Contributions and grants from corporations and foundations, respectively, usually are major gifts. Gifts from individuals run the gamut, from pennies placed in collection plates to multimillion-dollar pledges. Most Americans make at least one annual gift each year, but because wealth is not distributed equally in our capitalistic economy, a minority of individuals—those with the most income and assets—account for most major gifts.

Annual giving often is described as the bread-and-butter program of fundraising because it generates annual income that helps pay the charitable organization's operational expenses. Annual gifts, which typically are less than \$100, almost always are unrestricted in purpose, meaning they can be used where most needed as determined by the organization's managers after receipt. In contrast, major gifts almost always are restricted and must be used for the specific purposes for which they were given, determined in advance of receipt. Annual gifts usually are made from donors' *income*, whereas outright major gifts are made from donors' income and *assets*, and planned major gifts typically come only from donors' assets. As operational expenses are reoccurring, the annual giving program is *repeated* each year, unlike the major gifts program and planned giving, which are ongoing, and capital campaigns, which are sporadic.

For most charitable organizations, the major gifts program accounts for the vast majority of dollars raised, and only a relatively few gifts account for most of that money. Approximately 80 percent of all dollars raised will come from 20 percent of all gifts—what fundraisers refer to as the *principle of proportionate giving*. The major gifts program, therefore, is targeted at wealthy individuals, as well as corporations and foundations—but only those that have an expressed interest in the organization and its mission. Virtually every major donor has a long-standing, carefully nurtured relationship with the recipient organization and the people who represent it. In almost all cases, major donors have made previous gifts to the organization. Because

they provide most of the dollars raised, major donors have considerable power in affecting the organization's operations—similar to the power held by large institutional investors in publicly owned corporations. Fundraisers seek a balance between protecting organizational autonomy and being accountable to major donors. To help them achieve balance in their boundary role, fundraisers must be skilled negotiators because major gifts usually are restricted—often with multiple conditions—for purposes that may or may not coincide with the organization's self-directed plans.

Colleges, universities, and hospitals attract the largest gifts, followed by arts, culture, and humanities organizations. In 2002, for example, organizations with education and health missions raised \$32 billion and \$19 billion, respectively, according to the AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy. Not surprisingly, colleges, universities, and hospitals employ the largest number of fundraisers.

To raise annual gifts, fundraisers primarily use controlled media techniques, specifically, direct mail and special events, to solicit lower-level gifts from a large numbers of individuals. In contrast, fundraisers primarily use interpersonal communication techniques, such as face-to-face conversations and personal letters, to solicit major gifts from a much smaller number of individuals, corporations, and foundations. Building and maintaining relationships with donors is key to both programs, which requires fundraisers to devote a great deal of their time to sharing information and encouraging involvement. The emphasis of their work is on research, cultivation, and stewardship—not solicitation.

ROPES PROCESS

The ROPES process model, drawn from public relations theory, was conceptualized to describe how fundraising is conducted and was tested in field research. The resulting model was, in turn, applied to overall public relations practice, which affirmed the common theoretical basis of fundraising and public relations.

ROPES consists of five consecutive steps: research, objectives, programming, evaluation,

and stewardship. Fundraising begins with research in three progressive areas: (a) the charitable organization for which practitioners work; (b) the opportunity, or problem, faced by the organization; and (c) the donor publics related to both the organization and the opportunity. The second step is setting specific, measurable objectives that are derived from organizational goals and supported by research. Objectives are not limited to dollar totals. Programming consists of planning and implementing activities designed to bring about the outcomes stated in the objectives. These activities are categorized by the two purposes of cultivation and solicitation. Evaluation monitors programming and later determines if the set objectives were met. Stewardship completes the process and provides an essential loop back to the beginning of fundraising. Four sequential elements are basic to stewardship: reciprocity, responsibility (including responsible gift use), reporting, and relationship nurturing.

Research is deemed the most important step in fundraising, followed by stewardship. The prioritization is logical in that scholarly and practitioner analyses show that donors decide which causes are important to them and that the best prospects for future gifts are current donors. Whether raising annual, major, planned, or campaign gifts, the ROPES theory holds that fundraisers should spend 25 percent of their time on research, 15 percent on objectives, 30 percent on programming (equally divided between cultivation and solicitation), 10 percent on evaluation, and 20 percent on stewardship. Results of field research show that fundraisers generally follow the ROPES process, although they devote less time to research than advocated by the theory.

Fundraising lags about four decades behind public relations in establishing itself as a profession. Yet because of high demand and a shortage of trained practitioners, fundraisers command salaries approximately 50 percent higher than those paid to general public relations practitioners. Scholars and practitioners increasingly are drawing from public relations to build a body of knowledge that informs fundraising practice and education. The effort is

commendable given the important role that fundraising plays in our democratic society.

—Kathleen S. Kelly

See also Investor relations; Nonprofit organizations; Philanthropy; Public relations; Stewardship of large organizations

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GAME THEORY

Game theory was introduced to communication research in 1968 and specifically to public relations research in 1987. This theory has proven useful to those working in public relations and to those who build its theories. Game theory and its models help practitioners to enhance their decision-making and relationship-maintenance strategies and skills. Among theorists, game theory's introduction to the public relations literature affected a paradigm clarification because it inspired reconceptualization of public relations' normative two-way symmetrical practice model. Consequently, a few researchers have developed contextualized frameworks for analyzing rationality, preferences, and relationship outcomes ranging from conflict to cooperation.

Games is a science metaphor for the wide range of human interactions that depend on how two or more persons directly and strategically relate with one another. This approach to modeling human behavior in terms of outcomes was developed in 1944 by mathematician John von Neumann and mathematical economist Oskar Morgenstern. Game theory has been embraced among social science fields such as communication, psychology, management science, and political science. Rational choice theory provides game theory's foundation, and it has been invoked in debates on complex

policy issues such as market competition, arms races, and environmental pollution. Game theory resonates with public relations theory *and* practice because understanding the balance of influence between an organization and its key publics is central to doing public relations well.

Specifically, game theory has enabled researchers to expand the range of communication behaviors by redefining symmetric communication (games of pure cooperation), which rarely happens in actual public relations practice even though many theorists agree that it is preferable to asymmetric communication (zero-sum games). To illustrate, whereas a three-legged race might be classified as a game of pure cooperation (or non-zero-sum game), a tug of war is a zero-sum game because there is a direct correlation between participants' performance; the better one player does, the worse the other performs incrementally.

Priscilla Murphy (1987; 1989) suggested that public relations theory, like game theory, should avoid binary dualisms that exclude perspectives and limit the full range of possible communication behaviors. Others have concurred, arguing that public relations practice should not be forced to fit into one of four models (press agency, information, asymmetry, and symmetry) because it is a profession and an arena of academic inquiry that involves many variables and that is complex and dynamic. At

times, it may be prudent to maintain some degree of tension (as compared to pure cooperation or total accommodation) among competing interests that are at ideological odds in order to achieve a desired outcome. Therefore, a continuum, rather than a series of models, may offer a more useful heuristic.

Since game theory was introduced to the public relations literature, two-way symmetric communication has been redefined as a “mixed-motive” behavior. The mixed-motive framework maintains that while organizations may have asymmetrical self-interest concerns at the core of all behaviors, each is motivated toward cooperation in order to resolve or to reduce some aspects of conflict involved in building relationships with key publics.

In terms of application, game structures have been used to analyze crisis communication issues where stakes are high and timing is key. In the language of game theory, crises are noncooperative games between organizations and publics, such as the duel (Chernobyl explosion in 1986), the tag (Ford Pinto in 1973), escalation (A. H. Robin’s Dalkon Shield in 1980s), and cooperative bargaining (Procter & Gamble’s Rely tampon recall in 1980). This typology for analyzing organization-stakeholder relationships during or as a result of crises may be used to determine what went wrong and explain why it went wrong. Also, using game theory during strategic planning sessions enables practitioners to confidently examine “what ifs” and “best-worst case scenarios”—as well as to develop strategic alliances and build coalitions. Consequently, the game becomes a negotiation involving commodities, strategic trades, and concessions wherein, optimally, there are no clear-cut winners or losers.

For researchers, game theory provides a crisis communication model and offers a graphic continuum for classifying crises. It has been suggested that the communication outcome of Union Carbide’s plant explosion in Bhopal, India, in 1984, may be classified as a Pure Conflict game (zero-sum) on the left, that Procter & Gamble’s Rely tampon recall in 1980 illustrated a Mixed-Motive game in the center, and that Johnson & Johnson’s Tylenol recall in 1982 was a Pure Symmetric game (coordination) to the right.

Importantly, journalists and public relations practitioners also play “games” during crises. Whereas the public relations practitioner hopes that reputation-damaging news coverage is minimal, journalists are rewarded for scooping competitors and for producing visual stories that tap into enduring news values of conflict and disorder. This struggle has been compared to a classic duel in which the organization scores a “hit” if it delays communication long enough to allow the crisis to abate (resulting in no media coverage) or if it breaks the news of a crisis (that is likely to be discovered). On the other hand, a media outlet scores a “hit” if it is the first to break the news about an organization’s crisis.

Our ethics literature also is richer with the introduction of game theory. Since game models involve determining all possible consequences and a full range of potential behaviors, public relations practitioners may more clearly examine the ethical implications of their counsel. In a communication context, game theory inherently suggests that relationship participants seek maximum value in all exchanges. Hypothetically, lying is one such potential behavior. However, public relations practitioners and researchers emphasize that falsehoods are unethical and unacceptable. Thus, game models have enabled researchers to expose complex ethical issues and to incorporate ethics in public relations theory building.

Therefore, game theory + public relations theory = normative, prescriptive, and analytical frameworks for maintaining and developing relationships between organizations and publics. This stream of research underscores the assumption that interdisciplinarity broadens public relations theory building.

—Donnalyn Pompper

See also Codes of ethics; Conflict resolution; Crisis communication; Two-way and one-way communication

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GANTT CHART

For public relations projects, practitioners need a system for keeping track of the tasks that need to be done and those that have been completed. Henry Gantt invented the Gantt Chart as a way to track tasks for a project. The Gantt Chart is used in a wide variety of fields that involve project management. To build a Gantt Chart, the practitioner must identify all the tasks to be completed, the time each task will take to complete, and the sequencing to the tasks. The first step involves brainstorming and listing all possible tasks for the project. For instance, a simple news release could require researching the topic, drafting the release, selecting appropriate media targets, approving the news release's content, choosing proper contact names and addresses for the media targets, and distributing the news release. Next, the practitioner determines how much time each task will take. Assigning time demands that the practitioner understands the factors that affect the time it takes to complete a task.

Finally, the practitioner develops the sequence of the tasks. Sequencing requires that the practitioner separates contingent and concurrent tasks. Contingent tasks are those that are dependent on another task: Task A must be completed before Task B. For instance, research must be completed before a new release is written. All contingent tasks are arranged in the proper sequence. Sequences from the earlier example would be (a) research-draft-approval and (b) media selection-contact information. Both sequences are needed to arrive at the final task, distribution. Concurrent tasks are tasks that can be done simultaneously because they are not contingent on one another. The practitioner can select media and locate contact information while waiting for approval of the news release.

A Gantt Chart takes tasks, time, and sequence and displays them graphically. The horizontal axis on the chart is the time and the vertical axis represents tasks. Bars on the chart mark time. The unit of time depends on the nature of the project. The time units could be hours, days, weeks, or months. The longer the bar, the more time the task takes to complete. Lines drawn between the bars are used to connect the sequential tasks. Bars that overlap in time represent the concurrent tasks. A Gantt Chart makes it easy to “see” the sequential and concurrent tasks: what has been completed, what still needs to be done, when each of those tasks must be finished, and whether the project is on or off the schedule. A Gantt Chart is both a planning document and a means to monitor the progress of a project, and it works best for smaller projects. For large, highly complex projects, a practitioner is better off using the PERT Chart to organize, illustrate, and track the project (*see* PERT Chart). Microsoft Project is one of a number of software programs that provide templates for constructing Gantt Charts.

Gantt Charts are valuable planning aids to practitioners but are only as good as the work that goes into creating them. If a task is left off the Gantt Chart or times are miscalculated, the value of the Gantt Chart is reduced or completely lost. Therefore, careful preparation is necessary to develop a chart that truly reflects the demands of the project.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also PERT Chart; Process research

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GATEKEEPERS

Gatekeepers are communication professionals who are involved in the traditional news selection process. They sort through a number of messages, shaping chosen messages before delivering them to viewers, readers, or listeners. Gatekeeping involves selecting, shaping, displaying, and

withholding messages. In news organizations, reporters, copywriters, photographers, editors, or even media owners function as gatekeepers by choosing and shaping newsworthy messages. In a more social context, public relations professionals, government officials, and other social actors play a role in gatekeeping by deciding on what messages are disseminated to news organizations and by controlling the channel of news information.

The term *gatekeeper* was originally coined by sociologist Kurt Lewin in his study of the primary role of housewives in the family's changing food habits. Lewin proposed that housewives directed the flow of food items and therefore functioned as "gates" or gatekeepers; later the term was applied to the news selection processes. David Manning White's 1950 study of a small-city daily newspaper editor found that the news selection process depends on the editors' news values, or on what they consider newsworthy. The gatekeeping phenomenon is linked to the channel concept in the conceptual models of communication given by Bruce H. Westley and Malcom S. MacLean and Wilbur Schramm.

Gatekeeping is a broad function that occurs to affect the flow of information in the channels between senders and receivers of messages. Gatekeepers determine what messages are selected or rejected. Messages travel through certain communication channels, and certain points within the channels function as gates, which are managed mostly by gatekeepers. Originally gatekeepers were viewed as individuals, such as journalists working for traditional media such as television, radio, and wire services.

However, decisions on what messages will make the news information are also influenced by a number of other factors. Pamela J. Shoemaker (1991) suggested the complexity of gatekeeping by a number of gatekeepers at various levels: by communication routines and by organizational, social, and institutional (extra-media) systems. Thus journalists are influenced by their news values or practices, budgetary or time restrictions, competition with other media, advertisers, social ideology, and other factors that also function as gatekeepers in the gatekeeping process.

The gatekeeper concept has recently changed. Journalists traditionally functioned as gatekeepers, but they now use information subsidies provided by public relations professionals for reducing the costs of information gathering. Such subsidies occur because public relations practitioners supply newsworthy information to reporters. This professional service reduces the costs of news organizations. They can use the information provided by practitioners in various forms, such as press releases, backgrounders, and fact sheets. They have interviews handed to them. Many news reports are little more than edited releases supplied by public relations professionals. And with the advent of the Web, information can be available to reporters in a commodified form 24/7.

The advance of online media has also changed the gatekeeper role of journalists. More organizations, companies, and authorities directly reach their publics through online media without journalists' gatekeeping. Public information officials, governmental or corporate spokespersons, and other public relations professionals have increasingly assumed the gatekeeper role by judging what information can be shared with key publics or how communication with those publics can be managed as practitioners serve as boundary spanners. As organizations become primary sources of information, journalists are sometimes less influential in the gatekeeping process because people can obtain information from the organization without the help of journalists.

—Jae-Hwa Shin

See also Commodifying information; News and newsworthy

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GEODEMOGRAPHICS

See Segmentation

GHOSTWRITING

Ghostwriting is the process whereby one person, usually a professional writer, writes a document or a speech that another person then delivers and represents as largely his or her own work. The professional writer or “ghost” lends his or her skills in message preparation to the speaker, and the speaker takes advantage of these skills. The writer is described as a “ghost” because he or she is invisible when the speech is actually delivered. Ghostwriting is a well-entrenched part of many communication professions including public relations and political communication.

Senior political figures regularly employ professional speechwriters. Many business executives similarly employ professional ghostwriters to help craft speeches, letters, and other documents. Speechwriting in most organizations is a specialized aspect of the larger public relations function. Ghostwriting is also practiced in some publishing circles. Among the most celebrated modern ghostwriters was Peggy Noonan, President Ronald Reagan’s speechwriter. Noonan described the speechwriting process as one of balancing competing interests and managing successive reviews and revisions. The principal issues surrounding ghostwriting are effectiveness and ethical concerns of masked authorship and the possibility of deception. Deception occurs when those “pearls of wisdom” voiced by one person are actually the work of someone else. The person who delivered the message does not have the time or talent to craft

the message but receives credit for it. The ideology expressed in the message may come from the author more than from the person who delivers it.

Ghostwriters are generally believed to be able to produce more effective messages than would the average executive or politician working alone because the ghost has specific communication and writing skills. Moreover, ghosts can spend much more time preparing a speech, researching the audience and issues, and developing arguments than can a busy politician or executive. Ghostwriting is often justified on the grounds that it saves valuable executive time.

One of the key features of effectiveness is the ability of the ghost to successfully write for a particular speaker. Speechwriters must be very knowledgeable about their client’s specific interests, positions on various issues, and speaking style. The relationship between speaker and writer is most effective when it is characterized by openness and trust. Writer and speaker should work closely as a team to construct a speech that each is comfortable with. Mike Morrison, former speechwriter for Lee Iacocca, noted that “when a speaker comes to trust the writer to capture his voice and to articulate his position in that voice, the process can be very smooth.” Ghostwriters are also most effective when their participation goes unnoticed. An unwritten rule of ghostwriting is that the ghostwriter remains anonymous. In general, ghostwriters should not be publicly identified with a particular speaker or speech.

The ethical questions surrounding ghostwriting cluster around issues of honesty and deception. Specifically, some critics charge that using a ghostwriter is a kind of deception: a fraud or plagiarism whereby the speaker implicitly claims that the speech is his or her own. Because credibility, according to traditional models of ethos, is created by the speaker “speaking well,” he or she must be the author of the speech. Ancient writers on rhetoric such as Aristotle, Cato, and Quintilian all embraced the view that credibility arises during the speech as the speaker demonstrates his or her reasoning, moral character, and skill. Ghostwriting short-circuits this credibility-building process by allowing the speaker to substitute the words of a professional writer for his or her own. Some have suggested that this deception is not an issue in modern political or corporate contexts because

the use of ghostwriters is essentially an open secret. Audiences have come to expect that those in leadership positions will employ professional speechwriters to assist in the preparation of their messages. Other critics have noted that in cases where a ghost is employed, the speaker is usually fulfilling a larger representative leadership role. The speech, therefore, is best viewed as a corporate or organizational product much like an advertisement or brochure. In these cases, credibility is generated for the organization rather than for the specific speaker.

Ghostwriting, although a specialized niche in the public relations profession, is often viewed as an access point to strategic organizational and management functions. Because the ghostwriter is in a position to influence what senior executives are saying, he or she may also influence strategy. Ghostwriting services are provided by most internal public relations departments, public relations and advertising agencies, political consultants, and specialized freelance writers.

—*Matthew W. Seeger, Timothy Sellnow, and Robert R. Ulmer*

See also Speechwriting

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GOALS

Effective public relations is strategic; it has a purpose. Each public relations action should be designed and intended to achieve something for the organization or person developing it. Goals are an important part of developing your public relations strategy and evolve from your formative or

background research. A goal is a general statement of what you hope to achieve with your public relations action(s)—the outcomes expected from the public relations effort. A goal is tied to the problem statement that was developed from your formative research. You cannot create a goal until you understand the public relations situation. The goal is designed to eliminate the public relations problem and indicates what needs to be changed. Goals are sometimes called directional statements because they provide the overall direction for the public relations actions. Goals are general statements of where you want the public relations action to go.

A few examples will help to clarify the discussion of goals. Consider these two goals: (a) “to increase awareness of the GM Cobalt” and (b) “to improve community perceptions of Merck.” The Cobalt is the new automobile model for GM. The problem is that people may not know about it and, therefore, may not consider it an option when buying a new car. The general solution (direction) is to create awareness of the Cobalt. Merck personnel may have found that local communities where they operate do not believe they are good corporate citizens. The general solution (direction) is to improve community perceptions of Merck. The goals are vague; we do not have a clear idea of the exact outcome that is desired. Objectives provide the specific outcomes for the public relations actions.

Objectives are specific and measurable, whereas a goal is vague and probably not measurable (*see* Objectives). To translate our two goals into objectives requires much more detail. Here are two potential objectives that could be drawn from our original goals: (a) “to make 75 percent of potential compact car buyers aware of Cobalt as a purchasing option” and (b) “to increase perceptions of Merck as a strong corporate citizen from 20 to 40 percent in the communities where Merck has facilities.” In each case, the objectives provide more detail. The Cobalt objective specifies the target percentage of awareness (75 percent) and the specific target public (potential compact car buyers). The Merck objective seeks a specific increase in perceptions of “strong corporate citizen” (from 20 to 40 percent) among a specific target public (people in communities where Merck has facilities).

Goals are dangerous when they become confused with objectives. If a goal is used instead of an objective, proper evaluative research is impossible. A goal is simply too vague and offers no true measure of success or failure. The public relations practitioner will be unable to clearly determine if his or her strategy was successful. Let us return to the sample goal “to improve community perceptions of Merck.” What is your measure of success or failure? Do you succeed if just one member of the community expresses a more positive perception of Merck? You cannot determine the most effective way to assess your efforts if you only have goals.

Evaluation is central to learning, and that will only occur with objectives, not with goals. Goals are general guidelines for action. The vagueness of goals makes them difficult to measure effectively. Goals are precursors to objectives and should not be used in place of objectives. Such substitution will make evaluation problematic. Without evaluation, a public relations practitioner cannot learn what works and should be repeated and what does not work and should not be repeated.

One reason for the confusion between goals and objectives is goal-setting theory, a widely known motivation theory from organizational psychology. If a practitioner receives any management-related training, she or he will probably know about goal-setting theory, which states that workers will improve their performance when they have clear, specific, and challenging goals, when they participate in setting the goals, and when they are provided with frequent feedback on progress toward the goals. Notice that in goal-setting theory a goal is clear and specific. In other words, goal-setting theory uses the term *goal* in much the same way as public relations uses the term *objective*. Hence, practitioners versed in goal-setting theory may confuse goals and objectives. However, if a practitioner creates a true objective and calls it a goal, there is no evaluation problem because the necessary specificity will be there. The real problem is when vague goals are used instead of objectives. In these cases, effective evaluation will be difficult if not impossible.

The distinction between true goals and objectives is often blurred in public relations. Each year the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)

sponsors the Silver Anvil Awards to recognize outstanding public relations work in a variety of categories, including community relations, internal communications, and investor relations. The Silver Anvil Award winners should serve as exemplars of how to perform public relations actions. They are the best of the best. On their Web site, PRSA has an archive of the summaries for the past winners. The summaries provide information about the four basic steps in a public relations effort: research, planning, execution, and evaluation. The planning section, according to PRSA, should include the identification of the specific, measurable objectives of the public relations effort. However, even a cursory review of the summaries will reveal the use of goals (vague statements) instead of objectives (specific statements). Granted, the full Silver Anvil entry contains additional information about the public relations efforts that may include specific objectives. However, if the summary has only goals, this suggests either that there are no objectives in the public relations effort or that the summary was poorly constructed. Either way, if the public relations efforts that are recognized as the best can substitute general goals for specific objectives this easily, a general problem may exist with mixing goals and objectives. Public relations practitioners must be sure to convert their goals into objectives—to move from generalities to specifics. The value of formative research, planning, and execution is lost when a public relations effort cannot be evaluated. Thus goals are an important foundation for strategic public relations, but strategy becomes weak when practitioners fail to move from goals to objectives.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Benchmarking; Formative research; Objectives; Qualitative research; Quantitative research

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GOLIN, AL

Al Golin, founder and chairman of Chicago-based Golin/Harris International, is a man of enthusiasm, humility, and genuine commitment to long-term relationships with clients. He is a pioneer who says he has enjoyed every minute of his almost 50-year career in public relations.

Golin was born June 19, 1929, in Chicago, Illinois. He earned a bachelor's degree in business, with a minor in journalism, from Chicago's Roosevelt University. He began his career in 1951 as a Midwest field press representative for MGM Pictures. At the young age of 21, his clients included Debbie Reynolds, Clark Gable, and Gene Kelly.

In 1956, Golin joined a small public relations firm in Chicago, Max Cooper & Associates, which—as was true for almost all firms at the time—dealt primarily in publicity. A year later, in 1957, Golin made a career-changing telephone call. After reading a newspaper article about Ray Kroc and his then-fledgling McDonald's hamburger chain, Golin placed a cold call to Kroc, who invited Golin to come over to meet with him. According to Golin, "We talked for about 20 minutes, and he said, 'Okay, start Monday, and your retainer will be \$500 a month'" (personal communication, October 24, 2002). More than 45 years later, Golin/Harris still is working for McDonald's, but Golin admits, "The monthly retainer is a bit more than \$500!" ("Timeline," 2004, n.p.).

In 1958, Golin was named a partner of Max Cooper & Associates. Seven years later the firm became Cooper & Golin. In 1975, Cooper left the firm to become a full-time McDonald's franchisee and to pursue his hobby of producing Broadway musicals, and the firm was renamed Golin Communications. In 1981, the firm was renamed Golin/Harris Communications to reflect the significant contributions of Tom Harris, who later retired to teach at Northwestern University. In 1999, Golin/Harris Communications was acquired by the Interpublic Group of Companies and renamed Golin/Harris International.

In addition to McDonald's, other clients of the firm include Bayer Aspirin, DaimlerChrysler

Corporation, The Walt Disney Co., Florida Department of Citrus, Kellogg's, Keebler Foods, Levi Strauss & Co., Lowe's Companies, Nintendo of America, Pharmacia Corp., Ralston Purina, Sprint, Texas Instruments, Toyota Motor Sales of America, and VISA USA.

Golin prides himself on the firm's reputation as a full-service agency devoted to maintaining long-term relationships with clients. He stated, "We never tried to have a laundry list of clients. We are not just project oriented" (personal communication, October 24, 2002). According to Golin, the key to maintaining meaningful partnerships with clients involves a combination of environmental scanning and what he described as "changing things before they need changing" (personal communication, October 24, 2002). He continued,

Something I always say around here is that you need to "fix it *before* it breaks." Oftentimes, people get too complacent in our business. In order to look forward and interpret what is going on in terms of issues and demographics, we are always meeting with clients and with our people internally. (personal communication, October 24, 2002)

Golin/Harris International is among the top-10 largest public relations firms in the country, with nearly 1,000 employees and revenues of \$140 million. The firm has offices in London, Frankfurt, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Japan, with exclusive affiliates in dozens of other cities and countries. In 1996, Golin/Harris was selected as the Agency of the Year by the trade publication, *Inside PR*.

Golin said he delights in traveling to the firm's international offices and that he sees a common thread in the business. "Public relations people are creative, fun, and intelligent. No matter what language they speak, public relations practitioners are the type of people you like to be with" (personal communication, October 24, 2002).

Regarding changes in public relations he has witnessed, Golin said,

In the beginning, everything was publicity oriented. The object was simply to "get ink." But now, while

publicity is still a component, it is just one facet of public relations. The use of research has helped the industry become more business oriented. Today, we are more like management consultants who help clients with internal communication as well as with strategic consumer communication. (personal communication, October 24, 2002)

Golin is a member of the Public Relations Seminar, the Arthur W. Page Society, and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). He has served as consultant to the U.S. Department of Commerce, as a founding board member of Ronald McDonald House Charities, and as a public relations advisor to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. He also is a member of the board of trustees of Roosevelt University and the Goodman Theatre in Chicago. In 1999, he was named one of the 100 most influential public relations people of the 20th century by the trade publication *PR Week*. In 2003, he was the featured speaker of the Institute for Public Relations' 42nd Annual Distinguished Lecture Series.

Golin said he is most proud of his community relations work in expanding the Ronald McDonald House program, a home away from home for families of seriously ill children receiving treatment at nearby hospitals. During the early 1970s, Golin and McDonald's Ray Kroc developed the concept of the *trust bank*, meaning that companies should make deposits of goodwill to draw on in times of crises ("Timeline," 2004). The Ronald McDonald House program originated in Philadelphia in 1974, with a local McDonald's group and a member of the Philadelphia Eagles football team. Golin's firm then recommended that it become a national and international program. Currently, there are approximately 220 houses in 19 countries. The international growth of Ronald McDonald House, according to Golin, has helped change the culture in such countries as Brazil, where large companies had never become involved in social causes until the charity came to their areas.

In 1992, McDonald's established the Al Golin Trust Bank Award, which is given annually to one of McDonald's worldwide public relations firms

that best reflects Golin's commitment to community service. Golin was named the first recipient.

According to Golin, the notion of building trust banks has become the credo of Golin/Harris International. He stated, "We believe very strongly in community relations. We learned from our first experiences with McDonald's that the best way to establish an identity is to become active in your local community. We now call that the 'trust bank'" (personal communication, October 24, 2002).

Golin (2003) recently authored a highly regarded book on the subject, *Trust or Consequences: Build Trust Today or Lose Your Market Tomorrow*. The book describes strategies for helping businesses build, strengthen, and restore bonds of trust with stakeholder groups. It also reports results of a survey of over 700 business professionals.

Golin predicts that public relations in the future will focus more on applying research to obtain goals than on publicity for the sake of publicity. He also predicts a stronger focus on government relations and investor relations.

Golin credits his success in public relations to his genuine inquisitive nature. He stated,

I've always been a curious "news junkie." I have a granddaughter who is always asking questions, and I really like to see curious little kids asking questions. I think that public relations people need to be curious and aware. Unless you are current, you aren't any good in this business. (personal communication, October 24, 2002)

—Kathleen S. Kelly and Amy Broussard

See also Page, Arthur W.; Public Relations Society of America

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GOODWILL

The standards of socially responsible behavior continue to evolve with societal trends and expectations.

In order to maintain public goodwill, companies must conduct themselves in a responsible and ethical manner while providing transparency in their business dealings, accountability to their stakeholders, and sustainability to society and the environment. “Public relations bears directly upon the area of values associated with goodwill. Its task is not one of communications only, as some have supposed. Its roots reach to the very heart of corporate policy” (Hill, 1958, p. ix). These extensions of goodwill help demonstrate commitment toward a company’s stakeholders.

The most formally understood practice of goodwill is corporate social responsibility (CSR). This practice has commonly been perceived in the United States as a largely European phenomenon, since CSR is a high priority for European companies. The European Commission, in establishing social goodwill as one of the pillars of its approach to business and economic competitiveness, has set in motion a Multi-Stakeholder Forum that recommends to the European Commission how social responsibilities should be reflected in government policy and business practices. In addition, European Union countries swiftly began adopting ambitious new requirements for corporate reporting, called “sustainability reporting,” that go beyond financial results to cover the *triple bottom line*—one that shows the economic, environmental, and social performance of an organization.

However, this responsibility has not been confined to Europe, because more U.S. companies are taking goodwill practices more seriously. The growth of technology has made all types of information more accessible, leading to greater scrutiny of corporate practices around the world. “In a nation such as the United States, where public opinion is both judge and jury, any segment of the public is free to question management’s wisdom, integrity, and good human intent in handling responsibilities that amount to a public trust” (Hill, 1958, p. ix). Corporations are buffing up their social responsibilities and reputation since the Sarbanes-Oxley Act and the emphasis on corporate governance that emerged in the wake of Enron, WorldCom, and other major corporate accounting problems. This transparency also goes beyond

financials into more global operations, like labor practices. On a local level, more and more government agencies are expanding their standards for government contracts and requiring recipients to provide their employees with a predetermined living wage. Globally, NGOs, the media, and other groups are increasingly scrutinizing human rights and labor issues and demanding internal and external monitoring.

“The corporation exists to serve the common good and must constantly justify its performance on that basis before the bar of public opinion” (Hill, 1958, p. 146). Beyond the necessary reporting requests, companies are wisely working to have an influence in setting the standards by which they will be measured. According to Hill & Knowlton’s 2002 Corporate Reputation Watch survey, two thirds of CEOs feel that corporate social responsibility initiatives contribute at least a moderate amount to their company’s corporate reputation, including the way they are perceived by groups such as customers, shareholders, and the media. In fact, participating in goodwill practices, which boost a corporation’s reputation, increases the length of time that a firm spends earning above-average financial returns and decreases the length of time that a firm spends earning below-average financial returns.

John Hill, founder of Hill & Knowlton in 1927, outlined the basic tenets of social responsibility:

Here are some of the precepts of sound policy as evolved over the years through the experience of successful corporations. Under these precepts management seeks:

To maintain or improve the financial and economic strength and welfare of the company in all ways consistent with the community and public interest. The company must prosper if it is to live and grow.

To build an efficient and loyal labor force through the best possible working conditions and wages.

To conduct the affairs of the company in a way that will reflect credit upon it and upon the system of competitive enterprise under which it lives.

To remember always that the esteem of people has no substitute and that the good will of customers, employees, the community, and the investing groups is essential to success.

To take the long view in defining goals, and, by communicating information, to fortify the company against adverse movements and misunderstandings which may arise along the way. (1958, p. 53)

More specifically, there are many ways in which corporate social responsibility contributes to reputation and business results, most commonly recognized by the tangible benefits it provides employees, customers, and investors.

The common benefits employees receive are improved employee recruitment, retention, and motivation. Companies perceived to have strong commitments to goodwill practices often find it easier to recruit and retain employees, and thus have less turnover and associated recruitment and training costs. Even in difficult labor markets, potential employees evaluate a company's performance on acts of goodwill to determine whether it is the right "fit." In fact, more than half of MBA students would accept a lower salary to work for a socially responsible company.

Beyond employees, it is necessary to understand the role of customers, who serve as the foundation for a corporation's existence in the first place. A number of studies have suggested a large and growing market for the products and services of companies perceived to be socially responsible. While businesses must satisfy customers' key buying criteria, such as price, quality, availability, safety and convenience, studies also show a growing desire to buy, or not buy, because of other values-based criteria, such as being "sweatshop-free" and "child-labor-free," having lower environmental impact, and not having genetically modified materials or ingredients.

Corporate social responsibility is also useful in attracting investors, partly because of a perceived lower level of risk attaching to companies that make socially favorable decisions. Not only do socially responsible companies actually have better financial results; they also appear to have an advantage when it comes to attracting investor capital.

However, a corporation must consider how to conduct corporate social responsibility correctly by evaluating where it stands on CSR, where it eventually hopes to be, how it can get there, and how it can show results. To answer these questions, the corporation will need to consider a number of factors, including the regulatory framework the company is facing and the broad public policy issues that are driving the framework. After a company has a clear overall goodwill vision and mandate, it becomes possible to set specific targets and prioritize business activities.

When a company decides how to achieve the desired results, it must identify new ways to reach stakeholders that may have been overlooked in the past, using new partnerships, diversity marketing programs, or other approaches. In some cases, it may be necessary to create full-fledged educational, cause-related, and social-issues marketing campaigns. Dialogue, whether establishing it, building it, or enhancing it, is the common denominator in all these potential approaches. To generate the most impact from these initiated programs, a company must consider creating reports and disseminating information to stakeholders and key media and opinion leaders, who can help develop clear-cut internal and external communications plans.

There are many reasons why goodwill practices are necessary in today's business world. Not least of them is the fact that if practiced right, corporate social responsibility is substantially beneficial to business. "The steady building of good will matched by good deeds creates a substructure of strength that becomes valuable in times of crisis" (Hill, 1958, p. 57). By evaluating its current standing and strategies, a company can help maintain an appropriate standard of practice that adheres to acceptable measures of goodwill.

—Steve Aiello and Jim Sloan

See also Corporate social responsibility; Public interest

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GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Government relations is a function of public relations that organizations—both for-profit and nonprofit—use to strategically influence the public policy aspects of their environments. Corporate participation in shaping public policy can be traced to the business barons of the early 1900s. Since that time, business organizations have struggled with appropriate ethical and strategic responses to unprecedented changes, constraints, and challenges in their environment brought on by government policy decisions.

Scholars from such fields as political science, futurism, business management, public policy, communication, public relations, strategic planning, management information systems, and business ethics have advanced the field's understanding of the function of government relations. Communication efforts to government officials have a historical place in the public relations literature. When undergraduate texts narrate public relations' history, they often show how organization-to-government communication efforts shaped the early years of the field. The recognition of the value of the relationship between organizations and governments began more than 50 years ago. J. A. R. Primlott first linked public relations, government relations, and democracy together. Later, Ron Pearson examined the relationship between democracy and public relations.

Why are the offices of government an important public for organizations? Richard E. Crable and Steven L. Vibbert (1985) argued that organizations do not have authority in public policy. Rather, organizations have the ability to *influence* public policy. That is, organizations, whether profit seeking or not for profit, need to participate in the multiple state and federal arenas where “public policy is being decided” (Ewing, 1990, p. 24).

The importance of government as an organizational public has also been addressed in the management literature. Henry Mintzberg viewed government as one of the most important external publics with which an organization must communicate. Mintzberg argued that organizations must always give special consideration to government

officials because “they represent the ultimate legislative authority of the society . . . [and] establish the rules—the laws and regulations—within which every organization must function” (1983, p. 44). The management literature identifies government as a public to be researched, monitored, and regularly engaged through communication.

Barrie L. Jones and W. Howard Chase are credited with the systematic approach that explained how organizations can legitimize and validate organizational positions on relevant public policy issues. Government officials were considered one of the three major targets (business, citizens, government) of communication for strategic management (Jones & Chase, 1979, pp. 4–5). The authors encouraged organizations to “increase efforts to anticipate social change and respond to reasonable public expectations” rather than wait for others to set the public agenda (Jones & Chase, 1979, p. 11).

In Jones and Chase's initial conceptualization of issues management, issues precede government policies and organizations should “react” to events and be ready to proactively guide issues in the direction of favorable outcomes. Crable and Vibbert later admitted that business, citizens, and government are not coequal publics for organizations; rather, “public policy rests where it has for more than two hundred years—in the halls of government” (1985, p. 4). Indeed, the authors concede that even in the lower levels of state and local government, the need for government support for organizational decisions is clear. Robert L. Heath and K. R. Cousino acknowledged that organizations must communicate with government officials as key stakeholders in order to influence and benefit from favorable public policy decisions. Their advice for issue managers is clear—organizations need to know the relevant “persons who create law or ordinance that prescribes which actions are rewardable or punishable” (1990, p. 28).

Large and small organizations can build relationships with government officials.

There are certain steps that organizations can enact that will ensure that they have the information necessary to conduct government relations. The first step is for organizational leaders to know the legislative agenda in the different arenas of

government. Local, state, and national bodies all have individual, although sometimes overlapping, agendas that may affect an organization. Organizations should conduct environmental scanning to identify which policy issues will be salient in each government arena. Legislation normally progresses through various stages to become the law of the land. One is the prelegislative stage of deliberation, during which the prevailing forces attempt to craft bills that may sustain themselves in legislative debate. Hearings are a crucial element in this phase. Legislation progresses to become bills, which are signed into effect by executive authorities. Regulation is created to implement legislation. All of this may end up being litigated before finally becoming the enacted law. Government relations is relevant at each step.

Once an organization knows the legislative agenda for a body of government, the second step is to explore how the acceptance or rejection of a policy may affect the short-term and long-term functioning of their organization. Government decisions influence such diverse organizational practices as competition, mergers and acquisitions, employment, licensing, access to scarce resources, retirement procedures, and financial investments. The public relations department should speak with other organizational units to see how these potential policies will affect the different subsections of the organization.

A third way that organizations can enact government relations is by gathering, organizing, and disseminating background information that shows the organization's position on the policy. White papers and position papers can be created to provide background to government officials detailing how proposed policy decisions may influence constituents. Often the public relations department will not need to collect new information; rather, it will need to be able to summarize large amounts of intra-organizational information into easy-to-understand, jargon-free background that can be used by government officials as they deliberate.

Information is only one part of the relationship-building process with government officials. Fourth, organizational members will need to establish an interpersonal connection with elected officials. It is

recommended that organizational leaders set up appointments and meetings to develop face-to-face relationships with officials at various levels of government. There are a variety of ways that organizations can foster this type of rich communication with their elected officials. They can invite political leaders to their organizations, have key organizational members attend political fundraisers, or have organizational members participate in advisory bodies that report to elected officials. Building relationships with government officials takes time and energy, and access to high-level government officials may require multiple attempts before anyone from the organization actually sits down to talk with a government official.

Another way to increase the visibility of the organization is to combine government relations efforts with lobbying and issues management efforts. This convergence of mission and message will create a comprehensive and synergistic strategic communication program. Open communication is needed within an organization to ensure that the lobbying efforts are in sync with other strategic efforts.

Finally, organizations should join their respective trade or industry group to maximize their influence. Most governmental policies will not merely affect just one organization, but instead will affect whole industries. Industry groups allow competitors to cooperate with each other to ensure the future of their group. Industry groups often have resources to conduct comprehensive government relations efforts that benefit all members. At times, organizations may also want to partner with activist groups or organizations outside of their trade group to better communicate broader objectives and needs to government officials.

It is important to note that government relations are also very important in international public relations. Successful public relations efforts aimed at governmental publics require more than merely targeting particular officials. Effective public relations must also consider the unique social, economic, and political conditions of a nation. As the economic and social status of nations throughout the world changes, the offices of government may become the target of international public relations

efforts. The developing world is rapidly moving toward privatization, as the impetus for economic development shifts from national governments to private sector corporations. During this time of transition, government offices are emerging as especially powerful publics to the corporations that want to participate in and benefit from the economic opportunities. One task for international public relations practitioners is to successfully build, maintain, and change relationships with key foreign government officials.

—Maureen Taylor

See also Backgrounder; Industrial barons (of the 1870s–1920s); Issues management; Lobbying; Public policy planning; Publics; Stakeholder theory; Trade associations (and Hill & Knowlton's role in)

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GRAPHICS

Graphics are visual elements used to create images for print publications, videos, and Web sites. The term *graphic* is often used in a generic sense and can encompass a variety of visual elements associated with the design and creation of printed

materials, such as photographs, illustrations, drawings, clip art, line rules, typefaces, and tint boxes.

Graphics are a powerful way to communicate in today's visually oriented society. Most publications need strong, dominant visual elements to make them more interesting to the reader. Graphics can accompany copy to help attract attention, unify a look, convey special meaning, and add impact. They can also clarify, educate, and improve readability. Graphics are pieces of art used to express ideas, create a mood or image, and enhance the attractiveness of a piece.

Public relations practitioners use graphics to create identity systems for an organization. An identity system includes the organizational name and logo, which are used in all the materials produced by the organization, such as letterhead, business forms, brochures, invitations, and advertisements. Practitioners also use graphics to produce just about any communication tool, including newsletters, signs, posters, press kits, and Web sites.

Graphic design is the artistic and skillful application of type, color, and images to paper or another medium, such as a Web site, to create a clear and appealing whole. Many specialists work with the creation and production of graphic images, including art directors, graphic artists, and graphic designers, and they comprise an entire industry of professions relating to the design and printing of messages. Graphic designers, for instance, are professionals who design and may even coordinate the production of a printed piece, including the selection of type, art, paper, and ink. They work with public relations practitioners to ensure that a piece is visually appealing. A graphic artist is an individual who produces art through graphic methods, such as painting, etching, and drawing. Public relations practitioners work with these graphic specialists to create materials with graphics, such as brochures, corporate identity systems, Web sites, and advertisements. Public relations practitioners who work in this capacity are considered print brokers because they hire illustrators, graphic designers, and printers to help produce their work.

Like any type of pictorial matter in a publication or other medium, graphics can include original

illustrations and clip art; photographs; logos and symbols; graphs, charts, and maps; numbers; and visual elements such as bullets, line rules, borders, screens and tint boxes, typographic ornaments, geometric shapes (bars, stars, diamonds, hexagon), and enlarged letters. Clip art includes images in many different forms, such as photographs, illustrations, and typefaces. Clip art can be purchased on a CD; it is also available free on Web sites. Typically not created for any specific use, the art is generally copyright-free. Public relations practitioners need to be aware of the United States Copyright Revision Act of 1976, which states that those who use copyrighted work must have the permission of the copyright holder. Even though some graphics work may be in the public domain, other images may be protected by copyright even if a copyright does not appear with the graphic.

When public relations practitioners need graphics that are especially tailored to their needs, they may use the services of stock image providers or photo banks. Much less expensive and time-consuming than hiring a photographer and orchestrating a photo shoot, photo banks offer a wide variety of subjects, themes, and styles that can be accessed online and delivered digitally. Royalty-free images are purchased for unlimited usage at a flat fee, but they can be accessed by other users, including competitors. Rights-protected images can be used for a particular use and period of time.

—*Emma Daugherty Phillingane*

See also Layout; Logo

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GREGG, DOROTHY

Dorothy Gregg (1920–1997), Ph.D., was the first woman appointed a corporate officer at Celanese Corporation and was the first vice president of the National Council of Women in the United States.

Gregg was vice president of communication at Celanese for eight years, from 1975 to 1983, and was a senior consultant to Ruder, Finn & Rotman from 1983 to 1987, when she left to open her own firm. Prior to joining Celanese, she was assistant to the director of public relations at U.S. Steel Corporation, a pioneering position she held for 16 years.

Gregg had been a public relations consultant since 1954, and her contributions to the growth of the field were highlighted by numerous awards. Her exceptional leadership skills and achievements were well recognized statewide and nationwide. She was a 1962 recipient of the New York State Woman Award, given by the New York Department of Commerce. In 1968, she received the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs Top Hat Award, the American Advertising Federation's National Advertising Woman of the Year Award, and the Advertising Woman of the Year in New York City Award. In 1969, she received the Outstanding Woman of the Year, presented by the Toastmistress Club. In 1970, she was the recipient of Governor Rockefeller's Certificate of Honor.

A distinguished female executive herself, Gregg was dedicated to advancing the role of women in public relations and marketing communication. As an expression of her concern for women, she chaired the Committee on Women in Public Relations, supervised the Association for Women in Communication, and was director of the American Woman's Association and the Advertising Women of New York. She was also a member of the board of governors of the International Women's Forum and the New York Women's Forum.

Other national honorary organizations of which she was a member include Gamma Alpha Chi, Phi Beta Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha, and Theta Sigma Phi.

Gregg began her career as an educator. She had been an assistant professor in Columbia University's Economics Department and on the faculty of Barnard College, the New School for Social Research, Pace College, and the University of Texas.

A graduate of the University of Texas with B.A. and M.A. degrees in economics, Dr. Gregg earned her Ph.D. in the same discipline from Columbia University.

Dr. Gregg and her husband, Dr. Paul Hughling Scott, had two children. She died May 18, 1997 at the age of 77.

—*Hsiang-Hui Claire Wang*

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GRISWOLD, DENNY

Denny Griswold (1908–2001), co-founder and editor of *PR News*, was a dynamic force who facilitated the spread of public relations throughout the world during the second half of the 20th century.

She is credited with having had a profound influence on winning management recognition for public relations. She said, "I early on felt that unless management gave public relations its support and understood it, public relations couldn't get anywhere" (S. A. Serini, interview with Denny Griswold, June 21, 1994). *PR News* was founded in part to address that concern. During her tenure on the editorial staffs of *Forbes* and then *Business Week*, she met many industrialists. "I was appalled at how little they knew about public relations . . . and I became motivated and almost obsessed with the need for public relations" (S. A. Serini, interview with Denny Griswold, June 21, 1994).

Mrs. Griswold championed the importance of public relations among top management and the growing number of public relations practitioners, ultimately defining the field as a management function. She developed the following definition of public relations for *Webster's Dictionary* in the late 1940s:

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 acceptance. (J. Fox, interview with Denny Griswold, May 21, 1992)

A tireless advocate for the profession, she liberally distributed business cards with that definition as well as large green buttons emblazoned with a phrase she coined, "PRoud to be in PR."

Mrs. Griswold's understanding of public relations developed early in her career. She began working for the media but quickly made the transition to public relations. Her experience in the offices of early public relations pioneers Benjamin Sonnenberg and Edward Bernays, as well as her advertising promotion background at J. Walter Thompson and Conde Nast, prepared her well. By the time she met and married Glenn Griswold, editor and publisher of *Business Week*, she was ready for a new venture.

The Griswolds left the magazine business to form a public relations agency and provide counsel to large industrial accounts. Mr. Griswold brought his vast experience and connections with American industrialists, and she brought the public relations acumen.

There was very little written about the practice of public relations at the time, and the Griswolds recognized that as a weakness in the field. They founded *PR News*, the first public relations weekly in the world, in 1944, and Mrs. Griswold served as editor for nearly 50 years. *PR News* filled an important void in the developing field of public relations, providing not only news and information but the first case studies as well.

During World War II, Mrs. Griswold arranged to send *PR News* to public information officers overseas. It kept them informed about and connected to the growing field of public relations, which they entered in large numbers when the war ended. That was also the beginning of the spread of *PR News* into international markets. By the end of the 20th century, it had subscribers in over 90 countries and was instrumental in spreading the practice of public relations globally. She said, "We are developing a profession that will contribute to international relations, and bring to us the peace and harmony that

we are all seeking” (N. Carlson, interview with Denny Griswold, November 11, 1986).

Also in response to the paucity of public relations literature, the Griswolds coauthored a 634-page handbook, *Your Public Relations*, which was used in classrooms as well as by working professionals. It was published in 1948, 2 years before Mr. Griswold died of cancer.

In addition to building the literature in the field, the Griswolds also worked to build important social networks to facilitate the growth and understanding of public relations. They held many social gatherings at their New York townhouse on East 80th Street. Some of the most powerful and influential people of the decade—industry CEOs, diplomats, senior executive officers, heads of public relations and advertising agencies, prominent public relations practitioners, and thinkers of all ilks—gathered, conversed, and built relationships there. “I love giving parties and our parties are quite famous,” Mrs. Griswold said (S. A. Serini, interview with Denny Griswold, June 21, 1994).

Mrs. Griswold was a driving force in building important professional organizations. She was instrumental in founding Women Executives in Public Relations in the 1950s, and has been credited with facilitating the development of public relations organizations abroad as well. She claimed responsibility for proposing the idea of holding a meeting of top public relations executives in conjunction with the annual Congress of American Industry, sponsored by the National Association of Manufacturers, to which CEOs were invited to discuss issues and problems of business. That meeting evolved into what is known today as the annual PR Seminar.

She traveled extensively, promoting public relations and *PR News* at conferences and important gatherings throughout the world. She was an active member of numerous professional organizations, including the Public Relations Society of America, the International Public Relations Association, Women Executives in Public Relations, and the Newsletter Association.

Mrs. Griswold is a recipient of the highest award presented to an individual by the Public Relations Society of America, the Gold Anvil. During her

lifetime, she received over 130 honors for her contributions to public relations from organizations around the world, including Women in Communications, International Women’s Forum, the International PR Association, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, and the National Association of Manufacturers. She was also one of the first women to be named to the Northern Illinois University Honor Roll of Women in Public Relations in 1993.

She was a strong voice for the important role that social responsibility plays in doing business, and was herself actively involved in a wide variety of service activities. She gave generously of her time and talent and served on numerous boards and advisory committees including the USO (United Service Organizations), the Camp Fire Girls of America, the Institute of International Education, the Joint Council on Economic Education, Pace College, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Following her death, the Women Executives in Public Relations Foundation instituted an annual award in her name, the Denny Griswold Award for Social Responsibility.

Mrs. Griswold was also a classically trained opera singer. She studied music and planned a career in it. When her voice coach died, her “audition died with him,” she said, so she turned to radio and worked for National and Mutual Broadcasting (Serini, 1994). She introduced children’s songs on the radio and worked for dramatic shows, including *The Shadow*. Being a “practical person,” she found the 13-week radio contracts to be too tenuous for her, and she moved to the more secure jobs of first newspaper and then public relations.

She held two degrees, a bachelor of arts from Hunter College and a master of arts from Radcliffe, and she started work on a doctorate at Columbia University. “I like to learn,” she said, “and I feel like I’ve wasted a day if I haven’t learned something” (S. A. Serini, interview with Denny Griswold, June 21, 1994).

Although she refused to call herself a feminist, her commitment to an egalitarian workplace was unequivocal. She broke through the glass ceiling long before women had entered the workplace in significant numbers, and she helped other women to

do the same. Women Executives in Public Relations stands as but one example of that effort.

She was tireless, hard-working, and fiercely determined, and, above all else, Mrs. Griswold was a lady. Petite, feminine, and confident, she never appeared in public without a hat and, until very late in life, white gloves. “You see lots of women who lose their kindness, their softness, their gentleness, they become hard,” she said. “I think that’s wrong, and I don’t think that’s necessary either” (S. A. Serini, interview with Denny Griswold, June 21, 1994).

After the death of her first husband, Mrs. Griswold married investment manager J. Langdon Sullivan. She retained Griswold as her professional name.

In an interview recorded before she died, she was asked how she would like to be remembered. Here is what she said:

I would like them to remember me as a force that . . . can be credited to some extent for having spread the practice of Public Relations throughout the world. . . . And I think that I would like to be recognized as having persuaded top management that there was something besides the bottom line to doing business—and that was to recognize their social responsibility. (S. A. Serini, interview with Denny Griswold, June 21, 1994)

—*Shirley A. Serini*

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GROSS IMPRESSIONS

Gross impressions are widely used in program evaluation to indicate the number of people potentially exposed to a media message. These numbers are based on circulation figures for print media and

ratings figures for broadcast media. Gross impressions are calculated by multiplying the number of messages that appear by the appropriate circulation or rating. The gross impressions number can become very large, very quickly; however, it must be used with care. The main caveat that should always be stressed is that these are potential exposures, not actual numbers of people who read, viewed, or heard the message. The classic example is Super Bowl commercials. Air time during the game sells for very high sums based on the potential audience exposure. But people are known to do many things during commercial time aside from watch the commercials (for example, go to the refrigerator or restroom). Thus, actual exposures are typically lower (and sometimes greatly so) than gross impressions for TV messages. The opposite might actually be true of print media. One newspaper in a library or periodical in a doctor’s office will likely have far more than one reader. And with the current proliferation of cafés in bookstores, countless newspapers and periodicals are read but not purchased. Thus, circulation figures can actually underestimate the number of people exposed to a print message.

Another problem with the gross impressions number is that although it may provide some idea of the number of people exposed to a message, it says nothing about whether those exposed were part of the actual target audience. This issue is partly addressed by choosing appropriate media placements, but few media sources, especially major outlets, provide the precise targeting public relations often desires. One way to ameliorate this problem somewhat is to develop an overall promotion and publicity effort that generates a “buzz” about a topic. For example, movie promotion is very involved these days. Trailers and product tie-ins create awareness and anticipation. Then a star hits the talk show circuit to talk about what she’s doing in her life, and just happens to mention her latest movie that opens in a few days and has a clip or two from it. People who like the star and are thus likely to go to the movie see the interview on *Leno*. They will talk to friends at work the next day, and those people may well be more inclined to watch the star

on *Letterman* the next night. The overall promotion effort thus enhances the impressions generated among the most desirable audience members.

Finally, simple exposure says nothing at all about the impact or effect of a message. Use of the gross impressions figure alone is very misleading

as a measure of the effectiveness of public relations activities. Meaningful program evaluation must always measure impact, not simply potential.

—*Maribeth S. Metzler*



HAMMOND, GEORGE

George Hammond (1907–2003) led a remarkable life in the practice of public relations. He earned the reputation of being the man who could make things happen.

The golden age of public relations began to shine during the darkest days of U. S. economic history, the Great Depression. At the Carl Byoir Company, a pioneer in the field, the gold turned to 24 carat under the leadership of George Hammond, who joined the firm in 1932 and retired as chairman of the board in 1981. The style and methods of the company, America's most successful public relations firm for 50 years, were never duplicated.

George Hammond was a problem solver who worked directly with company CEOs to analyze the problems and the goals of their companies and then directed those challenges to his hundreds of employees across this nation and around the world. Those clients—more than 100 *Fortune 500* companies—included BF Goodrich, Honeywell, Bendix, A&P, Hallmark, Johnson's Wax, and countless others. The accomplishments of those companies are legendary.

With every client of the Byoir organization, the contact was with the CEO, a far different method than exists today. Under George Hammond's direction, it was the job of the Byoir executive to

continuously inform the CEO of anything that was happening in his company, the nation, or the world that could affect his company and its clients. This access and close contact with the CEO of the company prevented a host of problems that exist today.

This was not a spin company. This was not a company that made millions of dollars in profits or whose employees were the best paid in the industry. This was a company whose employees remained with the firm solely because George Hammond created an atmosphere in which they could do their best work. He was a strategic thinker; a visionary who thought through the problems, devised the plan, chose the best man or woman for the job, and allowed the freedom for them to do their best work.

He made things happen.

His parents, both well known but not wealthy musicians from Brooklyn, provided love and support and instilled confidence, which carried George Hammond to the heights of his profession, lauded by associates, clients, and peers worldwide.

His exposure from birth to the beauty of classical music and the visual arts continued throughout his life and produced a creative thinker. He continually expressed concern that the country's education formula did not acknowledge the need for more literature, art, and music.

In 1924, it took Hammond several trips from Brooklyn into New York City and eight tests in one

day, but he persisted in pursuing a scholarship to Columbia. His persistence paid off with a full Pulitzer scholarship and \$250 annually in spending money.

Persistence became a way of life for George Hammond. Throughout high school and college, he wrote sports copy for the *New York Sun*. After graduating from Columbia in 1928, he continued his sports career. He ghosted the Grantland Rice column, covered golf, and worked for a hotel chain in Cuba, where he met Carl Byoir. In 1932 he was hired by Byoir to manage a sports program at the Miami Biltmore Hotel to attract visitors to the empty hotel. Through his creative efforts, he filled the hotel in the depths of the Depression. He did the same for several other hotels on both coasts of Florida.

The company's tourism business grew through George Hammond's expertise in sports; he utilized the press corps to publicize various cities including Orlando, Coral Gables, and Sarasota, bringing attention to those areas as vacation meccas even in the darkest days of the Depression.

He was ultimately called to New York and given the responsibility of his first client, the BF Goodrich Tire and Rubber Company. He was associated with Byoir for nearly 50 years.

In 1978, he received a letter from Bert Johnson, an executive in Orlando who credited Hammond with putting Orlando in the map. He wrote,

What you did for Orlando in 1935 can never be questioned. You gave us new spirit, confidence and vision. You not only put our town's name in the newspapers around the country, but you showed us there was still hope. You came here among us and you turned on the light. (Johnson, personal communication, 1978)

As the years progressed, George Hammond turned on the lights of many corporations. He turned on the lights of the Long Island Railroad when his genius as a strategic thinker, who did his homework, brought the company out of bankruptcy and saved 60,000 commuters from being stranded on Long Island with no way to get into the city. He did it without sending a word to any news media. He did his homework. He learned that the railroad,

with no history of accidents for 100 years, had two in 1954 in which 80 people were killed. He studied the engineering reports. He learned that the railroad needed several million dollars to upgrade their equipment and the tracks.

He used a large easel bearing the headline "The Long Island Railroad is the worst railroad in the nation." On succeeding pages of the large easel he outlined the problems, how to solve them, and how much it would cost.

The easel made the rounds of Long Island and Pennsylvania Railroad executives and soon landed on Governor Dewey's desk. The governor called a special session of the legislature, and the needed money was provided by the State of New York.

In 1952 Hammond turned on the lights for more than 200 passengers of the streamliner train, "City of San Francisco." Trapped in Donner Pass in the High Sierras for three days, the streamliner had run out of food and heat, and both the U.S. Marines and the railroad had failed in rescue attempts. But Hammond applied his usual problem-solving skills and paid a skier to get a message to his New York office. Then things began to happen. He led the other passengers to the warmth and safety of a nearby bar and grill. A letter of congratulations and thanks from the vice president of the railroad did not compare to the appreciation of the grateful passengers, who had had little to eat and minimal heat the last 24 hours of the ordeal.

He turned on the lights at BF Goodrich when he convinced a board member to vote in favor of a financing plan approved by Goldman Sachs that would save the company from bankruptcy. The company had tried three times to get the plan approved by the stockholders and could not. Hammond was 29 at the time and had just arrived in New York from Florida. While others in the office—probably 10 at the time—looked for ingenious ways to solve the problem, George Hammond looked for the largest stockholder and went to the source. The man refused to see him. He returned to the building when it was time for the stockholder's car to pick him up. He slid in beside him and in that 15-minute ride, Hammond convinced him that the financing plan was the best way to solve the problem.

The lights continued to shine as he worked with the new BF Goodrich president, John Collyer, who knew from his long experience in Europe that Germany was producing synthetic rubber. Collyer and Hammond convinced the government that the United States could lose the war without synthetic rubber and that this country must immediately start making tires from synthetic rubber. The government complied. When the war was over, Collyer, with George Hammond at his side, went to Washington and persuaded the government to get out of the synthetic rubber business and sell the plants to private enterprise. To the surprise of everyone, the government complied. This is but one of the accomplishments directed by George Hammond that changed the way America lives today.

Hammond was a take-charge man who could and did solve problems when others had exhausted every plausible tactic. He was an adviser, a problem solver who directed a worldwide company of well-trained employees who utilized his problem-solving methods. A career that started modestly became a career filled with business accomplishments that would change the way this nation thinks. George Hammond was on his way to becoming chairman of the board of Carl Byoir and Associates.

His was the only public relations firm that was departmentalized, with experts heading every department. Editor John Stahr edited and approved every piece of copy that was sent to news media, regardless of where the account executive was assigned at the time. This resulted in enormous respect from all the media, including *The New York Times*. A release from CBA needed no editing and could be depended on to be accurate and well written.

The company never used a lobbyist during its entire existence and had no set formula for solving problems. Hammond thought that each problem was unique. He met with the CEO, determined the problem and the course he would take, then assigned the work to the best people for the job.

Although he was distressed with the business scandals of the early 21st century, he acknowledged that there were 17,000 public companies that were honestly run, and said that their efforts would keep the country going.

The merry band of professionals who worked for George Hammond at the Byoir company were dedicated, happy people. They loved their work, and they admired the leadership of George Hammond. They did not move from company to company. There was very little turnover.

Muriel Fox, executive vice president of radio and television for the company, said,

We thought there wasn't anything we couldn't do. George Hammond knew everything that was going in the company. He cared about race relations and predicted in the 50's that we must solve these problems or this country would have major problems in the cities. He was very focused in regard to human relations and brought in people to teach the executives about the wider world. He covered a broad span intellectually. (personal communication, 2003).

Fox realized the rareness of Hammond's character by his actions toward her career: "He promoted me to executive vice president of radio and television. He was the first in New York to place a woman in such a position" (personal communication, 2003).

Dick Truitt, another executive vice president, said, "After he retired and I had a difficult problem, I would go to a quiet place and say to myself, 'What would Hammond do?'" (personal communication, 2003).

His executive secretary of 30 years, Mary Apelian, said, "He was a lofty thinker who always presented me with a challenge. There is a lot that the exterior does not show of the interior" (personal communication, 2003). After he retired, he retained her as his secretary until his death. She worked for him for 50 years.

At 93 years old, when George Hammond started co-authoring an autobiography, he said,

As I sit here on my 93rd birthday watching the birds fly south over the Mystic River, I contemplate a remarkable life that a kid from Brooklyn was fortunate enough to enjoy.

A short time ago, as I assessed this life, I realized the worth of many of the things I have learned and practiced during a 50 year career in the public relations

business. As I think of the problems which face this nation today, I am firmly convinced that many of them could be solved if we could reach the people one on one, not by spin, but by thorough explanation.

For 50 years our job was to listen, to solve problems and to explain. We did that and we did it very well for such companies as BF Goodrich, Honeywell, Bendix, Hallmark, A&P, The Long Island Railroad, Johnson's Wax, various U. S. Cities and the United States government.

Everything we did and the way we did it was different from the method our colleagues used. We did not measure our success by the number of press clippings we could generate or the size of the bill we could present to the client. Our success was determined by this standard: did we solve the problem?

I have lots of time to read, think and evaluate. I believe there are three crises in this country today:

1. The attack on business
2. Ineffective treatment of our rising generation's education formula
3. The lack of participation in one of the greatest freedoms in this country: voting. We are not exercising the hard fought freedom of voting as less than 50 percent of the eligible population goes to the polls. (Orsborn, 2003, n.p.)

George Hammond believed that an effective person-to-person program throughout the nation, such as the method used to make the nation aware of the Children's Television Workshop, could be used to motivate the American public to appreciate that great freedom that our founding fathers envisioned for us.

Joan Cooney did not launch her idea for a television program for preschool youngsters until she had the guarantee of \$7 million in underwriting. Her budget for something that did not exist included an ice-breaking program that cost \$250,000 the first year. She retained Hammond's company to do the job. George Hammond directed his executives to innovate. They remembered old ways and invented new ways to communicate and persuade. It took

personal calls, handbills, sound trucks, and the enlisted support of hundreds of community organizations all over the country because some of those areas did not yet have television. Today, *Sesame Street* is still one of the most popular and watched children's television shows in the nation.

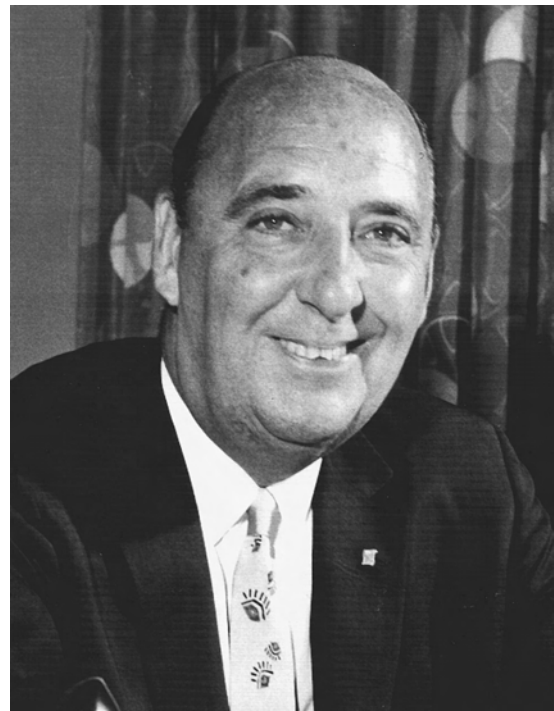
This is the quality of work George Hammond created and supervised. Mr. Hammond died December 4, 2003, five days after his 96th birthday.

—Nicki Orsborn

See also Counseling; Publicity; Spin; Strategies

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George Hammond

SOURCE: Nicki Orsborn. Reprinted with permission.

HEALTH BELIEF MODEL

Over the past four decades, the Health Belief Model (HBM) has been one of the most widely used

psychosocial models that attempts to explain health behavior and compliance. Formulated initially in the 1950s to help explain why individuals failed to engage in prevention or early disease detection behaviors, the model was later extended to embrace illness and sick-role behaviors, as well as compliance with medical regimens.

The still-evolving HBM integrates elements of operant conditioning and Kurt Lewin's theory of goal setting in the level-of-aspiration situation. As B. F. Skinner wrote, operant-conditioning theory focuses on the hypothesis that the frequency of a behavior is determined by its consequences or reinforcements, whereas Lewin et al. (1944) hypothesized that behavior depends mainly upon two variables: (1) the value placed by an individual on a particular outcome and (2) the individual's estimate of the likelihood that a given action will trigger a desired outcome. The model was subsequently categorized as an "expectancy x value" theory, attempting to describe behavior or decision-making processes under conditions of uncertainty.

The HBM is based on value-expectancy concepts: the desire to avoid illness or get well (value) and the belief that a specific health action available to a person would prevent or ameliorate illness (expectation). The expectancy was further delineated in terms of the individual's estimate of personal susceptibility to and severity of an illness, and of the likelihood of being able to reduce that threat through personal action.

The HBM proposes that one's subjective state of readiness to take action and engage in health-related behaviors, relative to a particular health condition, is a function of several factors. An individual's beliefs or perceptions of his or her likelihood of susceptibility to an illness, and the perception of the probable severity level accompanying a particular illness, represent major model features. Consequences can be social and physical. A second factor is the perceived benefit of the action, in contrast to the perceived barriers. That is, individuals are thought to weigh an action's effectiveness in reducing a health threat against possible negative outcomes associated with that action. A third factor involves access to cues for action or

triggers. Cues can be either internal (e.g., pain) or external (e.g., interpersonal interactions or mediated messages). Becker and Mainman also emphasized that the preceding three factors can be influenced by demographic factors such as gender, age, and ethnicity; psychosocial factors such as social class and personality; and structural factors such as knowledge levels about diseases and concomitant disease experiences. A detailed review of the evidence supports the inclusion of the various HBM components. A brief summary of supporting evidence follows.

PERCEIVED SUSCEPTIBILITY

This dimension refers to one's subjective perception of the risk for contracting a health condition. A number of retrospective and prospective studies of health behavior have reported positive correlations between relatively higher levels of subjective vulnerability and compliance to various health-related behaviors.

Perceived Severity or Perceived Threat of a Disease

Feelings concerning the seriousness of contracting an illness, or leaving it untreated, include evaluations of medical, clinical, and social consequences. The model focuses on the predictive power of the individual's perception of illness severity. Although the results of studies focusing on perceived severity and acceptance of preventive health recommendations are mixed, the individual's estimates of the seriousness or severity of the illness are consistently predictive of compliance with medical recommendations.

Perceived Benefits and Barriers

The HBM identifies and accounts for the relative benefits and barriers to engaging in behaviors to reduce health threats. For example, an individual exhibiting an optimal level of beliefs in susceptibility and severity would not be expected to accept any recommended health action unless that strategy was perceived as potentially efficacious. The individual

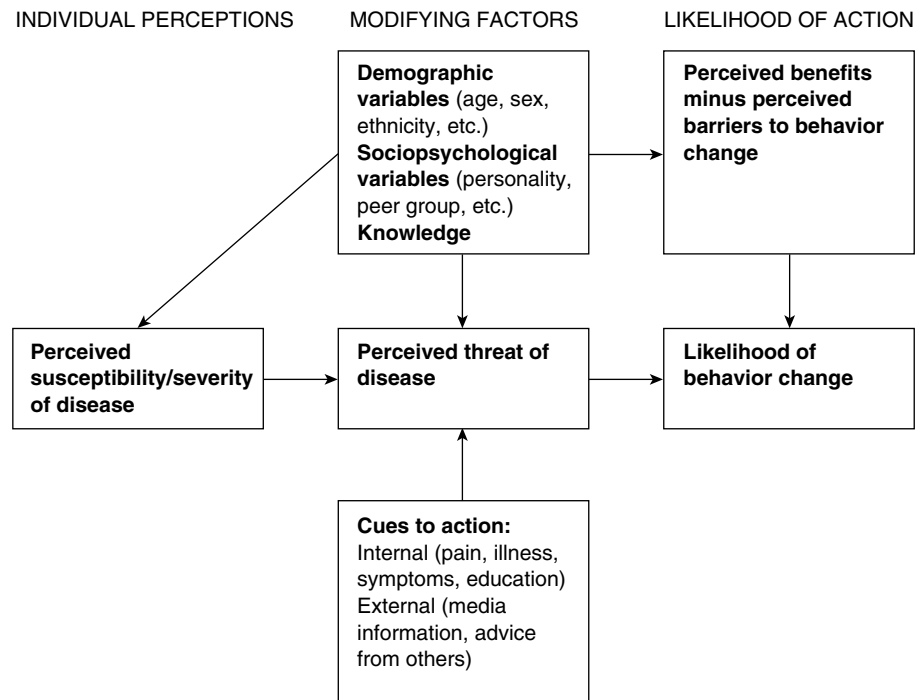


Figure 1 Health Belief Model

SOURCE: Adapted from Feurstein, Labbé, & Kuczmierczyk (1986) and Strecher & Rosenstock (1997).

thus weighs the action's expected effectiveness against perceptions that it may be expensive, dangerous, unpleasant, inconvenient, etc. Thus, the combined levels of susceptibility and severity provided the energy or force to act and the perception of benefits (less barriers) provide a preferred path of action.

Cues to Action

The notion that cues which trigger action are to be "held as necessary for activating the readiness variables, appears to serve to make the individual consciously aware of his feelings, thus enabling him to bring them to bear upon the particular problem" (Mainman & Becker, 1974, p. 22). Cues to action were discussed in various and early formulations of the HBM; however, they have not been systematically studied.

Modifying Factors

Demographic, structural, attitudinal, interactional, and enabling factors are examples of modifying

variables included in the HBM. They represent factors that may indirectly promote, have a mixed effect, or discourage health behavior. Sociodemographic factors, particularly educational attainment, are believed to have an indirect effect on behavior by influencing the perception of susceptibility, severity, benefits, and barriers. The key variables of the HBM, subsumed under three categories, are summarized in Figure 1.

Victor Strecher and Irwin Rosenstock (1997) believed that the concept of self-efficacy, introduced by Albert Bandura should be added to the HBM to increase its explanatory power and to become a more useful tool for the practitioner. Self-efficacy is defined as "the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcome" (Bandura, 1977a, p. 79). A growing body of research supports the importance of self-efficacy in helping to account for initiation and maintenance of behavioral change.

Many criticisms of the HBM stem from its high level of abstraction. For instance, Fitzpatrick and

associates (1984) describe the HBM as a conceptual framework for thinking about illness behavior rather than a model. Unfortunately, no research has been conducted to examine the HBM in its entirety. The vast majority of HBM-related studies analyze the constructs of the model separately. Taken together, the results support the model in understanding factors influencing health-related behaviors. In a revision of the HBM in 1977, motivation or the desire or intention to comply was emphasized. Also, positive health motivation may exist and account for positive action. Another critical review and overall assessment of the HBM's performance was conducted by N. K. Janz and M. H. Becker and published in 1984. Included in the review were preventive health and screening behaviors and sick-role behaviors requiring long-term changes. Additional research assessing experimental interventions to modify health beliefs and health behavior, as well as psychometric work to measure specific factors that need to be added to the HBM, should enhance the model's heuristic and pragmatic appeal.

—Tatyana S. Thweatt and Jim L. Query, Jr.

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HEARING

A public hearing is a forum held by decision makers, usually elected officials, to listen to various stakeholder positions on a piece of legislation. The public hearing is at the heart of the democratic process because any interested party can speak on behalf of the legislation. Both citizens, not-for-profits, and corporations have the opportunity to participate in public hearings. In most public hearings, speakers will support a particular piece of legislation and other speakers will voice their concerns about that piece of legislation. Public hearings ensure transparency in the decision-making process.

Different types of bodies hold public hearings. At the local level, town councils, city councils, and boards of commissioners meet to deliberate issues such as zoning, new laws, and taxes. At the state level, elected legislators also hold public hearings about issues such as education reform and the budget that affects the entire state. The U.S. Congress, both the House of Representatives and the Senate, also holds public hearings to solicit public comment on upcoming legislation of national and international topics.

Interested parties conduct research before participating in a public hearing. Data from reliable sources are needed to ensure that the arguments made in the public hearing are accurate and credible. Sources for data can include the United States Census, statistics from other communities/states, public documents, and information gathered through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Another type of research involves gathering personal narratives about the people's lives that will be affected, either positively or negatively, by the proposed legislation. This research is as important as the statistics because it puts a human face on the bill or regulation. Both types of research help to create a persuasive argument. Finally, interested parties should research the positions of each member of the committee prior to attending the public hearing. Citizens and organizations can contact the offices of each member of the committee and ask for each elected official's position on the legislation.

There is a predictable process to most public hearings. Generally, decision-making bodies announce the times and dates that they will listen to public comment on a particular piece of legislation. The announcement of the date and time of the public hearing is usually published on the decision-making body's Web site or in the local media. Interested organizations then can contact the appropriate governmental office and ask to be placed on the list of speakers. Individual citizens and organizations must provide the name and contact information of the intended speaker. Interested parties are given a date and time to appear in front of the committee. They are also given a time limit for their speeches.

Because speakers have limited time, in addition to writing a speech, each speaker prepares a written document. This document, in the form of a position paper or white paper, provides additional information about the speaker's position. Speakers submit a copy of this written document to the committee prior to speaking. Many speakers bring extra copies to hand out to media representatives and other interested parties. These written documents should contain background, contact information, and the same statistics and narratives as the speech. It is best to place the most important information at

the beginning of the document, use bullets, and make the position paper easy to read.

In public hearings each speaker is called to testify before the deliberative committee. Speakers introduce themselves (name, home town, organizational membership) to the committee, thank the committee for their time, and read their formal statement. The committee members may ask the speaker questions; however, it is unusual for the audience to be allowed to ask the speakers questions. Committee members are usually addressed by their formal titles and are treated with respect during the speech.

It is important for all speakers to stay within their allotted time limit. At any public hearing, there could be dozens of interested parties seeking to speak about their position. Speakers who extend beyond their allotted time may be asked to stop and will not be able to complete their statement. Speakers practice their presentations (often many times) and must anticipate difficult questions from the committee members. If there are several interested parties sharing the same position on the legislation, it benefits all of them to coordinate in advance which person will make which argument. Although repetition can be persuasive, it is best to bring a wide variety of arguments into the speeches.

During the public hearings, a level of decorum is expected from the audience. Members of the audience are expected to sit quietly and politely as different speakers present their arguments. Clapping for like-minded speakers is inappropriate as is making noise when opposing arguments are being made.

Representatives from the media often attend public hearings. Speakers should be prepared to give statements to the media and answer any questions about their position. Interested parties can invite the media to attend and offer to speak privately to them about their position. The media representatives may ask speakers for additional information and it is wise to provide it.

When all interested parties have had the opportunity to speak and after all of the committee members' questions have been answered, the committee adjourns for private deliberations. These meetings are not open to the public. It is here that the

public part of the public hearing is over. Interested parties can continue to communicate privately with their elected officials and provide additional written materials. Interested parties can also contact local media representatives to further explain their position. However, once the committee ends the public hearing phase of its deliberative process, there is no more space for public testimony.

The public hearing is one way that interested citizens and organizations can have direct contact with their elected officials. Each community has a slightly different process for holding public hearings, but the general process is as explained. It is the right of individuals and organizations to speak out on issues that affect their community. The public hearing provides the opportunity for elected officials to solicit public comment as they make legislative decisions. An interested party can be successful if he or she is well prepared, anticipates difficult questions, and provides meaningful written support materials to decision makers.

—Maureen Taylor

HILL, JOHN WILEY

John Wiley Hill (1890–1977) was the principal founder of Hill & Knowlton of New York, the largest and most successful public relations firm in history. For about 30 years after World War II, Hill & Knowlton led the industry in billings, and journalists and other public relations practitioners routinely rated it the best in the business. It was the first public relations agency to expand successfully into Europe and other international markets, while at home, by 1959 the combined sales of its clients amounted to 10 percent of the gross national product. Moreover, Hill's influence and that of his top executives was greater than most other public relations counselors of the time. Hill & Knowlton officers routinely attended board meetings and served as part of the management team of the agency's clients, which included the steel, tobacco, and aviation industry trade associations. Hill & Knowlton was the agency others wanted to emulate from the 1950s to the 1980s.

BIRTH AND EDUCATION

John Hill was born on November 26, 1890, on a farm near Shelbyville, Indiana, the third of four sons born to Theophilus Wiley and Katherine (Jameson) Hill. Growing up on a failing farm, Hill graduated from the public high school in 1909. He worked for local newspapers before joining the staff of the *Akron (Ohio) Press*. After about two years there, Hill left to study journalism and English at Indiana University. After two brief stints in school, he quit and returned to Akron, this time to work for the *Beacon-Journal*. In 1913 he and a friend founded the short-lived *Chicago Daily Digest*; a few months after it folded, he and another friend began publishing a paper in Shelbyville. It, too, collapsed, and he moved to Cleveland to report again for the *Press* and then the *Plain Dealer*. Hill married Hildegard Beck on June 19, 1916, in Cleveland; she was the daughter of the first conductor of that city's symphony. Hill's formal education apparently ended for lack of funds, but his entrepreneurial spirit would serve him well.

EARLY PUBLIC RELATIONS CAREER

In 1920 Hill made a tentative step toward a career in public relations. He created a newsletter for local executives for the Union Trust Company in Cleveland, while also serving as financial editor for the *Daily Metal Trade*. This dual role led him to two important realizations: first, that many journalists were inept in reporting on financial news, and, second, that most executives had no desire to deal with the press. In short, Hill identified a need for a "corporate publicity office," which he opened in Cleveland in April 1927. In 1933 he invited Don Knowlton to join him, thus creating Hill & Knowlton.

People who knew Hill believed that Hill & Knowlton's Cleveland accounts, including Union Trust, Otis Steel, Standard Oil of Ohio, and Republic Steel, had a tremendous impact on Hill's way of thinking and his approach to public relations. In his later years, Hill often reminded people of a banker or a statesman, and his quiet, conservative approach seems to have developed from his association

with financiers and steel magnates, many of whom hated big government and organized labor.

Tom Girdler, Republic Steel's fanatically anti-union president, drew Hill & Knowlton into a wider world, and into one of the biggest industrial controversies of the Depression. On Girdler's recommendation, the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI) retained Hill & Knowlton in 1933, forming an association that lasted well into the 1970s. (Eventually this became the largest single public relations account in the world.) The agency developed institutional advertisements opposing union organization of the steel industry, defended Republic and other companies when the 1937 Little Steel strike resulted in violence, and represented the AISI during the Senate hearings that investigated the companies' actions during the strike. A Senate subcommittee of the Education and Labor Committee, popularly known as the La Follette committee (its chair was Robert M. La Follette, Jr., of Wisconsin), even investigated Hill & Knowlton, because of a mysterious special fund the agency kept on behalf of the steel companies. None of the companies that contributed to the fund had received anything beyond a newsletter that all Hill & Knowlton clients received, and La Follette suspected the agency was involved with the antiunion "citizens committees" that had sprung up in strike towns, but the senator was unable to connect the money or Hill & Knowlton to anything illegal.

Although he often failed to see or understand the problems of the consumer or the worker, Hill had a strong appreciation for the power of public opinion. Because rational people ruled in a democracy, Hill asserted, "Public opinion is entitled to the facts in matters of public concern" (Hill, 1958, p. 63). Therefore, he explained, a good public relations program must be based on integrity, sound policies, and the release of information that the public could understand and believe. He was greatly influenced by Ivy Lee, whose 1925 book, *Publicity: Some of the Things It Is and Is Not*, Hill read and whose ideas he often repeated, particularly regarding the need for publicists to counsel their clients rather than simply taking orders.

Within a few years after its founding, Hill & Knowlton began to expand. Hill opened a New York

office in 1938, moving there while separating from and later divorcing his wife. In 1944 he opened a Washington, DC, branch to handle government relations for the New York and Cleveland offices. By November of 1945 the New York branch's billings were double those of Cleveland, and Hill recognized that his future was in Manhattan. In 1947 he turned over all but 5 percent of his interest in the Cleveland office to Knowlton and established a separate agency, Hill & Knowlton, Inc. (Knowlton owned a small share in exchange for the use of his name.) Hill married for a second time, on December 2, 1949, to Elena Karam, and he adopted two children.

HILL & KNOWLTON OF NEW YORK

Some of Hill's Cleveland accounts—Standard Oil of Ohio, Warner and Swasey, and the Austin Company—transferred to New York with him. The AISI and several other clients he had recruited through the Manhattan office, most notably Avco Manufacturing and the Aircraft Industries Association, gave the new firm a presence in both the field of public relations and in big business. Although he had several corporate accounts, large trade association clients were Hill & Knowlton's bread and butter.

The aviation industry campaign after World War II was typical of Hill & Knowlton's trade association work. The Aviation Industry Association (AIA) sought a steady diet of military appropriations for its member companies, and it promoted air safety, travel, and other aspects of civil aviation. After the war ended, military contracts took a nosedive, so the agency focused on convincing the federal government to audit the nation's air policies and its readiness for another war. When both Congress and President Harry S Truman set up commissions to review air policy, Hill & Knowlton helped industry officials prepare their testimony and publicized the boards' findings. Joining with the American Legion, the AIA sponsored a campaign, "Air Power Is Peace Power," beginning in 1947. Working through the Aviation Writers Association, which had its headquarters at the AIA offices, Hill & Knowlton promoted the aircraft industry with journalists who specialized in aviation. Interest in flying was high,

and in a three-month period in 1947, local media devoted almost 5,000 column inches to just one portion of the air power campaign. The AIA also mailed publications about aviation to opinion leaders such as college professors, state legislators, ministers, and business leaders, and sent speakers to civic club meetings across the nation. Thus, Hill & Knowlton coordinated the efforts of the media and political and public interest groups to promote its client's interests.

During the next two decades, Hill & Knowlton regularly took part in important public debates because of the stature of its clients. It represented the steel industry, for example, in 1952, when President Truman seized the mills to prevent a strike during the Korean War, producing booklets, speeches, advertisements, and more than 100 news releases in just a few months, both opposing the workers and disputing Truman's right to take the mills. In December 1953 the agency acquired a new account, a group of tobacco executives responding to a series of medical studies that linked smoking to lung cancer and other diseases. Hill & Knowlton created the Tobacco Industry Research Committee, funded by tobacco farmers and cigarette manufacturers, to distribute grants for research on smoking and health and to promote the idea that the link between smoking and disease had not been proven. The agency successfully convinced reporters to include its statements alongside those of doctors who condemned the industry's products in a growing body of evidence indicting cigarettes. (In 1969, Hill & Knowlton quietly resigned the account as its influence on industry policy dwindled.) Finally, the natural gas controversy of 1956 represented a major defeat for Hill & Knowlton, despite its best efforts. The agency mobilized corporations and individuals to fight federal regulation of the industry. It appeared to be headed for success after a favorable vote in the U.S. House of Representatives when a U.S. senator announced that two gas industry lawyers (not affiliated with Hill & Knowlton) had tried to bribe him. The bill still passed the Senate, but President Dwight D. Eisenhower refused to sign it because of the scandal. Hill & Knowlton also represented the pharmaceutical industry during the Kefauver hearings of the early 1960s, which were

followed closely by many citizens as well as business leaders.

INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

Several factors contributed to Hill & Knowlton's move into international public relations. First, John Hill toured Europe for the first time in 1952, when he was 62 years old. He detected extraordinary potential for the field of public relations there. Additionally, several of the agency's corporate accounts, including Procter and Gamble and Texaco, were multinationals with interests all over the world, and Hill needed a new challenge. Hill & Knowlton was the largest firm of its kind, and it had already begun buying up smaller agencies and absorbing their client lists. (In the 1980s this trend would accelerate among all the large agencies.) By July 1954, Hill & Knowlton had developed a network of affiliated agencies in Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium, and had opened its own office in Sydney, Australia. In December of that year, Hill & Knowlton sent an officer to Paris to establish its international headquarters. Hill traveled to Europe three times in three years, flush with optimism about his new venture, but not until 1958 did the international office gain its first big account: promotion of the 1958 World's Fair in Brussels. Although Hill & Knowlton International failed to turn a profit for almost a decade, Hill & Knowlton had established a firm toehold in international public relations and had enhanced its reputation as the leading public relations agency in the world.

INNOVATION AND GROWTH

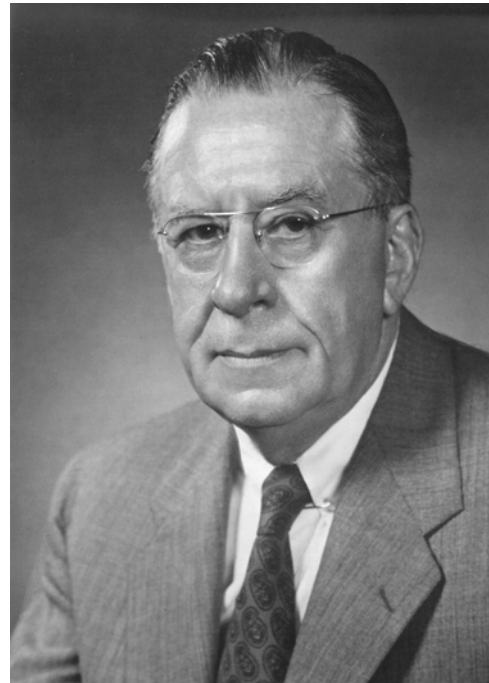
Hill & Knowlton was a public relations innovator in many other ways. In the late 1940s, the agency hired Price Waterhouse to apply cost accounting and modern budget management practices to public relations, setting up a system of standard fees and staff-time charges. (Most agencies rather haphazardly set different rates for different clients.) The agency also established stock purchase and profit sharing plans for employees, effectively minimizing turnover. It created educational programs for public schools and developed extensive community

relations programs for companies and industries. In 1966 it established an Environmental Health Unit to work with corporate clients on pollution and other environmental issues. Other specialized departments included women's interests, press relations, radio and television, graphics, and technical writing. Hill & Knowlton also experimented with new kinds of public relations research and with the use of computers during the 1960s.

In 1966 the agency listed 42 domestic clients and 15 international accounts, many of which were prominent in national and world affairs. In addition to the steel industry, trade associations included the American Petroleum Institute, Lead Industries Association, Licensed Beverage Industries, and the Tobacco Institute (a successor organization to the Tobacco Industry Research Committee). Corporations included Allied Chemical, Ernst and Ernst, Gillette, Marathon Oil, Procter and Gamble, and the Union Pacific Railroad. It even represented the American League of Major League Baseball. Internationally, such groups as Alcoa, the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce, Hughes Aircraft, and World Airways retained Hill & Knowlton.

Hill & Knowlton's staff also made an impressive testament to the agency's leadership and reputation in the field. A 1963 survey of its talented employees showed that the average staff member had 15 years experience in public relations; at least three in four of them had worked in journalism. They had written 44 books and had published articles in more than 100 publications. Hill himself wrote two books, made dozens of speeches, and wrote numerous articles for the trade press. Among his staff, three held doctorates; several were attorneys; one had won a Pulitzer Prize. Of those employed in the United States, 33 could read or write French, 19 German, 18 Spanish, and others spoke Russian, Italian, Arabic, Greek, and Dutch. At Hill's death, Hill & Knowlton boasted 560 employees scattered among 18 offices overseas and 36 in the United States.

John Hill consciously set up an agency that would outlast him, designating a line of succession to follow him. Beginning in 1960 he gradually withdrew from day-to-day participation in account management and reduced his personal holdings in the agency. He retired as chairman and CEO in 1962,



John Wiley Hill

SOURCE: Hill & Knowlton. Reprinted with permission.

although he retained his corner office until his death. Hill & Knowlton's reputation for integrity and professionalism, however, was based largely on Hill's personal reputation among business leaders and other public relations executives. After he died in New York City on March 17, 1977, executives found it increasingly difficult to balance growth with ethical performance. Still, with its combination of size and endurance, Hill & Knowlton represented a new kind of public relations consultancy.

—Karen Miller Russell

See also Lee, Ivy; Trade associations (and Hill & Knowlton's role in)

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HILL & KNOWLTON

See Hill, John Wiley; Trade associations (and Hill & Knowlton's role in)

HOLD AND HOLD FOR RELEASE

Press releases are among the most used public relations tools. They are an efficient means of disseminating information to the media and are heavily relied upon. Generally the information contained within press releases may be used by media outlets upon receipt. To make editors aware of this situation, the term "For Immediate Release" is found near the top of the release, usually in the upper right- or left-hand corner of the piece.

However, this is not always the case. In cases of sensitive information or to coordinate events and efforts, practitioners may send releases to media before they should be used. In these situations, the information is embargoed, meaning that a specific date and time are given for when the information can be used; editors are asked to hold it for release until then. To signify this, the term "Hold for Release" and specific release information such as time and date will appear in either the upper right- or left-hand corner of the piece.

Most editors will respect these requests and will not publish the information until appropriate, but public relations practitioners have no guarantee of this and have no recourse if an editor chooses to run the information before the embargo ends. Therefore, it is imperative for practitioners to be careful in releasing information that should be held for release. There are advantages to this practice as well. By sending the releases before the publication

time, public relations practitioners attempt to pique the interest of editors and reporters. With the advance notice, the media can develop more complex and in-depth articles about the subject without the pressure of deadlines; with the advent of instantaneous transmission of news in today's society, some say hold for release and embargoed items will soon be relics of the past.

—Brigitta Brunner

See also Media release

HOME PAGE

A Web page is a computer file that is stored on a computer server in such a way as to make the file available to other computer users via the Internet. Web pages can contain a variety of formats and types of information, including text, pictures, audio, and video.

Web pages are usually written in HyperText Markup Language (HTML) and are uniquely identified by a Universal (also Uniform) Resource Locator (URL). An example of a URL is <http://loc.gov/>

Not all URLs contain *www*, leading to a minor, but important distinction. The terms *Internet* and *World Wide Web* are used interchangeably, when in fact one is a subset of the other. All URLs that start <http://www> are part of the World Wide Web, which is a subset of all URLs making up the Internet. All URLs start with "http://." The inclusion of *www* does not make a Web page any more (or less) accessible.

A home page is simply the top level or *gateway* page for a Web site. A Web site is simply a collection of Web pages that are linked together. Creating Web pages in HTML allows a person to program the links into individual pages as they are created. Any content in a Web page can be linked to any other content in any other Web page. Or if a page is particularly long, links can help a user to navigate the page more quickly.

Web page creators typically use three different ways to let users know when something on the page is linked: (1) A different color can be used for the linked text, (2) the text can be underlined, or (3) both methods can be used. In all cases (meaning all data types, including text), when the mouse cursor

is passed over linked material, the cursor turns into a pointing hand.

The presenting and organizing of information in a Web page format has a unique advantage/disadvantage. It allows a content provider to structure and organize information in a nonlinear arrangement, consisting of text, pictures (moving and still), and video. Because no two people process and consume information in the same way, a Web page allows users some degree of control over the order and method in which they get the message.

This is also a disadvantage. Web page creators have to be familiar not only with ergonomic issues (where to put what information so it is easy to scroll to and access on a page), but also with communication theory, logic, and information flow, so information is not “lost” simply because it was not put where a Web page user expected it to be.

Organizations seeking to engage in public relations are wise to have a presence on the Internet. A home page serves as a 24/7 communication link that allows interested parties wide access to an organization.

There are also marketing advantages. Customers can acquire product and service information and possibly make purchases. A home page can allow open- and closed-end customer feedback and allow customers to ask questions about how to use a product or service. Web pages are replacing 1-800 customer service hotlines as the best means to make product inquiries.

Organizations can create and use a Web site to serve as a repository of information: annual reports of various kinds, collections of past and current media releases, and the history of the organization as well as its mission and vision. Financial information—for businesses as well as nonprofits—can be listed and updated. It can offer pictures and audio statements that make the people of the organization seem less distant. Such sites usually include a location for FAQs (frequently asked questions).

Web pages offer reporters access to media releases, sometimes with a password that allows them also to seek additional information about a story. Discussion rooms can be established where issues can be debated.

—*Michael Nagy*

See also Annual community reports; Annual financial report; Annual health, safety, and environmental (HSE) reports; FAQs; Hotline; Media release; Mission and vision statements; Web site.

HOOD, CAROLINE

Caroline Hood (married name Carlin) (1909–1981) was the first woman vice president of Rockefeller Center, Inc., a 21-building development in Manhattan, where she managed public relations programs, community events, and corporate advertising from 1934 to 1973. Hood was also the first woman to be elected to the board of directors of the New York Convention and Visitors Bureau and of Radio City Music Hall.

Hood began her work at Rockefeller Center as a “Flying Ambassador” traveling thousands of miles annually to publicize and promote the new multi-building project (“Caroline Hood,” 1981), although a 1951 article on women in public relations reported that Caroline Hood began selling souvenirs to tourists in the basement of Rockefeller Center and then suggested offering tours of the center’s gardens to the public (“Women in Public Relations,” 1951, p. 6).

Some of her accomplishments include the annual search for the famous Rockefeller Center Christmas tree; receptions for the world’s great—from the Dionne quintuplets to Haile Salassie to Princess Margaret; the celebration for the liberation of Paris in 1944 to the annual Christmas tree lighting ceremonies” (“Caroline Hood,” 1981, p. 1).

Hood was the first woman appointed to the Public Relations Society of America’s Board of Directors in 1951. In 1972, she received the Distinguished Service Award from the New York chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, the first woman so honored. The New York chapter of Theta Sigma Pi, a national journalism sorority, named her the outstanding woman in journalism and communication.

Hood served as president of Women Executives in Public Relations and of Advertising Women in New York.

In 1959, she served on a 16-member advisory panel for the United States Information Agency in

Washington, DC, and in 1963 she served on the New York State Women's Council. In 1964, the Republican Women in Business and Professions honored her as "the outstanding woman in public relations." Her career highlights are housed at the Schlesinger Library at Radcliffe College.

Hood studied at Columbia University and the New School. She was married to John Hayward Carlin.

—Elizabeth Toth

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HOOG, THOMAS W.

Thomas W. Hoog, who serves as chairman of Hill & Knowlton/USA, has made two defining contributions to the practice of public relations and public affairs in the United States during his tenure at the agency. The first was expanding the practice of public affairs beyond representation at the federal level to representation at the state and local levels. The second was developing a client service model that integrated equally both the geographic and practice expertise available to clients throughout the extensive U.S. network of the agency.

Tom Hoog was born in 1939 in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri. He went to the University of Illinois and received his degree in aeronautical engineering. Hoog started his career in 1960 as a naval aviator and spent four years with the U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet from 1962 to 1966. He began his work in politics and public affairs with stints in the presidential campaigns of both Senator Robert F. Kennedy and Senator George McGovern. In 1974, Hoog became chief of staff for U.S. Senator Gary Hart of Colorado, and served as political director of Senator Hart's presidential campaign in 1984. Hoog later extended his involvement in U.S. presidential elections by serving on the executive committee and national finance committee for then-governor Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign.

In 1980, after his Capitol Hill experience, Hoog founded and served as president of Hoog and Associates, Inc. This firm specialized in government relations and public affairs and had offices in Denver; Washington, DC; and Orange County, California. In 1989 the firm was acquired by Hill & Knowlton to expand its public affairs practice, which was headquartered in Washington, DC.

As Hoog advanced in Hill & Knowlton, he served as chairman of its U.S. Public Affairs Practice in 1992, and as general manager of its Washington, DC, office from 1993 to 1996. In 1996 he became president and CEO of Hill & Knowlton/USA and served on the agency's Worldwide Executive Committee.

In 1960, Hill & Knowlton became the first national public relations agency to open offices in Washington with the explicit purpose of representing its clients to the federal executive and legislative branches. At this time, the agency began to offer lobbying as a service to its clients. This was one of the initial steps in what evolved over the next two decades as the practice of public affairs. Just as the visionary John Hill saw that the interests of American businesses and commerce dictated the expansion of Hill & Knowlton into the international arena, so Hoog believed that those same interests would be increasingly impacted by the growth of the federal government in the United States.

Over those two decades, as federal legislation and regulation expanded, so did the Washington office of Hill & Knowlton. But Washington was not alone in influencing business and commerce. In the 1980s, increasingly state legislative and regulatory actions became significantly relevant to the business community. Referenda, particularly in California, became a powerful force for change and impacted the business sector significantly. As a full-service firm, Hill & Knowlton wanted to offer services to its clients dealing with this shift in policy and legislative activity.

It needed a leader who understood the interplay of public affairs at the federal as well as state levels and who could build a network of public affairs specialists throughout its national operations. It chose Tom Hoog to build this capacity, which remains a fundamental component of the agency's public affairs offering today.

An early example of this capacity at work in a multistate campaign involved a fight between the juice carton industry and the bottlers. The Maine legislature passed a bill that prevented the use of the individual juice boxes in schools. Similar legislation was introduced in other states. Hill & Knowlton waged a campaign that not only prevented the passage of similar legislation in other states but also reversed the decision in Maine.

Another example of this capacity at work harnessing powerful state interests to prevent a federal legislative action involved a fight between domestic and foreign automobile manufacturers. Congress was considering levying a tax on luxury automobiles manufactured by foreign companies. By working in California's large U.S.-based facilities of the foreign manufacturers and expressing the labor interests of those employed by these companies, Hill & Knowlton convinced the Congress not to proceed with this new tax.

Upon becoming president and CEO of Hill & Knowlton/USA, Hoog was faced with a significant challenge. Within the agency there existed a substantial geographic network of offices with varying degrees of staff composition and communications expertise. A high degree of specialized expertise also existed throughout the organization. For instance, the New York office dominated the financial public relations practice, with some expertise in Chicago and Los Angeles. Although media relations were offered in every office, the dominant media capitals were Washington and New York. Marketing services were becoming industry specialized. The health care practice was no longer directed solely to the pharmaceutical industry but also to the provider/payer sector, and the emerging biotech/bioscience industry, which flourished then in California and Massachusetts.

Yet clients needed the best the agency could offer, whether in crisis communications, reputation management, or issues management, wherever headquartered in the Hill & Knowlton U.S. network. Hoog was challenged to develop a client service model that harnessed all the disparate specialized talent of the agency, and a business management model that incorporated effective

incentives for different offices to work with each other on behalf of clients.

The concept of "best teams" was not new to Hoog. The goal was clear: Bring together the professional team with the right expertise needed by the client irrespective of where that expertise resided geographically. What Hoog did that profoundly altered the way Hill & Knowlton provided its services to its domestic clients was to make the concept of "best teams" work. He did this by taking two steps.

The first step was to bring into the organization a top tier of practice directors who had parity with the general managers of the U.S. offices. This parity was essential to enabling the senior management of the U.S. operations to focus on client service and also strategic growth for the agency. Parity was manifest in the management and governance of the U.S. company by having both general managers and practice directors on the U.S. management committee. In addition to 12 geographic offices, five functional practices and two industry-sector practices were established (corporate public relations, media relations, marketing communications, financial public relations, public affairs, health care and pharmaceuticals, and technology).

The integration of authority was manifest in hiring, in allocation of resources, in performance reviews, in business development activity, and in ensuring that every client—large or small—had access to the top counselors in the firm as well as the most specialized expertise. Incentives to work across geographic and practice boundaries were instituted at the individual, office, and practices levels.

The second step Hoog took was to institute a formal professional development program at Hill & Knowlton in which every professional was required to take 10 training courses per year. The training was provided by experts and was taken to each office throughout the U.S. network. An extensive curriculum was offered, including courses in journalism, client service, account management, writing, computer skills, and each of the core practices of the agency. The goals of this training program were to ensure that all professionals had a common standard of excellence in the basics of communications, learned more about specializations outside their own, stayed abreast of technology advances,



Thomas W. Hoog

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and were challenged to think about the impact of communications on the rapid changes taking place in society and business.

In addition, Hoog redefined Hill & Knowlton College, held once or twice a year for various professional levels throughout the agency. The faculty of the college consisted of internal and external experts, and attendees participated in three days of intensive training on how to harness the resources of the entire firm on behalf of clients. The personal relationships developed by this boot camp approach changed the way the professional staff interacted with each other on behalf of clients.

Hoog's leadership and contribution were recognized in his final year as CEO of Hill & Knowlton/USA by the agency's being named Agency of the Year by *PR Week*. In addition, Hoog was selected by *PR Week* as one of the 100 most influential public relations practitioners of the 20th century. He recently completed a term as chairman of the Counselors Academy of the Public Relations Society of America.

—*Jim C. Jennings*

See also Crisis communication; Hill, John Wiley; Issues management; Public affairs

HOTLINE

Hotlines provide customers and concerned citizens easy access to seek information or express opinions to businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Hotlines originated as 1-800 numbers to replace personal letters from customers who wrote to obtain information or express concerns. Savvy businesses were among the first organizations to realize that customers might wish additional information about products or services. So hotlines were established to make it easy for a customer to call an expert to seek advice on the use of a product or to solve a problem relevant to a product or service, such as might occur with an insurance policy. Government organizations and nonprofits soon recognized the virtue of this kind of constituent contact.

Hotlines can play a vital role in people's lives. Imagine for a moment a young couple who obligated themselves to prepare one of the major holiday meals for other members of the family or friends—or both. Early on the morning of the event, the young couple comes to grips with the reality that they have a very large, frozen turkey that is far from being easily and readily prepared for that delicious meal they imagined—based on their recollection of “Mom's” holiday table. Now, the couple might just call Mom. But that might mean admitting the truth: The couple is poorly prepared to deal with the realities of life at the holiday season. So why not call the company that harvested and sold the turkey? Should the package wrapping that plump turkey have a 1-800 number printed on it so that the young cooks could talk to an expert regarding how to prepare that magical meal that appears so easy when Mom fixes it? Realizing the marketing and customer relations value of such a number, poultry companies proudly display “1-800-Call-Turkey.” Frontline companies committed to customer relations print such numbers to give customers access to expertise.

The backs, sides, tops, bottoms, and fronts of packages now routinely include that magical 1-800 number or the even more modern version: an e-mail or a Web site address. The reality of this public relations tool is that companies are wise to make an easy and useful communication link with customers. Network theory advises that the easier information is to acquire, the more likely people are able to reduce uncertainty and feel a sense of accomplishment—part of what is necessary to build a mutually beneficial relationship. They also feel included in the organization. They are more than a customer; they are a valued customer. Customer satisfaction is more than a buzzword; it is a commitment indeed.

This public relations tactic can be used to ease communication with members, donors, activists, media, employees, students, and all of the stakeholders in a long list. Not only does the link allow for information to be sought, but information to be provided and opinions to be expressed by the outsider. Concerned citizens need a number to call if they are worried about their health or safety because of a company's operations. Government agencies can use the channel to provide information to citizens in an as-needed basis. At tax preparation time, for instance, the Internal Revenue Service can use links of this type to assist taxpayers. So can activist groups and other nonprofits, opening themselves to those who seek information and voice concerns.

If organizations aspire to be open, they need to facilitate that openness. They need to create various communication channels that can be used by customers, audiences, and publics. Organizations espouse the virtue of two-way communication but may fail to create the counterpart to one-way communication flows—from them to markets, audiences, and publics. Another benefit is that such channels give the organization an opportunity to conduct environmental scanning, looking for product/service-related problems or community concerns.

Whereas the 1-800 number began the tradition of opening an organization to outsiders, the current new technologies offer another 24/7 dimension to this. One additional option is the frequently asked question (FAQ) feature at homepage Web sites. Another is the chat room, where concerned citizens can voice

concerns, see the concerns voiced by other citizens, and read the organization's response. Whereas letters once were the sole link, this extremely impersonal and time-consuming process has given way to more modern and effective means for opening organizations to their constituents. Hotlines can help companies achieve the goal of promising to be the first and best source of information on all matters relevant to them and those they affect.

—*Robert L. Heath*

See also Chat; Environmental scanning; FAQs; Home page; Network theory; Openness; Tactics; Two-way and one-way communication

HOWLETT, E. ROXIE

E. Roxie Howlett, head of Howlett & Gaines Public Relations of Portland, Oregon, has been a leader in public service to society for the field of public relations. A fellow of PRSA, M.S., and C.H.E., she received the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Paul M. Lund Public Service Award in 1992. Lund challenged the field of public relations to change the human condition by becoming agents of understanding between institutions and society. Howlett illustrated this ideal through “exemplary dedication to the community of the San Francisco Bay area on a volunteer as well as professional basis” (“To Business Desk,” 1985, p. 1).

Howlett has volunteered her services to such organizations as the American Lung Association of San Francisco, the Commonwealth Club of California, the Assistance League of San Mateo County, the National Assistance League, and the San Francisco School of the Arts Foundation.

Howlett & Gaines, Portland, Oregon, was located in the San Francisco area from 1968 to 1989. Prior to forming this agency, Howlett was western manager, Home and Fashion Division for Infoplan, the public relations arm of McCann-Erickson, Inc. from 1962 to 1968. She was the first non-owner to run the San Francisco office of Infoplan.

Howlett worked as an account representative for Lee & Associates Public Relations, Los Angeles,

California (1958–1968), was assistant food editor for the *Los Angeles Times*, and was Director of Women's Programs at KPOJ, Portland, Oregon.

Howlett has been a leader in the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). She has served on the IPRA Council and coordinated IPRA interests with the PRSA International Section. In 1991, she reviewed the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Relations diploma, creating regulations and a syllabus for the Professional Diploma in Public Relations.

Howlett has held many leadership positions in the local, state, and national levels of the Public Relations Society of America, receiving national presidential citations for "meritorious service to the PRSA Counselors Section."

In 1983 Howlett became the first woman president of the Public Relations Round Table of San Francisco, formed in 1939 and said to be the oldest public relations organization in the United States.

She was one of the first female members of the Commonwealth Club of California, a leading public affairs forum and the oldest and largest such forum with more than 20,000 members in the United States. Howlett served as secretary and board of governors member for the Commonwealth Club, helping receive visiting U.S. presidents, vice presidents, congressional leaders, world political personalities, authors, researchers, and environmentalists.

Howlett's other professional activities include leadership roles in the American Home Economics Association, the Oregon Home Economics Association, the Oregon State University College of Home Economics and Education Alumni Association, Kappa Omicron Nu, the International Federation for Home Economics, the California Home Economics Association, and the San Jose State University Public Relations Degree Advisory Board.

Other community service activities have included service for Volunteers of America, Oregon, Inc.; the American Lung Association of Oregon; the American Lung Association of California (she was the second woman to serve as its president in 1984 and 1985); and the national American Lung Association.

Howlett earned a Master of Science degree from the University of California at Los Angeles, and a

Bachelor of Science degree from Oregon State University. She studied under Rex Harlow, Stanford University professor emeritus and a founder of public relations. In 1981, she was the first woman to receive the PRSA Rex Harlow Award.

—*Elizabeth L. Toth*

See also International Public Relations Association; Public Relations Society of America

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HUMAN INTEREST

Human interest is a vital ingredient in making some event or situation newsworthy. One of the compelling questions answered by journalists is "Who did something?" or "To whom did something happen?" The element of human interest enlivens a news story. It makes the story more appealing because it is about real people. It centers on the feelings and emotions of real people.

The human interest value of a story is easily revealed in the news programming axiom: If it bleeds, it leads. That statement reflects the sense that if the story has human drama, pathos, it is going to satisfy audiences' desire to see the human element of the news. News doesn't just happen. It happens to real people.

Meeting the human interest challenge separates the inadequate, adequate, good, excellent, and great journalists and public relations practitioners. Every practitioner is challenged to create media relations. Part of that challenge is to release to reporters news and news tips that attract their interest because the news is newsworthy. Newsworthiness is a strategic decision about the reader, listener, or viewer appeal of the content and presentation of news stories.

Human interest is created, for instance, by a news report that a child is missing from home. That story is made more interesting by noting the age of the child. A younger child would likely generate more news value, human interest impact, than an older child. The story would have more human interest if

the days were cold, the disappearance occurred under suspicious circumstances, the child were blind, or the child were lightly clothed—too lightly for safety given the lowering temperatures. If a storm were brewing, that would add human interest.

Thus, the details that enrich the drama of the news event add human interest. If a practitioner is trying to attract attention to some event, he or she is more likely to do so if it has human interest. Let's reflect on a real-life situation. What if a practitioner working to gain attention for the grand opening of a department store or mall is confronted with a nuance such as the mall or store catching fire near the opening date? The news releases are attempting to attract customers' attention to the opening to increase traffic. But the fire diverts the grand opening. Announcing that the store or mall is about to open after the appropriate repairs have been made might be anticlimactic. What if the merchants pool resources and buy a Dalmatian puppy to give to the fire station that responded to the fire alarm? What if the merchants also contributed money to a charity that was sponsored by the fire personnel and announced the gift? Would the new grand opening have more news value, more human interest, if associated with this tribute to the fire personnel who had risked their lives to extinguish the fire?

In the best sense, human interest is a vital part of each news story. One of the reasons people pay attention to the news is to learn about the impact of news events on people's lives. For this reason charities tend to build on the human interest, such as stories of needy families at Christmas, to increase the likelihood that reporters will present the news and audiences will receive it. Used ethically for the good of the issue, human interest is a very positive aspect of news and the media relations efforts of practitioners.

By the opposite use, human interest can exploit human feelings for no particular news value. It may appeal only to the darker side of the public's interest in seeing something bad happen to people. This may be especially true of people who want to pry into others' lives. For that reason, news reporting can focus on "dirty laundry." The assumption is that the news story has more appeal if dirty laundry

is aired in public. For this reason, celebrities of whatever walks of life are subject to extraordinarily unfair reporting standards. What might be a family tragedy, such as drug addiction, becomes even more newsworthy if it is associated with the rich and famous. The lurid details and horrifying pictures might even be blatantly displayed in the tabloids at grocery store checkout lines.

Human interest is an important dimension of news reporting. Because of its connection with news reporting, public relations has a responsibility to understand and comply with the strategic and ethical dimensions of human interest as news value. Practitioners would be guilty of unethical hype if they played up the human interest aspect of a story beyond what good judgment, responsibility, and taste would dictate. In this regard, an unethical practitioner would use and embellish the human interest beyond what was reasonable to meet community standards for the interest of the client. Such self-serving displays of human interest can erode the news value of stories, harm media relationships, and turn off the public, which has sensibilities to fair and honest reporting. On the opposite side of the coin, however, practitioners who represent certain clients must acknowledge that human feelings are a vital part of stories. In some instances, such as a sensational kidnapping, a practitioner might try to protect the family from the prying eyes of reporters and audiences who want lurid details and raw displays of feelings, which have no real news value. By the same token, however, practitioners in service of the rich and famous must know that the public and reporters are likely to demand more details, however raw, of those clients who seem to climb highest and fall the farthest.

Human interest is a two-edged sword of news and public relations practice. It focuses attention on the human drama that is explained by narrative theory. Nevertheless, some elements of decorum must bring perspective to the personal aspects of stories and the people who make them. The axiom that not everything is the news or newsworthy has substantial implications for those interested in human interest.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Media relations; Narrative theory; News and newsworthy; Spin

HUNTER, BARBARA W.

Barbara Way Hunter, founder and former CEO of New York-based Hunter & Associates, Inc. (now Hunter Public Relations, LLC), was a trailblazer for women in public relations who aspire to own their own firm—to be the boss. In the late 1960s, when it was virtually unheard of for a woman to own and head a business, Hunter countered opposition and purchased her own public relations firm. Her actions encouraged other women to do the same in a field then dominated by men.

Hunter was born in 1927 in Westport, New York. After graduating from Cornell University's College of Arts & Sciences with a bachelor's degree in government, she accepted a job as a trade magazine editor. Using her liberal arts background, Hunter quickly progressed to a publicist position for a major food company. In February 1956, she joined the public relations firm of Dudley Anderson Yutzy (D-A-Y) as an account executive. After two of the original D-A-Y partners died in 1969, Hunter and her sister, Jean Schoonover, bought out the remaining partner. Hunter became president of the new firm, which grew 500 percent in the next 12 years.

D-A-Y was sold to Ogilvy & Mather Public Relations in 1983, and Hunter became vice chairman of the subsidiary of the large advertising agency.

In 1989, Hunter founded Hunter & Associates, a firm specializing in marketing and public relations for food and beverage companies. The firm started with two clients: McIlhenny Company, maker of Tabasco sauce, and Kraft Foods. Eleven years later, when Hunter retired, the firm had added Campbell Soup Company, McCormick & Company, Morgan Stanley, Pepperidge Farm, Pernod Ricard USA, 3M, Sears, and others to its client roster. It also was the number two independent public relations agency in the nation, billing over \$7.8 million in 2000.

Hunter led the firm as CEO until her retirement in December 2000. Senior managers then purchased

the firm from Hunter, and—keeping her name and professional commitments and ideologies—renamed it Hunter Public Relations.

According to Hunter, honesty has been key to her success. During her 42 years of practicing public relations in an agency setting, she lived by one rule: “Do not overpromise results to your client and make certain you deliver the promises you do make” (B. W. Hunter, personal communication, November 14, 2002).

Honesty paid off. By not overpromising, she ensured that clients stayed loyal to her firm and referred her to other business associates. She explained, “When you promise an outcome and deliver on those promises, it builds confidence, and from confidence comes a loyal client” (B. W. Hunter, personal communication, November 14, 2002). She was not afraid to admit when she could not accomplish an organization's objective. Summarizing, she said, “Honesty is a large aspect of success.”

Going to great lengths for the client also helped build successful and beneficial relationships for her firm. Hunter elaborated, “If a clients know you will be responsive to their individual needs, they will stay with you. Everyone likes personal attention” (B. W. Hunter, personal communication, November 14, 2002).

Hunter also attributes her success to the creative and interesting approaches she has taken with her clients and their products. The bottom line, however, is that a public relations firm is only as good as the practitioners it employs. Practitioners must have good judgment and be creative, articulate, and skillful to get their message out to targeted publics.

Hunter's contributions extend to professional and civic organizations, and her achievements have been recognized with numerous honors and awards.

She is a past president of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and of the New York chapter of PRSA. She is a member of PRSA's College of Fellows and the recipient of 12 PRSA presidential citations. In 1993, the society honored her with its Gold Anvil Award, its highest individual award. She also is a past recipient of the John Hill Award from the New York chapter. She served as the chairman of the 1998 PRSA national conference in

Dallas, Texas, and founded PRSA's Food and Beverage Section in 1992.

A former trustee of the Institute for Public Relations, Hunter also was a board member of the Advertising Women of New York and Women Executives in Public Relations. She received the National Headliner Award from the Association for Women in Communications in 1984, the Matrix Award from New York Women in Communications in 1980, and the Entrepreneurial Woman Award from the Business Owners of New York in 1981.

Hunter was a charter member of the Committee of 200, the professional organization of preeminent women entrepreneurs and corporate leaders; she is also a member of the YWCA Academy of Women Achievers. In 1976, *Business Week* named her one of the 100 Outstanding Women in Business.

Hunter has served as a trustee of Cornell University, as well as a member of the advisory councils of Cornell's Colleges of Veterinary Medicine and Agriculture and Life Sciences. She is a lifetime member of the Cornell University Council.

Reflecting on her chosen career, Hunter said she has watched acceptance of public relations as a profession grow. As formal educational programs are offered and utilized, acceptance by the business community of public relations as a true profession has emerged. Also, advancements in computers and technology have extended the reach of a practitioner's message. The Internet has become an invaluable tool in a profession where immediacy matters.

Looking to the future, Hunter predicts that more emphasis will be placed on ethical practice. She has always believed that ethics is an essential aspect of public relations, but in tomorrow's world, practitioners will have no choice but to perform ethically. Ethics will be utilized more to communicate what the organization is doing *right*.

Hunter also predicts that public relations practitioners will have to pay more attention to social trends. Religion, economy, war, and other factors will shape constantly changing trends that create communication gaps. Practitioners will have to bridge these gaps to ensure that messages between organizations and their publics flow smoothly and effectively.

Barbara Hunter, who now enjoys retirement in her roles as wife, mother, and grandmother, took

great risks in her career that cleared the path for other women to follow.

—Kathleen S. Kelly and
Kathryn L. Ferguson

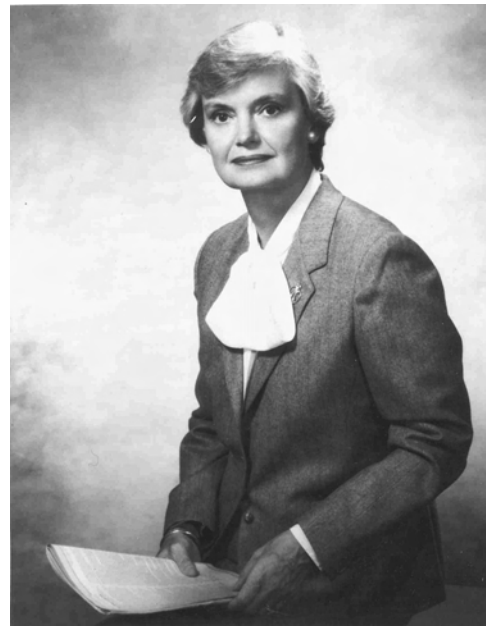
See also Institute for Public Relations (IPR); Public Relations Society of America

HYPE

The term *hype* keeps company with varying definitions, most of which are negative. When referencing its formal denotative term via various online dictionaries, we find noun-based descriptions like “blatant or sensational promotion,” “a deception or racket,” and “an intensive or exaggerated publicity or sales promotion.” Verb-based descriptions include “to put on, deceive”; “to market or promote (a product) using exaggerated or intensive publicity”; and “to falsify or rig (something).”

—Lisa T. Fall

See also Sandbagging; Spin



Barbara W. Hunter

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HYPERLINK

Hyperlink is synonymous with both *link* and *hypertext link* on the World Wide Web. The World Wide Web exists on the Internet, a vast network of computers. Although the concept of interconnected machines to facilitate the widespread sharing of knowledge first appeared in Vannevar Bush's July 1945 *Atlantic Monthly* article, "As We May Think," the word *hypertext* did not appear until 20 years later in a 1965 paper written by Ted Nelson. Two years later, a team of researchers developed the first hypertext-based system. However, hypertexts, now more commonly called hyperlinks, would not make their public debut until the early 1990s with Tim Berners-Lee's innovation, the World Wide Web. The extensive use of hyperlinks between Web pages is why the medium is termed the *Web*.

Hyperlinks make it possible to access content stored in the files of millions of individual computers. Hyperlinks allow users to navigate on the Web. Hyperlinks provide connections between a word, picture, or object to another. While the most common link on the Web is between a highlighted word or picture, links can also connect objects such as sound and video files. When users conduct searches using search engines, the results always include hyperlinks. In theory, if linking between objects and files on Web sites were not possible, the Web would no longer exist. By selecting a link (usually with a mouse), users are immediately connected or *jump* to another file on the Internet. Hyperlinking enables Web users to connect to other Web pages and find information within seconds without having to perform new searches or other complex tasks.

Hyperlinks can connect users to other pages within a Web site or to external Web pages. Web pages can contain anywhere between one to an

unlimited number of hyperlinks. The Web page owner controls these branching mechanisms. In most cases, Web site operators want their pages to be the destination of as many links as possible. The more links that point to a Web page, the wider the potential dissemination of information on those pages.

Starting in the late 1990s, hyperlinks became the center of intellectual property lawsuits. In a 1997 case, Ticketmaster sued Microsoft for *deep linking*. Deep linking is the process of bypassing a Web site's home page and linking to other pages on the Web site that are typically accessed from the home page. Ticketmaster claimed Microsoft's bypassing of its home page by deep linking allowed users to bypass its policies, service information, and ads. Although the case was eventually settled out of court, a district court ruled that hyperlinks themselves do not violate copyright law; hyperlinks automatically transfer users to the Web page of the original author, and no actual copying occurs.

Inline linking is another legal issue involving hyperlinks. For example, in *Kelly v. Arriba*, a search engine imported pictures to its Web site instead of providing a direct link to the photographer's Web site, which contained the pictures. Thus, the pictures appeared to originate on the search engine's Web site instead of the photographer's. The court ruled that inline linking was a violation of copyright law. In addition, Web sites that post hyperlinks to materials that violate copyright law can also be held liable. In a case involving the Web publisher of *2600 Magazine*, links to other Web pages containing software code that broke encryption access controls on DVDs was found liable for violating copyright law.

—Cassandra Imfeld

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Kelly v. Arriba, 280 F.3d 934 (9th Cir. 2002).



IDENTIFICATION

In an age when people frequently communicate with a variety of organizations in their daily lives, the theory of identification offers public relations practitioners a strategy companies and other organizations employ to influence audiences and build relationships with them.

Organizations do this when they demonstrate how they share identities, values, and norms with audiences and publics. As so many organizations try to capture and keep the audience's attention, this strategic process of creating and communicating common ground is crucial. First articulated by scholar Kenneth Burke, identification is a rhetorical concept that has become increasingly important in public relations as more organizations compete to garner the audience support needed for survival. Identifying with an audience consists of persuading them how an organization and an audience member are similar. As Burke described it, "A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is identified with B" (1969, p. 20). Less overt than some persuasive strategies, without the ability to convince audiences of shared interests, an organization's message is likely to fail. On the other hand, if people believe their views and beliefs overlap with an organization's, it becomes much easier to successfully persuade them, as approving

of an organizational message is akin to approving of themselves.

Identification is an ongoing process; indeed, public relations must help organizations to continually show audiences how they are alike and have shared interests. Companies that fail to maintain identification with audiences are in danger of failing. Without the specific connection created by identification, for example, the fur industry in the United States is struggling. It is having difficulty convincing people who value animals for more than their aesthetics that fur clothing is desirable. For some audiences today, then, creating identification on the basis of the values of status and prestige is no longer persuasive. The fur industry faces the danger that "if people find that old identifications are unacceptable, they can be persuaded, and even persuade themselves, to abandon them and adopt new ones" (Heath, 2001, p. 377). Savvy public relations practitioners must therefore monitor changing societal values, trends, and norms.

Understanding societal preferences is necessary, inasmuch as Burke saw identification as "compensatory to division" (1969, p. 22). That is, creating rapport between organizations and audiences necessarily involves showing the audiences how they are like the organization in question but different from other companies also seeking to establish common identity. The messages public relations employs to

create identification work to include audience members as part of a certain group, while at the same time they exclude other groups and competing organizational messages. This means, for example, that when The Gap tries to persuade audiences that they share the values of hip style, reasonable price, and comfort, they are excluding audience members who prefer high end, luxury, or more classic clothing. The company would then need to show how it is more similar to potential customers seeking this type of fashion than other casual clothing marketers.

There are a number of ways public relations can attempt to induce identification. In his study of organizational communication, George Cheney (1983) devised three prominent strategies that follow from Burke's (1969) original formulation of the identification theory. These strategies include (a) the common ground technique, (b) identification through antithesis, and (c) the assumed or transcendent *we*. (Cheney, 1983). Each works to persuade an audience member that they share similar interests. In the common ground technique, an organization would link itself to stakeholders in an overt manner. Audiences are told explicitly that they share organizational values, as in when a company says it has a "commitment to fairness." Identification through antithesis works by demonstrating and uniting against a common enemy. This strategy functions by an "us versus them" mentality, where organizations point out the differences between themselves and a competitor. Finally, identification can be created through use of the assumed or transcendent *we*. The use of this pronoun and its derivatives calls audiences to see themselves as part of the organization or institution. When we are called to act as Americans, for example, we unite on the basis of this particular strategy's evocation of our national identity.

As people identify with institutions when they see that they are alike in some fashion, it follows that these various identifications also work to provide portions of a person's identity. In this sense, identification can function beyond just persuading a person of a message; rather, areas of initial overlap can filter out and constitute portions of how a

person views him or herself. Indeed, as Cheney (1983) noted, "our corporate (or organizational or institutional) identities are vital because they grant us personal meaning" (p. 145). When a person feels she belongs to a certain group or accepts a particular name or label for herself, parts of her identity become constituted. For example, someone who describes herself as a Southern Baptist not only identifies with that organization's values but also views society through this lens. In other words, it is possible to become consubstantial with an organization, meaning that both the organization and audience act together. If one is consubstantial with a particular group, they share common motives. Here, the Southern Baptist would perhaps possess the willingness for acting together on the church's mission and goals (see Cheney, 1983, pp. 145–146).

It is in this way that individual identities can broaden collectively and form groups and coalitions. As Heath explained, "Through identification, people develop various collective identities with which they govern themselves and form human relations" (2001, p. 376). Environmental activists, for instance, support the idea of protecting and conserving the earth. Such groups appeal to these values to gain new members and use this belief to differentiate themselves from other societal groups in order to encourage action. Whatever the set of values or norms, if one shares substance, or is consubstantial, with a given group, then that individual will be more likely to take action when those values are threatened. Once again it is clear how closely identification is connected to societal division. People can feel the need to compensate for the stratification of our society and its attendant pressures by belonging to one group or another. Public relations can rely on the identification strategy to help audiences fulfill their needs of belongingness while simultaneously garnering stakeholder commitment to organizational missions.

These audiences are not always external to organizations, however. It is important for organizations to continually induce identification on behalf of their members to ensure success. If a person feels like they are a part of a given company and supports its values, they are more likely to be happy and productive

employees. Companies work to instill this type of identification in a variety of ways. From corporate newsletters, to team-building outings, to employee-of-the-month-style programs, public relations assists management in recognizing the need to remind employees continually of common interests.

It should be apparent that Burke's seemingly simple idea of demonstrating shared interests is quite complex and forms an important part of public relations practice. In a variety of arenas, public relations managers help craft identifications that support organizational functioning. The concept moves beyond public relations' particular goals, however, and is part of Burke's larger rhetorical theory about the nature of communication. Identification is a central theme in Burke's discussion of rhetoric. In his formulation, identification is a more prominent term than persuasion, as it broadens the role of rhetoric from that of a speaker delivering a persuasive message to one that shows how language, delivered through public relations and other conduits, constructs and reconstructs our realities.

In this way, identification can be broadly understood as a way of viewing society as a whole. Burke saw identification as having a powerful impact on society. He theorized that if identification leads to division, division then leads to societal hierarchy, in which certain audience members believe that they are superior to others. This feeling then leads to what he termed *mystification*, in which the audience questions whether some people *are* truly better, which then leads to victimage. In the victimage part of the identification cycle, audiences symbolically purge their guilt that they may not be as good as others by blaming a scapegoat. This feeling is followed by redemption, or purifying through projecting guilt, leading once again to a state of similarity and consubstantiality (Burke, 1969). Since Burke believed that no form of communication is exempt from motivation, he wanted to reveal the ways in which communication or rhetoric influences motives. Burke believed that rhetoric must investigate the symbolic means of ideology that can both create cohesion within a community and maintain divisions between them. Identification is this symbolic means.

In this sense, the public relations use of the identification strategy is one that perhaps should be viewed with caution. When capable of producing such powerful associations and divisions in society, it is important to understand how encouraging identification around a given issue or person can have more than immediate or short-term impact and can shape society as we know it. When applied thoughtfully, however, the identification strategy becomes a powerful public relations strategy. The benefits of showing audiences how an organization has their best interests in mind are difficult to overstate.

—Ashli A. Quesinberry

See also Dramatism and dramatism theory; Legitimacy and legitimacy gap; Mutually beneficial relationships; Organizational identity and persona; Rhetorical theory

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IMAGE

The term *image* is one of the most controversial in the lexicon of public relations. It has been heralded as essential to an organization and dismissed as irrelevant to an organization. Edward Bernays condemned the concept, but others embraced it and corporations spend millions of dollars a year to build them. The problem is that image has developed a negative connotation for stakeholders. That is why it has been replaced by and large in research and practice by the terms *reputation* and *reputation management*. (Refer to the entry “Reputation management” for additional details.)

Early skeptics discounted the basic idea of an image. Many in public relations felt the concept

was irrelevant because it did not affect public relations. Since an image is not tangible, a person cannot touch it; it does not really matter. Efforts and money spent on building reputations were considered wasted. Kenneth Boulding's (1977) early work on image suggested the opposite. He believed people treat images as if they are real. Later research conducted in business found an image has significant effects on organizations. Images were found to affect a stakeholder's behavior toward an organization. Early research found images related to stock prices and employee recruitment. Images do matter because they can shape stakeholder behaviors. The problem is not whether or not image matters; it does. The problem is in the use of the term image by organizations.

Image has many meanings, but focusing on the negative meaning helps us to understand how it came to be vilified and ultimately replaced in the public relations lexicon. Carl Botan (1993) noted that the most common definition of image was that of a manipulated representation of an organization that lacked substance or accuracy. This can be termed the shallow use of image representing style over substance. An image was something that an organization or even a nation tried to fabricate. The image was based on what the organization said about itself, not what the organization actually did. Zeta Corporation might promote its environment-friendly image in advertisements and brochures but do little to help the environment. Manheim and Albritton (1984) documented that many repressive nations with "bad images" hired U.S. public relations firms to help place positive stories about them in the U.S. news media without changing their repressive policies. The organizations or nations would "talk the walk" but not "walk the talk." For an image, actions became detached from words. The image became a projection that might have no basis in reality. If an organization did not like its image, it would simply try to project a new and better image. An organization could become whatever it desired to be.

The shallow use of image takes a very simplistic and patronizing view of stakeholders. First, it assumes a one-way view of communication. Organizations

send messages to stakeholders with no need to gather feedback. An organization assumes the stakeholders receive the image messages and construct the desired image. People have many filters that affect how they interpret messages. It is simply wrong to assume all stakeholders will interpret a message in the desired fashion. Practitioners must solicit feedback to see if their messages are being received as desired. Two-way communication is recognized as a much more effective way of developing accurate message interpretations by stakeholders. Second, it assumes stakeholders are not critical consumers of messages. Stakeholders do not simply accept whatever an organization says. Stakeholders do evaluate statements made by an organization and will form images based upon those evaluations, not just upon what an organization says.

The negative connotation generated by the shallow view of image was a detriment to public relations. In a field where the focus is on building mutually beneficial relationships, the shallow view of image was counterproductive. Images became associated with pseudo-realities and deception. This was an accurate portrayal because words without action are manipulations and inaccuracies. In turn, public relations became associated with building "shallow" images. An image was not what an organization did but what it claimed to do. In time, stakeholders will come to see through the image and realize the deception, thus damaging the organization-stakeholder relationship. Stakeholders will compare words to actions to evaluate an image. When the two do not match, stakeholders will form negative images of that organization. When stakeholders discover Zeta Corporation is not environmentally friendly, they will form negative images of Zeta. Practitioners should not divorce words from actions the way the shallow use of image does.

An organization can operate under the flawed assumptions that stakeholders will not discover their deception—image without action. True, many stakeholders have neither the time nor motivation to investigate every claim made by an organization. However, many activist and public interest groups carefully monitor and report on the behavior of organizations. Through the Internet and news-media

coverage, those who do monitor organizational actions can spread the word of discrepancies between words and actions. For instance, millions of people buy Nike products, but a small percentage personally investigates whether Nike is living up to its claims of not exploiting workers in Southeast Asia. Activists do monitor Nike's treatment of contract workers and publicize those findings widely in the news media and Internet. There was even a lawsuit filed against Nike for using messages saying it had stopped exploiting workers. The messages were circulated widely to Nike stakeholders, including customers and shareholders. The Internet has helped to foster an age of transparency for organizations. With easy-to-find information, stakeholders can see through an organization—it is transparent—and discover inconsistencies between words and actions.

In so many ways the shallow view of image is outdated and inappropriate for public relations. However, negative connotative meanings for words are difficult, if not impossible to shake. The deeper view of image that looked at it as a process and premised it on matching words and action is tarnished by the legacy of the shallow view of image. Hence, practitioners and researchers moved to the term reputation to reflect the deeper view of image. Reputation management moves away from the flaws of image. Painstaking work has gone into developing measures of reputation so that an organization can monitor how stakeholders actually perceive it; efforts to change reputation are premised on behavioral changes by the organization, not on just presenting a new message. The misapplication of image by short-sighted practitioners resulted in the death of image as a functional part of the public relations lexicon.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Reputation management

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IMAGE RESTORATION THEORY

Image restoration theory was crafted to understand the communication options available for those, whether organizations or persons, who face threats to their reputation. This theory is particularly relevant to crisis response. It integrated (and elaborated) previous work on *apologia* by B. L. Ware and Wil A. Linkugel (1973); on accounts, by scholars such as Marvin H. Scott and Sanford M. Lyman (1968); and on guilt redemption, by scholars such as Kenneth Burke (1970).

A person's image or reputation is extremely important. Accusations or suspicions of wrongdoing have a variety of adverse effects. Corporations can lose business, politicians can lose support and elections, people can lose friends and attract hostility; and at times legal or other sanctions can be applied. Because credibility is important to persuasion, threats to image can damage one's ability to communicate effectively. People and organizations have important reasons to maintain a favorable image.

Image repair messages are needed whenever an image is threatened. You must determine (1) what accusation(s) or suspicion(s) threaten the image, and (2) who is or are the most important audience(s). You cannot hope to successfully counteract an accusation unless you know the nature of the accusation. Vague rumors or whispers may arouse your concern, but you must know the problem to repair it. If there are multiple accusations, you must know them all to deal with them all (and to avoid ignoring an allegation). The audience must be kept in mind here. If the audience is not aware of an accusation, that accusation can safely be ignored (unless you think they will hear it later). In fact, the act of responding to an accusation will inform your audience of a potential problem. The accusations that really matter are those known to your audience.

Identifying the audience is important. For example, consider a company accused of polluting the environment. There are many potential audiences in this situation: the accusers (environmentalists and/or reporters), people who live near the polluting facility, customers, stockholders, and government regulators. The company must decide which audience matters (it may need to prioritize several audiences). First, some groups have more power over the company. It should be obvious that shareholders cannot be ignored. Depending on the nature of the alleged pollution and laws relevant to the actions, government regulators may be another group that cannot be ignored. Second, these groups have different interests. Stockholders would surely be concerned about the company's profitability; government regulators would presumably be most interested in the level of pollution and the relevant law. Environmental groups might want the company to reduce pollution to zero; however, the law is probably not that extreme and completely eliminating pollution may be prohibitively expensive (and possibly technically impossible). So, the company must decide which audience is most important (or it must prioritize audiences), and which audiences to try to persuade.

It is important to ascertain what the audience knows. For example, if the company considers government regulators to be important, the key question is whether *they* consider the alleged problem serious enough to warrant action. If regulators believe pollution is at acceptable levels, the company may not need to develop messages for them (or perhaps just messages to reassure them). On the other hand, if regulators think that there is a serious violation of the law, the company will need to deal forcefully with that concern.

Anita Pomerantz (1978) explained that accusations have two key components: (a) An offensive act must have occurred, and (b) the accused must be considered to blame for that act. If nothing happened, or what happened was not really bad, there should be no threat to image. Similarly, if you are not to blame for the offensive act, then there should be no threat to your image. Of course, the perceptions of the relevant audience are what matter most. If they believe you performed a wrongful deed, your image will suffer even if you know the act did not happen, was not

really bad, or that you did not do it. Of course, if any of these things is true, you can use them in a message to repair your image. It is also important to realize that blame can come in many forms: You may have committed the wrongful act, or encouraged it, or permitted it to occur, or perhaps you will be blamed for not preventing the act (inaction). The key point is that a threat to image has two key components: an offensive act for which you are blamed.

These elements are important because they help one understand the image repair options available. Options for repairing an image threatened by accusation or suspicion have been organized into five general image restoration options. The first two, denial and evasion of responsibility, concern blame; the third one, reducing offensiveness, concerns offensiveness. The fourth, corrective action, can address offensiveness (by repairing damage) or blame (by taking action to prevent the offensive act in the future); and the final option, mortification, accepts responsibility for the offensive act but asks forgiveness (apologizes). Table 1 illustrates these options (some of which have several forms).

Those who confront a threat to image should consider the allegations, the facts in the case, and the audience, and then select the strategies that can help to restore image. One must consider the advantages and disadvantages of the media that are available for delivering the messages (with one or more of these strategies) to the audience.

Effective image repair suggests that those who are truly at fault should admit it immediately and take appropriate corrective action. People want others to take responsibility for their actions, and they want them to clean up their messes (and/or prevent future problems). Furthermore, it is wrong to lie, and if (or when) the truth comes out, you can be vilified not only for the original wrong-doing but also for lying about it. Of course, lawyers would argue against admissions that would work against a company or organization in court. My advice here is about how to repair an image; however, I realize that people and organizations must consider other goals (i.e., consequences for on-going or future litigation). Of course, those who are innocent of wrong-doing should use that fact in their defense. Notice that even the innocent (Tylenol introduced

Table 1 Image Restoration Strategies

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Key Characteristic</i>	<i>Example</i>
Denial		
Simple denial	Did not perform act	Tylenol: Did not poison capsule
Shift the blame	Another performed act	Tylenol: A “madman” poisoned capsules
Evasion of Responsibility		
Provocation	Responded to act of another	Firm moved because of new taxes
Defeasibility	Lack of information or ability	Executive not told meeting changed
Accident	Mishap	Tree fell on tracks, causing train wreck
Good intentions	Meant well	Sears wants to provide good auto repair service
Reducing Offensiveness of Event		
Bolstering	Stress good traits	Exxon’s “swift and competent” clean-up of oil spill
Minimization	Act not serious	Exxon: Few animals killed in oil spill
Differentiation	Act less offensive than similar acts	Sears: Unneeded repairs were preventive maintenance, not fraud
Transcendence	More important values	Helping humans justifies testing animals
Attack accuser	Reduce credibility of accuser	Coke: Pepsi owns restaurants, competes directly with you for customers
Compensation	Reimburse victim	Disabled moviegoers given free passes after being denied admission to movie
Corrective action	Plan to solve/prevent	AT&T long-distance upgrades; promised to spend billions more to improve service
Mortification	Apologize	AT&T apologized for service interruption

tamper-resistant packaging and then switched to caplets even though it was not to blame for the poisoning) can introduce corrective action.

Shifting the blame works best when the target is plausible and when the blame actually shifts away from you (e.g., President Nixon blamed the cover-up

on his hand-picked subordinates, which meant he was ultimately responsible). Do not assume that the strategies are equally effective (e.g., I would say that in most cases minimization and provocation will be less effective than other options). Some strategies can work well together (e.g., good intentions and accident) but others do not (e.g., “I did not do it” [denial] and “You made me do it” [provocation]).

It is important to realize that a given strategy can be used persuasively as well as unpersuasively. For example, one can produce a heartfelt apology as well as a perfunctory apology. The former is far more likely to succeed than the latter. Furthermore, there are limits on the power of persuasive messages. Some acts are so reprehensible that nothing one can say will earn forgiveness (although usually over time people tend to forget). It is easiest to repair the image of those who are innocent; it is (and should be) more difficult to salvage the images of those who are guilty.

—William L. Benoit

See also Corporate image; Crisis and crisis management; Crisis communication; Crisis communications and the Tylenol poisonings; Exxon and the Valdez crisis; Image; Persuasion theory

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IMPLIED MEDIA ENDORSEMENT

See Third-party endorsement

IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT THEORY

Impression management theory takes a humanistic approach to the ways in which people organize their symbolic experience. The theory descends from the *symbolic interactionism* perspective of sociology and the social cognitive tradition of psychology; its terminology is dramaturgical in nature, revealing its connections with mid-20th century dramatism and dramaturgical theory. The 1959 book that introduced and elaborated this theory, Erving Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, remains one of its key works.

Though once considered as somewhat aberrant behavior or an unwanted variable created by social psychological research in a laboratory context, impression management theory has gained adherents in many disciplines, including linguistics, semiotics, cultural studies, sociology, communication studies, rhetoric, and philosophy. In public relations research, the theory was initially considered under *organizational politics* and later as *organizational impression management*. It is now particularly important to public relations in its relationship to the concepts of *corporate impression management*, *image*, and *ingratiation*. Recently, researchers have studied impression management through observational studies, experimental studies, field work, case or scenario studies, measures of individual difference, and meta-analysis of existing studies.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Symbolic Interactionism

The theoretical foundations of impression management theory extend to George Herbert Mead's (1934) sociological works on symbolic interactionism, which declared that both individual and group identity is socially constructed; that shared symbols form the basis for communication; and that human interaction is by nature dramatic, relying on the creation and adoption of social roles in particular situations. This theoretical perspective established within the individual a dichotomous relationship

between a *real*, underlying self (the *I*) and the reflective self (the *me*), which constructs a self-perception from observing how other individuals respond to the individual's behavior. The influence of this perspective remains evident in the characterization of communicators as actors who construct a persona that may or may not display their actual thoughts or emotions.

Social Cognition

Daniel T. Gilbert (1998) explained how the social cognitive tradition of psychology further developed impression management theory, elaborating its connections with *attribution theory* and *implicit personality theory*. Attribution theory posits that people infer unknown personality traits and dispositions about others based on behaviors they have observed. From extensive experience with the organization of human personalities, observers construct an implicit personality for the other and evaluate the other's behavior accordingly. Impression management is the complement to attribution, claiming that the individual actor works consciously and unconsciously to shape the behaviors that others see, and thus the implicit personality that they construct.

Dramatism and Dramaturgical Theory

Goffman's (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* is a key text to impression management theory. In it, Goffman introduced the metaphor of staged performance, which has remained dominant within the theory: Individuals are actors who attempt to control both the situation or scene and the content of the interaction in which they participate. Observers, including interlocutors, are considered members of an audience. The actor is responsible for two kinds of signaling in interaction: that which is *given*, and that which is *given off*. First, the actor actively (though not always consciously) constructs a *front*, or persona, using verbal and nonverbal cues to project either the image of reality that he or she wants the audience to accept, or the image of reality that the audience expects to see. Second, the actor *gives off* expressions that are read and attributed to

personality characteristics. Goffman proposes that individuals rely heavily on their own expectations and the expectations of those with whom they communicate to determine what behaviors are appropriate to a given scene. Such performances ceremonially confirm socially accredited values, much as Emile Durkheim (1915/1965) described in his own sociological works on ceremony. Furthermore, to maintain tact and respect how others present themselves, actors and audiences must be aware of cultural differences.

The scene of a performance, termed *region* by Goffman, refers to the physical, relational, temporal, and situational elements that shape an interaction and, to some extent, determine the acceptability of specific fronts and behaviors. The *front region* refers to the activity that is considered on stage, or visible to a particular audience; for example, Goffman discusses the activity of making work, or of merely looking busy at work in case one is being watched by one's supervisor. In the *back region* or backstage, facts and behaviors of a person that are carefully controlled in the front region are released. For instance, instructors may put on their sunny "instructor faces" for the duration of the class they teach; when they return to their offices and close the door, they are in their back regions, where they can safely mutter about their students' deficiencies. A location can function as front region for one type of interaction and as back region for another; of course, lapses, errors, and other actors often disrupt the drama. One of the most interesting of such problems occurs when the actor cannot protect a desired impression from being exposed to more than one audience at once. At such times, the actor is faced with the challenge of protecting what Kenneth Burke (1969) and Durkheim (1915/1965) identify as the *mystery* of the front—the preservation of an actor's control over the front region. The performer must actively manage the collision of conflicting impressions by employing defensive or *protective impression management strategies*, one of two categories of strategic impression management. Protective strategies identified by Goffman (1959) include shifting to a team performance in which the actor and the onetime audience become a new front

region for the benefit of an intruder; a second strategy is to invite intruders into the existing performance as if they belonged there. Neither technique is very effective; *acquisitive impression management strategies*, or attempts to establish initially favorable impressions, often present a better alternative.

The dramaturgical metaphor of impression management applies to group interaction as well as one-on-one communication. The *team*, which may consist of a married couple, a social group, a company, or a public relations group, is an entity in and of itself, although many individual performers may comprise it. Teams are defined by two kinds of reciprocal bonds: that of dependence, by which all members must actively contribute to a social performance, and that of familiarity, or the recognition of in-group/out-group boundaries. Beyond these boundaries, certain behaviors may jeopardize the performance, the group identity, or the scene itself. Acting together, the individual team members establish a group *identity* that becomes one mask, one representation of self, one public (and private) identity.

CRITIQUES OF IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT THEORY

Like Goffman, who takes a somewhat skeptical perspective of the practices actors employ to safeguard the fronts they build, scholars such as Paul Rosenfeld, Robert Giacalone, and Catherine Riordan (1995) have taken a *restrictive view* of the process of impression management, describing it as Machiavellian (p. 19)—that is, the intentional deception or manipulation of others by hiding or pretending to be something one is not. However, other scholars take the *expansive view* of impression management, arguing that the mystery in the drama is a necessary element of both personality and relationship.

The theory of impression management introduced in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* is based on the very human desire to avoid embarrassment caused when “the reality sponsored by the performers is threatened” (Goffman, 1959, p. 212). However, the dramaturgical metaphor employed in this theory translates semi-unconscious action into explicit intention. While the metaphor serves as a

helpful frame for conceptualizing how people control their self-exposure, it implies that individual actors, as well as actors in a team, are fully cognizant of what they do to shape how others see them, as well as why they do so. If taken literally, the intent and awareness implied by the dramaturgical framework is seriously overstated.

—Rachel Martin Harlow

See also Attribution theory; Corporate image; Identification; Image; Organizational identity and persona; Symbolic interactionism theory

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IMPRESSIONS

Impressions are a measure of how many potential readers, viewers, or listeners were reached by a placement in the media. It is usually equivalent to the circulation number in the case of print (i.e., newspaper, magazine) and the estimated viewership or listeners for broadcast outlets (i.e., television, radio). With broadcast, audience numbers vary depending upon the time of the newscast. With print, pass-along rates are often extrapolated and

taken into account in addition to merely relying upon circulation. Most good media databases (e.g., Bacon's) and monitoring services (e.g., Video Monitoring Service, Burrelle's) provide these numbers. Because no service is completely comprehensive, going to individual media outlets and asking is sometimes still necessary. Media buyers are also a good source of such numbers.

No exact number of people reached can ever really be determined, but impressions are the closest estimates that are available, keeping in mind that they do not gauge an actual *impression* that individual audience members have of the media clip and its message. Therefore, although impressions are a good tally of potential audience reach, they cannot definitively predict the actual imprint left by the coverage. Sometimes tone of the piece can help determine the likelihood of the latter.

Impressions usually come into play as a tool used in the evaluation stage of a public relations campaign or initiative in trying to determine reach. Although impression is considered a good measure by many communicators, other professionals in the field do not consider it to be a valid account of reach due to its decidedly quantitative nature. A more qualitative approach comes with measuring actual effect of a news clip, such as inquiries received as a direct result or a marked improvement in sales, business, or traffic. Impressions, however, are a good evaluation tool from a statistical standpoint in that potential audience numbers can give practitioners an idea of reach, with higher numbers increasing the odds of message dissemination.

—Lisa K. Merkl

INDUSTRIAL BARONS (OF THE 1870s–1920s)

“The public be damned,” a quote attributed to—albeit denied by—railroad magnate William Henry Vanderbilt in 1882, epitomizes the atmosphere of the United States during its industrial growth from the 1870s through the 1920s. The masses had seen evidence to support such sentiments about industrialists, who often believed the less the public knew

about their dealings the better. Thus grew a restless distrust of the “robber barons,” whose power and wealth were gained and secured for generations during this era, often through the exploitation of labor and natural resources.

The change from an agrarian society to an industrialized one had been inevitable. As Scott M. Cutlip noted in *Public Relations History* (1995), in just 25 years—1875 to 1900—the nation's population doubled, immigration and urban living swelled, mass production processes began, natural resources continued to be discovered and developed, railroads and telegraph wires crossed the country, and the mass media of newspapers and magazines proliferated. These profound changes set the stage for the rise of corporate *public relations*, which according to Cutlip and others, was a term first used by the Association of American Railroads in an 1897 company listing. However, by this time, the railroads' use of public relations tactics was nothing new.

On the contrary, said Cutlip, it was this industry that helped pioneer the profession. Vanderbilt's and others' railroads had long used articles, murals, pamphlets, and other means to convince Americans to take the rails westward. Such settlements would in turn expand the railroads' business territory. However, to do so, transportation by rail had to be proved safe to a doubtful public and investors had to be secured. Public relations tactics helped to do just that. By 1860, railroads were no longer seen as experimental, and by the 1870s railroads were still enticing people to head farther west. Cutlip detailed how the Burlington Railroad fashioned a campaign that included the use of news releases, philanthropy and community relations, third-person testimonials, letters, and pamphlets to accomplish its business objectives.

In its early years, the railroad industry also understood the power of public opinion and, thus, the power of the press. Cutlip reported that the industry provided free passes to reporters and established a trade journal and Bureau of Information, which served to educate the “press, legislators and the public, as to the true relations of the railway interest to the public welfare” (1995, p. 143). The industry used opinion leaders, long before the *two-step flow* theory was posited, to help win public

favor for such issues as route selection, freight and passenger business, and investors. Railroads also made use of speeches, letters of endorsement, and staff-written articles for popular periodicals.

However, railroad industrialists of this era also faced public relations challenges. Indeed, it was the perception of *us* versus *them*—exemplified by the publicity surrounding examples of the arrogance and greed that were pursued instead of the ideals of humanity and public good—that fostered recognition by giants of industry that the public could not be ignored. For example, the fallout from Vanderbilt’s alleged “public be damned” quote regarding express railroad operations’ existence due to competition, not to public need, included pressure being exerted (by a group called the National Grange) that resulted in the passage of the Interstate Commerce Act of 1887. The act, meant to stem industrial age excesses, resulted, said Cutlip, in the implementation of public relations programs by utilities and common carriers, for they were among the first industries to experience public wrath.

By the turn of the century, tensions between industry elites and workers had been further heightened, and Theodore Roosevelt and his Square Deal populism had become firmly ensconced in Washington, DC. By this time, industrialists such as financial giant J. Pierpont Morgan saw that courting the president’s administration and legislators’ favor was not enough. Public opinion also had to be considered.

Indeed, the power of the public to influence business interests was growing, and such muckrakers as Lincoln Steffens, Upton Sinclair, and Ida May Tarbell exposed gross injustices that made executives aware of the importance of public opinion and goodwill.

John D. Rockefeller and his Standard Oil Trust became the ultimate example of greed run amok at the expense of the nation. During the 1880s, the trust was the largest and richest manufacturing organization in the world. Rockefeller, who took pride in his positive relationships with fellow Standard Oil executives and believed himself misunderstood by the public, was largely silent to his critics. Although Standard Oil also employed such public relations strategies as influencing newspapers and legislators to plead its case to the

public, these endorsements, said Cutlip, were often provided in exchange for monetary compensation. Following investigative journalist Tarbell’s critical work on the history of Standard Oil in 1904, which accused it of strategically buying public goodwill and favors through charitable gifts, the Standard Oil Trust monopoly was eventually broken by a federal antitrust lawsuit.

The violent labor lockout in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892 had also served to underscore the seemingly unfettered power of industry. It was then that former railroad and oil man turned steel magnate Andrew Carnegie and his business partner Henry Clay Frick hired Pinkerton Agency guards and enlisted the Pennsylvania State Militia to help break the world’s strongest craft union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers. The strike at Carnegie-Frick Steel Company ended with 35 dead and hundreds wounded from both sides. Frick directed the assault upon the workers, while Carnegie, once proud of his reputation as friend to working men, remained quietly distant in his Scottish castle, allowing Frick to do what he deemed necessary. According to Carnegie biographer Harold C. Livesay, Carnegie never recovered his public reputation.

Although J. P. Morgan is alleged to have said, “I don’t owe the public anything,” it was Morgan who called upon early public relations practitioner Theodore Newton Vail to help save the American Telephone & Telegraph Company in 1902. Vail, who had also worked in the railroad industry hastening U.S. mail delivery and later served as general manager of the nearly new Bell Telephone Company in 1878, was named AT&T president five years later. During this time, Vail “made public relations and business history” (Cutlip, 1995, p. 198), for he was the first to formally ask questions about company relationships with the public and customer conflicts or difficulties. Vail subsequently initiated a formalized method for dealing with customer complaints.

Also blessed with visionary public relations instincts was George Westinghouse, founder of Westinghouse Electric Company. In 1886, he had developed alternating electric current (AC), which would compete with Thomas Edison’s direct

current (DC) systems already being sold. Edison and his public relations counsel, Samuel Insull, fought Westinghouse's invention largely through a smear campaign intended to scare would-be AC consumers. As detailed by Cutlip, Westinghouse was slow to respond to his competitor's campaign, believing his superior product would prevail, but soon realized he must tell his story to the public. As a result, he hired then-newspaper reporter Ernest H. Heinrichs to work for him and to produce and distribute accurate information about the Westinghouse product to the press. The superior product did win over consumers, but not before communication about the product had become part of the company's strategy. Three years later, in 1889, Westinghouse and Heinrichs had essentially established the first corporate publicity department.

Although Edison's product lost the consumer war, his public relations man Insull later emerged to become a pioneer in utility public relations, creating an in-house advertising department in his Chicago Edison Company. Insull used films, initiated bill stuffers, and developed an external community publication "to gain understanding and good will" (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2000, p. 119).

Indeed, the public relations industry grew along with the rise of the industrialists. Prior to the turn of the century, publicity and press agency had reigned, although there were glimpses of modern public relations practice. In 2000, Cutlip, Center, and Broom denoted 1900–1917 as the profession's "seedbed era," when publicity was used by companies to try to counter muckraking journalism and strategic presidential and federal agency press relations began. It was during these years that industrialist Henry Ford was probably the first to implement the public relations principles of positioning oneself or one's company as *first* at something and of making oneself accessible to the press. Ford's mass production processes afforded him great competitive advantage, but he also recognized the importance of an early marketing strategy that involved seeking publicity, while many business owners still shied away from it.

It was also during this seedbed era that Ivy League-educated Ivy Ledbetter Lee traded business reporting for the publicity business. Dennis Wilcox,

Philip Ault, Warren Agee, and Glen Cameron (2001) credited his "Declaration of Principles" as ending the "public be damned" attitude of the industrialists and as starting the "public be informed" era. These principles extolled the value of providing accurate and timely information and access to the press.

Lee also is tied to the industrialists. Hired by railroad executives to help them win a rate increase after several prior failures by the industry to do so, Lee used a strategy of taking the executives' reasons for the increase to the public to gain its support; it succeeded, and the increase was approved by Congress in 1914. This was the "genesis of the coupling of public relations with legislative relations to attain governmental favors or stay the hand of government" (Cutlip, 1994, p. 8).

The same year the railroad rate increase was approved, the heartbreaking Ludlow, Colorado, coal mine massacre occurred, and Lee was hired by John D. Rockefeller's son, John D. Jr., to help address the public fallout. The result of an attempt to break a strike, the massacre resulted when government troops opened fire with machine guns on the tents, which striking miners and their families were living in after being evicted from the company's housing. Led and supported by the United Mine Workers against the Colorado Fuel & Iron Co., the 1913–1914 strike followed an attempt nine years earlier to strike for better working conditions and compensation, which also had been harshly suppressed. The barrage of gunfire at the Ludlow tent colony killed 21, including women and children. John Jr. would later testify that he hadn't known of the mine operators' intended actions, but public outrage was nonetheless directed at the Rockefellers, who owned the company. Lee insisted that Rockefeller himself visit with the miners and their families and that the press be invited to attend as well. Lee provided the press with a fact sheet outlining management's view of the strike, and the visits ultimately resulted in new policies and better employee compensation.

Following this positive outcome, the junior Rockefeller hired Lee to help instill a positive image of the Rockefeller family itself, for John Sr.'s negative monopolistic Standard Oil image was still

embedded in the public psyche. Lee responded by making the Rockefeller family's philanthropy public and by keeping images of the senior Rockefeller—often giving away money—in the press. By the time of his death, the elder Rockefeller had become a much-loved public citizen.

After the seedbed years of public relations came the World War I period, 1917–1919, which demonstrated the power of strategic publicity to enlist support and cull patriotism, and the “booming twenties era” of 1919–1929. These periods also served to intertwine industry and public relations, for it was in the 1920s that communication strategies learned during the war years were applied to consumer products.

Arthur W. Page emerged during this intertwining era, and in his time with the American Telephone & Telegraph Company, he helped define modern corporate public relations. AT&T's first vice president for public relations, Page believed that it was performance that drives positive public relations, not publicity. He also espoused the belief that businesses exist only via public support and that it was important for public relations to be part of a company's management team. These modern principles evolved from the lessons of the industrialists who came before him, lessons that included being responsive to the public, telling one's story, being accessible, and operating in the public good.

—Diana L. Knott

See also Battle of the currents; Colorado Coal Strike; Insull, Samuel; Lee, Ivy; Page, Arthur W.

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Industrial baron J. P. Morgan (1837–1913), founder of U.S. Steel, shakes his cane at a passerby on a city street. Although Morgan is alleged to have said, “I don't owe the public anything,” he called upon early public relations practitioner Theodore Newton Vail to help save the American Telephone & Telegraph Company in 1902.

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INFOMERCIAL

An infomercial is a program-length television commercial designed to get around some problems inherent in the regular television advertising model. Infomercials subvert the traditional advertising model in several ways. Infomercials tend to mimic the production values (sets, lighting, and style of delivery used by the talent) of television news shows. Sometimes, an infomercial has name talent (such as Ricardo Montalban, hired for the Nativity Cross infomercial). Infomercials also use an increased runtime (length of the advertisement), typically 30 or 60 minutes.

The year 2004 marks the 20th anniversary of the Federal Communications Commission's removal of restrictions on the number of advertising minutes

per hour allowed on broadcast television, which paved the way for the birth of the infomercial. Deregulation of cable television gave the infomercial additional room to grow rapidly. According to *Response* magazine, long-form media billing for 2003 totaled US\$910,038,403. On average, media billing represents 40 percent of generated sales, making the generated sales figure for 2003 US\$2,275,096,008.

In addition to their longer format, infomercials, which are also referred to as direct response television (DRTV), offer the opportunity for a soft-sell approach. Combined with a long runtime and news program stylings, infomercials make for a more immersive experience. This cuts down on channel switching, and there is less reliance on additional viewings for message reinforcement.

Infomercials work well with mature (older) audiences, which are often less tolerant of a high-pressure pitch. Infomercials allow for a much more indirect approach, which can include numerous demonstrations of the product and its benefits.

The power of infomercials has been recognized by the Federal Trade Commission. They have disclaimer requirements, along with specifications on the use of celebrities to endorse products.

In contrast to regular commercials, infomercials use production elements and techniques that are more subtle and are traditionally given secondary consideration. Background (environmental) information can become more useful. What the actors are saying is important, but what the actors are surrounded by can become equally important. Music can be used extensively to set mood or serve as repeated punctuation for other audiovisual information. Set decor can become more extensive, and integral to the message.

Stations that run infomercials benefit in two ways. Stations that don't generate their own content have to buy it; and infomercials are a handy way for stations to fill broadcast time between 1:00 and 6:00 in the morning, when viewership (and advertising rates) are low. Stations save money by not having to purchase content and make money by selling the time slot for the infomercial to run.

—Michael Nagy

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INFORMATION INTEGRATION THEORY

Information integration theory “suggests that people form attitudes that result from a blending of positives and negatives” (Heath & Bryant, 1992, p. 15). In this way, information integration theory is nicely parsimonious.

You may like the taste of pizza, but you may dislike its calories and fat content. You may like the prestige and comfort of driving a luxury car, but you may dislike the cost and low gas mileage of the car. You may dislike the time demands of a regular exercise program, but you may like how it makes you look and feel. People form an attitude toward everything they encounter. Attitudes include affective or evaluative components, referring to likes or dislikes, as well as cognitive components that involve degrees of certainty, or the extent to which people consider something as likely to be true.

Information integration theory argues that attitudes “provide consistency for judgment and behavior because they reflect patterns of preferences that each individual has established” (Heath & Bryant, 2000, p. 202). This approach also argues that attitudes “are not singular or undifferentiated evaluative cognitions. Rather, each attitude is the product of several affective (evaluative) qualities that are combined into a single expression of opinion” (Heath & Bryant, 2000, p. 202).

Theories that help explain how people think and form attitudes are important in communication. Public relations practitioners can use theory to better understand how people receive and process messages.

Information integration theory is an approach that can increase understanding of how people can be influenced by information. "Information is the essence of the persuasion process," noted Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (1981, p. 339). Information integration can help explain how attitudes interact and how attitudes affect behavioral intention. This approach explains behavior as the result of attitude toward an action and of belief about the social expectation of others who approve or disapprove of the action.

Sometimes considered a perspective more than a single theory, information integration emphasizes the important role of information in affecting attitudes, or predispositions for behavior. This approach focuses on attitude change through the information variables of valence and weight.

The valence of information relates to direction (positive or negative) as a function of agreement or disagreement. The weight of information relates to credibility assigned by the person evaluating a message. The information-integration perspective has been appreciated for more than three decades, and it includes a number of widely used theories including expectancy-value theory and theory of reasoned action.

According to expectancy-value theory, attitudes are a function of beliefs and evaluations. The relationship may be expressed mathematically as attitude toward something equals the sum of each belief about the object multiplied by the evaluation. The theory allows for change in attitude to occur as a result of shift in weight of specific beliefs, of shift in valence (positive or negative) of a belief, or of addition of new beliefs. Fishbein and Ajzen viewed beliefs as "the building blocks of the cognitive structure, the information base that supports evaluative systems as well as intentions and behaviors" (Heath & Bryant, 2000, p. 203).

For public relations practitioners, one application of this theory is that attitude change may be accomplished by increasing the credibility or believability of beliefs, by shifting the negative or positive

direction of information, or by providing information to add new beliefs related to a topic or organization.

In 1980, Ajzen and Fishbein extended expectancy-value theory in the theory of reasoned action, which focuses on the influence of attitudes on behavioral intention. Attitude, they suggested, is "a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, p. 6).

The theory of reasoned action assumes that people are rational beings, making deliberate decisions based on their reasoning of information. The theory of reasoned action is expressed mathematically as: a person's behavioral intention equals the sum of a belief that the behavior will give positive result, multiplied by how strongly the person believes, plus the person's perception of social expectation, multiplied by how important social acceptance is to the person. In other words, behavioral intent equals the attitude toward the behavior times the weight of the attitude plus the subjective norm (opinion of others) times the weight of subjective norm. For a more detailed discussion, see Heath & Bryant (2000) or Littlejohn (2002).

The theory focuses on intent to behave rather than actual behavior, but it posits that behavioral intention can be influenced either by attitude or the opinion of others. The theory is useful in assessing attitudes and behaviors of large populations.

The information integration approach explains how attitudes are made up of multiple components that can be conflicting. The approach also explains how behavior is the function of attitude toward an action and belief about subjective norms (social expectation) approving or disapproving of the action. "Going beyond the notion that behavior is predicated on 'motives,' this theory argues that behavior results from a collinear interaction between the attitude that a specific action is good or bad and awareness of social pressures or norms favoring or disfavoring it" (Heath & Bryant, 1992, p. 145).

In 1987 G. J. Shepherd extended information integration theory by showing that the degree of collinearity can differ between attitudes and normative beliefs. It depends on individuals' differentiation of issues involved and how much information the individual brings to the situation.

Information integration theory is important “for those who wish to be persuasive” (Heath & Bryant, 2000, p. 207). It reveals that communicators may change individuals’ attitudes by changing either evaluation or belief. It explains how a person’s behavioral intentions may be changed “by focusing on the goodness or badness of the decision or by influencing a person’s perception of the prevailing subjective norm” (Heath & Bryant, 2000, p. 207).

Theories in the information integration tradition serve to emphasize the importance of information as potential for attitude change. These theories complement consistency theories in helping to explain how people organize information and what they do with messages.

Information integration explains how recently integrated information may result in attitude change. The information integration approach “is one of the most popular models of the nature of attitudes and attitude change” (Littlejohn, 2002, p. 123).

—Bonnie Parnell Riechert

See also Psychological processing; Subjective expected utilities theory

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INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEM

An information retrieval (IR) system is (increasingly) a computer-based research tool. The purpose of IR systems is to provide references to pieces of information related to the particular inquiry. Traditional equivalents to IR systems include card catalogs and printed volumes of abstracts or annotated bibliographies. According to F. W. Lancaster, as quoted in the introduction to C. J. van Rijsbergen’s *Information Retrieval*, “An information retrieval system does not inform (i.e., change the knowledge of) the user on the subject of his inquiry. It merely informs on the existence (or non-existence) and whereabouts of documents relating to his request” (van Rijsbergen, 1979, n.p.).

Information retrieval is a term with a long history and a changing meaning. In the past, an IR system was understood to be a closed information system that offered in-depth information on a very specific topic or area. The system would usually include a mixture of complete documents, abstracts, and bibliographic references. The closest current example of that sort of system that exists today would be a non-Internet-connected information kiosk.

With the arrival of the Internet, closed systems have become fewer, and with documents increasingly being created using computer-based systems, more documents have become available online.

Distinctions are further compounded by a conversational understanding of what is defined as information. Information retrieval scholars like van Rijsbergen have made a distinction between data retrieval (DR) and information retrieval (IR).

In the introduction to *Information Retrieval*, van Rijsbergen addressed the attributes that make the distinction relevant. Attributes particular to DR include exact matches, an artificial language used in queries, and sensitivity in error response. The attributes for IR, as expected, are the opposite. IR involves partial or best matches, natural language use in queries, and a lack of sensitivity in error responses.

A Web browser is an interesting example of a piece of software that is capable of handling both DR and IR queries. An example of data retrieval would involve typing in a specific universal resource locator (URL), with the result that the specific page of information associated with that URL appears on screen. An artificial language is being used (the URL), which if not entered correctly, results in either the wrong information or no information at all (matching and error sensitivity).

Still using the Web browser, information retrieval is represented by the use of a search engine (for example, Google). Queries can be structured in natural language (What is the temperature of the sun?), with (at the time of this writing) 2,550,000 results. The order of the results, barring financial considerations, is based on Google's proprietary software (partial and best matches).

Information retrieval presents an interesting problem for Web page creators: How can the error sensitivity be maximized? When the query for the sun's temperature was run, the contents of the 2.5 million Web pages found were not scanned. Rather, each Web page has keyword entries. The keywords are not visible unless the Web page's source code is examined. In the case of the Web page that came up first in the query, the keyword entries included

- Space simulation education math science challenger
- Space shuttle 51-L crew children school links
- Publications astronomy solar system resources Doctor
- Jeff questions answers

Public relations practitioners will have to make sure when assembling Web pages that careful choices are made with respect to entries. Keyword entries determine how well partial and best matches will work, and how the practitioner's Web page will sort in relation to other pages that may include related information.

To avoid a cliffhanger ending, the sun's surface temperature is about 11,000 degrees Fahrenheit, with a core temperature of around 30,000,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

—Michael Nagy

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INFORMATION SOCIETY

Information society is a term introduced by Alvin Toffler in his 1980 book, *The Third Wave*. Toffler defined three eras or waves of society; he called the third wave the *information society*. The first wave is an *agricultural society*, where the main factors in production are land and farm labor. The second wave is an *industrial society*. The land still retains its value and importance, with a difference in the application of labor. The second wave sees labor move from farming and tending cattle to manufacturing and tending machinery. The third wave represents a significant shift, where industrial muscle and might are replaced by the power of information and knowledge.

The primary resource of the third wave is what Toffler called *actionable knowledge*. This knowledge includes data and information in the form of text and images, as well as culture, ideology, and values. The third wave has opened a knowledge age. Toffler said that the knowledge age will not reach its potential unless social and political dominance are added to the technological and economic strength fueling the transition.

Although it's been over 20 years since Toffler introduced the concept, he has provided the occasional update. In 1994, he joined with Esther Dyson, George Gilder, and George Keyworth to write *Cyberspace and the American Dream: A Magna Carta for the Knowledge Age*. Toffler followed this in 1996 with *Future Shock in the Present Tense*.

Toffler, as did other futurists, pointed out that the transitions from one wave to the next are not as easy to delineate as the waves themselves. From the preamble of *Cyberspace and the American Dream*, we learn:

The industrial age is not fully over. In fact, classic Second Wave sectors (oil, steel, auto-production) have learned how to benefit from Third Wave technological breakthroughs—just as the First Wave’s agricultural productivity benefited exponentially from the Second Wave’s farm-mechanization. (1994, p. 1)

The transition to the third wave includes two important characteristics. First, the third wave is, structurally, allowing people to take a big step backward. The primary tool of the third wave is the computer. Reliance on “smokestack” industry is decreasing because of an increased reliance on work that is delivered via the decentralized structure of computer networks. Currently, 11 percent of the United States workforce works from home, via computer. We are seeing a return to the home as a primary location of production, just as it was for the first wave and during the transition to the second wave.

A second important characteristic of the transition is the increase in the levels of uncertainty and unpredictability found in everyday life. Employment and capital are more liquid than ever. The stability that smokestack industries of the second wave provided is eroding. This is compounded by an implied requirement that for individuals to function in the third wave, they will have to become much more technologically literate.

In *Future Shock in the Present Tense*, Toffler explained what *future shock* is, and goes a bit further. Future shock is “the distress and disorientation brought on by trying to adapt to too much change at rates faster than people can handle. We also believe that, in fact, today’s most disturbing social, cultural, and political developments can be traced precisely to this condition” (1996, p. 2).

After the transition period ends and the third wave properly begins, future shock and other disturbing developments are supposed to abate. The result will be a new economy, where billions of people will be raised out of poverty, the social fabric will be mended, and the planet will be allowed to begin healing.

There are problems with Toffler’s vision of the future. The single biggest one is the bold naivety that clouds that vision (strikingly similar to that found in an Ayn Rand novel). It reads well from a

theoretical or philosophical standpoint; however, the “universe” that serves as the foundation for a possible future bears only a passing resemblance to the reality innovators wish to reshape.

It is easy to poke holes in the idea of the third wave, now that the rosy future the technology boom was to deliver has turned out to be mere wishful thinking. The trouble is, the signs that it would not occur have always been present. It is simply a question of whether or not individuals, corporations, and agencies choose to ignore them, acknowledge them, or postpone such an agenda indefinitely.

If the computer is to be our salvation, what happens to all of the people whose work becomes displaced by the savior? Toffler’s observation of how second-wave industries have benefited from third-wave technology is the pointed end of the stick. What is it that will reverse the erosion of jobs and foster replacement of the millions of jobs lost because of technology? The processing power of computers roughly doubles every 18 or so months. How is being able to do more with fewer people going to enable those who are not fortunate enough to be those fewer people?

This leads to an interesting problem for mass communicators in general and public relations practitioners in particular. Technologies should continue to force the number of parent companies and organizations to decrease, while the number of mass media and other communication channels should continue to increase. Moving into an information or knowledge age, by definition, places a greater importance (weight) on the content and construction of the new currency.

In this case, the new currency is Toffler’s actionable knowledge. The information society represents an economic transition, where information is transformed. Information becomes a commodity, and that commodity simultaneously works (functions) as currency.

The computer and the Internet are the tools that make the third wave possible. It is the use of these tools that significantly change the role of the public relations practitioner. In a media relations context, the job becomes not only global, but also 24/7. Audience makeup is far more complex, as is

the variety of uses audiences will have for the information they receive.

From a marketing, publicity, or promotion standpoint, the 24/7 element means that the information tap is always on. This makes it far more difficult to create a finished, definitive information package. Instead, a Web-based information environment results in information streams that are forever works in progress.

There are upsides to all this. Since the tap is always on, there can be genuine, literal information flow. Message comprehension and retention benefit greatly from a steady stream of information, along with the steady exposure to it.

—*Michael Nagy*

See also Commodifying information; Media relations

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INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS (IPR)

Established in 1989 by a group of senior public relations practitioners, the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) is the only independent foundation in the field of public relations focusing on research and education. IPR has distinguished itself by sponsoring pioneering research, textbooks, fora, lectures, awards, and other activities to enhance the professional practice of public relations.

MISSION

IPR strives to improve the effectiveness of communications of organizations by advancing the

professional knowledge and practice of public relations through research and education.

In accomplishing its mission IPR helps

- Top managements understand how to use public relations more effectively to achieve success with employees, shareholders, and customers
- Researchers focus on the most important issues affecting public relations and the outcomes in dealing with them
- Educators in developing the skills needed for future practitioners
- The general public to appreciate the value of public relations as a management function and communications tool for use in creating better understanding of business, government, and nonprofit enterprises

IPR serves as a catalyst for creating and disseminating research that is usable by public relations senior management, agencies, clients, educators, and everyday practitioners.

To keep pace with ever-changing public relations challenges, IPR seeks to be the leading sponsor and provider of innovative, timely, and informative communication-related research.

SERVICES

IPR sponsors practical research studies on cutting-edge topics. In addition to public relations research, IPR offers symposia, grants, awards, and scholarships to outstanding scholars. Recent studies have focused on subjects such as finding ways to quantify the value of public relations and identifying current research in other academic fields such as psychology, sociology, and anthropology, which offer significant new concepts for public relations.

RESEARCH

IPR has sponsored more than 300 separate research projects covering everything from what public relations students should study to an analysis of how new technologies are affecting the profession around the world.

All IPR publications, awards, competition, and research are made available for use by students, educators, and practitioners, regardless of their organizational affiliations. This nonproprietary research has led to breakthroughs in improving the teaching and the understanding of public relations. Other publications have helped to strengthen the effectiveness of public relations in profit-making and non-profit organizations. IPR's distinguished awards and competitions serve as incentives for students and scholars to build the body of knowledge in the field.

PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE FORUM

A major initiative of IPR is the Public Relations Executive Forum, a limited-enrollment professional development seminar designed especially for high-potential, mid-level corporate communications and public relations executives who report to senior corporate communications officers. Many alumni of this annual forum now occupy top chairs in agencies and corporations.

COMMISSION ON PUBLIC RELATIONS MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

IPR also sponsors the Commission on Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation, a volunteer group of leading experts in the field. The commission exists to establish standards and methods for public relations research and measurement and to issue authoritative best-practices white papers. This series of studies, called the "Measurement Tree," are available without cost, as are nearly all IPR publications, on IPR's Web site: www.instituteforpr.com.

Objectives for the commission include:

- To be the leading provider of information about and advocate for public relations measurement and related communication research and evaluation
- To instigate research and be the first group public relations professionals turn to when they want definitive answers on effective public relations measurement and evaluation methods and standards
- To represent the four pillars of the profession in the evaluation of public relations: the client

sector, the counseling sector, research firms, and academicians

SPONSORSHIPS

"International Index of Bribery for News Coverage" is a study in cooperation with the International Public Relations Association to expose the unethical payment of the media for press coverage, which is the practice in some countries.

IPR is a co-sponsor of a case-writing competition for students of business, communications, and journalism that encourages students to conduct research that demonstrates the critical role public relations plays in helping to solve management problems.

IPR is the major sponsor of the annual International Interdisciplinary Public Relations Research Conference. Here leading academic researchers and top practitioners discuss research areas of mutual interest to the entire profession. IPR is also underwriting a book of international case studies for use in teaching public relations in developing countries.

TEXTBOOKS

From time to time IPR sponsors the creation of new textbooks on special subject areas needed in the field. The latest example is *The Primer of Public Relations Research*, authored by Dr. Don W. Stacks, which won the "best textbook of the year" Pride Award from the National Communications Association in 2002. This practical how-to book, now translated into other languages, is the preferred research text at colleges and universities.

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Each year at its Awards and Lecture Dinner, IPR presents awards for excellence in public relations:

- The Alexander Hamilton medal for years of distinguished service
- The Pathfinder Award for the best academic research

- The Master's Thesis Award for the best student thesis
- The Ketchum-Lindenmann Scholarship for the best graduate research

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The officers and board of trustees of IPR are thought leaders in the industry drawn from leading international corporations, universities, and consultancies. Donors and supporters of IPR's work are likewise broadly representative of the profession and welcomed from around the world.

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Research and education are so critical to the future of public relations that IPR attempts to assist and serve everyone in the field with better programs and activities to improve the knowledge and professional practice of public relations. IPR is funded by donations from corporations, agencies, and individuals—all tax deductible. Some donors remember IPR when they wish to honor a friend or mentor, establish a special scholarship, need a custom research study, or are reviewing estate planning.

— *Institute of Public Relations*

INSULL, SAMUEL

Samuel Insull (1859–1938) was a tycoon's tycoon who used and often abused public relations to craft a financial empire that eventually toppled, leading to his indictment on charges of mail fraud, violation of federal bankruptcy law, and embezzlement. He was acquitted. Eventually in financial ruin and ill health, the career ended for this master of publicity, promotions, and government relations, although he was never a practitioner by that name. In 1901, he created one of the first corporate public relations departments to forge favorable opinion on the part of customers and government officials.

His business career began in 1882, when he became Thomas Edison's private secretary. He

participated in the battle of the currents, which convinced him of the power of public relations even though Edison lost that battle to George Westinghouse. Through the battle, Insull realized the potent impact of public policy for giving rationale to specific business activities.

Insull served Edison as the general manager of his business organizations, which were growing and becoming more varied. Through their efforts, they created Edison General Electric and eventually Chicago Edison Company. Over time, this business and others became part of what was generally called the "Insull Empire."

Insull realized that no product—even electricity—could survive, let alone prosper, without publicity and promotion. He engaged in such activities as using publicity associated with electric trolleys in Chicago to demonstrate the virtues of this power source. Substantial attention was focused on electricity through the 1893 Chicago World's Fair; the Tower of Light, an illuminated Ferris wheel; and many displays to help residential users of power understand the industry. He engaged in mass marketing through the magazine *Electric City*. This publication was full of ideas favoring lifestyle advantages and cost savings for users of electricity. The sorts of marketing appeals he loved featured the use of electricity as a mark of affluence. Electric lights glowing in windows would demonstrate to neighbors the financial achievements of the homeowner.

Merger was a vital part of his empire building. He realized the need for regulated monopoly as a way to protect investments in electricity generation and distribution. Not only did he see the need to manufacture products that used electricity, such as the General Electric refrigerator, but he also wanted to extend electricity to every part of the country. This last mission motivated him to promote government financing of rural electrification.

Insull, along with other tycoons, recognized the need to create various opinions that led to favorable acceptance and treatment of various business activities. No industry or product is merely accepted and taken for granted. Acceptance must be crafted, and public relations plays a vital part in that fabric of

thought. In 1897, Insull convinced the city council of Chicago to grant his company a 50-year franchise to sell electricity as a regulated monopoly operating in the public interest. Far from creating political corruption as the basis of business dealing, Insull merely became very good at what was established practice long before his time. He realized that without oiling politicians with self-serving advantages, businesses could be brought to a standstill.

Trade associations were an important part of those sorts of business management and communication efforts. In 1928 the U.S. Congress wanted to understand the dynamics of such efforts as it investigated the activities of the National Electric Light Association, which through the guidance of Insull and others had engaged in an unsavory, if not illegal, communication and public policy campaign since 1922. The campaign used misinformation and bribery of public officials to gain a favorable acceptance of its business activities. Espousing the virtue of operating in the public interest, this association achieved protection to operate because of government franchise in the name of the public interest. Industries such as this balanced the right and power of government control with a mask, if not the reality, of yielding their plans and operations to public control.

This campaign was defined as propaganda, which had previously been viewed as a worthy approach to communication. Now, through scrutiny by governmental officials and academics, propaganda was being characterized as the art of manipulation and deceit. It no longer was a healthy part of the honest creation of opinion through mass dissemination of ideas and information. The Federal Trade Commission scrutinized this campaign, disclosing its myriad techniques, tools, and strategies.

In one sense, the efforts of the electricity industry were no different from those of other business segments. Blue sky reporting of profits and the advantages of industry growth were rife. This was the era of the booming 1920s, which led to the collapse of the stock market in 1929 when the sky fell because the financial community had built itself on false statements, false promises, and investor greed. In this campaign, publicity and promotion of

products and services featured advantages that simply could not be delivered by the standard business practices of the time. Books were commissioned; faculty members were paid to write favorably of the industry. Lobbyists promised a variety of personal and political advantages to congressmen who supported their industry. Insull's publicity genius, Bernard J. Mullaney, was hard at work to connect the dots to show all that was good with the industry. All that opposed the industry, including the aura of Red-scare communism, must be challenged because it could ruin the electric generation industry. Electricity through this campaign became a patriotic mission.

Mullaney, a former Chicago newspaperman, used a variety of mass media to reach his targeted audiences. He used house publications to communicate with internal audiences, workers who could spread the word of the advantages of electricity. He looked at the communication potential of "new communication technologies" of the era, such as film. He wanted to sell electricity and the idea that utility companies should be publicly owned, rather than owned by state or municipal governments. They should be regulated; however, they would be influential in how that regulation would ensure their growth because of the advantages of electricity to a modern society, the American lifestyle.

Although he was not a professional practitioner of public relations, Insull provides continuity in the evolution of public relations as practiced in the United States. As secretary of a literary society in England while still a very young man, Insull convinced Phineas T. (P. T.) Barnum to lecture to the society on promotion and publicity. Perhaps no one was better at these public relations functions in practice or theory than Barnum at the time. Insull quickly appreciated strategy and necessity of keeping ideas and options in front of people explained in ways that caught their attention and captured their imagination. These lessons, never forgotten, were refined and applied through Insull's long and infamous career in American business.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Barnum, P. T.; Battle of the currents; Government relations; Promotion; Propaganda; Public interest; Publicity; Regulated monopolies; Trade associations (and Hill & Knowlton's role in)

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INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION

Integrated marketing communication (IMC) involves the synergistic use of public relations in tandem with other promotional tools to promote products, services, causes, or candidates.

ORIGINS OF IMC

The traditional tools in the "promotion mix" used by marketers include advertising, sales promotion, direct response, personal selling, and public relations/publicity. Clients have used these tools for many years, but beginning in the early 1990s marketers and advertisers began to recognize the importance of using these tools more effectively in combination.

The advertising agency business, in particular, became alarmed about reduced spending on traditional space and time advertising. Clients were shifting dollars away from activities based on building long-term brand awareness and brand equity to activities that would generate more immediate, demonstrable results: trade and consumer promotions, direct response, and cause-related marketing and events. Agencies responded by promoting the idea that they could coordinate all these elements for clients and acquired or established alliances with companies with expertise in these other specialties.

ELUSIVENESS OF INTEGRATION

Early IMC theorizing called for an *audience-centered* (versus *activity-centered* or *product-centered*)

approach to marketing communications. Implicit in this approach was recognition that various tools could be used to reach audiences. Early IMC theorizing also emphasized the extension of the same metrics used to measure advertising to all communications efforts.

Duncan (2002, p. 8) defined IMC as the "cross-functional process for creating and nourishing profitable relationships with customers and other stakeholders by strategically controlling or influencing all messages sent to these groups and encouraging data-driven purposeful dialogue with them."

IMC advocates have identified a series of stages through which integration progresses: (a) awareness within the organization; (b) image integration, or the melding of messages and themes across communications activities; (c) functional integration of units responsible for producing messages; (d) consumer and database integration, where customer intelligence is brought together; (e) stakeholder integration to address groups beyond customers; and (f) technological integration, where communications with customers are both intelligent and interactive. These varying approaches suggest that integration is actually conceptualized and used in a variety of ways today.

Full integration has been difficult to achieve due to structural, economic, creative, and tactical issues that continue to differentiate the disciplines involved in the process. Advertising continues to receive top priority in many programs because of the broad reach and awareness ads can create (and the large revenues generated from advertising for agencies). Sales promotion, direct response, and public relations are often ancillary activities, considered only after a creative direction for advertising is established.

Full integration is also difficult because of the different creative, production, and distribution conventions used by these disciplines. Integrated communications campaigns invariably involve the conjoint efforts of communications professionals with different skills, training, and orientations who create different genres of communications that follow different conventions. Even with the best of intentions, these inherent differences pose misunderstandings and conflicts. Among some public relations practitioners, IMC has been viewed as an

encroachment by imperialistic marketers who seek to take over the public relations function.

Public relations practitioners produce a wide range of tools that can be used in an IMC campaign. These include product publicity, speeches and presentations, events (celebrations, tours, meetings, conferences), and school and club programs. Significantly, some tools commonly used in public relations also might be assigned to sales promotion or direct response specialists. Examples are publications (collateral), displays, exhibitions, audio-visuals, direct mail and e-mail, and Web sites. Corporate advertising, cause-related marketing, and campaigns involving tie-ins with philanthropic organizations are examples of where traditional distinctions between public relations and marketing functions have become blurred.

COORDINATION OF CAMPAIGN ELEMENTS

An integrated marketing communications campaign, at minimum, requires three elements: (a) deployment of different tools and media to achieve the objectives or outcomes for which they are best suited, (b) timing of campaign elements to take maximum advantage of each, and (c) message consistency or continuity so that audiences recognize a topic or message as being familiar.

Coordination of Tools

Integrated communication involves optimizing the effectiveness and efficiency of various marketing tools. Certain communications tools are especially well suited to achieve particular outcomes as outlined in Table 1.

Coordination of Message Timing

Integration also involves purposefully disseminating messages using the same or different strategies to maximize results. In a new product introduction, for example, it is customary to lead with a new product publicity announcement to take full advantage of media interest and a product's inherent newsworthiness. Once fully exploited, publicity efforts are often reduced (unless there is ongoing news interest) and advertising begins. In-store sales promotion

(point-of-purchase, etc.) often coincides with the initial advertising campaigns, but also can be used later to bolster interest when no public advertising is being used. Direct response often follows publicity and advertising, capitalizing on previous awareness and interest to stimulate ordering.

Coordination of Message Content

Marketers seeking maximum integration and messages will ensure that messages carry common elements across communications tools wherever possible. Elements include common brand identification, spokespersons, and message themes (product promises, benefits, descriptions, and key facts). To the extent possible, consistent use of executional features of advertising such as logos, signatures, slogans, and graphic designs can provide important cues that attract attention, trigger recall, and facilitate learning and memory.

The critical issue in message integration is consistency—speaking with a “single voice.” Contradictory positioning or descriptions of a product or service obviously should be avoided. However, research suggests that moderate levels of inconsistency might actually increase attention to messages because audiences are motivated to resolve differences between a message's content and their existing knowledge stored in memory. Psychologists describe this phenomenon as a desire for cognitive consistency or the reduction of cognitive dissonance.

Varying messages within or across media categories has been shown to enhance interest and avoid the problem of message “wear-out,” where people become bored and disengage from message processing. In publicity and other forms of promotion where marketers have control of message content, varying the source, phrasing, and valence of messages can contribute to message acceptance because the message appears to be from a source other than the marketer. The challenge for effective publicity thus is to imbue the message with sufficient cues to create linkages with other communications that might appear as part of an integrated campaign.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Involvement; Psychological processing

Table 1 Strengths of Alternative IMC Tactics

<i>Communication Tactic</i>	<i>Ideal Uses/Outcomes</i>
Advertising	Building awareness and desire
Publicity	Building awareness, establishing credibility
Interactive media	Handling queries, facilitating routine ordering
Sales promotion	Increasing involvement, prompting action
Direct response	Facilitating routine ordering
Personal selling	Overcoming objections, negotiating terms, facilitating nonroutine orders

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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION THEORY

Intercultural communication occurs whenever a message that is produced in one culture is interpreted in another culture. To understand the dynamics of intercultural communication, one must first understand the concepts of *culture* and *communication*. The concept of culture has many different definitions. Yet most definitions accept that culture is a learned collective or group process that is tied to communication. Communication is a meaning-making process.

Intercultural communication, then, is all about making meaning of the messages from a different culture.

The 21st century is a century of rapid changes in technology, trade, and communication. Both large and small organizations now operate in intercultural environments. For instance, American companies now have subsidiaries all over the world. Likewise, companies from other parts of the world have business relationships with the United States. Public relations practitioners must understand the fundamentals of intercultural communication. Practitioners, both in the United States and abroad, should become familiar with how public relations can be explained and improved upon by a consideration of intercultural communication theories.

The ways in which organizations can effectively communicate with international publics depend on a variety of cultural and societal forces. These cultural and societal variations will affect the communication between international organizations and the publics in the host nations. Extensive research shows the similarities and differences between cultures, and many researchers agree that context is one of the most useful theories for understanding intercultural communication. The theory of *context* is foundational for understanding the various cultural differences that influence interpersonal communication. Context is most easily understood as the situation or environment that encompasses a communicative interaction. By understanding the context of the situation, the parties gain the meaning and cues that guide people in how to act

and react in an interpersonal encounter. Edward Hall (1984) identified two types of context. High-context cultures, such as those in Asia and Latin America, are characterized by communication that is driven by the cues of both the situation and the relationship between the parties. In a high context the parties evaluate the environment and understand the meaning of the situation without too many words being spoken. Personal and professional relationships in these high-context societies have very little room for negotiation. These roles (superior, subordinate, partner, member) dictate the tone and content of the communication; when people do not know each other very well, they rely on very polite and formal communication. In low-context cultures, such as the United States and Germany, the tone and content of the communication is literally what is being spoken or written. People from low-context cultures generally seek certainty in their understanding of the situation by relying on spoken words, written documents, and formal agreements. In low-context cultures, the meanings that guide people's understandings of the situation are in the words, not the situation.

The theory of context offers several applications for public relations practitioners. In the higher-context cultures, individuals act out a particular role—manager, technician, or client—and little or no clarification is needed regarding tasks. In low-context cultures, public relations practitioners may need to ask more questions and seek verbal or written agreements.

A second set of theories for understanding the dynamics of intercultural communication is *cultural variation*. The work of Geert Hofstede is a central theoretical basis in the international public relations research literature. Hofstede (1984) has created five dimensions of culture, including (a) power distance, (b) uncertainty avoidance, (c) individualism-collectivism, (d) masculinity-femininity, and (e) Confucian dynamism. Public relations researchers have applied many of these dimensions in qualitative and quantitative studies of international public relations. *Power distance* refers to the openness of upward communication across societies. In high-power distance cultures, such as nations in Asia, public relations practitioners may

hesitate to express their opinions to their supervisors. The second dimension, *uncertainty avoidance*, refers to organizational members' tolerance of ambiguity. Uncertainty avoidance measures the ability of humans to cope with uncertainty. There tend to be more written rules, regulations, and stress in high-uncertainty avoidance cultures. The third dimension, *masculinity*, explains how work tasks are distributed across a culture and identifies whether or not these tasks are equally distributed to both men and women. For instance, in a highly feminine culture such as Sweden, both men and women work as pre-school teachers, secretaries, and nurses. A highly masculine culture is characteristic of any nation where women perform certain jobs and men do other tasks. The fourth dimension, *individualism-collectivism*, characterizes how people value themselves in relation to the larger group or community. Individualism-collectivism explores the relationships between the individual and the group or collective. Cultures with high individualistic values, such as the United States and Australia, tend to care about self-actualization and career progression in the organization. Cultures with collectivist values tend to value the benefits to the organization more than the interests and rights of the individual. The newest dimension, *Confucian dynamism*, describes cultures based on the ideas of thrift, perseverance, and the desire for orderly relationships with others. Denise Fernandez, Dawn Carlson, Lee Stepina, and Joel Nicholson (1997) conducted follow-up research and updated the dimensions of culture in 14 nations. Their article includes scores for China and Russia that were both excluded from Hofstede's original data set.

According to Hofstede (1984), these five variables are present in all cultures, and the degree of their presence will influence the internal and external communication of any organization. Cultural variation affects the practice of international public relations at two levels. First, it can influence communication relationships *within* an organization. For instance, the power distance dimension can tell us about the experiences of public relations practitioners with their supervisors or managers. In a study of Indian organizations, Krishnamurthy Sriramesh (1992) found that power distance can

have a strong influence on the public relations activities. Later research by Sriramesh, Yungwook Kim, and Miyoko Takasaki (1999) identified the cultural dimension of collectivism as a major influence on Japanese public relations; the concept of *wa*, meaning “harmony,” and *amae*, meaning “other’s goodness,” results in public relations efforts that create a “mutual solidarity” in the organization.

Second, cultural variation can affect the development of the practice of international public relations at the *societal level*. Nations that have high uncertainty avoidance are not tolerant of risk or threat of crisis. Organizations that operate in high-uncertainty avoidance nations must recognize that situations that may appear to be low risk may actually be perceived as crises by members of another culture. Poor communication during times of perceived risk will negatively affect public acceptance of organizational messages. Just as cultural variation is important for understanding international public relations, so too are societal factors. Different societies will react differently to public relations messages.

A related intercultural theory with clear implications for public relations is William Gudykunst’s (1995) theory of anxiety/uncertainty management (AUM). AUM theory provides a framework for understanding interpersonal, organizational, and society levels of risk tolerance.

Theories of intercultural communication are also informed by nonverbal communication. Hall’s (1984) intercultural theory of time shows that different cultures organize and experience time in different ways. *Polychronic* cultures are those that believe that time is flexible and can involve doing many things at one time. In polychronic cultures, involvement in and completion of a task are more important than adhering to a prearranged schedule. *Monochronic* cultures, on the other hand, believe that scheduled events and timelines must be met. People in these cultures work on one thing at a time and stop working on a task if another appointment or meeting is scheduled. Time orientation can affect business, communication, and relationships. Effective public relations practitioners need to identify the assumptions of their own time orientation and

be willing to understand and accommodate the orientation of others.

The trend of globalization creates opportunities for those with an intercultural communication understanding of the public relations function. Opportunities include the potential for public relations practitioners to lead their organizations during times of overseas expansions. The public relations function creates, changes, and maintains relationships with publics. It is because of this role that public relations practitioners can help their organizations to reflect on and incorporate the theories of intercultural communication in their communication with international publics.

—Maureen Taylor

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INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Internal communication is public relations directed to and among employees in an organization. James E. Grunig and Yi-Hui Huang (2000) referred to critical attributes of intraorganizational relationships such as reciprocity, trust, credibility, mutual legitimacy, and mutual understanding. For example, employee relations may be negative if there is a loss of credibility with organizational leaders.

Similarly, they indicate that trust is the characteristic that allows organizations to exist, including trust by stockholders, employees, communities, and consumers.

Individual perceptions of co-workers and supervisors are critical as these employee relationships emerge and develop. The diversity of communication relationships and the perceptions may lead to greater organizational efficiency or problematic relational dynamics. These dynamics also deserve consideration along with how organizations construct employee public relations material. The objective should be not just sharing information but also building understanding and resolving conflicts so that positive results (financial, productivity, relational) occur. Internal publics are groups of people inside the organization: supervisors, administrative assistants, clerks, and other staff members. Employee perceptions of internal public relations messages can be understood through comprehension of the various relationships that exist within the organization. Organizations and their employees can see their values as necessarily intertwined (i.e., “living the mission statement”) through various messages. When the positions taken by the organization (i.e., “white papers”) are supported by internal publics and the agreement is reflected in favorable views of the organization, the relationships among organizational members (especially among managers and subordinates) may be enhanced. Internal public relations material is often directed to employees, a communicative extension of management thoughts. However, media such as employee newsletters may provide a voice for employees on, perhaps, a weekly or monthly basis.

Theories of employee voice emphasize that such input can increase both organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction. Participation and other supportive management practices can improve information flows, decentralize power, and increase communication within and among employee groups. Simultaneously, enhancement of employee voice can provide feelings of perceived autonomy and positive perceptions of organizational fairness. Many American corporations emphasize consultative participation. With this strategy, employees make suggestions (possibly through an online newsletter

link), but management chooses which ideas to implement. Even though management retains control in these circumstances, such computer-mediated communication may eventually permit employees to communicate in ways that reduce spatial and temporal barriers. Communication can occur more quickly and minimize the role of hierarchy, creating a more horizontal rather than a vertical organization. Groups may be created by management, or committees may emerge spontaneously within the company to address issues. Computer-mediated communication, in terms of employee relations, may enhance organizational efficiency.

Employee relations messages may be distributed through, as stated earlier, online mechanisms (i.e., company intranet) and employee newsletters. Additionally, short promotional announcements may be conveyed through memos and electronic mail (also online) or live broadcasts of events on corporate video (if the organization has this medium). Many organizations strive to share critical news with employees using other communication tactics and media. Deborah Hauss (1993) provided some examples:

1. Special editions of company newspapers, with lengthy explanations of events
2. Videotaped appearances by the company’s chief executive officer addressing employee concerns such as financial stability and job security
3. Monthly staff meetings, which may become weekly, daily, or even hourly in crisis situations, to keep everyone abreast of the latest developments
4. Town meetings, allowing open-forum discussions among employees
5. A series of mental and physical health workshops to help employees deal with job-related stress and/or the balance of work with their personal/family lives

Efficient communication systems allow for rapid processing and dissemination of information. As Libby Bishop and David Levine (1999) argued, individuals may feel that an equal opportunity to participate in organizational affairs exists through employee relations technology.

With the range of perceptions and attitudes along with enhanced employee performance due to participation, the relationships among internal publics can be quite complex. For example, credibility issues and unethical behavior are prevalent in many organizations, and these interconnected problems can affect the aforementioned factors. Employee relations can also be affected by organizational decisions that are publicized before employees have a chance to provide input on such decisions. Consequently, these media leaks may irreparably harm the credibility that organizational leaders have with their employees. Potentially, employees may be portrayed as victims of a brutal and uncaring organization. The relationships can be even more complex when globalization and diversity concerns affect organizations. For example, multinational corporations are confronted with a similar dilemma, whether to have a standardized global campaign or adapt the campaign to the local cultures. Employees who are assigned to such tasks need to be trained as culturally sensitive boundary spanners, and this training is another mechanism for internal public relations. These training sessions may be similar in style (teaching) to the aforementioned workshops but more relevant to the employee's role in the organization. Even though many training sessions are sponsored by the human resources department or the employee's work group, they are an integral public relations tool. Employee relations is likely to suffer when job-related training is limited or nonexistent.

Diversity training initiatives can also be helpful. Speakers address employees on such topics as career development and the "glass ceiling." Managers and executives are also invited to attend these sessions, and every diversity promotion (traditionally affecting underprivileged groups such as African Americans and women) is well publicized throughout the entire organization, potentially enhancing employee relationships.

Focus groups may also be helpful for internal public relations. These groups may include people from different company departments or, as M. J. Major (1993) suggested, different ethnic and gender groups. These groups may have a direct influence on the image of a company as it is projected to

external publics. The influence can extend from corporate advertising campaigns to conversations at the local grocery store between a focus group employee and a potential customer of the organization. Major recommended another direction for employees and public relations in the form of community outreach programs. The focus groups plan, sponsor, and host various events, or they may get involved in high school and college internship programs. For the organization and its employees, the objective is not only to give back to the community but also to make employees feel good about their company. The focus group members, as well as other employees, see that the organization is (1) a good corporate citizen and, most important, (2) a company that strives to have beneficial relationships among all employees.

Employee relations can also be enhanced through company mission statements and communication of a vision. (These two items are often interrelated because organizations frequently communicate a vision through their mission statements.) Leaders and employees advocate for the mission statement by consistently executing its principles.

These enactments may create and sustain a sense of community among diverse people in an organization (job role, ethnicity, etc.). Thus, employee relations can be enhanced with company mission statements. However, these enhancements are maximized when employees are truly interested in principle execution: They are "walking the walk."

The mission statement may only be temporarily successful as a leader-driven employee relations mechanism; employees must have input into its development and execution.

An optimal organizational situation is when the vision, as articulated in the mission statement, is internalized by employees and projected to other relationships (internal and external) on a daily basis.

Internal public relations can also be strengthened through organizational storytelling. Stories can be a means for capturing employees' experiences and expressing them so they represent an organization's traditions, values, beliefs, and priorities. Stories

can foster understanding among employees, comprehension of the subcultures and political realities of daily organizational life. Additionally, stories can help managers with their leadership tasks.

Leaders may communicate how they viewed or handled a certain issue. Ideally, the stories will offer practical advice and solutions for employees. These experiences can be stored for future reference so that the next generation of leaders can learn from them.

The most valuable stories that are expressed in organizations are those that teach, inspire, motivate, and add value through shared meaning. Of course, there will be variations in meaning among different employees, but if there is a common frame of reference within the story, it can be a way to strengthen employee relations through identification. Organizational tales are created from past experiences, from current ideas and questions, and from a personal vision about the future (through stories and, possibly, mission statements).

These stories can be relayed through staff meetings (as mentioned previously, a common employee relations tool). For example, a sales team might report monthly figures in a meeting. A sales manager may ask them to review some of their best and worst experiences of the month through a story. These stories can provide the team with important lessons, make the report numbers more meaningful, and build relationships among individuals. Stories can also be conveyed in more informal settings, such as a local restaurant after working hours. The team may decide to meet at this specific location, and even though the setting is informal and casual, team members and leaders may be using the get-together as a means for strengthening employee relationships.

Additionally, organizational storytelling may also be revealing in terms of employee turnover; why is the person leaving, and what can be learned from his or her departure?

T. H. Feeley (2000) suggested that such attrition can be reduced by socializing employees using their peers or supervisors. Storytelling may provide a rich set of information that assists with socialization.

In terms of employee relations, partnerships must be built with internal stakeholders. Contextual

issues (i.e., environmental scanning) must be evaluated to gain an objective understanding of organizational life. By recognizing that employees are critical stakeholders, managers and team members can identify (through storytelling and other means of communication) which external and internal forces are of primary concern to the organization. Open feedback is essential. The open-door policy espoused by many organizations must be continuously practiced. Current and future employees must be aware of organizational processes and their roles within the organization.

Continuous feedback may stimulate such awareness. Employees need to be made aware of their responsibility in identifying development opportunities that will broaden and expand their skills and knowledge. Managers can also be helpful with identification of these opportunities. Thus, employees not only learn critical professional skills, but they also internalize that their organization is committed to forging positive relationships among employees. A final recommendation for successful employee relations is the institution and execution of employee mentoring programs. Positive relationships may be further enhanced through one-on-one identification and interaction.

—Brian C. Sowa

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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS (IABC)

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) is a not-for-profit professional association headquartered in San Francisco, California, with more than 13,000 members in more than 100 chapters with representation in 62 countries. IABC's mandate is to support members in their work to create strategic, interactive, integrated, and international organizational communication.

Members are linked through local chapter activities; local, national, and regional professional development initiatives that are delivered online, via telephone, and in person; an international conference; a print magazine, *Communication World*; *CW Bulletin*, an online newsletter; and an Internet Web site (www.iabc.com). A volunteer international executive board of directors composed of 26 communicators provides the strategic vision for the organization, which is informed by regional and local volunteer leaders. A salaried president and staff at its world headquarters handle day-to-day management of the association.

The organization boasts a well-developed and well-respected research arm, the IABC Research Foundation. The foundation develops original research that aims to advance the practice, perception and effectiveness of communication.

Through IABC's accreditation program, professional communicators can work toward an Accredited Business Communicator (ABC) designation. In addition to various recognition awards, IABC offers the Gold Quill Awards Program, an annual international competition for excellence in communication.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

IABC is more than 30 years old. From its beginnings at a communication conference in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1970, the organization has supported and acted as an advocate for professional communicators and their organizations. In the era of a booming post-WWII marketplace, the number of local International Council of Industrial Editors

(ICIE) chapters grew to the point where its leaders decided to create the first American professional communication association. Although the headquarter concept did not work for ICIE, the organization continued its print publications through local chapters. In addition, the association developed a peer and management evaluation and awards program. A similar organization, the American Association of Industrial Editors (AAIE), later established the Gold Quill awards, a program of recognizing excellence in the field, which continues today.

The associations began tracking membership and the function of communication in organizations during the 1950s. Using quantitative measures, the volunteer members analyzed data from nearly 2,000 American editors of nearly 10,000 internal and external organizational publications. Those findings are interesting to communication history students in that they demonstrate the gender, age, and income of the early professional communicators. (In 1955, one-third of the respondents were women, nearly one-half were more than 40 years old, and the average salary for those 40 years and older was US\$12,000.) The figures also trace the evolving functions of internal communicators.

The mid-1950s saw a shift in a communicator's responsibilities. Editors were increasingly moving from external communication departments to those of internal relations. However, many business publications had no identified link to their organization's objectives. The volunteer members identified this incongruity as an opportunity to communicate the value of their work to their organizational leaders.

Associations with the American Management Association, Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, and Oklahoma A & M led to professional development and strategic initiatives for local members during the 1950s. During this decade, ICIE volunteers developed measurement techniques that would help members communicate the value of their work to industry leaders. The main goal of the volunteers was to demonstrate through case histories with tangible results that managed communication programs tied to business objectives can lead to better understanding of company policies, lower turnover rates, and increased sales.

ICIE continued supporting its membership through print publications and professional development seminars throughout the 1960s. *Reporting* detailed the activities of the association, and the newsletter *Contact* was meant to assist communicators in demonstrating to their management that they could convey integral economic and policy information to employees. A nationwide tour of seminars endeavored to do the same in face-to-face settings. Regular mailings of successful case studies and research findings would later become the core of IABC's library and information resources (considered one of the major member benefits today).

In June of 1970 members of ICIE and AAIE amalgamated to form a 2,280-member IABC, and in 1974 Corporate Communicators Canada joined the association. Today, IABC consists of 12 districts or regions around the globe, including the Asia/Pacific Region, the Europe Region and the Sub-Saharan Africa Region. The association has evolved in correlation with the way people and their organizations communicate. In particular, technology now supplements print communication, and IABC communicates with members through its Web site, e-mail messages, and *CW Bulletin*.

Changing the way that people communicate changes the nature of relationships, which is not particular to any one situation or institution. As part of an ongoing process, public relations practitioners constantly analyze which communication channels work in their organizations and in society and which do not. According to Julie Freeman, IABC's current president, the association continues to respond to these contemporary realities and offers professional support for its members through "content, community and credibility."

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS

The content that Freeman refers to includes professional development opportunities, such as a yearly international conference, corporate communications summits, and research and measurement conferences. Many of the professional development vehicles and knowledge resources are delivered directly to the members via electronic channels.

The 94 local chapters in 12 countries provide professional development that is relevant to the needs of their specific members. Ranging from workshops, seminars, and presentations on topics such as negotiation skills in Australia and New South Wales, to managing employee communication during the SARS outbreak in Toronto, to using local attractions to promote the city of New Orleans, IABC members experience timely and relevant sessions that assist them in achieving high professional standards and innovation in organizational communication.

Although the majority of members work in the United States and Canada, IABC leaders attempt to capture global diversity by bringing best-practice examples from outside the continent to North America, and vice versa through research initiatives, articles in its publications, and the content of the learning sessions. Professional development seminars are delivered to members via the Internet and telephone, and in face-to-face settings. Those who present the learning opportunities are often top communicators from various parts of the world. These organizational leaders share experience and expertise on topics such as global branding, media coaching, and reputation risk management.

IABC membership reflects the changing face of where and how communicators work. The last two decades have seen a gradual switch from communicators working predominantly in corporate positions, to those working independently. IABC programming and intellectual resources reflect this change as the phenomenon becomes more prevalent.

In addition to working for professionals, IABC's efforts also include student and educator relations. The organization does not have a student-specific association under its umbrella; rather, individual local chapters choose to establish and support university and college student chapters. However, not all student chapters are supported by a local chapter; they can and do exist independently of a practitioner chapter. In an effort to actively establish relationships with future practitioners, to bring educators, students, and professional members together, and to encourage a wider diversity in organizational communication, IABC has established guidelines for local chapters interested in developing and nurturing these relationships.

ETHICAL AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

IABC members abide by the Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators. The code assumes three worldwide principles:

that just societies are governed by a profound respect for human rights and the rule of law; that ethics, the criteria for determining what is right and wrong, can be agreed upon by members of an organization; and, that understanding matters of taste requires sensitivity to cultural norms. (<http://www.iabc.com/members/joining/code.htm>)

According to the code, members agree to

1. Engage in communication that is not only legal but also ethical and sensitive to cultural values and beliefs
2. Engage in truthful, accurate, and fair communication that facilitates respect and mutual understanding
3. Adhere to the articles of the IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators (<http://www.iabc.com/members/joining/code.htm>)

These articles might not be referenced on a daily basis, but the topics within the code are addressed in publication articles, seminar themes, and member discussions. The code also plays a large part in a member achieving the Accredited Business Communicator (ABC) designation.

Similar to other professions, such as bar exams for lawyers and competency exams for general accountants, IABC members can earn accreditation. The program is managed by an accreditation council and represents both an evaluation of a communicator's expertise and a learning process for the applicant. Earning an ABC through IABC is a challenging process in which a communicator has to prove the ability to ethically and successfully manage and respond to organizational communication needs. The process is peer evaluated, and each section of the accreditation process is marked or graded by at least two, and occasionally more than four, experienced and accredited IABC members. The process has been adapted for different cultures and languages to reflect the global diversity of IABC membership.

Members with a minimum of five years' professional communication experience and a bachelor's degree, or a total of nine years of combined experience and education, are eligible to go through the process. After an application has been approved, the communicator submits a portfolio of work samples demonstrating the range of communication projects managed. The portfolio is meant to demonstrate to the evaluators how well the communicator understands communication planning. The final phase of the accreditation process consists of four hours of written and 30 minutes of oral testing. The entire process pays particular attention to ethical communication and is meant to reflect work situations and theoretical underpinnings of the profession. Nearly 25 percent of the applicants fail at least one section of the process on the first attempt. However, the process allows for an applicant to resubmit or retest specific sections of the evaluative process.

IABC members who commit to the accreditation program are supported on local, national, and international levels. Through virtual and face-to-face mentors, members learn from their peers and experience opportunities to articulate skills and knowledge. In addition, applicants can partake in virtual or face-to-face classes. Accredited members often boast an increase in credibility within their organizations and in the industry. Accredited members also report having higher salaries than their non-accredited peers. Although these are assets of the program, accredited members articulate that the learning process involved with accreditation is the most beneficial aspect.

The association offers other opportunities for members to demonstrate skills and knowledge, and to be honored for them. The most prominent of these is the Gold Quill Award, a program that offers professional communicators an opportunity to have their work evaluated by expert judges. All Gold Quill finalist entries are considered for the IABC Research Foundation's Jake Wittmer award for outstanding research in organizational communication, and for publication in IABC's knowledge resource materials. Although the association receives thousands of submissions each year, only a select few are chosen for excellence in business communication.

IABC recognizes its volunteers through various awards. The Fellow Designation acknowledges remarkable leadership, as well as contribution to the profession and service to the association, and is considered the highest and most prestigious honor for a member. Each year, the Chairman's Award recognizes an IABC volunteer who has demonstrated initiative, leadership, and a willingness to contribute to the association at an international level, and to the communication profession in general. Chapter Management Awards are presented to local chapters judged to have excelled in innovation, creativity, and best practices. Overall chapter management excellence is celebrated through the IABC Chapter of the Year award.

The association also recognizes individuals outside the organization who have proven to be extraordinary leaders in fostering excellent communication. The Excellence in Communication Leadership Award is usually given to member-nominated CEOs, managing directors, or presidents who consistently demonstrate vision and leadership in their commitment to effective business communication. In addition, the IABC Research Foundation facilitates a Lifetime Friend Award, which recognizes individuals who have been ardent supporters of research initiatives and who have donated their time and expertise to the Research Foundation's work.

GROUND-BREAKING RESEARCH

With its own distinct board of directors, IABC's Research Foundation aims to advance the practice, perception, and effectiveness of organizational communication by funding and publishing scholarly and professional research. The research results inform the association's educational programs by identifying the issues that are important to the members. This is achieved, in part, by a working group of 15 nominated communication thought leaders from academe, corporate, not-for-profit, and government sectors. The rotating membership of this think tank ensures that there is a fresh focus on future thinking about the profession and that key issues affecting public relations are recognized. The meeting's purpose is to recommend to the IABC

Research Committee a list of topics that can be developed into practical and original IABC information resources, services, and research. In addition, the information generated at the meeting is used to develop ideas for foundation projects and gives direction to the professional community through IABC publications.

IABC is unique in North America in that the organization supports international primary research through the Research Foundation. Past projects include the 1986 *Velvet Ghetto Summary Report*, the *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* study, and *Communication as an Intangible Asset*, among others. The studies are made available to members and nonmembers through IABC.

PEOPLE NETWORKS

IABC membership reflects the many forms of organizational communication. Members can range from investor relations professionals, to photographers, to CEOs of public relations firms. Freeman believes that one of the strengths of IABC is that it not only brings together people who are practicing different kinds of communication, but the organization connects practitioners around the world.

The community that forms around the membership manifests on different levels. For example, members use the membership directory, or the online "member search" feature and "member speak" to form a peer community, hire professionals, seek clients, or look for a job in areas where they may not have contacts. A member might also use the online IABC Job Centre to post a job vacancy or search for one. Perhaps the biggest benefit of IABC membership is the opportunity to volunteer and become involved in a community, where professional relationships and friendships are created at local, national, and international events. Because the organization is large and the membership diverse, people will often call on one another for knowledge sharing, professional advice and supplier recommendations, or problem-solving assistance. Members will also work together on collaborative projects, either for the association or for their own organizations. IABC leadership has

articulated a goal that the association facilitate the personal and/or professional connection that assists communicators to exchange knowledge about how to do their jobs.

—*DeNel Rehberg Sedo*

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INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSOCIATION

The International Public Relations Association (IPRA) is the world's only truly international public relations professional organization, with 1,000 professional members in 87 countries and with 89 countries identified as members of the global professional organization. Student memberships were also recently made available, and more than 200 students were identified with the organization in the 2003–2004 membership year directory as individuals interested in international public relations practitioner performance. A collegiate membership is also available for educators.

Fifteen world congresses have been hosted every three years since 1958 by the global association in major cities on six continents. In addition, the IPRA Council, which currently has global representation from 58 countries in its 77 elected members, has met annually since 1955 in 49 different cities of the world on seven continents. Council meetings are normally held in conjunction with jointly sponsored IPRA public relations conferences hosted by a country's national public relations association or with a country's annual national convention. IPRA has also hosted a number of international educator congresses, usually in association with its own congresses. The outreach of the association, therefore,

has truly been worldwide in educational impact for both professionals and educators.

In addition to providing networking and the sharing of information through conferences and meetings, IPRA has become significant to the global profession by providing global awards, the identification of universal ethical standards, recognition to groups that have advanced world understanding, publications on key professional and societal issues, and a consultancy role with the United Nations. An explanation of each of these programs follows.

GOLDEN WORLD AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

In 1990 IPRA initiated a program to recognize excellence in public relations practice with the creation of the annual IPRA Golden World Awards for Excellence. The awards program has increased in prestige annually, and today international public relations firms, corporations, associations, health organizations, chambers of commerce and other business groups, and governmental agencies are increasingly vying for recognition in this competition.

GLOBAL STANDARDS FOR ETHICAL PERFORMANCE

The pioneers within IPRA adopted the first code of conduct for global practitioners in Venice in 1961. The elements of the code were patterned after the code identified by the Public Relations Society of America for its members in 1950. In 1965, Lucien Matrat of France authored an international code of ethics that was adopted in Athens, Greece, by the IPRA General Assembly; it tied requirements for member practitioner professional and personal behaviors to the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights. In particular, the code requires that members shall refrain from (a) subordinating truth to other requirements, (b) circulating information that is not based on established and ascertainable facts, (c) taking part in professional activities damaging to human dignity or integrity, and (d) the use of subconscious approaches designed to manipulate the public without its awareness.

Concerns about environmental communication in 1991 resulted in a declaration that was approved in Nairobi under the IPRA chairmanship of Charles van der Straten Walle of Belgium. This code addresses practitioner responsibility to ensure the information and counsel they provide protects the environment, binding participants to environmental codes of practice adopted by the United Nations and the International Chamber of Commerce.

In 2002 specific member expectations were added to the IPRA charter on media transparency. The code identifies the expected relationship of IPRA members with members of the journalism profession within countries. The policy prohibits payment for editorial coverage and requires that when payment of any kind is received for editorial content, it be clearly identified as advertising or paid promotion. Gifts and the solicitation of coverage by journalists have also been addressed, with members required to prepare policy statements agreed to by journalists and public relations practitioners that have been made available to the public for inspection.

Although enforcement of the codes presents difficulties, their significance is related to the standard the codes identify for acceptable global public relations performance and the identification of practitioner behavior with the protection of fundamental human rights. Some indication of the positive impact is the fact that the Code of Athens has been translated into 20 languages and copies have been presented to numerous heads of state and the Pope. Other codes are carried in membership materials, emphasized at international meetings, and communicated through what is now a globally assessable Web site.

IPRA PRESIDENT'S AWARD

The IPRA President's Award was established in 1977 to recognize individuals or institutions outside of the public relations profession for "outstanding contributions that have led to better world understanding." Designed as a way of bringing recognition to individuals or institutions that have promoted principles of peace, social justice, cultural understanding, or the role and importance of

the public relations function in global society, the prize has been awarded to the Nobel Foundation, International Red Cross, Band Aid, the World Wide Fund for Nature, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The award reflects credit on public relations as a profession globally while bringing recognition to IPRA.

UNITED NATIONS

IPRA received recognition by the United Nations in 1964 as an international nongovernmental organization and has been granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council (UNESCO).

GOLD PAPERS

Position papers, printed with metallic gold covers and termed gold papers, were introduced under the leadership of Tim Traverse-Healy. The papers have defined the standards and ethics of public relations performance and education. Fourteen gold papers have been published. They have examined globalization; research and evaluation; public relations education; communication challenges including environmental concerns, quality control, and accountability; and ethical and social responsibility issues. These papers continue to be available and can be acquired by contacting the IPRA Secretariat at www.IPRA.org.

Among the gold papers with the greatest impact on global developments are those on public relations education.

HISTORY

IPRA has its origins in founders who were members of the Dutch Public Relations Club and the Institute for Public Relations in Britain, organizations in countries where international trade had long been the economic foundation. Two Dutch public relations practitioners—Hans Hermans and Jo Brongers—and four British practitioners—R. S. Forman, Roger Wimbush, Tom Fife Clark, and Norman Rogers—all officers of their respective public relations organizations, met informally in

London, where they identified a group of public relations executives in Britain, the Netherlands, France, Norway, and the United States of America whom they would invite to meet at the Royal Netherlands International Trade Fair in Holland for discussion of the needs and challenges entailed in the international practice of public relations. The meeting, which was also held under the auspices of the Public Relations Society of Holland, created the framework for initiating the development of what in 1955 would become IPRA. The formal establishment occurred with the adoption of a constitution and the appointment of the first IPRA council.

Founding council members included

- Tom Fife Clark, president (Great Britain)
- Tim Traverse-Healy, honorary secretary (Great Britain)
- Roger Wimbush (Great Britain)
- Alan Hess (Great Britain)
- Etienne Bloch (France)
- Jean Choppin de Janvry (France)
- Rene Tavernier (France)
- Rein J. Vogels (Netherlands)
- M. Weisglas (Netherlands)
- Erling Christopherson (Norway)
- Per Johansen (Norway)
- Odd Medboe (Norway)
- Richard B. Hall (United States)
- Edward L. Lipscomb (United States)

The mission of the organization was originally conceived as providing for the exchange of information and cooperation among international practitioners. However, following the adoption of an international code of ethics, the mission evolved into that of supporting the development of the highest possible standards of public relations ethics, practice, and performance.

By the 1990s, the mission had broadened to that of helping members keep in touch with national, regional, and international trends and issues via

informal contact and official functions, as well as that of explaining to opinion formers the role of the public relations function.

By the turn of the 21st century, the vision and mission were being defined in more strategic terms. The vision is now that of being the world's most relevant, resourceful, and influential professional associations for senior international public relations executives. The focus of the mission has also changed to providing professional development and member services that enable practitioners to be more effective in international counseling relationships.

LEADERSHIP

The United Kingdom and the United States have led in the numbers of professionals who have served as president. However, presidents from 19 countries have headed the organization since 1955. Dr. Don Wright, a leading American educator, will be the first educator elected to serve as president in 2005. A number of distinguished professionals have also served as influential secretary-generals of IPRA. Among these were Tim Traverse-Healy, who guided the organization in its formative years, and Sam Black, who through world travel substantially increased awareness of the global association. Currently, council members elected from 58 different countries guide the policies of the organization. At least one council member served as national chair within their countries.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

At the present, only one recognition has been established to acknowledge outstanding contribution to IPRA and to the global profession. This is the granting of Membership Emeritus Status in IPRA. Those who have been identified as making a distinguished contribution to IPRA and to the global advancement of the public relations profession by country include

Belgium: Charles Van Der Straten Waillet

Egypt: Mahmoud El Gohary

France: Claude Chapeau, Jacques Coup de Frejac, Lucien Matrat

Germany: Albert Oeckl

Greece: Manos B Pavlidis, Marcel Yoel

India: Anand Akerkar

Israel: Michael Barzilay

Japan: Roy Sanada

Netherlands: Anne Van Der Meiden, Rein J. Vogels

Netherlands Antilles: Arturo Jesuran

Norway: Odd H. Medboe

Sweden: Goran Sjoberg

Switzerland: Alain Modoux, Jean-Jacques Wyler

Turkey: Betul Mardin

United Kingdom: Sam Black, Dennis Buckle, Tom Fife Clark, Tim Traverse-Healy

United States: Edward L. Bernays, Robert L. Bliss, John W. Felton, Denny Griswold, Roy J. Leffingwell, Gene G. McCoy, John E. Sattler

—Melvin L. Sharpe

INTERNSHIP

As perhaps the most widely recognized and frequently practiced form of experiential education, internships are regular curricular offerings in most college and university public relations programs. An internship is work experience, typically approved for academic credit and offered by a business or nonprofit organization, designed to accomplish specific learning goals. Student interns are monitored by an on-site supervisor and a faculty member, each of whom ideally serves as a mentor. Internships extend the traditional classroom, allowing students to apply knowledge gained in their coursework to specific, practical tasks. Many public relations practitioners, faculty members, and professional associations consider internships an essential part of career preparation.

Based on the work of John Dewey (1938) and borrowing the label *intern* from medical schools, educational programs in many disciplines offer hands-on field experiences in which students connect abstract classroom concepts with work-based problems

and, by extension, increase their marketability after graduation. As Richard Katula and Elizabeth Threnhauser (1999) discussed, internships have two main goals: (a) acquainting students with professional working environments and (b) providing opportunities for professional development.

Fred Beard and Linda Morton (1999) found six predictors of successful internships: (a) academic preparation, (b) student initiative, (c) positive outlook, (d) quality of supervision, (e) task appropriateness, and (f) compensation. Compensation traditionally has taken many forms, ranging from academic credit to tuition reimbursement to payment for service. Discussion continues regarding the most appropriate compensation, and some research indicates that paid internships are taken more seriously by both students and field supervisors. Also important is that tasks assigned to interns be both structured and rich enough to promote skill development.

Beard and Morton (1999) also pointed to five internship outcomes: (a) development of job-related skills, (b) accrual of career benefits (e.g., job prospects, mentors), (c) increased career focus (e.g., understanding requisite skills and work environments), (d) enhanced professionalism (e.g., refined interpersonal skills), and (e) tangible outcomes (e.g., portfolio materials). Both the academic and field supervisors play critical roles. Structured internship programs better enable students to connect their experiences with public relations coursework. Field supervisors who provide specific directions and feedback assist in maximizing the experience—both for the intern and the organization. Internships should be designed as much more than work for academic credit; they should be learning experiences where students are mentored while having opportunities to contribute productively to host organizations.

Most student interns, faculty supervisors, and field mentors evaluate participation positively; and professional associations, such as PRSA, recommend internship experience as important in career preparation. Based on a survey of practitioners, Gayle Pohl and Dee Vandeventer (2001) concluded that persons entering the profession must possess specific skills; thus, job-related experience, such

as that attained through internships, is essential. Further, the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (2002–2003) predicted fierce competition for entry-level public relations positions and noted that internships are vital to securing employment.

—Joy L. Hart

See also Mentoring; Practice; Public Relations Society of America

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INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION THEORY

Historically, public relations has been closely associated with mass communication, in part because until only recently, public relations practitioners usually were educated and worked as journalists before entering public relations. Also, public relations frequently targets mass media as a popular channel to carry its messages, placing great emphasis on publicity-gaining activities and media relations. However, public relations also commonly employs interpersonal communication in carrying out its research and planning functions and executing its strategies, tactics, and evaluation processes. Public relations practitioners might well study interpersonal communication theory and master interpersonal communication techniques to enhance their probabilities of engaging in best practices.

Mass media functions to provide glimpses of socially constructed reality, projecting “pictures

in our heads” synthesized from the real world, in Walter Lippmann’s (1965) terms. Gaye Tuchman (1978) noted the news media acts as the public’s window on the world. Mass communication influences the way people relate to one another interpersonally and vice versa. The assessment applies just as well to public relations: In many instances, public relations influences the way people relate to one another interpersonally, and there is a growing recognition of the importance of interpersonal communication in public relations.

As early as 1955, Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld described interpersonal communication as an intervening variable between mass communication and behavior change. Katz and Lazarsfeld introduced the two-step model of mass media effects, depicting interpersonal interactions as channels of mass media information in which individuals engage in interpersonal communication about mass media content, exchanging information and influencing each other’s opinions. Public relations campaigns frequently work to facilitate application of the two-step model and depend on word-of-mouth amplifications of public relations’ mass media publicity placements.

Traditionally, interpersonal communication contexts have included theories dealing with individuals in relationships or the relationships themselves, especially—but not limited to—dyads. Public relations might well serve as a bridge between interpersonal and mass communications, since public relations contexts often include communication between dyads as well as broader societal interactions.

Weighing similarities as well as differences between interpersonal communication and mass communication, Jennings Bryant and R. L. Street, Jr., (1988) suggested that interpersonal and mass communication differ in (a) theoretical focus, with mass communication being preoccupied with receiver-oriented, and interpersonal with both receiver- and source-oriented, with an emphasis on the latter; (b) nature of the communication process, with mass and interpersonal communication each having varying active, recursive (involving feedback), interactive, and transactional patterns, depending on respective theoretical perspectives; and (c) outcomes of message perception in relation

to receiver cognitions and attitudes: Interpersonal research assumes cognitions and attitudes to be comparatively stable, whereas mass communication assumes they are dynamic and subject to influence by the mediated message. Bryant and Street concluded that studying each other's models and sharing findings can only enrich both interpersonal and mass communication domains. The same assumption likely applies equally to interpersonal communication and public relations.

APPLYING INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION THEORY TO PUBLIC RELATIONS

Elizabeth Toth (1992), Timothy Coombs (2001), and others have argued for pluralistic studies and applications in public relations, involving rhetorical, relational and systems perspectives from interpersonal communication theory. In general, practitioners in public relations engage in communication in three different categories of relationships: (a) client/organization–practitioner relations, (b) journalist/media gatekeeper–practitioner relations, and (c) members of target publics–practitioner relations. Interpersonal communication occurs within each of the three different categories.

Interpersonal communication theory has been applied to public relations practice to good effect. For example, Marcia Prior-Miller (1989) examined four theoretical perspectives rooted in what she characterized as “sociological-organizational traditions,” including (a) symbolic interactionism, (b) exchange theory, (c) conflict theory, and (d) structural-functional theory, and found that they each help explain various public relations communication phenomena under varying conditions. Studying internal public relations in a hospital, Gary Kreps (1989) discovered that information theory/uncertainty reduction is important to the organization as a system, where information becomes a prerequisite to the development and implementation of relevant innovations to accomplish systemwide organizational development.

Classically rhetorical post hoc evaluations of speaker's intent, oration, environment, and effect

dates back at least to the Greeks but is central to many different types of public relations campaigns conducted today. Although research on compliance-gaining message strategies has been conducted mainly in interpersonal settings, public relations messages that have compliance gaining as a goal or component are commonplace. Effective persuasive campaigns often rely on multiple messages. In public relations, multiple messages may involve use of different channels, calling upon different theoretical traditions including interpersonal communication theory.

Considering public relations campaigns invites further consideration of communication theory, which serves to inform campaigns about effective audience segmentation and message design, while campaigns provide data for further theoretical development. James VanLeuven (1989) found five theoretical frameworks—(a) persuasion/learning effects, (b) social learning, (c) low involvement, (d) cognitive consistency, and (e) value change—useful for understanding campaigns and their effects.

Two exploratory studies analyzed Silver Anvil Award–winning campaign case histories recognized for campaign excellence by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) for expressed and implied application of interpersonal theoretical perspectives. The first study, limited to 35 campaigns conducted only in the year or so before 1990, concluded that interpersonal communication theorists could use public relations as a laboratory in which to develop and test their theories. Interpersonal communication strategies are important to the effectiveness of public relations campaigns along with other strategies, such as mass media publicity placements, direct (unmediated) communications, and special events.

In the second study, 136 Silver Anvil campaign cases from 1970 to 1990 were analyzed for applicability of seven interpersonal theoretical perspectives. Information theory was found the most applicable overall and, along with social exchange theory, did not vary over time. Systems theory was found to be the least applicable overall, but did vary over time, along with constructivism, social influence, developmental approaches, and symbolic

interactionism. Also, interpersonal communication strategies suggested by theories have been for some time as applicable as other strategies, such as mass media publicity placements. A follow-up content analysis of leading public relations academic journals found that 12 percent of the research published had been guided by interpersonal theory and that another 15 percent of the research published might have benefited from framing with interpersonal theories about persuasion, cognitive factors, situational factors such as involvement, and need for negotiation during crises and conflicts.

Theoretical applications to public relations may enable practitioners to predict and control outcomes, or at least influence probabilities of outcomes. Practitioners perform a variety of management roles and functions while acting as liaisons between the organizations they represent and an organization's publics. Among functions performed are ascertaining and influencing public opinion, often using some combination of interpersonal and mass communication techniques. When public opinion about the organization is favorable, the practitioner's function is maintenance and problem prevention. However, when public opinion is less than desirable, practitioners are expected to design and implement communication programs to change the public's attitudes. Vincent Hazleton and Carl Botan (1989) cited the example that positive or negative publicity may affect stock prices in predictable directions: With positive media coverage, stock prices are likely to rise, and vice versa. A practitioner applying a theory that prescribed intervention in the communication process with journalists to affect the valence of publicity would be exercising control, but within ethical and legal boundaries. It is likely that at least some of those public relations–initiated communications between practitioners and journalists would be interpersonal in nature. New technologies such as Internet-based e-mail exponentially broaden opportunities for interpersonal communication across publics. By using theory-based models to drive strategy selection and implementation, probabilities of effectiveness may be greatly enhanced.

—Lynne M. Sallot

See also Best practices; Theory-based practice

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INTERVIEW AS A COMMUNICATION TOOL

Public relations professionals make use of media interviews to get the organization's message across and enhance its image. Such interviews can result because a spokesperson is invited to appear on a talk program or asked to respond to key questions in an interview format. A second way they occur is for practitioners to pitch the interview to producers who are looking for interesting personalities to put on talk programs.

Television (national and local cable networks), radio, print and the Internet provide opportunities for interviews. Public relations practitioners arrange for members of their organization to be interviewed by the media by maintaining an active media relations program. Media relations can be defined as "working with mass media in seeking publicity or responding to their interests in the organization" (Wilcox, Cameron, Ault, & Agee, 2003, p. 8). A practitioner must have an updated media list and keep in touch to know the shows/columns, the type of audience targeted, the time constraints, format used for interviewing, and so forth.

With a well-cultivated relationship, it is easier for public relations professionals to successfully pitch (present and sell) interview ideas for their clients. Public relations practitioners need to focus their pitch to media by highlighting benefits to the audience rather than assuming a self-serving role on behalf of the organization.

Television shows today are replete with celebrities, making it difficult for public relations professionals to sell their non-glamorous, corporate clients. However, the practitioner can look to local TV stations and radio to get the message across. With thousands of radio stations in the United States, it is relatively easy to reach targeted audiences.

The public relations practitioner's job does not end with getting the placement. He/she then approaches the required media professionals to give them basic information so that the interview appears "spontaneous, conversational and natural" (Anderson, 1991, p. 19). The next step is coaching the interviewee for the interview (also called media

training). This ensures that the interviewee is comfortable and has a good grasp of the subject. Public relations practitioners may want to conduct mock interviews beforehand. It also helps to decide in advance key messages that the organization wants to convey through the interview. The interviewee can then try to incorporate them into his or her answers. It is essential to consider the target audience while framing these answers. An interviewee's appearance plays a dominant role in the success of the interview, especially in the case of a broadcast interview. Body language, tone, and attire speak a lot louder than words. It is also advisable to decide in advance how to deal with awkward questions.

On the day of the interview, public relations practitioners may be present to smooth over any glitch during the interview. Some practitioners also prefer to audiotape the interview to clear up subsequent misunderstandings. The interviewer should be informed that the client is also taping the interview.

Finally, practitioners need to ensure that the interview was aired/printed appropriately and should use evaluation research to gauge its effect on the public.

—Brenda J. Wrigley

See also Media relations; Pitch letter

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INTERVIEW AS A RESEARCH TOOL

Interviewing is an age-old technique, for people have long asked questions to find out information. As Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey noted in 1994, population censuses in ancient Egypt, followed more recently by clinical analyses and by World War I psychological evaluations, employed interviewing techniques. Opinion polls have long relied on interview responses, and today interviewing is a common research tool in public relations, marketing, therapy, and academic inquiry. Further, although interviewing is used in quantitative research (e.g., survey interviews), it is more common as a qualitative technique.

According to Thomas R. Lindlof (1995),

In qualitative research, one interviews people to understand their perspectives on a scene, to retrieve experiences from the past, to gain expert insight or information, to obtain descriptions of events or scenes that are normally unavailable for observation, to foster trust, to understand a sensitive or intimate relationship, or to analyze certain kinds of discourse. (1995, p. 5)

Interviews may take place in dyads or groups and can be conducted in person, over the telephone, or more recently, on the Internet. Most often, interviews are conducted in face-to-face, individual sessions. They can be very brief or quite lengthy, sometimes including multiple meetings. Typically, interviews are conducted based on an interview schedule or guide—a list of planned questions.

Various types of interviews are used in research. Three of these are structured, semistructured, and unstructured. In structured interviews, the interviewer adheres to the interview guide, typically asking the same questions in the same order of all interviewees. These interviews may have predetermined response categories into which answers are recorded; however, practices vary. In semistructured formats, the interviewer has specific questions

to ask but is free to vary the order and use probes to elicit more information. In unstructured (sometimes labeled *depth* or *in-depth*) interviews, broad, open-ended questions are employed to understand the interviewee's views and behaviors; there are no predetermined response categories, and questions and probes can take various directions.

Interviewing has both strengths and weaknesses as a research tool. The strengths include comprehensive questions, probing for additional information, flexibility in dealing with interviewees, rich data, and unanticipated information. The weaknesses include time required (in collecting, transcribing, and analyzing data), potential interviewer influence on responses, answers containing unimportant information, and low anonymity. Although interviews may reduce error because interviewees can speak in their own words and not select answers from predetermined categories, the potential for bias still exists (e.g., interpreting responses). Thus, trained interviewers and careful analysis are required.

If interviewing is partly conversation, then the interviewer must be a skilled conversationalist. . . . If interviewing is partly the “digging tool” of social science, then the interviewer must be an effective, nonthreatening interrogator. If interviewing is partly a learning situation, then the interviewee must be a willing student. (Lindlof, 1995, p. 175)

—Joy L. Hart

See also Focus group; Public relations research; Qualitative research; Research goals; Research objectives

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INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

Investigative journalism grew out of the muckraking tradition established by Lincoln Steffens, Upton

Sinclair, Samuel Hopkins Adams, Ida Tarbell, and others in the early 20th century. The muckrakers essentially created a new journalistic form, one that exposed social ills and government, personal, or corporate misbehavior.

Muckraking is known today by several names, including investigative journalism, depth reporting, precision journalism, and computer-assisted reporting. Most techniques used in investigative journalism are not much different from those used in other journalism. Investigative writers rely on interviews, records and documents, narrative leads, and vignettes, just as other journalists do.

The difference lies primarily in the purpose of investigative journalism (to expose misbehavior or problems) and the amount of space or time devoted to such reports. A newspaper might devote six complete pages and a broadcast outlet, 30 minutes over a week to compelling, important investigative reports. Social science methods also are used in many investigative reports; beat reporters rarely engage in the kinds of computations, analyses, and interpretations that investigative journalists use routinely.

One of hundreds of examples of investigative journalism is the *Chicago Tribune's* analysis of the relationship between patient deaths and hospital cleanliness. The *Tribune* pointed out that approximately 100,000 patients die each year because of dirty hands, instruments, and facilities. Moreover, the *Tribune* showed that hospitals have reduced by 25 percent their cleaning staffs since 1995. The *Tribune* studied health data from 75 federal and state agencies, court and hospital records, health organizations, and patient databases. The methods essentially were those used by epidemiologists.

Advocacy organizations and foundations, for which public relations practitioners work, sometimes use the techniques of investigative journalism to shine light on a pressing problem or issue.

The Center for Responsive Politics, the National Institute on Money in State Politics, and the Center for Public Integrity, for example, completed a massive study of the states' campaign spending practices during the 2000 elections. They found, among other things, that unregulated soft money was sometimes transferred to state party committees from federal party committees. This confirms "a

commonly held perception that state parties are used to launder soft money and influence presidential and congressional elections in ways never envisioned nor intended by federal election laws" (Dunbar, Sylwester, & Moore, 2002, n.p.). Data from all 50 states were analyzed, hundreds of election officials were interviewed, Federal Election Commission data were analyzed, and hundreds of written records were collated and analyzed.

This and similar work is not done by a newspaper or broadcast station, but it is in effect investigative journalism. Public relations practitioners occasionally find themselves involved in such projects, if only to help write and disseminate the results.

Investigative journalism, of course, frightens practitioners who work in secretive, morally challenged organizations because they know an investigative writer might uncover an organization's dirty secrets. Practitioners in many hospitals, for example, probably were distraught to read the *Tribune's* series about dirty hospitals. Such publicity doesn't make an organization look good.

—Michael Ryan

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INVESTOR RELATIONS

There's an old saw in Texas that goes "if you don't like the weather, wait a few minutes and it will change." The unpredictable nature of Texas weather says much about the practice of investor relations.

In its relatively short history, investor relations (IR) has experienced a number of life-changing events. No wonder, given the dynamics of our world, our society,

and our economy. Never mind the massive impact of the economy's boom of the late 1990s and bust at the beginning of the new millennium. Just look at what's happened the last two years, with scandals such as Enron and others. Unquestionably, the way corporate America did business yesterday is not the way it will do business tomorrow. Similarly, the way investor relations was practiced yesterday is not the way it is being practiced today. Tomorrow is anyone's guess.

What do we mean by investor relations? Much like its parent, public relations, investor relations has many definitions. They range from long-time investor relations consultant William F. Mahoney's succinct "to market public companies to investors" (1991, p. 3) to Bruce Marcus and Sherwood Lee Wallace's (1997) encompassing "the process by which we inform and persuade investors of the values inherent in the securities we offer as a means to capitalize business" (p. xi). At an extreme is the National Investor Relations Institute's definition that blends a number of communications and finance disciplines and calls it IR:

Investor relations is a strategic management responsibility that integrates finance, communication, marketing and securities laws compliance to enable the most effective two-way communication between a company, the financial community, and other constituencies, which ultimately contributes to company's securities achieving fair valuation. (p. 1)

FROM PUBLIC RELATIONS TO FINANCE TO IMC AND BACK AGAIN

Part of the difficulty with getting a generally accepted definition is that investor relations is a work in progress.

Communications professionals agree that investor relations is the offspring of public relations and finance. Its maturation has been nurtured by the thoughtful and strategic responses to the dynamics occurring virtually daily in the marketplace and corporate America.

IR'S DEVELOPMENT PATH

We have to go back to the Great Depression to find IR's finance parent. Part of the reason for the stock

market crash in 1929 was the practice of using puffery to feature stocks. Tycoons, reporters, and public relations persons often claimed that the share values of their companies were worth well beyond their actual value.

Newspaper reporters representing some of America's most respected journals sometimes wrote stories that falsely lauded the investment value of companies. For example, George Gunton was a popular economist who championed the free enterprise systems in his capacity as editor of *Gunton's Magazine*. While in that position, he received a \$15,000 annual retainer from Standard Oil.

Such practices led newly elected president Franklin D. Roosevelt to urge Congress to address the need for federal securities laws governing publicly held companies. Congress passed the Securities Act of 1933, which required that a company going public file a prospectus and that the information contained within be complete and truthful. Congress then passed the Securities Act of 1934, which required public companies to periodically report on their financial condition. This Act created the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), a powerful federal agency that has more than lived up to its billing as the watchdog of Wall Street, striking fear in the hearts of big and small investors alike for more than six decades.

It took 20 years after the SEC mandate before General Electric Co. (GE) established the first formal IR department in 1953. Glenn Saxon was the first investor relations officer (IRO) at GE, and early members of his staff went on to create investor relations functions at half a dozen major corporations. Together they also helped form New York's Investor Relations Association, which continues to operate today. More important, the New York group was the catalyst for creating the voice of the investor relations profession, the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI). NIRI was begun in 1969 and today numbers more than 5,000 members in 35 chapters around the nation. In essence, it's an association of corporate officers and investor relations professionals responsible for communicating among corporate management, the investing public, and the broad financial community.

At GE and other early investor relations adopters, IR was an appendage of the public relations or corporate communications function, typically with a dotted line to the chief financial officer's office. The requirement in these early years was to generate information for existing and potential shareholders. Gathering, crafting, and distributing information was and is, of course, one of the primary tasks of public relations.

IR GROWS WITH A FLARE

Understandably, investor relations evolved during the 1960s and 1970s with, as Mahoney wrote, a "promotional flare" (1991, p. 3). Annual reports became showpieces of color and graphics with extraordinary budgets. "Dog and pony shows," the euphemism for multimedia presentations to security analyst and stockholder meetings, became the trademark of full-service public relations departments. Investor relations practitioners were technicians, leveraging their communication skills to create the necessary tools, such as reports, speeches and multimedia presentations, to inform the investment community. Few interfaced directly with the chief executive officer or any other member of the strategy-setting dominant coalition. Simply stated, they were order takers.

ENTER THE CORPORATE RAIDERS

This "Age of Impressionism," as Mahoney described it (1991, p. 3), came to sudden and unnerving end in the early 1980s with the emergence of a most unlikely influencer—the corporate raider. Individuals such as T. Boone Pickens, Ivan Boesky, Carl Icahan, and others created a battleground unlike any ever experienced in corporate America. A whole new lexicon gave the era almost a romantic feel. Terms like *white knight*, *black knight*, *poison pill*, *Saturday night special*, *junk bonds*, *greenmail*, and the dreaded *restructuring* captured everyone's attention, particularly the media's. Interestingly, investor relations took more strides toward becoming a valuable corporate function during this tumultuous time than in any

previous decade in the practice's short history. It was the demand of the merger and acquisition business for quality information that set the stage for investor relations to become an important part of corporate strategy and communications.

As company after company was put into play and industry after industry consolidated, corporate raiders, along with stable companies looking to grow by acquisition, determined that the market was undervaluing most businesses. Moreover, managements recognized the value of a higher share price in discouraging unsolicited bids for control. The higher the stock price, the costlier the takeover. The phrase "the best defense is a high stock price" was heard in countless corporate boardrooms during the 1980s (Mahoney, 1991, p. 87).

Traditional public relations practitioners, functioning as investor relations representatives, found themselves involved in financial discussions with corporate leaders. Those who understood the financial markets moved easily into the dialogue. Those who did not sooner or later relinquished their investor relations role to the professionals who had boned up on SEC regulations, learned basic accounting, or took to learning finance. In a matter of months, the investor relations/public relations practitioner experienced a major reality jolt. Priorities went from producing bland press releases and glitzy annual reports to battling in the takeover trenches:

- Giving daily reports from the field on how the battle was going
- Assessing the friends and foes
- Identifying and facilitating direct contact with shareholders who were hidden behind brokerage or bank accounts
- Doing quality research on the bidder
- Leading or conducting media contact or providing the information that went to reporters
- Determining the strategic content of information that would sway investors and analysts
- Preparing and disseminating the actual communications materials

By the 1990s, the takeover battlefield was considerably quieter because corporate managements

had pretty well learned their lessons. Managements became more aware of enhancing shareholder value and incorporating it into strategic growth priorities. In the process, senior corporate executives recognized a very different role for investor relations. Swept aside were the more traditional public relations technical skills. In their place came the more specific and strategic tools of monitoring investor attitudes and actions, and communicating corporate valuation programs and results.

Not surprisingly, because of their “financial” nature, these tasks fell to the finance-savvy people. Subsequently, investor relations moved from the public relations or corporate communications departments to the chief financial officer’s group, or even as a direct report to the chief executive officer. The people who occupied the posts were highly credentialed and often consisted of former business journalists, public relations executives who possessed strong communications skills but also thoroughly understood business and finance, and perhaps a research analyst, an accountant, or a line business manager. They were working in a field that had become well defined as focusing on the investor constituency. They often took on additional responsibility for strategizing and executing high-level corporate communications that involved the CEO, whose acknowledged ultimate responsibility was to enhance valuation.

ENTER THE BULLS OF THE 1990S

The next major life-changing event for investor relations was the bull market that led Wall Street virtually throughout the 1990s and into this century. Individuals rushed back into the market by the millions. Institutional investments recorded phenomenal growth. Media made the market front page news virtually daily. The Dow Jones Industrial Index, which hovered around 1000 in the 1970s, hit 7000 in 1997 and then soared beyond 9000 just months later. Venture capitalists could not fund all the new businesses being formed, particularly the dot-coms.

The boom led to two developments that dramatically altered the investor relations landscape.

First, the competition for capital and for market visibility became intense. IR pros were charged

with developing initiatives that would break through the clutter on Wall Street, improve their company’s market visibility, and open the door to low-cost capital to fuel growth. This prompted the marketing discipline to enter and, in fact, emerge as a primary driver of the investor relations process.

Marcus and Wallace (1997) argued that, in fact, investor relations always has been a marketing function. “It has always been a process of understanding the needs of the target audience, and of casting the information about a company in ways that persuade the investor that a dollar invested in my company will appreciate faster than a dollar invested in somebody else’s company,” they maintained (p. xvii). They said,

Call it what you will, but any process that relates a company’s products or services—or even cogent information about that company—to the needs of the buyer is marketing. And that . . . is what investor relations really is. To pretend otherwise is to put oneself in a poor competitive position. (1997, p. xvii)

Second, the boom of the 1990s rudely forced aside the notion of investing for long-term value and replaced it with a very short-term focused approach that worried about satisfying Wall Street quarter to quarter. With this shift came the *managed earnings* syndrome, where corporate managements, through the accounting process, attempted to meet or beat the previous quarterly earnings to satisfy analyst expectations. The culprit here, as Louis M. Thompson wrote, was the reality that a “penny missed” could have devastating results on a company’s stock price (2002, p. 12).

The combination of these two developments during the 1990s—vying for the attention of Wall Street and managed earnings—brought the investment community to the brink of another dramatic sea change in the history of Wall Street and investor relations.

THE CRASH OF CORPORATE CREDIBILITY

Except for the 2000 passage of Regulation Full Disclosure, which restricted the selective disclosure of material information to analysts and investors

prior to making it available to the general public, Congress and the SEC basically stood aside as corporate America maintained its managed earnings practice.

Then in October 2001 the world learned that a high-flying energy trading company was under SEC investigation for its accounting practices. Within weeks, Enron, with 16 of 17 “buy” to “strong buy” ratings, collapsed, costing shareholders and employees billions and taking with it long esteemed accounting firm Arthur Andersen. Within months, Global Crossing cratered, followed by accounting scandals at WorldCom, Tyco International, Adelphia Communications, and other blue-chip companies.

Multiple issues were blamed: aggressive accounting practices to meet quarterly earnings “consensus” expectations, conflicts of interest between research and investment banking, weaknesses in board oversight, a compensation system ill designed to align managements’ interests with those of their shareholders, and conflicts of interest between auditing and consulting in major accounting firms.

Adding fuel to the fire was intense media coverage of the almost daily developments and increasing loss of investor confidence. Cover stories like *Fortune*’s “You Bought, They Sold” with the photos of CEOs who took away millions from their failing companies while shareholders lost it all, were all too common.

The investor relations profession was not immune from the firestorm. When one looks at the companies that were headlined in the scandals, all had investor relations professionals who were members in good standing of the National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI). Were the IROs in these companies aware of the alleged fraudulent practices? If so, is it that they voiced their objections and no one listened? If they saw fraud, did they try to report it? Whatever they did or didn’t do “obviously reflects on our profession,” remarked NIRI’s president and CEO Louis M. Thompson, Jr. (2002, p. 11).

Enron’s collapse, exacerbated by the other scandals, triggered the most extensive Congressional legislation and SEC regulations seen on Wall Street in 60 years (Thompson, 2002, p. 2). Heading the list was the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, passed in July 2002,

that in its simplest definition requires public companies to validate the accuracy and integrity of their financial management. Although some see Sarbanes-Oxley as just another compliance burden, many see it is an opportunity to make real improvements in governance, compliance, and risk management transparency, control, and performance.

Moreover, beginning in December 2001, the SEC began pumping out 18 rule proposals designed to help restore investor confidence. Even NIRI tightened its reins. In April 2002, the NIRI board released its “Ten Point Plan to Restore Investor Confidence.” Their program is designed to be NIRI’s contribution to an overall effort in which all players in the equity markets must contribute to ensure investors that equity markets are fair, credible, and transparent.

IR RETURNS TO ITS PUBLIC RELATIONS ROOTS

Fast forward to 2003, and we see investor relations again evolving, this time seemingly back to its public relations roots.

Shane McLaughlin, senior writer at Best Practices in Corporate Communications, maintained that IR and public relations are once again converging. “With renewed calls for information in the wake of corporate scandals and new financial reporting standards . . . there is more reason than ever to combine the functions of investor relations and corporate communications,” he said (2003, p. 9).

Also, McLaughlin argued that it is only natural that as companies open up more channels to send information, corporate communications will play a central role in preserving consistency and content (2003, p. 9). Even if a company hasn’t integrated the two functions of IR and PR, the people on these two sides need to be joined at the hip, he adds. “That way communications is systematically involved way before a matter becomes a public issue” (2003, p. 9).

Roger S. Pondel (2002) argued that the debate essentially is over. Those who don’t understand that investor relations and public relations are converging are seriously weakening the companies’

valuations. The two management disciplines of IR and public relations are being brought together more closely, Pondel maintained, because of heightened disclosure regulations and exploding technology around the Internet and related telecommunications.

Jeffrey Greene, global vice chair of corporate finance at Ernst & Young, suggested a new view of IR before a symposium of investor relations professionals earlier this year. He called it “Investor Relationship Management,” whereby IROs move beyond providing data to facilitating a dialogue with the investor community on how best to value their companies. Greene added that the IRO’s job is to manage relationships—internally and with the investing community, communicating but also educating and coaching: “It’s a two-way dialogue (shades of Grunig!), and it requires integrated communications” (Berstein, 2003, p. 4).

However, the mingling of communication functions and reporting, along with the increased level of sophistication in the IRO function, has led to tension among the disciplines—public relations, investor relations, marketing, and corporate communications. One solution calls for companies to have a linking pin structure of employee groups: The corporate communications department overlaps with the CFO, who overlaps with IR, and they all overlap with the CEO, and so on. Many see IR as that linking pin.

IR DESTINED FOR NEW RESPECT

Far from a new issue, this turf battle among the disciplines promises to prevail for decades. Regardless of where investor relations lands within the dominant coalition, corporate managements appear in agreement that the role and responsibilities of the IR executive will continue to expand. Specifically, five developments are singled out for fueling the future growth of IR, including:

- A greater need to satisfy more stringent disclosure requirements
- A broader communications role in the company
- A more proactive attitude by corporate managements toward investor relations
- More involvement in the strategic planning process
- Greater information needs from institutions and portfolio managers

In sum, corporate managements have a great opportunity to elevate investor relations to a more strategic and valuable role in response to today’s turmoil in capital markets and corporate governance. Companies need strong IR and communications competencies to successfully help shape the evolution of capital markets communication for their company and their industry. In return for such a proactive approach, companies likely will see the benefits in stock price and operating performance.

—H.R. Hutchins

See also Annual financial report; National Investor Relations Institute; Securities and Exchange Commission

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INVOLVEMENT

Involvement is a psychological concept used to explain people’s motivation to process persuasive and other messages.

The *involvement* construct traces its roots to the late 1940s in psychology, but flourished in the 1960s as a way to explain a variety of communication

phenomena. These included people's *selectivity* in message processing, differences in the processing of *television versus print* messages, and resistance to *attitude change* attempts. For a review, see Charles T. Salmon's 1986 chapter "Perspectives on Involvement in Consumer and Communication Research" in *Progress in Communication Sciences*.

Today, involvement thrives as an umbrella construct that subsumes a variety of closely related concepts. In general, involvement influences the processing of public relations messages two ways: (a) as an *antecedent* that moderates people's willingness to focus on a message and (b) as the *heightened processing* of messages themselves.

INVOLVEMENT AS AN ANTECEDENT TO MESSAGE PROCESSING

Involvement is most often defined as the degree to which an individual perceives a message as being relevant to him or her because the subject matter (an idea or topic, product or service, cause, etc.) has consequences in his or her life. James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) defined involvement as a degree of connectedness between an individual and a message. Robert L. Heath and William Douglas explained that involvement "can be used to predict a person's willingness to process a message as well as the likelihood that existing message content will be used to assess each new message" (1991, p. 179).

Involvement moderates message processing because people are inundated with messages (informational overload) and have limited cognitive capacity to process information. People have been described as "cognitive misers" who are selective in what messages they pay attention to and devote only the effort necessary to make correct judgments. People are more motivated to process messages deemed relevant (high involvement) and less willing to exert the cognitive effort required if messages appear to be of little or no importance (low involvement).

Reviews of the involvement construct demonstrate the varying ways in which antecedent involvement is used. Johnson and Eagly (1989) suggested that antecedent involvement can be classified as *outcome-*, *value-*, or *impression-relevant* involvement. In 1986, Charles T. Salmon suggested

a continuum in which involvement can be described as (a) an enduring overall personality trait, (b) a psychological state triggered by a message's connection to a person's enduring values, (c) a psychological state that results from the salience of a subject matter and a person's short-term interest in it (not necessarily linked to long-term values), and (d) as an inherent characteristic of a subject that prompts varying levels of interest among different populations. In 1997 and 2003, Michael D. Slater suggested involvement is a goal-directed concept that pertains to a person's interest in processing messages based on six different possible processing goals in which people engage.

Common types of involvement important to public relations message strategists include the following:

1. *Political or civic involvement*, an example of involvement as a personality trait, is the degree to which people are generally aware of and interested in news, civic affairs, or politics at the societal or organizational level. Certain individuals want to know about what's happening in the world around them without regard to particular issues. These individuals are sometimes referred to as *all-issues publics*.
2. *Ego involvement* is the degree to which a subject or idea is of *enduring* importance to people because it links to their personal values or convictions. People become connected to many activities and causes that reflect important values or foster their self-identity. People can be motivated by their desire to either affirm or protect personal values.
3. *Topic or issue involvement*, one of the most studied forms of involvement, is the degree to which a person is concerned about a *situation* (such as the impending actions by others) that could have an impact on the person's life. Topic or issue involvement can center on issues that have relatively little personal meaning for a person, but could have a positive or negative consequence nonetheless. Examples include proposed changes in tax, utility, or tuition rates, which will prompt short-term concerns.
4. *Task involvement* is the degree to which a person focuses attention on a message in order to make a correct judgment or to take action. People who know they must perform a task (such as making an

unfamiliar or complex purchase or passing a proficiency test) are usually motivated to learn information in order to attain a desired outcome. Their motivation often is based upon their perceptions about the social consequences of their performance.

5. *Impression-relevant involvement* is rooted in the desire to receive praise and avoid ridicule or criticism.
6. *Product involvement* is the degree to which certain products or services are perceived as inherently more interesting to people than other products. High-involvement products can be described variously as entertaining (movies), stimulating (books), complex (computers), costly (homes), status conferring (cars), fashionable (clothes), or risky (exotic travel). By contrast, low-involvement products exhibit many of the opposite characteristics—uninteresting, simple, inexpensive, ordinary, and safe. Examples include many items purchased for everyday use—laundry detergent, snack foods, personal toiletries, hand tools, and so forth. People's interest in particular categories of high-involvement products is readily evident in the media's coverage of topics such as sports, travel and leisure, entertainment, travel, books, fashion, and interesting foods.

Implications of Antecedent Involvement

Involvement's importance to public relations is readily evident in examining psychological approaches to learning and persuasion.

Traditional learning theory assumes a hierarchy of effects in which people follow a series of steps from learning to attitude formation to action. Although this model clearly applies to high-involvement situations, researchers have found it does not necessarily apply in all cases. In low-involvement situations, for example, people can form strong opinions or attitudes first and develop comparatively little in-depth knowledge before they take action.

Meanwhile, developers of *social judgment theory* demonstrated that attitude change was closely related to personal values critical to a person's identity and ego. Highly involved individuals were posited to accept persuasive arguments within a relatively

narrow range (latitude of acceptance or rejection). Meanwhile, individuals with low levels of involvement in a topic were not as discriminating and were open to a broader array of ideas and opinions.

The importance of topic or issue involvement is readily evident by looking at the two principal process models of persuasion that have predominated persuasion research since 1980: the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and the Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM).

Both models posit that motivation to process persuasive messages is predicated on involvement. Individuals with high motivation (involvement) are able and willing to examine the quality or strength of arguments presented and process arguments effortfully (ELM) or systematically (HSM). This is labeled *central route* (ELM) or *systematic processing* (HSM).

By contrast, less motivated individuals (low involvement) look for cognitive shortcuts. These are referred to as *peripheral cues* (ELM) or *heuristic cues* (HSM) contained in messages. Examples of cues include the credibility of the source (including expertise or familiarity), graphics (photos, charts, etc.), and the simple number of arguments made. These low-involvement individuals thus use *peripheral route* (ELM) or *heuristic processing* (HSM).

The two models vary somewhat in terms of their explanations for how persuasion occurs and originally suggested that these processes operate independently (ELM) or concurrently (HSM). Both agree, however, that central or systematic processing is a more enduring form of persuasion.

APPLICATIONS OF ANTECEDENT INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Researchers have recognized the importance of involvement in theories identifying the probability that people become active on issues and in models for segmenting public relations audiences.

James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) incorporated involvement in their situational theory of publics to explain why people become active on particular issues, specifically their engagement in communications behaviors: active information seeking and passive information processing.

Situational theory posits that people with high issue involvement, high recognition of a situation as problematic, and low recognition of the constraints that might inhibit a remedy are most likely to become active on an issue. Indeed, involvement served as a better predictor of activism than various other socioeconomic variables.

Separately, Grunig (2000) used involvement to distinguish between *active* and *passive* publics and suggested that public relations practitioners should focus efforts on active or highly involved publics. However, Heath and Douglas (1990, 1991) pointed out that people can be highly involved in an issue because they either oppose or support the issue. The authors suggested a three-part typology that specifies (a) *involved-opposed*, (b) *involved-supportive*, and (c) *passive* audiences.

Separately, Kirk Hallahan (2000a, 2000b, 2001) argued that involvement should be distinguished from knowledge about an issue. Hallahan suggested that level of involvement and knowledge about a topic can form the basis for segmenting publics using a 2 × 2–category matrix. He defined an *active* public as a group with high involvement and high knowledge of a topic, versus an *inactive* public, where both involvement and knowledge are low. By contrast, an *aware* public can be knowledgeable but not be involved because they perceive a situation as having little consequence for them. Meanwhile an *aroused* public is one with high involvement but low knowledge.

Beyond situational theory and typologies of publics, public relations message researchers have examined the impact of involvement in only a few studies. On the other hand, advertisers have developed an extensive body of knowledge about the impact of topic, task, and product involvement in a variety of persuasive contexts. One noteworthy public relations study used the dual processing models to test the comparative effectiveness of news versus advertising. Content class—whether information appeared as news or advertising—served as a peripheral or heuristic cue. The study manipulated both task and product involvement and some support for the HSM and only modest support for the claim about the superiority of news versus advertising (Hallahan, 1999).

INVOLVEMENT AS HEIGHTENED MESSAGE PROCESSING

Whereas antecedent involvement focuses on characteristics the audience brings to the message processing experience (including personality, concerns, perceptions, etc.), involvement also has been addressed as increased motivation that stems from and explains message processing itself. Glen T. Cameron, for example, argued in 1993 that involvement entails making relational judgments and can only be examined as a condition or experience within an individual in response to a stimulus. Importantly, message processing involvement must be clearly distinguished from antecedent involvement.

Increased involvement in message processing has been defined and measured by C. Whan Park and Banwari Mittal (1985) as heightened arousal and attention to the message. Others have explained heightened processing involvement as including four stages or increasingly deeper levels of message processing, namely pre-attention, focal attention, comprehension, and elaboration. Others proposed that involvement can be explained as increased cognitive activation of memory nodes: The more cognitive stimulation and the more associations made, the higher the level of involvement.

Implications of Message Processing Involvement for Public Relations

Public relations strategists must recognize that not all audiences will share the same level of interest in an issue or topic. The objectives of persuasive public relations messages must be to capture people's attention and to promote greater message exposure, perception, comprehension, and retention.

All effective messages must underscore the relevance of subject to the audience. This task is particularly critical for audiences with low levels of antecedent involvement. In this instance, it is critical to present messages rich in peripheral or heuristic cues and to avoid complex arguments that might result in suspended processing. But even for individuals with comparatively high levels of antecedent involvement, it is important to maintain (and heighten) involvement in the message itself.

Applications of Message Processing Involvement in Public Relations

Recent research in information campaigns suggested that one technique is to match the type of argument to the *type* (not merely level) of involvement. Michael D. Slater and Donna Rouner (1996) showed that statistics (versus anecdotes) led to greater persuasiveness and believability among individuals engaged in processing messages that bolstered personal values (value-affirmative processing), whereas anecdotes (versus statistics) were more persuasive and believable among individuals when messages challenged their values (value-protective processing).

Drawing upon research in the advertising arena, Hallahan (2000b) suggested that practitioners must enhance an audience's motivation, ability, and opportunity (M-A-O) to process public relations messages (see Figure 1). He identified various commonly accepted techniques ("tricks of the trade") that serve that purpose and are grounded in persuasion theory. Beyond motivation, however, he stressed it is important to make messages *easy* to understand and to give audiences *more chances* to be exposed to a message. This is especially important for low-involvement audiences, who will not otherwise seek out the information in the same way as highly involved individuals.

Among activists, agenda building involves increasing people's involvement, that is, getting people to recognize that a problem or issue has personal relevance to them. Claims makers use a variety of techniques—including the use of statistics and large numbers, celebrity endorsers, symbols (icons, stories, typification, and synecdoche), framing, and media publicity to capture public attention and broaden interest. Activists must rely upon heightened message involvement (increased arousal and attention, more elaborative cognitive processing, and the activation of cognitive traces related to seemingly disparate areas of interest) to make the connections required.

Antecedent involvement and message involvement clearly work in tandem. Previous exposure to persuasive communications helps define one's antecedent involvement level. Then heightened involvement in processing a subsequent message itself helps tap a person's predisposition toward a

message and can make the subject matter even more relevant.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Framing theory; Persuasion theory; Publics; Situational theory of publics; Third-party endorsement

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<i>Enhance Motivation</i>	<i>Enhance Ability</i>	<i>Enhance Opportunity</i>
Attract and encourage audiences to commence, continue processing	Make it easier to process the message by tapping cognitive resources	Structure messages to optimize processing
<p>Create attractive, likable messages (create affect)</p> <p>Appeal to hedonistic needs (sex, appetite, safety)</p> <p>Use novel stimuli</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Photos <input type="checkbox"/> Typography <input type="checkbox"/> Oversized formats <input type="checkbox"/> Large number of scenes, elements <input type="checkbox"/> Changes in voice, silence, movement <p>Make the most of formal features</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Format size <input type="checkbox"/> Music <input type="checkbox"/> Color <input type="checkbox"/> Include key points in headlines <p>Use moderately complex messages</p> <p>Use sources who are credible, attractive, or similar to audience</p> <p>Involve celebrities</p> <p>Enhance relevance to audience—ask them to think about a question</p> <p>Use stories, anecdotes, or drama to draw into action</p> <p>Stimulate curiosity: Use humor, metaphors, questions</p> <p>Vary language, format, source</p> <p>Use multiple, ostensibly independent sources</p>	<p>Include background, definitions, explanations</p> <p>Be simple, clear</p> <p>Use advance organizers (e.g., headlines)</p> <p>Include synopses</p> <p>Combine graphics, text, and narration (dual coding of memory traces)</p> <p>Use congruent memory cues (same format as original)</p> <p>Label graphics (helps identify which attributes to focus on)</p> <p>Use specific, concrete (versus abstract) words and images</p> <p>Include exemplars, models</p> <p>Make comparison with analogies</p> <p>Show actions, train audience skills through demonstrations</p> <p>Include marks (logos, logotypes, trade marks), slogans, and symbols as continuity devices</p> <p>Appeal to self-schemas (roles, what's important to audience's identity)</p> <p>Enhance perceptions of self-efficacy to perform tasks</p> <p>Place messages in conducive environment (priming effects)</p> <p>Frame stories using culturally resonating themes, catch phrases</p>	<p>Expend sufficient effort to provide information</p> <p>Repeat messages frequently</p> <p>Repeat key points within text—in headlines, text, captions, illustrations, etc.</p> <p>Use longer messages</p> <p>Include multiple arguments</p> <p>Feature “interactive” illustrations, photos</p> <p>Avoid distractions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Annoying music <input type="checkbox"/> Excessively attractive spokespersons <input type="checkbox"/> Complex arguments <input type="checkbox"/> Disorganized layouts <p>Allow audiences to control pace of processing</p> <p>Provide sufficient time</p> <p>Keep pace lively and avoid audience boredom</p>

Figure 1 Motivation-ability-opportunity model for enhancing message processing

SOURCE: Reprinted from *Public Relations Review*, 26(4), by Kirk Hallahan, Enhancing audience motivation, ability and opportunity to process public relations messages, pp. 463–480, ©2000, with permission from Elsevier.

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ISSUE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

The Issue Management Council (IMC) is the professional membership organization for people

whose work is managing issues and those who wish to advance the discipline. The council focuses on management processes rather than advocacy on specific issues. IMC was formed in 1988 for professionals who did not “fit the mold” of existing membership organizations. These men and women spanned the existing—but artificial—barriers between public relations (image), government/legal affairs (influence), and strategic planning (operations). Many people collaborated in the formation of the council, but its organizing leader was W. Howard Chase.

MEMBERS

Members come from diverse industries, countries, cultures, and sectors. Yet all are alike in their intent to exercise corporate leadership on issues, rather than waiting until issues reach a crisis stage or are narrowly interpreted by special interests. The majority of members (approximately 75 percent) represent management of large corporations. Consultants to these companies compose the second largest membership segment (approximately 15 percent). Approximately 7 percent of IMC members are issue management practitioners in the public sector. Academic participation is the smallest membership segment, at approximately 3 percent.

GOVERNANCE

An international board of directors governs the IMC, representing a diverse combination of industries, countries, cultures, sectors, and expertise. The chair is elected from the board of directors and serves a two-year term. Officers—the chair, president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary—serve as the executive committee. Projects are completed through board member–led task forces that in 2003 developed programs in membership value, issue management advocacy, awards, and membership development. Board members are nominated and elected from the membership and can serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. All board members serve in a volunteer capacity. A small staff provides administrative support at IMC headquarters near Washington, DC.

MISSION STATEMENT

As steward of the issue management discipline, the Issue Management Council is the advocate for effective and principled global application of issue management and the source for practitioners seeking education, collaboration, recognition, and inspiration.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

1. Membership development and advocacy work to create global awareness of the field of issue management and the resulting desire to become a member of the council.
2. Operations and governance center attention on leadership and management of a robust, growing, and practitioner-based professional organization.
3. Stewardship exercises the responsibility to exert IMC’s leadership to advance the discipline.
4. Products and services continue to refine educational, communication, and consultation offerings to support practitioner needs and field advancement.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

IMC offers the following services to the global body of issue management practitioners, as well as to any member of the general public who is interested in learning more about issue management:

Practitioner Exchange

Member dialogue takes place along formal and informal channels. Many IMC members simply contact each other on an as-needed basis. Sometimes the IMC staff helps to facilitate small-group conversations based on member interests and inquiries. Each month an emerging issues teleconference takes place, involving selected members according to their issue expertise. For the first year of membership, individuals are assigned an IMC new-member mentor. These relationships provide the camaraderie of like-minded colleagues who are helping their organizations to reach a breakthrough in management philosophy and practice.

Access to the Members Only section of the IMC Web site offers the capability to search for fellow

members by name, company, region, and issue expertise. Other online resources include the Issue Management Bibliography and the Compendium of Issue Management Speeches, as well as occasional papers and presentations of interest.

Issue Management Training

Beginners find the one-day overview titled Introduction to Issue Management very useful as an outline of key concepts, methodologies, terminology, and structure. This workshop is usually held in conjunction with the IMC Annual Conference and is also available on an in-house basis for member companies.

For those interested in identifying emerging issues, the IMC hosts an Emerging Issue Workshop featuring presentations from leading issue advocates and advanced methodologies for issue identification.

The Issue Management in Practice workshop offers case studies and practical applications of issue management in the field. When sponsored by an IMC member company, this gathering is held as a member forum, and registration fees are waived for IMC members.

The IMC Annual Conference is an examination of the current state of the art in issue management on a worldwide basis and features elements of the aforementioned themes, along with the presentation of the Chase Award for Excellence in Issue Management. At this conference, practitioners explore the most recent developments in issue management, including new applications of leadership and process, opportunities for deeper integration with existing business functions, and innovative approaches to anticipating and resolving issues.

Issue Management Literature

Through our affiliated publishing company, IMC members receive a subscription to *Corporate Public Issues and Their Management*, a monthly exhibit of issue management in practice at leading corporations. Members also receive a subscription to *The Issue Barometer*, a monthly examination of emerging issues, as surfaced by IMC member teleconferences and supplemented by original editorial research. Members also receive a succinct quarterly e-mail update of IMC activities.

Opportunity for Recognition

Each year, one deserving organization earns the W. Howard Chase Award for Excellence in Issue Management. Winning this prestigious competition represents the highest achievement in the field of issue management. Awards are also granted for individual achievement in issue management and for extraordinary service to the IMC.

Every IMC member also receives a certificate of membership that is suitable for framing.

CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

The most customary membership option is on an individual basis. Organizational memberships are also available. The third category of member is for vendors who wish to use the council as a means to display their services.

VISION

It is easy for the IMC Board to envision what it wants the IMC to become. The IMC will be

- The most sought-after, effective, and trusted advocate for the advancement and utilization of issue management principles worldwide; we will be known as the “keeper of the flame”
- Populated with the best practitioners from around the world (our conferences will need interpreters of many tongues!) who are known for their vibrant, engaging, and innovative practices
- The first stop and only stop needed by our stakeholders for the best issue management resources—all others will benchmark to us
- Firmly entrenched in our stakeholders’ top-of-mind position
- Recognized globally as best in class
- Known as the rising tide that lifts all the ships

Our vision is huge, but so is our passion for issue management!

—Teresa Yancey Crane

See also Chase, W. Howard; Chase issue management cycles; Issues management

ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Issues management is a strategic set of functions used to reduce friction and increase harmony between organizations and their publics in the public policy arena. Issues management entails four core functions: (a) engaging in smart business and public policy planning that is sensitive to public policy trends, (b) playing tough defense and smart offense through issue communication, (c) getting the house in order by meeting or exceeding stakeholder expectations, and (d) scouting the terrain to gain early warning about troublesome issues. Applied properly, it gives organizations the opportunity to reduce the harm of threats and to take advantages of opportunities created as public policy changes occur.

First, issues management must be an intimate part of strategic business planning as issue managers help their senior executive colleagues look for and avoid threats while working to take advantage of issues-driven opportunities—those that are created by emerging issue trends. Second, issues managers need to build and cooperate systematically with other issues specialists whose insights and foresights can scan for issues, identify issues, analyze issues, and monitor their trajectory and implications for the strategic business plan of the organization. Third, issues management can help organizations to understand and work to achieve the standards of corporate responsibility to reduce the legitimacy gap between them and their stakeholders. Fourth, issues management entails issue communication, on the assumption that the voice of large organizations needs to be heard on policy issues. For the formation of societally responsible public policy, the best minds and voices need to blend to create the needed platforms of fact, value, and policy.

The term *issues management* was coined in the 1970s in response to 1960s activism, much of which was spawned by the increased salience of the Civil Rights movement and the turbulence created by the protests against the war in Vietnam. Angry publics fought to impose their wills and values on business and government policies and practices. In the 1960s activist groups challenged media reporters and

government officials to press for myriad changes in business activities and policies. Industry was caught off guard by this era of unrest and redefinition. Industry had reason to feel good about itself. The Great Depression had ended and the industrial might of the United States had played a major role in the victories that ended World War II.

Industrial leadership went into the 1960s with high marks for ethics and honesty. After activist scrutiny of every aspect of industrial policy, senior management's high ratings have never been the same since. Part of this slide resulted from an often quite reactive response to criticism. Issues management was innovated and developed to give industry a philosophy, a set of refined functions, and tactics to give it more of a proactive approach to its vilification.

In 1977, W. Howard Chase coined the term *issue management*, which he designated as a new science. To recommend a new kind of corporate communication response to critics of business activities, Chase drew on his long-term corporate public relations experience, especially his tenure at American Can Company. He was also influenced by John E. O'Toole, who may have coined the term *advocacy advertising*.

Two themes emerged but soon were eclipsed by a more solid approach to issues management. One was the assumption that advocacy advertising, or advertising by any similar name, could solve the collision between industry values and those of its critics. The second was that if issues could be spotted as they were emerging, industry could head them off with skillfully designed messages.

As early as the mid-1970s, issue experts advised companies to rely less on providing information and to become more willing to advocate their case in public policy debates. Proponents of this strategy were convinced that companies, especially large companies, had remained silent too long and had expertise that needed to be considered in the raging debates that swirled throughout the 1960s and 1970s. By 1976, terms such as *issue advertising* and *advocacy advertising* were being used in business publication discussions of the aggressive op-ed campaign made famous by the vice president of public relations of Mobil Oil

Corporation, Herbert Schmetz. The International Association of Advertising (IAA), in its global study of issues communication, urged adoption of the less contentious term, *controversy advertising*. Advocates of a communication approach to issues management assured their employers and clients that “ideas could be sold like soap” (Dinsmore, 1978, p. 16) if their presentation was complete and truthful.

Practitioners and senior management recognized that their organizations were targets in bitter confrontations. This realization opened new opportunities and challenges to the strategic and ethical practitioners who understood that management and public relations must work in harmony. Public relations would fail to assist clients and employers in these battles if they were charged only with providing positive news and reputational statements. They understood that new challenges required new response options. Thus, for some, issues management was a subdiscipline of public relations. Its purpose was to debate the positions advocated by corporate critics. The assumption was that the voice of industry could be strong enough, and the position advocated by companies was accurate enough, to silence the challenges of the critics. One reason for this communication bias in the design of issues management was the fact that many of the leaders in its development were communication professionals more than individuals engaged in management.

For this reason, issues management would have been a much different, and arguably much less important corporate response if other disciplines and persons with other experiences had not engaged in the design and development of issues management. As an early advocate for thorough investigation and innovation, founder of the Issue Management Council, W. Howard Chase offered a widely quoted definition:

Issues management is the capacity to understand, mobilize, coordinate, and direct all strategic and policy planning functions, and all public affairs/public relations skills, toward achievement of one objective: meaningful participation in creation of public policy that affects personal and institutional destiny. (1982, p. 1)

Chase stressed the proactive aspect of issues management, which “rejects the hypothesis that any institution must be the pawn of the public policy determined solely by others” (1982, p. 2).

Maturing in his thinking, Chase defined issues management as being a systematic and proactive approach to criticism and change that builds on several key steps: issue identification, analysis, change strategy options, action programming, and evaluation of results. “An issue change strategy option is a choice among carefully selected methods and plans for achieving long-term corporate goals in the face of public policy issues, a choice based on the expected effect of each method of employment, cost, sales, and profits” (1984, p. 56). Action programming entails the use of resources to gain the strategy option selected.

William Renfro (1993), a pioneer in the theory and practice of issues management, focused his analytical attention on the factors that predict how issues emerge and become worthy of management consideration and response. He stressed the need to identify and monitor issues as preliminary to strategic business planning. “The field of issues management emerged as public relations or public affairs officers included more and more forecasting and futures research in their planning and analysis of policy” (p. 23). In this sense, “issues management is an intelligence function that does not get involved in the ‘operations side’ unless specifically directed to do so” (Renfro, 1993, p. 89). Despite its need to support business activities, this function “is not closely connected to immediate operations and the bottom line” and therefore “it is difficult to determine the effectiveness and value of an issues management capability” (p. 89).

However defined, realists understand that organizations are required to reduce what management professor S. P. Sethi (1977) called the legitimacy gap by changing their policies and procedures as well as by using communication. A legitimacy gap is that chasm between what an organization believes and does and what its key publics think it should do and believe.

Sponsored by the Conference Board’s Public Affairs Research Council, James K. Brown (1979) developed one of the early comprehensive approaches to issues management. He reasoned that

if management should accustom itself routinely to ask the full range of questions that ought to be asked about vital corporate decisions, taking into account all the relevant external environments as well as the internal environment, this business of issues would become, properly, a non-issue. (p. 74)

His view in the late 1970s was entirely too optimistic, but it helped direct thinking in the right direction. No single issues management function can accomplish that goal. Many functions are required, some of which require the expertise of public relations practitioners, and the performance of which can strengthen the rationale for including public relations in the dominant coalition of corporations.

One innovator of the practice and conceptualization of issues management, Raymond Ewing, featured its functions as giving “public policy foresight and planning for an organization” (1987, p. 1). This sort of thinking prompted many who studied issues management to feature the role of futuristic thinking. These seers wanted to understand how issues emerge and mature. They worked for scanning, identification, and analysis processes that could systematically alert organizations to issues as they emerged. These systems could also monitor the trajectory of issues in the hopes that strategic responses to influence this trajectory would benefit the organization. Such thinking led some senior public relations officers to think they could “manage issues” while others believed they could not. At least the persons tended to agree that early warning systems would help the organization to manage its response to issues as they emerge and mature or decay.

Early thinking about the topic of issues management demonstrated many influences. Among the voices heard on this topic, some were from the highest executive levels, regardless of whether the organization was a business, a governmental agency, or a nonprofit that engaged in public policy changes. The management theme stressed the role of issues management and public policy trends and forces in savvy strategic business planning. Many early discussions did not consider the possibility that management philosophy and policies had to change as part of issues management. Others

realized that if those philosophies and policies created the problems brought to public attention by critics, then one part of strategic issues management had to be smart and honest responses. Management philosophy and policies simply had to change sometimes in order to achieve harmony. Managements often did not like to entertain that option because it meant giving in to critics. Recalcitrant managements were reluctant to acknowledge that activist and governmental critics did indeed want to manage the business from the outside. The tools for this management were legislation, regulation, and litigation. For this reason, the era launched in the 1960s has seen much more legislation, regulation, and litigation brought to corporate managements than occurred in any previous period in American history.

As former Allstate Insurance public affairs manager, Ewing widely concluded that “issues management is about power” (1987, p. 1). Organizations, as the collective expression of individual interests, engage in reward/loss analysis regarding the expediency of opposing or yielding to power pressures from stakeholders who can impose sanctions. The equation works like this: Assuming accuracy of understanding between the parties in contention with one another—but suffering an unchangeable difference in evaluation—companies, regulators, or activists groups have the option of exerting influence or opposing the influence efforts of others. Issues management serves organizations when it assists executives to foster the bottom line by enhancing the quality of the relationship with stakeholders in a power arena.

Despite the fact that the term *issues management* was coined in the 1970s, much of the comprehensive thinking about that concept extends back to the Industrial Revolution, before the advent of the 20th century. Business and government leaders were carving out a new view of industrial might. Slowly fading from the commercial landscape was the small company. In its place was the massive corporation on scale with what we know today. These industrial giants needed to convince key publics that big was good. They needed legislation

and regulation that would support this concept. They were also fighting over industrial standards, such as the “battle of the currents,” which pitted George Westinghouse and Thomas Edison against one another to determine whether alternating current or direct current would be the industry standard.

In a time when free capitalism was on the lips of these industrial giants, many were trying, and often succeeding, to limit competition through monopolistic practices. The issues management question of that day was when is big too big? When does competition fail to serve the interest of customers? Related to that was the issues management challenge of the telephone companies to convince the public that regulated monopolies were best. Tangles of phone lines and incompatible systems nearly convinced the public that the telephone was a nuisance rather than a necessity. AT&T convinced government and the public that regulated monopolies are good. So did the electric industry and the natural gas industry, for instance. The irony of business and the role of issues management in strategic planning is nowhere more evident than in the fact that years later the telephone companies and the electric generating companies are now deregulated and forced into a competitive mode.

Thus, issues management is more than aggressive and open communication in contest of issues. It is the management function that helps a variety of organizations serve stewardship roles to create better businesses and better business systems. It is a vital part of activism, issue-relevant nonprofits, and governmental agencies. It has even become quite popular with organizations that are devoted to protecting their brand equity against unfair and inaccurate criticism, as well as unforeseen public policy shifts.

Because of the study of issues management, the dynamics of public policy battles has changed. Some industries are reluctant to change. Some even foolishly assert that they have changed to improve their philosophies and policies. Critics monitor

their actions closely and look to ascertain whether the claims are true. All of this battleground of issues analysis and problem solving has for three decades been conducted in an arena where the general public has had the incentive to be less willing to accept responsibility for their actions and choices, based on the rationale that they are not dealing with large corporate entities that are honest and ethical. Myriad horror stories, such as poorly designed automobiles that burst into flame on impact, continue to be part of the nation’s popular culture. Activists have leveraged substantial power because they are at times the only segment that the general public has to look to for advocates of their interests. Government officials find themselves strained to balance these tangled interests. Such is the challenge and playing field of issues management, one strategic option to reestablish the age of deference.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Age of deference; Battle of the currents; Brand equity and branding; Chase, W. Howard; Issue Management Council; Legitimacy and legitimacy gap

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JAFFE, LEE K.

Lee K. Jaffe, APR, Fellow PRSA, and award-winning government public relations practitioner, served as director of public relations for The Port of New York Authority from 1944 until 1965, during the revitalization of Manhattan's financial district and the planning and early construction of the World Trade Center. She is credited with suggesting that the World Trade Center be the tallest building in the world and, by the time she retired, she was said to be earning the highest salary in the country for someone at her level.

Born Lillian Kreiselman in Treveskyn, Pennsylvania, and schooled in Ohio, Jaffe moved to Wichita, Kansas, with her family after graduating from high school. There she soon began working for U.S. Senator Henry J. Allen. Allen also was born in Pennsylvania but moved to Kansas with his family at the age of 2. He was a reporter turned newspaper publisher who served first as the governor of Kansas from 1919 to 1923, and later as the publicity director for the Republican National Committee before being appointed to fill a U.S. Senate seat from 1929 to 1930.

When Allen lost his bid for that seat, he set Jaffe up as the Washington correspondent for his flagship newspaper, the *Wichita (Kansas) Beacon*, where her first story was the 1932 Veterans' Bonus March, a demonstration by 12,000–15,000 veterans calling

for their World War I service benefits. She also wrote for the *Binghamton (New York) Press* and *The Northwestern Miller* trade journals before joining the Domestic Division of the Office of War Information. Later she worked for the New York Metropolitan Region of the Office of Price Administration, the wartime agency charged with price regulation and rationing; there she served first as an information officer and then as the regional radio director. She married Isidore Jaffe on December 22, 1933, and they lived in Great Neck, Long Island.

In 1944, Austin J. Tobin, a longtime Port Authority attorney who had become executive director two years earlier, hired Jaffe to help promote the agency's image during a time when the wartime lack of money and materials kept it from fulfilling its own mission. Founded on April 30, 1921, The Port of New York Authority was the first agency of its kind in the Western Hemisphere with a bi-state district, and it surrounded the Statue of Liberty (in 1972 the name changed to The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey). Over the years, it was responsible for the planning, building, policing, and administering of systems and structures relating to transportation, from bridges and tunnels to airports and a rail line—which later became the Port Authority Trans-Hudson lines (PATH)—as well as other commercial entities in

the port jurisdiction. Thus, the Port Authority eventually came to oversee the building of the World Trade Center, which was originally conceived in the 1940s as a global import/export business center in downtown Manhattan.

With the backing of David Rockefeller and his Downtown-Lower Manhattan Development Association, then-Governor Nelson Rockefeller, and the Port Authority, among others, the first plans for the center were unveiled in 1961. But a year earlier, according to historian Angus Kress Gillespie, Jaffe wrote a memo suggesting that the center be the tallest in the world. As it turned out, the final set of plans presented to the public in 1964 revealed two towers, each of which would be the tallest in the world upon completion—only to be upstaged by the Sears Tower in Chicago a month before the Center's dedication on April 4, 1973.

Jaffe reported directly to Tobin. Known professionally as Lee K. Jaffe, much of her subsequent success could be attributed to her own ideas concerning government public relations. In January 1950 Jaffe published an article in *Public Relations Journal*, the trade magazine of the Public Relations Society of America, in which she emphasized the importance of public relations in city government as a nonpolitical function and one that represented “one single, assigned and authoritative news source” (Jaffe, 1950, p. 4) for the media and the general public. Additionally, she stressed the policy-level function of her role as the director of public relations for the Port Authority, her refusal to bury bad news or to block media access to Port Authority management, and her practice of responding promptly to inquiries and on-site visit requests. Indeed, Jaffe testified in a 1960 U.S. House Judiciary investigation into Port Authority finances that \$2,609 worth of meals spent on herself, her assistant, and the media at New York International Airport's Golden Door restaurant over a period of two and one-half years was part of the job when conducting press tours or sponsoring other Port Authority media events.

Jaffe joined PRSA in May 1950. In 1951 she was elected president of the Government Public Relations Association, which consisted of state and city practitioners. In 1955 she published another

article in *Public Relations Journal* exploring the place of government public relations in the post-Korean War world. Reminding readers of the 1913 federal legislation prohibiting the funding of publicists with congressional monies unless the funding was “specifically appropriated for that purpose,” Jaffe pointed out that the top annual salary among federal civil service information specialists during the previous year was \$12,690, whereas the 1955–1956 budget for the United States Information Agency was \$85 million. She observed,

The Washington “propaganda machine” of World War I has been traded in from administration to administration for newer and more powerful models. There is room for some traffic direction, if not control to keep the contraptions [the many information offices] from running wild and crashing head-on. (Jaffe, 1955, pp. 78–79)

Better organization could foster improved relations with the public, she said, and it would “increase the dignity and self-respect of public relations personnel” (Jaffe, 1955, p. 79). Ultimately, though, Jaffe wrote, “Government must first do a job that people can think well of, and then intelligently and deftly call attention to it” (Jaffe, 1955, p. 141).

In February 1956, Jaffe and the Port Authority received the “Best Government Public Relations Award” from PRSA. In May of that year, she was one of three speakers at the Southern Public Relations Conference in New Orleans, during which she emphasized the importance of government listening to the public, being open and honest with it, and complying with the public's desires as much as possible. In October 1956, Jaffe served on a panel, “Women in Public Relations,” at the ninth PRSA Conference in Milwaukee. In 1958, she and *PR News* editor Denny Griswold were the only two women representing PRSA at the First World Congress of Public Relations in Brussels.

In 1965 Jaffe became the first woman to receive PRSA's Gold Anvil Award for lifetime achievement. In May of that year, she retired from the Port Authority after 21 years of service and, with a salary of \$35,000, as the highest paid person at that level of government relations. In 1989 Jaffe was one

of 26 inductees into PRSA's inaugural class of the College of Fellows, along with other Golden Anvil winners Leone Baxter; Edward L. Bernays; John F. Budd, Jr.; Chester Burger; Harold Burson; Allen H. Center, Ph.D.; W. Howard Chase; Kalman B. Druck; Dan J. Forrestal; Lawrence G. Foster; James F. Fox; Ralph E. Frede; Denny Griswold; George Hammond; Rex F. Harlow, Ph.D.; Carl F. Hawver, Ph.D.; Patrick Jackson; Philip Lesly; Ed Lipscomb; Donald B. McCammond; Hale Nelson; Betsy Ann Plank; J. Handly Wright; Frank W. Wylie; and Kenneth Youel.

In the October/November 1994 issue of the *Public Relations Journal*, some of the past Gold Anvil recipients were asked to comment on the future of the public relations field. True to form, Jaffe emphasized that "integrity is the key to the proper practice of public relations" and that public relations practitioners should make it a priority not only to weigh in on policy decisions but also to put themselves in the shoes of those who will be affected by those policies.

Throughout her career, Jaffe was a member of a number of professional and community groups, including the Aviation Writers Association, the Foreign Press Association, the Women's City Club, and the Women's National Press Club. She served on the board of the American Public Relations Association, the Government Public Relations Association, the New York chapter of PRSA, and the

Greater New York Safety Councils. Additionally, the American Public Relations Association recognized Jaffe in 1950, 1951, and 1957 for her work in government, as did the Government Public Relations Association in 1955 and 1956. In June 1955 *Charm*, a magazine for working women, selected Jaffe to spotlight the achievements of the 1,328,747 working women in New York. In 1958, *PR News* honored Jaffe with its Annual Achievement Award.

—Margot Opdycke Lamme

See also Government relations; Media relations; Public Relations Society of America

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KAISER, INEZ Y.

Inez Yeargan Kaiser was born on April 22, 1918, in Kansas City, Missouri. After receiving a bachelor's degree from Kansas Teacher's College in Pittsburg, Kansas, she attended Columbia University in New York for a master's degree; there she majored in home economics and received a certificate in mass communication. The certification in mass communication first brought Kaiser exposure to public relations.

Prior to finding her place in public relations, she taught for over 20 years in public schools in Evanston, Illinois; Kansas City, Kansas; and Kansas City, Missouri. More specifically, Kaiser taught home economics in the public schools. While working as a home economics instructor, she helped organize the Home Economics Department for the Board of Education and worked with the Red Cross and the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC).

Additionally, she served as chairperson of the Home Economists in Business organization and was cited by *Seventeen* magazine as one of the most outstanding home economics teachers in the country. Kaiser was often recognized for excellence by her colleagues and was selected as Teacher of the Year by the Missouri State Teachers Association. For all of her accolades and recognitions, she was named Business Woman of the Year in Kansas City.

Kaiser was introduced to black readers and communities across America through several columns that she wrote for the black press. The columns, titled "Fashionwise and Otherwise," "Teen Tips," Kaiser Konsumer Korner," and "Hints for Homemakers," served as precursors for a second career in public relations. Using her columns as a platform and her experience as credibility, Kaiser devoted herself to educating black consumers on issues that she considered important. During the peak of her journalistic endeavors, her most widely read column, "Hints for Homemakers," reached a national audience of over 8 million readers. She was later honored by the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) for her 20 years of achievements in public relations and for providing information to black consumers through the black press. Kaiser also showcased her writing talents in a book titled *Soul Food Cookery* in 1968, which was published by Pittman.

Kaiser used her celebrity status to help black models secure work on Seventh Avenue and was one of the first African American women to cover fashion shows and menswear showings in New York, California, and Paris for the black press. Through her columns and other journalistic activities, Kaiser made black fashion and black beauty more visible and indirectly paved the way for acclaimed models such as Tyra Banks, Iman,

Naomi Campbell, and Tyson to grace the covers of mainstream magazines and to achieve their supermodel status. In 1980 she also received the Eartha M. White Women's Achievement Award from the National Business League for being a "pioneer black woman in the fields of public relations, fashions and the food industry."

After retiring as a school teacher in the Kansas City School District during the late 1950s, she decided to use the notoriety gained from the press to become an entrepreneur and open her own public relations agency. Thus, Inez Kaiser and Associates, located in downtown Kansas City, Missouri, was founded in 1961. This venture accorded Kaiser the distinction of becoming the first African American female to establish a public relations firm with national accounts. In that capacity she also became the first black consultant to land a soft drink account, a pharmaceutical account, and a household account. Over the years her clients have included, but are not limited to, J. Walter Thompson, Seven-Up, Sperry and Hutchinson, Continental Baking Company, and Pillsbury. She was one of the first public relations practitioners to merge advertising and public relations when she prepared advertorials for Sterling Drug, Inc. and Sears Roebuck Company.

The agency worked with major corporations, federal agencies, and associations throughout America and community-based groups in Missouri. In addition to her recognition as a public relations pathfinder, Kaiser was a civil rights activist whose agency was hired to consult with the Equal Opportunity Commission in Washington, DC. In 1972 she founded the National Association of Minority Women in Business, which was headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri. She subsequently coordinated the Department of Commerce's first Conference for Women in Business. Moreover, she became a member of the Women's Chamber of Commerce and the American Marketing Association (AMA) of Kansas City. Her activism continued into the 1990s, when she accused the Missouri Division of Tourism of racial discrimination against businesses owned by people of color. In a news conference on October 6, 1992, held at the NAACP office located in St. Louis, she outlined charges of

biases that favored white-owned businesses. Kaiser's agency, Inez Kaiser and Associates, had subcontracted for two years to promote African American tourism in Missouri. She had received the contract with Glennon and Company, a St. Louis firm that handled tourism advertising and public relations for Missouri. The contract was canceled, and Kaiser complained that the state was using her ideas, "even though she was told her ideas weren't needed before the contract was canceled" (Penington, 1992, p. 3A). Although Marjorie Beenders, director of the Tourism Division, said Kaiser's contract was canceled not because of her race but because her specialty was not needed, Kaiser garnered a great deal of publicity over the cancellation.

In 1994 she continued to fight discrimination in the tourism industry when consulted for a newspaper article addressing racial issues encountered by travelers of color. Kaiser suggested that most managers and supervisors were interested in resolving any racially sensitive problems and were very interested in preserving positive images of their hotels.

Because of the roads that she paved for other blacks and her unabashed commitment to public relations, the litany of awards and accolades given to her were quite extensive. She was named Business Woman of the Year in Kansas City and was selected as one of the 100 Most Outstanding Black Business and Professional Women by *Dollars & Sense* magazine. Educational organizations expressed their gratefulness for her efforts by perpetuating her name in several ways. The Kansas City Branch of the American Association of University Women named a scholarship award in her honor during the mid-1970s. One of her highest accolades was an honorary doctorate of law from Lincoln University in 1986. Kaiser was the first African American female to become a member of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). During the early 1990s, the Minority Scholarship in Public Relations was established by Jack Detweiler and Marilyn Kern-Foxworth for the Public Relations Division (PRD) of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC). Graduate students of color pursuing degrees in public relations or conducting research

in the area of public relations are eligible for the award. Students often are nominated by their professors, or thesis and dissertation committee chairs. The students, domestic and international, selected for this award are given funds to pay for their membership in AEJMC and for membership in the Public Relations Division (PRD) of the organization. Another benefit of the award is the introduction of students of color studying public relations to the activities of both AEJMC and the PRD. The funds are provided by public relations professors and journalism/public relations/communications schools and departments. During the annual PRD luncheon of the AEJMC held August 12, 1993, in Kansas City, Missouri, the award was named in honor of Inez Yeargan Kaiser. On July 31, 2003, 10 years after the awards were named in her honor, the PRD of AEJMC featured her at the Bill Adams/Edelman Luncheon. By this time over 175 graduate students had become recipients of the Inez Kaiser Award, named after the trailblazing legend.

The International Association of Market Developers (IAMD), during a ceremony held in Chicago on April 19, 1997, recognized Kaiser as a public relations legend. During that same ceremony, she passed the torch in public relations to Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, who received the Torchbearer Award.

As part of a CBS special Fourth of July program on July 4, 1997, titled "What's Right With America," Kaiser was interviewed by Dan Rather and was one of four people profiled as having made a difference in America. Kaiser's major achievements in public relations and her leadership in advancing black business women were accompanied by a collage of pictures that showed her conversing with such luminaries as former presidents Nixon and Ford, both of whom she consulted on issues pertinent to women of color in business.

Inez Yeargan met Richard Kaiser when he was stationed in the U.S. Navy at the Fairfax Naval Base in Kansas City, Kansas. They were married on October 29, 1944, at the First Baptist Church in Kansas City. In January 1949 their son, Richard Stafford Kaiser, Jr., was born. Kaiser spent her life making the world more inclusive and along the way has been a pathfinder and a pioneer. Remarkable on her success, Kaiser

notes, "I was just a woman who happened to be black and good. Persistence and patience are the biggest things I've learned. Still, I think the thing that keeps me going is my faith in God."

—Marilyn Kern-Foxworth

See also Baker, Joseph Varney; Demographics; Kendrix, Moss; Minorities in public relations

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KANT, IMMANUEL

See Deontology

KASSEWITZ, RUTH B.

Armed with a bachelor of science degree in Journalism Management from Ohio State University in 1951, Ruth Eileen Blower Kassewitz (1928–) began her professional public relations career in that year as a copywriter in charge of print advertising for the Ohio Fuel Gas Company, Columbus, Ohio. She continued to work in advertising as an account secretary for the Merritt Owens Agency, Kansas City, Kansas, and in 1956–1959 was an account executive for Grant Advertising, Inc., Miami, Florida.

Kassewitz's first public relations position came in 1968 as director of public relations for an architecture and engineering firm, Spillis/Candela Partners. In 1969 she became director of communications for the Metro-Dade County Department of Housing and Urban Development. In this position,

she organized public information programs in urban renewal communities, helping impoverished citizens to communicate and participate in government's earliest community involvement initiatives.

With the passage in 1972 of the Florida Government-in-the-Sunshine Law, Metro-Dade County appointed Kassewitz to establish the first office of public information. As communications officer, Kassewitz launched a public relations campaign to inform the voters of the services represented by the county's \$550 million Decade of Progress bond issue. The campaign won a Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Silver Anvil Award in 1973.

Kassewitz ran a successful public information campaign for Metro Dade County's \$70 million water bond issue in 1974. The campaign won first place in the WICI (Women in Communications, Inc.) Clarion Awards.

During Kassewitz's seven years as communication director, she built up her department from 1.5 to 13 staff persons to serve the public information needs of the county manager, all county departments, and citizen advisory boards. Kassewitz accomplished this using an "internal agency" budgeting model so that the net impact on the county budget remained at 1.5 persons.

From 1978 to 1991, Kassewitz was administrator for public relations at the University of Miami/Jackson Memorial Medical Center. She created the campaign "One of the Nation's Best," helping to increase the county hospitals' private patient admissions. This campaign won the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA) Golden Image Award. Kassewitz retired in 1990.

Kassewitz's public service and leadership in professional organizations includes serving as the first woman president in 1993–1994 of the Rotary Club of Miami, Inc. Rotary, founded in 1905, began accepting women into its membership only in 1987.

Kassewitz was Miami president of Women in Communication in 1962 and president of the Mental Health Association in 1982. She was president in 1963 of the Dade/Miami Lung Association and of the University of Miami Women's Guild in 1973–1974. She served on PRSA's national board of directors from 1974 to 1976 and was the South Florida PRSA Chapter president in 1969.

Now a public service/public relations consultant in Coral Gables, Kassewitz received the Miami PRSA Lifetime Achievement Award in 1975. Among her other awards are Woman of the Year from the University of Miami School of Medicine; the PRSA Paul M. Lund Community Service Award in 1993; the Distinguished Rotarian of the Year award, 1996; and Rotarian of the Year, International District award, 1999.

—Elizabeth L. Toth

KENDRIX, MOSS

Moss Kendrix was born in Atlanta, Georgia, on March 8, 1917. His early education took place in local public schools. He often bragged that Lena Horne, one of the most celebrated African American female entertainers, was a close childhood friend. Following his graduation from high school, he attended Morehouse in Atlanta, the most prestigious college for African American men. His career in public relations was sparked at Morehouse, where he edited the school newspaper, *The Maroon Tiger*. It was during his college years that he joined Alpha Phi Alpha, the first African American fraternity. He also co-founded the Phi Delta Delta Journalism Society, the first and only society of its kind for African American journalism students.

Following graduation from Morehouse in 1939, he felt the necessity to honor black journalism pioneers by creating National Negro Newspaper Week. Although he was admitted to Howard University Law School in 1939, he deferred the offer and opted to improve his journalistic skills by gaining work experience. In 1939, he also married Dorothy Marie Johnson, a student at Spelman College, a premier black college for African American women, also located in Atlanta.

Drafted into the U.S. Army in 1941, Kendrix worked for the Treasury Department in the War Finance Office. In this capacity he traversed the nation with African American luminaries, such as composer-musician Duke Ellington and singer Billy Eckstine, promoting war bonds. It was at this

juncture that he regularly appeared on radio programs for the CBS network.

Kendrix subsequently became the director of public relations for the Republic of Liberia's centennial celebration in 1944, an experience that laid the groundwork for his illustrious career in public relations. During his career as a lobbyist, he was the first African American to represent a mainstream organization and often had the opportunity to work with other black lobbyists such as Edgar G. Brown and Leslie S. Perry.

The power of the African American market during the early 1940s was not recognized by many of the white-owned and oriented organizations, companies, advertising agencies, and public relations firms. So in 1944 he started his own public relations firm, the Moss Kendrix Organization. The agency, located in Washington, DC, heralded the mantra "What the Public Thinks Counts." Understanding the purchasing power of the "Negro market" was crucial to getting the market noticed with retailers, manufacturers, and on Madison Avenue. The economic clout of the market was reinforced in an issue of the *Negro History Bulletin* in 1956, which featured Kendrix on the cover. Moreover, the article contended that disposable income of blacks paralleled that of Canada; doubled that of Belgium, Greece, and Australia; and tripled that of Sweden. The article further noted that the *Wall Street Journal* had suggested that "sales messages must be slanted" toward the Negro people. Thus, Kendrix, a skilled communicator, was relentless in his efforts to gain attention for the virtually untapped Negro market. He established a remarkable rapport and reputation with some of the most prominent business leaders in the country who valued his counsel. In his quest to gain notice for African American consumers, he became the conduit between the Coca-Cola Company, one of the largest beverage companies in the world, and the black community.

The African American consumer market share of Coca-Cola was one that was formed by his fortitude and determination. Ironically, the affinity that African Americans hold for Coca-Cola products today was forged during the 1950s, when Kendrix documented the fact that African Americans did not

drink Coca-Cola products during this period. He subsequently decided to force the issue and traveled to the Coca-Cola headquarters in Atlanta. The officers were given a solid presentation based on research and statistics; he left them with a written proposal, which reinforced those points and offered his plan for tapping into the as yet virtually ignored market. His prospectus utilized advertising, public relations, and sales promotion, which wrapped around three major campaigns: (a) a Jackie Robinson Bat Boy and Girl Good Citizenship Corps, (b) a "Who Are America's Twelve Leading Negro Citizens?" contest, and (c) a Coca-Cola scholarship contest for high school seniors. He subsequently was hired by the Coca-Cola Company and became one of few African American public relations specialists to acquire major corporate accounts. While at Coca-Cola, he used his influence and expertise regarding product promotion. He parlayed his charismatic personality with African American luminaries, celebrities, politicians, civic leaders, religious leaders, and other black opinion leaders into a mutually beneficial relationship between Coca-Cola and himself. Furthermore, he designed promotional advertisements for the Coca-Cola beverage. His relationship with the company spanned approximately 20 years and did not end until the early 1970s.

Kendrix was able to gain other clients through his organizational memberships and by networking with some of the most powerful blacks in the nation's capital. Kendrix was a known quantity in and around the metropolitan area of Washington, DC. He was privileged to be one of approximately 30 African American journalists who were members of the Capital Press Club invited to the Rose Garden at the White House when President John F. Kennedy was in office. Kennedy invited the group to the White House because he could not attend the club's annual awards luncheon. The annual awards luncheon, which was attended by Kendrix, centered on concerns that the journalists had regarding the news coverage of African Americans. More specifically, the groups focused on limited coverage of blacks in mainstream newspapers, stereotypical images presented of African Americans, and the lack of interest shown by the

mainstream press in covering Africa, as well as other foreign countries in which black Americans might have a vested interest.

In addition to his corporate communications activities, Kendrix hosted a weekly radio program, *Profiles of Our Times*, on WWDC.

During his tenure as president of Moss Kendrix, he used his resources to sign clients. His mass media exposure helped him secure a notable litany of blue-ribbon clients that included Carnation, the National Dental Association, the National Educational Association (NEA), and the Ford Motor Company. He also was instrumental in persuading these companies to provide more employment opportunities for African Americans. His agency was slowly phased out, and it closed its doors in 1975.

Although the doors of the Moss Kendrix Organization had closed permanently, his efforts regarding multicultural marketing and diversity in the workplace would continue to open doors for ALANA (African, Latino, Asian, and Native American) consumers and professionals for many years to come.

The advent of integrated advertising, which showcased blacks, Asians, Latinos, and Native Americans in local, regional, and national advertising campaigns—radio, newspaper, and magazine—during the early 1970s, was made possible because of the efforts of Moss Kendrix. His emphasis on making sure that African Americans were portrayed positively in advertising also made an indelible impression on the portrayal of blacks by other advertising agencies, retailers, organizations, and manufacturers. Furthermore, the insight of Kendrix regarding the African American consumer market has been the impetus for scholars and communications practitioners crediting him with making corporate America take a long, hard look at the buying power of other multiethnic markets.

As a pioneer in the communications industry, Kendrix was the catalyst for the formation of several organizations of note that continue his tremendous legacy today. After discerning a need for a venue for African American communicators to meet, correspond, and collaborate, he organized the National Association of Market Developers (NAMD).

Founded in 1953 at Tennessee State University, NAMD provided a mechanism for African American marketing specialists to network and develop strategies for tapping into the Negro market. More specifically, the organization promoted professional development of its members, served as a platform to increase the effectiveness of marketing and public relations campaigns created by its members, and provided a resource for attracting and retaining young African Americans into the public relations arena. In 1954, NAMD was incorporated in the District of Columbia by Ken Wendell P. Alston, Esso Standard Oil Company; Alvin J. Talley; Howard University Marketing Professor H. Naylor Fitzhugh, an associate of the Moss Kendrix Organization who later became vice president of the Pepsi Cola Company; and Raymond S. Scruggs, American Telephone & Telegraph Company (AT&T). The organization was composed of African Americans who worked in the areas of management, advertising, public relations, sales, and urban affairs. There was a five-point plan under which the organization was established: (a) to serve as a national African American resource, (b) to provide professional support for the black community, (c) to support students through education and a guidance program, (d) to increase NAMD's exposure through national affairs, and (e) to develop national liaisons with other organizations. In 1978, during the silver (25th) anniversary of NAMD, the group paid homage to Kendrix by naming him president emeritus. In 1980 the organization recognized his monumental achievements on the occasion of his 63rd birthday. Because he had interacted with the movers and shakers in Washington, DC, for a number of years, President and Mrs. Carter were among those who sent their congratulations. Currently, an annual Moss Kendrix Marketer of the Year Award is given by NAMD in honor of the achievements of one of its most accomplished founders.

The National Public Relations Roundtable also was one of the trailblazing ideas created by Kendrix. An event more significant was the creation by Kendrix of National Newspaper Week, which is now celebrated annually in early October.

Because of his diligence to gain recognition for the African American consumer market, Kendrix

has been immortalized in the Public Relations Museum located in New York and the Alexandria Black History Center in Alexandria, Virginia. The Center has archived over 900 photographs and 30 cubic feet of artifacts which document his life, his legacy, and his impact on the public relations profession. The documents also provide a detailed analysis of the advertising and public relations activities during the 1950s and 1960s. African American newspapers and magazines published during that period, which are out of print, are catalogued in the collection. There also are unpublished celebrity commercial stills.

Kendrix, labeled by friends and associates as “the Dreamer who works to make dreams come true” and often referred to as the “crown prince of public relations,” left an indelible impression on the advertising and public relations industries. In addition to the accolades mentioned previously, he was

awarded the key to the city in Birmingham, Alabama, the cornerstone of the civil rights movement. His efforts left an imprint on communication strategies targeted toward the African American community. He died in December 1989.

—*Marilyn Kern-Foxworth*

See also Baker, Joseph Varney; Kaiser, Inez Y.; Minorities in public relations

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KOHLBERG, LAWRENCE

See Moral development



LABOR UNION PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations continues to play a vital role as a vehicle of communication for labor unions. Always aware of the value of taking their case to the general public, once labor unions became institutionalized, they realized the need for effective professional public relations. Public relations philosophy, strategies, and tactics have long been used in struggles for and against organized labor and its goals, as well as for optimal goal achievement by non-union agents working cooperatively with agents of organized labor. The uses of public relations against organized labor and by organized labor against businesses have been fueled by an “us versus them” way of thinking that has dominated much of the relationships between big business and labor. To some degree, the “us versus them” mentality has been overcome, and organized labor and big business have worked together to reach common goals.

Scott Cutlip (1995) was among the first to suggest that “much of public relations history—constructive and destructive—is woven into [the] unending struggle between employer and employee that today is fought with publicists, not Pinkertons” (pp. 204–205). In fact, many labor unions are quite skilled in the use of public relations.

Unions, as well as the companies with which they clash, realize the need to build a case for their

grievances. This is especially true if a strike is involved that can affect the lives and businesses of persons outside of the company—especially its commercial customers. In the not-so-distant past, a vice president for corporate relations with UPS Company went on record advocating that it is not good to underestimate the public relations power of unions such as the Teamsters. He lamented that doing so may well make an opposing organization lose the battle for a desirable public image. This lesson was learned during a labor clash between UPS and the United Teamsters. The current socioeconomic culture in the United States drives the need for a favorable image since image often determines whether an organization will or will not be successful at achieving its goals.

The American Federation for Labor–Congress for Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) defines a union on its official Web site as “a group of workers who come together to win respect on the job, better wages and benefits, more flexibility for work and family needs, and a voice in improving the quality of their products and services. Workers in unions counter-balance the unchecked power of employers.” As a representative body for organized labor in the United States, the AFL-CIO engages in public relations strategies and tactics to further the pursuits of organized labor. Each union, then, at the national level as well as at the local level, also uses public relations strategies and tactics to further its pursuits.

The beginnings of the Industrial Revolution brought with it the beginnings of organized labor. Unions were formed with leadership often provided by those formerly trained in the ways of Communism, in direct response to the treatment workers received from industrialists. The time was riddled with violence both within the factories and around strikes and strike-breaking activities. Within union activity, however, public relations strategies and tactics were used to rally workers to organize, to gain community support, and to communicate pro-labor messages to factory owners and representatives of the United States government. At the same time, public relations strategies and tactics were used by industrialists to rally support within communities and among representatives of the government against organized labor and its goals. Public relations led the way as industrialists learned to communicate with the press and union representatives, and as union representatives learned to communicate with the press and the industrialists, among themselves, and with their memberships. Organized labor used the power of public relations to lead the way to such accomplishments as the abolishment of child labor practices in the United States, and to secure a standard 40-hour work week, overtime legislation, medical provisions, and the like.

Today, labor unions use all the public relations strategies and tactics available. The AFL-CIO and each individual union have created a presence on the World Wide Web. Speeches and rallies, town hall meetings, interpersonal communication, direct and indirect lobbying, press releases and press conferences, satellite conferencing and satellite broadcasts, appearances on news and talk shows, philanthropic efforts and social responsibility activities, fundraising tactics, and membership recruitment and campaigning are engaged in on a daily basis by United States labor unions.

—Tricia L. Hansen-Horn

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Local 600 of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) electrical workers electrocuting an effigy of Hitler in a 1942 Labor Day parade. Public relations philosophy, strategies and tactics have been used in struggles for organized labor and its goals.

SOURCE: Office of War Information. Overseas Picture Division. Washington Division; 1944.

Laurie, Marilyn

Marilyn Laurie (1939–) was the first woman to hold senior leadership positions for American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T). A graduate of Barnard College with an MBA from Pace University, Laurie was a nationally recognized environmentalist before joining AT&T in 1971. She was one of the originators of Earth Day in 1970, a co-founder of the Environmental Action Committee, and a writer for *The New York Times* environmental section. Her association with AT&T, one of the first corporations in the United States to acknowledge its social obligations and responsibility under the first AT&T public relations leader Arthur Page, is consistent with her commitment to public service.

As of her retirement in 1998, Laurie had worked for AT&T as a speech writer, Vice President of Bell Laboratories, Senior Vice President of Global Communications, and Senior Vice President of Public Relations and Employee Information. From 1997 until her retirement, she held the position of

Executive Vice President of Brand Strategy and Marketing Communications. She also served as a member of the company's Management Executive Committee and worked as a trustee of the AT&T Foundation. Her responsibilities included "managing one of the world's best known brands and counseling AT&T's chairman on managing the communications and corporate reputation for the company's 300,000 employees" ("AT&T's Marilyn Laurie," 1995, p. 11). Ms. Laurie currently heads Laurie Consulting in New York.

Laurie took responsibility in 1993 for an offensive cartoon that appeared in a company employee magazine. To the employees of AT&T she said, "There's no excuse for it, and we have sincerely apologized for publishing such insulting materials. We also have taken a number of steps in response, including ceasing to publish the magazine" (Laurie, 1993, p. 17).

Laurie has served on the board of directors of the New York City Ballet and has worked for the Fund for New York City Public Relations Education and the New York City Partnership. In 1995 the Women's Campaign of the American Jewish Committee recognized Laurie with the Human Relations Award for her professional achievements and dedication to civic service. She was elected to the YMCA Academy of Women Achievers, served as an officer of the PR Seminar, and is the only female member of the Arthur Page Society Hall of Fame. Other professional honors include a Women in Communications Matrix Award, the Tribute to Women in International Industry Award, and the Women's Equity Action League Award.

—Elizabeth L. Toth

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LAYOUT

A layout is the spatial arrangement of graphic elements for a printed publication. Graphic elements

include photographs, illustrations, tint blocks, backgrounds, line rules, display type such as headlines and subheads, initial caps, body copy, and other graphic devices. Layouts show the arrangement of type and white space and indicate the size and position of elements. The layout containing these elements serves as a prototype or blueprint for production. Layouts are used to create a number of communication tools used in public relations practice, such as brochures, newsletters, advertisements, fliers, posters, invitations, programs, proposals, and Web sites.

Layouts are often used by public relations practitioners as a development tool to perfect the flow and look of a printed piece, test the presentation of a printed piece with members of the target audience, and obtain employer or client approval of a printed piece before it is published. Public relations practitioners, along with graphic designers hired by practitioners to develop materials, often create various stages of layouts before producing a printed piece. The first stage is the development of *thumbnails*, miniature rough sketches of the printed piece. These small sketches show various possibilities for layouts. They are quick pencil renderings—smaller, but in proportion to the actual size of the piece. Thumbnails allow risk taking and experimentation. Typically, they are not executed on a computer but are fast, free-wheeling sketches used for brainstorming. In the second stage, a *rough layout* is produced from one of the thumbnails. This informal layout is the actual size of the printed piece and shows a more detailed arrangement of the design elements. Often, a rough layout is used as the guide to final print production. In some instances, however, practitioners may develop a *comprehensive layout*, which is a refined version of the layout and a close approximation of the finished work. A comprehensive layout is useful for the pitch to a prospective client or for gaining advance approval for a costly publication or campaign. Since they are full-sized simulations of the finished product, comprehensives, or comps, are generally expensive and time consuming to produce.

Layout principles are extremely important in the development of layouts. Layout principles include

- *Balance*, the organization of elements either symmetrically or asymmetrically along an implied axis
- *Dominance*, the placement of an attention-getting element that stands out because of its size, tone, or shape
- *Unity*, the sense that the message is an integrated and cohesive whole
- *Proportion*, the spatial relationship of elements similar in nature
- *Flow*, which promotes eye movement and direction in a layout

The term *dummies* is often used synonymously with *layouts*, particularly in the production of multipaged documents such as newsletters and brochures. A dummy is a rendering of a page or pages in the planning stage, often unbound and with type and graphics crudely indicated, to show a printer the positions of the various elements. *Storyboards* are layouts used in broadcast work, such as for a public service announcement or television commercial. The storyboard is a series of rough sketches of the scenes accompanied by each scene's description and dialogue.

Layouts can be produced by hand or by using a desktop publishing program such as PageMaker, QuarkXpress, or Microsoft Publisher. If practitioners work directly with a printer to produce a printed piece, they will identify the colors, size and kind of typefaces, percentages of screens, and other specifications directly on the layout to provide the printer with direction on the desired outcome.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Advertising; Graphics

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LEARNING THEORY

Learning theory is based on the principle that people learn attitudes through direct experiences and

messages that are relevant to life's challenges and that they use arguments and reasons presented in messages to develop the opinions that guide their behavior. Learning theory provided the rationale for one of the largest and most important research projects ever conducted to explore the nature of persuasion in social influence. During the 1950s, massive funding was allocated to Yale University researchers to better understand the intricacies of persuasion. Because of its popularity, learning theory was adopted as the centerpiece of the project. This project spawned two decades of researchers and thousands of major studies and laid the foundation for many modern theories of persuasion.

A major contribution of learning theory is that it can account for human behavior, decision making, and influence without relying on *drive* theory. During the middle years of the 20th century, drive theory posited that human behavior results from genetic drives rather than being learned and subject to voluntary choice. Learning theory maintained that what people learn, especially their attitudes, leads them to be able to make choices between rewarding and negative outcomes and consequences. This theoretical approach provided insights for subjective utilities theory and also contradicted many claims from propaganda theory about how people could be easily persuaded, even by unethical means.

Central to this learning is sorting between outcomes that are rewarding and those that are punishing. How people react to messages is important, according to this theory. Messages can hold content that points to positive or negative outcomes. For instance, one does not need to look at much television advertising to realize that those messages often show customers how much better their life will be if they use the sponsor's product or service. "Use my product and anticipate X" is a common persuasive incentive. Evaluation, however, can work against the persuader's message. People can think about whether the product, for instance, really will bring those benefits.

Messages must capture people's attention and be understandable as prerequisites for influencing judgment. Attention, comprehension, and anticipation are learning factors, whereas evaluation is an acceptance factor. Evaluation was an important element in the Yale research project because it kept people

from being mindless puppets dancing to the persuader's tune. Refining this line of analysis, researchers in the project recognized that two factors were essential to persuasion: reception, or noting and thinking about a message, and yielding, or allowing it to influence one's attitudes.

Learning theory was being applied to persuasion research at a time when other researchers were exploring a variety of communication models. Inspired by these models, persuasion researchers theorized that several elements could account for persuasive influence. Researchers explored how persuasion could occur because of *source*, *message*, *channel*, and *receiver* variables.

Interest in source as a factor in the Yale study sparked two decades of analysis that renewed classical rhetorical theory's interest in ethos or the credibility of the source of a message. Researchers knew that some people were more influential, more persuasive, than others. Factors related to the source's credibility might account for this difference in influence.

Message was another focal variable. The study explored factors such as the order of topics presented in a message. Researchers interested in order effects wanted to know whether it is best to place strong topics first (primacy effects) or later (recency effects) in a single message or a series of messages presented during a campaign. Researchers wanted to understand whether it was more persuasive to present one side (pro or con) instead of both. They focused attention on the emotionality conveyed in the words chosen to present the topics in a message. Dozens of other message elements went under the social science researchers' microscopes in their efforts to understand the nature of persuasive influence.

Channels were a hot topic. Just a decade before, other researchers had found that individual opinion leaders might be more important than mediated messages during political campaigns. Print, television, and radio were other alternative channels. Some people prefer print because of the depth and "permanency" of the content in the message compared with radio or television. Radio and television devote less depth to messages, but they add the personality or credibility of the reporter. Seeing a reporter on TV might be more or less influential than just hearing one on the radio.

Researchers isolated a legion of factors that might account for why individuals receive and yield to messages differently. Some of these factors were demographic. Were young people more persuadable than older persons? Do men and women receive and yield to messages differently? Does the topic influence these outcomes? Does the perception of the relevance of a topic or the seriousness of a decision influence how people are persuaded?

Questions and conclusions came from this line of study in abundance. Perhaps one of the more alluring contributions relevant to advertising and public relations was the 12-step model proposed in 1981 by William McGuire. He postulated that the formation and use of attitudes progressed through stages:

1. Being exposed to the message
2. Attending to it
3. Liking it and becoming interested in it
4. Comprehending it
5. Learning how to process and use it
6. Yielding to it
7. Memorizing it
8. Retrieving it as required
9. Using it to make decisions
10. Behaving in accord with the decision
11. Reinforcing the actions
12. Consolidating the decision based on the success of the action

Persuasive influence is possible at each stage. Anyone designing a promotional campaign might focus attention on where the targeted audience is in the sequence of cognitive steps. Publicity, for instance, might be used to expose people to a message and get them to attend to it. A promotional campaign might get them to use the message in making a decision as a foundation for influence in the latter steps of the model.

Because of its models and assumptions, learning theory has been criticized as offering "tricks" to manipulators and being highly mechanistic. In reality, the researchers who worked on this theoretical explanation of persuasion were convinced that

social influence is never as easy as it appears. These seminal researchers recognized the limitations of their explanations even as they helped spawn subsequent generations of researchers devoted to exploring the mysteries of persuasion.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Propaganda; Rhetorical theory; Subjective expected utilities theory

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LEE, IVY

Ivy Ledbetter Lee has often been called the “father of modern public relations.” He shares that distinction with Edward Bernays, but Lee and Bernays had two quite different interpretations of the profession they supposedly co-founded. Lee, who had been a journalist for the *New York Journal*, the *World*, and the *Times*, thought his new profession’s purpose was to inform the public on behalf of his clients and advise them how to win public approval. Bernays, who as the nephew of Sigmund Freud came from a family steeped in social psychology, was more interested in understanding and using social forces to manage the public on behalf of his clients.

Lee was born on July 16, 1877, in Cedartown, Georgia, the son of a prominent Methodist minister. After graduating from Princeton, he went to New York in 1899 to work as a journalist, starting as a general assignment reporter. He soon specialized in financial affairs, covering Wall Street and the stock market during the heyday of the anti-big business muckraking crusades.

In 1904, Lee left journalism to work as a freelance writer and publicist and then joined forces with

another reporter, George Parker, to open an office they called Parker & Lee. They proposed to help business clients who were having difficulty with a critical press. During a strike by coal miners in 1906, the new firm was hired by the coal mine owners to handle press relations. That assignment resulted in the now-famous “Declaration of Principles,” a statement sent to city editors by Parker & Lee.

The declaration stated,

This is not a secret press bureau. All our work is done in the open. We aim to supply news. This is not an advertising agency; if you think any of our matter ought properly to go to your business office, do not use it. Our matter is accurate. Further details on any subject treated will be supplied promptly, and any editor will be assisted most cheerfully in verifying directly any statement of fact. (Morse, 1906, p. 458)

By 1908, *Editor & Publisher* wrote that Parker & Lee had “established itself firmly in the estimation of editors and publishers,” that they have “never made any attempt at deception,” and that they were “never sensational, never libelous, always trustworthy, always readable” (p. 2).

That same year Lee withdrew from the Parker partnership to work exclusively with one of his clients, Pennsylvania Railroad. One of his first and most famous actions at the railroad was to change its policies regarding accidents. The Pennsylvania, feeling that any accident publicity was bad, had always refused to allow reporters at the scene of an accident and had declined to give out any information about the situation. As a consequence, the railroad suffered from rumors as well as reporters’ ill will. Lee changed the policy, taking reporters directly to the scene of any accident at the railroad’s expense and giving them complete access to all the facts of the case. As a result, the Pennsylvania got better press and eventually achieved more public understanding regarding its problems.

Lee soon realized that his work went far beyond producing press releases. His main function was advising his clients on what they should do to get good press. He realized that if an organization were to open channels of communication and tell the truth about itself, it needed to have a good truth to tell. So he began to advise the Pennsylvania to install more

safety equipment, to beautify its stations, to raise employee salaries and benefits, and even to start a profit-sharing plan.

His work for the Pennsylvania brought him to the attention of the entire railroad industry, and other companies eventually signed him on, including the New York Central, the Baltimore and Ohio, and all the Harriman lines. He later helped establish the Association of Railroad Executives to continue public relations for the whole industry. Many credited his efforts with preventing the nationalization of American railroads in the first half of the twentieth century.

Some of America's most prominent early-20th-century corporations and individuals signed on for Ivy Lee's advice, including Standard Oil, Bethlehem Steel, Chrysler, American Tobacco, Armour and Company, General Mills, and United States Rubber. He served public utilities, banks, investment companies, shipping interests, copper manufacturers, sugar cartels, and even foreign countries. But perhaps his most famous clients were the Rockefellers: John D. Sr. and John D. Jr.

His first big job for the Rockefellers was handling their press relations during a 1914 strike in the Colorado coal mines of which the Rockefellers were majority owners. When the strike got out of hand, the National Guard was called in and innocent miners and their families were gunned down in what became known as the Ludlow massacre, the blame for which was laid at the feet of cold-hearted absentee owners. The press vilified the Rockefellers as never before.

Lee urged the shy and sensitive John D. Jr. to become involved by going to Colorado and meeting personally with the miners and their families, inspecting their homes and factory towns, listening to their grievances, and even attending social events, where he danced with the striking miners' wives. Such actions were unheard of and won glowing notices in the press, paving the way for resolution of the conflict, as well as the humanization of the Rockefellers.

Unlike advertising agencies or press agents, Lee was not simply interested in promoting his clients by selling their products, personalities, or ideas; rather, he was concerned with achieving public understanding of them. If one's policies could not

be made acceptable to the public, they must be changed. The work of public relations, as Lee developed his ideas, was twofold: to relate his clients to their publics through effective channels of communication, and to adjust those relationships by advising different plans of action when misunderstanding or conflict arose.

He pioneered the use of employee newspapers, management newsletters, stockholder reports, and press releases to explain his clients to their various publics. But he felt that effective communication came through many channels, from "Gothic cathedrals to brass bands," a phrase Lee himself used in some of his unpublished writing about his work. He urged the Rockefellers to give more public expression to the good works they were doing, such as their charities and foundations, which they had been reticent about revealing. He urged the building of Rockefeller Center, the reconstruction of Williamsburg, and the founding of the Riverside Memorial Church as means of explaining the ideas and ideals of the Rockefellers. These were not his projects or ideas, but he saw each as a medium carrying a powerful and positive message.

By the time Lee died, the world had witnessed a complete change in the Rockefeller reputation, from cold-blooded and avaricious robber barons to benign benefactors of the public good. In 1935, John D. Jr. wrote to Ivy Lee's widow:

From the earliest days of my contact with your husband it became clear to me that his point of view was the same as ours, that complete sincerity, honesty and integrity were fundamental principles which regulated his daily life and upon which his every action was based. What he did for us in the Colorado situation and in the general relations of our family and business interest to the public thereafter was of greatest value.

Throughout his professional life, Lee devoted his public relations work to many charitable activities. During World War I, he took a leave from his business clients to become the publicity director of the American Red Cross. He saw the Red Cross as a kind of Rockefeller Foundation for America, and saw his role as helping to explain to the rest of the world America's character, its generosity, its goodwill, and its desire to help humanity and win the

peace. He continued to serve the Red Cross until his death, and his firm carried on with the charitable work for many years thereafter. He worked on a voluntary basis on the public relations problems of universities (including Harvard and Princeton), the YMCA, and the Henry Street Settlement, among many others.

Lee believed that public conflict, such as existed between labor and management, could be resolved peacefully through public relations; communication would lead to understanding and compromise on both sides. He felt the same techniques could be used to gain international peace and understanding, and in the 1920s he devoted himself increasingly to international public relations. Among his clients were France, Poland, and Romania, to which he gave advice on publicizing postwar reconstruction loans.

Around this time, he found himself involved in a public controversy over the Soviet Union. His interest in Russia had begun in 1905, when he visited there as a freelance writer and publicist. After the Bolshevik revolution in 1917, he studied the new policies of the Soviets and their experiments in closing all channels of communication with the outside world. Lee felt that only a free flow of information between East and West would bring the two camps into peaceful understanding of each other, and this alone could lead to change in the Communist world. He began in the 1920s to urge diplomatic recognition of Red Russia, at a time when such an idea was vehemently opposed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Congress. He reasoned that America could never influence the Soviets if it did not engage in a dialogue with them. As a result, Lee was attacked as a press agent and propagandist for the Soviet Union, but both the State Department and a Senate investigating committee eventually cleared him of any such charges.

In the early 1930s, his firm also served such foreign businesses as the Solvay Chemical Corporation of Belgium and the German Dye Trust, the latter involving Lee in another controversial role during the early years of the Nazi regime. He was investigated by the House Un-American Activities Committee for being a Nazi propagandist, but was again cleared of any wrongdoing. The investigation

showed that his public relations advice had been sound and honest. He had told the Dye Trust that Hitler's policies would never be acceptable to the American people.

However, the German and the Russian controversies damaged his reputation. Throughout his professional life, his ideas were treated simplistically by the press and his work routinely misconstrued and distorted by his detractors. Leftists painted him as a masterful manipulator on behalf of capitalism. Rightists regarded him as a misguided bleeding heart. Novelist Upton Sinclair called him "Poison Ivy," an epithet that lived on in the press.

In 1933 Lee made one of his senior associates his partner, and the firm became Ivy Lee and T. J. Ross. Ross continued the firm under that name until 1960, when it was changed to T. J. Ross and Associates. Lee himself died an untimely death in 1934 at the age of 57, leaving much work unfinished. He was deeply in debt, no doubt because he was much more interested in the success of his ideas and his clients than his own business and its profits.

During his professional life, he obviously thought long and hard about the activities he had pioneered. But much of his writing about public relations remained unfinished, which allowed Bernays to define the field more publicly. Lee published dozens of magazine pieces, many on behalf of his clients. He produced half a dozen books and several dozen pamphlets and booklets, but again most were probably subsidized by clients. Only one book appears to have been published by a legitimate publisher for its own sake: *Present-Day Russia* (1928). Two of his pamphlets fall into that category, *Publicity: Some of the Things It Is and Is Not* (1925) and *Public Opinion and International Relations* (1927).

A rich treasure of Ivy Lee's work resides, carefully catalogued, in the Princeton University Library. For the public relations profession, this is perhaps Ivy Lee's most interesting legacy, for it clearly shows him struggling to define himself, his work, and the new profession he had helped launch. Among the unpublished manuscripts are *Constructive Publicity* (4 chapters, undated); *An Intelligent Citizen's Guide to Propaganda* (7 chapters, undated); *Mr. Lee's Publicity Book*

(21 chapters, undated); *The Meaning of Publicity* (lectures given at the Harvard School of Business Administration, 6 chapters, 1924); *Problems of Propaganda: A Challenge to Democracy* (10 chapters and various notes, undated); *The Public Eye* (various versions and titles, 5 to 7 chapters, undated); and *Publicity: The Profession of Persuading the Public* (9 chapters, undated).

Only one full-length biography has been published, this author's own work: *Courtier to the Crowd: The Story of Ivy Lee and the Development of Public Relations* (1966). Shorter treatments of his life and work abound in many books and articles.

In his brief lifetime of 57 years, the America in which Ivy Lee lived underwent revolutionary changes. From a largely agrarian, laissez-faire, individualistic, and isolated community, it had become an industrialized mass society and world power. In other parts of the world, similar changes produced violent results—the overthrow of capitalism, kings, and emperors in bloody conflicts; the rise of dictatorships; and the loss of individual rights as states assumed supreme authority under Fascist or Communist regimes. It can be argued that in America capitalism and democracy survived the turmoil of industrialization and the rise of mass society because of the kind of public relations espoused by Ivy Lee. His methods provided a peaceful mechanism for conflict resolution.

Lee reasoned that a free press required transparency, and transparency required social responsibility. His public relations espoused two-way communication, a dialogue with one's public that would help shape policies and messages that could win public approval. The analysis of Lee's notion of two-way communication was first made in 1948 by Princeton University professor Eric F. Goldman. Furthermore, practice of the techniques he pioneered could level the playing field by giving all parties the same methods for reaching and influencing the public.

Much of Lee's philosophy can be found in public relations policies and programs adopted in the mid- to late 20th century. Post–World War II and Cold War government programs such as the U.S. Information Agency, the Agency for International

Development, and the Peace Corps would have been hailed by Lee as perfect examples of the way to influence the world. Edward Barrett, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs in the early 1950s, summarized Lee's philosophy precisely and succinctly in the title of his book about the new USIA, *Truth Is Our Weapon*. (Barrett had been a newspaper publisher in Alabama and an executive for Hill & Knowlton. After his State Department appointment he became dean of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.) And when the U.S. military adopted the policy of embedding journalists in military units in the war in Iraq in 2003, it was following the same script that Ivy Lee developed for handling press coverage of accidents on the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1908.

Unfortunately, public relations practitioners today do not always follow the Ivy Lee model. The decline of an investigative press and the rise of deregulation have allowed unchallenged power centers to develop, such as a military-industrial complex and global media empires. These powerful new forces frequently act as if transparency, social responsibility, and public dialogue are no longer necessary for their success. Power centers with extensive resources can overwhelm the channels of communication with slick messages, freezing out competing ideas and propositions, denying the role of critical publicity in the public sphere. But both Lee and Bernays felt that publicity is essential to democracy. As Canadian communication scholar Stanley B. Cunningham put it, "For both Lee and Bernays—and their followers in advertising and public relations—propaganda was essentially a social good: good for business, good for democracy, good for society" (2002, p. 129).

Ivy Lee practiced "a very austere morality of public relations," wrote social scientist Randal Marlin (1994, p. 242). Lee reasoned that propaganda was evil only when its source was not disclosed. The public, he felt, was reasonable and would judge all information for its own sake if it was clear where the information came from. For example, when "public utilities buy newspapers and don't let the public know that they bought them, they are obviously making a wrong use of propaganda" (Marlin, 1994, p. 242).

Bernays (1928), on the other hand, thought propaganda of any kind was essential in modern society because the public was largely irrational and impressionable, and “new propagandists” were needed to be the “invisible governors” of the public’s thoughts and opinions.

Jurgen Habermas, communication philosopher and ethicist, also held that publicity was essential to democracy, but he posed two versions: one oriented toward critique and the other toward consumption. By critical publicity he meant that everything in the public sphere should be open to public investigation. Consumer-oriented publicity, on the other hand, was engineered through advertising or public relations, distorting the normative force of publicity. Habermas regarded public relations as a place for power and engagement rather than critical-rational judgment. He acknowledged that “public relations may effect desirable outcomes,” but he argued that it comes “at the cost of transparency. Once the image and event-making strategies of public relations start to establish the terms of public discussion, we start questioning the motives and worrying about the styles used in critical debate” (Dean, 2002, pp. 36–37)

This is essentially the tragedy of Ivy Lee. Because he regarded the public as rational, he was willing to open the channels of communication to transparency and dialogue, and as a former journalist he was often more concerned than Bernays with what Habermas would call critical publicity. As a result his work often effected positive change in his clients and their publics. But his motives were usually questioned to such an extent that his impact ultimately was muffled. Lee’s rival, Bernays, had no qualms about his work or attacks on his motives. He promoted himself and his ideas vigorously, and ended up having a bigger impact on public relations and the world. Lee, a thoughtful man, struggled for much of his professional life to defend himself from criticism and articulate his philosophy, and he died without fully succeeding in either task.

—Ray Eldon Hiebert

See also Bernays, Edward; Colorado Coal Strike Critical theory; Parker, George; Propaganda; Ross, Thomas J. “Tommy”

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LEGITIMACY AND LEGITIMACY GAP

Organizational legitimacy and *legitimacy gap* are terms that explain how corporations lose, meet, and regain societal approval to operate. They explain how organizations seek to “establish congruence between the social values associated with or implied by their activities and the norms of acceptable behavior in the larger system of which they are a part” (Dowling & Pfeffer, 1975, p. 122). That is, organizational legitimacy is a result of a company’s ability to assure the public it has their interests in mind. These concepts are important to public relations as companies rely on the industry to help them account for their actions in a manner that satisfies the public. Whether a company’s legitimacy has been threatened or just needs maintenance, public relations is often necessary.

The concept of legitimacy gap originated in 1977 with the claim by S. Prakesh Sethi that organizations suffer such a gap when their policies and operations violate expectations held by their key publics. During the period of political unrest in the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, the right of organizations to operate as they preferred had been sharply challenged on an increasing number of fronts. Sethi’s explanation of the effect of such challenges began an ever more insightful exploration of how organizations may lose key public

support for their legitimate right to operate as they wish.

Public accusations of wrongdoing can thrust organizations into legitimacy crises. These challenges to corporate existence occur when the public perceives a gap between social values and a company's actions and can cause an organization to lose its ability to function successfully. To retain their legitimacy, organizations must show that they operate by society's value systems. Most members of American society are familiar with such events as the nuclear emergency at Three Mile Island, the seven deaths caused by tainted Tylenol capsules, or the aftermath of the explosion at Union Carbide's Bhopal, India, chemical plant. Many people are likely to remember the scandals created by questionable corporate decisions, such as Dow Corning's decision to market what proved to be health-threatening silicone breast implants or Chrysler's selling vehicles as new, which in fact executives had driven with disconnected odometers. In all of these situations, these organizations faced public charges of wrongdoing because their actions suggested they did not meet society's standards of safety, honesty, justice, and fairness.

To continue to operate, companies must repair these legitimacy gaps between society's expectations and their behavior. For example, when a commercial airliner crashes, the public looks to that company as well as to federal investigators for an explanation of why the event occurred and reassurance that a similar tragedy will not occur. All sectors of our society, including institutions of government, education, religion, and private enterprise, are called to account for their actions at some point when they appear to violate public expectations. The public seeks answers and explanations for issues of corporate behavior that resonate in society's collective mind. They seek responses from companies whose actions have aroused public concern. Until corporations adequately address public anxiety, these concerns will continue to hold public attention. Companies that fail to produce acceptable explanations face threats to their legitimacy and their freedom to operate in society.

Societal expectations shape how a company's behavior is received in three concrete ways.

According to John Dowling and Jeffrey Pfeffer (1975), "organizational legitimacy is determined by its method of operation and output, as well as by the goals or domain of activity of the organization" (p. 126). Nike sometimes faces challenges to its legitimacy, for example, because of charges that its practice of using overseas factories for production is an unacceptable method of operation. Similarly, of late, some fast-food companies have had their legitimacy challenged as a result of their output. Fast-food companies who produce high-fat and high-calorie items find themselves accused by some segments of society of not meeting America's health values. Finally, if a company is associated with an unacceptable goal or domain of activity, that company's legitimacy will be threatened. Our society finds it unacceptable, therefore, for a company to have a goal of providing alcohol or tobacco to minors.

As companies can face challenges to their legitimacy in these three ways, they must rely on one or more of three options to respond to these threats. Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) provided three "prescriptions" an organization must follow to become or remain legitimate. They posit that an organization must practice at least one, but possibly all, of the following behaviors: (1) "adapt its output, goals and methods of operation to conform to prevailing definitions of legitimacy"; (2) "attempt, through communication, to alter the definition of social legitimacy so that it conforms to the organization's present practices, output and values"; and (3) "attempt, again through communication, to become identified with symbols, values or institutions which have a strong social base of legitimacy" (p. 127). Thus, when an organization is charged with wrongdoing, its options for remaining legitimate in the eyes of the public rest on its ability to employ public relations.

Public relations helps companies fulfill the prescriptions for organizational legitimacy. If a company attempts to alter its output—as in the case of a chemical company's decision to no longer produce toxic products—it must rely on public relations to notify stakeholders that it has conformed its methods of operation to the prevailing definitions of legitimacy. If an organization chooses the second,

often more difficult option, it attempts to convince the public to change its value system slightly so that the organization meets expectations. A tobacco company that tries to make the issue of smoking about the right to smoke, rather than responding to smoking's potential health problems, is attempting to adopt this second tactic of securing legitimacy. Many companies follow the third option for their legitimacy needs. Because Americans value freedom, for example, organizations attempt to show how their practices or products reflect this value. Sport utility vehicle manufacturers facing more stringent emissions regulations might argue against these regulations by appealing to the freedom of Americans to drive whatever type of car they wish.

Whichever tactic an organization chooses to secure legitimacy, communication and public relations is necessary. As Jill McMillan (1987) pointed out, "When the organization's public record proves to be a liability rather than an asset, the organization invariably taps its vast symbolic store for messages with which to defend itself" (p. 33). For these defenses to be successful, companies should employ messages that encourage publics to identify with them. Publics who identify with or relate to a company's symbolic choices will offer it less resistance and grant it the right to continue to operate.

Underlying organizational legitimacy, then, is the notion that companies must adjust to changing societal values and norms through communication; however, organizations can also have a role in shaping these norms. Organizations rely on issues management to shape public reaction to their activities. Often, public relations tries to reduce a widening legitimacy gap through this process. Robert L. Heath (1997) has suggested that by surveying potential problem areas such as pricing practices, corporate social responsibility, publicity choices, and customer and community responsiveness, companies try to make their policies acceptable to the society in which they operate before crises arise.

According to Metzler (2001), for example, the 1994 congressional hearings of the tobacco industry's potential long-standing cover-up of its knowledge of the dangers of smoking has led to legitimacy problems. The industry needs to rely on issues management and public relations to alter the perception

that it deceives the public. If it can work to shape its policies so that it demonstrates its concern for the public, it can begin to repair the damage to its legitimacy and head off a deepening gap of public disapproval. In this way, we now see the tobacco industry advertising its contributions to philanthropy in an attempt to convey its responsiveness and responsibility to its publics.

Clearly, the concept of legitimacy is one important part of organizational behavior. It functions interrelatedly with two other elements of organizational behavior: economic transactions and legality. These elements must work together for a company to receive societal acceptance. It is important to note, however, that the other elements do not guarantee legitimacy. As Dowling and Pfeffer (1975) pointed out, "economic exchange is not identical with legitimacy" (p. 124). A company can face economic challenges—as, for example, when a nonprofit struggles to raise funds for a cause—and still be legitimate. The nonprofit's organizational mission helps it meet societal norms and values. Similarly, illegitimate organizations, such as drug cartels, can exchange economic resources but do not meet the organizational behavior standards of legitimacy and legality. Drug cartels, since they participate in activities that do not meet societal values, remain illegitimate. Yet an organization may demonstrate that it operates legally and is economically sound and still face legitimacy problems. When news organizations invade privacy or illegally film subjects in order to gain a story, for example, they often suffer reductions in societal approval.

Legitimacy, then, is a complex blend of a number of organizational behaviors. Companies must rely on public relations to show the public that their actions meet societal standards, or attempt to change these expectations. As Metzler noted, these activities that work to boost legitimacy are at the core of public relations activity. If a company fails to ensure that the public sees that it has their best interests in mind, it will eventually face a crisis of legitimacy and lose its right to exist.

—Ashli A. Quesinberry

See also Identification; Issues management

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LESLY, PHILIP

Philip Lesly (1918–1997), a published, award-winning public relations practitioner, led from his headquarters in Chicago, Illinois, what was at one time the largest counseling firm in the world. He founded the Philip Lesly Company in 1949 and served as its president for 20 years. His firm was a full-service agency in the United States with offices throughout the world and represented more than 50 of the major organizations in Canada and the United States. Primarily a counseling and creative company, Lesly's firm focused on employee relations and communications, environmental concerns, and issues/crisis management. In his work with major corporations, trade associations, and nonprofit organizations, he viewed the public relations role as central to the management of an ever-changing human condition within society.

In 1978, he was voted the “leading active practitioner” in an international poll of professionals in the field conducted by *PR Reporter* (1991, p. 3). Lesly's leadership in public relations was further established by his well-articulated views in books, journal articles, and his bimonthly industry newsletter known as *Managing the Human Climate*, for

which half of the subscriptions originated outside the United States, mainly in the Far East.

Lesly's publications began with the basic *Public Relations: Principles and Procedures*. His next book focused on case studies and was titled *Principles in Action*. His sought-after *Public Relations Handbook*, first published in 1950, was reissued with the fifth edition in 1998, shortly after he passed away. Writers still quote Lesly's concise definition of public relations from the 1983 handbook: “helping an organization (or group) and its publics adapt mutually to each other” (1983, p. 5). Lesly's handbook serves as a highly valued reference for professionals in many countries throughout the world, including Japan, India, and the United Kingdom.

During his career, Lesly was awarded three annual awards from the Public Relations Society of America, including a Golden Anvil. His early accomplishments provided the basis for this leadership role. By the age of 18 he had earned a scholarship to Northwestern University, graduating magna cum laude and earning the status of a Phi Beta Kappa. He entered public relations work immediately after college and within two years became vice president of a major U.S. counseling firm. He organized and served as editor of the first daily newspaper for high schools in the United States. He later worked as an editor for the *Chicago Herald and Examiner*. His frequent lecturing and speeches were often reported and reprinted in leading newspapers and magazines such as the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and *Vital Speeches of the Day*.

Throughout his writings, Lesly focused on communication as the nexus for public relations and stated that “all of human society today pivots on communication.” His career focused on the importance of (1) examining attitudes, (2) understanding the role of public relations in practice, (3) studying effective communication, and (4) viewing public relations as a gestalt.

ATTITUDES ARE THE FOCUS

Lesly distinguished opinions from attitudes, claiming the latter had more power in indicating social trends. The focus on the “climate of attitude” as the

basis for forming public opinion emphasized the increasingly diverse society (1974b, p. ix). Citing the often-neglected area of attitudes, however, Lesly noted that management does not appreciate intangibles. Organizations tend to demand accounting for progress in terms of measurement. Yet if management could be persuaded to appreciate it, the more intangible area of attitudes—particularly in regard to change—could lead to a better understanding of social trends.

Lesly was particularly interested in the emerging role of activists. In his book *Overcoming Opposition: A Survival Manual for Executives* (1984), the advice focused on how to handle volatile issues. The strategies presented focused on the types of opponents, the types of opposition, the ways to distinguish legitimate organized groups, and the problem of an “instant media.” Guidelines developed for organizations outlined the strategies and tactics needed to address the changing social scene.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AS THE MIDDLE PERSON

Unlike the case for other professions such as law, accounting, or journalism, Lesly saw the public relations professional as the middle agent in the communication process. The public relations practitioner did not represent an area of expertise per se but worked with both the client/employers and the publics. The public relations professional serves as the bridge to ensure that the communication process is effective beyond personal self-interest. Such a unique role as interpreter should assist the participants in seeing the larger social impact.

Such an interpretive role necessitated a deep understanding of the climate of attitudes. Knowing the impact of trends on culture and having the ability to strategize options were key attributes for the public relations professional. Most important, knowledge and awareness of attitudes was to be utilized fully for crisis planning. Lesly recommended four specific actions to be implemented during a crisis or disaster: (1) people come first, (2) the organization is committed to communication, (3) the

crisis will have priority until it is resolved, and (4) the organization will be fair to those connected with the problem. Lesly stressed that crisis planning took place well before something happened, and this required attention to trends and potential problems and opportunities.

In the planning stage, Lesly preferred using the term *monitoring* instead of *issues*. This meant that not only were issues discovered, but the potential for opportunities was equally important. This further emphasized the flexibility and responsiveness needed to deal with a changing situation, particularly one that is ongoing over an extensive time period. His issues and opportunities list focused on the type of structure given to groups, the research necessary, the publics important to this issue or opportunity, the specific activities to be initiated, as well as the essential items in regard to budget, timetable, and evaluation. The role of the public relations professional as an interpreter of these multifaceted variables required such a comprehensive planning process. His concerns about encroachment of public relations positions by people without public relations expertise and his recognition of the need for business knowledge illustrated the depth and breadth of the experience he sought in employees.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

In a rather extensive effort to cover effective communication, Lesly took to heart the two-way mode of communication. He saw the audience as central to the communication effort. By involving the audience, reaching people through a variety of approaches, and filling the environment with messages, Lesly felt that the audience was being encouraged to join in the conversation. Other guidelines suggested that one keep ideas oriented toward local items as much as possible and maintain a consistency of message. Lesly also recommended adding a summary statement to assist the audience in developing conclusions. Essentially, these guidelines for communication established much of what is considered good persuasion practice today.

His book *How We Discommunicate* (1979) illustrates his respect and demand for precision in communication. Lesly's term *discommunicate* honed in on the sloppy use of language, the tendency toward jargon, the depersonalization of communication, the public distrust of communication, and the tendency to desire "controlled" communication (1978, p. 125). Communication simply is hard work, and much study is needed to successfully execute communication plans. Lesly railed against the multitudes who thought communication was an easy profession. This lax public attitude toward communication, he commented, was why communication failed so often.

Because of the social forces converging to make for a very complex environment, Lesly noted the emergence of an approach called *nuggetizing*. People tend to want ideas and concepts to come to them packaged for ready consumption. The difficulty of sorting out what is "real" and what is "phony" seems to be overwhelming. Faced with choices in such an environment, Lesly offered his view on how to reduce the chaos to essential "nuggets" of wisdom intended to guide a person through the morass of offerings from society. His pithy comments on horticulture, culture, science, fame, and other diverse topics focus on basic values and are useful for practicing an ethical and socially responsible public relations effort.

Lesly was fearless in his opinions about public relations. In the case of Hill & Knowlton's public relations client Kuwait, Philip Lesly strongly held to the opinion that H&K had violated Article 8 of the Public Relations Society of America's (PRSA) code of conduct when the agency concealed the identity of a witness testifying before Congress. Such a "front" misled the legislators in their decision. Other professionals cited Article 14 of the PRSA code, which states that "a member shall not intentionally damage the professional reputation or practice of another practitioner" and refused to comment on the case.

PUBLIC RELATIONS VIEWED AS A GESTALT

In 1996, Lesly again responded to the concerns surrounding public relations as a developing

profession. In a rather incisive analysis of the field, Lesly (1996) declared the profession to be "balkanized" (p. 41). The competition between segments of the public relations field was not only "self-destructive" but had destroyed the image of the discipline. The attempt of professionals to divide up the field into specialties resulted in a focus on parts of the discipline at the expense of the whole. For example, those who stress public relations as "relationship" have severed communication, the very foundation of public relations, from consideration. This distortion of the field has resulted in a major disconnect that, in effect, weakens the understanding of public relations as practiced.

Lesly suggested that public relations should be considered more as a "gestalt," or the sum total of human behavior. An example of this is the tendency to define public relations as corporate communication. At present, more growth in public relations activity is taking place in countries where corporate organizations, as known in the Western world, hardly exist, so corporate communication is too limiting a definition. In those countries, the focus shifts from corporate restructuring and product promotion issues to concerns regarding AIDS, the need for a civil society, or hunger.

The final contribution by Lesly thus challenged public relations professionals to represent the discipline as a gestalt, focusing more on the abstract qualities of communication of emotions and attitudes that represent the field as a whole. He suggested that the "marketing public relations" concept is nothing more than the product promotion idea from the 1920s updated with more diversity in publics. This is where his insistence on being precise in one's language becomes crucial. He redefines "marketing public relations" as "marketing publicity and promotion." By clearly identifying the specific function linked to marketing, public relations changes from primarily strategic or policy activity to more of a tactics approach—and thus a major loss in stature. Lesly viewed public relations in the "middle role" of working with intangibles, a focus where business problems were identified as essentially a communication need. His idea of the professional using communication to bridge the

interaction among the client/employer and public served to demonstrate an even larger social function for public relations.

—Bonita Dostal Neff

See also Community relations

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LOBBYING

Lobbying is the process through which issues and individuals are mobilized in an effort to bring about change. The end goal of most lobbying is the institutionalization of change through legislative processes; any attempt to influence specific legislation counts as lobbying. Although some may perceive any reference to lobbying as pejorative, to many it represents the fundamental right of free speech guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Lobbying is classified by the Internal Revenue Service at one of two levels: direct lobbying or indirect lobbying. The IRS distinguishes between direct and indirect lobbying based on one main criterion—whether or not there is a call to action.

Direct lobbying involves a call to action on specific legislation. It often involves paid individuals engaging in a direct, formal communicative process

with key officials and legislators. The Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, interpreted by Jack Maskell in a CRS Report for Congress, recognizes two kinds of direct lobbyists: “(1) ‘in house’ lobbyists of an organization or business—employees of that organization or business who are compensated, at least in part, to lobby on its behalf; and (2) ‘outside’ lobbyists—members of a lobbying firm, partnership, or sole proprietorship that engage in lobbying for ‘outside’ clients” (2001, p. 5). Any employed individual whose direct lobbying responsibilities constitute 20 percent or more of his or her time over a six-month period is considered a lobbyist for that organization.

A business or organization assigning lobbying duties to an employee, thus making that individual a “paid” lobbyist, must register and identify that individual with the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House. An outside lobbyist must be registered and identified by the lobbyist firm for each client firm, “identifying such things as the lobbyist, the client and the issues” (Maskell, 2001, p. 5). Exceptions to registration rules are made only on the amount of expenditure.

Any organization which uses its own employees as lobbyists will not need to register if the organization's total expenses for lobbying activities do not exceed \$22,500 in a six month period. A lobbying firm (including a self-employed individual) does not need to register for a particular “outside” client if its total income from that client for lobbying related matters does not exceed \$5,500 in a six month filing period. (Maskell, 2001, p. 6).

These individuals must register within 45 days from employment or from making requisite contacts, whichever is earlier.

On another level, if an individual lobbies for or on behalf of a foreign government, a foreign political party, or any other foreign entity, the Foreign Agents Registration Act must be followed as amended by the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995. In selecting paid lobbyists it is important to note the restrictions placed on previous employees of the federal government. In what is known as the “revolving door” conflict of interest, the Act places a “cooling off” period on many former employees extending for one year

after they leave their positions. This means these individuals cannot accept employment to lobby any part of the federal government, including members of Congress, for one year after leaving their governmental positions.

Indirect lobbying does not involve a call to action and is sometimes known as grassroots lobbying or grassroots activism. Indirect lobbying does not require registration with the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House, as it generally involves nonpaid laypersons coming together and engaging in public relations activities in an effort to politicize an issue or promote an agenda. The mode of contact between grassroots activists and key officials and legislators is almost always mediated. The mediation occurs in various forms: pseudo-events staged for the purpose of generating the attention of television, radio or print outlets; letter writing, either through the United States Postal Service or over electronic mail; town hall meetings and rallies; and telephone calling, petition signing, and the like. It is important to note that indirect lobbying may be facilitated by laypersons themselves or sponsoring organizations. It is also important to note that under the IRS guidelines even what may be considered initially as indirect lobbying may truly be direct lobbying if a call to action is included.

Philanthropic organizations can lobby along with non-tax-exempt organizations, but they must follow strict guidelines for lobbying expenditure amounts if they want to maintain tax-exempt status. The 501(h) election allows nonprofits some allowance for lobbying activities. Under this election they may attempt to influence legislation within five categories of activity: self-defense; technical advice; nonpartisan analysis or research; examinations and discussions of broad social, economic, and similar problems; and regulatory and administrative issues. Any nonprofit organization engaging in lobbying activities may, under IRS guidelines, spend only one-fourth as much on grassroots lobbying as on direct lobbying. For example, if an organization has allowed \$50,000 in annual lobbying expenses, only \$12,500 of that may be used for indirect lobbying expenditures with the remainder used for direct lobbying expenditures.

Public relations strategists engage in both direct and indirect lobbying activities to accomplish public relations goals. Public relations ethics call for practitioners to maintain strict adherence to the rules of lobbying and the avoidance of front groups. Front groups exist when grassroots campaigns and activities are implemented on behalf of undisclosed interest groups.

—Tricia L. Hansen-Horn

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LOBSENZ, AMELIA

Amelia Lobsenz (1922–1992) was the first woman president of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), serving in 1986, and its fifth American president. Lobsenz was chairman and CEO of Lobsenz-Stevens, Inc., a public relations firm in New York City with annual billings of \$3.7 million and such clients as Clairol, Pitney Bowes, Bristol Myers Squibb, Procter & Gamble, and Mitsubishi Motors. She was also Director of International Affairs of Pinnacle Worldwide, a network of public relations firms in 20 countries.

Born in Greensboro, North Carolina, Lobsenz graduated from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia. In the mid-1940s, she began her 40-year career as a freelance writer and book author, with articles appearing in *Ladies Home Journal*, *Reader's Digest*, *Family Circle*, and *Woman's Day*. She worked for Edward Gottlieb & Associates before beginning her own firm, Lobsenz PR, in 1956. Her firm merged to become Lobsenz-Stevens in 1975.

Lobsenz was a member of the board of governors of the National Women's Economic Alliance, an organization of business leaders that promotes

career opportunities for women. She served on the board of the National Media Conference. She received six Presidential Citations from the Public Relations Society of America and served on that organization's national board from 1980 to 1981.

In 1986 Lobsenz was honored by public relations societies in London, Paris, Milan, Frankfurt, Vienna, and Tokyo and received the Orleans, France, Medal of Honor.

In her leadership role with IPRA, Lobsenz developed a drug abuse education program, using a children's board game to teach children about the realities of drug abuse in a nonthreatening environment. William Corbett, 1990 president of IPRA, eulogized Lobsenz by saying, "Amelia gave boundless energy and enthusiasm to the profession and she was always there to volunteer . . . she never stopped pushing" ("Amelia Lobsenz," 1992, p. 54).

—*Elizabeth L. Toth*

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Amelia Lobsenz, leading PR woman, dies (1992, October). *O'Dwyer's PR Service Report*, 54.

LOCALIZE

When a media release or feature is written so that it highlights information of interest to a specific locality or population, it is called localizing. Most media will quickly point out that if the information they receive isn't local in terms of their coverage area and demographics, it's not news to them. In fact, the lack of a "local angle" is the primary reason media releases are rejected. Consequently, localizing a media release will greatly increase the chance it will be used.

To localize a piece, writers must narrow their focus and lead with the information that will best create interest among the group being targeted. Localizing a media release often consists of simply rewriting the news lead to highlight a geographic location and including additional information significant to that location. For example, a national retail chain can localize the announcement of a new

product by placing the focus on its individual stores rather than the company in general. Although this takes extra time, it ultimately will result in increased media coverage.

THE HOMETOWN RELEASE

One popular format of localizing is the "hometown release," which is often used by organizations to announce appointments, promotions, or other achievements of personnel. In addition to distributing a general release to the media that covers the area where the organization is located, localized releases might be sent to the community where the subject of the media release lives, the person's hometown, or the person's alma mater. Slightly different versions would be written for each of these media.

For example, suppose an organization located in Buffalo, New York, is announcing that one of its employees, Michael Owen, has just received a national award. A general media release outlining Owen's achievement has been prepared for media in the Buffalo area: "Michael Owen, an employee at . . ." However, the media coverage the announcement receives outside of Buffalo could be expanded by making small changes to the lead. A second release could be sent to the community in which Owen lives: "Hamburg resident Michael Owen . . ." A third release could be targeted to Owen's hometown: "Michael Owen, formerly of South Bend, Indiana, . . ." A fourth release could be sent to Owen's alma mater: "Notre Dame alumnus Michael Owen . . ." Personal information appropriate to each version might also be included. For example, the college version might include the year Owen graduated and the degree he earned. These minor changes immediately tell the targeted media that the information is of interest to their audience.

—*Ann R. Carden*

See also Media release; Pyramid style

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LOGO

A logo is a graphic element that symbolizes an organization, product, or service, and a logotype is a typeface rendering of the name of the organization, product, or service. A logo must be representative of the organization, reflecting its desired image and positioning strategy. A logo is created to help convey a unified image by taking a complex communication challenge and condensing it into its simplest and most effective form. An effective logo should be understandable, memorable, pleasing to the eye, positive in its depiction, and timeless. It should be versatile so that it can be implemented in a variety of sizes and color schemes. For instance, it should be effective if executed in black and white, one color, or a combination of colors, and it should reproduce well in large and small formats. The Apple Computer logo, which is an illustration of an apple with a single bite out of it, is one example of a simple design that exemplifies the characteristics of an effective logo.

In public relations, advertising, and marketing, logos are implemented as part of a visual communication system or corporate identity system, which includes a logo, an organizational name, and a slogan or tagline. These elements work together to convey a particular image and/or key message. Many consumers are familiar with the Nike swish logo and its accompanying tagline, "Just Do It."

Logos can be created using type, line rules, tint boxes, illustrations, or any other graphic device. As part of a visual communication system, logos are placed on an organization's stationery, business forms, and labels, as well as on collateral materials such as brochures and advertisements. Many organizations develop and distribute manuals on the proper execution of their corporate identity systems. Such manuals include instructions on size, placement, and the use of color and type in various executions,

ranging from outdoor boards to newsletters. The American Cancer Society and the American Red Cross distribute a variety of manuals and booklets to their divisions, units, and volunteers in an attempt to ensure a consistent portrayal of their logos.

Research is key when developing a logo. A thorough understanding of the organization's mission, goals, desired image, positioning strategy, unique characteristics, and stakeholders is necessary. Brainstorming sessions can be a helpful way to generate logo ideas, and ideas should be mocked up in various applications, such as letterhead and business cards, for purposes of testing and feedback.

Logos can also take the form of trademarks, service marks, collective marks, and certification marks. A trademark is used by a manufacturer to represent its product or products and distinguish it from other products. A service mark is used by an organization offering a service. A seal, emblem, or insignia is used by nonprofit organizations. Collective marks are used by trade associations to promote a product provided by an industry rather than a particular manufacturer. Certification marks, indicating a seal of approval, are used by a testing company to demonstrate that a brand is of a particular quality. On the other hand, a trade name is the name of a brand or organization, which may be in the form of a trademark.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Graphics; Tag

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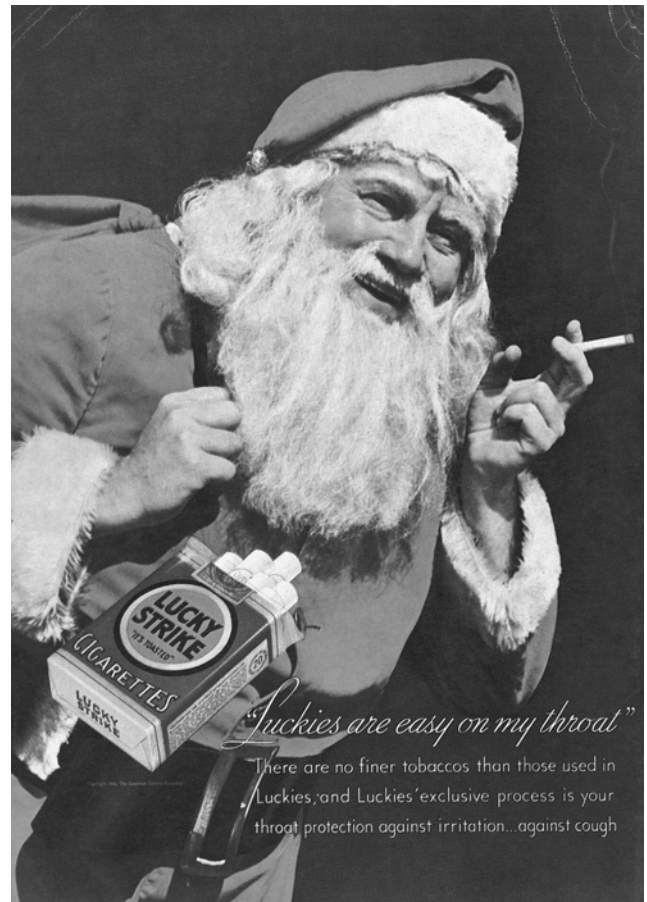
LUCKY STRIKE GREEN CAMPAIGN

In the 1920s and 1930s, Edward Bernays and George Washington Hill, the president of America Tobacco, teamed up to promote cigarette smoking among women, an endeavor that was to haunt Bernays when the dangers of cigarettes were revealed later.

The flagship brand for American Tobacco was Lucky Strike, and Hill had spent years and millions of dollars promoting the signature green Lucky Strike packaging. This green color was problematic because survey research found that women did not buy Lucky Strikes because the green packaging clashed with their wardrobes. Hill called upon Bernays to remedy the situation but stated that changing the color of the packaging was not an option. Bernays responded, “If you won’t change the color of the package, change the color of fashion—to green.” Thus, the promotion of green was born. Bernays was to develop a campaign to get women to wear green in order to prevent Lucky Strikes from clashing with their outfits.

The promotion of green was a six-month effort driven by the formative research that revealed why women were not buying Lucky Strikes. The problem was that women were not wearing green. Bernays did additional research on the color green itself. He found in the book *Language of Color* that green was associated with hope, victory, and plenty and was a positive psychological color. The goal was to make green a fashionable color for women. The next task was to identify the targets for the green message. To reach women on the basic fashion issue, Bernays relied on New York City debutantes, the same group he used in 1929 to promote the acceptability of women smoking in public with his “Torches of Freedom” campaign. The debutantes were opinion leaders for women’s fashion. If they wore green, other women would wear green. Fashion editors were a second target. Favorable stories about green would facilitate women’s wearing the color.

The basic message was simple: Green is the “in” color. The challenge was to develop the tactics that would make green a desirable color. The Green Ball, a formal dance held at the Waldorf Astoria, was the most visible tactic in the promotion of green. The color green was to be the theme, and all the attendees were required to wear green gowns, as the purpose of the ball was to show debutantes wearing green and to generate favorable accounts of the color in the fashion magazines. A successful ball would help to establish green as an acceptable color for women to wear.



Lucky Strike Cigarettes used a variety of campaigns to sell products in the 1930s, from promoting green—the color of their cigarette packaging—as fashionable for women to featuring Santa Claus as a customer, as in this 1936 advertisement. “Luckies are easy on my throat,” Santa is quoted as saying. “There are no finer tobaccos than those used in Luckies, and Luckies’ exclusive process is your throat protection against irritation . . . against cough.”

SOURCE: © Bettmann/CORBIS

Bernays felt the key to the Green Ball was the right hostess. With the right woman at the helm, the Green Ball would attract the leading debutantes and have the maximum impact. Bernays selected Mrs. Frank A. Vanderlip, the wife of the former National City Bank chairman. She was well known and well connected in New York City society. But how would Bernays convince her to play hostess? Mrs. Vanderlip was also the chairwoman of the Women’s Infirmary of New York. Bernays developed an early form of social marketing to entice

Mrs. Vanderlip to play hostess. The proceeds from the Green Ball would go to the Women's Infirmary to help with various projects, such as clothing for patients and milk for undernourished children. A nameless sponsor would help to defray costs with a \$25,000 donation, and Bernays would "donate" his services. Mrs. Vanderlip recruited the elite of New York society to help her. Women such as Mrs. James Roosevelt, Mrs. Walter Chrysler, and Mrs. Irving Berlin populated the invitation committee. The Green Ball was assured of being attended by prominent guests.

But the Green Ball was but one tactic in a larger effort. Bernays wanted to go beyond dresses to accessories and even home design. Green should be an accepted and used color throughout a woman's life. The promotion of green was a finely crafted public relations campaign, with the Green Ball just one tactic within that effort. The fashion and accessories industries and department stores were targets as well. Someone needed to make the dresses and accessories (e.g., gloves, scarves, shoes, etc.) and to sell them if women were to wear them. Interior designers and home furnishing buyers rounded out the target audience. These were the people who could bring green into the home and weave it into the fabric of a woman's life. Bernays recruited the Onondaga Silk Company to help reach the fashion editors, department stores, and interior designers. Philip Vogelmann was the president of Onondaga at the time and was swayed by Bernays's argument that green could become an "in" color and that Onondaga would have a sales advantage by being on the leading edge of the trend.

Bernays and Onondaga created the Color Fashion Bureau to bring green to the home. Women were seen as less likely to buy clothing that would clash with their home decor. The Color Fashion Bureau sent out letters, on green paper, that promoted green as the color of the future. These letters were sent to department stores, home furnishing buyers, and interior designers. More than 6,500 letters and kits were sent that presented the coming green trend. The Color Fashion Bureau quickly became a source for fashion information. In a period of a few months, the Color Fashion Bureau received requests

for information from 77 newspapers, 95 magazines, 83 furniture and home decoration manufacturers, 301 department stores, 175 radio stations, and 64 interior designers. The requests indicate that the word was spreading about the color green and that the Color Fashion Bureau was an effective tactic for disseminating the information. Department stores began to use green clothing in their window displays, and the Reinhardt Galleries held the "Green Exhibition" of paintings. Green was spreading throughout New York City.

Vogelmann collected fashion editors for a Green Fashions Fall Luncheon at the Waldorf-Astoria, future site of the Green Ball. The menu featured only green food, including green beans, olivette potatoes, and asparagus-tip salad. The message delivered at the luncheon was the positive nature of the color green. Fashion editors heard a psychologist explain the wonderful qualities of the color green, and an art professor from Hunter College gave a lecture on "Green in the World of Great Artists." Newspapers provided immediate stories about green being a color to look for in this year's fashions. Later, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* would feature the Green Ball on their covers. The luncheon tactic was designed to generate positive coverage of the color in the fashion press, and it seemed to be a success.

The Green Ball was a success because it generated large amounts of positive media coverage for the color green. Green was recognized as an important color on the fashion pages of leading newspapers and magazines. Independent historians generally agree that green did become the "in" color of 1934. However, we do not know if the promotion of green actually led to women buying more Lucky Strikes; there is no direct evidence for that. We do know that the number 1 reason women did not buy Lucky Strikes had been addressed.

On the Internet, many people cite the promotion of green as guerilla marketing and extreme publicity. The focus is on the Green Ball and the publicity generated by it. Critics have attacked the promotion of green on two counts. First, the Green Ball was a pseudo-event or publicity stunt, an event created simply to generate publicity. That charge is true:

There would have been no Green Ball had Bernays not wanted to generate positive media coverage of the color green. But the news media cover a wide range of publicity events each day, from a news conference to the president riding in an airplane that lands on an aircraft carrier. They know events are staged for publicity, and they have the freedom to choose whether or not to cover them. Publicity is a part of the journalist and public relations landscape. As long as it is done truthfully and tastefully, publicity has a place in both. Second, the Green Ball has been criticized as part of the effort to promote smoking for women. This charge is true. Bernays was a major figure in expanding cigarette smoking to women. In hindsight, this is an unfortunate development as tobacco companies continue to exploit and to expand the female smoking population, placing millions of women at risk for smoking-related diseases. Actions often have unintended consequences, and the promotion of green did contribute to the spread of smoking-related diseases to the female population. Although unfortunate, this should not be justified by saying no one knew of the health risks. People must accept responsibility for their actions even if they did not fully realize what those actions might do. Bernays spent his later years

supporting antismoking efforts. However, his work for American Tobacco make him the villain in many writings that condemn public relations, such as the book *Toxic Sludge Is Good for You*.

As a field, public relations must reflect on its impact on society, both the good and the bad. Had the promotion of green been used to sell more broccoli, it would be hailed today as a great case study in the strategic use of publicity. We can still learn important ethical and tactical lessons from the promotion of green. Bernays provides a model for an early strategic approach to public relations and reveals the dangers that success can breed when a product later harms its consumers.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Bernays, Edward; Ethics of public relations; Public relations research; Publicity

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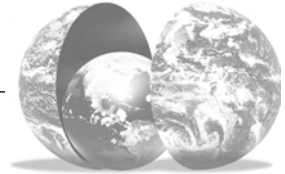
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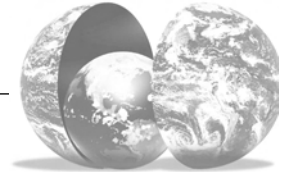
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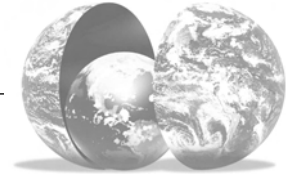
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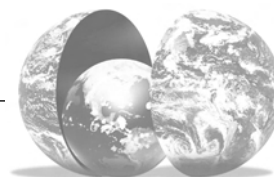
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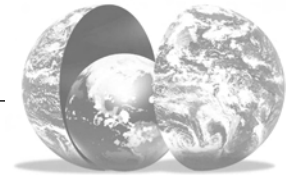
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Activism: Unidentified activists from the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP) stage a demonstration on July 11, 2000, in Durban, South Africa, at the 13th International AIDS Conference. ACT UP called on the World Health Organization (WHO) to distribute antiretroviral treatments to poor countries.

Asia, practice of public relations in: *Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER)* journalists, British citizen Rodney Tasker (*left*) and United States citizen Shawn Crispin (*right*), attend a press conference at the Thai Immigration Bureau in Bangkok on February 27, 2002. Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra insisted that Thailand had the sovereign right to expel the two foreign journalists over an article they wrote that touched on the government's relations with the country's revered monarchy.

Barnum, P. T.: A portrait of P. T. Barnum on a Barnum and Company circus poster that advertises an exhibit featuring "Great Jumbo's Skeleton."

Berlowe, Phyllis: Photo

Bernays, Edward: Photo

Bogart, Judith S.: Photo

Burson, Harold: Photo

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Collaborative decision making: Table 1. Common Techniques for Collaborative Decision Making

Committee on Public Information: Poster for "Under Four Flags," one of a series of films by the Committee on Public Information promoting the United States' efforts in World War I. Such films

were used both as propaganda and as fundraisers for the war effort.

Communication management: Table 1. Six Domains of Communication Management

Communication technologies: Table 1. Technological Considerations in Designing Messages and Selecting Media

Community relations: Gray Panthers' founder Maggie Kuhn gestures and screams during her address to the Poletown Neighborhood Council in Hamtramck, Michigan, circa 1980.

Consumer/customer relations: Figure 1. Ten phrases to attract return customers.

Co-orientation theory: Figure 1. Co-orientation model.

Crisis and crisis management: Joe Allbaugh, Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), briefs reporters on September 15, 2001, about the ongoing operations at the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Workers started to remove the collapsed portion of the Pentagon shortly after the briefing.

Crisis communications and the Tylenol poisonings: James Burke, Johnson & Johnson executive, displays a new tamper-resistant Tylenol bottle on November 11, 1982. Nearly eight months earlier, six Chicago-area people died of cyanide poisoning from tainted Tylenol tablets.

Cultural topoi: Table 1. Cultural Topoi Compared

Cutlip, Scott M.: Photo

Drobis, David: Photo

Dudley, Pendleton: Photo

Ellsworth, James Drummond: Photo

Environmental groups: Protesters at a 1990 Earth First! protest hold up a banner reading “Stop Redwood Slaughter.”

Exxon and the Valdez crisis: Cleanup workers spray oiled rocks with high-pressure hoses after the *Exxon Valdez* ran aground on March 24, 1989, spilling more than 10 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound.

Exxon and the Valdez crisis: An Exxon memo proclaims the rules of zero tolerance, posted after the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in Alaska.

Federal Trade Commission: The former R.J. Reynolds cigarette advertising mascot, “Joe Camel,” plays pool and smokes cigarettes in an advertisement for Camel cigarettes that covers a billboard in a field. The FTC and antismoking advocates pressured R.J. Reynolds to eliminate the “Joe Camel” campaign in 1997, accusing the company of using a cartoon character to attract young smokers.

Focus group: As a focus group in Needham, Massachusetts, watches an interview of Monica Lewinsky on televisions in 1999, members’ reactions are displayed directly on screen in graph form.

Four-Minute Men: A 1917 poster for one of the Four-Minute Men speeches. President Woodrow Wilson recruited 75,000 speakers called Four-Minute Men to give short talks on United States war aims to the public at theater intermissions and other venues.

Frede, Ralph E.: Photo

Hammond, George: Photo

Health Belief Model: Figure 1. Health Belief Model.

Hill, John Wiley: Photo

Hoog, Thomas W.: Photo

Hunter, Barbara W.: Photo

Image restoration theory: Table 1. Image Restoration Strategies

Industrial barons (of the 1870s–1920s): Industrial baron J. P. Morgan (1837–1913), founder of U.S. Steel, shakes his cane at a passerby on a city street. Although Morgan is alleged to have said, “I don’t owe the public anything,” he called upon early public relations practitioner Theodore Newton Vail

to help save the American Telephone & Telegraph Company in 1902.

Integrated marketing communication: Table 1. Strengths of Alternative IMC Tactics

Involvement: Figure 1. Motivation-ability-opportunity model for enhancing message processing.

Labor Union Public Relations: Local 600 of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) electrical workers electrocuting an effigy of Hitler in a 1942 Labor Day parade. Public relations philosophy, strategies, and tactics have been used in struggles for organized labor and its goals.

Lucky Strike Green Campaign: Lucky Strike Cigarettes used a variety of campaigns to sell products in the 1930s, from promoting green—the color of their cigarette packaging—as fashionable for women to featuring Santa Claus as a customer, as in this 1936 advertisement. “Luckies are easy on my throat,” Santa is quoted as saying. “There are no finer tobaccos than those used in Luckies, and Luckies’ exclusive process is your throat protection against irritation . . . against cough.”

Muckrakers (and the age of progressivism): American journalist and political philosopher Lincoln Steffens (1866–1936), who published many articles exposing urban political corruption. He was prominent among the writers Theodore Roosevelt called “muckrakers.”

National Investor Relations Institute: Chairman of the Board of the General Electric Company, Ralph J. Cordiner (*center*), pounds the gavel here to open a meeting of share owners of the firm. Some 2,500 owners attended the 68th annual meeting of the firm. Flanking Cordiner are Robert Patton (*left*), President, and Ray H. Luebbe, Secretary. Cordiner established the first efforts at formalizing a company’s communication program with shareholders in 1953.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs): Members of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) wave fliers during a protest outside the conference room of the opening session of the World Trade Organization (WTO) conference in Doha on November 9, 2001.

Page, Arthur W.: Photo

Page, Arthur W.: Arthur W. Page’s book, *The Bell Telephone System* (1941), explained the company’s

the financial policy and how it affected the company's mission to serve, including the public relations function. Nearly 200,000 copies of the book were sold in hardcover and in paperback.

Perjury: Senator Karl Mundt (R) of South Dakota, who was acting chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) when the first testimony on the Alger Hiss–Whitaker Chambers investigation was heard, is shown in his office scanning the headlines that tell him of the jury's January 21, 1950, verdict in Hiss's second perjury trial. Chambers, a senior editor from *Time* magazine and an admitted ex-communist, identified Hiss and several other federal officials to HUAC as having been members of a communist cell whose purpose had been to infiltrate the U.S. government. The conviction made Hiss liable to a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and fines totaling \$4,000.

Plank, Betsy: Photo

Political action committees (PACs): United States President Bill Clinton addresses the 54th annual meeting of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA) while in Chicago, July 30, 2000. The ATLA is regularly one of the top-spending political action committees (PACs).

Postcolonialism theory and public relations: An Indian protester uses a megaphone during a demonstration against the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy in New Delhi on August 27, 2003. Scholars have pointed to the Bhopal tragedy as an example of postcolonialism because most mainstream public relations literature continues to depict how the company dealt with the crisis and maintained its line of communication with its shareholders and investors, while the voice of the victims of the tragedy is rarely heard.

Psychographics: Figure 1. Generational influences.

Public Affairs Council: Table 1. The Public Affairs Council, in Profile

Public Affairs Council: Table 2. Membership Composition

Public Affairs Council: Table 3. Most Active Members

Public Affairs Council: Table 4. The Components of Public Affairs: The Public Affairs Council's Fields of Expertise

Public health campaign: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' *Healthy People 2010: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Outcomes* is one of the major engines driving the prioritization of specific efforts in current health services and research.

Public Relations Field Dynamics (PRFD): Figure 1. Field diagrams of the perceived relational landscape.

Relationship management theory: Table 1. Dimensions, Types, and Models of Organization-Public Relationships

Roberts, Rosalee A.: Photo

Rules theory: Figure 1. Rules compliance continuum.

Spin: Prince Charles on a walkabout in Sheffield in 1998, with his Deputy Private Secretary Mark Bolland behind him (holding files). Described by the British newspapers as the prince's "spin doctor," Bolland left Charles's employ soon thereafter to set up his own public relations agency.

Sweden, practice of public relations in: Table 1. Some Facts About the Swedish Public Relations Association

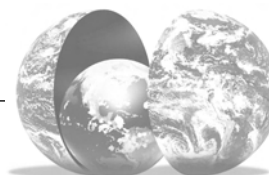
Traverse-Healy, Tim: Photo

Vail, Theodore Newton: Photo

Warfare and public relations: President Woodrow Wilson (*left*) and George Creel, Committee on Public Information (more commonly known as the Creel Committee) leave the Royal Train at a station in the Alps on January 2, 1919, for exercise. Wilson formed the committee during World War I, made up of leading newspaper editors, advertising writers, and members of the public relations field as a means of spreading propaganda.

Wire service: A United Press International (UPI) Unifax machine was an early type of fax machine that used early photocopier technology, enabling the sending of picture data over phone lines and turning UPI into a "wire service."

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MANAGEMENT THEORY

Management theory refers to the range of theories that help to explain the concept, purpose, and process of management in organizations. There are, of course, many definitions of management, with management as a concept and process arguably being traceable back to antiquity. However, the systematic development of management thinking is generally accepted to date from the late 19th century, when the emergence of the large industrial corporations created the need for more effective management structures and processes. Of course, the growing demand for management skills at that time and since has not been confined only to large private-sector businesses but has also been manifest within government, public, and voluntary-sector organizations, including schools, hospitals, and the like. As with management in general, the history of public relations as we conceive of it today was spawned in unison with management theory. As public relations has matured as a profession, it has become more firmly rooted in assumptions and processes relevant to management theory.

Perhaps the best-known definition of management is that advanced by the early management scholar Henri Fayol, who maintained that management involves “to forecast and plan, to organize, to command, to co-ordinate and to control” (1949,

p. 40). This so-called classical view of management implies that managers generally operate as essentially rational, analytical planners and decision makers directing the work of subordinates in such a way as to achieve pre-stated organizational goals. More simplistically, management can be seen as focusing on identifying and guiding those activities that transform business inputs into outputs. At one extreme, these activities are manageable on a day-to-day basis, with managers responding to problems and minor changes in operating conditions; this is called *operations management*. At the other extreme are *strategic management* decisions that will launch the firm on a trajectory that is expected to continue for a number of years; the long-term character of these decisions is what makes them strategic.

This classical view of management has come under sustained criticism during the latter half of the 20th century as empirical studies have revealed a quite different picture of what management involves and what managers do. Scholars such as Henry Mintzberg (1973), John P. Kotter (1982), Andrew Pettigrew (1973), and Rosemary Stewart (1976, 1982) have pointed out that, in reality, management is often a very frenetic, unstructured, and largely reactive activity in which managers are forced to engage in a constant process of negotiation, bargaining, and compromise to get things done. Indeed, Tony J. Watson (1994) suggested, “Managing is

essentially a process of strategic exchange because it shapes the overall activities of the organization and how it functions in its environment through the continual and continuous exchanging of information, favours, material and symbolic resources” (p. 37).

Management scholars have tended to focus on identifying the generic elements or activities associated with the performance of management roles in organizations. However, as Colin P. Hales (1986) emphasized, management work is contingent upon, *inter alia*, function, level, organizational type, structure, size, and environment. Moreover, managerial work may comprise both *formal* and *informal* elements, although the distinction between formal and informal may not always be easy to sustain since managerial work is itself highly fluid. It is also important to recognize that the scope of management theory extends beyond the distinction between operational and strategic management and embraces elements of a number of other subdisciplinary areas, ranging from human resource management and marketing management to more narrowly defined fields such as leadership and knowledge management.

The distinction between operational and strategic management has important implications for how the role of public relations in organizations is understood. Much of the debate to date has focused on arguments advocating that public relations should have a seat at the top management table (the dominant coalition) and should be party to strategic decision making within organizations. Yet as Jon White and David M. Dozier (1992) acknowledged, public relations is often excluded from membership in the dominant coalition and, more important, from participation in strategic decision making. One of the principal reasons cited for such exclusion from the work of the top management team is the perceived lack of management skills and competencies among many practitioners. Indeed, a recent large-scale study of the UK public relations industry conducted on behalf of the Institute of Public Relations and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) found that only around 20 percent of practitioners claimed to have public relations representation at board level. Equally, the study found that in less than a third

(31 percent) of cases was public relations strategy a regular item discussed at board level, and in 56 percent of cases public relations strategy would be discussed at board level only if a major issue was involved. Perhaps more significantly, nearly half of respondents (47 percent) rated their public relations strategy-making ability as relatively weak—a finding which the study’s authors suggested points to significant gaps in the management training and development provision for practitioners. Although these findings relate only to the UK public relations industry, it would not be unreasonable to infer that they may well reflect the situation found in public relations worldwide.

Thus the challenge for public relations practitioners hoping to achieve board-level recognition in what has become an increasingly professional and demanding corporate world is to move public relations away from a communication emphasis and develop a managerial focus both in the training and operating mindset of practitioners. Indeed, the manager’s role in public relations has tended to be defined primarily in communication terms instead of the more generic skills associated with general management responsibilities. Thus the manager’s role has been defined as a composite of the three practitioners’ roles identified earlier by G.M. Broom and G.D. Smith (1979): expert prescription, communication facilitation, and problem process facilitation. Here the main attributes defining manager role enactment exclude what are recognized as the higher-order management competencies required of more senior managers in organizations: leadership, people management, and strategic vision. It is not necessarily the case that senior public relations practitioners/managers do not require these broader management skills, but rather that academic research has failed to look for them or to encourage their development. If public relations is to achieve senior management/board-level status within organizations, it seems obvious that practitioners will need to develop and demonstrate these broader, mainstream senior management skills.

—Daniel A. Moss

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MANAGING THE CORPORATE PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

To manage a corporate public relations department, a senior practitioner must be able to build what amounts to a business-to-business relationship between the department and senior management of the company. The manager of this department must serve not only the professionals who work in the department, but also his or her peers within the company's dominant coalition as well as the key business heads. The manager must use knowledge of public relations and management skills to deliver value to the business. At the same time, the person must guide, coach, and foster the professionals in the department. Managing the department puts this individual into a counseling role—even a marketing role—with others in senior management. Not only does this person have to at times educate and

reeducate others in management regarding what public relations is, but he or she must also assert how public relations can add value to the bottom line and build brand and reputation with key audiences. The person in this role is expected to foresee potential “image” problems and manage issues, as well as offer ethical advice for positioning the company to build, repair, or maintain relationships.

As long ago as the 1880s, major companies in the United States began forming budget and staff public relations departments. Originally these were often called publicity departments, a name that implies that their original objective was merely to publicize and promote the company and its business activities. Public relations activities were limited to press agency, the use of one-way communication to tell the company's story.

Today, major and even small companies routinely have some variation on the theme of what we think of as a public relations department. As with managing agencies and building agency-client relationships, the principles underpinning the successful corporate department are knowable, but the size and style of a public relations department may vary. One size or template does not fit all. Several issues surround the ways in which the public relations department is positioned, structured, and managed within an organization.

At various times in the history of corporate America, public relations or public affairs departments became quite large, with big ones employing 100 members. Huge ones grew to have as many as 200 professionals who brought to service a wide array of talents and performed very specialized services such as editing or speechwriting. Large size assumes that the organization is willing to commit to and budget for a full-service in-house operation. Business downturns and changes of philosophy about what public relations is and can do for the organization often lead to reductions in the size of public relations departments. Senior practitioners often moan that the size of the department is cut at just the time volume is most needed.

At the very least, management entails budgeting to achieve definable outcomes. It requires the application of best practices to develop public

relations functions and to implement them through strategies and tactics. In the broadest of terms, public relations as a professional practice is justified as part of the management cadre to the extent that it contributes to the net income of the business. It can help increase income and cut costs. Stressing this theme, Holly Hutchins (2001) prophesied that “today’s public relations organization will not survive as an expense or overhead cost in the new corporate business model. The new business model demands that public relations be accountable” (p. 445). The management of public relations requires that the department be positioned, budgeted, and staffed to achieve definable outcomes that are in the interest of the business.

The name of the department often indicates its position in the company as well as its influence on other members of management, and on the other businesses. Ideally, it should be a separate department with its leader reporting to and being a member of senior management. Thus, the title of the senior person over this function should be at the officer level, such as Vice President of Public Relations or Vice President of Public Affairs. In many large companies, the major department is often called public affairs rather than public relations, which suggests that its scope goes well beyond traditional public relations and into the disciplines of government relations, corporate philanthropy, constituent relations, and others.

Additional options exist. Public relations may be part of the marketing department, and it may be subservient to advertising. This configuration is typical of any company with a heavy emphasis on consumer marketing. In other companies—for instance, heavy manufacturing—the lead department might be public affairs, with public relations, marketing, and advertising as subparts. An emerging trend is the joining of public affairs and human resources under one very senior corporate officer, typically from the public affairs side of the house. Up until just the past several years, these were very distinct and often competitive corporate services. Today, given the increasing interaction and synergies between the two functions in areas such as employee benefit communications and diversity

awareness, more and more public affairs and human resources departments are consolidating.

If there is a corporate-level public relations department, companies may also have public relations specialists, typically called community relations managers, working at key locations wherever the company operates. A large diversified manufacturing company or a holding company may have a corporate public relations department. In addition, each manufacturing site might have a small team of public relations professionals who specialize in building partnerships both with employees and within the community. Such has become the case as companies have become increasingly global.

Also, in this diffused model, senior personnel in locations distant from corporate headquarters may have at least minimal public relations training, particularly in dealing with the media. This management strategy assumes that senior members in scattered business locations “do” public relations even though they don’t have that role specified in their title. They may have that role specified in their job description. These business managers may be responsible for understanding the public relations culture of the organization and the community, and they need to know what professionals they can call on to serve the needs of their local operations. Even limited knowledge of public relations can help them contract for the services of a local agency.

Thus, public relations can be positioned in various configurations within the company. It can be highly concentrated, featured prominently, or placed in subordinate roles and diffused throughout the organization. One size does not fit all. How public relations is designed and managed will reflect the business’s public relations. How senior management defines and respects the contribution of public relations will determine how the practice is positioned and deployed to bring professional public relations services to bear on definable management objects and the corporate mission.

Corporate public relations departments are structured in ways that serve the needs and meet the value propositions of the company. At least that is the logic. One aspect of the structure of the department is the definition and allocation of specialties

in the department. People are often organized by function and tactic. A large corporate public relations department might have many functions staffed by one or more persons. These functions might be community relations, crisis response, corporate communications, investor relations, media relations, government relations, and strategic philanthropy.

The corporate public relations department also may be structured by tactic. Some of the professional talent in the department may be pool writers who work on many varied projects as needed. Large departments are likely to matrix individuals so they work on their specialties as well as serve collectively on many kinds of projects. Matrixing can help to integrate talent by bringing different perspectives and specialties to bear on problems that require varied experience, skills, and knowledge. People may be assigned to various projects on a temporary or permanent basis. For instance, one or more professionals might manage the corporate Web site. One or more might write and publish the corporate employee magazine. In similar fashion, an individual or team might craft community relations pieces, supply information for the company intranet, and update the company history.

The senior person in charge of the public relations department needs a blend of management and public relations principles to guide her or his management style. Unfortunately, it is not unusual today in corporate America, particularly in the energy sector, to see non-public relations or communications professionals in the senior public relations leadership positions. Many companies approach the senior public relations job as a “pass-through” or “get your ticket punched” position for corporate fast-trackers coming from finance, manufacturing, or technical areas.

Many senior practitioners adhere to the principle that communication may not be the most important aspect of public relations. Exploring this theme, John Budd, Jr., observed that “communication is the last act in the process of public relations—a process that should appropriately begin with policy and decision-making” (1995, p. 178). In the effort to build lasting, mutually beneficial relationships,

appropriate policies and actions must precede communication. Using counseling to advise the development of sound management policy is vital to making the organization good, prior to expecting it to speak well. To this end, public relations professionals should advise as well as help implement the business’s strategic plan.

Dozens of studies and professional papers have addressed how the public relations department can best satisfy the expectations of CEOs. Practitioners know that CEOs may misunderstand and even overestimate what public relations is and what it can do for the company. In 1995, while examining the ways to please CEOs through sound public relations practice, Robert L. Woodrum stressed six qualifications for success. The manager needs to have *personality*. This person must be personable, confident, intelligent, energetic, and cooperative. He or she needs to be *driven*; the department head is more likely to succeed if he or she goes to work each day committed to specific outcomes and if he or she is someone on whom others can depend. The successful manager must be *results oriented*. Can this person set goals and achieve them through the application of subordinates’ skills and knowledge? The manager must be a *team player*. In addition, Woodrum noted that this person must possess *solid communication skills*. Even though the person may do less and less writing as he or she matures into management, the person has to be articulate and able to get his or her point across—both to others in management as well as to subordinates. To be a successful manager, the person needs to be able to listen to and appreciate the points others are making. The person in this position will fail if he or she is not *analytical*, capable of identifying and dissecting issues. Moreover, this person must understand the *business* of being in business, that is, delivering value to his or her business customers, to the company’s shareholders, and to other key stakeholders.

Three last challenges of managing the corporate public relations department are worth noting. One challenge arises because of the disciplinary experience and training of the person who holds this position. Studies and experience have indicated that the

dominant culture of the business may unduly—and unfortunately—influence who is selected to head the public relations department. If the organization has an engineering culture, only people with engineering degrees and experience may find their way into senior management. Such persons may not adequately understand what public relations is, what it can do, and what its limits are. The same can be said if the department head has a law degree but limited experience and study of public relations. Add to this list the person who is expert in finance or management, but not public relations. Practitioners like to believe that the person who is most qualified to head the public relations department is someone educated and experienced in the profession.

A second challenge is positioning the department to receive adequate budget to accomplish its objectives. Two fundamental models prevail over how the department is budgeted. One assumes that the department is given a budget based on what it needs to do and can do to serve the interests of the business. A second model is to treat the department as a profit center—an agency-in-residence—instead of a cost center. As an agency-in-residence, the department has to compete for business by promoting and selling its professional services to others in the company. The challenge is to earn a budget as an external agency might by adding value to internal “clients” or “customers.”

The third challenge is to know when to hire professionals as members of the company or to outsource services to agencies. Having a full-time employee employed by the company increases the likelihood that the person will understand and work for the culture of the organization. This person knows the company and its business. The person is often quite loyal, beyond merely generating billable hours for an agency. However, the wise manager knows that some talents or specialties are not needed every day, 2080 hours per year. Thus, the services of some individuals might be outsourced since it is unwise to employ those talents on a full-time basis. These talents can be employed as needed.

Management is a two-edged sword. It requires knowing what can be done through public relations.

It demands understanding the difference between a “public relations problem” and a management problem. Public relations, for instance, cannot use communication to solve a problem that is not a communication problem. Counseling management requires credibility, honesty, and experience to help executives understand that having effective public relations may require that changes be made in how the business operates, not just how it communicates.

—Robert L. Heath and H. R. Hutchins

See also Advertising; Community relations; Counseling; Government relations; Investor relations; Marketing; Public affairs; Public relations agency

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MARKET SHARE

Market share is the proportion of any market that is achieved by a specific product or service of a company in the mix of competitors. Of all automobiles sold in the United States, for instance, how many were manufactured under the General Motors name? Even more specifically, market share can be determined for each individual model in an array of products. Thus, the market share can be calculated for Chevrolet and GMC (General Motors Company) pickups among all pickups sold in the United States. Even more specific market share calculations could be made by state or by demographic. Thus, market share in the most specific

sense is a sheer accounting record of the portions of a market as it is divided among competitors.

Public relations is one of several business functions that provides strategies and tools that can be used to affect the market share enjoyed by any competitor in a specific market for goods or services. Differentiating between marketing and public relations was simpler when Edward L. Bernays was practicing, teaching, and writing about public relations. To quote Bernays, "Marketing is properly concerned with the distribution of products, public relations concerns itself with the distribution of ideas which may or may not include products" (1955, pp. 63–64).

The goal of marketing is "to attract and satisfy customers (or clients) on a long-term basis in order to achieve an organization's economic objectives" (Wilcox, Cameron, Ault, & Agee, 2003, p. 15). In other words, the goal of marketing is to maintain or increase the market share of a product or service, the proportion of consumers of a product category who consume the product of the client. Thus, integrated marketing communication—primarily a strategic blend of advertising and public relations—is used by each competitor in a market to try to increase its market share. Since market share is always a proportional calculation, the increase of market share by one competitor is achieved by the loss of market share of one or more competitors.

How public relations serves this marketing function is a matter of consideration and debate. At one extreme, any communication effort—even the use of events created purely for marketing purposes—can be employed. Customer relations, often a purview of public relations, can help keep or expand market share. Practiced in what many believe to be the most ethical way, the goal of public relations is to achieve mutual understanding and cooperation between the client and the array of publics—customers in this sense—who affect and are affected by the client. Convergence—the merging of public relations, product advertising, and strategic communication functions—is thought to be one of the ways to maximize the contributions of several related professions.

One of the strategic objectives of organizations working to increase their brand share is to first increase the mindshare customers have regarding

their product in contrast to those of their competitors. Cornelius Dubois coined the term *mindshare* to represent one brand's standing compared with other brands in the opinion of potential customers. Mindshare, according to Dubois, predicts market share. Because product ideas are not the only types of ideas competing for share of mind, Bernays (1955) expanded the notion of mindshare to mean the share of peoples' minds relative to competing attitudes or ideas (p. 65).

Many authors and managers cast public relations in the supporting role of developing mindshare to be turned into market share. According to Thomas Harris, for example, public relations functions to raise awareness, to inform and educate, to gain understanding, to build trust, to give people reasons to buy, and, finally, to create a climate of consumer acceptance. Jordan Goldman located public relations within the marketing tools directly related to increasing market share. Philip Kotler described public relations as the fifth P in the four P's of marketing (product, price, package, promotion).

Wilcox et al. (2003) listed eight ways that public relations contributes to marketing and the development of market share:

1. Developing new prospects
2. Third-party endorsements
3. Generating sales leads through articles in the trade press about new products and services
4. Paving the way for sales calls
5. Stretching ad and promo dollars through use of publicity about the company 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.

Evins Communications, Ltd., and IT Management Global Corp. provided examples of an approach

that blurs the boundaries of public relations and marketing. Both companies use public relations to generate brand or product awareness and then parlay that awareness into mindshare, which translates into market share. Retailers like Wal-Mart also engage in efforts to capture mindshare as a precursor to market share. To enhance its fashion image, Wal-Mart is tracking and releasing fashion forecasts.

However, when integrated marketing communication casts public relations in a supporting role to marketing in the development of mindshare to translate into market share, it is a step backward from the two-way symmetrical model of public relations to an asymmetric practice of public relations.

The marketing function is traditionally a one-way function with clearly delimited channels of communication. As James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) pointed out, "The marketing function should communicate with the markets for an organization's goods and services. . . . The major purpose of marketing is to make money for the organization by increasing the slope of the demand curve."

In consulting on public relations for two nursing homes, this purpose was shown to be superfluous. Nursing homes and extended-care facilities often have waiting lists. However, employee turnover, family perceptions, and government relations were significant influences on the nursing homes' abilities to survive and prosper.

J. E. Grunig and Hunt (1984) accurately captured the contribution of public relations in such instances: "Public relations saves money for the organization by building relationships with publics that constrain or enhance the ability of the organization to meet its missions. Public relations, therefore, should be concerned with all the publics of the organization."

The Public Relations Society of America defines public relations by saying that it "helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other." Although this definition does not preclude the practice of public relations in support of efforts to build market share, it gives more than a nod to the two-way symmetrical model of public relations

and encompasses the public affairs and public information functions where there is no market share to be built and where expansion of market share is not an issue.

—Ann Preston

See also Advertising; Bernays, Edward; Brand equity and branding; Event; Integrated marketing communication; Public Relations Society of America; Symmetry; Two-way and one-way communication

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MARKETING

More than 40 years ago, Theodore Levitt (1960) said that the purpose of business is to make and keep customers. It might seem that his admonition is just plain common sense, not some cutting-edge revelation. On the other hand, the growing competitiveness in all industries has led many firms to believe that the purpose of business is making money. The focus on profits, ROI (return on investment), growth in sales and number of units, mergers, buyouts, stock prices, and sophisticated business school jargon has drawn attention away

from the real purpose of business: to make and keep customers. No one is suggesting that profit is not important. It is critical. Without profit—and cash flow—a business “ain’t no more.” Think of the following analogy: If you claim that the purpose of business is making money, you might just as well say that the purpose of life is eating. Eating is a requisite for, not a purpose of life. The same is true of profits. In other words, profits *follow* people.

Giving Levitt’s perspective a marketing definition, *marketing is a process by which we make and keep guests at a profit*. This view confirms the marketing philosophy begun by the General Electric Company that became known as “the Marketing Concept.” The Marketing Concept views the consumer as the focal point of all marketing activities. In his classic article “Marketing Myopia”, Levitt (1960) reinforced this belief. Before this re-orientation was introduced, marketing focused on what the company could produce, promote, and sell, and it was called “the Selling Concept.” Folklore of the day maintained that Henry Ford reflected this philosophy with his claim that you could have any color of Ford, as long as it was black. This basic switch in how marketing was viewed reshaped the field of marketing to focus on the “customer is king” philosophy. From this reorientation came such concepts as the practice of segmentation, target or niche marketing, competitive advantage, product differentiation, positioning or brand building, and consumer research.

Although many people may be influenced to try a brand for the first time through the media, loyal customers are made one at a time. This appears to be a mind-boggling task. Think about a hotel that checks in 800 guests a day, a brokerage firm that serves 2000 people daily, or the hundreds of thousands who walk through the gates at Disney World every day. The managers of these operations, and thousands more like them, must have knowledge, understanding, and managerial skills to establish a standard operating performance—notice this didn’t say procedure—for customer satisfaction. The consumer who first walks through the door can be turned into a loyal customer only through well-selected, well-trained, and highly motivated

employees. Thus, in reality, it is impossible to separate marketing from operations/line management. They are two sides of the same coin. Every employee is both a salesperson and a goodwill ambassador for your business. In fact, to your customer, he or she *is* your business. Therefore, you have to view marketing as a process with three major functions:

1. *Identifying* opportunities to increase revenues and/or customer counts
2. *Influencing* customer choices through brand building and promotion
3. *Servicing* customers to develop loyalty, gain repeat business, and generate word-of-mouth advertising

Sometimes these functions are known as identifying, influencing, and servicing demand, where demand is defined as consumers who are ready, willing, and able to buy. Whatever the label, each of these three marketing responsibilities involves a variety of marketing tasks: research, positioning, packaging, differentiating, pricing, promotion, calendars, budgeting, and analysis—all of which serve the purpose of increasing customer count, that is, making and keeping customers.

IDENTIFY DEMAND

Business leaders know that a marketing information system (MIS) is the basis for effective management decisions. It stands to reason that if you develop new products, services, or concepts, the market had better want them and be willing to pay what you need to charge to cover costs and produce the desired ROI. You are in the business of solving customers’ problems better than your competition does, so you had better carefully observe and listen to consumers and customers.

INFLUENCE DEMAND

Any basic marketing course teaches the “four P’s of marketing”—Product, Price, Place, and Promotion. This model served us well in the past, but now there

is a more complex and competitive business environment, so it makes sense to expand the paradigm of the four P's and think of marketing in terms of eight P's. The eight P's are tools to be understood, used, manipulated, developed, and perfected in order to reach the ultimate marketing goal of making and keeping customers at a profit. Just as you would use a hammer, saw, and nails to fashion wood into a piece of fine furniture, you use these elements to fashion raw marketing information into a successful marketing plan. You use them to influence consumers to come into your business and, once there, to influence what they buy.

People

The first "P" requires you to ask the question, Who are your customers and prospective customers? You need a clear understanding of their demographics, psychographics, and buying behaviors. Underlying the needs, wants, and expectations of these markets are changing lifestyle trends, which alter how consumers think about your products and brand. Just think of the healthy eating and fitness trend. Before we all started counting calories and fat grams, fried foods were *good!* Now, we may still eat them, but we think of them differently. In addition to trends, an important part of the People "P" is who customers "rub elbows with." Being like other people—the *right* other people—is part of why consumers buy a certain brand of jeans, join a certain club, or eat at a certain restaurant. Market segmentation is heavily related to homogeneity.

Product

Your product is the sum total of all the tangibles and intangibles of need- or want-satisfying benefits; it includes the physical as well as the psychological product. This "P" asks what business you are in and what product you really sell. Although you might think that McDonald's is in the hamburger business, they are really in the safety and security business. Whether you eat at the golden arches in Minneapolis or Moscow, you know what you're going to get. There are no surprises; you feel safe in your food choices. Similarly, Disney World is really in the

entertainment business, not the theme park business. And what about Michelin? While they may sell tires, they are actually in the insurance business. Who can watch those cute babies riding around in a tire on television and not feel that, with Michelin, they are insuring the safety of their loved ones?

Position

Positioning requires that you look at how consumers classify and rank your product/brand relative to your competition. It asks the question "What image do you want to own in consumers' minds?" Positioning strategies have to be long term and related to your mission statement. It would, for example, be unrealistic for Taco Bell to want to "own" a fine dining position in consumers' minds when its mission centers on southwestern fast food at a low price.

According to Michael Porter (1985), a business can be positioned only on one of three criteria:

Price. If your mission statement directs you to position on price, then the key is to be seen as either the least expensive or the most expensive. You can't get caught in the middle. Your pricing strategy may be middle-of-the-road, but if you position your brand on price, then you have to be at one extreme or the other. Wal-Mart positions itself on the pricing element. It wants to own the cheapest-place-in-town-to-buy-everyday-household-items position.

Segment. You can also position yourself by the market niche you go after. The clearest example of this is a private club. Clubs are not out to be all things to all people. They go after a very narrow band of the market. Maybe it's golfers, or people who like to work out or drink imported beer. Whatever the product, an organization that narrows its focus to a special target market is really selling homogeneity, friendship, and exclusivity. Its physical product is only a vehicle for their real product.

Differentiation. If you don't position yourself on price or market segment, then you have to position yourself on one of the other "Ps." You have to be known for some uniqueness. In my hometown, there was an ice cream store that sold "rainbow"

cones in “junior” and “senior” sizes. Their ice cream was like that in most other stores in the area—no better or no worse. But it was what they did with their ice cream that made the positioning difference. To make the rainbow cone, they would layer five (junior size) or seven (senior size) flavors of ice cream on a regular cone using a type of spatula scoop. When one flavor was put in, the next was laid along side of it, extending a little further out of the cone. This would continue until all the flavors were layered, resulting in a “rainbow” of color and flavor bands. People would drive for an hour just to get one of Walt’s Rainbow Cones. Walt’s positioned not on the ice cream, but what they did to the ice cream. You can also position on Place, like Appleby’s neighborhood, or Promotion, as Absolut Vodka has done with its artful print ads.

Package

When you talk about a box of cereal or a bottle of perfume, the idea of packaging is obvious. What does the box look like? Although that’s one way to look at packaging, in the expanded marketing paradigm, this “P” is more complex. There are really three levels of packaging that you can use to help market products. The first one is the actual product—the car, the clothing, the computer. The second level is the decor and ambiance of the store (or Web site) where it is sold. It includes color, texture, lighting, and sound, and also furniture design and any theme used. The third level includes all the symbols used to reinforce the brand’s image—the company logo and signage, how the building looks, its landscaping, and surrounding neighborhood. Add to these the feel and look of your advertising, where you place your ads, how you get publicity, and how you generate public relations, and you’ll have the total packaging “P.”

Place

Place refers to the geographic location with respect to your target market(s), competition, employees, and distribution channels. It also includes relevant site characteristics such as convenient access to highways and exit ramps, proximity to other demand generators/attractions, restrictions

on site development, and natural scenic features. And in today’s e-commerce world, it includes all the attributes of your Web site. How important is location? That depends on a lot of factors. But most of all it depends on what kind of a need your customer is trying to satisfy (i.e., where on Maslow’s hierarchy that need falls). The more physiological the need, the more important is location; the more psychological the need, the less critical location becomes as a decision factor for consumers. Just remember that in today’s fast-paced culture, distance is measured in terms of time, not in terms of miles. Think about place, then, relative to how long it takes people to make the purchase and whether it is worth their time and effort to do so.

Price

The pricing “P” is what a customer pays to get your product and is the single most tangible way for consumers to compare you with your competition. It establishes the all-important perceived “price-value” relationship for consumers, and it must deliver the financial return on capital for your business. What you ultimately decide to charge is really a marketing decision that is too often driven by accounting factors. You have to look at what you need/want for your ROI, the competitive influences on perceived value, and what the consumer is ready, willing, and able to pay. Since pricing is a marketing strategy in addition to a financial strategy, you have to take the decision out of just a balance sheet and put it into the consumers’ minds. The bottom line in pricing is this: When your customers leave, will they feel that *you owe them* or that *they owe you*?

Promotion

Promotion addresses the question of how to best influence your customers to buy. Generally, promotion is thought of as advertising, special promotions, and direct sales. But in its broadest definition, it includes everything you do to influence people to come and then to influence their purchase choices once they are there. In other words, promotion includes *all* activities that are designed to influence

consumers to choose your brand over those of your competitors. The overall goal of any promotion is to make a promise to the prospective guest—a promise that establishes an expectation higher than the competition's. In designing your promotional strategy, you must deliver on the promise and hopefully exceed customer expectations. This job falls to operations, reinforcing the belief that there is no way marketing can be separated from operations in today's competitive business environment. Marketing departments and advertising agencies can be very creative and, by design, are aggressive promoters. Sometimes, in their exuberance, they can make a promise and set an expectation level that can't be delivered. While the ultimate goal of your promotion is to make a promise to the guests, your promotion must be designed more specifically to break through the clutter of other promotional "noise" and drive revenues. Every day, consumers are bombarded with myriad messages to "buy me." Your message must be able to break through all that clutter in order to grab attention. This means that you have to be creative, develop a memorable message, and target the media channels that will hit your target markets.

Service Demand Performance

The final "P" represents the third function of marketing—that of servicing demand. Too many marketers see their job as simply getting customers to the door and operations as the folks who deal with the product, service, maintenance, accounting, staffing, scheduling, and other such functions. But it costs 6 to 10 times as much to get a new customer in the door as it does to get a current customer to return. If you fail to integrate operations into your marketing strategy, you'll end up with a big hole in your ROI. Consistently top service quality is the name of the game here. You can sell the sizzle but you also must be able to deliver it consistently. Once you're well positioned, it's hard for your competitors to knock you out of your market share unless you give a bad performance. Performance is the consistent delivery of the promise of the promotion. It's management getting the needed/desired

results through others. It's called operations. And it's the other side of the marketing coin.

—Bonnie J. Knutson

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MARKETPLACE OF IDEAS

John Milton's 1644 book, *Areopagitica*, in which he advocated a free and open discussion of ideas where "truth and falsehood grapple" so that truth could freely rise, has led to the "marketplace of ideas" metaphor as a measure of analysis for questions regarding First Amendment law. Open, public discussion and robust debate are critical components of a healthy democracy, and public relations professionals contribute to the information stream. As advocates for corporate interests, legislative issues, and social causes, public relations practitioners tell companies' and organizations' stories and communicate these entities' stances to the media and to the public. Public relations historian Scott M. Cutlip (1995) pointed out that public relations practitioners also engage in propaganda, as defined in the neutral sense: "Much of practitioners' endeavors are in propagating a doctrine, a cause, an institution, or an individual" (p. xi).

Indeed, public relations practitioners have the technical communication expertise, the access to myriad controlled media, and the contacts within media industries to serve as effective advocates, a role that renowned practitioner John W. Hill saw as a primary public relations duty. However, propagating

a cause or being an advocate does not dictate the release of distorted, one-sided information. On the contrary, ethics scholar David Martinson (2003) suggests that the notion of “substantial completeness” be applied, meaning that public relations practitioners should supply information to “the point at which a reasonable reader’s requirements for information are satisfied” so that people can make informed decisions (Wilcox, 2001, p. 110).

Likewise, as communication facilitators and liaisons, or “boundary spanners,” practitioners also bring the views of various publics back to organizations and corporate management. Such “symmetrical two-way communication” processes, in which an organization communicates cooperatively with its publics—both giving and receiving information via dialogue—stands in stark contrast to mere publicity, or one-way communication. Although not always realistic to implement, the two-way symmetrical communication model is considered by many modern public relations practitioners to be the ideal. Not only does a two-way communication model ensure that entities consider their publics’ wants, needs, and concerns for strategic and competitive reasons, but for companies and organizations to thrive, they ultimately must operate by public consent, as legendary corporate practitioner Arthur W. Page contended during his time with AT&T.

Many public relations professionals have declared their noble intentions to

increase public knowledge and understanding by promoting expression and debate in the competitive marketplace of ideas . . . providing a voice in the public forum for every point of view, including the views of those—such as the homeless and powerless—who would not otherwise be heard because of limited media attention. (Cutlip, Center & Broom, 2000, p. 25)

However, some scholars argue differently. They contend that the voices of sophisticated communicators, often acting on behalf of powerful corporate elites, have much greater access to media and thus to the “marketplace” than the poor or disenfranchised; therefore, true debate cannot occur. Walter Lippmann, author of the 1922 classic *Public Opinion*, expressed similar concerns about society.

However, said David L. Martinson (2003), “professionals” are by definition dedicated to serving the common good and public interest. Therefore, he reasoned that public relations practitioners need to be more attentive to bringing about mutual understanding. Two-way symmetrical communication aids in such understanding, thereby indirectly bringing myriad views to the marketplace.

Regardless of First Amendment principles, there are public relations exceptions to the free marketplace analogy. Commercial speech—traditionally meaning advertising—is not legally protected. Issues of consumer health and protection stemming from false and misleading advertising supersede a company’s right to say whatever it wishes. However, the recent *Kasky v. Nike* case calls the definition of “commercial speech” into question. Nike’s appeal of a California Supreme Court ruling was dismissed by the U.S. Supreme Court in June 2003 by a 6-3 vote. Therefore, the case will go forward in California. The legal issue revolves around the contention by California consumer activist Marc Kasky that Nike misled consumers about the company’s overseas labor practices in a publicity campaign including letters to editors and news releases. The case could ultimately cause companies and organizations to become more reticent, thus causing the “ideas marketplace” to shrink.

The Nike case underscores the public relations profession’s credibility problem. Too common among the general public are notions of practitioners distorting the truth as expert “spin doctors,” impressions that good corporate acts are insincere because their actions are “just public relations,” and the idea that public relations spokespersons are hired liars. Although many public relations practitioners follow and espouse professional codes of ethics, honesty, public good, and stakeholder access—ideals that most recognize as not only noble, but as the better alternative for long-term business success—many do not.

Front groups are a case in point. Although they contribute to the marketplace of ideas, they may be deceptive and ultimately counterproductive to the public relations profession’s credibility. With names that give the impression of grassroots

organizations, front groups are funded by industries or special interest groups with specific public policy agendas. Lobbying by such front groups, called “stealth lobbying,” keeps confidential the identity of a campaign’s sponsoring organization. Such tactics, condemned by many practitioners and the Public Relations Society of America, seek to misrepresent and unduly influence and thereby compromise the free-marketplace concept.

—Diana L. Knott

See also Commercial speech; Hill, John Wiley; Page, Arthur W.; Public Relations Society of America; Spin

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MATERIAL INFORMATION

Investors desire information that will help them to decide whether to buy, hold, or sell the stock of any publicly traded company. Material information is any detail about a publicly traded company’s plans,

operations, or business conditions that would help a prudent investor decide whether to buy, sell, or hold shares of stock in the company.

Material is a key term in investor relations. The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) requires publicly traded companies to disclose all material information. Various investor relations tools are used to accomplish this task, especially since the SEC also requires that such notice be made in a public manner so that all interested investors have the same opportunity to obtain and use the information. Thus, disclosure of material information must be open, broad, and timely.

In reference to *timely*, the SEC offers two broad standards. One is that some investors should not have the opportunity to get the information before it is made available to all investors. Also, the information must be shared so that it is most relevant to stock transactions because it is not out of date.

Companies get into trouble when their sense of what information is material or relevant to stock transactions differs from that of its investors. They can incur the wrath of the SEC and investors if this information is not available when it is most relevant to those persons wanting to make stock transactions.

Material information comes in many forms. One obvious kind of information is the likelihood that the corporation will produce a profit or suffer a loss. A major change in senior personnel or the health of a senior executive could be material. It is often believed that key executives have a major influence on the business. Thus, the condition of these personnel is material.

If a company is suffering a substantial lawsuit, a dramatic change in the market, the arrival or loss of a major competitor, or implementation of a new process, that information is likely to be material. If an agriculture company has operations that are likely to be affected by the weather (drought or excessive rain, for instance), that is material.

The SEC uses rules and regulations to define what is material. Investigations are launched and audits are performed to increase the likelihood that material information is properly revealed in a timely fashion. For this reason, an ostensibly independent auditing firm to ensure objective

compliance with SEC expectations audits the books of each publicly traded company.

Regulations, statutory law, and case law constitute a huge body of expert guidelines that are to be applied by executive management in conjunction with legal counsel and auditing firms to ensure that prudent stock traders get information they need and deserve.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Investor relations; Securities and Exchange Commission

MATRIXING/MATRIX MANAGEMENT

Starting in the mid-1990s, Hill & Knowlton's management addressed how to restore excitement, growth, and profitability to one of the oldest and best-known brands in the public relations industry. Ultimately the answer to that challenge was to embrace matrix management, which replaces a silo approach to account management with a management philosophy and organizational strategy that builds teams relevant to each account based on the most relevant expertise.

One of the steps in meeting this challenge was to ask, "How we can bring value to clients?" This question could not be answered without recognizing that it might require an end to the silo approach. A silo approach to managing client accounts assumes that one account manager with his or her team is the only resource made available to the client.

The silo approach had lots of problems. Clients were denied the broad talent, intellect, and experience of the firm—which should be one of the fundamental reasons they would hire Hill & Knowlton versus a local boutique. Clients were not getting full access to global resources and specialist skills. Growth was artificially restrained by the talent and experience of the local office. And staff didn't have the professional opportunity to interact with other offices and skills to encourage their own growth and development.

The matrix management style has some clear strengths. It provides clear fiscal accountability. It facilitates a hands-on training and mentoring

environment for public relations people. It delivers local accountability for clients and accounting clarity for billing.

The challenge was preserving the historic strengths of geographic management while unlocking the potential for clients, agency people, and the firm. The solution was matrix management.

Matrix management, as introduced at Hill & Knowlton in the United States in 1996, was designed to deliver greater value for clients, staff, and the firm. It was a management tool to compensate for the weaknesses of local profit and loss (P&L) management by unlocking our potential.

MATRIX MANAGEMENT DELIVERS VALUE

There is no doubt that matrix management has delivered results.

- U.S. growth dramatically improved for Hill & Knowlton in the late 1990s and into the early 2000s.
- Profitability recovered quickly.
- Offerings of specialist client services exploded. Clients could be offered more specialist skills more easily than ever before.
- New business was won that would have been lost under the old local-only approach.
- The firm attracted better talent than ever. People were excited by the openness and devotion to clients that a matrix system provides.

The success of matrix management at Hill & Knowlton is clear. It added a lot of value for the firm and its clients. As a result of the initial success, each of the company's regions—Europe, Asia, Canada, and Latin America—now employs a version of matrix management to improve client service and the performance of staffs around the world. Matrix management is now the standard, so that any Hill & Knowlton client anywhere in the world can benefit from the best-teams and best-talent approach.

IMPLEMENTING THE CHANGES

Moving from a purely local management system to a matrix management system is a huge undertaking.

Never underestimate the amount of planning, work, and follow-up that it takes. It is enormous. Hill & Knowlton had to retrain its entire U.S. workforce; develop a new orientation for recruiting and training that got people off to the right start; plan and implement systems to support matrix management; and change the culture at the company to support this new work environment. Even clients had to understand what the “new” Hill & Knowlton was all about.

There were six key steps in successfully implementing the transformation to matrix management.

First, we needed to better understand our clients. We talked with lots of clients. We looked at their business challenges. We looked at their needs today and how those needs might grow in the future. We did a candid appraisal of our own alignment to be able to provide for those needs. Any additional service we might provide for a client deepened the relationship, both financially and functionally. Any service that we failed to provide simply left the door open for a competitor to come in and dazzle the client. We were also candid about how happy clients were with our service, and the answer was clear: not happy enough. In our business, a marginally happy client is one that we are about to lose.

Second, we had to assess our own skills and offerings. Were we staffed to provide what clients really needed, both today and in the near future? In many cases, we were disappointed. Although we had bright, talented generalists in our offices, we lacked the specialist talent that our clients need. To illustrate the challenge with a comparison, a specialist heart surgeon that opens 150 chests a week will develop tremendous professional skills that a once-a-week general-practice surgeon in a small town could never master. Although we still needed some small-town practitioners who were close to clients, we also needed the big-city talent of specialist leaders who could help organize our efforts to deliver more for clients.

One crucial step was to recruit a number of practice leaders in key areas who could be our leaders and organize our specialist skills for the firm. We identified several key practices that our clients would need: corporate, financial, consumer, health

care, media, public affairs, and technology. These practices covered our most critical areas for client services in the United States. Each would be an intellectual and motivational leader who could win client assignments, train our staff as specialists, and deliver greater client service. Their challenge was to create a brand within a brand, building a strong and determined point of view about our approach to client needs in each key practice area.

Third, we began rolling out our new leadership system, which included both practice heads to deliver the specialist skills and talent that our clients need and strong local-office general managers who knew the local marketplace and provided the strength in key local markets in the United States. The next key step was to review the local staff in each office and organize them into specialist practice areas to match our national practice approach to client service.

This effort required a massive human resource effort in creating new job descriptions for local general managers and practice leaders—and the rules of engagement on how they would work together. Absolute authority ended, and we moved into a system of collaborative decision making.

Fourth, we had to focus again on clients. The motivation for matrix management was really the clients—to bring more value to them. We had to work to align this new system with our clients and their needs.

As we mobilized and developed practice approaches, we had to go out with road shows and meetings to help clients understand how we might provide even more help and better solutions and results for them. We used these meetings to better understand their priorities and what they needed from us. Practice leaders helped us to diagnose client problems and opportunities and worked with local managers to develop the talent that we needed to respond to those opportunities.

The matrix system also opened the door for multiple-office and even global solutions. We focused on where we could find the best talent within Hill & Knowlton for what they needed, regardless of where they were based. We were freed from the shackles of looking for local-only solutions to any

problems. Multi-office, best-teams, best-talent approaches to solving client problems were what we preached and practiced.

One of the key ways to ensure that this approach would work was to build an incentive system that supported it. That was the important step 5 in our transition. Key practice leaders and local managers had management objectives and bonus incentives that were built around the combination of personal goals and collaboration. Teamwork was rewarded and incentivized, while “piggish” behavior resulted in a personal and financial cost to the individual. It was one of the critically important symbolic ways that we assured our people that we were really serious about this new direction for the company.

We had lots of bumps in the road, but people really pitched in and got excited about making it work. It was invigorating for our staff, who felt as if they were suddenly opened to new training and development opportunities beyond the locale of the their home office.

Sixth, we knew that we had to track our performance. I named a head of client services for the U.S. company to develop a system of measuring, tracking, and reacting to service needs for all of our major clients. We built an annual tracking system with a client service review. That assessment of what we did well and what we did not was shared with practice leaders, general managers, and client service teams. We had a transparent look, completed by an independent reviewer and with candid client feedback about our strengths and weaknesses.

Each client service review was a goldmine of valuable client insight. We knew what was going well that we needed to protect. We knew where we fell short, and quickly moved to fix that. Fixing a problem can do wonders to improve a client relationship. It helps clients to understand that we’re really in it for them and not just ourselves. What was really interesting, though, is that the most valuable part of the client service audit was the knowledge gained about other needs of the client. It told us exactly how and where to approach clients with new offerings from Hill & Knowlton that could expand the relationship and provide a value added for the client.

LOOKING BACK

One of the lessons for us was the importance of occasionally standing back and viewing our business anew. Although local P&Ls fit the business in the early days, it is no longer the best approach today. Although former Democratic House Speaker Tip O’Neill is right in saying that all politics is local, it’s not the case for public relations. We had grown from a more modest cottage industry of hometown, locally focused companies to sprawling, diverse, complex mega-corporations with complex global needs and challenges. Our management structure had to grow with our clients. While many major companies developed their own matrix management approaches, we had to realize that it was the best system for us, too, if we were to keep pace with their increasingly complex professional public relations needs. Matrix management allowed us to get more talent to the table for our clients while retaining the great strengths and fiscal controls of local P&Ls.

—Tom Hoog

See also Account manager/account management; Client/agency relationships; Management theory; Public relations agency

MEAN AND MEDIAN

The mean is the arithmetic average of a group of numbers. Its relative ease of calculation—any spreadsheet program will compute a mean—and widely understood definition make it a common point of reference in many types of research. More important than its common use is its role in characterizing a data set. In a normally distributed data set, the mean represents the population parameter, or the typical response (found under “measures of central tendency” in statistics programs). Public relations researchers and practitioners often focus on the “average person’s opinion” when investigating attitudes or planning campaigns. For example, on a five-point Likert item (1: strongly agree to 5: strongly disagree), one may report that the mean

response was 2.2, which corresponds to agreement, but not strong agreement. The tendency to report that “68 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed” with a statement should be avoided, as it lacks the overall precision of the mean and can mask a large portion who disagree with the statement.

In addition, using the mean provides a precise benchmark from which to measure progress. In research or campaign planning, measuring opinion change from time 1 to time 2, for example, is important for improving our knowledge of the impact and effectiveness of public relations activities and for the accountability of programs. As a campaign objective, with the initial measure of 2.2 one can set a precise target of, say, 1.4 for improved agreement with a statement after the communication campaign. Measurement with the same statement at both times allows direct comparison and evaluation of change.

The mean is also important as the basis for the calculation of numerous inferential statistics. T-tests and ANOVAs, which measure differences between groups, both assume an accurate mean in the computations. Very often we need to know if, for example, gender (a t-test) or education level (an ANOVA) makes a difference in what people think about a topic or how they react to a message. Questions attempting to measure such opinions or attitudes should always be formulated in a manner that provides an accurate mean. Aside from their inability to measure a range of opinions, “yes/no” questions do not allow the calculation of a mean; only response percentages can be reported from these questions (yes/no questions can be used, however, as the grouping variable in a t-test).

The median is another measure of central tendency. When all responses to an item are placed in numeric order, the median is the number that is the midpoint of the list. If the list has an even number of entries, the median is calculated by averaging the two numbers that fall to either side of the midpoint. In a normally distributed data set, the median and mean will be approximately the same. However, the median is useful as a measure of central tendency when the mean is either inflated by large responses

or deflated by small ones. For example, in examining the income figures within an organization of 50 people, very high salaries among 6 executives could inflate the mean income in such a way that makes it look like the company pays its employees better than it does.

Generally speaking, the fewer numbers there are in a data set, the more impact extreme values will have. Examining the distribution of the data points and the difference between the median and mean should indicate which number is the more accurate reflection of the typical response in a data set.

—*Maribeth S. Metzler*

MEASURING/MEASURES

Respected and successful public relations scholars and practitioners alike acknowledge the important role measurement plays in communication effectiveness and management. Essential to communication practitioners who employ one-way, two-way, asymmetrical, and symmetrical communication functions, research informs the decision-making processes in successful organizations. Measurement can be used to offer both insight and foresight and is often used to shape strategic initiatives based on the needs of publics. Measuring organizational communication is often broadly categorized as informal, formal, quasi-formal, or mixed. The two paradigms of research include quantitative and qualitative. No method is better than the other; rather, they are complementary.

Contemporary discussions of public relations research are rooted in the late 19th-century debates about whether or not researchers could or should borrow investigative methods from the physical sciences to understand the human and social world. Anchored in the foundation that the physical world was mastered intellectually and materially to a greater extent than the social world, positivist theorists, including Auguste Comte, John Stuart Mill, and Emile Durkheim, worked in the empiricist tradition established by John Locke, Isaac Newton,

and others. Conversely, constructivist or naturalistic theorists were loosely labeled idealists. These scholars, including Wilhelm Dilthey, Heinrich Rickert, and Max Weber, found their philosophical origins in a Kantian tradition.

Within these broadly defined paradigms, communication research seeks to explain, describe, or explore the phenomenon chosen for study. Composed of both theories and methods, paradigms help us understand phenomena by advancing assumptions, asserting how research should be conducted, and defining legitimate problems, solutions, and criteria of “proof.”

Measurement is generally the assigning of either words (qualitative) or numbers (quantitative) to a phenomenon. A qualitative study explores a specific program, event, situation, person, or group, and it usually applies only to the specific matter being studied; the results cannot be generalized. Those projects that seek to learn about regularities are usually deemed quantitative.

The different research paradigms hold different assumptions, which include ontological, epistemological, axiological, rhetorical, and methodological approaches.

The ontological assumption asks, “What is reality?” For the quantitative researcher, reality is objective, independent of the researcher, and can usually be measured objectively as well. Reality for the qualitative researcher can be constructed only by those involved in the research, whether it is the researcher, those people being investigated, or the reader(s) interpreting the study.

For a quantitative study, the epistemological supposition—or the relationship of the researcher to those or that being studied—is that the researcher maintains distance and is left independent of the research subject(s). This is why researchers try to control for bias, to select a systematic sample, and to be as “objective” as possible when analyzing the data. This is much different in qualitative research, where the researcher will interact with those they study.

Researchers from both camps claim objectivity, but mean different things. The quantitative approach takes *objective* to mean what is outside us or in the

world of facts, independent of the knower—seeing the world free from one’s own personal place or situation. To the qualitative researcher, objectivity means that how one views the world is based on one’s knowledge and experiences of the world and place in it. According to the norms of qualitative research, then, the researcher is not separate from the research process.

Verification is a process that occurs throughout data collection, analysis, and report writing. Standards that need to be applied to *all* research projects include the need for research questions to drive the data collection and analysis rather than the other way around, data collection and analysis techniques being competently applied, researchers’ assumptions being made explicit, and the study overall being warranted and having value, both for informing and for improving practice. But is *validity* even a word used by qualitative researchers? Some researchers use quantitative terminology, such as *external validity*, *reliability*, and *objectivity*, to facilitate the acceptance of qualitative research in a quantitative world. Instead of using the term *validity*, one could use *credibility* or *verification* by constructing standards of structural corroboration (relating multiple types of data to support or contradict the interpretation), consensual validation (seeking opinions of others), and referential adequacy (criticism).

The discussion of credibility in measuring has an impact on the axiological assumptions of the two paradigms. The researcher’s values are kept out of a quantitative study, but become imperative to the value-laden nature of a qualitative study. Detaching oneself from the study is seen as failure to understand the subject by a qualitative researcher. That which is a limitation to a quantitative researcher is essential to a qualitative one.

Thus, the language differs between qualitative and quantitative research. Another aspect is that a quantitative researcher will use only impersonal and formal words, including words that have been formally accepted, such as *relationship*, *comparison*, and *within-group*. Some qualitative researchers have constructed a language different from the quantitative vernacular to reflect the nature of the

research, including terms such as *understanding*, *discover*, and *meaning*. This differentiation extends to the writing of qualitative reports, in which the language is personal, informal, and based on definitions determined in the study.

Quantitative and qualitative research both follow specific procedures, which include a statement or definition of the problem, a review of prior related research, a research design, data gathering and data analysis, and an interpretive phase that results in conclusions and recommendations. However, the process of study is different. Quantitative measuring uses a deductive logic by testing theories and hypotheses in a cause-and-effect order. The concepts, variables, and hypotheses are set before the study begins and remain throughout the study. Communication practitioners who use quantitative methods are usually looking to develop generalizations that might predict, explain, or clarify how publics respond to organizations and their communication efforts. The data are measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedures.

Qualitative research is an inductive process. The researcher might identify several lines of inquiry before beginning the study. Most often, however, categorical data emerge as the study progresses. The emerging data provide “rich” information about that which is being studied, such as people’s attitudes, opinions, and reactions. When studying people, qualitative researchers note verbal and non-verbal cues as data. The data are analyzed systematically and continuously throughout the research process using either traditional pen and paper or word processing and qualitative data analysis software. The research process continues until saturation is achieved. Saturation occurs when no new data are brought forth.

A research situationalist is a communicator who understands that both research approaches have value. Certain methods are appropriate for specific situations. Quantitative surveys might provide representative information that can be elaborated through qualitative data collection in in-depth interviews. Survey research allows one to test hypotheses generated through a pre-test and focus groups. Again, the approaches are complementary.

If time, money, and expertise are available, a communicator might employ what is called mixed- or multiple-method research. There are three different purposes for using multiple-method design. First, the goal may be triangulation, which seeks a convergence of findings. Second, one might look for bracketing, which pursues a range of estimates of the correct answer—or triangulation with a confidence interval. And third, one might seek complementarity, where different methods are used to assess different components or phenomena, to assess identified threats to validity, or to enhance the interpretability of different assessments of the same phenomenon.

Using different types of methods helps to guard against and correct for inherent methodological biases. Used together, the different methods paint different pictures and allow for more confidence in the decisions made from the research process. For example, visiting sawmill workers in the field improves the realism of employee surveys by providing an empirically grounded framework for survey research, and surveys may correspondingly improve on fieldwork’s realism.

Combining measurement techniques might provide a fuller picture, but most likely will not give a more “objective” one. Different methods come from different theoretical traditions, so combining them adds range and depth, but not necessarily accuracy. Combining theories and methods carefully and purposefully should be done to add breadth and depth to analysis, but not to provide the “objective” truth.

Public relations research can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory. Exploratory research is done when little is known about an issue, a public, or an event. Most often, a case study or field study, including observation, and focus group and/or individual interviewing are used to gather information. A descriptive study looks for specific descriptions of events, conditions, circumstances, processes, and relationships in order to document and analyze them. Data collection techniques include but are not limited to observation, participant observation, in-depth interviewing, document and content analysis, and survey questionnaires. Explanatory or

predictive research looks for explanations or causal relationships by using experiments and quasi-experiments (although uncommon, but successful when employed, in organizational settings), survey questionnaires and polls, content analysis, message indexes, and Web page counters.

Measurement in public relations should be both formative and evaluative. Formative research assists the effective communications manager to plan and implement strategic communication programs by determining what the current situation “looks like.” Analysis and assessment of public opinion, the environment, and communication programs can assist in predicting a public’s behavior. Used appropriately, formative research facilitates two-way, symmetrical communication efforts by allowing the communicator and the publics to communicate with one another. In addition, implementing formative research throughout a one-way, asymmetrical communication program allows for strategy reformulation.

Evaluative research is composed of tools that can help determine the effectiveness of a communication plan, program, or initiative. The conclusions that emerge from evaluative research are often used to communicate with others on an organization’s management team. If conceived properly, a communication plan will include goals and objectives that reflect those of the organization. The evaluative research can determine to what degree the communication program met those objectives and will provide insight into where efforts might be focused in the future.

How does a communicator choose which method to employ? First, one must ask which assumptions hold to the views, experience, and comfort levels of the communicator, the research consultant (if one is employed), and those who will use the research. Does the communicator have qualitative research expertise? Is there an in-house data analysis department? What will hosting focus groups communicate to the audience? Does the leader of the organization want to see bottom-line dollar figures? The amount of time and money available will influence information gathering and analysis techniques types. Research can be expensive. However, if research is not implemented at the conception stage of a

communication program, and if it is not continued throughout the process as well as after, the cost of poor communication can be catastrophic.

As with any good strategic communication plan, a measurement program begins with identifying goals and objectives. These will reflect the goals and objectives of those who can use the research. At this stage of the measurement process, the researcher identifies the audiences, issues, or events that will be the focus of interrogation. When defining audiences, a communications practitioner is cognizant of both audience demographics and preferred communication methods. Designing an e-mail survey for employees who spend most of their day on fishing boats, for example, is not as logical as planning to conduct face-to-face surveys through an independent third party.

Ethical considerations are equally important in considering who will be the subject of measurement. Under most circumstances, people should remain anonymous and their responses confidential. If there is the possibility that this might not happen, it is the responsibility and obligation of the researcher to notify the participant. The researcher should also ensure that participation in the research project is voluntary.

Linking the research to other organizational measurables—such as behavioral expectations, levels of satisfaction, sales, projections, and productivity—also occurs in the preliminary planning of the research project.

Conducting a secondary research review will contextualize the problem or opportunity for the communicator, and may further determine the need for research. In public relations research, a review of the secondary research includes any of the organization’s previous studies. It may also include projects that have been produced by government agencies and professional associations. Historical documents, databases, libraries, and the Internet also contain valuable information that can inform an organization’s research plan. A communicator might find that someone else has already collected the information that is needed.

The goals and objectives of the research are the most important element in deciding whether to

employ quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method measurement.

If public relations practitioners want to make generalizations about a population, they employ quantitative research using a random sample. For example, if an external communications practitioner of XYZ not-for-profit wants to better understand how many residents in the community of Smithton support the organization's efforts, quantitative measurement is most likely the best choice. Quantitative measures provide information about numbers. A sufficiently large, random sample must be drawn from all residents in order for the communicator to assume confidently that the residents of Smithton support or do not support the organization. If the communicator is interested in tracking how the media respond to the organization and believes this might be indicative of how the residents feel, she might conduct a systematic content analysis. More likely, the measurement tool would be a telephone, face-to-face, or mail survey. Because surveys can give neither in-depth detail about the citizen's perceptions nor information that illuminates how the people interpret the activities of XYZ, the communicator might decide to use focus groups. If XYZ is applying for government funding to produce a community newsletter and needs to provide broad and detailed information in its application, the communicator might choose to use both quantitative and qualitative methods. This research project could then be used as a benchmark study. In the future, XYZ might want to determine if perceptions of the organization have changed after citizens began receiving the newsletter. Using similar questions, sampling techniques, and measures, XYZ can respond accordingly.

—DeNel Rehberg Sedo

See also Qualitative research; Quantitative research; Reliability; Symbolic interactionism theory; Validity

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MEDIA CALLS

Media calls are telephone exchanges between reporters and sources. Telephone calls are basic media relations tools, along with correspondence, e-mails, faxes, and personal visits.

Receiving calls. Public relations practitioners welcome telephone inquiries from reporters and editors and routinely include telephone numbers on news releases and in story queries. The telephone remains the most widely used reporting tool for most journalists seeking quick answers and direct access to news sources.

Reporters call public relations representatives to obtain background information, verify information, obtain quotes, and arrange to speak to organizational experts. These impromptu conversations provide important opportunities to obtain unsolicited coverage.

Knowledgeable personnel should be available to speak to reporters in the hours following the release of announcements, especially if release happens late in the day when writers are on deadline. Failure to respond in a timely manner can lead to errors or omission from coverage.

Being responsive to unsolicited calls is an important way to build media relationships. Reporters and editors tend to seek out helpful sources and recommend them to colleagues.

Placing calls. Professional courtesy suggests that media calls always should be returned, but careful thought should be given to making unsolicited calls. Calls that *alert* reporters about *significant* breaking news stories, such as a pending announcement or industrial accident, are obviously welcomed. *Introductory* calls to reporters assigned to beats are also usually appropriate. However, *follow-up* calls inquiring whether a reporter or editor received a particular routine news story only annoy busy reporters and should be avoided.

Practitioners wishing to “pitch” stories to media sometimes make *cold calls* to assignment editors or reporters. Although this technique can work when a relationship already exists between the source and journalist, most editors and reporters will tell unknown callers to send them materials in advance, after which a follow-up call is appropriate. If used, cold pitches must be simple and compelling and should telegraph the idea in the first several sentences of the conversation.

Telephone calls are frequently employed to place guests on radio and television programs. Talent coordinators and producers almost always demand to see materials in advance but will then negotiate details by phone. Thereafter, arrangements should be confirmed in writing.

MEDIA CALL ETIQUETTE

Observe these commonsense rules:

- Always return queries promptly.
 - When arranging for others to respond, make sure they understand the journalist’s deadline and call back within an agreed-upon time frame.
 - Avoid placing unsolicited calls while a reporter is on deadline.
 - If callers sound suspicious for any reason, ask for a number and call back. This technique can help screen imposters.
 - Include special instructions to media callers on office and home voicemail messages.
- Call journalists on their personal cell phones or at home only when you have permission to do so.
 - Leave all appropriate numbers (office, home, cell phone, etc.) when leaving telephone messages for media personnel.
 - Never speculate. If you don’t know the answer to a telephone query, offer to call the person back.
 - Always speak on the record, especially with unknown reporters.
 - Don’t avoid returning telephone calls. In an effort to demonstrate balanced reporting, journalists often tell audiences that repeated telephone inquiries were not returned. Avoid appearing evasive.
 - Be succinct and be quotable.
 - If you cannot respond to a particular question, say so. Declining comment for cause is better than saying “no comment.”

—Kirk Hallahan

MEDIA CONFERENCES

Media or news conferences are held when an organization has important information to share that will affect the public. At the organization’s request, the media gather at a designated date, time, and place to hear the information. Media conferences may be held to announce good news, address complex issues, or respond to a crisis situation.

The following criteria should be considered before deciding to hold a media conference:

1. Is the information newsworthy?
2. Is the information too complex for a media release alone?
3. Is it important that reporters have access to the information at the same time?
4. Is there visual value to the announcement?
5. Will reporters be allowed to ask questions?

If the answer is yes to *all* of the above, a media conference may be in order. If the answer is no to *any* of the above, holding a media conference may be a mistake. Reporters will not appreciate attending an event that they will consider a waste of time.

FORMAT

Upon arrival, reporters should be given media kits containing information that will assist them in developing their stories. Media conferences usually begin by welcoming the media and introducing the speaker(s) who will make the announcement, followed by a question-and-answer session. They should start on time and be brief. Satellite news conferences are used to make announcements to a large number of media in different geographic locations.

PLANNING A CONFERENCE

Select a site for the media conference that will accommodate the media and their equipment and, if possible, reflect the topic. For example, a beach might be the setting for announcing an environmental cleanup project. Be mindful of reporters' deadlines when picking a date and time.

Select the most appropriate person to make the announcement and respond to the media. Anticipate all questions that may be asked, not just those pertaining to the announcement, and prepare the speaker with answers.

Invite the media. Most often this is accomplished through a media or news advisory that contains only the necessary details for the conference—the topic; the date, time, and place; and contact information. Providing too much information will decrease the chances the media will cover the event, because they will already have the story.

Use visual elements. Television reporters and newspaper photographers will want more than “talking heads” as subjects. In addition, the name and logo of the organization should be prominently placed.

Prepare a media kit. This typically consists of a media release based on the announcement and other helpful background information, such as speaker biographies, organizational fact sheets, or graphics.

—Ann R. Carden

See also Communication technologies; News and newsworthy; Press kit

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MEDIA EFFECTS

Scholars have long studied the impact mass communications have on individuals and society. Results of these studies tend to indicate both that Western societies have a dependency on mass media and that this dependency is not so complete as to make viewers and listeners thoughtlessly accept whatever messages they receive. To explain media effects, rejected models of media effects will be explained and current models of media dependency will be analyzed.

One early model of media effects was known as the “hypodermic” model. Much as a doctor’s needle injects a patient with some drug, this theory held that audiences passively view whatever content major media outlets make available to them. Theoretically, having viewed set content would lead an audience member to behave in a predictable manner. However, several problems are associated with this theory. First, the proliferation of media outlets and the option of turning the television off make focusing audience attention on a single message exceedingly difficult. Second, this theory does not account for the tendency of audience members to respond to messages based on their own beliefs and values rather than on what they see on television.

A similar theory is known as the “magic bullet” theory. This argues that a media message will directly impact an audience. In other words, if an individual sees an advertisement for soft drink X, he or she will necessarily respond favorably to that soft drink and will likely buy it. Researchers have generally been unable to support such a conclusion. Although explanations vary, it is likely that this effect fails for similar reasons as the failure of the hypodermic effect. People have experiences other than what they see on television, and advertisements do not automatically overcome these experiences. Although a magic bullet can be properly aimed to hit its target, a direct effect from the simple presence of an ad is unlikely.

Although the hypodermic and magic bullet models of media effects have been widely rejected, media dependency theory offers some explanation of the ways in which media impact society. Developed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur, media dependency theory explains the growth of the media as well as the increased reliance many individuals have on various mass media forms. This theory holds that reliance on media is linked to the three factors of media, audience, and society. In this case, *media* refers to the number and type of information outlets that are available. In contemporary society, radio, television, print news sources, and the Internet are all viable ways in which people can receive information. This makes the task of selecting a medium more difficult, because audience members have many alternatives to which they might turn. At the same time, the sheer number of media options makes it more likely that there is some media option that will appeal to an individual audience member.

Audience refers to the degree to which a person or group of people depend on various media forms for information. Some audiences have a greater need or perceived need for information, and each audience will have different preferences about the precise forum from which they prefer to receive information.

Finally, *society* refers to all of the social factors that surround a need for information. When a nation is at war, its citizens are likely to have a greater perceived need for information than when the leading news stories are about more limited issues. Additionally, a person's place within a social structure will affect his or her need to access information. Together, these three factors indicate that the more someone relies on a particular form of media, the more that media outlet will influence the person's thoughts, feelings, and actions. People will rely more on media when their existing social networks do not fulfill all of their needs.

In 1996, DeFleur and Everette Dennis modified this work and coined the phrase *media information dependency theory*. Their theory has five major propositions. First, people in every society need information to make everyday decisions about

politics, food, shelter, dating, and a wide array of other subjects. Second, people in traditional societies tend to pursue similar ways of life and rely on interpersonal methods for transmitting information. Third, contemporary urban-industrial societies are composed of a wide diversity of people from different backgrounds and groups. Fourth, increased social differences in industrial society cause people to have fewer effective interpersonal communication channels from which to obtain information. Fifth, people in urban-industrial society rely on the media to gain information that is typically unavailable to them from the interpersonal networks prevalent in traditional societies. In short, one of the reasons that so many people rely on the media—and thus give the media relatively great power to influence them—is that television or other mass media outlets may be the best available instrument for gaining the information needed to conduct everyday affairs.

Scholarly debate about media effects is ongoing. However, some theories have been rejected. There is neither a “hypodermic” nor a “magic bullet” effect where people simply absorb all media information presented to them. Rather, the effect of media correlates with how dependent people are on it. In contemporary urban society, many people rely on mass media to gain common information, which allows those media channels to serve a gatekeeping function that helps determine the issues that will be on the public agenda.

—William Forrest Harlow

See also Agenda-setting theory

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MEDIA MIX STRATEGIES

Communicators often use formal mass media channels to develop and maintain relationships with key audiences. Primarily the domain of advertisers and media buyers, media mix strategies involve weighing the advantages and disadvantages of each medium against budget considerations. Media mix strategies also play a role in public relations work. Like advertisers, practitioners are challenged to develop unique messages that cut through media clutter.

Although buying media generally is not a public relations practitioner's responsibility, it is important to understand each medium's operations and needs when putting together information for media representatives. Furthermore, practitioners must consider their organization's overall communications objectives and internal resources and the advantages and limitations of each medium—as well as stakeholder media use behaviors, evolving technologies, and implications of media ownership and management change. Specific communication tasks best carried out by using mass media include placing press releases and public service announcements or advocacy advertisements, staging press conferences, offering interviews, coordinating product placements for films and TV, and organizing special events.

Designing messages and developing media mix strategies involve at least five important decisions. First, the practitioner should review the communication objectives established for the organization and for key public relationships in terms of credibility perceptions, timing, information opportunities, reach effectiveness, motivation, and cost per contact. Funding and staffing resources also must be factored in. Second, selecting media that complement a message requires an understanding of the pros and cons of each mass medium.

Among print media, newspapers are the most immediate and credible information source. Newspapers offer sections tailored to readers' demographic and psychographic needs, are geographically flexible, and lend local flavor. Newspapers' limitations are passivity, shrinking circulations, and low interest among young readers. Magazines target highly selective audiences and lend prestige appeal, produce demographic and

geographic editions, and have a long shelf life with pass-along value. Disadvantages include lack of immediacy and long lead times. Direct mail is highly selective and relatively easy to personalize and measure, yet can be costly.

Electronic media such as television, radio, and the Internet are immediate and active—and attract both selective and mass audiences. Network television is beneficial for developing product or service image, and cable television has high penetration for higher-income households. Radio offers good demographic and geographic selectivity and is especially beneficial for targeting mobile populations. On the downside, transmission quality wavers, and messages are fleeting and cluttered. The Internet is an important, cost-effective, global communication vehicle among practitioners, yet stakeholders are concerned about privacy issues, content overload, and unwelcome solicitations.

A third consideration involved in developing media mix strategies is learning stakeholders' media use behaviors. For example, “surfing and scanning” interrupts message flow, sheer abundance of media content competes for attention, and traditional demographic and psychographic data often are inadequate in anticipating audiences' media habits. Fourth, new technologies seem to develop overnight, and practitioners quickly must learn how to use them. Finally, media ownership issues such as splintering and mergers affect change in media routines, personnel, and content.

Indeed, a number of variables are involved in practitioners' construction of viable media mix strategies designed to grow and enhance relationships with key publics. Such media mix decisions are a cornerstone of effective communication campaigns.

—Donnalyn Pompper

See also Advertising; Marketing; Media networks; Practice; Press kit

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MEDIA NETWORKS

One of the traditions of public relations is that it conducts much of its communication activity through “other people’s media.” Advertising buys time and space. Public relations typically uses “free time or space” in which it places news, stories, and comments through news reports, for instance.

Media, as discussed in public relations, come in two sizes. One is the mass media, which consist of complex networks of news gathering and dissemination, as well as entertainment programming and editorial commentary. Magazines, newspapers, and television are the traditional venues through which news, commentary, and entertainment reaches readers, listeners, and viewers. Public relations practitioners also use “their own media.” Pamphlets and reports are key examples of media tools that practitioners use to disseminate information and commentary. In this sense, media are print and electronic networks that can be used to reach mass audiences.

Second, media networks are narrowcast information systems, consisting of multiple-output devices fed and controlled by a centralized source. Message recipients have no way to engage in direct feedback.

The output devices are usually display devices: Jumbotrons, video monitors, LCD and plasma displays, and so on. The centralized source is usually a computer-controlled audiovisual switching system, with source information stored and played back in either analog or digital format. Videocassettes, compact discs (CDs), CD-ROMs, digital video discs (DVDs), DVD-ROMs, and computer hard drives are the storage media typically encountered.

Message content is dependent on venue or environment. Media networks are used in sports stadiums and arenas, office buildings, shopping malls, and individual retail spaces. Technological convergence is allowing the addition of billboards to the media network landscape.

Messages do not have to be homogeneous. It is possible to run several different messages

simultaneously. A common example involves advertising in an athletic shoe store. Usually, there are several clusters of video monitors, with each cluster narrowcasting a different advertisement on each monitor in the cluster. Advertisements are usually repeated across the clusters, meaning that one monitor in each cluster is running the same advertisements.

Media networks are not simply a new way to advertise. Media networks can play a critical role in an office/business environment. It may be something as simple as a running stock ticker that includes the company’s stock price along with the company’s competitors’. Above the ticker could be copies of relevant business stories. An organization can go further with the media network and include messages from the CEO or minutes from meetings. Companies often use a media network to function as a message board, notifying employees of policy changes, upcoming events, or meetings. It is possible to have many of the functions of a company newsletter moved onto a media network.

Media networks provide the public relations practitioner with a unique opportunity. Narrowcasting allows for a fairly high level of customization and refinement of the message. There are three principles to keep in mind in considering the use of a media network for message delivery.

First, understand the limitations of the storage, playback, and output devices. For example, hard drive space is cheap and plentiful, making it easy to store large, high-quality audio and images. However, if the venue is a sports arena, the speaker systems are typically not that good, the acoustics of the space are horrible, and the output quality of a Jumbotron is well below television quality.

Second, message delivery is reliant on an electro-mechanical system with limited human oversight. Media systems lend themselves to a “set it and forget it” mentality. To function optimally, tape machines need to be cleaned on a regular basis, for example. If the message includes a lot of static (nonmoving) graphics that have long presentation times, those graphics will “burn in” to the display devices. Picture quality will degrade, and the effectiveness of the message will be diminished. Durability of the storage media is also a consideration. Videotapes wear out;

CDs and DVDs can get scratched; hard drives can fail. Some media systems do not have the actual media stored on site. Rather, they have the content beamed in via satellite. Satellite delivery has a whole extra set of potential problems and concerns, reception quality being only one.

The third idea is double-edged. Many media networks are “always on,” meaning they are automated and run 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. That means that even though a message is narrowcast, potential exposure is maximized. That exposure is where the downside is found. Although the message may be a “hit” the first or second time it is encountered, what about the hundredth time? If the media network is located in a retail space or shopping mall, the people that work there will easily be exposed to the message dozens of time a day, several days a week. The result can be a backlash, involving everything from sabotage of the equipment (simply turning it off) to outright destruction of the data.

Whether damage is accidental-on-purpose or simply the result of wear-and-tear, the rapidity with which worn-out media (and messages) can be replaced must be taken into consideration. If it will take several weeks to get replacements sent out, consider budgeting for extra copies to hold in reserve as needed.

—*Michael Nagy*

See also Network theory

MEDIA RELATIONS

Sound media relations practices were critical to public relations campaigns long before most people even knew what a “public relations campaign” was. Mary “Mother” Jones used good media relations techniques when she traveled to Philadelphia in the summer of 1903 to support the textile workers’ strike against the mill owners and to help focus attention on the tragedy of child labor. Mother Jones and the union organized a “March of the Mill Children” from Philadelphia to President Roosevelt’s summer home on Long Island to dramatize the problem.

The marchers held press conferences, made press tours (Mother Jones and the children visited journalists to tell their story), made speeches, granted interviews, pitched feature stories to journalists, and put writers in contact with sources.

Modern media relations experts—whether in agencies, groups, corporations, or not-for-profit organizations—use these techniques, plus a few others:

- Distribute videos to Web sites and broadcast outlets.
- Ask journalists periodically about their information needs.
- Make sure journalists’ names are on listservs (messages sent by electronic mail to keep interested individuals informed about an organization’s activities).
- Prepare media packets (collections of leader profiles; information about the organization, group, service, or product; statistics; reports; news clippings; and similar materials).

Another modern activity—preparing managers to interact with journalists in interviews or news conferences—is a tad controversial, but it helps spokespersons to communicate more effectively. And it helps journalists because sources are prepared; they frequently bring along media packets to help journalists do their jobs.

Ethical practitioners are committed to keeping the media informed for a couple of reasons: (1) Practitioners can reach some of their publics only through the media. This is less true today, when professionals use the Internet in some instances to communicate directly with publics, than it was in 1903, when the newspaper was the only game in town. But still, some messages can be conveyed most effectively through the mass media. (2) Journalists are going to write about newsworthy groups, organizations, and individuals no matter what. They want to talk to the principals involved in newsworthy activities, because principles of objective journalism demand that, but the stories are going to be written with or without input from those involved. Good practitioners understand that it is far better to have input than not.

PROVIDE SOUND INFORMATION

The overarching principle in effective media relations is that practitioners provide accurate, relevant, fair, timely, complete information. This means in part that practitioners cannot put their organizations' interests above the public's interest when those interests conflict and then lie about what they've done. The best practitioners try to ensure that their organizations' interests are consistent with the public's interest because they think that's the right thing to do, and failure to do so nearly always leads to unfortunate consequences.

Practitioners who are compelled to put organizational interests above the public interest can experience extreme dissonance when those interests conflict, and they are unlikely to have good relations with the news media. Ironically, a practitioner who seems to put the public interest first can run into difficulty within his or her organization, for some organization men and women might charge that the practitioner is more concerned about journalism's needs than about the organization's needs. The ethical practitioner tries to educate the doubters about the realities of the media world.

One reality is that an organization or group cannot establish effective media relations if it is not credible, and it's extraordinarily difficult to recover lost credibility. If an organization is caught misleading the public a single time and never does it again, it will be a long time before that organization is perceived as credible. Many Americans still will not believe the tobacco and asbestos industries. The media will ignore messages disseminated by low-credibility groups, organizations, or individuals, or they will subject the messages to intense scrutiny and, frequently, substantial revision.

The Pentagon ran into a firestorm of criticism when it considered a proposal to plant news, some false or misleading, in international news media. The goal was to "de-position" (discredit) unapproved governments and to promote the United States. The plan was to have credible third parties who had no apparent connection to the U.S. government distribute "news" to friendly and unfriendly foreign media. The plan was attacked by numerous journalists, and the Pentagon's credibility was damaged

severely—just for considering the plan. To their credit, many military public affairs officers opposed the proposal.

Contrast the Pentagon's boneheaded plan to the response of Odwalla Corp. when one of its products was contaminated with *E. coli* bacteria. Public health officials in Vancouver, British Columbia, and the states of Washington and California were struggling with several ill patients when a 16-month-old Denver girl died of complications from *E. coli* poisoning. Odwalla's apple juice turned out to be the common thread. Within 24 hours of notification of the problem, Odwalla recalled all the beverages and was cooperating with the media and public health agencies. Odwalla publicly acknowledged that juice from one of its plants tested positive for *E. coli*, created a Web site to respond to questions, announced procedures for ensuring plants were sanitary, and created an advisory council to discover ways to improve product safety. Odwalla should not have distributed the tainted juice in the first place, and it did pay a fine. However, in reacting to the crisis honestly and openly, it protected its credibility.

Public relations practitioners must be committed to ethical communication if they are to serve their clients well. Beyond that, they need to master several skills.

WRITE AND SPEAK CAREFULLY

Practitioners must be able to write and to speak well. It should go without saying—but it can't—that professionals must master language elements such as grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style. A practitioner simply cannot afford to write or speak a sentence like this one: The soldier picked up their rifle and moved on. The attempt to avoid sexist language is admirable, but the grammatical error is unforgivable. Nor should a practitioner write "412 West Elm Street" for a newspaper. That is a gross violation of virtually every newspaper's style. How can an editor who judges a news release have respect for a writer when the release contains errors? And how can he or she respect an organization that would employ such a writer?

Good writing must be reflected in everything, written and verbal, that a practitioner produces.

Some writers seem to think good grammar, spelling, and punctuation are unimportant in electronic mail. They are wrong, for a practitioner is judged harshly when he or she sends messages that contain grammatical and spelling errors or that fail to capitalize words properly (the most common error). Writers even need to write grocery lists carefully if they are to avoid bad habits.

A practitioner who wants to establish good relations with the media also must understand what the media need. In “olden times”—before the mid-1980s or so—many practitioners were reformed journalists, and they knew exactly what an editor wanted in a release, news conference, or interview. Practitioners no longer are drawn primarily from the ranks of journalists, and they sometimes have trouble deciphering editors’ needs. Too often, a practitioner will distribute, by mail, fax, or electronic mail, releases that contain no news, or schedule news conferences that are of no interest to most audiences. This is poor practice because it damages credibility by making a practitioner seem unprofessional.

Effective practitioners produce copy that is similar to that published or aired by the target media. This means making sure their stories contain timely news that is of interest or importance to many people. It is helpful if the stories contain news values in addition to timeliness that editors use to evaluate information for stories. These include conflict (verbal or physical), prominence (well-known personalities, places, or issues), magnitude (large numbers of deaths or dollars), consequence (many lives affected), and proximity (local events, persons, or issues).

Practitioners who write news releases, arrange news conferences or media interviews with their bosses, or pitch feature ideas need to make sure the information they want to distribute contains at least some of these news values. And they need to understand that a message that would interest one medium’s editor and audience might not interest another’s. A release frequently is written multiple times to ensure that each medium gets a version tailored to its needs. Editors have a right to feel insulted when they get releases that are of no interest to their audiences.

The news also needs to be written in standard journalistic format. For print and online publications, that

means writing in the inverted pyramid format, with the most interesting and important information at the top and the least interesting and important at the bottom. Writing for broadcast is a little different because one writes for the ear, rather than the eye, but the principles are the same. A broadcast journalist typically writes a label, which is comparable to a newspaper headline, that is read by an anchorperson. Then the writer produces a lead that he or she reads on the air. Rather than end with the least important information, a broadcast journalist typically reiterates the news. The other important difference is that broadcast stories typically are much shorter than print or online stories. Practitioners must keep these differences in mind when writing for broadcast.

Writing a lead is one of the hardest tasks facing any writer. It is doubly hard for a news writer—whether a journalist or public relations practitioner—because he or she must capture the heart of the story, package it in an interesting way, and produce a lead of 10–30 words. This is one of the great creative challenges, and most communication professionals must meet the challenge several times a day.

There obviously is too little space to address the fundamentals of writing the rest of a release, but a model that Michael Ryan uses at the University of Houston may be helpful. The model assumes two phrases in each paragraph and one sentence per paragraph:

- Paragraph 1: Heart of the news event or issue, followed by an attribution
- Paragraph 2: Background information needed for a reader or listener to understand the heart of the news in paragraph 1, followed by an attribution if needed
- Paragraph 3: A direct quotation that amplifies, but does not repeat, material in paragraph 1, followed by an attribution
- Paragraph 4—last: New information presented in each sentence, following by attributions or background material

This model requires that the most important and interesting information in each sentence be placed at the beginning of the sentence. When background information is not required, paragraph 2 is dropped.

Most broadcast writers would alter the model slightly so that sentences begin with attributions, and they typically would put a label above paragraph 1 as a lead-in.

Practitioners also need to work with those who supply visuals for media editors. They should not presume to tell photographers what to do, but practitioners certainly might make suggestions. A photographer who needs to take the picture of a CEO for a business publication's cover story might like to know about an interesting backdrop on a production line, for example. When a practitioner supplies photographs or video, he or she needs to be sure the people in those pictures have signed releases and that there are no copyright restrictions.

Many practitioners are not numerate (they fear numbers), but they have to get over this problem, for they likely will deal with numbers constantly and they will pass those numbers on to journalists. A good practitioner will check all numbers and will try to package those numbers in attractive graphs and charts that editors can use without change. This will ensure the numbers are accurate and that they can be interpreted easily by an organization's publics.

COMMUNICATION DURING CRISIS

Even the best relationships with journalists are tested during times of crisis, when confusion and chaos are most pronounced. The difficulty is that journalists want information *now*, and practitioners often just don't have it. They certainly don't have time to get the usual approvals from all departments to release information. Here are a few things organizations should *not* do during a crisis: release unverified information, for the information might be inaccurate; intentionally mislead or withhold information; fail to express concern; and fail to prepare for the worst that could happen.

Organizations can respond best to crises if they have anticipated the crisis and developed a plan. If an organization manufactures fireworks, for example, the practitioner needs to develop a plan for keeping the media informed in the event of an explosion. The plan might outline contingencies if nobody is injured, if some are injured, and if some are killed. Each person's job, from the CEO to the

janitor, is specified under various conditions so that everyone knows what to do in the event of catastrophe. A list of the information (e.g., time of accident, number of injuries, cause, damage estimate) that must be disseminated is critical.

Rumors tend to complicate crisis communication, for they spread quickly among people who are under stress. Someone must be assigned to track rumors, to find out what people are saying about a catastrophe, and to seek the truth. When the truth is established, a spokesperson must pass the information along to the news media so the rumors can be squelched or confirmed quickly.

TALKING BACK

Most practitioners avoid "talking back" to the news media. If they don't like a story published in the local newspaper, they might wad up the story and slam it into the trash basket. Then they forget it. A practitioner must have cordial relations with local media representatives, and complaints about media coverage or lack of coverage are not conducive to good relations. Nobody wants to have his or her work criticized, and nobody wants to be in trouble with the boss.

However, some practitioners have become bolder in the last decade or so, partly because government regulations require that the printed record be accurate. Practitioners are extraordinarily careful about what they write because everything can end up in the record—and the record can get an organization into trouble. If a newspaper article is substantially incorrect, it can lead to many problems later on. It may be worth risking a damaged relationship just to correct the record.

Some practitioners talk back also because they believe they are just as responsible as journalists for protecting the public's right to know, and they don't want the public to know inaccurate information. Nor do they want important channels of communication polluted with inaccurate and distorted information. If they have the facts on their side, and they are not just expressing contrary opinions, they should correct substantive errors.

—Michael Ryan

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MEDIA RELEASE

A media release, also known as a press release, is one of the most frequently used tactics or tools in the public relations practice. A media release can be either a news release or feature release. News releases present hard news and feature releases offer human-interest stories. The most commonly distributed release is a news release. Although publicity is a strategy used by many public relations practitioners, those who specialize in working with the media are called publicists and media relations specialists.

Releases are sent to a media gatekeeper, such as a print journalist or television producer who determines the stories that appear in a publication or on a broadcast. The most common form of media release is the news release, which conveys information that is considered newsworthy and is written in an inverted pyramid format. The inverted pyramid format begins with a clothesline lead of information, including the elements of who, what, when, where, how, and why. Next, facts and details are developed in the body of the release, supporting the lead sentence. The release generally concludes with related, but less significant, information on the topic. Some practitioners place a boilerplate at the end of the release, which is a paragraph describing the organization releasing the information.

A feature release, on the other hand, presents a more attention-getting lead and develops a clear and logical story with a definite conclusion. A feature release is a human-interest story. Unlike a news release, feature releases tell a story, begin with a catchy opening called a hook, and offer a conclusion or ending to the story.

Public relations practitioners write and distribute three types of releases. An *advance story* announces something that will happen, such as a change in management or an upcoming event. A *cover release* reports something that actually happened, such as a sizable donation to a nonprofit organization, a community clean-up event, or a major management decision. *Follow-up releases* report the news after an event, such as the quarterly sales of a new product, the results of a research study, or the effect of policy changes. Releases have many uses. They can announce something (hires, mergers, price changes, layoffs), offer spot news (road closings, strike, school cancellations), give a reaction to something (charges against an organization, industry trends, new laws), and tell bad news (faculty products, recalls, apologies).

The factors that determine news include timeliness (or currency), impact (or something of far-reaching consequence), prominence of individuals or events, proximity and local tie-in, conflict, and novelty or uniqueness.

Some media gatekeepers receive over a hundred releases in one day, and many are thrown away or not seen. Therefore, a carefully crafted news release is essential. Releases should have a strong newsworthy angle, be accurate, contain well-researched facts, present information that is truthful and balanced, and strive for objectivity. Most important, releases should be tailored to the media gatekeeper and editorial environment of the targeted publication or show. They are often used as a trigger for publicity or media coverage. Some releases are accompanied by a pitch letter and may be part of a press kit of other media-related materials.

Public relations specialists adhere to specific formats when developing news or feature releases. Ideally, releases should be no more than two double-spaced pages. Most are labeled “for immediate release,” meaning that the media outlet is free to

release the information upon receipt. Releases are printed on organizational letterhead, have a contact name and number at the top, and include a dateline. Although public relations practitioners should pay special attention to the style of the publication they are targeting, many use the writing style of the Associated Press and include page slugs and end marks in news releases. Releases may be e-mailed, faxed, mailed or hand delivered, depending on the preferences of the media gatekeeper receiving the release. Some public relations practitioners distribute their releases through public relations news bureaus, such as Business Wire and PR Newswire. Most also post their releases on their organizational Web site.

Some media gatekeepers at weekly newspapers, regional publications, and specialty papers print releases with few changes; however, journalists at larger publications such as metropolitan newspapers seldom use a release in its original form. Rather, they will use only some of the information. In such cases, public relations practitioners use the release as a catalyst in which to persuade a gatekeeper to cover a particular story. Editors of trade publications, for instance, will use product information releases in a product update column.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Clip (news clip) and clipping services; Feature; Media calls; Publicity

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MENTORING

The term *mentor* has been used to describe relationships between apprentices and masters within trade guilds, but most recently it is used to describe relationships between professionals and protégés.

Mentoring can benefit both mentor and mentee. Mentors who actively recruit less experienced talent have the advantage of contacting quality pre-professionals early, and mentees get experience and begin to build a network. Mentors also learn valuable training and leadership skills while enacting their role and can experience greater job satisfaction.

Various studies have been conducted to learn more about the concept of mentoring. In the *Journal of Human Counseling*, Tsedal Beyene, M. Anglin, William Sanchez and Mary Ballou (2002) reported a study titled “Mentoring and Relational Mutuality: Protégés’ Perspectives,” where they studied the responses of the mentees after their experience in a mentoring program. One hundred and thirty-three students were questioned—they had diverse backgrounds and represented 35 different majors.

The researchers’ definition of mentoring was a relationship in which both mentor and mentee derive knowledge and skills, as well as emotional support. Mentees look to their mentors to model professional behavior and to learn the often unwritten rules of an organization. The results were fairly consistent—almost everyone agreed with this definition, and most agreed that the mentor became a role model to them. The majority of the participants were not intimidated about questioning their mentors, and almost three-fourths agreed that the relationship was a success. The main qualities that the mentees described for an ideal mentor were “nurturing, knowledgeable, listening, a friend, trustworthy, open-minded, a role model, approachable, helpful, encouraging, initiating, loyal, patient, non-judgmental, should share similar interests, and should have a positive attitude and a sense of humor” (Beyene, et al., 2002, pp. 87–102).

Today mentoring is one of the most important tools in equipping professionals for the future. A mentor influences the life of another (mentee) by guiding and motivating him or her in the right direction outside the normal manager-subordinate

relationship. These relationships help mentees reach the next level in their professional careers. Mentoring encompasses wisdom, loyalty, motivation, and trust. This role is not a one-time function; it is an ongoing process that lasts until the goal of the mentee has been accomplished. Because of this, mentors monitor their mentees on a regular basis to assess their development. When applied properly, mentoring is a win-win situation for everyone involved.

The public relations profession knows that mentoring is important. This is why the profession has made many successful efforts to implement mentoring programs in the field.

Because public relations plays a vital role in organizations, mentoring professionals and providing them with the right tools for success is essential. Because the public relations field is changing at a rapid rate, there is a great need to keep the employees up to date and committed to their organization and to the profession.

Some PRSA chapters have set up internal mentoring programs. These programs give new practitioners a chance to be guided by older, more experienced professionals. This is a chance for the experienced professional to show how things work. This guidance prepares the mentee to take on the upper-level positions of his or her superior in that organization or elsewhere. These investments show that organizations value their employees and will do whatever it takes to see them succeed.

A mentor has the opportunity to increase his or her professionalism and the professionalism of others through counseling and hands-on experience. This gives mentors a chance to sharpen their managerial skills while playing a significant role in the growth and career path of another. PRSA chapters have set up mentoring programs to help members enhance their skills and knowledge regarding the field.

Nationally, PRSA has also set in place the College of Fellows Mentoring Program. This program makes it possible for all levels of public relations practitioners to share knowledge and business expertise. This program also counsels one along his or her career path and in decision making. Members

of PRSA who are chosen to be mentors have over 20 years of experience. The mentors are carefully elected by the college because they “demonstrate superior capability as a practitioner, exhibit personal and professional qualities that serve as a role model for other practitioners, and have advanced the state of the profession” (PRSA, 2003, n.p.).

Paul Schrodt, Carol Stringer Cawyer, and Renee Sanders (2003) stated in their recent research that individuals with mentors receive more promotions, have higher incomes, and report more career satisfaction and mobility than those who do not participate in the mentor-mentee relationship. This, then, is one avenue for improving the quality of work life for organizational members.

Lynn Appelbaum (2000) stated that mentoring offers something longer lasting than the superficial payoffs such as free meals and gym memberships, which some organizations offer. Mentoring offers an environment that makes mentees feel accepted and supported on both personal and professional levels. This creates stronger corporate culture, teamwork, and better use of resources. It also connects employers to organizations outside of their own. Mentors set the foundation for career paths. These relationships are excellent avenues for expanding networks and giving timely advice about one's future.

—Brenda J. Wrigley

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MINORITIES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

In recent decades, organizations have been urged to recruit minorities and those who are sensitive to cultural diversity. According to the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), more minorities hold professional jobs in private and government arenas than ever before. However, numbers of minority public relations practitioners still lag significantly behind those of Anglo practitioners. Ironically, many perceive that minority groups are doing especially well due to federal legislation. But in reality, anti-affirmative action sentiments continue to gain momentum.

Anglo males dominate senior-level management in the United States, and organizational theorists suggest that management culture is shaped by a Eurocentric, patriarchal bias that becomes normalized. For example, much of our trade literature and public relations research similarly contextualizes the status of “minorities” and “women.” Perhaps this is because Anglo males once dominated the field. The terms *minorities* and *ethnicities*, as used here, refer to non-Anglos of both genders. Ethnicity is socially defined, based on cultural, psychological, or biological characteristics. The U.S. Bureau of the Census categorizes major race groups as Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Native American.

Back in the early 1980s, M. J. Layton (1980) wrote of one early critic of “minority issues” in public relations who called the field “the last of the lily-white professions” (p. 64). Two decades later, the U.S. Bureau of the Census reported that the public relations industry remains predominantly white (89.4 percent), followed by 4.5 percent black, 2.8 percent Hispanic, and 2.1 percent Asian. The trade publication *Public Relations Quarterly* also reports that very few Arab Americans and Native Americans work in public relations. Opportunities for minorities seemed boundless 20 years ago, when an estimated 4,000 of the 70,000

U.S. practitioners were minorities. Yet African American practitioners dropped from 7 percent to 6 percent by the 1990s even though the number of total practitioners had grown to 150,000.

Further underscoring this gap are comparative salary, status, and higher-education figures. According to *PR Week’s* 2002 Salary Survey, ethnic minorities are paid “considerably less” than their white counterparts, on average: blacks 36 percent less, Hispanics 31 percent less, and Asians 9 percent less. The U.S. Department of Labor reported in 1999 that among public relations managers, the mean annual wage is \$56,770. White women’s weekly earnings are 37.4 percent higher than those of Hispanic women—and women generally earn a little more than half (63 percent) as much as men. This means that Anglo males significantly out-earn all other demographic groups.

In terms of status, a culturally diverse senior-level management is an anomaly in the United States, particularly in the public relations industry. Numbers of minorities working in senior public relations management are dismally low. Hispanics comprise only 4.2 percent of managers in marketing, advertising, and public relations. Overall, statistics fail to correlate with the ethnic diversity of the larger U.S. population—82.2 percent white, 12.8 percent black, 11.8 percent Hispanic, and 4.1 percent Asian.

Even though level of education frequently has been invoked as a rationale for low numbers of minorities working in public relations, *PR Week* survey findings suggested that 29 percent of black and Asian respondents had earned graduate degrees—compared with 24 percent of whites surveyed. Thus, it seems that ethnic minorities in the United States are outnumbered and underrepresented in public relations management *in spite of* graduate degrees.

Indeed, the public relations industry has been criticized for lack of advancement and inequitable salaries among minorities. Overall, the profession has demonstrated low recognition of diversity, a poor record of educating for diversity, and underrepresented diverse populations. Some firms suggest that they find hiring minorities difficult

because they receive so few applications from them. Because organizational theorists have noted that culture (shared values, beliefs, meanings, understanding) affects workplace processes, it is no surprise that multicultural perspectives rarely gain access to executive offices. Organizations tend to “play it safe” by ignoring class relations and attempting to “control” diversity.

Well aware of these trends, PRSA established a task force several years ago. Also, some public relations firms have worked to stimulate recruitment of minorities and fund scholarships to place minority students as interns. Furthermore, Larissa A. Grunig, a prominent senior public relations researcher, shared her vision to inspire new generations with heterogeneous chronicles of public relations history. Unfortunately, few public relations textbooks cover minorities’ contributions in any great detail. Most offer only a few paragraphs.

A “handful of minorities” joined the public relations field in the late 1940s, but it wasn’t until the civil rights era that “significant numbers” pursued public relations careers. Joseph Varney Baker became the first African American man to launch a public relations consulting firm, serve as a PRSA president, and earn accredited public relations (APR) status. The Rev. Barbara Harris, the first African American *woman* in public relations, began her career at Baker’s firm and became its president in 1958. Recorded historical mentions of Hispanic, Native American, Asian American, or other minority practitioners are nearly nonexistent.

Beyond the public relations workplace, academic studies of minorities in public relations are few—whereas advice on *how to market to ethnic minorities* abounds. Moreover, all-black, all-Hispanic, all-Asian agencies have emerged in recent years. Some full-service agencies even have added “Hispanic public relations” (HPR) to their rosters. Of course, building relationships between organizations and key publics is fundamental to the definition of “public relations.” Public relations researchers have called targeting the Hispanic market “important,” “desirable,” and a means “to increase company revenue.” Practitioners are cautioned, however,

to beware of market tendencies to commodify ethnicity, a move that reinforces hegemony.

Characterized as “the most prolific scholar analyzing multicultural trends in public relations,” Marilyn Kern-Foxworth has conducted surveys to examine the technician-manager role/salary dichotomy between whites and “women of color,” the institutional constraints manifested by race, and minority representation in public relations textbooks. Time and again she concluded that minorities are underrepresented and underpaid.

A few studies have probed the relationship between race and career advancement. Those “people of color” who *are* employed as public relations practitioners often are pigeonholed into servicing “ethnic” projects—whether they really want to or not. Many minority practitioners reported being underutilized in their organizations, and overlooked when organizations assign or hire public relations practitioners. Paradoxically, one researcher concluded that stereotyping and pigeonholing hold back minority practitioners, and another found that most (85 percent) of the African American public relations practitioners she surveyed denied being pigeonholed.

Even though, as James E. Grunig (1992) wrote, “Excellence Theory” has contributed much to our understanding of the best way to “do public relations in an ideal situation” (p. 12) and serves as the dominant paradigm in public relations research, it makes no explicit mention of ethnic diversity. In other words, this normative theory offers no provision for exposing discrimination as an impediment to excellence. Donnalyn Pompper (2004) has argued that it is an integral two-way symmetrical model component because communication is more likely to be excellent when ethnic diversity is supported. Organizational effectiveness depends on as much diversity within an organization as outside it, and ensuring ethnic diversity is a public relations responsibility.

Indeed, much more work is yet to be done in examining the experiences of minority practitioners in public relations organizations. Unfortunately, much of our early research involved data sets with underrepresented minorities. Also, ethnicity

variables have been homogenized and ethnic identities obscured—as in studies of “minorities,” “multiculturalism,” and “people of color.” Finally, ethnicity variables have not been probed in studies of sexual harassment.

It is predicted that blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and other minority group members will make up 47 percent of the U.S. workforce by 2050 and that the number of men will grow at a slower rate than the number of women. Furthermore, numbers of Hispanic, black, and Asian workers will continue to grow well into 2010—while the number of white workers will fall below 2000 levels. Hence, it may be forecast that greater numbers of ethnic minorities will be available for recruitment as public relations practitioners.

—Donnalyn Pompper

See also Baker, Joseph Varney; Demographics; Excellence theory; National Black Public Relations Society (NBPRS); Practice

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MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

Mission and vision statements delineate the goals, purposes, and values of an organization. Vision statements provide a broad guideline of future organizational goals; mission statements define the scope of the organization, differentiate it from competitors, and give a summary of why the organization exists. A good mission statement communicates to internal and external publics the strategy of the organization, the framework that will be used in attempting to achieve goals, and the norms and values of the organization.

The terms *mission statement* and *vision statement* are closely related, but there are distinctions between the two. The vision statement represents a desired future goal that identifies general priorities for the organization. Mission statements normally communicate the strategy of the organization in a more practical sense with regard to goal attainment. A general rule of thumb is that the vision statement defines where an organization is going and a mission statement gives basic information about how it is going to get there.

VISION STATEMENTS

A shared vision is an integral part of an organization. If all members of an organization share a well-defined goal, the organization can make more strategic and targeted management and operational decisions than it could without a clearly specified vision. A vision spells out a target for change and the desired long-term goal state.

Often vision statements will include elements of organizational culture such as values, philosophy,

the role of the organization in relation to society and in relation to publics, and any other factors that might provide overall guidance and direction in shaping the organization. Although vision statements are sometimes critiqued as nebulous and vague, they can be an invaluable tool for determining long-term organizational priorities that must be addressed in defining the mission of an organization. Vision statements are also essential tools of organizational leadership, particularly in light of managing change. A leader creates vision to “provide a way for people to develop commitment, a common goal around which people can rally, and a way . . . to feel successful” (Nadler & Tushman, 1989, p. 105).

Although a vision statement is intentionally vague, it gives the employees of the organization an indication of what the company will strive to attain in the future, the values that it holds and advocates, and the areas of the business that will be most competitively focused on in the future. A good vision statement should allow all employees to answer the question “Where is this organization going?” in a similar manner, and it helps to define the purpose and culture of a company. For instance, an organization whose vision focuses on providing the highest-quality product would have different strategic emphases than one focusing on the most innovative new designs, or one with the most inexpensive merchandise. The vision statement indicates what core competencies the organization and its employees should reward.

A vision statement is usually created at the highest level of the organization by the CEO or another senior executive in a leadership position. A danger here is that simply creating a vision statement at the top of the organization and expecting others to follow it defeats the ownership and responsibility that are fostered when many participants work at crafting the vision statement. Conducting research with internal publics—such as labor and management—and creating a diverse group of representatives from internal stakeholders to work on the vision statement is the preferred method for crafting an organizational vision. This method results in a “shared vision” of what employees at all levels of the organization desire for the future, and develops

participatory ownership and commitment to that vision across the organization. Research shows that these factors create higher levels of job satisfaction and productivity, as well as lower job turnover, making for a more efficacious organization.

MISSION STATEMENTS

Many disciplines discuss the topic of mission statements: organization theory, business management, sociology, communication, and related fields. There is little agreement among scholars on how to define mission statements or what elements a mission statement should include. Mission statements are used as tools to convey goals, organizational structure and strategy, legitimacy, values, participation and ownership among employees, leadership, responsibility to the community, ethical priorities, and commitment to publics and stakeholders.

Mission statements provide a foundation for business that encourages focus on an organization’s strengths. The focus fostered by a clear and authoritative mission statement can provide a competitive advantage for an organization by allowing its members to remain strategic, both intellectually and in resource allocation. Without a clearly defined mission statement, an organization can flounder and make decisions that are well intended but do not emphasize its competitive strengths. By building on what it does well, an organization can reinvest in its strengths and become less dependent on the areas in which it is weaker, giving it an advantage in the competitive marketplace.

Mission statements provide a strong, intentional consistency with regard to organizational behavior. They often outline the hierarchy of priorities in an organization, and can be used to direct management decision making. The consistency provided by a clear organizational mission allows the formation of long-term relationships with publics and stakeholders. These groups know what to expect from such an organization and come to trust and rely upon the organization as one dedicated to a clear mission, enhancing the credibility of the organization.

Mission statements are more practical and short term than vision statements. The mission statement

endorses a clear purpose for the organization and answers the question “Why are we here?” or “How are we different from our competitors?” Common elements of mission statements include key goals, management strategy, ethical values, relationships with publics and stakeholders, organizational structure, and so on. Many mission statements spell out an organization’s competitive advantage and how it will be used to create a benefit to the organization, such as “By being the most cost-efficient manufacturer of this product, we will pass on savings to the customer, and therefore gain a majority of new sales in this market.”

There may be little standardization of content among mission statements, but top-performing organizations almost always subscribe to exemplary statements of vision and mission. Although such statements vary considerably across industries and among organizations, a clear vision for the future and a thoroughly articulated mission statement are vital to the overall success of an organization.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Excellence theory; Management theory; Systems theory

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MODERNITY AND POSTMODERNITY

Modernity and postmodernity are difficult to define—the former because it covers an extended time period filled with massive changes, and the latter because it attempts to make sense of the present’s shifting phenomena in the presence of disillusionment with modernity’s versions of order and rationality. Both can be described as historical periods with sets of general characteristics. Anything beyond that is subject to dispute. Since the stakes are the nature of contemporary reality, linked with unfolding futures, the disputes will not be solved by scholarly decision or resolved by easy consensus. In general, supporters of postmodernity tend to see modernity as finished, to consider its demise as a positive event, and to position the present as uncertain, fragmented, and distinctly different from the stage of modernity that preceded it. Opponents of the idea of postmodernity tend to see it as a passing, or past, fad and view the present as late modernity, continuous with modernity itself rather than marking any distinctive rupture.

In the public relations literature, only Margaret E. Duffy’s trenchant critique in 2000 of the existing linear orthodoxy in textbook histories registered awareness of the importance of the treatment of time in modernity-postmodernity differences. Her work implicated public relations education in the use of instrumental communication as part of a totalizing process and established the field’s need for a post-modern informed historiography. However, subsequent public relations writings have not addressed the contested modernity-postmodernity periodization.

Outside the field, although there is limited agreement on the specific opening and closing dates, the two periods have been most strongly distinguished through chronology. The start of modernity has been traced back as far as the scientific revolution of the 17th century and as recently as the early 20th century. From both points, modernity's meta-narrative—or overarching theoretical story that offers universal explanations and validations—was one of progress.

Modernity's meta-narrative begins as a universal emancipation movement liberating people from ignorance, political tyranny, religious authority, and superstition, as well as mastering nature through science in order to relieve famine and supply basic necessities. Its methods involved the spread of bureaucratizing, centralizing, rationalizing, and Western practices everywhere. Later modernity extends those ideals and practices to 20th-century industrialization through functionalist scientific management involving Taylorism, the Ford Motor Company's assembly line, and the mass production of standardized goods with associated economies of scale. Its liberation component, albeit within a command and control framework, initiated comparable moves toward individual freedom through industrialization with improved living standards, paid employment, and parliamentary democracy.

Accounts of postmodernity put its start somewhere between the 1940s, and the atomic bomb, and the 1970s, and the oil crisis. Postmodernity is characterized as more democratic, more fragmented, and more mediated, as well as multiethnic, postcolonial, post-Fordist, postindustrial, and, in terms of knowledge, poststructural. Although less based in material production, it adds value through a new economy of intangibles by managing meanings, brands, and perceptions in ways that combine niche markets with dispersed global production, global sales, and flexible global workforces. Within public relations, George Cheney and George N. Dionisopoulos (1989) crystallized the contextual shift from modern material production to postmodern symbol production in 1989 by focusing on the management of meaning. They acknowledged how communication becomes constitutive so that “we must recognise organizational processes (even

material ones) for how we know them—*through*, *with*, and *in* symbols” (p. 138). They also drew attention to the ethical challenge attendant on that acknowledgment by calling for an extension of the speech repertoire of the privileged to include the voices of the less powerful.

As its name suggests, postmodernity is connected to modernity and comes after it. From that vantage point postmodernity lists its predecessor's failures by observing how, without ending world hunger, the modernist road to freedom led to concentration camps, ethnic cleansing, and mass unemployment. Postmodernity offers three critiques: first, modernity's ethnocentric implication in colonialism, and the resultant lack of any sense of its cultural and economic values relative to other cultures; second, modernity's susceptibility to epistemological instability, that is, the ways in which things can be known and referenced once language is rejected as a mirror of reality for representing natural objects, and accepted as partly constituting or co-creating the world; and third, modernity's failure to reflect critically its own process and products, including environmental degradation and global inequities, when knowledge can no longer be innocent or separated from power.

For the first critique, postmodernists relativized the concept of the single and universal truth of the white Western male—with its Cartesian cognitive bias, restricted emotional range, and narrowly economic version of what constituted progress—using perspectives from other cultures. Ghandi, for example, when asked what he thought of Western civilization, relativized the ideas from an Indian perspective by replying that he thought it would be a good idea. For the second, postmodernists cast doubt on modernity's claim to offer a rationally objective mapping of reality. One destabilizing technique postmodernists deploy is word play, which frequently complicates and ironizes traditionally serious matters while simultaneously illustrating the serious point of language's irrational instability in playful fashion, as with the example of the pun in the next sentence on “partially,” which allows two conflicting meanings—both “partly” and “biased in part”—to operate on the same word

at the same time. Postmodernists also illustrate how referencing, or representing, the world requires multiple maps that can be based on sometimes arbitrary symbols and partially shaped by the standpoint of the cartographers and their technologies. Australian Aborigines, who inhabited their land long before the arrival of European explorers, reject the traditional verity of history and geography books that “Captain Cook discovered Australia,” and map their territorial homeland through oral traditions called songlines rather than cartographic conventions called gridlines. For the third critique, postmodernists demanded increased reflexivity, or self-questioning about whether, for example, in the face of widening global industrialization with ever-depleting natural energy, food, and mineral resources, the final project of modernity might mean the end of nature through nuclear warfare or environmental catastrophe.

Derina R. Holtzhausen’s 2002 writings on public relations and postmodernity echo Cheney and Dionisopoulos’s 1989 call for inclusive discourse to restore the words and stories of people excluded, exploited, or marginalized within modernity. In expounding these postmodern values, she conflates them with critical theory while overlooking the fact that the majority of critical theorists condemn postmodernity. They describe it as, at worst, an amoral celebration of a commodified, consumerist, and unjust status quo, and, at best, as a subversion of exploitative modernity, but only at a level of theory irrelevant to any real world challenge. Holtzhausen’s associated call for public relations practitioners to become organizational pro-democracy activists similarly runs counter to her own admission of the field’s continuing dominance by modernist values, such as administrative control from the center, rationalized economic goals, and hierarchic workplaces: “The focus on public relations as a management function has possibly made the biggest contribution to establish public relations as a serious field of study” (Holtzhausen, 2002a, p. 254).

With such gains, why would the field split with modernity? Even prior to that kind of consideration, Elizabeth Toth (2002) stated bluntly that, despite her declared affinities with it, “postmodernism must

have a ‘cash value’ for public relations” (p. 243). The adherence to modernity’s managerial functionalism is clear and the only short-term gain is for mainstream academic and applied public relations to seek status by being associated with the new, and therefore avoid looking outdated, without tampering with the old. Accordingly, despite Holtzhausen’s (2002a) considered opinion that the “management and *Excellence* foci in public relations have become metanarratives that have drowned other, equally valid, discourses” (p. 258), her assessment has been contradicted by the latest *Excellence* book’s assertion that two-way symmetric communication is “decidedly postmodern” (L. A. Grunig, J. E. Grunig, & Dozier, 2002, p. 328) and a force for democratic activism.

Even within instrumental rationalism, issues remain for public relations. If postmodernity marks a significant historical rupture, and public relations remains so deeply implicated in modernity, then the field risks cutting itself off from the methods of understanding, and the economic and geopolitical realities, of a changing world order. There are signs that the shift of power away from the West signaled by the 1970s oil crisis, and updated by Chinese expansion, will accelerate in contexts polarized by post-9/11 events. With corporations increasingly led by market demand rather than producer desire, the Third World, with more than 90 percent of the globe’s population, will become the main economic driver of the 21st century. Despite its inconsistencies, postmodernity offers insights into those transitional arrangements, and public relations would do well to explore them by tackling Cheney and Christensen’s (2001) still relevant postmodern question, “What would a non-Western, nonmanagerial, and nonrationalist form of public relations look like?” (p. 182).

—David McKie

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MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Lawrence Kohlberg (1927–1987) was an eminent American psychologist who studied moral development. His *levels of moral development* describe the strata through which human beings progress in their understanding and their reasoning of whether actions are right or wrong. As we age, our understanding of moral behavior and the reasons for acting morally increase in depth and complexity. At some point in early to middle adulthood, that growth slows or stops for most individuals. Most people then operate on a primary level of moral development, but might advance or regress to another level situationally. Kohlberg's levels of moral development are generally excellent classification devices, but are understood as theoretical models, or simplifications, of a complex interplay of variables that describe moral conscience. Kohlberg's work helps us comprehend ethics in both theory and practice, and its application to public relations helps us understand the choices and levels of moral development found among public relations practitioners.

Kohlberg's empirical studies on the moral development of individuals spanned decades and examined

the moral decision making of young children through older adults. His research incorporated many factors such as socialization and cultural norms, but it concentrated on identifying the moral reasoning that accounted for individuals' choices. Kohlberg's extensive research resulted in his identifying three major levels of moral development, each subdivided into two developmental stages. The first level of moral development is the *preconventional*, the second level is the *conventional*, and the third level is the *postconventional* or *autonomous*.

In the *preconventional* stage of moral development, also called level I, Kohlberg addressed the learning of infants and children who are not yet moral. In the first stage of level I, the infant or child reacts to punishment. He or she does not have the reasoning ability to understand why not to do something, but reacts instead to avoid the punishment that comes along with undertaking an action. In this way the child seeks only to avoid negative repercussions of behavior rather than to act morally. For example, what keeps a child from throwing food is not the understanding that it would be an irresponsible action, but the desire to avoid being scolded or otherwise punished for the action. In the second stage of the preconventional level, this understanding is coupled with the desire to earn praise and receive rewards for behavior. The child undertakes an action in order to receive positive reinforcement, or praise and rewards, rather than because he or she understands the nature of the action itself as good. Through this process, children are socialized into learning the norms of good and bad behavior. However, they have not yet developed a sense of morality in understanding that certain actions are morally worthy and others are morally unacceptable. Nor have they developed the analytical reasoning ability required for a higher-level moral analysis of behavior. In the preconventional level, children are simply pursuing the self-interest involved in avoiding punishment and seeking rewards.

Level II is defined as the *conventional* level of moral development. In the conventional level, moral agents make decisions based on conformity to expected roles and norms of behavior. Most

adults operate at the conventional level of moral development and generally accept its tenets without questioning their validity. The first stage of level II was termed by Kohlberg “good boy/nice girl morality,” in which the moral agent is motivated to act through role conformity. The socialization process allows us to understand how a “good boy or nice girl” is supposed to act in our society, thereby producing norms of expected behavior. The pressure to conform to the role of a good girl or nice boy is strong and leads the decision maker to desire to make decisions that are socially acceptable, meaning that others find those decisions morally permissible. For instance, a high school student might undertake the philanthropic activities of peer and referent groups in order to be perceived as a “well-rounded high school student.” In the first stage of level II, the person reacts to the expectations of peers and parents as the primary agents of socialization.

The second stage of level II is the “law and order” stage, in which moral agents learn what is expected of them and how they are “supposed” to act. In this stage, individuals also want to conform to the role of a good citizen. The norms and laws that govern society act as indicators of moral worth of an action and are used by the person to decide how he or she should behave. For instance, if murder and stealing are illegal, then the individual concludes that these actions must be morally wrong. The pressure toward the role conformity of a good citizen is enough to prevent most agents from engaging in the behaviors society has deemed illegal, and therefore—in this view—immoral. The role conformity brought about in the first stage of level II is generally learned from peer groups; in the second stage it includes those norms but also incorporates the laws of one’s society.

Kohlberg’s final level of moral development is level III, the *postconventional, autonomous, or principled* level. In this level, the moral agent operates by self-accepted moral principles that can be justified through analysis and argument. These moral principles are accepted not because society says they are right, but because the individual has examined and understands the moral argument.

Kohlberg acknowledged that most people never reach the third level of moral development, but, interestingly, some adults do.

Kohlberg divided level III into two stages. The first stage is the “contract and individual rights” stage, in which the primary moral concern is the rights of the individual. As R. T. De George (1999) wrote, “We speak of, and understand, morality based on the rights of individuals and the agreements made between consenting adults” (p. 36). Kohlberg argued that issues of fairness and justice for the individual are of primary concern in this stage. Most interestingly, the second stage of level III is “rationality,” the apex of moral development according to Kohlberg. In this stage, people do not simply accept the moral standards of society, but question their justification rationally against moral norms and principles. This final stage of moral development incorporates a universal view of actions, in that they are judged to be right or wrong by the agent regardless of specific cultural norms that might change over time or by location. Incorporating the Kantian concept of duty, Kohlberg argued that agents at this level of development do not act in accordance with moral law out of compulsion or conformity, but because they understand the moral principle involved and why it is binding on them. This duty to follow the moral law is self-imposed by each individual, rather than externally imposed by parents, peers, or lawmakers. At this level of moral development, the desire to take the morally right action outweighs concerns of prudence, constraint, or even self-interest.

Calling this postconventional stage “autonomous,” Kohlberg argued that agents are able to provide a rational defense of moral arguments. He evoked the argument for moral rationality espoused centuries earlier by Kant. Autonomy is the one true method of moral decision making, according to Kant, because “a moral agent is an agent who can act autonomously, that is, as a law unto himself or herself, on the basis of objective maxims of his or her reason alone” (Sullivan, 1989, p. 48). These objective maxims are the moral principles based on rational analysis and justification that cause this stage of moral development to differ from all others

in significant ways. The rational, autonomous analysis of moral principles called for in this stage is a higher-order cognitive ability than is seen in the other levels of development. The postconventional level is of most interest to those who teach and study moral decision making because it allows the agent to conduct a thorough, rational analysis of ethical decisions and dilemmas. When a dilemma is encountered, the individual responds not by seeking the refuge of group or role conformity, or seeking the other-based guidance of rules and laws, but by conducting a logical assessment of the reasons why some actions are right and others are wrong. Once rational and principled reasons are determined, the agent can articulate and defend a moral decision based on the principles used to reach that conclusion.

Other scholars have been deeply influenced by Kohlberg's seminal work on moral development. For instance, philosopher Henry David Aiken (1978) identified three stages of moral discourse that are remarkably similar to Kohlberg's levels of moral development: (1) a pre-rational, reactive, emotion-based state; (2) a conformity or rule obedience state, and (3) a level of ethical reflection. These states of discourse mirror the levels of moral development Kohlberg identified and serve to reinforce their validity and contribution to our understanding of moral growth. Carol Gilligan (1982) argued that Kohlberg's levels did not sufficiently take gender differences into account and that female moral development is centered more on the value of relationships than is male moral development. However, the critical finding is that both males and females can reach the final stage of level III, the highest level of moral development, based on autonomous reasoning and examination of moral principles.

Scholars have used Kohlberg's levels of moral development to study the ethical choices of public relations practitioners as well as to argue the moral worth of public relations as a societal discourse.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Decision theory; Deontology; Ethics of public relations; Moral philosophy

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MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Moral philosophy intersects public relations in the areas of ethical decision making, issues management, and corporate responsibility. In modern society, corporations are faced with a mandate to be good corporate citizens: to behave in the public interest as well as their own interests. Employing moral philosophy contributes to organizational effectiveness by aligning the interests of the company with those of its publics.

Moral philosophy is defined as the theoretical study of ethics. Philosophers study the composition of moral principles and expound on their justification using many methods of analysis. These methods of analysis can range from the weighing of consequences to the use of various tests, including concepts such as duty, fairness, justice, equality, and right. Philosophers concerned with defining moral principles ask such questions as “What is universally good?” and “What is the role of intention in determining the morality of an action?”

To varying extents within each philosophical school, moral philosophy attempts to base ethical

decisions on rationality rather than on other decision-making bases such as faith. Although much of Western moral philosophy might have roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition, philosophy attempts to separate nonrational decision-making factors such as faith, prejudice, belief, and bias from the logical principles of the philosophy being applied. In seeking to determine moral principles, moral philosophers attempt to look beyond the cultural and religious norms that tell us certain acts are right or wrong, moral or immoral, and seek truths that span time and location. Such truths are called moral principles.

For instance, a generally accepted moral principle is that lying is wrong. Philosophers can arrive at this principle through a multitude of moral tests. Through a utilitarian test, lying is wrong because it produces more harm than good. Through deontology, it is wrong because lying does not uphold the dignity and respect of others and because we would not want to be lied to ourselves. Although these moral tests are simplifications of the actual philosophies they represent, they allow us to see the principle that lying is morally wrong. But what about lying to save the life of a potential murder victim? What is the morality of those who lied to Nazi soldiers in order to save the lives of Jews? Moral philosophy takes on such difficult questions of moral obligation, intention, consequences, duty, fairness, responsibility, and justice and provides consistent methods for solving such dilemmas.

There are three broad purposes or types of conceptual approaches that moral philosophy can take: meta-ethics, defining what constitutes ethics; normative ethics, determining what rules or principles should guide ethical decisions; and applied ethics, the application of normative rules to specific ethical dilemmas. Normative ethics is the most prominent type of moral philosophy. Normative moral principles are of interest to public relations because they can guide the decision making of public relations practitioners in a multiplicity of situations.

Moral philosophy studies ethics, the *application* of moral principles to decision making. Ethics assumes that an objective morality does exist and attempts to discover the rules, values, and principles

that govern—or should govern—behavior. Ethics provides logical decision-making methods based on moral principles of right and wrong, whereas moral philosophy deals with the more abstract questions about what actually constitutes moral character, norms, values, and beliefs across societies.

We can divide moral philosophy into two primary approaches to ethical decision making, realizing that there are many interpretations and competing views within each paradigm. These two broad approaches are consequentialism and non-consequentialism. These types of ethical reasoning are diametrically opposed, as they hold differing values that dictate the parameters used to define what each considers an ethical decision.

Consequentialism instructs that the ethical decision is the one with the most favorable consequences. The morality of the decision is judged by the expected outcome of the decision (utility) rather than the decision itself. The “utility” of a decision is what it produces in terms of the outcome of implementing the decision. Utility can be measured in numerous ways, such as bringing the greatest amount of good, happiness, favorable consequences, or pleasure to the greatest number of people. Consequentialism expects the decision maker to be able to predict the potential outcomes of numerous decision alternatives and then choose among those alternatives to produce the greatest positive consequence. This paradigm is similar to a cost-benefit analysis. It looks not at a moral principle applied to the dilemma, but at the consequences of the decision.

Consequentialism dictates that the most ethical decision is the decision that produces the greatest utility. Therefore, the moral aspects of the decision come into play after the decision is made or in weighing the consequences of different options. The most prominent school of consequentialist thought is utilitarianism. Although there are varying forms of utilitarianism (hedonistic, eudaimonistic, and ideal, further subdivided into act and rule utilitarianism), the moral decision in this paradigm is that which has an outcome of creating the greatest utility or good for the greatest number of people affected by the outcome of the decision.

The second broad approach to ethics is the non-consequentialist approach. This view asserts that the worth of a decision should be judged by the moral principle applied, not by the resulting consequences of the decision. This view holds that duty is the basic moral requirement and exists independently of consequences. Arguments about justice, responsibility, fairness, and duty are generally appealing to the moral norms and principles used in non-consequentialist decision making. In this view, doing the morally right thing to uphold one's duty is the primary decision-making factor, and the consequences of an ethical decision are a secondary concern. When an ethical decision is made based on sound moral principles (such as "lying is wrong"), the decision is deemed ethical. The consequences of making a decision are not ignored, but they are not the primary decision making factor. Non-consequentialist philosophers do take the consequences of decision alternatives into account, but they do not allow the outcome of various alternatives to *determine* the moral principle used to make the decision. Deontology, as developed by Immanuel Kant, and the Rawlsian theory of justice, are common forms of non-consequentialist ethics.

In deontology, the decision maker must decide the ethical course of action by reason alone, basing his or her moral judgment on autonomous rationality, with the overall imperative of performing her or his moral duty. Kant's categorical imperative, a test of universal reversibility, is employed to ensure that the decision is based on a generalizable moral principle that is applicable across situations, times, and cultures. The categorical imperative asks the decision maker to place himself or herself on the receiving end of a decision as a test of its fairness and acceptability. Deontology requires a rigorous analysis of motives and intention to guard against bias or self-interest in favor of an objective vantage. Finally, deontology demands that people be treated as ends in themselves, with moral principles that maintain the dignity and respect of all involved supporting ethical decisions.

To allow consequences to dictate moral principle would violate deontology's guard against bias by allowing the outcome of a decision to affect the

moral principle used to make the decision. In the words of one senior public relations practitioner, "If you do the right thing, the consequences take care of themselves" (Bowen, 2002, p. 280). Deontology argues that the consequentialist reasoning of "If I do X, then Y will happen" can be easily mutated to serve selfish interests or even to justify unethical behavior. By basing the decision entirely on moral reasoning according to categorical principle, deontology attempts to offer a method of analysis that rules out all considerations except the moral intention of doing the right thing.

Why use moral philosophy in public relations? Moral philosophy gives people standards, language, and tools for rational analysis with which to reduce the difficulty of articulating and defending moral judgments. What factors make one decision more ethical than another? Is there an intrinsic moral good that we can judge in ethical decisions, or is it up to every individual to define what is good for himself or herself alone? Furthermore, if moral standards are in conflict, whose standards should prevail? Only through moral philosophy can we conduct a rational and modestly objective analysis of such dilemmas. This analysis provides an excellent tool for the public relations practitioner to use when facing differing demands from the organization or client, the dominant coalition, publics, stakeholders, the media, and activists.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Decision theory; Deontology; Ethics of public relations; Utilitarianism

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MOTIVATION THEORY

Although the term *theory* is used in motivation theory, no single recognized theory of motivation exists. Rather, *motivation* is used as an umbrella term for a number of theories that describe factors, traits, or situations that result in people moving beyond awareness and attitudes into behaviors.

One of the earliest 20th-century psychologists to focus on motivation was Kurt Lewin, noted for his three decades of work at Stanford University, the University of Iowa, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Lewin established the Research Center for Group Dynamics and thought of motives as goal-directed forces. This was new thinking amid the psychological theories that behavior was due to blind impulses within individuals. His resulting field theory stated that actions were influenced by environmental factors as well as psychological traits.

Abraham Maslow's 1954 *Hierarchy of Needs* further refined this idea of internal and external influences by identifying five sequential categories of needs that must be met for individuals to feel fulfilled. First, physiological needs such as hunger and thirst must be satisfied; second, individuals must feel safe; third, people must feel like they belong to some social group; fourth, individuals must experience some type of self-esteem; and fifth, only then can individuals work toward reaching their own potential, what Maslow called self-actualization.

Lewin and Maslow's work established the two basic domains of motivation: internal and external. Researchers in the next two decades attempted to identify variables and factors that fit into these two perspectives in a variety of different environmental settings from the workplace to advertising.

A number of workplace theories cite motivation as a key element in employee workplace behavior. Frederick Herzberg's 1959 *hygiene theory* contends that the external job environment, consisting of hygiene factors such as company policies, supervisor

behavior, and salary, must be satisfactory before individuals will be motivated to pursue higher-order, internal motivators such as achievement, recognition, and job advancement.

Perhaps the most famous workplace motivation scenario is the serendipitous finding known as the Hawthorne effect. Researcher George Mayo, conducting human relations research at General Electric's Hawthorne Works, found that individuals' group motivation and resulting productivity increased or decreased according to factory light levels. He concluded that the levels of attention being paid to them directly affected individuals' motivation—in fact, that security, belonging, and recognition were stronger factors than physical comfort.

Douglas McGregor's 1957 X and Y theories also contributed to the motivational theory umbrella. Often used in management situations, theory X states that individuals have an inherent aversion to work and therefore must be externally motivated to do it. Theory Y provides the opposite view, that individuals naturally have a need to work and external forces have only to encourage and provide opportunities for this need to be satisfied. This suggests that understanding individuals' internal motivations is necessary to know what external motivators would be most effective in creating or reinforcing desired behaviors.

The media environment with its rich variety of technologies has its own set of motivational studies, most based on trying to identify the effects media have on human behavior. The 1930s Payne Fund Studies, a 13-study, three-year effort directed by the Motion Picture Research Council, studied the influence of movies on children. The resulting 10 volumes, with their findings on topics from sleep disturbances being linked to scary movies to the influence on moral standards of on-screen actors, were not conclusive in proving effects, but were revolutionary in even attempting to tackle such a complex subject.

Radio figured prominently in early media/motivation studies, with the *War of the Worlds* broadcast fiasco and Herta Herzog's study of women listening to radio serials. Actor Orson Wells

was so convincing in his 1938 radio rendition of *War of the Worlds* that people panicked, some to the point of jumping out of windows. Herzog, under the direction of Paul Lazarsfeld and the Office of Radio Research, combined four studies of radio and women listeners to conclude that the women's personal characteristics motivated them to listen because of the satisfaction they received from listening. This developed into the *uses and gratifications perspective*, which has subsequently been studied in the context of television and Internet use.

When television entered mainstream American homes in the post-World War II era, researchers shifted attention to what people heard as well as what they saw. As with films, the research began with effects on children in the first major study of its kind, *Television in the Lives of Our Children*. Of most concern were the potential behavior effects, but as with most motivational research findings, no significant link between what children watched and what it motivated them to do was established. That did not stop the flood of television studies that ensued—the 1960s *Violence and the Media* study identified the two worlds individuals' experience—television versus real-life experiences—and concluded that violent television content motivated individual violent behavior. This inspired George Gerbner's longitudinal study of violence in the media, resulting in his cultivation theory. This theory states that if individuals see enough violence repeatedly on television, some individuals become socialized to believe and/or accept that behavior as reality while others are motivated to emulate it. In 1977, the Ronnie Zamora murder trial provided the ultimate legal test for motivation and violent television when Zamora's attorney based his client's defense on behavior motivated by violent television. Though the defense was novel, Zamora lost.

Not all motivation theories are linked exclusively to media, however. Other researchers studied real-life social situations to determine what motivated individuals to behave in different ways. In the 1960s Albert Bandura studied how people learn new behaviors. His famous experiment with the Bobo doll, where children watched a doll being punched and when left alone with the doll, punched

it as they had seen others do, led to modeling theory and its premise of individuals being motivated to emulate the behaviors of others.

During the same period, Leon Festinger was exploring how individuals were motivated to solve situations in which they received conflicting information. His cognitive dissonance theory states that when discrepancies exist between beliefs or actions, people are compelled to resolve the conflict so they can return to a state of equilibrium. His conclusion was that the change in behavior motivated people to make a change in their thought patterns.

Applying these social, cognitive, and behavioral perspectives is an accepted part of marketing and advertising practice as well as being used in the more traditional realms of television and radio programming. One of the advertising industry's first introductions to motivational research came during the 1940s and 1950s via Ernest Dichter, head of the Institute for Motivational Research. Dichter conducted in-depth interviews that relied on a psychoanalytical, Freudian-based interpretation of consumers' responses to identify feelings and emotions such as tension and guilt and to use them to develop sales psychology. This led to further research on consumers' self-images, attitudes, and behaviors, along with their environments, as factors that influence consumers' decisions and motivate their buying behavior; this work was, in effect, seeking a direct link between psychology and purchasing behavior.

Not everyone accepted the early motivational researchers' premise that discovering these psychological desires would motivate individuals into behavior. One of the strongest criticisms of motivational research is that the data could not predict which thoughts individuals would act on. The heavy reliance on qualitative research techniques was also constantly questioned by traditional marketing and business scholars, with the result that by the end of the 1950s, the idea of psychology's direct influence on consumer behavior was losing credibility. Motivational research, however, was not dead; in fact, it is credited as being the forerunner of modern-day psychographic research models. These approaches focus on sophisticated systems combining consumers' demographics with

lifestyle behaviors; one of the best known is the Stanford Research Institute's (SRI) Values, Attitudes, and Lifestyles System (VALS). Based on a complex, weighted combination of environmental, demographic, and lifestyle variables, the VALS system and others like it attempt to create categories of consumers to whom targeted advertising and promotional messages can be sent to motivate purchasing behavior.

Although much study has been devoted to why people behave as they do, there is still no reliable, statistically significant research that can pinpoint specific, reliable factors in human behavior. Although specific internal or external factors can be studied in depth, putting all of these complex factors together to come up with one motivational theory has not been accomplished. The complexity of human beings with their internal differences and the myriad external factors affecting each individual make that a challenging task for future researchers.

—Barbara J. DeSanto

See also Cultivation theory; Psychographics; Uses and gratifications theory

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MUCKRAKERS (AND THE AGE OF PROGRESSIVISM)

Muckrakers were early investigative journalists who exposed corruption and abuse by the newly emerging giant corporations and local political machines. For public relations, the focus was on the negative exposure of the corporations headed by the legendary robber barons such as J. D. Rockefeller, William Vanderbilt, and J. P. Morgan. The corporate response to the muckrakers resulted in a growth

spurt for public relations in the early 1900s. Muckrakers showed that the newly emerging mass media—newspapers and magazines—could turn public opinion and public policy against the seemingly all-powerful corporate giants. These corporate giants began hiring public relations practitioners to present their side in the court of public opinion.

Today, television still dominates the news media landscape and provides many forums for investigative journalism. Many of these stories lead to problems and even crises for organizations. A few examples include when CBS exposed the danger of the drug Rezulin, when ABC battled the grocery chain Food Lion over food safety, and when NBC challenged GM on truck safety. While this is often called muckraking, there is a significant difference between investigative reporters of today and yesterday. Most of the muckrakers were part of a larger social movement to effect change during a very turbulent social time in United States history, the Progressive movement. It is instructive to begin any discussion of the muckrakers by presenting the social backdrop of progressivism.

The age of progressivism or the Progressive Era ran from 1895 to 1920 as a reaction to the changing social structure of the United States. This time period saw the rise of urbanization, industrialization, and immigration. Before 1930, the majority of the U.S. population lived in rural areas. In fact the United States had very few cities with populations more than 100,000. By 1930, the majority of the American people lived in urban areas, and there were 93 cities with populations of 100,000 or more. Suddenly small-town living was replaced by city living—with its related problems of sanitation and crime. The United States was adapting to a new way of living: urban life.

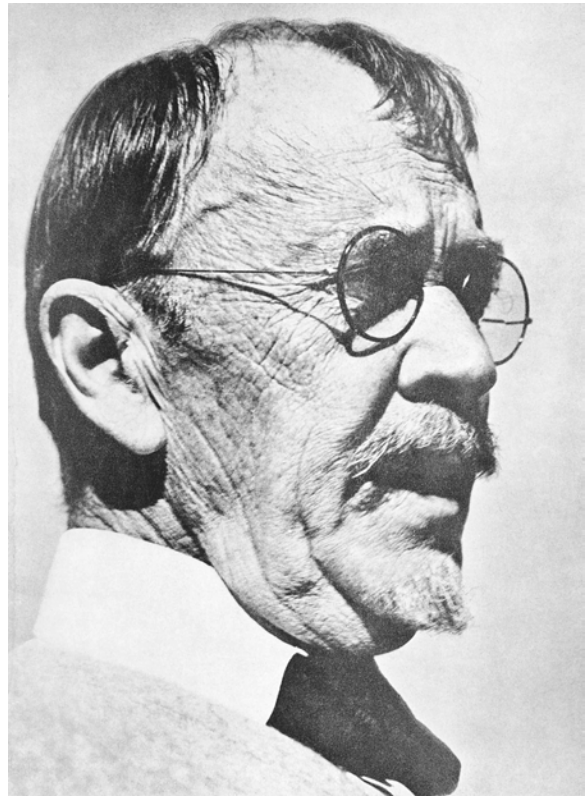
The rise of cities was accompanied by the shift from an agricultural to an industrial economy. People no longer worked in small shops or farms. They worked in large factories. The work was hard, as people often worked more than 12 hours a day in extremely unsafe working conditions with low wages. The cities provided a large pool of labor, so it was easy to replace workers who were injured or agitating for better working conditions.

Immigration was helping to further increase the number of people in the cities. However, immigration patterns were changing. Before 1890, most immigrants were from the United Kingdom, Germany, and Scandinavia—from northern Europe. After 1890, most of the immigrants were from southern and central Europe. These new immigrants were often exploited because they were different and lacked political power.

Cities such as Chicago became a breeding ground for discontent. Segments of the population lived and worked in terrible conditions while having little recourse to change it. There were fears in the United States that socialism would take roots among the discontented and result in revolution, perhaps violent, or wide-scale adoption of socialist principles. One sign was the effort to unionize the workers.

The Progressives wanted change as well but in an orderly fashion and done within the existing political structure. The Progressives wanted to avoid violent revolution and socialism. In fact, most of the Progressives were upper- and middle-class Americans who wanted to preserve much of the status quo. They wanted limited change that made life better for the discontented lower class but did not change the basic political, economic, and social structures that benefited the upper and middle classes. Of course, one segment of the Progressives wanted more sweeping reforms, but they were in the minority.

From this landscape emerged the muckrakers, journalists whose words often brought about social and political change. Many muckrakers were much more radical than the Progressives, many being socialists themselves. President Theodore Roosevelt provided the name *muckrakers*, but he did not mean it as a compliment. In the 17th-century religious allegory *Pilgrim's Progress*, there is a group of people who can only look down and rake the muck; they could not look up and see the celestial crowd. President Roosevelt created the nickname after David Graham Phillips wrote a piece critical of Roosevelt's political allies as part of an expose on the Senate. But ironically, the muckrakers helped make Theodore Roosevelt a crusading president by providing the public opinion needed to



American journalist and political philosopher Lincoln Steffens (1866–1936), who published many articles exposing urban political corruption. He was prominent among the writers Theodore Roosevelt called “muckrakers.”

SOURCE: © Bettmann/CORBIS

support many of “his” reforms. Lincoln Steffens, a leading voice among muckrakers, told Roosevelt after the muckraker speech, “Well, you have put an end to all these journalistic investigations that have made you.”

Some muckrakers were activists who used fiction to dramatize their causes, and others were journalists interested primarily in revealing the wrongdoings of corporations. Upton Sinclair and Ida Tarbell represent the two variations of muckrakers.

Upton Sinclair was the prototypical muckraker. He was a reformer with a burning pen. Sinclair was appalled by the living and working conditions of the meat packers in Chicago. As a center of transportation that connected the Midwest to the East, its huge stockyards and processing plants made Chicago the

meat packing capital of the United States at this time. Bubbling Creek was so named because it bubbled with blood from the slaughtered animals. Only poor workers lived near the dirty and smelly packing plants. Sinclair lived among the workers in the area known as Packingtown for seven weeks. There he learned about the abusive labor practices and unsanitary meat packing facilities. The end product was his book titled *The Jungle*. The meat packers, such as Armour, were exploiting the workers. They worked hard for low wages in dangerous conditions. During his stay, there was even a strike that was suppressed by management. The book also described the unsanitary conditions in the packing houses, which included grinding rats, refuse, and the body parts of workers in with the meat.

Sinclair struggled to find a publisher. Originally the book was presented in serial format in the socialist publication *Appeal to Reason*. Six publishers rejected the manuscript before Sinclair decided to publish it himself. After receiving more than 900 orders, Doubleday decided to publish the book and sold more than 150,000 copies. Eventually Americans read about the abuses in the meat packing industry. Sinclair hoped people would be enraged by the abuse of the workers and demand reforms to help them. The public reaction was much different. People were outraged, but it was over the meat they ate, not the exploited workers. Sinclair noted that he aimed for the heart but hit the stomach.

Public opinion did force the U.S. government to take some action. President Roosevelt read *The Jungle* and helped push for meat packing reforms but made it clear that he did not care for the socialist ideas promoted in the book. The federal government passed the Pure Food Bill and Beef Inspection Act. The meat packing lobby managed to water down the reforms. The laws had very little effect on meat packing, and reformers, including Sinclair, considered the measures to be failures. In the end the laws were largely symbolic—designed to reassure people that meat was safe. Such changes were common in the Progressive Era as people wanted limited change, and you cannot get much more limited than a change that simply makes people feel

better. The symbolic changes were designed to keep people quiet, not to make serious changes. The news media today are still doing stories on food safety, sanitation issues, and problems in meat packing.

The Progressive Era did see significant changes that improved the lives of workers. Child labor laws were developed, worker compensation programs were instituted, and measures were passed to hold employers liable for harm to workers. The environment also benefited as Niagara Falls was saved from corporate exploitation, and policies were developed for the conservation of natural resources.

Ida Tarbell was a journalist who decided to write about the abuses of corporations, but not be an activist for reform. Tarbell was a well-known biographer at the time, having published books on Napoleon and Abraham Lincoln. *McClure's* magazine agreed to let her write a piece on the history of Standard Oil, the monopoly created by J. D. Rockefeller. Tarbell's father had been part of the Pennsylvania oil industry that had been ruined by Rockefeller's questionable business practices. Although *McClure's* was known as a muckraking magazine, Tarbell's style was careful historical research and documentation. Tarbell researched the project for over five years. Here documentation came from court records of lawsuits against Standard Oil. She supplemented this data through interviews with current and former Standard Oil executives, government regulators, competitors, academics, and antitrust lawyers. In the end, Tarbell crafted an objective story based on public documents. She created a paper trail to document her work. Other investigative journalists of the time would often use gossip that led to inaccuracies in their stories. Moreover, there was no call for action as was common in reform pieces of the day, and she allowed Standard Oil officials to respond to earlier drafts.

The history of Standard Oil included ruining competitors by signing agreements with railroads that caused rates to be higher for competitors and by operating in New Jersey because New Jersey state laws helped companies get around the

Sherman Anti-Trust Act, a measure designed to prevent monopolies. The railroads were working with Rockefeller and his associates. The railroad would charge other oil producers more for shipping than they charged Rockefeller and his group, giving them a price advantage. Furthermore, the railroads would give part of this excess charge back to Rockefeller and his friends. This unfair advantage allowed Rockefeller to put others out of business. In Pennsylvania, the scheme was run under the name South Improvement Company (SIC). The practice was eventually found to be illegal, and SIC was ordered disbanded. However, the damage had been done, and many small oil producers had been put out of business. Later, Rockefeller used threats of such a practice to win control over the oil production in Cleveland, Ohio.

Tarbell's research was published in a 16-part series published between November 1902 and October 1904 titled *The History of Standard Oil*. It later became an 814-page book, and in 1999 was listed as number 5 on the list of the 100 most important journalistic works of the 20th century. Here is an excerpt from *The History of Standard Oil*:

Little by little as the public began to realize the compactness and harmony of the Standard organization, the ability of its members, the solidity of the qualities governing its operations, they began to forget its history—they began to accept the Standard's explanation that the critics were indeed "people with a private grievance," "moss-backs left behind in the march of progress." It looked more and more to the outsider as if henceforth Mr. Rockefeller was going to have things his own way, for who was there to interfere with him, to dispute his position? No one, save that back in Northwestern Pennsylvania, in scrubby little oil towns, around greasy derricks, in dingy shanties, by rusty deserted oil stills, men still talked of the iniquity of the railroad rebate, the injustice of restraint of trade, the dangers of monopoly; still rehearsed with tiresome persistency the evidence by which it had been proved that the Standard Oil Company was a revival of the South Improvement Company.

Tarbell's own father warned her against writing the piece because he feared Rockefeller would retaliate against her. Tarbell's characterization of

J. D. Rockefeller was scathing. She referred to him as money mad, hypocritical, and a living mummy. Standard Oil did fight back by launching a smear campaign against Ida Tarbell. The main messages were delivered in pamphlets that simply attacked Tarbell without addressing the issues her pieces had raised. This reaction by Standard Oil is public relations at its worst, a simple knee-jerk reaction designed to suppress discussion instead of airing the facts. President Theodore Roosevelt read the *History of Standard Oil* and used many of the insights to build a case against monopolies. Clearly, Tarbell had an idea of the corruption she would find before writing the series. However, she did not have the activist bent of writers like Upton Sinclair or Lincoln Steffens. Her desire to expose Standard Oil was derived from personal experience with the dangers of J. D. Rockefeller's business practices. Tarbell actually pioneered today's style of investigative journalism that seeks careful documentation of corporate abuses.

The work of Sinclair and Tarbell illustrated two emerging forces that corporations would now have to face: the mass media and public opinion. The mass media was a new phenomenon driven in part by the growth of cities. Publications could reach hundreds of thousands of the new urban population. This would have been impossible prior to urbanization. It was now much easier for a large segment of the population to become aware of problems. When people become aware of problems, they can choose to press for change. Public opinion, opinions shared by a significant percent of the population, began to emerge as a force. When people read *The Jungle* and learned they could be eating spoiled meat, they complained to politicians and demanded action. Stories in the mass media could help to shape public opinion, and public opinion could shape public policy—the agenda setting and agenda building effects. In turn, public policy could affect how a corporation operated and its level of profitability.

The robber barons could not afford to ignore the new mass media or to refrain from trying to influence public opinion. Corporations needed to speak to the new urban population. It is no coincidence

that modern public relations was believed to have developed in 1906, right in the middle of the Progressive Era. Corporate leaders, such as J. D. Rockefeller, hired former journalists to help them work with the mass media and become a part of the struggle to shape public opinion. Silence by corporations was no longer golden; corporations had to respect the power of the mass media. For instance, the policy for train accidents changed from barring the mass media from the site to helping them tour the site. Corporations wanted to present their side of the story to the mass media. Some went too far by actually buying the support of editors and reporters, but the roots of modern-day media relations were beginning to emerge along with a concern for how stakeholders felt about the organization. Motivated more by profit than compassion, corporations were learning that the opinions of stakeholders did matter and should be taken into account.

Still, these early days of public relations did view stakeholders more as obstacles than as possible assets to an organization. During the Progressive Era, corporations were beginning to change and public relations was to be an integral part of that change. Public opinion mattered, so a corporation had to be sensitive to the opinions of stakeholders in its actions. Slowly a recognition was emerging that corporations must think beyond just making more money. Stakeholders such as the news media, workers, and activist groups were emerging as a force in public opinion that must be considered, not ignored, by corporations.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Publicity

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MULTIMEDIA

Multimedia is a combination of discrete technologies. In the simplest sense, multimedia means “many media working together as one.” Although the technologies are not necessarily communication based, the result of the combination is a communication approach or channel not previously available.

An easy, low-tech example is a “multimedia slide show,” which was considered cutting edge 30 or so years ago. Utilizing the earliest versions of multimedia, agencies—public relations and advertising—often showed clients samples of creative tactics by using multiple, synchronized 35-mm slide shows with audio accompaniment. A bank of slide projectors would be used in conjunction with an audio player. The audio recording would have an extra, unheard track of information, consisting of trigger pulses to cue and advance the various slide projectors. A good example of this approach using music and still images can be found in the film *The Parallax View*, where the lead character is shown an absolutely harrowing recruiting film.

The mid-1970s marked the beginning of an unsuccessful attempt at interactive television via multimedia. Warner Cable used computer technology to deliver the QUBE system to subscribers in Columbus, Ohio. With the use of a special set-top box, viewers could participate in electronic town hall meetings and surveys, play along with game shows, call plays in sports broadcasts, and even participate in mock voting during the Academy Awards. The system was prohibitively expensive to maintain and was dismantled in the early 1980s. However, the QUBE system was an important failure. The use and integration of computer technology at the system level was an important step in the enhancement of the mass communication process. The combining of television and computer technology is one signpost of a major change in society. Alvin Toffler introduces the idea of an information society in his 1980 book, *The Third Wave*. Toffler explained the transition under way as American society is moving from an age of industry to an age of information. Television, as a technology, has moved from an

Industrial Age invention to a conduit of the Information Age.

Moving into the Information Age has precipitated a shift from multimedia to convergence. Whereas it was once easy to distinguish between the various elements in a multimedia presentation, convergence makes the distinction impossible for both message creation and message delivery.

Message creation now involves the seamless use of a variety of audio and video material. The ability to digitize any source and “reformat” it for use in any delivery system makes, for example, distinctions between film and video one of effect, not affect.

Multimedia and convergence provide the public relations practitioner with unprecedented degrees of latitude and flexibility in both the creation and delivery of messages. The positive effect of flexibility in message creation and delivery has a negative effect on message control. Message creators should realize that convergence allows for a message to easily move from one mass medium to another. For example, internal memos show up on a Web site called www.internalmemos.com, allowing an audience to see a message that was never intended for them.

—*Michael Nagy*

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MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATIONSHIPS

A mutually beneficial relationship (MBR) is a highly desirable, normative outcome of effective public relations. An MBR occurs when the stakeholders of each organization believe that the subject organization works to achieve a condition where it and all its stakeholders benefit appropriately

because of the quality of their relationships. As a platitude, MBRs are asserted as the outcome goal of public relations, without much attention to how that end is achieved or what it actually entails. Such platitudes may mask the darker intent and ability of the focal organization to persuasively promote the conclusion that the relationship is more mutually beneficial than it truly is.

As a best-case scenario, the logic of MBR reasons that when people believe that organizations operate with their interests in mind, they support rather than oppose those organizations. Thus, they buy from businesses they believe give them full value for goods and services purchased. They support activist or other nonprofit groups that share values and hold similar goal-oriented commitments, such as ending specific childhood diseases. They believe in and support governmental agencies that act in their interest, in what can be seen as the public interest, where they are the “public.”

Critics of this line of thinking simply doubt that businesses, for instance, ever hold stakeholder interests equal to their own. By this logic, executive managements create policies and engage in marketing that justifies their salaries and makes the business prosper, even though the relationship is tipped to favor the interest of the business and may even harm the health, safety, sense of fairness, or other aspects of well-being on the part of customers or other stakeholders. Thus the logic of MBR challenges public relations practitioners to truly understand and be in a management position to help the organization to know the expectations of its stakeholders that define their best interests.

MBRs assume that stakeholders hold varying standards of how each organization should operate. These standards are forged through societal dialogue voiced by many points of influence: industry, activist, government, media reporter, and such. Disagreement and intolerance are part of the dispute over the definition of what is mutually beneficial and whether the organization truly operates to that end. Critics hold different standards. Some are more intolerant of the actions and ethical choices of organizations than others. Thus, MBR is a normative goal that cannot be totally satisfied for all

parties in any relationship. Each organization, regardless of its type, has a wide array of stakeholders. Each may have different expectations for the quality of the relationship and whether it is satisfied by what the organization does and says.

Relational theory discusses process variables that can foster or impede the creation of MBRs, but it does not address the difficult question of shared interests or the co-creation of meaning. Beyond the process, MBR is not meaningful if it is not a normative goal that challenges each organization to foster—through dialogue, collaborative decision making, strategic commitments, and corporate responsibility—a positive balance between its interests and those of its stakeholders. As it builds relationships with stakeholders, the organization advances the public interest and helps to elevate the quality community. In any full discussion of MBR, the sense of community is a focal point. What any organization does and says needs to be judged by whether it truly advances the essence of community among all of the stakeholders.

By the same token, appeals to community can be used asymmetrically to the beneficial interest of the organization rather than those of its stakeholders. Thus, a government ostensibly fighting international terrorism can appeal to community to defend its policies against its critics. It may, in this rhetorical stance, argue that any critic of its battle against international terrorists is actually a supporter of terrorism because it does not immediately and completely agree with and support the government policies. This rhetorical stance would in fact be asymmetrical and serve the mutual interest of the critics whose ideas may indeed ultimately add value to the fight against terrorism but do so in ways that disagree with the positions of the administration.

Although academics in the late 1990s began to show enthusiasm for the concept of MBR, it was not a new or novel concept. Substantial discussion by various practitioners and academics earlier in the 20th century sought to determine how organizations could create relationships. Both the International Association of Business Communicators and the Public Relations Society of America have featured relationship building as a part of effective public relations and strategic business communication.

In its Vision, Mission, and Structure statement, the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) features relationships:

IABC specializes in helping people and organizations:

- Make business sense of communication
- Think strategically about communication
- Measure and clarify the value of communication
- Build better relationships with stakeholders (www.iabc.com)

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) has been committed to meeting the challenge of relationship building since at least 1982, when it adopted its current official statement on public relations. There it acknowledged the professional need to engage in collaborative decision making and corporate responsibility to bridge differences: “Public relations helps our complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony.”

Reviewing the wide array of institutions that require effective public relations, the PRSA publication *Public Relations Tactics: The Blue Book*, noted that “these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or publics such as employees, members, customers, local communities, shareholders, and other institutions, and with society at large” (p. B2).

In their summary of the discipline published in 2000, Scott Cutlip, Allen Center, and Glen Broom observed that the trend in the United States was for public relations to be less focused on one-way, self-interested persuasion and more on mutuality, reciprocity, and the idea of “between.” Based on this trend, these authors posed one of the most widely disseminated definitions: “Public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends” (2000, p. 6).

One of the leaders in the formation of public relations as a management discipline, John W. Hill, principal founder of Hill & Knowlton, featured the

concept of relationship in his books published during the 1950s and 1960s. He credited Ivy Lee with an even earlier discussion of the term: “Public relationships, he [Lee] wrote, involved not simply ‘saying’ but ‘doing’—not just talk, but action” (1963, p. 16). Hill reasoned that organizations simply could not avoid considering and meeting the challenges of multiple relationships “because the corporation deals with employees, stockholders, customers, neighbors, government functionaries, and many others—with all of whom it has many relationships” (1958, p. 4). To build relationships, organizations must not only talk, but act in appropriate ways. Thus, public relations can never be limited to communication and is best when it is part of management decision making that allows the organization to position itself and operate in ways that strive to balance its interests with those of its stakeholders.

At one level, the effort to achieve MBR, Hill reasoned, was a matter of reputation management. Do the organization’s stakeholders believe the organization worked in their interests? Does it have the reputation for such actions? If not, is the problem with its reputation one that could be corrected by communication, or does it also or primarily call for new and improved actions and policies? To this end, Hill asked managements to think about how strong their relationships were with all of their stakeholders:

Typical of the questions that need to be answered before a sound public relations program can be constructed for a corporation are these:

1. How sound and stable are its relations with employees—and what do employees think about the company?
2. How are relations with customers, distributors, dealers—and what do they think of the company?
3. How are relations with stockholders and the financial community—and what is the opinion in those quarters about the company?
4. How does the company stand with prevailing public opinion in the communities where its

plants are located—and to what extent does it assume its share of community responsibility?

5. Does the company have any problems with governments—federal, state, or local—and are these legislative or otherwise?
6. Does management have adequate and effective ways of communicating in person or by other means with its employees and with all other groups with which it has relationships?
7. Are key personnel informed sufficiently about company affairs—are they able to explain and defend broad company policies to employees and others?
8. Is there a well-thought-out and workable plan for responding to the many appeals by worthy causes for company contributions?
9. Is there a plan for cooperating with educators in supplying them with factual material for school use as desired?
10. Are members of management sufficiently articulate in explaining their own business and the workings of the enterprise system when occasion demands—and is the company benefiting enough from leadership by management in public and industry affairs?
11. Are the company’s achievements and products sufficiently known to its public and is there need for improving goodwill?
12. Are press relations good, bad, or indifferent? (1963, pp. 136–137)

Hill was a practical counselor as well as one who sought high moral ground as the rationale for his profession and its profession. He reasoned, as advice to executive managements,

Business managements are concerned with the problems of conducting their corporate or industry affairs in ways that they may feel are contributive to public progress. They must arrive at effective policies that go far beyond their economic and operating functions into the complex realms of social, governmental, and political relationships. The large majority push forward into these policy areas as a matter of choice. But in terms of the long-range survival of corporate

enterprise, there is little choice involved; it is a matter of essentiality. (1963, p. 230)

A realist, Hill knew and counseled that organizations could not operate with autonomy as long as they merely operated in their own interest and expected others to tolerate that point of view.

Recent studies have examined the variables that seem most essential to fostering MBRs. This line of analysis is far from finished, but key factors are emerging. Leading concepts in this analysis seem to be these:

1. *Open*: Fosters two-way communication based on listening for and sharing valuable information, as well as being responsive, respectful, candid, and honest. One-way communication occurs when an organization “speaks” but does not listen to or acknowledge the merit in what other people and organizations “say.”
2. *Trustworthy*: Builds trust by being reliable, non-exploitative, and dependable.
3. *Cooperative*: Engages in collaborative decision making that ensures that the needs/wants of the organization and its stakeholders are met.
4. *Aligned*: Shares interests, rewards, and goals with its stakeholders.
5. *Compatible views/opinions*: Fosters mutual understanding and agreement; co-creates meaning.
6. *Commitment*: Supports community by being involved in it, investing in it, and displaying commitment to it.

The analysis of relationships has been explored from many points of view. *Systems theory* gives the rationale that no part of a system can operate forever imbalanced against the other parts of a system. Stated otherwise, one part of a system cannot prosper at the disadvantage of the rest of the system. A *rhetorical* perspective reasons that the effort to define interests assumes the co-creation of meaning. Many voices come together to define what constitutes a mutually beneficial relationship. *Social exchange theory* encompasses both of these theories and advances to reason that the quality of each relationship is based on give-and-take.

Dramatism theory assumes that individuals engage in battles of merger and division seeking higher levels of identification through courtship. Ultimate identification leads to a sharing of symbolic action.

MBRs are challenging because although they feature a positive outcome, such may not be possible with all publics. Frankly, critics whose values may not truly be in the public interest or otherwise meet the highest ethical standard can confront excellent organizations with challenges over values. For instance, at various times in the history of U.S. industry, companies were criticized as being destructive to the public interest if they engaged in hiring practices that opposed prevailing values to discriminate against people of color. It may be debatable how those values would help or harm the public interest. Thus, the question remains as a situational challenge to the ethics of public relations counselors: What truly is the public interest? Is it the narrow self-interested preference of any critic, or is it something else, something higher? Can the organization define this interest, can the critic prevail with its definition of the public interest, or is some other standard to prevail?

The concept of relationship underpins an even higher notion of community, which always is normative. Building community can be a positive incentive to discover what is in the best interest of the organization and its stakeholders and to move toward, if not fully achieve, that balance. But the concept of community can become a tyranny that may be manipulatively used by one side against the other. At best, such a ploy is an opening salvo to define the interest of the community, as critics typically claim that the organization is harming and not benefiting the community. As it is ad hominem to simply claim that an organization offends the community, it is equally ethically questionable to argue that to challenge the organization is to harm the community. Both of these tactics have been used, for example, by environmental activists and the organizations they criticize. In such debates, publics must be allowed or assumed to define themselves and speak their mind. Theory does not adequately get at the essence of MBRs if it leads to the conclusion that the organization alone can know

what is a public, whose ideas are best, and which discussants of an issue are legitimate.

The concept of MBR commits organizations to a process and outcome that goes beyond mere manufactured image or reputation by avowing to seek positive relationships with its customers or publics. Such approaches to relationship building can be manipulative and disingenuous. One challenge of MBRs is to avoid confusing being nice to customers with working for a mutuality of interest.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Community and community building; Dramatism and dramatism theory; Hill, John Wiley; International Association of Business Communicators (IABC); Lee, Ivy; Public interest; Public Relations Society of America;

Rhetorical theory; Social exchange theory; Stakeholder theory; Symmetry; Systems theory

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NARRATIVE THEORY

According to communication scholar Walter Fisher, humans naturally are storytellers. This view of *homo narrans*—storytelling humans—fueled narrative theory or what Fisher called the *narrative paradigm*. From this perspective, narration is seen as a fundamental quality of human nature. In other words, humans “experience and comprehend life as a series of ongoing narratives, as conflicts, characters, beginnings, middles, and ends” (Fisher, 1987, p. 24).

Communication follows story format, with characters engaged in a plot sequence. Further, Fisher asserted that communication is narrative and all people are tellers of stories. Thus, we should regard all communication as story, regardless of its form, because we interpret it and fit it into our life stories. From this vantage point, “there is no genre, including technical communication, that is not an episode in the story of life (a part of the ‘conversation’) and is not itself constituted by logos and mythos” (Fisher, 1985, p. 347).

Essentially, we make sense of our lives by composing stories, woven from discrete experiences into functioning wholes. That is, knowledge is narratively configured, and it is through continuous activities in story making and storytelling that we interpret our experiences and describe them to others. However, because we collaborate with

others in co-creation and analysis, narratives do not simply reflect our internal views. Further, the processes of narrative construction and meaning making are not static; rather, several types of information processing and attribution are at work.

In essentially the same way that individuals come to understand and describe themselves to others through their stories, organizations create and re-create narrated identities. Organizations tell stories about who they are, what their work is, who their stakeholders are, and who their enemies are—all of these crafting a particular identity or identities. Blake Ashforth and Fred Mael (1996) suggested that an organization’s identity is crafted from “unfolding and stylized narratives about the ‘soul’ or essence of the organization” (p. 21).

Organizational members and public relations practitioners who understand an organization’s identity, its publics, its key stakeholders, and the internal and external challenges it faces are in preferred positions to serve as leaders and spokespersons, weaving narrative explanations and responses. That is, recognition of these factors is useful in collaborating with others in the co-creation of meaning.

STORY POWER AND QUALITY

Fisher believed that stories are powerful and more persuasive than other forms of reasoning (e.g.,

statistics). This position is elaborated in his 1987 book, *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value, and Action*, in part by comparing and contrasting the underpinnings of the narrative paradigm with those of the rational world paradigm. Despite their power, however, not all stories are equally commanding. People judge stories (and as storytelling creatures, we all are qualified to do so), finding some more compelling than others.

To assess the relative quality of stories, Fisher used narrative rationality, which involves two criteria: story coherence and story fidelity. Coherence assesses the degree to which the story makes sense (e.g., is internally consistent). Fidelity assesses the degree to which a story fits with our views and experiences. Weighing coherence and fidelity, James Baesler (1995) found both to be important but concluded that coherence plays a greater role in the overall persuasiveness of a story.

In life, we tell and are told numerous stories. Some of these stories we accept and integrate into our story, our understanding of the world. Others we cast aside. Through this process, we create and re-create our lives and our understanding of ourselves and the social world; thus, stories are central to human understanding and expression.

NARRATIVE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

In *Human Communication as Narration*, Fisher applied narrative theory to specific rhetorical situations (e.g., Reagan's rhetoric) and showed the diverse application of the theory. Clearly, public relations theory and practice share an interest in the telling and interpretation of stories. For example, according to Barry Brummett (1995), public relations involves "the practice of telling and managing stories that are told about people, institutions, and groups" (p. 24).

"Organizations can adopt or seek to influence the narratives of society by what they say and do" (Heath, 2001, p. 42). From narrative theory, organizations are seen as "providing 'plots' that are always in the process of recreation rather than existing as settled scripts" (Fisher, 1987, p. 18). Thus,

organizations and public relations practitioners can use existing public views and opinions as resources or seek to change them through new narratives. They work with internal and external stakeholders in co-creating meaning through stories told, stories adopted, and stories remembered.

For example, in times of organizational crisis or stress, public relations practitioners ideally work to develop a narrative that explains the situation and that previews resolution and a positive future. Clearly, an organization's past is critical in shaping how its stories of explanation will likely be seen (e.g., a history littered with similar infractions vs. a clean slate and positive community relations). Also at these times, the consistency of messages delivered to the public is of key import—what Fisher called narrative coherence.

CRITICISMS OF FISHER'S NARRATIVE THEORY

Despite its numerous strengths (e.g., heuristic value, parsimony, highly democratic orientation with all humans serving as story producers and evaluators), several aspects of Fisher's narrative theory have been criticized. One area of criticism concerns the completeness of the theory's description. For example, Robert Rowland (1989) asserted not all communication is narrative, nor does it strive to be. For example, Rowland cited particular types of science fiction and fantasy narratives as not conforming to earthlings' expectations or experiences. Additionally, some types of communication may fall outside Fisher's discussion of the theory. For example, some scholars maintain that Fisher failed to explain how narrative can result in unique outcomes and to account for its potential negative consequences, such as encouraging hatred or violence. A second area of criticism counters the first by suggesting that the theory is overly broad—so expansive that it fails to describe or distinguish between differing forms or types of communication. A third area of critique by William Kirkwood (1992) suggested that the theory may be seen as reinforcing the status quo. For example, it focuses on existing and accepted values (i.e., narrative fidelity) and

ignores means by which stories can encourage change, denying a “rhetoric of possibility.” In other words, the perspective could be taken as encouraging tellers to tailor their stories to what hearers already know, believe, and value, rather than to offer new visions. Essentially, the focus may restrict tellers to fit their stories to extant views, rather than leading people, through story, to new vistas. Instead of countering Fisher’s views, Kirkwood intended to supplement and extend them—examining how stories may create previously unimagined possibilities.

—Joy L. Hart

See also Co-creation of meaning theory; Discourse theory; Rhetorical theory; Symbolic interactionism theory

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NARROWCASTING/ BROADCASTING

Narrowcasting and broadcasting are two ways to disseminate mass-mediated messages. Narrowcasting indicates that some sort of strategic discretion is being used in the selection of an audience for a message. Broadcasting is the opposite; here the primary consideration is how to reach as large an audience as possible. The strategic decision of whether to narrowcast or broadcast a message can happen at several levels, and across types of messages and different mass media.

One example is television. The traditional broadcast started with three networks, each with its own channel. The object in creating programming was to appeal to the lowest common denominator. With the advent of cable television, narrowcasting became a possibility. The number of channels expanded from three to hundreds—and satellite systems push the channel options even further—with each channel representing new possibilities.

Although increasing the number of channels promotes audience fragmentation, it also promotes demographically better-defined audiences. Content providers can fine-tune (or target) their messages. Advertising and public relations firms are also to be considered. With audience demographics better defined now than ever before, advertisers and public relations firms reap the benefits of being able to further refine messages for a specific audience. Added to this is the existence of two strata in the spots that run between programs—local and national.

Television is not the only medium to consider. The term *narrowcasting* is increasingly associated with radio. The Internet provides massive bandwidth, with the potential of tens of thousands of channels of content, each of them—creativity willing—unique.

Another medium to consider is the magazine. Technology has made it much less expensive to enter the print magazine business. Some magazines exist only on the Internet, sidestepping the costs of ink and paper. As the capabilities of the Internet grow, television will go through the same upheavals that print and radio have experienced.

Narrowcasting does have its problems. As an audience is further defined, it shrinks in size. That drives up the cost of getting the message (program, public service announcement, or advertisement) out. A balance will always have to be struck between the size of the audience to be reached and the cost of a message for that audience.

—*Michael Nagy*

NATIONAL BLACK PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY (NBPRS)

Almost 200 African American public relations specialists were on the membership roster when the Black Public Relations Society (BPRS, pronounced “beepers”) was founded in 1983. On the south side of Chicago, five women who worked at Morgan Communications Group—Sharon Morgan, Paula Robinson, Linda Williams, Deana Balfour, and Trina Williams—shared a concern regarding the status of black professionals in public relations. It was a historic moment because it was the first meeting of the Black Public Relations Society of Chicago. The organization would be a pivotal factor in the development of black public relations practitioners for decades.

From that momentous day in 1983, presidents of the Chicago BPRS chapter made tremendous personal sacrifices to keep the organization on track. Those who led the charge included Sharon Morgan, Paula Robinson, Billy Davis, and Chelsey Burroughs. Wynona Redmond took the helm of the group in 1998, a year in which the organization was reorganized. Redmond subsequently passed the baton to Paul Davis, who was the group’s leader in 2003. Others who played pivotal roles in the success of the chapter were Stephanie Banks, Morgan Carter, Jackie Marshall, Deana Balfour, Barbara Kensey, Robbie Smith, Lydia Brown-Muhammed, Rae Jones, Jennifer Shultz, and entrepreneurs such as Tom Burrell, Michelle Flowers, Eugene Morris, and Robert Dale. The chapter celebrated its 20th anniversary in grand style during fall 2003.

The formation of BPRS in Chicago laid the groundwork for the formation of other African American public relations groups. In Los Angeles, after an article in *Essence* magazine touted the success of the Chicago group, Californian Helen Goss envisioned a similar group and enlisted assistance from another well-known communicator, Pat Tobin. Thus, the second BPRS chapter was founded in Los Angeles, the Black Public Relations Society of California, Inc. The chapter was begun in 1983 by a group of public relations practitioners who recognized a need for an organization that would nurture and strengthen professional development, resource sharing, mutual support, and networking among African American professionals and students interested in the public relations profession. Major initiatives undertaken by the organization focused on career development, training, program enhancements, networking, and scholarships.

Within the first year of its inception, the California chapter of BPRS elected officers, obtained a nonprofit 501(c)(3) classification, hosted a networking breakfast meeting, and outlined plans for an annual student scholarship program. The organization designates itself as the only organization on the West Coast with the primary goal of meeting the professional needs of African Americans in public relations. One of the most successful programs of the group is the annual Spring Development Professional Seminar. Attended by practitioners and students, the seminar features some of the industry’s most well-known, seasoned, and influential business people working in public relations.

In June, the organization hosts an annual luncheon where outstanding African Americans working in public relations are honored. Additionally, during the luncheon African American students majoring in public relations, journalism, or communications and attending accredited California universities and colleges are given scholarships. By 2001, the organization had awarded more than \$25,000 in scholarships.

The accomplishments of the California contingent of BPRS created a springboard that greatly assisted African American public relations

professionals by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, job opportunities, and networking. Future plans for the organization include the identification of untapped areas where African American public relations specialists might seek employment, utilization of technology to strengthen networking and communication activities among members, the development of a speaker's bureau, and the creation of new jobs.

Following the creation of the Chicago and Los Angeles chapters, other chapters were formed in Atlanta, Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, DC.

Philadelphia attempted to form its own BPRS chapter for black practitioners in 1987. Pat Tobin, who had been instrumental in the formation of the Los Angeles BPRS chapter, was in attendance in Philadelphia to offer her advice when the black professionals met. Others in attendance included Arlethia Perry, Pennsylvania State University; Mattie Humphrey, WDAS Radio; Delsia Scott Afantehao, OIC; A. Bruce Crawley, First Pennsylvania Bank; Sam Presley, Lincoln University; and David Brown, Public Private Ventures. The effort did not materialize at that time, but the Philadelphia chapter of BPRS was finally created in 2000. In celebration of its third anniversary, the Philadelphia Chapter of BPRS (PBPRS) held an aggressive membership drive during May 2003. The organization's mantra is to provide communication resources and professional support to its members. The group offers scholarships to assist students of color who are interested in pursuing careers in the communications industry.

To increase the active participation and employment of blacks in the various communications disciplines, especially public relations, the Black Public Relations Society of Atlanta (BPRS/Atlanta) was formed in 1987. The chapter was founded with 32 members. The first president of the chapter was Charlotte Johnson Roy, vice president of A. Brown-Olmstead Associates. The impetus for the formation of the chapter came from Peggy Seats, an independent marketing and public relations consultant who had moved from Chicago to Atlanta, where BPRS was chartered in 1983.

As a benefit to its members, the Atlanta chapter of BPRS and the Georgia chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) assembled a blue-ribbon panel to discuss the merits of advanced communications degrees, certifications, and accreditations in May 2003. Participants were provided with frank dialogue and critical analysis regarding continuing education and development. More specifically, discussions focused on the necessity of certification, accreditation, and licensing and whether or not such designations were essential in advancing careers and providing job security. During prior meetings the organization showcased executives from Fortune 100 companies and Atlanta-based agencies and organizations who discussed their experiences in the areas of business-to-consumer, nonprofit, real estate, entertainment, and corporate public relations.

Additionally, the organization has provided programming to its members pertinent to professional development techniques and career enhancement. Other seminars organized by the group gave communications experts an opportunity to share their expertise on topics such as networking, demonstrating the value of public relations to clients, maintaining working relationships with media outlets, and training BPRS members to hone and market their unique skills.

To assist its membership during economic downturns, a seminar titled "Preparing for the Future: An Economic Reality" was planned and panelists discussed strategies and tactics for maintaining economic health during bull and bear economies. More specifically, the participants addressed financial investments, career opportunities, tips for starting a small business, financing education, and technology.

In 1993, the Black Public Relations Society of Washington issued a letter to several entertainment institutions that outlined complaints about area hotels and restaurants that seldom used the services of black-owned public relations firms.

The Washington, DC, branch of BPRS took its complaints a little further when it considered filing a class-action suit against several businesses that they claimed regularly discriminated against multicultural public relations professionals. The organization

asserted that the discriminatory practices had circumvented entry into business and kept ALANA (African, Latino, Asian, and Native American) public relations agencies from securing mainstream accounts. Ofield Dukes, one of the organizers of the Washington, DC, chapter, succinctly summarized the situation: "For the past two decades, minority PR professionals in Washington have been invisible. We have been overlooked by mainstream businesses."

The Black Public Relations Society of Greater New York has provided a platform for public relations and communications practitioners for several years. To assist its members with their career aspirations the society hosted "An Evening with PR Recruiters and Human Resources Experts: Tips on How to Get and Keep Your Public Relations Position in Today's Marketplace" in summer 1993. Additionally, to keep their members apprised of the latest information and strategies for handling crisis communications, the chapter invited crisis communications specialist and political consultant Judy Smith to share her insights in February 2003. Smith's public relations and law background gave her entry to many of the nation's most high-profile cases. These cases included the confirmation hearing of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, the scandal over President Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky, the 1991 Gulf War, and the Chandra Levy investigation.

An attempt to form a national BPRS organization was made in Atlanta in 1994. The impetus to achieve national status for public relations practitioners of color was spurred by an organization and conference that merged the four primary national journalism organizations composed of journalists of color in 1994. Unity '94, an organization composed of the National Association for Black Journalists, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, the Asian American Journalists Association, and the Native American Journalists Association, decided to join forces to form an organization that would host a national conference every five years. A national meeting of public relations professionals of color was held simultaneously in Atlanta, but the conference failed to cement the formation of a national organization.

To strengthen their efforts and gain more visibility, the BPRS chapters in existence formed the National Black Public Relations Society in 1998. All of the chapters of BPRS were formed because its members felt that their needs were not being met by the mainstream public relations organizations in existence at that time. They were formed with a mission of providing resources, services, and social venues for practitioners working in public relations, public affairs, communications, media relations, community affairs, governmental affairs, and other affiliated service professions. More succinctly, the organization's stated mission is

to address the challenges and emphasize the opportunities for the multifaceted constituency that we serve. This organization began more than 10 years ago with the goal to recruit and retain professionals in the industry and reinforce the importance of our role as business strategists and communicators. (National Black Public Relations Society Web site, 2003, n.p.)

Education, expansion and empowerment are the "success triad" needed to outline targets. To keep pace with the future, members see their reach extended beyond domestic borders. The organization, composed of a cadre of role models for young, inexperienced, entry-level practitioners, also has designed programs to prepare future public relations professionals.

The annual conferences organized by the national organization have provided an opportunity for members and professionals in the communications disciplines to convene to share information and resources and to address hot topics that impact public relations activities. The conventions have addressed such timely issues as understanding convergence in the newsroom, maintaining a competitive edge, pitching to the national media, cause-related public relations, creative messaging, doing business with the federal government, and public relations and the entertainment industry. Student attendees have been given information pertinent to securing entry-level positions and selecting the right courses for the new millennium. Some specific topics for the student-oriented workshops have been "Internship Options: Discovering Your Career

Path” and “Masters and More: The Benefits of Furthering Your Education.”

National conferences were held in 1999–2003. The 2001 conference was held in St. Paul, Minnesota, with the theme “Techniques & Technology.” The fourth annual conference was held in Washington, DC, with the theme “Public Relations: Power, Influence and Change.” For the 2003 conference held in New York, the theme was “Public Relations: Technology Driven, Diversity Focused,” and Michele Flowers, president of Michele Flowers public relations, was named Public Relations Practitioner of the Year. The 2004 convention of the National Black Public Relations Society was slated for Chicago.

—*Marilyn Kern-Foxworth*

See also Baker, Joseph Varney; Demographics; Kaiser, Inez Y.; Kendrix, Moss; Minorities in public relations

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NATIONAL INVESTOR RELATIONS INSTITUTE

The National Investor Relations Institute (NIRI) is an association established in 1969 to advance the practice of investor relations as well as the professional expertise and status of its members. A national association with local chapters across the United States, NIRI serves professionals whose responsibility is implementing investor relations programs in order to attract capital for their organizations. NIRI membership includes more than 5,000 investor relations consultants and corporate



Chairman of the Board of the General Electric Company, Ralph J. Cordiner (center), pounds the gavel here to open a meeting of share owners of the firm. Some 2,500 owners attended the 68th annual meeting of the firm. Flanking Cordiner are Robert Patton (left), President, and Ray H. Luebbe, Secretary. Cordiner established the first efforts at formalizing a company's communication program with shareholders in 1953

SOURCE: © Bettmann/CORBIS

officers from major publicly held companies as well as small and mid-sized companies.

According to NIRI, 45 percent of its members have financial backgrounds, 21 percent corporate communication, and 20 percent public relations. Forty-five percent of NIRI members have more than 10 years of experience in the practice of investor relations. Seventy-seven percent of NIRI members are executives of public companies, 14 percent are consultants, and the remainder are vendors or associate members. Fifty-six percent of member companies are listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and 37 percent are listed on NASDAQ. More than 40 percent of member companies have a market capitalization of \$1.5 billion.

Advancing the practice and professionalism of investor relations remains one of NIRI's priorities. The association has gone so far as to advance a definition:

Investor relations is a strategic management responsibility that integrates finance, communication, marketing and securities law compliance to enable the

most effective two-way communication between a company, the financial community, and other constituencies, which ultimately contributes to a company's securities achieving fair valuation. (National Investor Relations Institute, 2002–2004)

Investor relations had humble beginnings in public relations departments where there was a considerable lack of financial expertise and knowledge of the securities markets. Ralph Cordiner, chairman of General Electric Co. (GE), established the first efforts at formalizing a company's communication program with shareholders in 1953. At the same time, shareholder relations positions were being established at other major companies.

Through NIRI's originating chapter organization, the Investor Relations Association, much consideration and discussion went into naming the field, establishing standards of ethical conduct, and distinguishing the type of training needed for the profession. Other organizations, such as the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and the American Management Association (AMA), influenced investor relations with financial communication and management views concerning the practice.

From the first meeting in September 1968, Investor Relations Association leadership sought to form a national organization that could keep up with the changing pace of investor relations. In February 1969, NIRI charter members signed a constitution, and at a May meeting officers were elected. The published proceedings of NIRI's First Annual Conference in 1970 became a valuable reference and included topics on investment research, the role of investor relations in corporate responsibility, the future of the analyst profession, and disclosure.

NIRI's annual conferences, publications, seminars, and workshops continue to provide a comprehensive knowledge base for professional development. Executive alerts and white papers offer summaries and guidance on issues and regulations affecting the practice of investor relations. Local chapter meetings and events allow investor relations professionals to develop networking opportunities.

—Rebecca G. Aguilar

See also Investor relations; Public Relations Society of America

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NETWORK THEORY

Network theory is closely associated with systems theory. It is the vital part of systems theory that addresses the pathways of information flow within and between systems. Each pathway is a repeated or potential route for information to flow from person to person, organization to organization, person to organization, organization to person, and so on. Network theory features the central premise, vital to public relations, that people need and want information. How they obtain this information or feel the lack of the desired information can affect their attitude toward and knowledge about various topics that are relevant to the goodwill and success of each organization. People may experience either information underload, not having the information they want, or information overload, possessing too much information to process comfortably. One of the predictors of satisfaction is that people feel they have the information they want and know that others do as well. If all relevant parties appropriately share information and use it wisely and ethically, decisions can be made that bring harmony rather than friction between people and organizations.

For these reasons, network theory poses two challenges to public relations practitioners. They need to know what information key stakeholding/stake-seeking publics want or need. Also, they need to understand and strategically operate in the networks by which the needed or desired information can get from one point to the desired audience. In that sense, communication management as a paradigm of public relations relates to the ability to

facilitate information flow and decisions that arise from the shared information. Thus, network theory poses a challenge of getting information to people who want and need it, and practitioners need to know where this information is available and how it can be shared in the network. This challenge may require that practitioners create networks where none exist. In addition, they need to know how to facilitate and maintain existing networks.

Information theory, refined by systems theory, rests on many assumptions about the nature of information. Central to that analysis is the reality that what is information or informative depends on the judgment of the people who obtain and evaluate the information. Typically, such people feel various amounts of uncertainty. Uncertainty can be uncomfortable and thus motivates people to seek information, process it, and form useful attitudes.

At various turning points in their lives, people want to know something. They may want information about products, services, missions, visions, policies, community service, problems, solutions, and myriad other aspects of their lives. The amount of information in any or each message depends on the impact it has on each person's sense of uncertainty. Information, so conceptualized, is the impact each message has, as interpreted. The amount of information is measured by the degree to which individuals who receive it and evaluate it become more or less uncertain on some matter based on their interpretation of the information.

So conceived, organizations and individuals are information processors. Each system—organization or individual—takes in information, processes it, and outputs it in various forms. Thus, the three major functional elements of a network are input, processing or throughput, and output. Newspapers and other mass media are seen as parts of networks—systems. In fact, it is logical that networks such as NBC, CBS, and ABC would be called such. They are part of the news and entertainment industry, a system composed of many information networks. Each is in and of itself a network that gathers information (input), processes that information into news, and outputs the information to listeners and viewers.

One of the contributions of network theory is the concept of openness. According to B. A. Fisher (1982),

openness is the free exchange of energy between the system and its environment. That is, to the extent that the boundaries are permeable and allow the exchange of information—what energy is to a physical system, information is to a social system—that system is said to be more nearly open than closed. (p. 199)

Information is to human systems what energy is to natural systems. Information is the energy of human systems. It fuels human systems because people can get and use information that helps them to make appropriate decisions and to reduce uncertainties.

Network theory provides the rationale needed to analyze the effectiveness of systems' abilities to obtain, process, and output information. Network analysis focuses attention on how well information flows throughout an organization, by taking various pathways. Each pathway is a pattern that can be charted as a network. Since information is the life force or energy of an organization, researchers want to know how information flows and influence is exerted.

A network is the pathway or pattern of repeated interactions by which information flows between individuals within a group and between groups in an organization. A network consists of person-to-person connections by which information is exchanged. Networks consist of people who interact. A set of pathways, such as information flow between accountants in the accounting department of a company, is a *micro-network*. In this sense, a micro-network is a system (or a subsystem). When micro-networks are put together, they form a *macro-network* (a system or a supra-system). To some extent, both types of network correspond to the organization chart, but information also flows through networks that do not correspond to formal organizational structure. If a macro-network is a system, its micro-networks are subsystems. Klaus Krippendorff wrote in 1977 that several types of networks can be identified: (a) *line*, in which one person contacts another, who contacts another, and so on ($A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C \rightarrow D$), (b) *commune*, an open

exchange in which everyone interacts with everyone else, (c) *hierarchy*, in which the network functions as an organization chart or layers of systems, and (d) *dictator*, or a super gatekeeper.

Networks exist because a number of people are involved with and responsible for the ease or difficulty of information flow. Networks also consist of the relationships between the people that make them work. At the most basic level, such relationships can be described or brought to life through process words such as “talks to,” “coordinates with,” or “reports to.” In this way, analysis focuses not only on the number of people involved but also the strength or intensity of the relationship between them, which can be estimated by the frequency of contact and the degree of interdependence.

In this sense, public relations practitioners are often thought to be links or boundary spanners who help or impede the flow of information from the organization to key publics or from those publics to the organization. Thus, the success of practitioners leads to organizations being viewed as either more or less open. For this reason, when public relations people help stonewall an issue, they close the network and impede the flow of information. Conversely, they help the organization to be open to its publics by being responsive to their interests and serving as the first and best source of information on matters relevant to the organization.

Networks exhibit the property of symmetry, which describes the degree to which the direction or flow of information reveals balance rather than imbalance in a relationship. Relationships can be one-way or two-way, and they can be symmetrical (influence balanced) or asymmetrical (one party has more influence than the other). In a one-way asymmetrical relationship, for instance, one person provides information and influence for the other, but does not receive much if any in return. Two-way symmetrical relationships exhibit the most balance because influence and information flow freely between the two parties.

One of many characteristic of networks is transitivity, the ease with which information flows from one person to the next. Relevant to this analysis is the analogy between information flow and the flow

of water within a system of pipes and valves. Each person can be a valve. He or she can open or close the valve. Such actions increase or impede the flow of information. Typical of a line network, person A communicates with person B, who communicates with C, who communicates with D. Person D depends on all of the others for information; for this reason, it may be difficult for A and D to communicate because they depend on B and C. If the information that A wants to get to D flows with relative ease, the system has high transitivity. If the information does not flow because one or more links are impediments, the system lacks transitivity. This characteristic can easily be seen in the organizational practice of routing communication; it also refers to the ease with which communication flows across each link in the chain of authority.

For many years, network theory, along with its companion theories, has offered insights into the study and practice of public relations. This line of analysis has also been vital to organizational communication theory and research. Some scholars see public relations as a subdiscipline beneath organizational communication for this reason. The logic is simple: To the extent that an organization functions as a system and part of many other systems, it does so as a source and conduit for the flow of information. Such flows are systemically superior when they are two-way. Thus, by this analysis, public relations serves networks, organizations, and individuals by obtaining, processing, and outputting information between organizations and individual publics.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Openness; Stakeholder theory; Symmetry; Systems theory; Two-way and one-way communication

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NEW BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

New business development is critical to the livelihood of any public relations firm and involves a variety of methods designed to secure a steady stream of clients. Most clients hire firms on a project basis, although the project may extend anywhere from one to three years. Thus the firm, in order to meet overhead and payroll, must ensure that continued work is available. This stream of work is vital to firm stability as well as to growth of individual staff members, who are challenged by and learn from new opportunities. Although necessary, new business development should be the result of strategic planning for the public relations firm. Firms that wish to maintain a consistent size and to offer a set level and/or breadth of service may engage in lower-key business development than firms that have charted a planned growth pattern.

All public relations firms' strategic plans for new business development should include a consistent, daily, two-pronged approach: (1) provide only the highest quality of service to existing clients and (2) network. Often overlooked in the quest for new sources of income is the current client. Although the great majority of clients may contract for a specified length of time, an excellent success record with demonstrated results provides impetus for the client to renew a contract. Similarly, noting opportunities and looking ahead for the client may provide additional work. Critical to this line of

business development is educating the client and evaluating the firm's work: The client must understand public relations and its capabilities and must see the results manifested through evaluation.

Providing a high quality of service may not lead to additional contracts from the client immediately, yet referrals are highly valued as clients search for prospective firms. Such referrals also come from networking, which should be defined broadly enough to cover even building bridges from unsuccessful pitches. Future work can also arise from media contacts whom clients may seek out and ask to identify firms by expertise and reputation. Relationships established through a variety of professional associations and personal contacts along with pro bono work also often lead to new business opportunities. Furthermore, networking can build a broad range of affiliates who may be called on as consultants for specialized new business pitches; with a broad range of experts available for hire, firms can more readily demonstrate their abilities to meet a broader variety of client needs.

Another critical element in any firm's strategic plan is promotions. So many firms do not include themselves as their clients when such awareness programs are vital to their own longevity. In addition to public relations-based publications, awards programs and pro bono work offer opportunities to promote the firm's expertise. Peer-recognized work also becomes material to highlight on Web sites.

Firms may also engage in entrepreneurial activities designed to showcase their expertise and successes. Such activities might include creating a newsletter that targets key executives in defined areas.

More active and aggressive new business development includes typical sales approaches such as cold calls and arranged meetings to discuss possible opportunities. Other active development opportunities come by responding to RFPs (requests for proposals) initiated by clients who are in the market for a public relations firm.

—Pamela G. Bourland-Davis

See also Account executive; Client; Public relations agency

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NEW ZEALAND, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

See Australia and New Zealand, practice of public relations in

NEWS AND NEWSWORTHY

News is intangible, a compilation of mediated messages assembled according to the norms and constraints of a major social institution composed of businesses and dictated by economic imperatives. A distinctive writing style and image portrayal process distinguish news from all other communication formats.

Perhaps it is easier to define news in negative terms—underscoring what it is *not*. News is neither an essay nor a term paper, neither a short story nor a novel with scenes, characters, plotline, or climax. It is more than just a recorded voice, photograph, or video clip. Indeed, there is little consensus as to how to definitively characterize “news” or “newsworthy.” Scholars, historians, and critics continue to analyze journalism’s role in society and the cultural implications of news work.

Journalism historian Robert Park (1940) suggested that news texts have replaced the town crier of yore who walked through the streets singing out the time of day, announcing births, and so forth. Today, news takes the shape of its sponsoring mass medium, and the form, content, and production of print and electronic news differ substantially. Whereas print news is passive and static one-way communication, television news is active with both words and visuals. Web-based news offers interactive, two-way

communication. Indeed, reporters—or journalists—still circulate knowledge, making public property out of social and cultural assets and, as Gaye Tuchman (1978) wrote, “transform[ing] mere happenings into publicly discussable events” (p. 3). They make abundantly available to all information that otherwise would be inaccessible due to geographic challenges and resource shortages. In the process, the news fosters a sense of community, defines who we are, and suggests what is important.

Contemporary journalists are professionals who subscribe to democratic ideals and are bound by codes of ethics as defined by trade organizations such as the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ). Even though journalism is not a licensed profession, it is a respected and legitimate one that adheres to standards of fairness, accuracy, and objectivity. Most journalists began their career by earning a college degree. Journalism students across the United States are trained both in the classroom and in the field as apprentices or interns who hone their craft and learn practical skills such as how to cover beats, cultivate sources, and navigate newsroom politics.

In the classroom, budding journalists develop a “nose for news”—shorthand for defining “newsworthiness”—and memorize and internalize important clues known as news values. For example, “impact,” “importance,” and “the unusual” define about 75 percent of all news stories. Similarly, a sociologist who studied newsroom cultures at CBS, NBC, *Newsweek*, and *Time* resolved that “enduring” news values such as “ethnocentrism” and “moderatism” enable journalists to decide what is news. “If it bleeds, it leads” is a popular newsworthiness barometer used by television news workers, who seem to attach importance to visual violence. About 100 years ago, legendary news editor Charles A. Dana simply defined newsworthiness in terms of novelty: “When a dog bites a man, that’s not news. But if a man bites a dog, that’s news.” However, today’s media scholars posit that news is the end product of a process that is far more complex than this.

Todd Gitlin (1980) performed a meta-analysis of published theories developed to explain news and newsworthiness. He discovered three striking patterns. First, journalist-centered theories

consider news to be a product of professional news judgments and objectivity. As such, journalists consider themselves uniquely qualified to identify what is news based on their own conceptions of newsworthiness. Tuchman (1978) wrote that news workers “claim the right to interpret everyday occurrences to citizens and other professionals alike” (p. 5).

Second, *event-centered* news theories invoke a cadre of metaphors to define news. For example, news has been characterized as a “mirror” that journalists hold up to the real world so that they may offer the “reflection” to audiences. One theorist described the news media as *amplification stations*, staffed by news workers who select, order, and explain signals from the physical world. Yet other scholars have invoked “conduit” and “link” metaphors to describe journalists’ liaison function between serving audiences and selecting happenings. Such imagery and metaphor use is not without criticism, however. Media scholars, including those at the Glasgow University Media Group and the University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, have argued that “reality” is a slippery concept—virtually impossible to offer in a pure, objective way.

Third, *phenomenological* theories characterize news as that which is selected and packaged in a form that audiences readily accept as “the news.” These theories emphasize the human agency of news and argue that it is socially constructed in a context of commercial imperatives. For example, Roger Fowler has argued persuasively that news is not *found* or even *gathered* so much as it is *made* and *produced*. In other words, news does not happen in a vacuum. Journalism is a practice with a definable milieu that culminates in a manufactured product shaped by a complex—yet artificial or subjective—process of selection, collection, organization, and dissemination of data. In contrast to event-centered theories, scholars who advance phenomenological theories of the news consider the making of news to be a process, one that should not be studied devoid of context and other variables that affect a journalist’s interpretation of reality.

Beyond analyzing the work of reporters that average audiences can witness firsthand, some

researchers have examined what editors do behind the scenes because they also determine what is news. Editors act as “gatekeepers,” opening and closing the news gate, along with subjectively selecting, processing, and organizing information that will become news. Furthermore, editors and their reporters set the news “agenda” by influencing what people “think about.” For example, findings from a study of how daily newspaper editors construct the front page suggest that ideological biases help them to sift through a census of potential newsworthy happenings and issues and to pull out the important ones.

Indeed, defining “news” and determining what exactly is “newsworthy” is a highly subjective process that carries with it major social responsibility.

—Donnalyn Pompper

See also Agenda-setting theory; Framing theory; Gatekeepers; Media relations

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NEWS SERVICES

News services now encompass what were once separate, but related, links in the information channels. News services include organizations such as the Associated Press, clipping services, and U.S. Newswire. Generally speaking, news services provide unfiltered news information. These services

gather information from many sources and then make it available to newspapers, broadcast news organizations, and magazines for a fee. Because of their linking role in the information dissemination process, news services are targeted by public relations practitioners for media relations. Practitioners target their media releases to news services that may pick up the story and disseminate it to their clients. Thus, news services allow practitioners a means to reach a larger pool of news outlets.

The Associated Press (AP) started out as an organization for pooling information (text and photos) among member newspapers. If there is a big story in New York City, a San Francisco newspaper would not have to worry about getting a reporter to New York City. Rather, the San Francisco paper would simply look for copy and photos from a New York City newspaper.

Internet technologies have made it easier for an organization like AP to exist. Instead of members having to rely on wire or broadcast technologies to move information, they simply go to the AP Web site and upload or download text and photos.

Clipping services have been in decline due to the increasing presence of the Internet. Clipping services were very handy in culling particular information. If a person was interested in articles on U.S. steel production across multiple media channels (say, newspapers, magazines, and non-professional journals), the clipping service did all the dirty work. They had subscriptions to a wide variety of publications and employed researchers to copy information from sources at public libraries. The service would then pull all of the elements together in one package and send out a hard copy. Later, clipping services would employ the latest wire and wireless technologies.

Clipping services may make a comeback. Although the Internet has made accessing various news channels easier, the number of news channels has grown by orders of magnitude. There is an interesting new take on the clipping service, called Google News. Google News can be found on the Internet at <http://news.google.com>. This site is currently in beta, meaning that it is functional but its form and ability are not finalized. Google is applying

their search engine technology to the culling of news stories.

The last element included in news services is represented by U.S. Newswire, a public-interest news wire service. U.S. Newswire has a similar “look and feel” to services offered by an organization such as the Associated Press. However, it must be stressed that U.S. Newswire is not a news reporting organization. The types of organizations that use U.S. Newswire for distribution include the federal government, Congress, and cabinet-level agencies; political campaign organizations; foreign embassies; associations, unions, advocacy, and civic groups; universities, think tanks, and research organizations; and public relations, public affairs, and law firms. U.S. Newswire also provides content to media, public relations, and news services including America Online (AOL), and Yahoo! News. In 1999, U.S. Newswire merged with Medialink Worldwide, Inc. The Web address for U.S. Newswire is <http://www.usnewswire.com/index.html>.

—Michael Nagy

See also Media relations; Media release

NEWS STORY

The news story is the basic, fundamental content component of all news media—print, broadcast, or electronic. Each news story reflects the shared values among journalists that answer the question “What is news?” Further, the news story is identified and classified by its content and structure.

NEWS VALUES

The process of deciding which stories, among the almost infinite possibilities on any given day, will be *news stories* is not simple. Although there may be close-to-universal agreement among journalists and scholars that certain events (a terrorist bombing of an American embassy abroad, for example) are appropriate content for a news story, decisions regarding many other issues, people, and activities are less clear. What could make an important news story in Chicago, for example, may be of no

interest to people in Miami. Of all the possible stories that any news organization selects on a given day, what predicts which stories will become today's news?

Since the earliest days of American journalism, there has been rather remarkable consistency among journalists as to what the criteria are for determining whether a story is newsworthy. These criteria are derived from the values, shared by journalists, that define "news." A review of several prominent news writing textbooks reveals these criteria. Although there is some variation in terminology, the criteria themselves are highly consistent.

Timeliness. Readers must understand why this news story is being told or presented to them at this time. Did the event happen today? Is this story timely because it is the anniversary of an important event?

Proximity. This criterion is why an important news story in Chicago may have no interest to audiences in Miami; there is not a local angle. People like and want to know what is happening close to them, in their own communities.

Prominence. Well-known people attract much attention. Sports stars, entertainers, and politicians are prime examples of prominent people around whom many news stories are constructed.

Impact or consequence. The number of people who are affected by an issue and how seriously it affects them contribute to the newsworthiness of a story. Hundreds of people being inconvenienced by a detour is likely news in a local community, as is the sending overseas into combat one or two local citizens.

Rarity or novelty. The winning of a lottery is an example of a story that is news because it is a once-in-a-lifetime happening for the recipient. Events that are strange or unique are often news simply because of their rarity.

Additional criteria that are advanced by some journalists include *conflict* and *human interest*.

NEWS CONTENT

Until the last two decades of the 20th century, the content of news stories was dominated by several

topics, among them governmental issues, disasters, crime, and sports. Undeniably, many news stories still originate from courts, city halls, capital buildings, and arenas. Such stories are often classified as "hard" news; they will be covered regularly by journalists because of their inherent values. Yet there has been an "explosion of subject matter" (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen, & Ranly, 1992, p. 5) as Americans have begun demanding information on a wider range of topics, many relevant to the individual. Many stories about individual interests (entertainment and travel, new product introductions, and decorating, for example) are classified as "soft news"—that is, they do not necessarily conform to traditional news values, but they are still of interest to news consumers. This shift in content has greatly increased the opportunities for public relations practitioners to contribute news stories.

One of the largest topical areas evidencing this expanding content is health. Whether there is a new cancer treatment, an outbreak of the West Nile virus along the Gulf Coast, or a promising drug for preventing baldness, American news consumers want the information. In the 21st century, the range of subject matter for news stories is greater than it has ever been. Each story must still conform to one or more of the basic criteria, but the way newsrooms look at content itself is far more broad than it was even 20 years ago. At times the distinction between "hard news" and "soft news" blurs on some of these topics.

Regardless of the specific subject, content of the news story is traditionally identified as a series of answers to six simple one-word questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how? Although there are several ways to structure the story, a news story can always be written on the basis of the answers to the following questions: *Who is involved? What happened? When did it happen? Where did it happen? Why did it happen? How did it happen?*

News Story Structure

There are many ways in which a news story may be organized, but the most standard construction consists of a beginning (the lead), a middle (the body), and an end (the conclusion). Of these, strong agreement exists among authors of news writing textbooks

that the most important structural element is the lead. It is the first thing that is read or heard in a story, and as such it often determines if the reader, listener, or viewer will continue attending to the story.

There are many types of leads, but the most common is the *summary*. Answers to the six questions (who, what, when, where, why, and how) are provided in the first sentence of the story. The summary lead is most often found when the news story is written as an inverted pyramid. In this structure, all of the important information is presented immediately, with support or elaboration following.

Other types of leads may focus more on answering one of the six questions. When the most important element of the story is a person, the lead may emphasize his or her identity. These are labeled *immediate identification* (“Laura Bush . . .”) and *delayed identification* (“An 11-year-old child was killed earlier today when. . . Dead is . . .”). Another type of lead presents multiple content elements (“The Supreme Court today handed down a decision impacting affirmative action, refused to rule on a domestic abuse case from Indiana, and prepared for their first break of the year”). It is generally advisable to keep the lead simple and straightforward; thus, writers are urged to use multiple-content-element leads sparingly.

Leads may also be anecdotal or narrative; they may be grounded in a quotation; or they may ask a question, tease, or be mysterious. These more creative leads are most appropriate for human interest stories and are least likely to be found in hard news.

The body of the story provides elaboration and support; it often gives context, scope, and impact. Although there are numerous structures for the body (Rich, 1994, pp. 211–233), the most common is the inverted pyramid. In this structure a summary lead that answers the basic questions is most often used, followed by supporting information in descending order of importance. It often has no conclusion.

Public relations practitioners must understand news values, content of interest to various media, and structures of news stories in order to better serve both the media institutions that use provided

content as well as the organizations/clients they represent in the media.

—Ruthann Weaver Lariscy

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NEWSLETTER

A newsletter is a type of publication produced most often by public relations practitioners. Almost all organizations—nonprofit and profit-making alike—create and distribute newsletters to members of their key audiences. With the development of desktop publishing, newsletters have grown in popularity. Although they share similar traits with magazines and newspapers, newsletters are smaller, less formal publications that are directed toward a specific audience, such as employees, customers, members of the community, donors, or volunteers. Although newsletters fall under the realm of public relations tactics, they existed long before the birth of the practice. In 200 B.C.E., the Han dynasty in China published a daily newsletter. Many historians consider newsletters to be the forerunners of the modern newspaper. In fact, one of the first successful publications in America was called the *Boston News-Letter*.

To be successful, newsletters must have a narrow and clearly defined target audience and a specific objective, such as strengthening ties with volunteers, educating the community about local programs of interest to them, encouraging donors to keep giving money and resources to a nonprofit organization, and informing employees about company policies. Internal company newsletters are quite common and are called house organs. They are used to build employee morale, promote teamwork, recognize outstanding achievement, and instill company pride.

Effective newsletters must have an overall key message that is communicated throughout each issue. For instance, a school district distributes a newsletter to parents of the children enrolled in the school. The key message is that if parents get involved in their children's education, their children will become more successful in their studies, and the objective is to encourage parents to help their children with their nightly homework and take an interest in their children's learning. Appropriate stories in such a newsletter would be articles on strategies to help children with their homework, tips on getting kids motivated to do their homework, easy-to-understand statistics on how helping children with their studies improves performance, a list of free or low-cost tutoring services for parents unable to help their kids, and a profile of an actual student whose performance increased with his parents' attention. Although stories may vary from issue to issue, newsletters carry the same overall theme in each issue, and the style and layout remain consistent.

Newsletters are distributed to a specific target audience on a recurring basis. Many appear quarterly, and some are distributed weekly or monthly. Few are distributed biannually or yearly because frequency helps build the relationship between sender and recipient. Although few in number, some short-term newsletters may be distributed daily. For instance, booth sponsors in a trade show might receive a brief newsletter each day of the show, which keeps them up to date on the show's happenings.

No matter what the frequency of distribution, newsletter stories are typically short, informal news and feature stories, although newsletters will also include sidebars; a limited amount of calendar information; news briefs; letters to the editor; and bulleted information about programs, activities, or employee updates. Most newsletters are four to eight pages in 8½ × 11-inch format, although they can be larger or smaller—one page to larger, multi-page documents.

The parts of a newsletter include a consistent grid, nameplate, table of contents, masthead, headers and/or footers, headlines, subheads, body copy, bylines, pull quotes, captions, and graphics. A grid

is a pattern or plan for pages in the newsletter, which includes a set of rules that apply throughout the piece, such as the number of columns, space between the columns, and location of headers and/or footers. The nameplate, also called a flag or banner, includes the name of the publication; volume, issue, and date; and a brief subtitle that explains the editorial focus or intended audience of the newsletter. The masthead tells the name and address of the sponsoring organization, editorial staff, contact information, and frequency of the publication. A header or footer is the information, which may include the publication name and date, that appears either on the top or bottom (or both) of each page. Pull quotes are quotations from the body copy or a blurb from the article displayed in enlarged type and set back into the article as an attention-getting device.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Brochure; Collateral

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NEWSOM, EARL

Earl Newsom may have learned his appreciation for the power of words by listening to his Methodist minister father. Named Edwin Earl Newsom, he was born in Wellman, Iowa, on December 13, 1897, to a family of teachers, ministers, and musicians. So Earl leaned the art of teaching as he acquired an appreciation for language. His long career began as a teacher, not as a newspaper man. He had become, by his death on April 11, 1973, one of several practitioners who shaped the course of American industry.

Newsom had a keen sense of business. He liked selling. With his brothers, he established Newsom Brothers Piano Company. This enterprise sold pianos

and was profitable enough to fund the college education of several of the Newsom youths.

Newsom earned his baccalaureate degree from Oberlin College and used it to launch his teaching career. He honed his love for the power of language at Oberlin and set out to share that affection and knowledge of its intricacies with students. After a short teaching career, he elected to seek a Ph.D. in English from Columbia University. He took a teaching position in New York City to help support his family and fund his studies.

Along with his study of English, he developed a fascination with the topic of public opinion, which was receiving substantial academic attention. This attention also addressed the national phenomena of activism and nonprofit organizations. World War I had demonstrated the impact of public campaigns through the Creel Committee. The Red Cross and the Liberty Bond campaigns showed how appeals to the general public could foster philanthropy and community involvement to solve national problems by encouraging citizen participation.

Newsom was an enthusiastic student of public opinion. He had read Walter Lippmann's *Public Opinion* (1922) and Edward Bernays's *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923). These legendary books examined how public opinion forms and influences the destiny of a people. Bernays applied those principles to the practice of public relations.

He had also read Gustav LeBon's *The Crowd—A Study of the Public Mind*, which offered an unflattering look at the mindless willingness of the masses to follow a bold leader. Other books on this subject heightened his insight into the way people acquire information, are influenced through persuasive messages, and develop motives that lead them to make certain choices and express different preferences.

Love for the power and grace of language coupled with an interest in public opinion underpinned his practice of public relations. Newsom's break, as it were, came in 1925, when through one of his students he was offered a job in the promotion department of the *Literary Digest*. The fields of public relations and advertising were booming along with the economy. Promotion and publicity were lucrative lines of work as the nation lathered

itself into a financial frenzy in the years leading to the burst economic bubble, the Great Depression.

What might today be called publics, markets, audiences, or stakeholders came to be known to Newsom as the "crowd." People joined in common idea and purpose were the foundation of any society. That was true of government, the nonprofit sector, and, of course, business. Public opinion, the opinion of the public, was sovereign. Nothing could challenge it. Thus, influencing it led to power, influence, and success.

His next endeavor was to work for a publishing company. That endeavor was unsatisfying. He left and worked for an investment house, where he directed public relations and sales. Through his partnership with architect Norman Bel Geddes, he met Paul Garrett, director of public relations for General Motors. In later years, GM was a client of his.

Newsom's career trajectory took him through a variety of partnerships and professional associations. Along the way, he acquired a reputation for being an effective counselor. He brought sage advice to corporate and trade association clients. He earned a professional reputation for being able to assist his clients in their efforts to build favorable images, affect public policy relevant to their interests, and develop relationships. He was particularly skilled in finding the common themes and interests that could unite trade associations and forge solid relationships among the members.

Clients such as Atlantic Refining and the Tea Bureau were pleased by Newsom's services. They were quick to recommend him to other potential clients. Sound service to one client led to a friendly relationship with another. Thus, Atlantic Refining laid the basis for his work with the Tea Bureau. That professional association sparked a contract with the International Wool Association. In his client relationships, he was fiercely loyal, preferring to keep a client for each industry category even though a more lucrative contract might come along. By this business practice, he found that his loyalty was reciprocated. Out of the succession of corporate and trade association clients, he eventually came to work with Standard Oil Company, Ford Motor Company, Eli Lilly, Campbell Soup Company, and

the International Paper Company. In the public sector, he counseled the President's Commission on International Information Activities and the Internal Revenue Service. In the nonprofit sector, his clients included Crusade for Freedom, the Free Europe Committee, and the Ford and Rockefeller foundations. His association with Standard Oil led John D. Rockefeller III to hire him to counsel on the creation of Colonial Williamsburg.

Compared with many of the other princes of public relations who were forging the profession, Newsom was less likely to build his professional service around press relations and mass communication. He saw positioning and relationship building as being more important than press attention.

His agency services reflected his strengths, featuring four lines of specialization. One was public relations planning and program development. A second was writing, but he went beyond effective press releases. He added tools and range to the sorts of services provided by agencies, including annual reports, backgrounders, issue position papers, books, and congressional hearings. A third service was assisting clients' efforts to build their in-house departments. That required assistance with defining the sorts of personnel needed and then locating and hiring the most qualified persons. It indicated an understanding of the total range of what public relations could do for an organization—the many functions it could serve. The fourth service was conducting research. The agency did not gather data, but designed and executed research projects for clients using the outsourced services of companies such as Elmo Roper. Such research was an extension and an application of Newsom's fascination with understanding and working in constructive ways with the public opinion necessary for clients to meet their business objectives. To augment his own research capabilities, Newsom hired research specialists. That was an innovation in public relations agency history.

Newsom's academic curiosity and belief that public relations was an intellectual activity attracted leading intellectuals to join his agency. Some of these associates left to join large businesses or trade associations. That professional association led to new business opportunities or continuing professional

services. Some former associates left to start their own agencies. Although small compared with his clients' organizations, Newsom's agency was a place of learning and professional development. At the time of his death, he was a director of the Advisory Council of the Committee for Modern Courts, a life member of the Academy of Political Science, and a member of the executive committee of the National Institute of Social Sciences.

His practice was theory based (public opinion theory) and heavily oriented toward counseling. For these reasons, Newsom was a pioneer in what came to be called issues management. He believed that organizations receive only the respect they earn. He used sophisticated research to understand the opinions of key publics, the information they wanted, their performance expectations of organizations, the ways they received information, and the leaders who affected their opinions.

Newsom and his colleagues assisted Standard Oil of New Jersey in a series of issues. Any of these issues could lead to outcomes harmful to the company's efforts to achieve its mission. The list of issues was long, but some of the most important were key publics' concern over the company's relationship with I. G. Farben, the German industrial giant in the years leading up to WWII. Other issues centered on the concern about the company's size. Was it a cartel, a monopoly? Did it engage in unfair business practices? Should the federal government take aggressive steps on behalf of customers?

For Ford Motor Company, Newsom worked on issues related to the succession of Fords in the leadership of the company. He also took on the problem of the original Henry Ford's blatant anti-Semitism, which cost the company business and goodwill. New leadership needed new ideas and a strong business persona. Newsom's approach was to change the organization to make it more acceptable rather than to manufacture an image that drifted far from reality.

Newsom resembled Abraham Lincoln. Both had craggy faces and swarthy complexions. Newsom liked to quote Lincoln, especially the line about how you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Annual financial report; Backgrounder; Bernays, Edward; Goodwill; Hearing; Issues management; Position and positioning; Publics; United States government and public relations

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NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS)

A nongovernmental organization (NGO) is a part of the voluntary sector in which individuals organize to accomplish a social goal. The concept of nongovernmental organizations emerged when many colonies and territories were seeking their independence from colonial powers. These organizations were created during the transition from colonial rule to self-rule. After independence, these organizations continued to work in solving local problems such as infant mortality, education, and illiteracy. The growth of NGOs reflects a shift away from the beliefs that government is the primary provider of services, that economic growth is the singular key to progress, and that leadership is a top-down process. NGOs are organized groups of individuals that are not yet institutionalized. However, some NGOs will become institutionalized as their efforts become indispensable to society.

Much like American not-for-profit organizations, NGOs are formed by and sustained by individuals with a specific goal or agenda. Why do people join NGOs? Individuals often feel that they have little power to influence their local community and have an even smaller chance of influencing larger, national issues. The creation of nongovernmental organizations that work to articulate citizen concerns helps to bring important social issues into the forefront of public discussion. To encourage citizens to reach out to NGOs, these organizations should use interpersonal communication, media relations, and strategic communication programs. It

is also important that these organizations extend beyond merely serving elite causes and niche publics and work toward the resolution of larger, national issues.

In the United States there is a social cause group for almost every issue. Groups organize to protect the environment, children, and animals, as well as to advocate for consumer safety, women's rights, and minority issues. In other nations of the world, especially in societies that have been dominated by repressive governments, there is no tradition of cause groups acting on behalf of social issues. Today, there is a continuing emergence of NGOs throughout the world. These grassroots organizations work on behalf of issues but are not part of the formal governmental structure. Indeed, NGOs provide services that governments fail to provide to their citizens. Many NGOs begin by serving local issues and then, if successful, often become national organizations.

Nongovernmental organizations are not limited by national boundaries. International nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) extend their humanitarian efforts to the political arena. In developed nations, international organizations that operate on behalf of larger social causes include Freedom Forum, Amnesty International, and Greenpeace. These watchdog groups are crucial because they provide an external perspective on the situation in a particular nation. In developing or postcrisis countries, the United Nations, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the George Soros Open Society Institute provide financial and human resources to help facilitate development. These international organizations underwrite or fund local groups that work to achieve societal goals. INGOs are especially important during the initial stages of a civil society because they work directly with indigenous organizations and provide important training and activating of local civil society leaders.

NGOs have the same organizational needs as other groups. Once a group of like-minded people come together to identify and work on a problem, there are certain structural, legal, and financial imperatives that must be met before the group can

begin to work toward its core mission. NGOs usually must register with a regional or national office. The registration process is necessary because it may give the group tax-exempt status and certain fundraising benefits. The group must be able to articulate a mission statement and create bylaws to govern the organization. Bylaws should spell out how leaders are selected, the different responsibilities of the various elected offices, the ways in which finances will be monitored, and how changes to the bylaws can be enacted. Additionally, it is important for groups to specify in advance of their petition for legal recognition that the organization has identified different types of donors, grants, and corporate resources that can be used to sustain the organization's mission. For instance, an NGO that specializes in prenatal care should begin conversations with different government agencies and corporations that specialize on this issue. Partnerships between NGOs, government, and corporations are crucial to meeting the needs of the NGOs' target publics.

NGOs must also strive for transparency in their operations. Many NGOs have various revenue sources (e.g., grants, donations) and should work to make their financial status and their accomplishments open to public inspection and scrutiny. NGOs that do not use their grants and donations to serve their missions should be held accountable for misusing their resources and abusing the public trust.

NGOs can benefit from the strategies and tactics of public relations. Because NGOs seek to inform, persuade, and change the attitudes and actions of others, they can employ many of the proven functions of strategic communication. For instance, many NGOs seek media attention to expand the reach of their message and to encourage both the public and their elected officials to think about a certain issue. NGOs should create positions such as "Public Affairs" or "Public Outreach Specialist." Moreover, NGOs should train multiple members of their organizations in what constitutes news and how to work with the media. Skills such as news release writing, planning and executing effective news conferences, and helping the media to write stories about social issues can be developed with some training.

NGOs can learn a lot about meeting the needs of their publics by remembering the basic tenets of effective relationship building. NGOs should follow the principles of strategic management. The leaders of NGOs, often not trained in business techniques, should learn about strategic planning and evaluation. NGOs usually direct several programs simultaneously and need to be able to see ways in which to create synergy between projects.

NGOs can be strategic in the management of their programs by creating specific and viable objectives that can be measured. With a little research, NGOs can create benchmarks of issues both before and during the outreach programs. By creating standards or benchmarks of performance and service, NGOs can monitor their progress, change their programs, and better serve their intended publics. Evaluation does not need to involve sophisticated quantitative analysis or national-level surveys. Rather, short surveys, focus groups, or interviews with people before, during, and after a program can help the NGO to meet its objectives.

Corporations may want to learn more about the NGOs that work in certain areas. Partnerships between NGOs and business organizations are a win-win situation for both parties. NGO-corporate relationships between computer companies, pharmaceutical companies, and health-related organizations can give corporations exposure to new regions and allow them to be good corporate citizens. Moreover, many corporations have philanthropic priorities and are always looking for new ways to partner with locally based organizations that can provide evidence of success.

NGOs provide invaluable services throughout the world. Unfortunately, many NGOs are not able to achieve their long-term goals because of poor planning or an overreliance on donations. In many parts of the world, especially during and after a crisis, there is a large amount of assistance available. This financial assistance is not limitless, however. In many crisis situations, donors leave when the crisis appears to be abating. The NGOs that were created during this time of crisis are often left with few or no financial resources when the donor

dollars cease to be available. Therefore, NGOs need to become sustainable. Sustainability means that the NGOs use their strengths to create revenue-producing ventures within their organizations to help fund public-oriented projects. For instance, some NGOs have developed expertise in survey collection and data analysis. They can make money from this skill and offer their services for a fee to business and other organizations. Other NGOs have developed sophisticated understandings of desktop publishing and can help profit-driven organizations in creating high-quality advertisements and professional documents. Finally, some NGOs can provide training to newer NGOs in their own country and abroad for small fees and donations. All of these practices help the NGO to be sustainable so it can continue to exist and serve its core mission.

A strong NGO sector has been linked to the development of civil society and democracy throughout the world. NGOs are an important part of any society's development and have much to offer their publics. But NGOs, just like other types of organizations, need to communicate with their members, the media, and their publics to be effective in their core missions.

—Maureen Taylor



Members of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) wave fliers during a protest outside the conference room of the opening session of the World Trade Organization (WTO) conference in Doha on November 9, 2001.

SOURCE: © AFP/Corbis.

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Nonprofit organizations comprise the sector of the economy referred to as the nonprofit, voluntary, or third sector. Incorporated under state law as charitable or not-for-profit corporations, these organizations are distinguished from organizations that focus on either making a profit (the private sector) or serving as an arm of government (the governmental sector). The nonprofit organization must focus on making some portion of society better or preventing it from becoming worse. As a result, nonprofit organizations provide not only welfare services but also social, educational, and cultural services. This category of organization is also called not-for-profit.

The nonprofit sector has a significant impact not only on quality of life, but also on the economy. In 2000, over \$200 billion in donations from individuals, corporations, bequests, and foundations were collected to serve a variety of community needs. This sector may be the fastest-growing sector in the United States economy, with over 1.6 million nonprofit organizations in existence. With their focus on issues such as education, culture, religion, social service, environment, and health, nonprofit organizations are an important part of both the economy and community life. Involvement in such organizations has long been characteristic of American culture. Researchers such as Harvard professor Robert Putman have suggested that the number or density of such organizations is predictive of a region's economic health, governmental efficiency, personal happiness, and faith in public institutions.

Statistics indicate that the number of nonprofit organizations continues to grow, with as many as 50,000 new charities created in recent years. Times of economic growth encourage the development of nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations are developed within local communities to meet specific local needs such as an animal shelter or boosters to support the local marching band. They exist along with those organizations defined as regional or national, such as the American Lung Association. Included in the nonprofit sector are hospitals, schools, museums, homeless shelters,

research centers, youth groups, symphony orchestras, houses of worship, and health organizations such as the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association.

CHARACTERISTICS

State and federal laws specify the conditions under which an organization can be classified as charitable or nonprofit. These organizations must have the following four characteristics: they must be incorporated and must have a public purpose, their governance structure must preclude self-interest and private financial gain, they must be exempt from paying federal tax, and they must possess the special legal status that stipulates that gifts made to them are tax deductible. In order for that organization to be classified as tax exempt, to be eligible for tax deduction, or to be known as a 501(c)(3) organization, the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code specifies activities that are and are not permitted. Annual reports detailing the financial activity of the organization must be filed in order to maintain nonprofit status.

Although the majority of nonprofit organizations are funded through donations, sales of products can also help fund the organization, such as the annual cookie sale of the Girl Scouts. Although funding may come from major foundations, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's support for improving health in the developing world, the United States government and state governments are also involved in funding the services of nonprofit organizations, often through grants for those specific services. Examples include local organizations such as legal services or safe visitation programs.

Traditionally, a separation has existed between governmental funding for services provided by nonprofit religious or faith-based organizations and those services provided by secular organizations, but even that division is disappearing. With increasing attempts to shift responsibility for public service and assistance from governmental programs to nonprofit organizations, recent attention has been directed toward enabling faith-based organizations to receive governmental funding for specific service programs.

With an increase in the number of nonprofit organizations, there has been an increase in competition for public attention, volunteers, and donation dollars. As a result, the public can expect numerous requests for donations every week. Because not all charities are honest and accountable to their donors, public understanding of nonprofits and analysis of their programs and appeals is essential.

Community Chest, later to become United Way, was begun in 1913 in Cleveland, Ohio. Serving as a type of gatekeeper for the community with numerous charities, Community Chest began with the goal of consolidating into a single appeal the needs of a specific community with the appropriate nonprofit organizations. Each United Way organization must meet the specific guidelines established by United Way. Each year as community needs grow and more nonprofit organizations become available, more organizations apply to be included as United Way organizations than United Way can handle. As a result, not every reputable program is part of United Way. And throughout the year each community experiences numerous additional appeals for funds.

An effective nonprofit organization will focus on gaining the appropriate public attention, public concern for its mission, conviction that the organization is bringing about effective change, and commitment to involvement and donations. These objectives are achievable through an effective public relations approach.

PUBLIC RELATIONS FUNCTION

The public relations function in most nonprofit organizations includes creating awareness and acceptance of the organization's mission; communicating effectively with key publics, including employees, volunteers, the community, those served by the organization, and the media; developing, maintaining, and monitoring the organization's issue area, organizational policy, and public policy relevant to the organization; and maintaining the organization's reputation with donors. This means that the communication function will include media relations, publicity, issues management, public affairs, speech writing, publications, promotional

writing, and, at times, crisis management. Otis Baskin, Craig Aronoff, and Dan L. Lattimore (1997) argued that “public relations is the business of many not-for-profit organizations” (p. 368).

The nonprofit sector has been a starting place for a career in public relations for many individuals. Although starting salaries in the nonprofit sector may be somewhat lower than starting salaries in agencies or in corporate work, the sense of accomplishment through doing something good for the community as well as having the opportunity to work with interesting and successful volunteers has led to higher job satisfaction in this sector.

In their study of communicators and communication departments, David Dozier, Larissa A. Grunig, and James E. Grunig (1995) found that the communication departments in the nonprofit sector are about half the size of the departments in the corporate and governmental sectors. In addition, communicators in the not-for-profit organizations and professional trade associations are more likely to have attended graduate school and to hold advanced degrees. Responsibilities of communication professionals in the not-for-profit organizations include contributions to strategic planning as well as manager role knowledge.

Unfortunately, this level of public relations expertise does not exist throughout the nonprofit sector. In many social welfare agencies, insufficient funding to hire individuals with public relations expertise means little public relations activity may be present. As a result, even an awareness of the need or methods to inform the media of organizational news may be lacking.

The public relations function with nonprofit organizations includes several goals. The variety of goals demonstrates the need for a variety of public relations approaches. These range from the unidirectional publicity to a two-way symmetrical approach. Because one goal includes increasing public awareness of the organization, its mission, and its successes, publicity will play an important role for meeting some organizational needs. For example, fundraising programs such as Race for the Cure and the MS Walk-a-thon rely on publicity. Even the American Cancer Society’s Great American

Smokeout is based primarily on publicity. Visibility and name recognition are essential for new organizations but are also important to the continued success of older organizations. Both publicity approaches and news coverage can be an advantage in this area. However, the successful nonprofit organization must do more than create awareness—it must also make a difference. At one time nonprofit organizations assumed that they could accomplish the educational function of their organizational goals such as preventing or detecting heart disease, diabetes, or cancer by simply sending out messages. Success was demonstrated by the number of messages produced or the number of brochures distributed. Many organizations have revised their focus from the source of the message to the actions of the receiver of the message and now look to measure changes in that receiver. This could include not only the number of individuals having mammograms but also early versus late cancer detection rates.

Media relations is an important part of public relations for the nonprofit organization. Because the mission of nonprofit organizations focuses on issues important to the local community, there should be sufficient opportunity to find news the media should want to cover. Understanding the importance of establishing a strong relationship with the media is essential.

Volunteer recruitment and retention are an important public relations activity of the nonprofit organization. These individuals are characterized by their donation of time and service for the benefit of the organization without consideration of pay. As a result, volunteers have a special relationship with the organization. Orientation and training will probably be necessary. This can include training in effective communication skills such as writing news releases or public speaking. Two-way symmetrical communication is important as volunteers work with salaried employees to help set goals and objectives. The process increases volunteer commitment and satisfaction in the organization’s accomplishments. Because volunteers must feel that donating their time is as important as giving money, positive relationships must be maintained with the volunteer group. Within this context, recognition of volunteers

also becomes important. However, the organization must be alert to appropriate recognition that meets the needs and expectations of the volunteers. For example, some volunteers expect appreciation but are uncomfortable with gifts or too much publicity.

Employees present another focus in the public relations effort. A complicating factor in the nonprofit organization is when a large regional or national organization works to have a presence in the local community where a local office has limited staff and relatively little experience with the nonprofit organization but significant responsibilities in the local community. The responsibilities of developing and maintaining a good relationship with the organization's governing body as well as serving as leader for the local community call for effective public relations skills.

Nonprofit organizations are increasingly recognizing the necessity of effective relationships with governmental bodies. Accomplishing the goals of the nonprofit organization may necessitate petitions to local city councils for changes such as rezoning for homeless shelters or for smoking ordinances. Effective development and presentation of these petitions becomes another public relations function. Often these responsibilities extend to the state or federal level, where lobbying may be necessary to influence legislative understanding of proposed legislation on issues of concern to the nonprofit organization. Nonprofit organizations are permitted to lobby federal and state officials with communication on specific legislation and reflecting a view on that legislation. However, they are not permitted to participate in political campaigning. Because the IRS specifies which expenditures are allowable for a nonprofit organization, it is necessary that the organization stay current on the issue. The lobbying effort, however, remains an important public relations function for many nonprofit organizations.

The financial aspects of the nonprofit organization are part of the public relations concern. Fundraising in the form of requesting donations from the public is the most common financial base for the organization. Much of the communication activity of the nonprofit organization may be

directed toward getting sufficient donations to enable the organization to accomplish its goals. Although many volunteers enjoy participating in fundraising activities because success is easy to measure, they also are aware of the amount of effort involved in securing those funds. As a result, stewardship is important. As part of the ongoing public relations effort, the organization must be sure that a significant amount of the income goes toward accomplishing the mission of the organization and not toward the fundraising activities themselves.

Because a return is expected from the donation in some kind of improvement in the public's welfare or general benefit, nonprofit organizations must maintain careful financial reports. These financial reports, somewhat similar to corporate annual reports, may be part of the public relations effort of the organization. However, analyses of the financial activity of major national nonprofit organizations by outside organizations compare organizations and enable the public to see whether or not specific organizations are spending donation dollars wisely. As the fundraising expenses, administrative expenses, and program spending are analyzed, the public is shown the efficiency of the dollars it has donated. Increasingly, the public is being educated to expect effective nonprofits to spend less than 25 percent of their capital on fundraising activities and more than 75 percent on program implementation. Nonprofit organizations are recognizing the wisdom in limiting staff size and eliminating expensive fundraising projects. From a public relations perspective, the organization must adapt to meet changing public awareness and expectations.

Grants from foundations or governmental agencies often provide significant funding for special projects of the nonprofit organization. Grant writing may become part of the communication activity of the organization. Because grant writing involves telling the story of the organization, public relations professionals in the nonprofit sector will wisely be prepared. Unfortunately, in times of economic downturn, available funds from grants tend to decrease.

Ideally, the nonprofit organization will manage issues effectively. Whether these issues include

increasing public expectations of accountability in fundraising, the successful accomplishment of an organization's mission such as elimination of tuberculosis or polio, or insurance for volunteers, the successful nonprofit will adapt to the changes.

Unfortunately, even nonprofit organizations are susceptible to crisis situations. Sometimes these are major crises such as the one the United Way of America suffered when its leader was found guilty of fraud, conspiracy, and money laundering; that suffered by the American Red Cross when, in the weeks immediately following the New York Twin Towers disaster, it refused to share its computerized database of the victims; or that experienced by the Catholic Church in the sexual abuse scandals. In any event, a nonprofit organization is not immune. Effective public relations must be prepared to help lead the organization through these crises, rebuilding the organization's credibility and public confidence in it.

—Kathie A. Leeper

See also Fundraising; Publics

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OBJECTIVES

Objectives are central to a strategic approach to public relations that is based on research. An objective specifies exactly what is desired from a public relations action. An objective is created from the information collected through formative/background research. Evaluative research is used to determine whether or not the public relations action achieved the objective—whether it was a success or a failure. (Refer to “Formative research” for clarification on the connection between objectives and public relations research.)

Objectives are generally written using the word *to* and then an action verb such as *increase*, *reduce*, *earn*, or *convince*. An objective must be quantifiable; you must be able to measure it in some way. Moreover, the objective should specify the amount of desired change stated as a number or percentage. It is the specificity of an objective that creates the clear standard for judging success. The following objectives are measurable and specific: (a) “to increase attendance at the 2004 charity auction to 120” and (b) “to convince 60 percent of employees to support the restructuring proposal.” A person can count the number of participants to determine if 120 people attended or use a survey to assess employee support for the

restructuring program to see if it reaches 60 percent. Evaluation becomes possible because of the ability to measure an objective and compare it against a specific standard. Some experts recommend that an objective include a target date or deadline. This increases specificity by indicating the date for the desired change to be achieved. You need to decide what time frame is appropriate for your objective. For instance, the second objective could be rewritten as “to convince 60 percent of employees to support the restructuring proposal by the end of June.”

There are many different types of objectives. One distinction is between *process* and *outcome* objectives. A process objective checks to determine if certain steps were taken in the preparation and execution of a public relations action. Sample process objectives include writing a news release, getting approval of Web pages, or securing a permit for a city park. Each of these actions can be converted to a full objective. “To send out a news release to 20 media outlets by July 7.” “To receive management approval of the Web pages by October 13th.” “To secure the permit for the park development fun run by March 11th.” All three of these objectives are measurable; you have either completed the action or not, and each one has a set time for when the action should be completed. Process objectives

address the question “Did we do what we were supposed to do?” A public relations action can fail because a certain action or step was not taken. Process objectives are a checklist for actions or steps that must be taken in your public relations action. This checklist is developed as part of the planning process and used to review the execution of the public relations action.

Outcome objectives are used to determine the success or failure of the public relations action. An outcome objective specifies what the public relations action hoped to achieve. A proper outcome objective often includes the target stakeholder(s) because public relations actions are focused on specific target stakeholder(s)—whom the message is designed to reach and affect. When appropriate, include a specific target stakeholder in the objective. The objective “to convince 60 percent of employees to support the restructuring proposal by the end of June” indicates employees would be the target. You would not include a target stakeholder if you were trying to reach a very general audience as in the objective “to increase attendance at the 2004 charity auction to 120.”

Outcome objectives can be divided into three groups: (a) *knowledge*, (b) *attitude*, and (c) *behavioral*. Knowledge objectives center on learning: The target stakeholders know something after the public relations action that they did not know before the action. There are three types of knowledge objectives: (a) *exposure*, (b) *comprehension*, and (c) *retention*. Exposure means that the target stakeholder(s) has an opportunity to see or hear the public relations action. The public relations action appears in some media or location the target stakeholder uses, such as a newspaper, radio, or Web site. Comprehension is the ability of the target stakeholder(s) to understand the message. A message must be written in a fashion and in a language the target can understand. Retention means that the target stakeholder(s) remembers information about the public relations action. Ideally, the three informational objectives are related to one another. Stakeholders must be exposed to a message in order to comprehend it and must understand a message if they are to remember it properly.

Attitude objectives attempt to change how people think or feel. An attitude can be defined as an evaluation of some object. “I love turkey” or “I dislike traffic” are examples of attitudes. In each case an evaluation (*love* and *dislike*) is made of some object (*turkey* and *traffic*). For an outcome objective, a public relations practitioner is trying to change the attitude of some target stakeholder/audience. The public relations action should alter the target stakeholder’s evaluation of a particular object. “At the end of the three-month campaign, current customers will have a 15 percent increase in the approval of IBM’s customer service department.” The target stakeholders in this objective would be current customers, and the object is IBM’s customer service department. People should hold different attitudes after they encounter the public relations effort than before it. Reputation is a form of attitude and is a common focus of public relations actions.

A behavioral objective seeks to alter the way people act. Behavior change is the most difficult of the three outcome objectives. People are more likely to resist behavior change than to resist new information or even alter an attitude. People are creatures of habits, and we do not like to change those habits—our behaviors. In a behavioral objective, the public relations action is trying to change how a people act. The target stakeholder should act differently after the public relations effort than before it. “To have 15 percent more new donors give blood in 2004 than in 2003.” This objective seeks to get more people (new donors) to give blood—change their behavior.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Benchmarking; Formative research; Goals, Qualitative research; Quantitative research; Research objectives; Reputation management

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OECKL, ALBERT

Albert Oeckl (1909–2001) was the most important figure of the post–World War II era of public relations in Germany. The obituaries on his death (April 23, 2001) reflected the mythically idealized position that Oeckl held. He became a living legend primarily through his national as well as international professional activities, but he is also widely known for his writings, public speeches, and teaching activities.

Oeckl was born December 27, 1909, in Nuremberg and studied law and national economy in Munich and Berlin. In 1934 he earned his doctorate with a dissertation, *German Employees and Their Living Conditions*, and worked initially as a junior lawyer. Although written under the national socialist government, his dissertation can, from our contemporary viewpoint, be regarded as a profound scientific work with no recognizable kowtowing to national socialist ideology.

Following his internship as a junior lawyer (1934–1935, in the Reichspropagandaministerium in the Munich state office), he began his vocational career in 1936 at IG Farben in Berlin, where he was later to be employed in the head office and the newly founded press office. As he pointed out himself, this was where and when he gained his first journalistic experience and where he learned about the basics of then-current public relations of an international company.

During the war he worked, among other positions, in the news service for the supreme command of the Wehrmacht (OKW, or German Armed Forces) and in the Reichsamt (the German “empire office”) for economic development under Carl Krauch. A recent dissertation at Leipzig University (by Christian Mattke) has shed light on Oeckl’s career until 1945. Press relations and monitoring as well as support service for visitors were Oeckl’s first duties at IG Farben. He was also responsible for an address card index, which might have triggered the idea for his *Taschenbuch des öffentlichen Lebens* (“Pocket Book of Public Life,” published in 1950).

On May 1, 1933, he joined the NSDAP (Hitler’s ruling national socialist party until 1945); however,

he never held a ranking office in the party, nor did he have any national socialist grade. After the war, in 1947, an allied committee classified Oeckl as a *Mitläufer* (nominal member), a designation given to former members of the Nazi party who were considered not to pose a threat to the emerging democratic, capitalist society. With this classification Oeckl did not have to fear legal consequences stemming from his role during the war. However, he concealed his party membership publicly throughout his life.

Oeckl started his postwar career as the assistant of Dr. Rudolf Vogel, a member of the German Bundestag (German parliament) and of the Christian Democratic Party (CDU). From 1950 to 1959 Oeckl was director of the Public Relations Department of the Deutscher Industrie- und Handelstag (DIHT), the German Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry. From 1959 on he was head of the public relations department of BASF, also a multinational corporation. From 1961 to 1967, Oeckl held the title of deputy director; from 1967 to 1974 his title was director. In 1974 he retired from his active career.

Oeckl had early ambitions regarding an academic career. He accepted the invitation to teach as a lecturer at the University of Heidelberg, where he gave lectures and seminars from 1960 until 1969. Later on he also taught at Augsburg University. From 1974 until 1978, after his retirement, he taught social psychology and public relations at the International University in Rome in the position of an extraordinary professorship. From this lectureship he earned the title of an honorary professor. This title strengthened his reputation in a discipline in which only few representatives held doctoral degrees. Hence, Oeckl was considered the academically legitimized voice to speak up for the majority of practitioners, to represent the whole professional field of public relations.

From 1950 onward, Oeckl annually published the *Taschenbuch des öffentlichen Lebens* (“Pocket-book of Public Life”) and quickly became well known from it. It contains a systematic collection of addresses and can be found even today on nearly every editorial or public relations desk. In 1964 he

published his first major book, *Das Handbuch der Public relations. Theorie und Praxis der Öffentlichkeitsarbeit in Deutschland und der Welt* (*Handbook of Public Relations: Theory and Practice of Öffentlichkeitsarbeit [Public Relations] in Germany and the World*). A revised version of this handbook was published in 1976, under the title *PR-Praxis. Der Schlüssel zur Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* (*PR Practice: The Key to Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*). At that time, these books—as well as Oeckl's various lectures and articles—played an important role in the professional field. Even today, they are important historical sources for academic public relations research. Oeckl defined *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* (the German equivalent of public relations) as “working with the public, working for the public and working in the public (sphere)” (1976, p. 34). Another definition he gave was “*Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* is the conscious, planned and continuous endeavor . . . to build and maintain mutual understanding in public” (1964, p. 43). This definition, which is very similar to the definition crafted by the British Institute of Public Relations during the 1960s, contains a society-oriented understanding of public relations with symmetrical presuppositions. This understanding also underlies the formula Oeckl coined later: “PR = Information + Adaptation + Integration” (Oeckl, 1976, p. 19).

Although Oeckl—due to demands on his time—never developed a scientific theory that was empirically testable, he created a kind of *normative practitioner theory*. This theory, based on many years of professional experience, is aligned to relevant scientific literature, particularly writings of communication research. It not only provides definitive dividing lines between public relations and other concepts of public communication such as advertising, propaganda, and publicity, but one of the core elements of this practitioner theory is a set of normative guidelines (how-to rules) that express ways to act, to behave as a public relations practitioner. For Oeckl, primary requirements in public relations are “truth, clarity (lucidity), as well as the unity of word and deed” (1964, p. 47). Alongside these demands, sociability, open behavior, integrity, and modesty are characteristics that he considers

important professional values. During the 1960s, Oeckl informed younger professionals about the basic management method, the Four-Phase Model of PR Management: (a) analyses, (b) programming/strategy building, (c) taking action/communicating, and (d) evaluation (1964, pp. 343ff.). Most important for Oeckl's understanding of public relations was his regard for it as a separate and high-level management (staff) function in all kinds of organizations, not as a subdiscipline of marketing, or as pure publicity or propaganda.

Oeckl assumed and informed the profession that he had coined the German equivalent of the term public relations, *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*, in 1950 by translating the American term *public relations*. New research has shown, however, that this term had been used much earlier in a discussion of the press organizations of the Protestant Church (*Evangelische Pressverbände*) as early as 1917. Presumably, by 1950 the term had fallen into oblivion. But during the 1950s and 1960s the German term made an excellent resurgence. Today, notably, state institutions (ministries, municipal press departments) and nonprofit organizations use the term *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit*, whereas private companies and public relations agencies widely prefer the English term *public relations* or *PR*. In recent years, the term *communication management* is used more and more.

Predominantly due to his political organization activities, in which he drew upon his—for that time—profound number of publications and lectures, Oeckl acquired the reputation of Germany's “PR-Nestor.” He was a co-founder of the Deutsche Public Relations Gesellschaft (DPRG) (German Public Relations Association) in 1958 and officiated as second president between 1961 and 1967, following Carl Hundhausen. In 1986 the DPRG awarded him the honorary president title, and a junior award for academic theses has his name. Also important were Oeckl's international organization activities: Since 1965 he served as Confédération Européenne des Relations Publiques (CERP) vice president, and in 1967 the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) voted Oeckl its first German president. Through his activities in these functions, an important early

impetus was given to the academization of the vocational public relations field, from which came ideas for an academically based public relations education at universities and standards for ethical codes.

On the occasion of his 90th birthday, in 1999, CERP president Thomas Achelis presented a *festschrift* (“PR Builds Bridges”) to Oeckl, with essays contributed by well-known German, European, and American public relations practitioners, scientists, and organizational representatives that mirror the reputation Albert Oeckl had reached in the international public relations community.

Oeckl played a similar role for Germany to that of Edward L. Bernays for the professional field of American public relations: founding father, influential and symbolic figure for the whole professional field, and representative of a modern concept of the practice. Preconditions for Bernays’s and Oeckl’s reputations as founding fathers were their outstanding professional achievements and the capability to present themselves and to produce their own images in an outstanding way.

In Germany Oeckl represents the highest standard of the public relations practitioner, carefully considering and reflecting the practice of his profession with a high—and academically based—reputation due to his teaching, his writings, and his positions. In the history of public relations in German-speaking areas, Oeckl can be considered the most important figure next to Carl Hundhausen. Although Hundhausen achieved more solid and greater academic recognition, he was not as outstanding in the practical field as Oeckl. Both of these giants in the profession represent a kind of professional continuity from the 1930s, the national socialist time, on to the Federal Republic of the 1950s and 1960s. Both credibly represent, on the other hand, the restart of postwar public relations in Germany, a profession that had to distinguish itself clearly from the propaganda of Nazi politics. For many years, until the end of the 1980s, Oeckl embodied German *Öffentlichkeitsarbeit* worldwide.

—Günter Bentele

See also Bernays, Edward; Promotion; Publicity; Symmetry

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OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION

See Davis, Elmer, and the Office of War Information

ONLINE PUBLIC RELATIONS

Online public relations involves the use of Internet technologies to manage communications and to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationship between an organization and its key publics.

Organizations have adopted the Internet widely and integrated computer-based delivery into their mix of communications technologies. Particularly valuable is the Internet’s ability to allow organizations and people around the world to exchange information on a 24/7 basis.

ONLINE PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOLS

Web sites

The World Wide Web is probably the most important Internet technology for PR practitioners, permitting organizations to display text, visual, and sound files using computer servers and browser software on personal computers. The Web provides the decentralized delivery of information using human-computer graphical interfaces to facilitate access.

Organizations use Web sites for a variety of marketing, human resource, and other management functions besides public relations. Among the most common applications for public relations are the following.

Online newsrooms allow journalists and others to access news releases and other press materials that can be downloaded quickly and easily and transferred directly to the news production systems of newspapers and magazines as well as radio and television stations. More than 90 percent of all reporters now use the Web as a basic research tool, although Web sites have not surpassed the telephone, personal contacts, and traditional news releases as the preferred source of information for reporters (Hachigian & Hallahan, 2003).

Investor relations sites provide a wide range of materials for analysts and investment professionals as well as individual and institutional investors. These materials previously were distributed only as hard copies: annual reports, quarterly reports, earnings information, government filings, analyst presentations and reports, fact books, and so forth.

Product promotion sites engage consumers and others in educational, informational, and entertainment activities. Food and household manufacturers, for example, now provide recipes and consumer tips online. Many production companies sponsor sites to promote movies, TV shows, books, and entertainment fare. Site content includes background information, downloadable photos and audio, streaming video, chat rooms and bulletin boards, and interactive games designed to illustrate key ideas and to promote involvement.

Education and advocacy sites are used by not-for-profit organizations to inform users about issues and engage in the social marketing of ideas. Many of the same techniques used in product promotion sites are adapted to the promotion of ideas (such as an appreciation of the arts) or causes (such as the eradication of social problems). Educational sites often include tutorials and learning materials as well as quizzes and tests that facilitate assessment of a user's learning or knowledge. Advocacy sites encourage public education in the same way, but encourage participation in public discussions and

debates. Unique features on advocacy sites include directories, maps, and other address information regarding where people can write public officials or file public comments. Also included are direct e-mail links and prototype texts that might be used.

Health sites are widely used to provide information on health and risk-related topics and to provide coping mechanisms for people affected by particular maladies. Users can include the sufferers of health problems, as well as family members, friends, and health care practitioners. *Telemedicine* includes the provision of diagnoses and advice by health professionals as well as the self-help activities by support groups and not-for-profit organizations concerned about particular health or safety issues.

Fundraising/development sites are used by not-for-profit organizations to build and maintain their support bases. Online fundraising has become an increasingly important application of e-commerce technology. Visitors to sites of nonprofit organizations can become informed, but also involved by joining as members or by sending a financial contribution billed to a credit card.

Intranets and Extranets

Communication within organizations has been facilitated by the advent of *intranets*, or closed-system Web-based communications systems used to facilitate the distribution and sharing of information within an organization. In a similar way, *extranets* have enabled organizations to share data-based information with allied partners, including vendors and customers, using controlled-access (usually password-protected) Web-based information systems accessible to users outside the organization.

Although intranets are used primarily to manage internal operations, many traditional employee relations functions are now conducted online. These include the distribution of announcements, company newsletters, employee policies and procedures, benefits information, and performance recognition. Intranets are also being used to conduct employee suggestion programs, deliver special messages from management, register employees for organizational and social events, and provide access

to various archived materials such as graphics standards and materials and historical records and photographs.

Extranets continue to be used by business organizations primarily to share research and development, production, distribution, and inventory control information. However, as extranets have expanded in use, many organizations have recognized the value of extranets for public relations purposes. News and information about developments and activities at an organization are important to employees of partner organizations. In addition, online relationship building efforts can cement allegiances and improve productivity.

Electronic mail (e-mail) can be used in a variety of ways for public relations purposes. Bulk or broadcast e-mails are used to distribute information about company developments to both internal and external publics, including the distribution of news and feature materials to the press. Individual e-mails can be used to communicate directly with members of key publics, such as managers, employees, customers, donors, or constituents.

Variations of the traditional text-based memorandum are including links that prompt users to go to a Web site for desired information or to access e-mail attachments, which can be in the form of word-processed or portable document format (pdf) documents. More advanced techniques include graphically designed e-mails, video e-mails, electronic newsletters, and e-zines.

People react negatively to unsolicited e-mails (spam). However, an acceptable alternative is to give prospective recipients the option to receive (opt in) or not receive (opt out) bulk e-mails. Such permission (sometimes termed *permission marketing*) enhances message effectiveness by targeting the message to people who have indicated an interest in the topic. Senders must be careful, however, to avoid distributing messages too frequently.

Discussion Groups, Chats, and Online Meetings

Organizations can tap the interactive potential of the Internet by participating in or by sponsoring opportunities for people to share ideas with others.

These include *discussion groups*, also known as newsgroups or bulletin boards, where people can post messages that can be read later (asynchronously) by other discussion group members. Live *chats* use synchronous conferencing software to allow people to come together and interact in real time.

Variations on chats include *Webconferences* and *netmeetings*, where synchronous discussions are augmented by video (made possible by cameras on personal computers) or audio (where people use microphones attached to personal computers). This technology has permitted organizations to make online presentations (*Webcasts*) and to conduct seminars (*Webinars*) to inform and engage participants in remote locations.

Organization representatives can sign on to a wide range of discussion groups or chats online, where they can cull valuable insights about participants' opinions on key issues and can use both fora to articulate organizational viewpoints. An important ethical issue involves whether the organizational representative is clearly identified and all users understand his or her special interest.

Other Online Tools

Lesser-used tools include database file transfers, using file transfer protocol that enables the delivery of large volumes of data by an organization to an inquirer, who can then read, manipulate, and interpret the findings. Remote kiosks allow organizations to use online technology in public buildings and elsewhere so that occasional users can find answers to queries. CD-ROMs provide an alternative delivery mechanism to real-time online connections and enable users to access information in the same ways as the Web. Finally, wireless technology allows people to access Web-based content, e-mail, and other forms of online communication without access to a personal computer. Wireless technologies using cell phones and personal data assistants (PDAs) probably provide less functionality and somewhat limited information—but nonetheless will be important organizational communication tools in the future.

APPLICATIONS OF ONLINE PUBLIC RELATIONS

Organizations can use online public relations in a wide range of applications.

Research

The ability to monitor the Web and discussion groups and chat rooms has facilitated the ability of public relations professionals to scan the environment to identify emerging issues and then track particular concerns that might affect the organization. In addition to extant information available online (secondary data), organizations can use online technologies to collect primary data in the form of e-mail and Web surveys.

Information Distribution

E-mail and Web sites facilitate the dissemination of announcements and other information to targeted grounds, eliminating time lags created when organizations depend on the press or postal mail to distribute information. Information is available instantaneously and can be updated regularly as needed. The cost of delivered information can be lower, although many organizations use redundant systems to distribute information (printed and mailed materials, faxes, private wire services, and personal delivery).

Queries

Online technologies provide an ideal, low-cost, automated way for organizations to respond to routine, perfunctory questions, thus reducing the demand on staffs in offices at customer call centers. Although a large majority of queries can be addressed online, effective query management involves incisive anticipation of the most common topics of interest as well as mechanisms for handling the nonroutine, one-of-a-kind problems that might arise. Although many queries can be handled online, organizations must maintain other mechanisms to handle questions, such as telephone help lines and customer/consumer affairs correspondence functions.

Crisis Response

Online communications today play a critical role when organizations are faced with extraordinary events that create uncertainty or disrupt routine operations. People often flood Web sites and e-mail boxes seeking information, and organizations must now include online communications as a critical, first-response component in crisis management plans. Both content and technical Webmasters have become members of crisis response teams in many organizations. Tactics include the creation of a special home page and increasing the system's capacity to process increased volume. Other standard techniques include creation of news and information update pages, activation of online resources to assist victims and others, and use of electronic bulletin boards for employees and others to share intelligence and express concerns.

Discussions and Debate

Organizations can use online technologies to encourage the sharing of ideas among key publics and thus further public debate on issues important to them. A growing number of organizations use their intranets (as well as groupware) to facilitate work on projects among staff organized in *virtual teams*. Intranet discussions groups are being used more widely to seek employee input on problems, including suggestions for improvements in productivity. The effect of this expanded participation is greater involvement and affinity with an organization.

Among external audiences, forward-thinking organizations are creating mechanisms for people to provide feedback on social issues and the organization's issue positions, consistent with notions of about the importance of dialogue and two-way communications. Beyond serving as valuable research findings, public access to comments allows others to crystallize, change, or reinforce their own opinions. Publication of public comments submitted to government agencies is another way online communication can facilitate democratic processes.

Relationship Building

If the ultimate purpose of public relations is to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with key publics, online communications have the potential to help foster positive reputations (as a prerequisite to establishing positive relationships) and to foster interaction between an organization and key publics. Online relationship building is critical where a user's only contact with an organization might be via online communications, but also can contribute to the process where offline relationships exist. The inherent interactive features of Web communications, for example, lend themselves to *two-way symmetrical* or *dialogic* communications, although many organizations so far have failed to fully exploit these features (Taylor, Kent, & White, 2001).

MANAGING ONLINE PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations managers face a variety of managerial concerns as online communications become an integral part of an organization's public relations effort. These include determining who in the organization will control and manage site content, the consistent and proper branding of online communications (such as domain names), the maintenance of content quality, the usability or functionality of the system, and the integration of online and offline activities.

Also important is compliance with the changing laws and regulations that impact online public relations activities. New issues include: (a) the disclosure and enforcement of electronic information privacy policies, (b) the right of employers to eavesdrop or monitor employees' use of private e-mail and other organization-owned systems, (c) the right of government to access electronic records to prevent terrorism, (d) the acceptance of electronic signatures, and (e) regulatory requirements for the retention of electronic messages.

Online communications also raise new concerns related to misuse by others that results in threats or potential losses to an organization. These include (a) defamatory attacks on organizations in discussion

groups or attack/complaint Web sites, (b) intrusions into systems by hackers who aim to disrupt service or destroy content, or (c) misuse of content by lurkers who wish to gain competitive intelligence or who might stalk organizational personnel (*cyberstalkers*). Public relations managers must also deal with rogues who purchase desirable Web site domain names to resell them to organizations for a premium price (*cybersquatters*) or simply to deceive potential visitors for personal gain by diverting traffic. Finally, public relations managers must be concerned with the *theft* of digital assets (copyrighted or trademarked content) that can be diluted in value by excessive or fraudulent use by others.

Public relations managers also face challenges in assessing the effectiveness of online communications vis-à-vis other communications tools. Metrics for measurement of traffic have been developed that allow organizations to count access (such as *hits* on a Web site page), but also unique users (unduplicated *reach*), frequency of use, length of visits, and so on. Registration systems and *cookies* technologies also allow organizations to identify visitors (and to tailor personalized information to them).

Online public relations can be measured based on traditional evaluative standards used in public relations, such as awareness and attitude change. However, valid and reliable measurement techniques need to be developed to assess how mere exposure leads to greater awareness and understanding of online content and how online content leads to persuasion. Fortunately, the interactive nature of online communications makes actions taken online relatively easy to measure. Organizations can count click-throughs to promoted messages, online messages sent, and orders submitted for more information or for products and services. But if actions are taken offline, evaluation becomes more elusive.

More than any other communication activity, online communicators must address the question of return on investment (ROI) or the financial return derived from online communications investments. ROI analysis is a common way for organizations to evaluate investments in technology. Public relations managers will be called upon to demonstrate the

cost-effectiveness of online activities and the consequences if these activities are not undertaken.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Communication technologies; Crisis communication; Dialogue; Excellence theory, Home page; Qualitative research; Quantitative research; Relationship management theory; Web site

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OP-ED

Op-ed refers to the page in a newspaper that is opposite the page on which editorials are published. (Editorials reflect a newspaper's official position on problems and issues.) Some newspapers devote only one page to editorials, letters to the editor, and commentary; editorials typically are to the left and op-ed contributions typically are to the right, although everything is on a single page.

The best newspapers have balanced editorial and op-ed pages. They publish a blend of editorials;

letters to the editor (typically, not all letters are published); commentary from local and nationally syndicated political columnists; and *public commentary* from individuals who do not work for the newspaper.

The best newspapers also ensure that a broad spectrum of opinion is reflected in their letters, syndicated columns, and public commentaries. (Editorials do not reflect a broad spectrum of opinion because they are the newspaper's official voice, which is likely to lean to the right or the left.) A good balance is sought on political, economic, social, and cultural issues. This does not mean that two conservative and two liberal items will be published each day. It does mean that, on balance, a good newspaper will publish ideas that reflect a wide range of opinions.

The public commentary sections of most newspapers are open to anyone, and public relations practitioners sometimes try to have their organization's views published there. The public affairs officer for a legislator who is sponsoring a controversial and widely discussed bill, for example, might pen a piece explaining the legislation and submit it to all the newspapers in the state (under the legislator's name) in hopes it will be published in some of them.

A corporate public relations practitioner might write a commentary about the steps a corporation is taking to preserve the environment as it attempts to develop land in an environmentally sensitive area. That would be distributed under the CEO's name. Or a practitioner at one of the ubiquitous think tanks might submit a commentary purporting to show that chlorofluorocarbons are not really a threat to the environment after all.

Unfortunately, newspapers do not screen commentaries as carefully as they do other stories. Some commentaries contain factual error, and some reflect partisan views that have little basis in fact. For this reason, public commentary sometimes carries little weight with some readers.

Some newspapers also are extraordinarily difficult to get into. The *Houston Chronicle*, for instance, publishes only 18 of the 400 or so submissions it receives each week. Some organizations follow the lead of Mobil Oil Corporation's Herbert Schmertz, who helped pioneer the use of

the paid commentary (*advertorial*). Mobil wrote commentaries that looked like op-ed pieces and then paid to have them published in newspapers across the country. Such commentaries get published, but they are not op-ed pieces, and they may have less credibility than commentaries that survive the rigorous screening process.

—Michael Ryan

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OPENNESS

The concept of openness, in terms of public relations, may have internal and external interpretations. From an internal perspective, employees may feel positively about open communication feedback cycles and company newsletters advocating the open-door policies of management. From an external perspective, the media may have negative interpretations of openness if the company spokesperson is evasive during a crisis situation.

The concept of openness, in terms of public relations and organizational communication, is derived from systems theory. This theoretical framework is concerned with complex, interdependent organizations that operate within dynamic environments. With the multiple pressures that organizations face (mergers, economic considerations, media coverage, community obligations), openness helps companies see themselves as part of a dynamic web of interdependencies and relationships. Openness involves interaction with the environment, reciprocal exchanges within and outside of organizations. The existence of diverse environments across industries, companies, and governmental entities means that the same organizing principles and solutions cannot be applied in all situations. In short, various contextual and environmental factors need to be considered, and organizations need to have some degree of openness in order to prosper.

Public relations representatives may help organizations achieve openness with various stakeholders (i.e., community, media). Thus, they are critical organizational boundary spanners. Larissa A. Grunig, James E. Grunig, and D. M. Dozier argued in 2002 that the systems perspective emphasizes the coordination of internal and external contingencies. Organizations depend on resources from their environments, such as employees and clients. A company with an open system uses public relations representatives to gather information on how productive its relationships are with the community, customers, and other stakeholders. In contrast, they argued that organizations with closed systems do not actively seek new information but operate on past history or the preferences of managers. The closed organization clings to the status quo (i.e., how we've always done it), and managers tend to exhibit defensive behaviors such as resistance to change.

Openness is synonymous with the concept of organizational boundary spanning (OBS). The boundary spanner straddles the edge of an organization. This person has a viewpoint within and outside of organizations; he/she knows many details about the company as well as its clients. Public relations representatives are the liaisons, explaining the organization's actions to its stakeholders and interpreting the environment for the organization. Public relations people should have open feedback loops with the primary decision makers acting as the members of the dominant coalition—the executive team—in the organization. The boundary spanners can alert managers to problems and opportunities in the environment and help them respond to these changes.

If managers keep their systems open, they allow for the two-way flow of resources and communication between the organization and the environment. The information can be used to adapt to the environment, or managers may use the data to try and control the environment. Control may be accomplished through consolidation of resources or persuasive influence. In some cases this strategy may be appropriate, but eventually some adaptation is required.

According to J. E. Grunig (2000), symmetrical public relations (a balanced approach) values openness and collaboration. Organizations need exchange relationships with the environment. They can be negatively impacted when there is an unwillingness on the part of managers to incur costs that build collaborative relationships. However, they incur greater costs from negative publicity, strict regulation, and other issues that result from closed relationships. Grunig argues that organizations will be more effective if they incorporate values of openness and collaboration into their corporate cultures and decision-making processes.

From an internal culture perspective, openness within the organization may not necessarily lead to successful boundary spanning. However, cherishing this value at all levels of the company will probably lead to communal, collaborative external relationships with stakeholders. According to John J. Rodwell, René Kienzle, and Mark A. Shadur (1998), some organizational professionals argue that employees must be given information about the company, its activities, goals, and vision. Additionally, they must be allowed to have channels through which information can be delivered to management.

Openness is essential for many organizational processes, such as public relations. Through openness in the system, the communication conduit for many aspects of organizational life is strengthened. Rodwell, Kienzle, and Shadur wrote in 1998 that employee attitude surveys often suggest that communication is an area that needs attention. By establishing and maintaining open feedback loops in the organization, positive internal public relations is likely to flourish. Employee morale and organizational commitment may also be positively affected.

Deloris McGee Wanguri argued in 1996 that an environment that encourages discreet and consistent communicative openness is recommended for organizational boundary spanners. From the discretionary viewpoint, this alternative does not advocate the disclosure of privileged information or knowledge that is potentially harmful to any individual or to the company and its clients. In other words, too much openness is problematic for many organizational relationships. In many cases, good judgment

on how much information needs to be revealed is recommended. Additionally, consistency is essential so that trust and respect can develop in these relationships. If the stakeholder learns to trust the consistent communication behaviors of the boundary spanner, respect and continued openness will permeate the relational encounters.

Using sound judgment and prudence in selecting information to share can increase communication openness and enhance perceived equity in these public relationships. If the information is accurate and appropriate for the target stakeholders (e.g., customers probably don't need to know specific quarterly financial results), the benefits outweigh the risks. Communicative openness can lead to positive dynamics, such as increased discussion and understanding, enhanced preparation for change, improved communication, and perceptions of communicative equity. In terms of equity, the receiver perceives that the sender is being straightforward and direct. The receiver also perceives that the sender is using proper discretion and consistent communication patterns. Thus, the organizational relationship is balanced. These perceptions of balance are critical for public relations professionals. Although public relations' stature has improved in society, the associations with propaganda and "spin" have not entirely disappeared.

Open systems, by their nature, react to change. These reactions may involve negotiation and compromise. With these dynamics, the boundary spanners and the stakeholders establish rules and then maintain and adapt the rules as needed. Stakeholders will learn to trust the source credibility of the boundary spanner when openness is valued.

Candor is a means of achieving credibility, and it must be constantly engaged and reengaged. Companies must engage in active listening, a primary part of any open communication process, with their stakeholders and respond to their concerns. Solutions may not be readily available, but mutually acceptable alternatives may be negotiated when such candor is exercised.

Although potential barriers to the effectiveness of communication will always exist, openness is an important and useful public relations strategy. It is a

strategy, however, that requires continuous adjustments to cultural, structural, and behavioral changes. The practitioner's adjustments are relevant for both the organization and its stakeholders. Through open exchange of information, all parties can learn to deal with the changes and their effects on the public relationships.

Ultimately, if the participants in these communication transactions do not trust and respect each other, if the stakeholders do not value the conditions under which the information is shared (i.e., media people recognizing possible spokesperson evasiveness), or if practitioners fail to use discretion in their communication, then the resulting relationships will be negatively affected and the recovery may take many years.

—Brian C. Sowa

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OPPORTUNITY AND THREAT

The idea of opportunity and threat in crisis management is rooted in the oft-recounted observation

that the Chinese character for crisis is made up of two seemingly contradictory symbols: one for opportunity, the other for threat. The implication is that managers should view crises not just as threats—to their bottom line, to their reputations, indeed, to their very survival—but also as opportunities—to redefine problems, to promote self-sacrifice, to reaffirm relationships with key constituents—as well as a vehicle by which to achieve strategic advantage.

OPPORTUNITY AND THREAT DEFINED

The line of reasoning for treating threat and opportunity together is rooted in the term *wei-ji*, the Chinese word for crisis. It is the term *wei* that means threat or danger, and the word *ji* means opportunity. In the pictograph that makes up the word in Chinese, the term for threat is placed at the top, and the word for opportunity is below it. The placement suggests that although the threat in a crisis is real and apparent, the opportunity, though present, is somewhat concealed. The implication, of course, is that wise crisis managers look beyond the threat to see where opportunities lie.

Threat

Threat is central to the concept of a crisis. In their survey of the literature of crisis management, Matthew Seeger, Timothy Sellnow, and Robert Ulmer (1998) wrote that a crisis is composed of three distinct notions: surprise, a short response time, and a threat. Among the threats that an organization faces are a diminished ability to accomplish conventional organizational objectives, as well as the real probability of organizational loss. Indeed, Karl Weick (1988) got at this critical component of threat when he defined crises as “low probability/high consequence events that threaten the most fundamental goals of the organization” (p. 305).

Organizations should plan for crises, viewing their likelihood as inevitable, given the variegated threats companies face. Such threats originate from both internal and external sources. Internally,

threats take the form of serious accidents, product safety incidents, or corporate misdeeds by senior executives. Organizations face external threats as well; these threats can emanate from activists who challenge a company's environmental record or consumer terrorists—such as Tylenol tampering incidents—as well as natural disasters.

Opportunity

Whereas the threat in crisis situations is self-evident, the opportunity is not. Weick (1988) acknowledged this problem when he concedes that crisis “events defy interpretations and impose severe demands on sensemaking” (p. 305). Yet if crisis managers are to strategically rescue their organizations from a crisis, they need to develop a sense-making process by which novel opportunities are seen, or, using Weick's term, enacted. That is, they have to cognitively re-create the crisis situation by developing a different way of seeing, one that envisions the situation as one in which opportunities are present.

One such opportunity is definitional; crises provide organizational officials wide latitude in managing meanings. A crisis is powerful in that it breaks frames; old ways of viewing problems are rendered obsolete. This gives a crisis manager an opportunity to redefine a situation in a way that was impossible before, and with new definitions come new solutions for problems. In short, a crisis provides a face-saving way to change paths by providing cover for decision makers—a helpful vehicle by which to disentangle oneself from intractable problems. Crises also proffer *an excuse to act* to bring about desired outcomes—even though the justification may have little to do with the action.

Second, a crisis emboldens people not only to act but to do so in a way that is costly to them—in the expectation that the sacrifice will bring a better day. Crises provide short windows of opportunity by which people are more likely to sacrifice—or accept dramatic change—in order to bring about a long-term good.

Third, a crisis provides opportunities for organizations to demonstrate to key constituencies that their concern is for customers more than for the bottom line. That is, crises give companies an occasion

to reinforce their reputation and their commitment to ethics. Even if they are at fault, by reacting to a crisis in a positive way, an organization can build goodwill.

Finally, crisis managers can use a threat to the industry as an opportunity to position a company for a strategic advantage. The case of Starkist Tuna is instructive. After years of being criticized by environmentalists for the fact that dolphins were caught in its tuna nets, the Heinz Corporation developed a new policy by which it would purchase tuna only from suppliers that could prove that their tuna was caught in a manner that was safe for dolphins. The company then put the label “dolphin-safe” on its tuna cans. The implication of the message was clear: Heinz cared about the environmental consequences of its actions; its competitors did not.

—Keith Michael Hearit

See also Apologia theory; Crisis and crisis management; Crisis communication

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ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTITY AND PERSONA

Organizational identity and *persona* are terms that refer to the self or character a company strategically communicates to multiple audiences in order to

achieve organizational goals. They are central concepts in the study and practice of public relations because these corporate personalities shape public acceptance. Just as individuals often play multiple roles and manage multiple identities—for example, people manage their work, home, and relational identities—organizations rely on this public relations function to increase connectedness with audiences. Managing organizational identity and persona involves creating and maintaining a selected public face while resolving contradictions that might arise as audiences interact with this organizational character. If a corporation creates and manages its identity and persona carefully, it can more successfully persuade the public to embrace the organization and its products, services, or policies.

To understand how corporations benefit from this identity management function, it is useful to take a closer look at the concept of organizational persona. Jill J. McMillan suggests that the term *persona* (from the Latin for mask) is beneficial in labeling organizational communication as symbolically constructed while noting that corporations have recognizable social presences with which audiences create relationships. Indeed, as Robert L. Heath (1993) pointed out, “the symbols of the organizations’ personae become real in the minds of persons involved despite the fact that the organizations are only symbolic and artificial” (p. 148). In other words, the only way audiences can often *know* an organization is through its employment of these symbolic personae. As Cheney and McMillan (1990) observed, as members of an organizational society, people must converse with corporate rhetors along with individual speakers. Organizational personae form the basis for this conversation. If people accept an organization’s use of symbols, they will be more likely to have an ongoing dialogue with a company and its services.

Organizations rarely possess only one persona, however, and it is the interaction of various personae that constitutes an organization’s identity. In Western society, the idea that individuals possess qualities that differentiate themselves from each other gradually came to describe differences in organizations as well. Thus, we may think of an organization’s

identity as that which is communicated through its various identifying emblems, logos, insignias, programs, and public actions. As Lars Thøger Christensen and George Cheney noted,

Some corporations, for example, work to personalize their identities in various ways, including the use of visible representatives (such as Hollywood celebrities or CEOs) or characters (such as Xerox’s monk-scribe of some years ago). Other organizations prefer, or even feel compelled, to “center” or “ground” themselves in key values or concerns. (1994, p. 224)

Nike, for example, relies on both of these approaches. Not only does its swoosh logo identify it, but its inner-city teen programs reflect its business personality. An organization’s identity is not static, however. Savvy organizations recognize that audiences interact with these corporate selves and adjust these public faces as needed. A company that in the 1950s communicated the identity of responsible benefactor through its logos and the like might recognize the need to update its identity to one of technological innovator to meet current societal expectations. This ongoing need to assess organizational identity can lead to challenges and even paradoxes for companies.

Examining the ongoing process of a corporation’s effort to maintain its organizational identity and persona with multiple audiences suggests how challenging careful identity management can be. If audiences identify or accept a given organizational persona, the organization will be able to meet its goals more easily. Instead of regulation and close scrutiny, for example, a chemical company that projects the persona of a concerned corporate citizen finds less public resistance. Audiences who feel the chemical company shares their concerns will in turn identify with the company. An important aspect embedded in the concept of organizational identity and persona, then, is the idea of identification. The more a person identifies, or relates, to an offered corporate persona, the less direct or forceful a company’s persuasion needs to be.

An audience member might identify with one organizational persona, however, and not with its other personae. Theresa A. Russell-Loretz (1995) investigated this paradoxical nature of organizational

identity and persona in Dow Chemical recruitment videos. She pointed out that organizations must balance the need to be unique from other organizations with the need to be the same, in order to be part of the cultural mainstream. Dow, like all organizations, must convey its unique corporate values for recruitment purposes while simultaneously informing employees and customers that it shares basic Western business practices and procedures with other corporations.

All corporations, as a cornerstone of a successful public relations foundation, must articulate and monitor their identities and personae. Without these recognizable corporate personalities, a corporation will be unable to stand out from other businesses and attract attention. The challenge facing all corporations, then, is how to create and maintain their images in a way that the public finds both acceptable and appealing.

—Ashli A. Quesinberry

See also Identification; Image; Legitimacy and legitimacy gap

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PAGE, ARTHUR W.

Arthur Wilson Page (1883–1960) is one of the most important pioneers of corporate public relations in United States history. As vice president and head of the Information Department at American Telephone and Telegraph from 1927 to 1947, Page—the first public relations person to achieve that rank—developed and institutionalized many of the strategies and tactics that are still commonly used in the practice, particularly in his use of research to guide policy. During World War II, he assisted with government public information activities and drafted the news release that announced the use of the first atomic bomb. After the war he spent a dozen years as an independent counselor. Unlike most public relations professionals, then or now, Page became a member of the boards of directors of AT&T, Continental Oil, and Chase National Bank. He was a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Carnegie Corporation, and the J. Pierpont Morgan Library and volunteered for countless other philanthropic organizations. He is still counted among the field’s outstanding practitioners, and the Arthur W. Page Society, an organization for senior public relations and corporate communications executives, was founded in 1983 to promote his principled approach to public relations.



Arthur W. Page

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BIRTH AND EDUCATION

Page was born on September 10, 1883, in Aberdeen, North Carolina, the second of four children of Willia

Alice Wilson Page and Walter Hines Page. Walter Page wrote for and edited several prestigious publications, including *Harper's* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, before founding the publishing house Doubleday, Page and Company, where he served as literary editor of *World's Work* magazine. The Pages were Methodists and Democrats, both of which young Arthur became as well.

Arthur Page was educated at the Cambridge (Massachusetts) Latin School from 1896 to 1899 and the Lawrenceville (New Jersey) School from 1899 to 1901, and he graduated from Harvard College in 1905. At Harvard he was a member of the Hasty Pudding, two literary societies, and a Southern Club that he had organized. Although his academic career culminated in an undistinguished "gentleman's C," he never stopped working on behalf of education, raising funds to educate African American teachers, serving on the Board of Overseers at Harvard, becoming a trustee at Columbia Teacher's College, and spearheading a corporate giving campaign for colleges and universities generally. He was honored with Doctor of Law degrees by Columbia University in 1954 and by Williams College in 1959.

EARLY CAREER

Page said he wanted to be an architect, but his father wanted him to go into the family business. While at Harvard, Arthur wrote for *The Advocate*, contributing almost all of the editorials published during his senior year, and he spent his summers at *World's Work*, proofreading and collecting pictures for the public affairs magazine. *World's Work* published 21 feature articles under Arthur's byline after he went there full-time in 1905.

Page began to assume more responsibility, both at home and at work. In 1911, he became managing editor. He married Mollie W. Hall of Milton, Massachusetts, on June 1, 1912. When his father went to London to serve as U.S. ambassador from 1913 to 1918, Arthur took charge of the magazine. Toward the end of World War I, Page went to France to help prepare propaganda for the Allied Expeditionary Force's Psychological Subsection.

This group created leaflets on such topics as the amount of food army regulations provided for prisoners. The army dropped millions of the leaflets by airplane during the last two or three months of the war in hopes of convincing German soldiers to surrender.

Page's father died in 1918; therefore, when Arthur returned to the United States in 1919, in addition to editing *World's Work*, he supervised other Doubleday, Page publications, including *Educational Review* and *Radio Broadcast*. He published his first book in 1920, on the part American troops played in Europe during World War I.

AMERICAN TELEPHONE & TELEGRAPH

By 1926 Page was ready to leave his family's business. He was the father of four children: Mollie (born in 1913), Walter Hines Page II (1915), Arthur W., Junior (1917), and John Hall (1920). He had plenty of writing and editing experience, as well as a strong background in business administration. And he was ready to leave because he no longer agreed with F. N. Doubleday's leadership in the family publishing house. In the meantime, AT&T's new president, Walter Gifford, was in search of a new publicity director. When Gifford and Page met, Page said he would take the job, but only if the company was serious about taking a socially responsible approach to informing the public. Gifford agreed, and Page joined AT&T as vice president on January 1, 1927.

Nine months later, Gifford and Page birthed their most important policy in a speech Gifford made before a meeting of the National Association of Railroad and Utilities Commissioners. Gifford's statement (apparently written by Page) was a credo that would guide Bell System decision making and public relations for the next 50 years. Gifford pointed out that AT&T's stock ownership was "widespread and diffused" and conceded that AT&T was a monopoly. The company's far-flung stockholders and consumers depended on Bell, giving the system serious obligations: "Obviously, the only sound policy that will meet these obligations is to continue to furnish the best possible telephone

service at the lowest cost consistent with financial safety.” He believed this long-term policy would succeed, stating, “Earnings must be sufficient to assure the best possible telephone service at all times and to assure the continued financial integrity of the business.” He spoke also of the “spirit of service” that marked Bell’s history, a tradition that continued with “scientists and experts devoted exclusively to seeking ways and means of making the service better and cheaper.”

The Dallas speech was the embodiment of Page’s approach to public relations. First, like the speech, Page always emphasized quality service. As a monopoly, AT&T was subject to public criticism and government regulation. Knowing that all corporations operated at public discretion, Page insisted that the public must be served; only truthful communication about beneficial activities could command public support. He also espoused a belief in the two-way function of public relations, contending that the public relations practitioner must act as the agent for the public inside the councils of the company and that public relations must be based on management’s policies, if for no other reason than that public opinion could become law. Therefore, public relations had figured in the development of the financial policy, and the policy served as the foundation for AT&T’s public relations. Finally, Page stressed the importance of character. The Information Department was not burdened with making money; rather, it was the custodian of the company’s ideals. It owed it to the public to make sure management upheld the financial policy.

PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

Under Page’s supervision, AT&T used advertising, publicity, motion pictures, speeches, employee magazines, brochures, international expositions, and other media to promote its services and improve its reputation. Roland Marchand (1998) describes AT&T, with its advertising agency N. W. Ayer, as an important innovator in institutional advertising, which aimed to imbue huge corporations with a soul. In 1927, the campaign ran in 446 periodicals with a total circulation of 44 million at

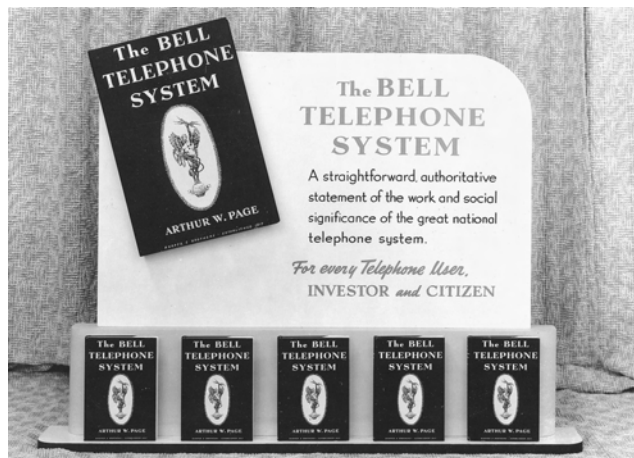
a cost of about \$1 million. A favorite publicity tactic was the “first call ceremony,” which celebrated the opening of a new line or the use of some new technology developed at Bell Laboratories. Page’s predecessor at AT&T, James Ellsworth, originated both of these tactics, but Page brought them closer in line with management policies and raised the company’s ethical standards.

Although he headed AT&T’s public relations, Page’s influence extended to the rest of the Bell System as well. AT&T was essentially a holding company, while its Associated Companies (such as Wisconsin Bell or New England Telephone) and its own Long Lines division handled local and long-distance operations, respectively. Western Electric was the manufacturing division, and Bell Laboratories the research division. With Page’s encouragement, these companies staffed Information Departments of their own, with as many as 400 public relations officers employed in AT&T subsidiaries by 1938.

Because of his desire to advocate for the public, Page relied on opinion research, but AT&T treated different publics differently. Page commissioned annual surveys to identify trends in public opinion and encouraged the Associated Companies to conduct research, too. Just before World War II, for example, New York Telephone found that its customers wanted the company to place memo pads in all public telephone booths. Therefore, by 1943 the company had supplied memo pads to more than 2,000 booths. Yet the Bell System did not treat its employees’ opinions with the same regard. The companies used such tactics as employee stock plans, company unions, and medical benefits to keep workers happy, and the Information Department implemented attitude surveys, analysis of discussion in company union meetings, and interpersonal and mass communication information campaigns. But the companies did not take workers’ desires into consideration when making management decisions. For example, Bell policy during the Great Depression was to lay off employees or cut their hours, whereas AT&T continued to pay its traditional \$9 stockholders’ dividend—despite the fact that earnings could not support it.

The Depression caused other problems for Page and AT&T. By the 1930s the system controlled the telecommunications industry. AT&T controlled the only significant long-distance network, Bell accounted for 80 percent of the telephones in the United States, and it owned more than 9,000 patents. Because of AT&T's dominance, Congress empowered the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to investigate the telephone industry in 1935. Page was personally investigated because, in addition to being a vice president of AT&T, in 1927 he had been made president of Bell Securities, a subsidiary that sold stock to the public and Bell System employees. The FCC reported on its investigation in 1939, but it failed to spur public criticism or congressional action against the company—or Page.

When one of the commissioners, a Harvard economics instructor, wrote a book criticizing AT&T, Page responded with his own book, *The Bell Telephone System* (1941), a plainspoken, methodical defense of company policies and activities. Page explained the financial policy and how it affected the company's mission to serve, including the public relations function. Harper Brothers published 30,000 hardbound copies; R. R. Donnelley and Son sold nearly 150,000 more in paperback.



Arthur W. Page's book, *The Bell Telephone System* (1941), explained the company's financial policy and how it affected the company's mission to serve, including the public relations function. Nearly 200,000 copies of the book were sold in hardcover and in paperback.

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AFTER AT&T

During World War II, Page served the U.S. government as well as AT&T. Although he declined an offer to become an assistant to Secretary of War Henry Stimson, he did agree to serve on the Joint Army and Navy Committee on Welfare and Recreation. While directing AT&T's Information Department, he was also the War Department's de facto public relations counsel. For example, in 1944 he went to England to help prepare the troops for D-Day; later he conducted a study of the War Department's Bureau of Public Relations, recommending sweeping changes, many of which were adopted by the army and the navy. He also counseled Secretary Stimson on the use of the atomic bomb, and he wrote the news release handed out by President Harry S. Truman's press secretary announcing its use in Hiroshima, Japan.

After the war, Page returned full-time to AT&T, but he retired in 1947 at the age of 63. Still, Page's work was hardly over. He opened a consulting agency and cultivated an impressive client list, including AT&T, Kennecott Copper, Prudential Insurance, International Telephone and Telegraph, Continental Oil, Chase National Bank, Consolidated Edison, and Champion Paper. Page did not want to build an agency—he hired only a secretary—but simply to advise management on public relations. He also continued to volunteer for numerous philanthropic organizations. The counsel he gave all of these clients was consistent with the approach he had implemented at AT&T.

One of Page's projects caused him to operate more circumspectly than usual. Beginning in 1950 he headed the Crusade for Freedom, the fundraising and publicity arm of Radio Free Europe (RFE) and Free Europe Press. Noel Griese (2001) reports that the crusade sent out millions of flyers, leaflets, brochures, handbills, and the like, raising more than \$1 million in its first year—but its costs almost equaled that. In its second year, the crusade actually spent more than it collected. Yet public officials seemed not to mind. In fact, RFE was funded mostly by the Central Intelligence Agency. Griese concludes that the Crusade for Freedom was simply

a propaganda front working to convince the public of the importance of fighting communism in Korea and around the world. Page supported the crusade because he truly believed in the importance of its cause.

Page also continued to offer public service, especially in the field of transportation. Having switched political affiliation to the Republican Party, he helped with Dwight D. Eisenhower's presidential election campaign. Ike then invited him to chair an advisory subcommittee to the Presidential Advisory Committee on Transport Policy and Organization. Page also took part in a study of the New York–New Jersey transit. A frequent rider of the Long Island Railroad, Page was named project director by the Metropolitan Rapid Transit Commission in September 1955. The committee proposed a rapid transit loop linking New Jersey's commuter railroad network with Manhattan's subway system by means of two underwater tunnels.

Page's family also kept him busy. His four children produced 17 grandchildren, who often visited him at his Long Island estate. In March 1960, Page went to the hospital for the first of two surgeries for diverticulitis, a disease of the intestines and bladder, and he recovered enough to return to work in May. However, he returned to the hospital in August, and he died on September 5, 1960, in New York City.

Arthur W. Page represented the pinnacle of public relations professionalism. He was among the first members of the "Wisemen," a group of such luminaries as Pendleton Dudley, John W. Hill, T. J. Ross, James Selvage, Paul Garrett, and J. Carlisle MacDonald. This group included only those public relations professionals who had access to policymaking by their clients or employers—the same group that populates the Page Society today.

—Karen Miller Russell

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PAMPHLET

A pamphlet is a printed piece of collateral material used for public relations, advertising, and marketing purposes. Also called a brochure, a pamphlet is a communication tool or tactic and a form of direct media (like fliers, newsletters, and posters), which reach audiences through distribution channels other than mass media (newspapers, magazines, radio, television). A pamphlet is generally considered a simple form of a brochure, but some designers and practitioners consider *pamphlet* and *brochure* synonymous terms.

Pamphlets are commonly distributed to a target audience interpersonally, in information racks, and through the mail in a standard business envelope or as a self-mailer. To be effective, pamphlets must be strategically sound, which means they need to be targeted toward a particular audience, convey an overall key message, and attempt to achieve a specific objective. Some of the most commonly used objectives in public relations include increasing awareness about a specific organization and educating the target audience about a specific service or product.

Every organization, whether corporate or non-profit, needs pamphlets or brochures to convey key messages to particular target audiences. A pamphlet is a tactic with a specific objective. For example, pamphlets can be used to inform utility customers about a fee increase, explain sexual harassment policies to employees, or persuade community members to volunteer for a neighborhood cleanup.

Although not considered as elaborate as brochures, pamphlets are produced in a variety of styles, shapes, and sizes. One popular format is an 8½ × 11 inch sheet folded in half, making four printed panels. Another format often used in public relations is a simple two-fold, six-panel, 8½ × 11 pamphlet. Pamphlets need to be created with a

unifying design throughout the entire publication, which can be conveyed through an appropriate choice of typeface, line rules, screens and tints, consistent clip art, and color schemes. Since pamphlets communicate information to a single reader at a hand-held distance, they also need to offer an orderly sequence of information. The information is presented in stages through panels, and a common design visually connects all of the panels and holds the reader's attention.

Pamphlets are commonly printed in one or two colors, usually black for the type and another color to highlight specific areas. Some public relations practitioners begin with a layout and copy for a pamphlet and then work with a designer or printer to develop the final printed piece. Other practitioners create the entire piece themselves using any number of desktop publishing programs, such as PageMaker, QuarkXpress, and Microsoft Publisher.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Brochure; Collateral

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PARENT/STUDENT NEWSLETTER

A parent/student newsletter is a highly popular public relations tactic in the communication plan of individual schools and school districts. Defined as a two-way asymmetric, segmented, public relations tactic, a parent/student newsletter is designed to not only communicate the key messages of a school or school district to its key publics, but to also give the key publics a glimpse of life inside the walls of the educational system.

To understand the dynamics of the parent/student newsletter, the first step would be to break down the definition and examine its three main components: *two-way asymmetric communication, segmented*

audience, and tactic. However, to achieve a complete definition, one must simultaneously examine the parent newsletter and the student newsletter as two separate entities. Although one publication can, and often does, serve two different publics, often they are two publications serving two different publics.

The characteristic of being segmented means that, unlike the local newspaper, which is sent to a mass audience, the parent/student newsletter is delivered to a targeted list of people who have a vested interest in the organization. For example, some school districts send their parent newsletter to all taxpayers, believing that only the taxpayer has an interest in what is happening in the school, whereas others send their newsletter to every household in the school district, believing that everyone in the community has a vested interest in the state of education. When looking at student newsletters, the mailing list may be segmented to include current students or to include recent graduates.

Newsletters have been referred to as being “moderately interactive” because the audience, having a vested interest in the information, tends to be willing to supply feedback in the form of letters, phone calls, or e-mails. However, the parent newsletter is a good example of a two-way asymmetric tactic because there is a two-way communication between sender and receiver but the communication has an imbalanced effect, with the school district's or individual school's main purpose being to persuade its key publics of the value of the institution. The well-written, proactive parent newsletter will act as the school district's voice when the local media are running unfavorable stories or editorials regarding a particular issue. Although contacts are made with community papers, the real substance of a district's public relations efforts is verbalized in a quality parent newsletter.

However, this may not be true of a student newsletter. A true student newsletter, although most likely edited by an adult faculty member, is written by students for students, and in this format would be an example of the public information model of public relations. The purpose of the student newsletter is to disseminate information regarding the activities in school, whether academic or extracurricular.

There is little research or persuasion that occurs, and the nature of the communication is one-way.

A tactic is a specific action that is taken to fulfill an objective. A parent/student newsletter is one of a number of tactics available to the public relations professional. In addition to a Web site, it is a standard tactic in a school district's or individual school's communication plan and can include articles on budgetary decisions, contract negotiations, extracurricular activities, curriculum changes/additions, and classroom/school highlights.

—Kristine A. Parkes

See also Newsletter; Web site

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PARKE, ISOBEL

Isobel Parke (1926–) is president and senior counsel of Jackson, Jackson, & Wagner, one of the most well-known consulting firms in the United States. Parke stands out in public relations history for her wide breadth of contributions to the field since the 1960s. She has helped to increase professionalism of the practice and champion undergraduate public relations education. In particular, she has contributed to the development of modern-day strategic environmental communication and coalition building. Her ability to balance her commitments to public relations as a democratic process, to educational issues, and to environmental concerns makes her a role model for today's young women entering public relations. "Even though we didn't consider ourselves feminists, per se, we wanted equal opportunity," Parke said of women like herself working in public relations 35 years ago, "and we were prepared to work for that" (Parke, personal communication, 2003).

Parke's first foray into the practice of public relations occurred when she was in her early thirties and had the opportunity to help organize and promote the New England Pavilion at the 1964 World's

Fair in New York. She had met Miriam Jackson and Patrick Jackson through mutual acquaintances and began to work for Jackson, Jackson, & Wagner, which was responsible for organizing and marketing the exhibition. She helped collect objects that represented New England from museums and then promoted the items through the media to attract fair attendees. She learned to work with media through trial and error. (She once sent a *Boston Globe* reporter a promotional photograph in a large, thick, blue paper "mat" frame in response to him requesting a "matte" finished photograph.)

After the Fair, Parke moved with Patrick Jackson and Miriam Jackson, owners and operators of Jackson, Jackson, & Wagner, to a 1735 farmhouse in New Hampshire. They grew their own fruits and vegetables and raised pigs while working for mostly nonprofit organizations. Parke's first client was a financially challenged repertory company. Parke helped the organization increase its audience base, but she also found herself placating creditors and electric companies that wanted to shut down the organization.

In the 1960s, Parke spearheaded Jackson, Jackson, & Wagner's statewide effort to build an environmental coalition to change an article in New Hampshire's constitution that allowed corporations to clear forests for purposes of business development. Parke brought together garden clubs, parent-teacher associations, residents, environmental organizations, and local businesses and politicians. This coalition helped establish state limitations and restrictions on land use, and it became a model for advocacy campaigns for the environment. Parke continues to serve on the coalition to maintain the amendment for open space.

Parke has described herself as "the inner wheel" (Parke, personal communication, August 5, 2003) of Jackson, Jackson, & Wagner, a behind-the-scenes motivator for Patrick Jackson's vision of strategic management. Although most of Parke's initial clients were nonprofit organizations, she began working with corporations who were seeking to better understand citizen groups and environmental advocacy. Parke said, "The first responsibility of public relations is to consider the public good" (Parke, personal

communication, August 5, 2003). For almost 40 years, Parke's expertise has been built on issue anticipation and analysis, community coalition building, strategic planning, and crisis containment. She has counseled environmental coalitions on land conservation, health-care organizations on mergers and restructuring, and the private school sector on crisis communication. She explained part of her work philosophy: "It's important to have a holistic grasp of the historical and societal issues before working on public relations solutions" (Parke, personal communication, August 5, 2003).

Parke has enhanced professional development for public relations as a management function through her service to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Parke is an accredited member and fellow of PRSA, served as a director of PRSA's national board from 1986 to 1987, and served as national board secretary in 1988. She was a founding member of PRSA's Yankee Chapter, which constitutes members from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. It was these activities in PRSA that led to her passion for public relations education.

In 1986, Parke was appointed PRSA board liaison to the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). She recalled, "At the time I had an 18 year old step-daughter. I had little confidence in dealing with several thousand teenagers all at once!" However, she agreed to the position and attended her first PRSSA board meeting. The students at the meeting were surprised to see her because professional liaisons rarely attended their meetings. However, Parke wanted to familiarize herself with the students as well as the organization. She recounts the moment when she walked into the board meeting: "Arriving a little late, I walked in and there was a wary silence. They asked, 'Who are you?' I said, 'I'm your board liaison.' After a moment, they brought me a chair and we got to work" (Parke, personal communication, August 5, 2003). For the next two years she helped PRSSA with decisions and strategies for the benefit of its student members.

Parke was a 2002 recipient of the David W. Ferguson Award presented by the PRSA Educators Academy, which honors practitioners who have

made significant contributions to advancing the profession through their support of public relations education. She was also a member of PRSA's Educational Affairs Committee (1992–2002), represented PRSA on the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (1997–2003), and has been a member of PRSA's Commission on Public Relations Education (1997–present).

Along with this active career in public relations, Parke built a reputation for public service in New Hampshire. She is the first woman president of the New Hampshire Timberland Owners Association and president of the Rockingham County Woodland Owners Association. She is a member of several other organizations, including the Rockingham County Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice, the SPACE Board of Directors and Legislation Committee, the Epping Conservation Committee, and the Seacoast Growers Association.

Parke is an award-winning conservationist and for almost 40 years has worked to preserve New Hampshire's land and timber industry. She has operated and cared for Tributary Farm since first moving there in 1964. The farm was originally 61 acres, but in 1992 Parke and Patrick Jackson purchased over 100 acres adjacent to the property to save the land from possible real estate development. In 2002, the New Hampshire Tree Farm Executive Committee named Parke the New Hampshire Outstanding Tree Farmer of the Year. To be eligible for the award, Parke had to meet specific objectives within 5 years that were set forth in an action plan written by her. Her objectives included improving the harvesting quality of mixed timber species, encouraging wildlife, and providing recreational enjoyment. Parke makes Tributary Farm an educational experience for college students who come to work and for kindergarten children who come to explore. She also frequently testifies before the New Hampshire legislature on a variety of forestry issues, such as licenses and use of wood-burning plants. She has won the John Hoar Award by the Rockingham County Woodland Owners Association and the Kendall Norcott Award, the highest recognition from the New Hampshire Timberland

Owners Association. Finally, Parke is president-elect for the Granite State Woodland Institute. She said, "With ownership of land comes the responsibility of good stewardship for the next generation" (Parke, personal communication, August 5, 2003).

Born in a country village called Sturminster Marshall in Dorset, England, Parke received her high school degree in Boston from the Winsor School. She returned to England for her master's in modern history from Oxford University. After graduation, she worked for 12 years as manager of education programs at Moor Park College, an experimental adult education college. She was married to Patrick Jackson from 1974 to 1994 and remained an integral partner in his life and work until his death in March 2001. Parke said that she gave Jackson "the partnership he needed to establish for our profession the vision and the challenge of behavioral public relations" (Parke, personal communication, August 5, 2003).

—Linda Aldoory

See also Public Relations Society of America; Public Relations Student Society of America

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PARKER, GEORGE

George Frederick Parker is important in the history of public relations primarily because he and Ivy Lee formed one of the early public relations firms, Parker & Lee, in late 1904 and he was publicity manager to President Grover Cleveland during three presidential campaigns.

Parker was a man with connections. He had a way with people in high places, particularly in politics and business. If he didn't know a person, he knew someone who did. There were only two

degrees of separation between Parker and any person of significance. It was not that he did not have journalistic skills; he had quite a background in the newspaper business. It was just that his ability to never meet a stranger, to know and influence people, was his greatest gift and his real value.

Today, such people are negatively called "schmoozers" because they attend key cocktail parties and effectively work the room. Still, such people are often a valuable commodity to executing both simple and complex campaigns. Parker would have to be called a superschmoozer because of the powerful people in his circle of acquaintances and his ability to persuade and convince them to take the actions he suggested.

Parker was born in Indiana on December 30, 1847. He lived much of his young life in Iowa, where his father had a farm. His interest in politics and journalism was apparent when he, at 26, founded the *Indianola Tribune*, a Democratic Party weekly in Iowa. When he was 29, he sold the newspaper and, for some years, wrote for other newspapers and studied in Germany. He returned to the United States and worked for the Democratic National Committee on the 1880 campaign in Indiana. During those years, he met Grover Cleveland and worked for him in the Pennsylvania campaign for the successful presidential election of 1884. Cleveland and Parker, during the election, developed mutual respect and a friendship. Cleveland asked Parker to prepare the campaign book for the party for the 1888 election. This was a secret task that meant Parker had to move to Washington, D.C., and work in the White House. The book was actually a brag book about the accomplishments of the Democratic administration. After he completed the book, Parker was transferred to New York to the party's national headquarters to work in the publicity department. Cleveland lost to Benjamin Harrison, and Parker was unhappy at the loss and how the campaign was run; he vowed that Cleveland would win in 1892.

Parker accepted a position as editor of the *New York Saturday Globe*, and for the 4 years between the elections he began to build Cleveland's reputation.

Cleveland did not like publicity or the press and was not effective at building relationships with politicians. Some historians say he lost the election to Harrison because he “suffered more from the newspapers than any other president” (Pollard, 1947, p. 499).

Relationship building being Parker’s forte, he wrote a speech for Cleveland to deliver in Boston. In those days, speeches were mailed to newspapers to print, since there were no television or radio broadcasts. Parker and Cleveland disagreed over the distribution of the speech. Cleveland, since he disliked and feared the press, wanted it to go out only 5 days in advance and only to a few carefully selected newspapers, whereas Parker wanted it to go out 7 days in advance and sent to newspapers all over the country. Parker won the argument, and the speech was positively received. In 1892, Cleveland won the most decisive presidential victory in the 20 preceding years, winning swing states as well as traditionally Republican states. It made the bond between Parker and Cleveland, now built on trust, even stronger. That same year, Parker selected, edited, and wrote the introduction for Cleveland’s *The Writings and Speeches of Grover Cleveland*.

Cleveland never made Parker a member of his presidential or White House staff, but he kept him close. He did make him U.S. counsel in Birmingham, England, and Parker worked there until the Republicans and McKinley won the White House. Then, he returned to the United States to head the publicity for the National Democratic Committee for the 1904 election. Upon his return, he learned about a young man who had won praise working for the 1903 New York mayoral election, Ivy Ledbetter Lee, a former *New York Times* reporter. Parker asked Lee to work for the National Democratic Committee. They worked on the campaign for Alton Parker. During that time Parker introduced Lee to numerous important figures, and Lee was impressed. When the Republicans won with Theodore Roosevelt, Parker asked Lee to join him as partner in a new publicity firm, which became Parker & Lee.

The nation’s third public relations agency, Parker & Lee had offices adjacent to the New York Stock

Exchange in either late 1904 or early 1905. Parker was 57 and Lee was 26. The two never did get along well. Historians agree that it was partly their age and partly their working styles. Parker was definitely the boss, and Lee, young as he was, did not appreciate taking orders from Parker. Many historians also agree that they probably took separate clients.

Their first client was General Asphalt Company, whose investors were worried about its solvency. Lee took on the task of informing the company’s publics of the facts. Parker had financier Thomas Fortune Ryan as a client. Ryan had made many millions on the New York streetcar and subway lines and had donated nearly half a million dollars to the Alton Parker presidential campaign when Parker was heading it. He wanted to be kept out of the news, and Parker was happy to comply.

No matter how they did their business, they managed to gain from the press a reputation of honest and responsible information dissemination. Their credo was “Accuracy, Authenticity, and Interest.” *Editor and Publisher*, then very critical of public relations, praised them. Beginning in the Alton Parker campaign, their press releases were printed like newspaper stories in columns and disseminated on galley sheets. This made them easy to read, and newspaper editors could use them without having to retype them, especially since Parker and Lee, former newsmen themselves, wrote them in accurate, journalistic newspaper style, unlike many political publicity stories of the time.

Lee acquired the Pennsylvania Railroad as a client in 1906 and then left the firm and took a job as director of publicity for the railroad. It was after Lee departed that he wrote his destined-to-be-famous Declaration of Principles, but there is little doubt that the ideals he and Parker followed led him to write it. There is also little doubt that Parker introduced Lee to key people that helped make his career successful.

Parker continued to do political legwork for Grover Cleveland after his presidency. In 1905, when the Equitable Life Assurance Society wanted to bring trust and prestige to their company at a time when the muckrakers were writing inflammatory

pieces about corruption in the insurance business, Parker convinced Cleveland to accept an unpaid position as head of Equitable's board of trustees. As an apparent reward, Parker was made secretary to the trustees, a salaried position he held until 1909, but there is no published evidence of the work he performed.

Parker, in 1908, formed a partnership, Parker & Bridge, with Charles A. Bridge, who had been a newspaper editor at the *New York Herald* and was also office manager for Parker & Lee. Little is known about their business, but it folded in 1913. Parker continued to work. He was secretary of press and publicity for the Committee of the Protestant Episcopal Church from 1913 until 1919 and had various other jobs as political and press counselor until he died in 1928 at 81. In death as in life, he made connections; financier Ryan was a pallbearer at his funeral.

—Kathleen Fearn-Banks

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PASTER, HOWARD G.

Howard G. Paster, a veteran Washington lobbyist and political strategist who became global chairman and CEO of Hill & Knowlton in 1994, achieved distinction in the public affairs realm for overseeing a dramatic turnaround at one of the world's largest communications consulting firms. In restoring the reputation of Hill & Knowlton, which had endured a period of intense controversy due to missteps by its previous leadership, Paster projected an ethic of

rigorous integrity. While many other CEOs in the 1990s succumbed to the swaggering spirit of the decade's economic boom, Paster inspired his colleagues by emphasizing integrity, counseling patience, and insisting on professionalism.

Paster, born December 23, 1944, completed his undergraduate degree at Alfred State College in history and political science in 1966. Later, he earned an MS from the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism.

Paster came to Hill & Knowlton from the Clinton administration, where, as the director of the White House Office of Legislative Liaison and the president's chief lobbyist on Capitol Hill, he had succeeded in winning congressional approval of two dramatic measures: a comprehensive federal deficit-reduction package and the North American Free Trade Agreement. Those victories required all the skill that Paster had built up during a lifetime in politics: as an aide to Congressman Lester Wolff of New York and Senator Birch Bayh of Indiana, and as a lobbyist for the United Auto Workers and for Timmons & Company. The bruising political battles over deficit reduction and NAFTA were severe tests of the Clinton administration's tenacity, and Paster's success in achieving those economic-policy breakthroughs helped lay the foundation for the strong U.S. economy of the later 1990s.

Engineering a turnaround at Hill & Knowlton posed a corporate challenge every bit as complex as the political struggles Paster had known on Capitol Hill. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the firm took on lobbying clients that many viewed as inappropriate. The firm's public embarrassment over its client selection had damaged both its public standing and its internal esprit de corps. Combined with the after-effects of the early-1990s recession—which had momentarily damaged the firm's flow of revenue and made it difficult to retain top talent—the situation posed a stern test of Hill & Knowlton's resilience.

With its morale shaken, the firm needed more than the routine corporate steps of cost-cutting and talent development. Paster knew that an entirely new corporate culture had to be instilled throughout the firm, as a fundamental step in overcoming the firm's reputation problem. Embodying a theory that

Hill & Knowlton would later impress on its corporate clients—the theory of “the CEO as standard-bearer”—Paster knew that integrity, to be (and to be perceived as) authentic, had to flow from the top down.

Starting with his early conversations with the firm’s leaders, Paster closely vetted the roster of clients, ensuring that they could withstand the harshest scrutiny. He developed a new Code of Professional Conduct—prominently posted at every office throughout Hill & Knowlton’s international network—and he insisted that all senior corporate leaders personally sign the document. He tirelessly traveled to meet with the firm’s regional presidents and senior managers, inspiring them with his personal concern for sound ethical standards. By delivering ethics-focused speeches at a new series of leadership conferences and workshops—called “H&K Colleges”—in the United States and Europe, he ensured that integrity would be the hallmark of the firm’s rising generation of talent.

Paster propelled his credo both internally through the management ranks and externally through steady reputation-building initiatives. He worked closely with the regional presidents within the worldwide firm to make sure they shared and would promote his vision of elevating the entire public relations profession’s standards. And by encouraging his clients and colleagues to speak out forcefully on public concerns as well as professional matters, Paster raised the firm’s visibility in the news media—in both mainstream publications and the trade press—and helped win recognition for Hill & Knowlton as an idealistic practitioner of public relations and public affairs strategies.

During almost a decade as Hill & Knowlton’s global chairman (1994–2002) and CEO—before being chosen as executive vice president of the parent WPP Group, where he went on to oversee all of the holding company’s public relations and public affairs agencies—Paster single-mindedly focused on restoring the firm’s renown for integrity. His willpower and perseverance ensured that the firm again earned public recognition for having the highest standards of integrity and living up to

the public-spirited legacy of John W. Hill—the creator of the modern-day public relations profession and the founder of Hill & Knowlton.

—Tom Hoog

PENNEY, PAT

In 1966, Patricia Penney Bennett (known professionally as Pat Penney) became the first woman to chair the Public Relations Society of America’s (PRSA) Counselor’s Academy, and she was the only woman to lead PRSA’s first special interest group during the group’s first two decades of existence.

At the 1965 Denver PRSA conference, Penney was nominated to become vice chair of the then-fledgling, 5-year-old group. She was then designated to become chair the following year. Male chauvinism so pervaded the practice at the time that a Detroit counselor rose to block Penney’s nomination because she was a woman. Following a raucous discussion, the assembled members voted down the challenge. Penney’s nomination was a milestone event in women’s efforts to acquire greater prominence in the field.

Penney had served in 1965 as the first woman president of PRSA’s Los Angeles chapter. She later became PRSA’s national secretary in 1969.

A 1948 journalism graduate of the University of Kansas, Penney began her public relations career in the publicity department of Jerry Fairbanks Production in Hollywood and later became assistant news bureau director at the California Institute of Technology. She later became account director at the Harry Bennett agency and manager of corporate accounts for Communications Counselors, a subsidiary of McCann-Erickson.

She became a business partner with Harry Bennett, whom she married, and was president of Penney & Bennett, Inc. in Los Angeles from 1960 to 1973. The firm was a leading consultant in the emerging field of investor relations. Its prestigious client list included Prudential Insurance Company and Union Bank of California.

Following a brief stint as vice president of corporate relations at Summit Health, Ltd., in 1976 Penney opened her own firm, Pat Penney Public Relations, which she operated until the time of her death. Clients included her former employer, Summit Health, and leading Los Angeles financial institutions, consulting firms, charities, and philanthropic organizations.

Penney was active in and received awards from a variety of professional, business, and civic groups. From 1974 to 1988, she taught public relations part-time at the University of Southern California School of Journalism (now Annenberg School of Communications), where a public relations scholarship is established in her memory.

—Kirk Hallahan

PERJURY

Put simply, perjury is the crime of lying under oath. Although in common law it was considered a misdemeanor, today perjury is usually classified as a felony under both state and federal statutes. Government bodies at all levels depend on the truthfulness of sworn testimony for decision making and proper functioning. By undermining the integrity of these governmental processes, perjury constitutes a serious offence against the state. Subordination of perjury, a related offense, occurs when one person convinces another to commit perjury.

To secure a conviction for perjury, a prosecutor must show that the defendant knowingly made a false statement of material fact while under oath. A person who gives untruthful testimony because of confusion or poor memory does not have the willful intent necessary for perjury. Furthermore, statements are considered “material” only if they could have affected the proceeding’s outcome. For example, a witness to a traffic accident who lies about his or her annual income has probably not committed perjury because the false testimony does not pertain directly to an element of the offense. However, a defendant charged with federal income tax evasion would be guilty of perjury for giving the

same false statement regarding his or her yearly earnings.

Although the law prohibits all citizens from committing perjury, public relations practitioners in particular must be scrupulously honest when engaged in lobbying activities or when otherwise testifying before government entities. As a criminal offense, perjury carries serious legal consequences. Perjury is also unethical under the Public Relations Society of America’s *Member Code of Ethics* as adopted in 2000, which counsels practitioners not only to “adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth,” but also to “maintain the integrity of relationships with . . . government officials” (2003, p. B16).

Alger Hiss’s two perjury trials (1949 and 1950) are still considered among a handful of United States “trials of the century.” Hiss, a seasoned government official whose professional experience ranged from secretary to Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes and attorney with the New Deal to aiding the formation of the United Nations and serving as president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, was charged by magazine editor and former Communist Party member Whittaker Chambers with supplying government documents to the Russians in the 1930s. Hiss denied the charges, and though the statute of limitations didn’t allow for espionage charges to be filed, he was indicted on two counts of perjury in December 1948. A hung jury in 1949 forced a second trial in 1950, in which Hiss was found guilty and sentenced to a 5-year prison term. Although Hiss maintained his innocence until his death in 1996, Soviet files made public that same year provided evidence of Hiss’s guilt, but controversy lingers.

Lobbyists found guilty of perjury have tarnished the profession’s reputation. For example, public relations practitioner Michael K. Deaver, a former top White House aide to President Reagan, was convicted of perjury in 1988. After leaving government service in 1985, Deaver started a lobbying firm whose clients included foreign governments and major corporations. Within a year of his departure from the White House, Deaver was found guilty of lying to a federal grand jury and a congressional subcommittee about his contacts with Reagan



Senator Karl Mundt (R) of South Dakota, who was acting chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) when the first testimony on the Alger Hiss–Whitaker Chambers investigation was heard, is shown in his office scanning the headlines that tell him of the jury's January 21, 1950, verdict in Hiss's second perjury trial. Chambers, a senior editor from Time magazine and an admitted ex-communist, identified Hiss and several other federal officials to HUAC as having been members of a communist cell whose purpose had been to infiltrate the U.S. government. The conviction made Hiss liable to a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and fines totaling \$4,000.

SOURCE: © Bettmann/CORBIS.

administration officials on his clients' behalf, in violation of the Federal Ethics in Government Act. Although Deaver faced a possible 15-year prison term, the court sentenced him to 3 years' probation and ordered him to pay a \$100,000 fine and perform 1,500 hours of community service.

—Nicole B. Casarez

See also Ethics of public relations; Lobbying; Public Relations Society of America

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PERSONAL NEWS STORY

See Human interest

PERSPECTIVISM THEORY

The claim that “it is all subjective” is almost commonplace among individuals in the 21st century. This claim reinforces the assumption that one’s knowledge is self-reflexive; that is, it both *affects* one’s perceptions and talk and *is affected by* one’s perceptions and talk. This is generally talked about as the “problem of knowledge” or the “epistemic problem” and is referenced by the question “how do you know what you know?” Often, beliefs are informed by family, friends, science, religion, social connections, and education level, among other things; ultimately, much of what is accepted as knowledge is based on a person’s perception about what exists and about what is deemed “true.” Often disagreements between people are explained as the differences between their individual perspectives. The theoretical names of this problem include, among other names, *perspectivism theory*, a term that encompasses multiple philosophical and theoretical concepts.

The rubric of perspectivism theory can be divided into two different epistemological camps: radical perspectivism and perspective realism. Radical perspectivism presumes that either there is nothing “out there” or that the only thing that matters is one’s individually constructed meaning of what may or may not be “out there.” Radical perspectivism assumes that meaning, reality, and knowledge are constructed through language and that they have no correspondence to anything that may exist apart from the knower. The Greek sophists introduced radical perspectivism into ancient

philosophy, and Frederick Nietzsche popularized it for contemporary philosophy. Robert Scott (1967, 1976) and Barry Brummett (1976) introduced radical perspectivism into the study of human communication with their discussions about rhetoric-as-epistemic and the concept of intersubjectivism. The ancient sophists and Nietzsche argue that humans are essentially solipsistic and cannot know anything other than what is experienced and known in their own head.

Perspective realism, on the other hand, assumes that a knowable reality exists apart from the knower but that humans have a finite understanding of and differing views about that reality. Thus, differences exist because people have differing perspectives on reality, rather than that people have different realities. This may sound like semantic games, but the difference between the two statements is significant because the differences are still held together by what is deemed the common ground of the actual but never fully knowable reality. Perspective realism was introduced into ancient philosophy, it can be argued, by Isocrates and Aristotle and has been explained to a modernist audience by Evander Bradley McGilvary (1956). This concept was adapted to the study of communication by Richard Cherwitz and James W. Hikins (1986) when they introduced rhetorical perspectivism and philosophical realism to the study of human symbolic interaction. Cherwitz and Hikins incorporated McGilvary's ideas when they contended that differences in knowledge are analogous to the differences that two people would give when they describe the same mountain from two different sides. They are seeing the same physical object but describing it in two different ways because each has a perspective that is limited by the geographical view of the same object. Another example of perspective realism is Kenneth Burke's concept of "terministic screens." Burke (1966) argued that the language humans use helps them to both explain what is experienced and to determine what will be experienced. Burke does not go as far as the radical perspectivists to argue against the existence of a reality that is external to the knower, but he does contend that our "observations" are as much a result of the particular terminology in which the observations were made as they are of the

object observed. Thus, we are affected as much by the language we use as by an external reality.

What application does this have for the study of public relations? Here the possibilities are almost limitless. One simple possibility is the basic understanding of a public. Is a public (or a consumer group) something that is discovered, or is it something that is created? The radical perspectivists would argue that a public is only created by how one talks about it; the perspective realists would argue that there is a particular public that is "discovered" rather than created but that practitioners will differ in how they view or understand it because of the language they use to describe it and the various epistemological and historical backgrounds (i.e., perspectives) of those who are describing the public.

Similar distinctions apply to those who are on the receiving end of the public relations message. The radical perspectivists would argue that each individual recipient of a public relations message will understand the message in radically different ways because each audience member has a different reality and no one can exert any control over that "reality." The perspective realist would argue that even though each audience member may have a different perspective on the message or product or service that is presented, there is enough common ground from the external reality that impinges on each of them that all audience members will have something in common in how they understand a message. Thus, there is a difference between the audience members, but the difference is limited. If the ad is about shoes, the perspectives will differ but no one will be thinking about elephants in India.

—Mark A. Gring

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PERSUASION THEORY

One of the main goals of public relations is to persuade an organization's target publics to adopt a certain attitude, opinion, or behavior. Whether a company is trying to increase its customer base, recruit employees, or enhance its image, the use of persuasion is key.

Persuasion is not a dirty word, although it is often confused with its “black sheep” cousin, *propaganda*. Whereas propaganda may use coercion, manipulation, and deception to convince people to think or act a certain way, persuasion does not try to take advantage of the public. Instead, people are presented with reasons why they should adopt an attitude, opinion, or behavior. It remains up to them whether they choose to accept these reasons and reevaluate their thinking.

The art of persuasion dates back thousands of years. It was Aristotle, however, who provided the basis for persuasive reasoning: *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*. To this day, these “modes of proof” are at the core of the public relations practice.

MODES OF PROOF

Aristotle described persuasion as an art of proving something true or false and identified three ways to offer such proof: through *ethos* (source credibility), *logos* (logical appeals) and *pathos* (emotional appeals).

Ethos

Ethos focuses on the credibility of the source delivering a message. Is the source considered to be ethical and believable? Source credibility directly impacts the effectiveness of an appeal. If a person delivering the message isn't believable, it doesn't matter what appeals are being used, so selecting an appropriate spokesperson is critical.

Ethos appeals are often made by using celebrity spokespeople, satisfied customers, and people who are perceived as peers to back a product or cause. Public relations practitioners should consider how their target public will perceive a spokesperson's integrity, expertise, reputation, and authority. Similarity to the audience and likability also are important characteristics, as can be physical attractiveness and charisma. For example, a musician popular with teenagers may be an appropriate spokesperson for that age group but would probably have little influence over senior citizens.

A public's opinion leaders may be good choices as message sources. Opinion leaders are respected people to whom others look for guidance. The balance (consonance) theory, which suggests that people consider their relationships with others when listening to and adopting information, provides support for using opinion leaders.

Logos

Logos refers to appeals based on logic and reason. These arguments usually consist of facts and figures, and they address an audience on a cognitive level. Public relations tactics aimed at educating a specific group of people most likely would focus on *logos* appeals. Such information would be communicated straightforwardly and objectively for the sole purpose of making that group of people aware of something.

Although strong factual information should be the foundation for any argument, facts and figures can't always stand alone because they lack inspiration and motivation.

Pathos

Pathos refers to arguments that are based on emotion—on arousing feelings such as fear, guilt, anger, humor, or compassion. Public relations practitioners use these appeals when their purpose is to motivate a group of people to think or do something in particular, such as buy a product or support a cause. *Pathos* appeals can be seen everywhere:

- A fundraising appeal to feed hungry children hopes to arouse compassion.

- A public service announcement about drunk driving targets guilt.
- A commercial for a home security alarm system seeks to arouse fear.
- An ad for diamonds focuses on love.

Pathos appeals are usually more effective when they are combined with logos appeals. For example, the fundraising appeal to feed hungry children cannot just focus on the faces of sad boys and girls; it must communicate how many children are in need, why they are in need, and what can be done to alleviate that need.

AUDIENCE SELF-INTEREST

Before developing a persuasive message, public relations practitioners must first determine which appeal or appeals to use to best reach their target public. This choice depends on the wants, interests, needs, concerns, and beliefs of the target public. Human beings share basic needs, such as food, shelter, and clothing. They also want many of the same things—success, love, and security. Interests and beliefs, however, vary among groups based on age, lifestyle, and other demographics.

The concepts of selective exposure and selective attention suggest that people only expose themselves and pay attention to information that is consistent with their self-interest; if they do not perceive that they are affected by information, they will selectively avoid it. For example, people shopping for a new car will be attracted to car ads more than people who are not in the market for a new vehicle.

Analyzing a target public to determine its wants, interests, and needs requires research, which may include examining census or marketing data; conducting polls, surveys, focus groups, or interviews; or evaluating lifestyles.

FRAMING MESSAGES

Once a target public's wants, interests, and needs are analyzed, a message can be written to address those wants, interests, and needs. Teenagers, who

typically struggle to “belong,” will be attracted to messages that promise to make them look “cool.” Young professionals climbing the corporate ladder will be attracted to messages that promise success. Mothers will be attracted to messages that promise to make their children happy and healthy.

There are many persuasive techniques from which to choose, including testimonials and endorsements (ethos); surveys, examples, and other factual information (logos); and a variety of emotional appeals ranging from humor to fear to sex appeal (pathos). The key is to select the ones most appropriate for the target public based on the analysis that was conducted.

Take, for example, a target public consisting of parents of freshmen college students. They will be concerned about their child going away from home for the first time and will want to ensure his or her happiness and health. A college sending a message to these parents regarding the availability of refrigerators for dorm rooms may select from several persuasive tactics. If an ethos appeal is used, the message might be delivered by current students, who will share their stories about the necessity of a refrigerator. A logos appeal may focus on facts surrounding student lifestyles and offer statistics on how many freshmen usually have a refrigerator. A pathos appeal may stress how having access to a refrigerator will enable students to eat healthy foods, which would address a common concern of parents.

ETHICAL USE

Because there may sometimes be a fine line between persuasion and propaganda, public relations practitioners must understand the differences and implement persuasive tactics in an ethical manner.

One of the most important elements of persuasion is that the information must be true. Unlike propaganda, which distorts facts and exaggerates claims, persuasion should be based on information that an organization honestly believes to be true. If a company claims that a diet pill is responsible for its users losing 50 pounds in four weeks, that claim must be true; otherwise, the claim is deceptive.

Sources used to deliver persuasive messages must be sincere and relay genuine feelings and emotions, especially if one is giving a testimonial or endorsing a product.

There also is a difference between tailoring emotional appeals to an audience's self-interest, as is done in persuasion, and playing on emotional insecurities in an effort to manipulate the audience. Manipulation may benefit an organization, but it won't meet its public's needs. Extra care should be given when using fear or guilt appeals to make sure the severity of the appeal matches the interest of the public. The greater the target public perceives the fear, the more severe the appeal can be; moderate appeals should be used if the fear is perceived as moderate. Effective fear appeals tell the audience not only the degree and likelihood of harm, but also how to reduce the chances of the harm occurring.

Several values of the Member Code of Ethics developed by the Public Relations Society of America pertain to the ethical use of persuasion: honesty, or adhering to the highest standards of accuracy and truth; fairness, or focusing on free expression and supporting all opinions; and, advocacy, which stresses responsibility in supporting "informed debate."

—Ann R. Carden

See also Demographics; Motivation theory; Propaganda; Psychographics; Psychological processing; Public opinion and opinion leaders; Publics

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PERT CHART

For complex public relations projects, it is essential to have an effective planning tool. Large-scale projects consume a large chunk of a public relations department's budget as well as its human resources, so a practitioner wants to do everything possible to ensure that the project runs smoothly. Planning is an essential feature for large and/or complex public relations actions. Planning helps him or her deliver a quality product on time and on budget. The program evaluation and review technique (PERT), sometimes called the critical path method (CPM), is an excellent resource for planning and monitoring complex projects. The system originally was developed for tracking missile development programs for the United States government. The PERT Chart is much like the Gantt Chart (*see Gantt Chart*), but it presents information as a network chart rather than as a bar chart. Like the Gantt Chart, a PERT Chart requires a practitioner to identify all the tasks that must be completed, the time each task will take, and the sequence of the tasks.

PERT Charts are designed to help practitioners plan the time that a public relations action will take and track its progress. They provide a method for organizing, scheduling, and coordinating tasks. Planning experts argue that PERT Charts provide a better visual depiction of tasks and contingencies than Gantt Charts. However, since they require the user to learn certain terms and symbols, they can be more difficult to interpret than a Gantt Chart. There are advantages and disadvantages to each. In general, PERT Charts are more technical; numbered circles or boxes represent the tasks, and arrows connect tasks and indicate if tasks are sequential or concurrent. If an arrow runs between two tasks, such as between "conduct an interview with the CEO" and "write the story about the CEO," the tasks are sequential. Diverging arrows, such as for "select paper for newsletter" and "write newsletter stories," indicate that the tasks are concurrent.

PERT Charts also deal with external contingencies, or factors beyond the practitioner's control that can still affect the time a public relations project takes to be complete. For example, a practitioner

hires a printing company to produce brochures for a product launch. The brochures must be shipped to the company. External contingencies include the ability of the printer to complete the brochure on time and to have the brochure shipment arrive on time. A strike or fire at the printing company could delay the completion of the brochure. Bad weather could delay the arrival of the shipment. Practitioners must consider the external contingencies when planning how long a project will take. The skilled practitioner builds in extra time as a hedge against external contingencies.

PERT Charts also use the terms *critical path* and *dummy activities*. The critical path is the longest path through the chart and indicates the maximum needed to complete the project. Let us assume a project will take 70 days to complete—it has a critical path of 70 days. The path is critical because any delay in a task on this path will delay the project. For instance, assume that tasks four and eight are on the critical path while three, five, and seven are not. (PERT Charts label tasks by number.) Slight delays in tasks three, five, or seven will not affect the completion date because they are scheduled to take less time (30 days) than the critical tasks (70 days). Clearly a very long delay in any tasks can disrupt a project, but any delay in a critical path task will delay a project's completion. A PERT Chart provides an easy way to identify the critical path for a project.

A dummy activity is a task that must be completed in sequence but requires virtually no resources or time to complete. It is still important, however, because failure to execute it would delay the project. For example, say that a brochure is drafted and e-mailed to a manager for review. The e-mail must be sent, but doing so uses only a brief amount of time and electricity. Dotted lines are used in a PERT Chart to illustrate such a dummy activity.

PERT Charts even have a formula for calculating the time of a project. First, the manager identifies the best-case scenario time (the quickest possible time to complete the project), the worst-case scenario time (the longest possible time it should take to complete the project), and the most likely time to complete the project. Those numbers are then entered into the following formula:

$$\{[\text{Best time} + (\text{Likely time}) \times 4] + \text{Worst time}\} / 6$$

In addition to task and time, a PERT Chart can include responsibilities for tasks. People can be assigned to tasks so that it is clear who is responsible for what in a project. If there is a delay on a task, everyone knows whom to contact about that task.

As with a Gantt Chart, a PERT Chart is only as good as the thought process that went into the planning. It does not magically add overlooked tasks. However, seeing the public relations action may indicate to planners that something is missing. The PERT Chart is used to guide the execution of the action as well. The manager plots what tasks have been completed and the time it has taken. When these data are entered, it becomes easy to see if the project is on track or how far ahead or behind it might be. The PERT Chart also serves as a reminder so that tasks are not forgotten. A manager knows exactly what has been done and what still needs to be done. Finally, these charts are helpful for developing budgets: by knowing exactly what needs to be done, a practitioner can calculate the costs of the materials, personnel, and equipment needed to complete the project.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Gantt Chart; Process research

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PHILANTHROPY

Philanthropy is a unique characteristic of American society, and public relations practitioners play an important role in preserving the tradition of giving and helping. Broadly defined, philanthropy is voluntary action for the public good, including voluntary giving, voluntary service, and voluntary association.

Our tradition of philanthropy was dramatically demonstrated in the aftermath of September 11, 2001. Within hours after the terrorist attacks, millions of dollars in unsolicited contributions began pouring into the offices of disaster-relief charities.

In just seven days, donations to such charities and to special funds established to aid victims, their families, and communities approached \$250 million. By week three, gifts surpassed \$750 million. One month after the tragedy, the total stood at \$1 billion.

Gifts came from individuals, corporations, and foundations—the three types of donor publics. Listing just a few examples, Chicago firefighters standing on street corners collected \$360,000 in one day; film, television, and recording stars generated an estimated \$150 million in pledges during a two-hour telethon broadcast on 35 networks just 10 days after the terrorist attacks; the corporate foundation for Citigroup gave \$15 million to establish a scholarship fund for all victims' children; the Coca-Cola Company, its foundation, and its bottling partners gave \$12 million to be divided among several relief organizations; the Lilly Endowment, one of the five largest independent foundations, pledged \$30 million to the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and the September 11 Fund; and the Ford Foundation gave \$10 million.

About 140 charitable organizations, such as the Red Cross, were involved in collecting and distributing the financial assistance so generously given. These organizations are part of our country's nonprofit sector, which is composed of more than 1.4 million tax-exempt organizations that are neither businesses nor government agencies. Collectively, their mission is to provide "goods" not provided by the business sector, which is ruled by the marketplace, or by the government sector, which is ruled by the ballot box. The nonprofit sector, also known as the voluntary or third sector of the U.S. economy, is grounded in the First Amendment of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to form associations. Nonprofits are the operationalization of voluntary action and serve as a conduit for voluntary giving and service. For example, following the terrorist attacks of September 11, charity officials reported that offers of volunteer help, blood donations, and donated goods were so numerous that they far exceeded immediate needs. Relief organizations were inundated by volunteers. Across the United States, without being asked, people left

families, jobs, and their own problems to travel to the disaster sites to do whatever they could.

As dramatic as this demonstration was, it should not be viewed as a surprising aberration. A historic and deeply rooted cultural belief in the United States is that our country's social needs, to the greatest possible extent, should be addressed by private voluntary action rather than by government. Americans also eschew a dominant role for churches in meeting social needs, which is prevalent in countries with one state religion. In other words, philanthropy is highly salient in U.S. society because it is linked to such core values as religious freedom, opposition to powerful government, and individualism.

In his book on the history of U.S. fundraising, the father of public relations education, the late Scott Cutlip (1965/1990), stated, "America's philanthropy is typically American—born of the cooperative and generous spirit bred on the frontier, required by the problems of large-scale industrialization and urbanization, [and] made possible by the enormous accumulation of capital wealth" (pp. 530–531).

Cutlip also reported another extraordinary demonstration of philanthropy that testifies to the tradition's longevity and contradicts claims that America's response to September 11 was unsurpassed in history. During World War I, the American Red Cross War Council raised \$114 million in just eight days—an amount that when adjusted for inflation far surpasses the \$129 million raised by the Red Cross in the same number of days following the 2001 terrorist attacks. President Woodrow Wilson had proclaimed June 18–25, 1917, as National Red Cross Week, and the amount of money given in that short time represented more than \$1 for every man, woman, and child in the United States.

VOLUNTARY GIVING

America's tradition of philanthropy is the envy of other industrialized nations. Quite simply, individuals, corporations, and foundations in the United States characteristically give away money. In 2002, Americans gave a total of \$241 billion, of which 84 percent came from individuals, 11 percent

came from foundations, and 5 percent came from corporations (AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy, 2003). With only a few exceptions, giving has increased every year since studies measuring philanthropy began.

Americans give money for many reasons, but, fundamentally, they make gifts because giving is a customary, admired, and expected behavior in our society. According to *Independent Sector* in 2001, almost 90 percent of all U.S. households contribute to one or more charitable organizations each year, and the average gift per household is \$1,620. Wealthy individuals adhere to a philanthropic standard that is unusual in the modern world. The standard was outlined more than a century ago by legendary philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, who proclaimed, “He who dies rich dies disgraced” (1989/1883, p. 108). Attesting to the standard’s continued influence, Microsoft founder Bill Gates and his wife, Melissa, have given away more than \$25 billion of their wealth since 2000.

Approximately 700,000 companies report charitable contributions on their income-tax return every year. On average, these companies give away about 1.2% of their pretax revenues. Independent foundations, unlike the other sources of gifts, are required by law to give away each year an amount equal to 5 percent of their financial assets. Their purpose is to provide support to charitable organizations through grants. There are approximately 50,000 independent foundations in the United States; their combined assets total more than \$450 billion.

VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION

The United States has a large and pervasive nonprofit sector consisting of 1.4 million nonprofit organizations, of which more than 900,000, or 63 percent, are charitable nonprofits, meaning that gifts to them are deductible from donors’ taxable income. This third economic sector allows Americans to collectively promote causes that they believe are important and in society’s best interest. The causes, represented by the missions or tax-exempt purposes of nonprofits, are diverse and wide ranging. They touch on almost all aspects of American life.

Naming just a few broad categories, nonprofits are engaged in arts and culture, education, health, human services, recreation, and religion.

The United States relies on nonprofits and the services they deliver more so than any other country in the world. Most major social action in the past, such as civil rights, women’s rights, and environmental protection, began in the nonprofit sector. As a former president of Yale University asserted, the United States can be distinguished from all other societies by virtue of the workload it assigns to its third sector.

Our propensity for forming nonprofits was first noticed as distinctly American by Alexis de Tocqueville more than 170 years ago. As he noted, Americans of all ages and all conditions constantly form associations. De Tocqueville was convinced that this propensity was a significant factor in the vitality and success of American democracy. Contemporary scholars agree: The nonprofit sector fosters the pluralism on which democracy depends.

CHARITY VERSUS PHILANTHROPY

Scholars have identified two primary but distinctive thrusts in voluntary action: *compassion*, most closely associated with charity, or helping the poor and needy; and *community*, concern with civic improvement and social change, or philanthropy. Authorities agree that, today, charity primarily is carried out by government through welfare programs. Cutlip said the term *charity* was replaced by *philanthropy* after World War I. Philanthropy translates from its Greek origins to “love of humankind.” It is an investment in civilization. In a contemporary context, charity is a part of philanthropy, but only a minor part.

The term *charitable organization* is a legal term; it does not refer to programs dealing with the poor. Rather, the term is used by lawyers to refer to organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as serving religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or educational purposes. The greatest proportion of charitable organizations—and the bulk of the money given to them each year—have to do with purposes not defined as charity.

PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

Public relations practitioners play a vital role in sustaining America's tradition of philanthropy. Many practitioners specialize in fundraising, or helping charitable organizations attract philanthropic dollars by managing their relationships with donor publics. Other public relations practitioners serve as corporate contributions officers, helping businesses make contributions that are mutually beneficial for the community and the company. Foundations rely on the public relations practitioners to disseminate information on their grant making and on solutions to societal problems that their grants have helped solve. Many public relations firms serve nonprofit clients or advise businesses on their philanthropic giving.

Overall, public relations people in all three economic sectors utilize philanthropy to help their organizations succeed and survive. They represent diverse pluralistic voices in the marketplace of ideas and encourage interaction, thereby strengthening our democratic society.

—Kathleen S. Kelly

See also Fundraising; Nonprofit organizations; Public relations

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PHOTO-OP

One way for an organization to gain media attention is to create an opportunity for a news photographer to get a great shot. A picture can be a powerful message, and by having the right photograph picked up by media, an outstanding opportunity can be created. A photo opportunity (photo-op) is a planned act that will sum up the entire public relations campaign in a picture. When creating a photo opportunity to promote an event, it is essential to visualize how the event will be portrayed in pictures rather than words.

To get coverage of an event featuring a great photo-op, a news release or media alert is sent to media to notify them of the photo opportunity. The photo-op has a greater chance of getting noticed if the event is truly newsworthy. Notification of a photo-op spells out a unique visual for print and broadcast media outlets and should be formatted like a media release or media alert. It should be a condensed version of a news release limited to one page that spells out the details of the event and also intrigues its recipients. The alert should be formatted with headings like "who," "what," "when," "where," and "contact information." Special attention should be given to describing the visual appeal of the event.

Some examples of common photo-ops are a tree planting, a ribbon cutting, a signing ceremony, a plaque or check presentation, or a ground breaking for a new building. Although these examples may get media coverage, in order to truly attract media attention, a photo-op has to be creative. One must imagine the photo as it will appear on the local broadcast of the evening news or on the front page of the newspaper and make sure that it conveys the right message. The organization's logo should appear prominently in the photo. The logo will provide immediate identification with the organization or company and can appear on the podium, a backdrop behind the speaker, or even on a T-shirt or hat.

A single glance of the photo should reveal the entire thrust of the event, or the entire public relations campaign. A photo-op should be simple so as not to confuse the audience and the image. It is best to avoid a photo opportunity that is time sensitive.

An everlasting image will appear in newspapers and magazines for some time to come, but if a photo's timeliness is limited to one day, such as a Fourth of July celebration, its circulation will be greatly limited. The photo opportunity should also appeal to all media. One must imagine how the event will play out on television, in print, and on the Internet.

The appearance of a celebrity or other public figure will create intrigue and interest in the photo-op. A classic staged event to promote the film *The Seven Year Itch* was developed using special blowers installed in the grate underneath Marilyn Monroe's feet. Photographers captured the memorable planned image when her skirt "accidentally" flew up. This staged photo-op has everlasting appeal.

—Nancy Engelhardt Furlow

See also Media relations; Media release

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PITCH LETTER

A pitch letter is a public relations sales tool. It is written to interest a media representative in a potential story idea and is tailored to a specific media outlet (unlike a news release, which may be distributed very broadly).

The most effective pitch letters draw on the writer's knowledge of the media outlet and the representative within it. First, a story must be pitched to the appropriate media outlet. Often this decision is fairly easy, since local media outlets are the targets for many public relations efforts. However, at other times broader audiences may be needed to achieve public relations objectives. For example, a paper mill in the Pacific Northwest has developed new effluent treatments that both reduce pollution

control costs and greatly improve the quality of the water the plant discharges. The cost reduction aspects could be pitched to a trade journal to generate positive press with industry peers, and the water quality issue could be pitched to a sport fishing magazine to improve the company's image with those who fish. The key is to understand what the public relations objectives are for a story, and then pitch the angles to the right media outlets to achieve them.

Another important aspect of the media outlet is the editorial calendar. Some larger publications have special or themed issues planned months in advance. Being familiar with editorial calendars, available through certain media directories, will enable public relations practitioners to pitch stories that can result in very important placements.

Next, the story must be pitched to the appropriate person. There is no point in pitching a story about a company's community relations efforts to a news editor; such a story probably should be sent to the business or community editor (depending on the outlet). Pitching a story to the wrong person wastes time for both parties. On the local level, developing good working relationships with area media will make most of these choices fairly clear. On a broader scale, media directories should be used to pinpoint the best person at a specific outlet to send the pitch letter to. A pitch letter should never be addressed "Dear News Editor." Such a mistake typically ensures failure.

Finally, a story must be pitched in the appropriate manner. The letter should reveal the writer's understanding of the audience of the media outlet, the relevance of the story to that audience, and key points of interest. Assistance in arranging interviews and other information gathering should be offered. The point is to generate interest in the story with the media, not to write the story for them. As for tone, a hard sell is rarely, if ever, appropriate. The media value their independence and will not be told what stories they need to write. Beyond that, the choice between a straight business approach, creativity, or some mix is determined by appropriateness to both the topic and the outlet.

—Maribeth S. Metzler

PLANK, BETSY

Betsy Ann Plank is widely acknowledged as a pathfinder and legend in public relations. Her career, spanning more than 55 years, is filled with “firsts.” Indeed, many in the field consider her public relations’ First Lady.

Plank is the first woman to have served as president of the Public Relations Society of America (PSRA). She is the first and only person to be selected for three of PRSA’s top individual awards: the Gold Anvil Award (1977) for being the outstanding U.S. professional, the Paul M. Lund Public Service Award (1989) for exemplary civic and community work, and the first Patrick Jackson Award (2001) for distinguished service to PRSA.

Plank is the first woman elected by readers of *Public Relations News* as Professional of the Year (1979) and also was named one of the World’s 40 Outstanding Public Relations Leaders by the same publication in 1984. She was the first recipient of both the Arthur W. Page Society’s Distinguished Service (formerly Lifetime Achievement) Award (2000) and PRSA Educators Academy’s David W. Ferguson Award (1997) for exceptional contributions by a practitioner to public relations education.

In 2000, the Institute for Public Relations honored Plank with its highest award, the Alexander Hamilton Award, in recognition of her major contributions to the practice of public relations. In 2001, she was inducted into the Communication Hall of Fame at the University of Alabama, her alma mater. Five other universities similarly have recognized her as an outstanding public relations professional.

Despite all the accolades, Plank has refused to view her achievements as anything extraordinary. She stated,

Mea culpa, I never had a plan! I simply seized opportunities as they came along and have been very blessed. I also credit my family—they always had expectations of excellence and hard work and were so supportive. I had the freedom to explore everything. There was no gender-bias there and, in retrospect, perhaps that accounts for my never recognizing any during a long career lifetime. (personal communication, October 23, 2002)

Plank was born on April 3, 1924, in Tusculoosa, Alabama. She attended her hometown university, the University of Alabama, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in history, with English literature as a minor, in 1944. In later years, Plank liked to point out that there was no such thing as a public relations major when she attended college, and for that reason she became a leading advocate of public relations education.

Her career in public relations began by serendipity in 1947. At the time, she had moved to Chicago in search of continuing a career in radio broadcasting—without success. But then she met one of the city’s only women executives, Duffy Schwartz, Midwest director of the Advertising Council, who became her first mentor. Schwartz recommended Plank for a temporary position at a public relations and fundraising agency serving nonprofit organizations and coached her in the unfamiliar field. After several months, Plank was offered a full-time position and worked at that agency and others throughout the 1950s.

In 1960, Plank joined Daniel J. Edelman, Inc. (now Edelman Public Relations Worldwide) and served as executive vice president until 1973. Plank then became director of public relations planning for AT&T before transferring to Illinois Bell (now SBC Communications Inc.), where she was the first woman to head a company department, directing external affairs and a staff of 102.

Plank spent more than 17 years with SBC and helped shape and articulate the company’s response to the divestiture of the Bell System—what she considers the greatest challenge in her career. “We had a couple of years to break up the world’s largest corporation and prepare it without a single missed step,” she recalled (“Alabama Communication Hall of Fame,” 2004, n.p.). There were many problems. It was fascinating to live through, challenging to prepare for and carry out, and almost twenty years later, “the telecommunications industry hasn’t settled down yet” (“Alabama Communication Hall of Fame,” 2004, n.p.).

Plank retired from corporate practice in 1990, but she continues to work as a public relations consultant through her Chicago-based firm, Betsy Plank Public Relations.

Much of Plank's energies throughout her career have been devoted to public relations education, with particular emphasis on the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). She admits that today students and their education are her most compelling interest and joy. She explained, "My professional life has given me a deep appreciation for colleges and universities preparing students for ethical practice in the evolving profession of public relations" (LaBresh, 2000, n.p.).

According to Plank, one of her proudest achievements occurred while she was president of PRSA. Not surprisingly, it reflected her confidence in the new PRSSA. Prior to 1973, a PRSA committee of "elders" had governed PRSSA. With Plank's strong advocacy, bylaws were amended to permit the student organization to govern itself. "It's a joy to have been part of such a watershed event in the history of PRSSA's remarkable and responsible leadership," she said (personal communication, October 23, 2002).

Plank served as the national advisor to PRSSA from 1981 until 1983. At the beginning of her tenure, she and Jon Riffel, often referred to as the "godfather" of PRSSA, established what is now known as Champions for PRSSA, a group of professionals who have special, ongoing interests in the student society, its members, and public relations education. In 1988, the Champions created annual PRSSA scholarships, which were later named for Plank. Since the program began, more than \$65,000 in scholarships have been awarded.

In 1993, the student society honored Plank with its 25th Anniversary Award. Today, PRSSA has 243 chapters at colleges and universities across the nation, with more than 8,000 members, and Betsy Plank is widely known as the "godmother" of PRSSA.

Plank co-chaired the 1987 Commission on Undergraduate Public Relations Education, which developed guidelines for public relations curricula at U.S. colleges and universities, and is a member of the current commission, which deals with both undergraduate and graduate education. Plank was instrumental in establishing PRSA's Certification in Education in Public Relations (CEPR) program in

1989, which provides a review and endorsement process for undergraduate studies in public relations. She chairs the initiative to encourage university-based programs to seek formal certification.

Plank sees education and research as the most important developments in the future of public relations. She explained,

The hallmark of every respected profession is a formal program of study. Originally, few people in public relations were educated for it. Most came from newspapers or other media as I did, and concentrated primarily on publicity. Today, the field needs men and women who have studied for the practice, know its theory, principles, ethics, and expectations and who have a command of the skills and research required for it. (personal communication, October 23, 2002)

Plank emphasized that research is essential to assess the attitudes of an organization's constituencies and to evaluate the impact of public relations. "Research and education—both formal and life-long—are moving public relations to a stronger recognized position of professionalism" (personal communication, October 23, 2002).

To Plank, public relations is about building reputation and relationships. Although she was an early endorser of new technologies, she believes that interpersonal communication is key to effective practice. She stated:

Communications technology is a magic, wonderful tool, but simply a tool. It will never replace the human encounter, the willingness to listen and to address differences constructively. That requires understanding of human behavior, psychology and motivation—and that doesn't come with a keyboard! What is fundamental to public relations is how we help our clients relate and respond to their constituencies—employees, customers, owners, and the community at-large. (personal communication, October 23, 2002)

Plank also continues to believe that recent crises in the corporate sector, starting with the Enron scandal in 2001, present a wake-up call to organizations about their credibility, ethics, and need for transparency—all emphasizing the strategic importance of ethical public relations. She stated,

I foresee public relations addressing many more functions—all aspects of the organization’s reputation and relationships. These crises provide a unique opportunity for public relations professionals to say to their clients, “We can help in restoring and reinforcing the organization’s relationships of trust with its key stakeholders,” and then to perform and position public relations in its strongest counseling and policy-making capacity. (personal communication, October 23, 2002)

Plank expressed gratitude for her chosen career:

I am so fortunate to be in a field that I love very much and of which I am very proud. This is a profession rooted in the history of this country, which was founded on the idea of people having an informed choice, participating in dialogue, reaching compromise and consensus. Public relations has played an essential role in that tradition and democratic process, which is now reaching people worldwide. (personal communication, October 23, 2002)

After more than 55 years in the practice, Betsy Plank continues to counsel clients and to pursue her passions for advancing public relations education and its students. She said, “In my lexicon, there is no such word as *retirement!*” (personal communication, October 23, 2002).

—Kathleen S. Kelly and
Cristina Proano Beazley

See also Institute for Public Relations (IPR); Page, Arthur W.; Public Relations Society of America; Public Relations Student Society of America

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Betsy A. Plank

SOURCE: Public Relations Society of America. Reprinted with permission.

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES (PACs)

Political action committees, often called PACs, are an important aspect of American politics and the American electoral system. They exist legally so that corporations, trade unions, and other private groups can make donations to candidates for federal

office—something that they cannot do directly. Many PACs represent special interest groups like the National Rifle Association of America; others represent large conservative or liberal coalitions. PACs in the United States have a long and at times controversial history.

They were invented by labor unions in 1943 as a loophole around federal campaign laws. The first PAC was organized by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and was a model for later PACs. Corporations were not allowed to form PACs until the passage of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (FECA). By opening the door to corporate money being used to set up PACs, the FECA and its 1974 and 1976 amendments brought about a new and much larger role for trade associations and corporations in politics. Enormous growth in the number of PACs actively involved in politics soon followed, and today there are more corporate PACs than any other type. In 1974, there were 608 political action committees registered with the Federal Election Committee. At the close of 1995, there were more than 5,000 of them.

As the number of PACs has increased, so has the amount of PAC money spent in elections. In 1974, the 608 PACs contributed \$12.5 million to congressional candidates. In the 1995–1996 election cycle, about 5,000 PACs gave \$201.4 million to congressional candidates, most of them incumbents. This amount represented an increase of 12 percent from the 1993–1994 level and was more than one-third of the total money raised by these candidates. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, at the close of the 1998 election cycle, PACs contributed a total of \$220 million to federal candidates.

PACs get their funds not from the sponsoring group's treasury, but from its members, employees, or shareholders. Most give the majority of the funds to congressional elections, in which they can contribute a maximum of \$5,000 to a candidate for each campaign—the primary, runoff, and general election. However, some have conducted independent negative campaigns against candidates they oppose. An early example of this, which has served as a model for many others, was the \$8.5 million campaign waged in 1988 by the National Security PAC

that simply attacked presidential candidate Michael Dukakis on behalf of Republican George Bush.

PACs that work to raise money from people employed by a corporation or in a trade union are called “connected PACs.” They rarely ask for donations but are legally free to do so. “Unconnected PACs,” also called “independent PACs,” raise money by targeting selected groups in society. The Supreme Court ruled in 1985 that there should be no limits on the spending of PACs on a candidate's behalf, provided that the expenditure is not made in collaboration with a candidate. The PAC must maintain legal independence. An individual's contribution to a PAC is limited to \$5,000.

During a presidential campaign, PACs give to the parties to support the election campaign expenditures of the candidate. A PAC can contribute a maximum of \$15,000 to a national party. It can, however, give much more to state and local parties. This amount is restricted in some states, but in others it is not. Pre-primary-election campaigns, or exploratory campaigns, are often financed by a PAC that was founded by a candidate. They may also be created by a “foundation”; donations to a foundation are tax-deductible, which makes them even more attractive to donors. The donations go to pay for an undeclared candidate's travel and politically related expenses that occur during a campaign.

The relationship between political parties and PACs is unusual because it is both symbiotic and parasitic. On one hand, it seems they are bound to be competitors. Both raise money from the limited pool of political givers, both try to elect candidates, and both strive for the attention of candidates and office holders. They do, however, have very different perspectives. PACs act on the basis of a narrow viewpoint, whereas parties operate from a broad-based vantage point. The success of narrow-based PACs comes partly at the expense of broad-based parties. As parties decline, PACs gain. On the symbiotic side of things, both parties work hard to nurture PACs and gain their money, and most PACs try to be used in a bipartisan way, usually to incumbents of each party.

So, which PAC spends the most money? The Association of Trial Lawyers of America beat out the American Federation of State, County, and

Municipal Employees union as the biggest spending PAC of 1997–98, spending \$2,697,636. Five of the top 10 high-spending PACs are labor unions; these are national organizations and can pull together contributions from millions of members. The United Parcel Service PAC was the most generous PAC representing a single company, and the National Rifle Association was the top-spending single-issue PAC.



United States President Bill Clinton addresses the 54th annual meeting of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America (ATLA) while in Chicago, July 30, 2000. The ATLA is regularly one of the top-spending political action committees (PACs).

SOURCE: © Reuters NewMedia Inc./CORBIS

PAC funding of congressional elections has been heavily aimed at those already elected and seeking reelection. During the congressional elections of 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994, FEC data show that Democratic incumbent senators received five times more funding from PACs than their Republican challengers. The Democrats received the majority of PAC money for as long as they had control of Congress, despite the fact that Republicans are usually viewed as more sympathetic to business. In 1994, however, the Republicans took the majority in both the House and Senate, and that all changed. The 1996 season revealed a reversal of PAC funds from the Democrats to the Republicans, especially from the business PACs. The Democrats regained some ground in 1998, receiving \$4 million more from PACs than they did in 1996.

There are some congressional members who make a point of not accepting PAC money, but others heavily depend on it. In 1990, more than 80 percent of the financial support of nine members of the House came from PACs. The importance of this is obvious—if you have the financial backing to finance an election campaign, you have an advantage over a challenger who does not. This is deepened by the fact that contributions from PACs not spent on a campaign can be held until the next cycle, giving the incumbent a head start over a future challenger. The same is true in the Senate. In 1997, 30 senators elected in 1992 and standing for reelection in 1998 had already raised an average of \$1.4 million per senator. The generally agreed-upon figure to be a good “start point” for senatorial elections is \$5 million; those who already have 20 percent of that sum before the election starts have a distinct advantage. Since House members are elected only every two years, any House member seeking reelection is almost constantly seeking funds. Many House members spend more than \$1 million during a campaign.

There are some in the United States who would like to see the amount of PAC money greatly reduced, fearing its potential influence on legislators. Even though records from PACs are made public and checked by the FEC and media members and the public are free to view them, some are still uneasy about the power of PACs and the legal dodging of limits placed on donations received. To some it seems that there is no motivation among the president, senators, and congressmen to alter a system that has benefited them so much. As public criticism rose during the 1990s, Congress considered several reform proposals, but no legislation was passed. The proposal that would have generated the most sweeping changes in campaign finance, the McCain-Feingold-Thomson Bill, failed by just six votes in 1996.

The future of the PAC donation system remains to be seen, but the current structure that appears to favor incumbents is holding strong in 2003.

—Ruthann Weaver Lariscy

Note: Special thanks to Amie Marsh-McCook for her contributions to this entry.

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POLITICAL SPEECH

Political speech is speech on issues of political and social importance. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution provides that the government cannot restrict an individual's right to speak regardless of what the government might think about that speech. The First Amendment originally referred only to Congress, but today it applies to all levels of government.

Scholars justify the First Amendment's protection of the right to freedom of expression in several ways. One of the primary justifications for protecting freedom of expression is self-governance. A working democracy depends on the ability of individuals to freely discuss politics without fear of being censured. Another justification is the attainment of truth. The idea is that truth will be found only if society is able to test concepts through open discussion. The freedom to criticize government is also seen as a stabilizing force in society. Unrest comes when individuals are not free to voice their displeasure and seek change. And finally, expression is seen as necessary for human self-fulfillment or self-realization. The ability to express oneself is what sets humans apart from animals, and therefore the right to freely express oneself is crucial to human dignity and integrity.

In determining whether government regulation of political speech is constitutional, the courts use the standard of strict scrutiny. That is, the government must establish that it has a compelling interest to protect through the regulation and that the regulation is narrowly tailored to achieve that interest. Because

of the importance of ensuring a robust public debate on political issues, some false political speech is permitted. For example, individuals can libel or defame political figures with impunity provided their statements were not made with actual malice—knowledge of falsity or reckless disregard of the truth. The purpose is to prevent speakers from being chilled by the threat of government censure.

Until 1978, corporations were not thought to have First Amendment rights because they cannot achieve self-fulfillment. Beginning in 1978, however, the U.S. Supreme Court came to recognize that corporations do contribute to public policy debates and that individuals have a First Amendment right to hear what corporations have to say on policy issues. The purpose of political speech by a corporation is not to promote a product or service, but rather to voice the corporation's views or position on a matter of public importance. Such speech falls within the realm of public relations.

The first case in which corporate political speech was recognized involved a Massachusetts law prohibiting a corporation from speaking on referendum proposals unless those proposals materially affected the corporation. The First National Bank of Boston challenged the law because it wanted to publicize its views on a proposed constitutional amendment that would have granted the state legislature the right to impose a graduated income tax on Massachusetts residents. First National opposed the amendment and sought to inform its customers of its position via a public relations campaign.

In denying the bank's claim, the lower court had said the issue was whether corporations had First Amendment rights. The court concluded they did not, but the Supreme Court disagreed. The Court said that the issue was not whether corporations had the same speech rights as natural persons, but whether the speech in question was protected by the First Amendment. In other words, the content of the speech determined the protection granted, not the nature of the speaker. Voters were entitled to hear First National's views on the topic; therefore, the bank's speech was protected by the First Amendment. The speech was not made less

important because it came from a corporation rather than from an individual.

Two years later, the Court reinforced its protection of speech by a corporation, holding that the government could not restrict speech by a corporation simply because the speech might be offensive to some people. Nor can the government force a corporation to disseminate messages on political or social issues with which it disagrees, although the government can force a corporation to carry certain messages about its products, such as the Surgeon General's message on tobacco packaging.

Not everyone agrees that corporations should have First Amendment protection for political speech. These critics focus on corporate wealth and power, arguing that corporations have such power and influence that they distort the debate on public policy issues. Individuals need to be protected from that power and influence, it is believed. That position can be seen in the case of *Nike v. Kasky* (2003).

When Nike, the multinational athletic equipment manufacturer, became the subject of a public debate about the use of sweatshops overseas in the early 1990s, the corporation tried to restore its public image through a public relations campaign. An activist then sued Nike in California under the state's false advertising statute, claiming that statements made by Nike in the course of the public relations campaign were false and misleading. Nike argued that the statements constituted political speech, not commercial speech, and were therefore protected by the First Amendment. The trial court agreed, but the California Supreme Court held that the speech was indeed commercial speech because Nike hoped to reach consumers with its message. The court said that Nike was free to discuss the issue of overseas labor in the abstract, but it could not discuss its own practices unless it was truthful and nonmisleading. The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case, leaving the California decision standing. The effect of the California decision is to reduce the sphere of corporate political speech. The emphasis is no longer on the right of individuals to hear the views of corporations, but rather on the speaker and the intended audience. So long as a court views the intended audience as

consumers, corporations will have little or no political speech rights.

—*Karla K. Gower*

See also Commercial speech

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PORTFOLIO

A portfolio contains evidence of the accomplishments of a student or professional practitioner. Portfolios are especially valuable during a job interview because they offer evidence of the job candidate's proficiency in the practice. The evidence contained in a portfolio consists of samples of the person's work that reveal his or her knowledge, work ethic, skill, and creative talent.

Students who are studying public relations need to carefully develop a portfolio. Thus, they might write for their campus newspaper or get stories aired on the campus radio or television stations. Students should include in their portfolios all of the materials they produce as class projects; such projects can help demonstrate the skills they are honing to become an intern or entry-level employee. They are therefore wise to carefully participate in class projects and extracurricular activities with the intent of producing work that can augment their portfolios. They might write stories for the newsletter of their Public Relations Student Society of America chapter. They might create its Web site or otherwise contribute in some meaningful and identifiable way to that site. They might plan and help execute a fundraiser event. Or they can submit their work for various contests. PRSSA chapters often set aside days when students can meet with professionals to discuss materials that should be in portfolios or are in them already. Professionals can

offer advice on how to augment the portfolio with materials they find most useful when they make hiring and promotion decisions.

Much like students, professionals should develop and carefully groom a portfolio. In contrast to a student's portfolio, a professional's portfolio contains some of the more important samples of that person's work. It can, for instance, include samples that earned awards. Organizations such as the Public Relations Society of America and the International Association of Business Communicators hold annual contests in which a wide array of public relations campaign strategies and tools are judged.

Internships are a vital part of a student's academic and professional preparation. They not only help the student learn the ropes of the profession by seeing what professionals do, but they also offer the student many opportunities to produce work that can be added to her or his portfolio. Any student who takes an internship is wise to negotiate the opportunities to do work that could be added to the portfolio.

A good portfolio fleshes out the student's or practitioner's professional life story. It tells what the person can do and demonstrates the skills the person possesses. At a crucial point in a career, it can mean the difference between getting a job or merely being a candidate.

—Robert L. Heath

See also International Association of Business Communicators (IABC); Internship; Public Relations Society of America; Public Relations Student Society of America

POSITION AND POSITIONING

A *position* is a stance a consumer takes regarding a product, service, or the nature of an organization relative to the competition. *Positioning* depends on how a consumer compares a product to the competitors' product. Hence, a consumer ultimately determines a product's position and plays a key role in marketers' positioning strategies.

One can take the example of a *luxury car*. Undoubtedly, a specific corporate image and specific product attributes or visuals would immediately come to mind. In sum, this is the position that *luxury car* occupies in the hearer's brain. More precisely, positioning is a process that marketers use to persuade consumers to think favorably about *their* particular brand, product, service, or organization. It is "the process of creating a perception in the consumer's mind," according to Kenneth Clow and Donald Baack (2002, p. 99). Given this example, a specific automobile marketing team's "positioning" will have been successful if the consumer thinks of *their automobile* rather than a competitor's model.

According to an integrated marketing communication (IMC) approach, all elements of the mix—advertising, public relations, personal selling, and so forth—generate synergistic energy that is used to build lasting relationships with key stakeholders. In this way, marketing is considered a *philosophy*, rather than simply a *function*. Hence, IMC campaigns that involve strategies designed to nurture relationships with consumers will be most successful in competing for a "share" of the consumer's mind—and thus increasing sales—since their brand is the one the consumer readily thinks of when deciding which product to buy amidst a sea of competitive brands. Moreover, effective positioning simplifies the process for consumers: they expend little mental energy on purchase decisions because they choose certain brands spontaneously.

All elements of the marketing mix are involved in the positioning process. For example, public relations practitioners use two-way communication between the organization and consumers and other key publics to develop solid relationships. Advertisers use one-way communication strategies involving slogans, taglines, themes, characters, images—all designed to generate awareness and promote key product attributes and benefits to the consumer. The sales team works one-on-one with vendors to stock the marketplace, place point-of-sales materials, create special end-aisle displays—and so on.

As simple as this process seems on the surface, the position-positioning dynamic is a deeply complex

one. Essentially, a product's position is intangible, dynamic, and elusive. A competitor's sale price, new technologies, a negative news story, and numerous other variables can affect a consumer's perception. Furthermore, what marketers *think* they know about their products and consumers often is quite different from the reality. It is the marketer's job to discover which consumer perceptions should be built upon, maintained, or reinforced and which should be changed, displaced, or deemphasized.

Usually, reinforcing a position that reflects well on the organization is much easier than repositioning or reversing a consumer's negative view. Consumers' key beliefs and attitudes are paramount. For example, Johnson & Johnson's successful handling of the Tylenol product-tampering episodes in 1982 included reemphasizing hospitals' trust in administering Tylenol to patients. On the other hand, Winn-Dixie supermarkets has found that changing customers' negative perceptions of the stores' beef quality since the 1998 charges of past-due meat sales has been comparatively more challenging.

The first step in the positioning process is to develop a three-phase research plan. First, research is used to unlock the target market's existing perceptions. Since consumers ultimately determine a product's position, learning as much as possible about consumers demographically and psychographically—as well as how they use the product—can provide important clues about the existing position it holds in their mind.

Second, researching key variables enables marketers to discover distinctive means by which to showcase a product to its best advantage—also known as creating a desired position. Basic approaches consider the consumer, competitors' strategies, social responsibility, and image strategies. Research enables marketers to assess consumers' reactions to tentative persuasive messages developed to affect a product's positioning. Of particular concern is how the messages play out relative to consumers' beliefs, attitudes, and product-use habits. Some marketers position their product using strategies such as problem-solution, country of origin, distributor location, distributor's service

capability, and low price. Here are some other approaches:

- Corporate image
- Product benefits/attributes: underscoring certain traits and characteristics
- Competitors: comparing with a competing brand
- Price-to-quality ratio: emphasizing this value relationship
- Product use: distinction from competition based on how a product is used
- Product class: identifying a hierarchical position within a category
- Cultural symbol: relating the product to a well-known symbol
- Distribution methods: associating product with reputable distributors who make products easily accessible for consumers
- Spokesperson: linking product with a celebrity
- Personality: relating a product to a certain lifestyle

Finally, marketers must consistently monitor the position that their products hold in consumers' minds and modify strategies accordingly. Key message development and communication over the long-term are crucial components of successful, well-researched positioning strategies. Expecting short-term promotional strategies to cement a desired product position constitutes a formula for failure. Moreover, positioning messages should be consistent across all segments of the marketing mix, and marketers should take care to create positioning strategies that competitors cannot duplicate easily.

Finally, positioning strategies also must be considered when developing market plans for international arenas in today's global marketplace. Again, research is key to discovering what is relevant to the consumer and how the product provides a benefit. A culture's heritage, traditions, and symbols cannot be overlooked. Given the strong emphasis on research, it is obvious that positioning is only as good as the research on which it is based.

—Donnalyn Pompper

See also Advertising; Marketing; Media networks; Two-way and one-way communication

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POSTCOLONIAL THEORY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Postcolonial theory is a relatively new lens through which to examine the academic discipline of public relations and other corporate and governmental practices. In essence, postcolonial theory offers the rationale for interventions that uncover traces of colonialist styles of thinking manifested in prevailing discourses on economy, society, culture, and politics.

Postcolonial is a way of theorizing challenges and resistances to dominant, often Western, theoretical and methodological perspectives. This interdisciplinary tool has been used extensively in literary criticism and cultural studies to critique the taken-for-granted worldviews of mainstream Euro-American writers, scholars, and thinkers. In recent years, postcolonial scholars have been trying to articulate radical new ways of understanding the world that challenge both overt and covert forms of economic, social, and cultural imperialism.

The postcolonial perspective gained currency in the domain of communication studies when *Communication Theory* brought out a special issue on the subject. In their introductory essay in this issue, Raka Shome and Radha Hegde pointed out that “there is a growing awareness of the limitations and parochialism of theory so steeped in Eurocentrism that it either ignores completely or oversimplifies the complexity of the ‘rest’ of the world” (2002, p. 260). Postcolonial theory plays a significant role in not only making sense of this complexity on the fluid matrix of a deterritorialized world but also in communicating this complexity.

In public relations literature, one of the earliest references to postcolonial theory is in a 1996 essay by Nancy Roth, Todd Hunt, Maria Stavropoulos, and Karen Babik, who, drawing on postcolonial scholar Edward Said (1978), talk about the need to address issues of relative power in the framing of universal ethical principles for the practice of public relations.

Power, which is central to postcolonial theory, is often neglected in the study of public relations. The discipline of public relations, of course, does acknowledge multiculturalism. But although the recognition of multiple identities, cultures, and ethnicities is a crucial first step in acknowledging demographic, ideological, and cultural diversities in the world, postcolonial scholars argue that global relationships and interactions have to be understood in terms of existing power differentials within and among nations, institutions, and organizations. For instance, one of the key postcolonial projects is to show how Western or West-trained policymakers seek to control power by legitimizing Western ways of thinking manifested in the Western paradigm of global management.

In the domain of public relations, there is an overwhelming emphasis on the communication of corporate goals. This communication is channeled through messages about a dominant, largely Western, model of economic growth and development. Such a model, postcolonialists argue, is often shaped more by powerful Western or West-based multinational corporations and their strategic publics in the market, trade, finance, and high technology sectors than by the needs and aspirations of a vast majority of the global population. In other words, publics that are not perceived to be “strategic” are marginalized or ignored.

A postcolonial examination of the predominantly Western paradigm of public relations is carried out by Debashish Munshi and David McKie, who postulated that the more common “homogenised worldview of public relations maintains old colonial legacies that support neo-colonial economic interests” (2001, p. 16). They pointed out, for example, that the Bhopal gas tragedy of 1984 in India, which claimed thousands of lives and maimed countless others, continues to be seen through the eyes of a

major Western corporation (Union Carbide). Most mainstream public relations literature continues to depict the ways in which the company dealt with the crisis and maintained its line of communication with its shareholders and investors. The fundamental aim of the mainstream public relations approach in this case was to manage the impact the case had in the United States, where the corporation was based. The voice of the victims of the tragedy, akin to the marginalized subaltern publics of colonial historiography, is rarely heard in such depictions. Clearly, therefore, there is a significant power differential among a diverse range of publics.

The sustainability of public relations depends on addressing the issue of power differentials and acknowledging the existence of a multiplicity of publics. Postcolonial approaches provide an opportunity for public relations to look outside the dominant frame and effectively reach out to a broad range of publics instead of being limited to few elite publics. In a rapidly globalizing world with major demographic shifts, recognizing a broad spectrum of publics is not just a moral imperative for public relations scholars and practitioners but an economic and political one as well. In numerical terms alone, publics in the Third World, often a loose synonym for the non-Western “other,” will have to be taken note of. After all, as Futurist David Mercer pointed out, “wealth increasingly depends upon market demand rather than supplier pressure, and—with more than 90 per cent of the world’s population—the Third World will become the main economic driver in the Third Millennium” (1998, p. 15). In the interest of long-term equity, therefore, public relations scholars and practitioners would need to shed firmly entrenched paradigms rooted in the colonial era and work toward nurturing multiple relationships and recognizing a variety of worldviews.

—*Debashish Munshi*

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An Indian protester uses a megaphone during a demonstration against the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy in New Delhi on August 27, 2003. Scholars have pointed to the Bhopal tragedy as an example of postcolonialism because most mainstream public relations literature continues to depict how the company dealt with the crisis and maintained its line of communication with its shareholders and investors, while the voice of the victims of the tragedy is rarely heard.

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POWER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT THEORY

Power resource management theory is founded on the assumption that those who have control over

resources (also known as stakes) have differing degrees of power over one or more of the following: decision-making processes, resource recognition and/or allocation, criteria building, interpretation of events or communication, agenda setting, issues management, and the like. In essence, there are as many resources as there are economic, political, and social contexts. Definitions of what might be considered resources and the values assigned to them are largely a phenomenon of social construction. Resource definitions and values can be frequently characterized as states instead of traits. Definitions of resources as well as assigned values can and often do change through ideological discussions or contests over what is or what should be.

Traditionally, however, public relations resources are those “things” that have the potential to accomplish organizational goals. In the arena of activism, for example, Robert L. Heath suggested that

power resource management entails the ability to employ economic, political and social sanctions and rewards through means such as boycotts, strikes, embargoes, layoffs, lockouts, legislation, regulation, executive orders, police action, and judicial review . . . [It] assumes the ability of a group, a company, or a governmental agency to give or withhold rewards—stakes. (1997, p. 161)

Barry Barnes wrote that power resource management theory conceptualizes power as being “embedded in society as a whole” (1988, p. 61); however, not everyone or every organization has the discretion to use power. “The possession of power is the possession of discretion in the use of that power. When one person [or organization] is said to have more power than another it is a matter of the one having the discretion over a greater capacity for action than the other” (p. 61).

Considerations of power and the discretionary use of it in public relations can be interestingly contextualized among three levels of power. The first, and most traditional, conceptualization of power assumes that one has power over another to the extent that one can get the other to do something he or she (or it) would otherwise not do. This is the most obvious presence of power. Persuading members of a public to contribute to a new philanthropic

effort or to adopt a specific interpretation of an organization’s intended identity over an alternative one are examples of the first level of power.

The second level assumes that power comes from the mobilization of bias, meaning the ability to represent sectional interests as the interests of the masses within a given population; the definitions and values of a few are made to take precedence over the definitions and values held by the majority. For example, when public relations strategies and tactics are used to develop consensus around economic, political, or social issues (regardless of party lines) to favor one group of the public over others that have stakes in the outcome, they are being used for the mobilization of bias. It is important to note, however, that this process is rarely a conscious one in the minds of the majority participants.

The third level assumes that power, and the discretionary use of it, come from the ability of an individual or organization to engage in discursive practices resulting in the creation of a given population’s wants and needs. At this level, the populations under study accept the construction of their wants and needs by parties other than themselves without question. The economic, political, and social norms by which a population operates and is governed are accepted as real and immutable, when in reality they are the results of the reification and institutionalization of the mobilization of bias. Public relations strategies and tactics can be and have been used in the institutionalization process. They also have been and can be used to challenge institutionalized norms, thereby bringing about change and new ideas.

From the standpoint of power resource management theory, then, power may be viewed as coming from the discretion, socially given, to determine and/or manage valued resources in complex ways within socially meaningful economic, political, and social arenas. To the extent that public relations is used to construct, add meaningful value to, and exercise discretion over resources, it is integral to power.

—Tricia L. Hansen-Horn

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PR NEWSWIRE

Founded by Herbert Muschel, the originator of the *TV Guide*, PR Newswire has provided the technological means for public relations and investor relations practitioners to communicate with the media since 1954. Starting with a private teleprinter network to distribute news releases to journalists from public relations agencies and corporations, PR Newswire first delivered news releases to news sources in New York. Almost 50 years later, it has expanded into a global network using the latest communication technologies. Today, the company offers many multimedia tools, including Web-based conference calls, video news releases, Web sites, and cybercasting of press conferences, annual meetings, and events. PR Newswire serves as a communication bridge between public and investor relations practitioners and journalists. Its Web site caters to both journalists and communication professionals.

In March 2002, PR Newswire launched a special section tailored for journalists, who can use the company's services at no cost. PR Newswire's Web site allows journalists to locate sources for stories by sending e-mail queries to up to 10,000 public relations and news information officers in North America and Europe. In addition, the Web site allows journalists to conduct searches for news releases, as well as information about companies, and subscribe to e-mail alerts about various industries. The "Company Information Pages" section allows journalists to view news releases issued by a company, as well as biographical information about key people working for that company, product

information, and white papers related to that company. The "Company Information Pages" section gives journalists access to photos, multimedia presentations, and tradeshow, and also a directory of contacts for each company.

Public relations and investor relations practitioners use PR Newswire to distribute news releases to the media for a fee. Practitioners can target the distribution of their releases to journalists by state, region in the United States, or country. The press releases are posted on PR Newswire's Web site and can be sent directly to journalists subscribing to PR Newswire's services. Practitioners can include pictures or multimedia presentations to accompany the news releases or can have them stand alone. For example, during the 9/11 attacks, the airlines posted press releases to PR Newswire within an hour of the terrorists crashing the planes into the World Trade Center. In addition, Southwest Airlines, although not one of the airlines involved in the attacks, included a video news release on PR Newswire's Web site about the precautions it was taking to ensure passenger safety to ease consumers' fears about flying again within a week of the attacks.

In addition to distributing news releases, practitioners can include information about their company or organization's experts for use by the media. When reporters need a source for a story, they can use PR Newswire's service called ProfNet (<http://www.profnet.com>). This service links journalists to experts from colleges and universities, corporations, government agencies, national laboratories, think tanks, scientific organizations, non-profit organizations, and public relations agencies. The ProfNet database allows journalists to either post a query for experts or search a database. The information in these databases is compiled by and paid for by communication practitioners.

Practitioners can also monitor the impact of their communications through PR Newswire's eWatch service (<http://www.ewatch.com>). Since 1995, this service has monitored the Internet for information about or related to a communication practitioner's company or industry. For a fee, practitioners can keep a pulse on what consumers, businesses, and the media say about their products, company, and

competitors. eWatch monitors more than 4,700 online newspapers, e-zines, broadcast sites, and portals. In addition, more than 66,000 Usenet and electronic mailing lists, as well as investor relations message boards, are monitored.

—Cassandra Imfeld

See also Investigative journalism; Investor relations; Media release

PR WATCH

Designed to educate and expose “manipulative and misleading” public relations practices, PR Watch (prwatch.org) is a Web site that posts information, articles, and book reviews about the public relations industry. The Web site is sponsored by the Center for Media and Democracy, a nonprofit public interest group dedicated to investigative reporting of the public relations industry and informing the public, journalists, and researchers about current public relations practices. The Center for Media and Democracy challenges public relations communicators’ “spin” on issues and attempts to present accurate and unbiased accounts of the news. The organization has received widespread media attention, including coverage in *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Washington Post*.

Through its quarterly publication *PR Watch*, the Center for Media and Democracy tackles issues that it considers have become propagandized by the public relations industry. Since 1994 PR Watch has addressed public relations issues involving O. J. Simpson, Philip Morris, Mad Cow disease, breast implants, global warming, and terrorism. Each issue begins with an overview of the public relations industry’s latest success in spinning news events, followed by in-depth articles that present different perspectives about news events initially “spun” by public relations practitioners. In addition to its quarterly publication, PR Watch also offers an e-mail newsletter titled *The Weekly Spin*. The free e-newsletter is a “compendium of current news tips about public relations, propaganda and media spin.”

On its Web site, PR Watch pulls quotes from other media sources around the country that recognize the effect of public relations on current events in a section called Spin of the Day. The quotes pulled from media sources date back to 1994 and include publications such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *Salon.com*, *Editor & Publisher*, and *O’Dwyer’s PR Daily*. In addition to posting the media’s quotes about “spun” stories, the Spin of the Day section allows users to engage in discussion about the quotes and news stories. Called “Let’s Talk About Flacks, Baby,” Spin of the Day’s discussion is an active and up-to-date forum for users and members of the media to discuss how public relations practitioners shape the news. Let’s Talk About Flacks, Baby also allows users to discuss books written by the PR Watch editorial staff.

In addition to serving as a watchdog on current events, PR Watch monitors and reviews organizations in its Impropropaganda Review section. This section of the Web site is dedicated to exposing industry front groups and anti-environmental think tanks. Impropropaganda Review has examined organizations such as the American Council on Science and Health, the Center for Tobacco Research, and the Global Climate Coalition. Each in-depth review of these organizations provides a history of the organization, key personnel, and funding sources and a case study of how public relations practitioners use these organizations to advance their “propaganda” goals.

Although PR Watch is dedicated to providing journalists and researchers with information and examples of the public relations influence on the news, the site also includes links to several other Web sites, including public relations organizations, search engines, government institutions, and other activist Web sites.

—Cassandra Imfeld

See also Propaganda; Spin

PRACTICE

It is most practical, perhaps, to define public relations “practice” by explaining what a “practitioner” does and to compare and contrast this with the work

of “academics.” Both practitioners and academics have worked diligently to align perceptions of public relations work with those of other “professions” and to improve unflattering characterizations of public relations practice. On the other hand, practitioners and academics differ. Practitioners serve a strategic function as members of an organization’s management team, whereas scholars teach in higher education settings and build public relations theory about conflict reduction.

Overall, the basic tenants of public relations practice have not changed significantly since Ivy Lee penned his *Declaration of Principles* in 1906; ethical practices, relationships, and mutual benefit take center stage. Unfortunately, public relations is considered all too frequently to be a *dishonest* means for spreading propaganda. Consequently, national and regional public relations trade organizations have organized to explain the profession’s metamorphosis from mere press agency or publicity to a reputable one that thrives on facilitating two-way communication flow between organizations and publics. Task forces continue to investigate means to advance the profession. For example, the governing body of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) formally adopted a definition of public relations that has been widely accepted: “Public relations helps an organization and its publics adapt mutually to each other.”

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the practice of public relations is one of the fastest-growing fields that does not require a graduate degree. Practitioners held about 122,000 jobs in 1998 (13,000 were self-employed), and the median salary range for practitioners was \$53,000, according to the PRSA/IABC 2000 Salary Survey. G. M. Broom wrote that, nearly 20 years ago, the practice was a “traditionally male bastion” where only one in four (27 percent) PRSA members was a woman (1982, p. 17). Federally funded investigations, such as the Kerner Commission, recommended greater hiring of minorities and women in newsrooms and related fields such as public relations. Now, women account for about two-thirds of all public relations specialists in the United States. Practitioners work in “for-profit” settings (public relations agencies,

corporations, companies) and “not-for-profit” settings (government, education, fundraising, trade organizations). No state requires that practitioners be licensed.

A practitioner should have a solid understanding of our complex, pluralistic society and should possess good knowledge of human relations in order to manage change and to enable organizations to generate market share and income (funding, revenue, donations), to share ideas, and to affect behavior. Also, a practitioner acts as a “sponge”—soaking up popular culture, social trends, political policy issues, and other current debates. A foundation in psychology, sociology, political science, and the management sciences is vital to developing negotiation skills and cognitive complexity.

Several personality traits emerge among public relations practitioners. For example, they must thrive under pressure conditions, listen, be creative and inquisitive, and be good communicators. However, practitioners do more than write press releases, meet people, and smile in public. As managers, practitioners play an integrative role and must know how to conduct market research, identify stakeholders, interpret public opinion, counsel senior-level management, address public policy, set objectives, measure results, and manage resources.

The practitioner’s day-to-day responsibilities are based on a long-term view of an organization’s relationships with various groups, the ability to do multitasking, and a grasp of certain technical skills. For example, practitioners act as consultants and mediators, decision makers, and public speakers. They also get involved in the community, work closely with employees, participate in industry affairs, serve as a liaison between organizations and the media, organize special events, and anticipate and act in the wake of crises that threaten the organization’s reputation. To excel in public relations, the practitioner should be able to write well for a variety of media (including speeches and reports), analyze and interpret public opinion, conduct research on an ongoing basis, and do planning, including setting objectives and measuring results. He or she should also have skills in graphic design, statistics, conceptual development, and technology.

Scott Cultip, Allen Center, and Glen Broom (2000) wrote that threats to successful public relations practice, called the “seven deadly sins in this (agency) business,” were itemized by Robert Dilenschneider, former president and CEO of Hill & Knowlton and current chair of the Dilenschneider Group of New York and Chicago (p. 69):

1. Overpromising what cannot be delivered
2. Overselling public relations’ capabilities
3. Underservicing by using junior staff, but promising senior staff attention
4. Emphasizing financial results over performance
5. Short-sightedness instead of long-term strategic thinking
6. Enabling encroachment by lawyers, financial officers, and others
7. Violating ethical standards

Finally, as in trade occupations of yore, practitioners serve as mentors to public relations student-apprentices and work with them side by side during relatively short periods of time called “internships.” While “shadowing” practitioners, interns garner practical, hands-on knowledge beyond the classroom about how public relations works. Often, interns are asked to write press releases, update media lists, coordinate special event details, and perform office tasks such as filing and typing. These experiences serve students well when they are interviewing for full-time positions because they can share actual, practical examples of their work—including portfolios that showcase their skill sets.

Public relations scholars conduct research to further develop the public relations body of knowledge and to enhance public relations’ image as an ethical profession, and in doing so they offer practitioners advice on how to be more successful. In recent decades, several academic journals have developed and published scholars’ research findings: *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, and *Public Relations Quarterly*. Public relations scholars set the tone for early theory building in the 1970s when they sought to define

and validate public relations by examining practitioners’ roles. Other researchers have considered conflict reduction in terms of public relations practice models, gender and ethnicity workplace issues, international practice, measurement techniques, social issues/case studies, and more. Overall, public relations scholars draw from the theoretical perspectives of diverse social science fields to offer multidisciplinary perspectives.

Spheres of practitioners and academics formally overlap during annual meetings, such as the convention of the Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication (AEJMC) and the PRSA conference.

—Donnalyn Pompper

See also Code of ethics; Encroachment theory; Feminization theory; Internship; Lee, Ivy; Press agency; Two-way and one-way communication

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PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SECRETARIES

The modern-day White House press secretary’s primary responsibility is to be the official spokesperson for the president of the United States and his or her administration. Additionally, the press secretary’s responsibilities include meeting with the president and other senior administration officials, conducting press briefings, helping the president prepare for press conferences, handling press

arrangements for presidential trips, fulfilling interview and information requests, writing and disseminating press releases, meeting with the press secretaries of various departments, and gathering information about the administration.

Historically, some White House press secretaries have also acted as policy advisers and speechwriters, have helped make personnel decisions, and have been a voice of reason in times of crisis. Depending on their relationship with the president, some press secretaries were even able to speak in a frank and direct manner with the president. Twenty-six individuals, 25 men and 1 woman, have served the president of the United States in the press secretary capacity.

It is widely accepted that George Ackerson was the first person whose sole responsibility was to handle press relations on behalf of the president. Although Ackerson did not hold the official title of *press secretary*, President Herbert Hoover employed Ackerson in that capacity from 1929 to 1931. The title given to Ackerson and the nine men who followed him in that position was *secretary to the president*. James Hagerty, who handled press relations for Dwight D. Eisenhower, was the last person to hold this title; in 1956, it was dropped by legislation. As a result, Hagerty was the first person to officially hold the title of *press secretary*.

In the early years, the press secretary and his or her assistant primarily dealt with Washington-based print reporters and radio. But as communication technologies have evolved, the press corps covering the president has grown. Subsequently, these changes in technology have forced the Press Office staff to grow as well. Now, the White House Press Office employs several people who handle issues that deal with specific areas of the administration and whose responsibility it is to convey the “official administration position” to the press.

The White House Press Office currently falls under the jurisdiction of the White House Office of Communications, which was established by Richard M. Nixon in 1969.

Stephen Early, who ran Franklin D. Roosevelt’s press office, was the first press secretary to successfully handle the press, and his success helped define

the role of the press secretary for years to come. Charlie Ross, who was one of Harry Truman’s press secretaries, shared a unique relationship with Truman. They were boyhood friends growing up in Independence, Missouri; thus Ross was a true administration “insider.” Perhaps the most successful press secretary was Hagerty. He is credited with expanding the role of the press secretary and adding the element of frankness to the post.

The following is a list of those individuals who have acted in the capacity of press secretary or have held that official title: George Ackerson (1929–1931), Theodore Joslin (1931–1933), Stephen T. Early (1933–1945), Jonathan Daniels (1945), J. Leonard Reinsch (1945), Charlie G. Ross (1945–1950), Stephen T. Early (1950), Joseph H. Short (1950–1952), Roger Tubby (1952–1953), Irving Perlmeter (1952), James C. Hagerty (1953–1961), Pierre Salinger (1961–1964), George E. Reedy (1964–1965), William D. Moyers (1965–1967), George E. Christian (1967–1969), Ronald L. Ziegler (1969–1974), Jerald F. terHorst (1974), Ronald H. Nessen (1974–1977), Joseph L. Powell (1977–1981), James Brady (1981), Larry Speakes (1981–1987), Marlin Fitzwater (1987–1993), Dee Dee Myers (1993–1994), Mike McCurry (1994–1998), Joe Lockhart (1998–2001), Ari Fleischer (2001–2003), and Scott McClellan (2003–).

—Adam E. Horn

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PRESS AGENCY

Press agency is the practice of attracting the attention of the press through techniques that manufacture news, no matter how bizarre. Methods associated with press agency include staged events, publicity stunts, faux rallies or gatherings, spinning,

and hype. A common practice in the late 1800s and early 1900s, press agency is not part of mainstream public relations. Rather, it is a practice primarily associated with major entertainment-related events, such as Hollywood premieres and boxing events. The goal of press agency is to attract attention rather than gain understanding. Although press agency is considered an old-fashioned reference, even today, the term *press agent* is sometimes used interchangeably with *publicist* in traditional Broadway theater and motion picture industries. Today's entertainment industries are populated with publicists rather than press agents. Publicists are individuals skilled in media relations who attempt to get the name of their clients or events in the media by carefully constructing messages that inform, educate, and persuade. Some are astute in branding and positioning strategies to further the careers and success of their clients. In contrast, press agents want attention—good or bad—in most any form.

Press agency has been called persuasion for short-term advantage through the use of truth bending and even distortion, but it can also be simply the staging of provocative acts to get publicity and draw attention to an individual, event, or cause.

The evolution of public relations is often described by four models: press agency/publicity, public information, two-way asymmetric communication, and two-way symmetric communication. The earliest, which is the press agency/publicity model, is described as one-way communication in which truth is not an essential component. The most sophisticated form of practice is the two-way symmetric model, focusing on mutual understanding, mediation, and two-way balanced flow of information. Therefore, it is understandable that one of the earliest proponents of the press agency/publicity model was Phineas Taylor (P. T.) Barnum, the famed American showman and promoter who put Gen. Tom Thumb on exhibit and launched a mobile circus featuring Jumbo the elephant and freak shows. Barnum was a master of press agency. For instance, he wrote letters both praising and criticizing his circus show to newspapers under an assumed name.

In the early part of his career, Edward L. Bernays was a master of press agency. He persuaded 10 debutantes to hold up Lucky Strike cigarettes, manufactured by his client, the American Tobacco Company, as “torches of freedom” while participating in New York’s Easter parade. In 1929, Bernays staged a global news event by organizing the “Light’s Golden Jubilee,” a worldwide celebration commemorating the 50th anniversary of the electric light bulb for his client, General Electric. Bernays managed to secure several prominent individuals for the event, including carmaker Henry Ford, electricity scientist Thomas Edison, and President Herbert Hoover.

Henry Rogers, one of the founders of Rogers and Cowan, the largest and most successful West Coast entertainment publicity firm, became well known when he promoted an unknown contract player for Columbia Pictures named Rita Hayworth. He contacted *Look* magazine with a telegram from the Fashion Couturiers Association of America, a fictitious group, claiming that Hayworth was the best-dressed off-screen actress. *Look* magazine took the bait and put Hayworth on the cover and printed 10 pages of photographs.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Barnum, P. T.; Bernays, Edward; Entertainment industry publicity/promotion; Promotion; Publicist; Publicity

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PRESS KIT

A press kit is a package of information put together for a special event, such as a press conference, new product launch, or media preview event. Its use should be reserved for events that merit more

extensive information than a standard news release can provide. Press kits are not used as an everyday public relations tool.

The focus of a press kit should always be information. The media should find the kit to be a helpful resource when reporting on the event. Materials that do not further this purpose should not be included in the kit. A growing criticism of press kits is that they include too many meaningless trinkets or outright gifts designed to influence the media. Members of the media recognize this ploy, and many outlets instruct their reporters not to accept such items. Maintaining the focus on information will enable a public relations practitioner to provide the media with helpful material and avoid the appearance of impropriety (and clutter).

The anchor piece in a press kit is the news release about the topic of the special event. Other written pieces should be included, as appropriate, in support of the news release. These can include additional news releases, fact sheets, backgrounders, biographies, photos with cutlines, and article reprints. Product samples should be included when they are the focus of the event, but not in excessive amounts.

Press kits are typically packaged in a two-pocket folder. The folder itself is usually specially printed for the event. This additional expense is another reason press kits are not used on a daily basis. The folder should look professional and carry through with the theme of the event, if one exists, or the branding of the organization. Inside, a business card insert cutout is fairly standard on one of the pockets. When the folder is lying open, the main news release should be the top item in the right pocket (where the eyes naturally go first), with a table of contents on top in the left pocket. Although not always included, a table of contents can be quite helpful, especially in a large press kit. It should list, in order, what is contained in each pocket. Again, the purpose is to assist the media in covering the story, and anything that furthers that purpose should be included.

As an example, say a small waterfront town sponsors an annual festival that regularly draws 100,000 visitors for the two-and-a-half-day event. The event

includes a variety of nationally recognized music and entertainment artists, along with water events, family-oriented activities, and a large fireworks display. The event has been nationally recognized, and local media, including those from a nearby large city, always provide coverage. To facilitate continued good press and add to it, an annual media preview event is held. The press kit designed for this preview has the colorful festival logo on the cover and contains the primary news release about the festival, individual news releases about headline entertainment, a timetable of special media coverage opportunities such as the setup of the fireworks barge, a fact sheet covering festival history and records, and a reprint of the article that named the festival one of the top 100 in the nation. The media also receive advance copies of the full festival program with a timetable insert for each stage and all special events. Both the media preview event and the press kit are designed to stimulate media interest in the festival and facilitate coverage when it occurs. (This description is based on the author's experience with Harborfest in Oswego, New York.)

Press kits are provided to members of the media at the event for which they are designed. Those who can't attend the event should be sent a press kit immediately after the event concludes. Another option, and one that is growing in popularity, is to provide electronic press kits online through an organization's Web site. Many organizations have a button on their Web sites that is a direct link to what can be called their cyber newsroom. Although providing items such as an actual program (mentioned previously) and trinkets is not possible with this method, all standard written tools and photos can be placed on a Web site and accessed at the media's convenience. A distinct advantage here is that large amounts of information can easily be made available, whereas a traditional folder does have limited capacity. Those in the press who criticize press kit gifts as influence attempts might view this method of presentation as preferable, because the focus is strictly on the traditional information pieces. This method also lessens the expense associated with producing a press kit by eliminating the need for specially produced folders. Finally, with the

increasing use of corporate Web sites by individuals to gather information, particularly in the area of investor relations, having these specialized groupings of information available to anyone who cares to look for them provides a nonmediated method of reaching important publics.

—*Maribeth S. Metzler*

PRIVATIZING PUBLIC OPINION (AND “PUBLICIZING” PRIVATE OPINION)

Legions of books, articles, feature stories, and editorials have decried the influence that large companies’ version of the free market system has on the public opinion of the United States. The proposition that runs through this analysis is that corporate industry has the dollars and incentive to create a public opinion that privileges the role and interests of large companies in society. One of the reasons critics and supporters make this connection is the legion of statements by public relations practitioners and theorists that feature the role of public opinion formation as the essence of public relations and advertising—the outcome of corporate communication.

Out of this discussion arose the concept of privatizing public opinion. On this topic, Michael J. Sproule reasoned: “Organizations try to privatize public space by privatizing public opinions; this is, skillfully (one-sidedly) turning opinion in directions favorable to the corporation” (1989, p. 264). Endless pounding of the public collective mentality by messages supplied by deep-pocket corporations has led members of the public to believe that what is good for industry is good for America. One recalls one of the highlights of American popular culture: “What is good for General Motors is good for America.”

In a sense, this view of public opinion formation opts for what can be called a propaganda approach to the mass communication of messages that shape any society’s collective mentality. This line of reasoning assumes that the meaning of society is skewed to the advantage of industry, the private

sector against the larger interests of the people of society. What is deemed to be good commercially for industry is good for Americans. Thus, for instance, Detroit automobile manufacturers used publicity and promotion to create a culture of new car ownership. Each fall, with great fanfare, the new models would roll off the design and assembly lines. The new season of automobiles was headline news. It was featured in the newsreels at movie theaters and sufficiently important to *Life* magazine that an entire issue would be devoted to the display of status and freedom in the shape of the latest models. These were carefully positioned and differentiated so that they demarked class structure. Of even greater relevance, the “true American” bought a new car each year—to have the latest model to show status and patriotism. Less trendy or affluent Americans were supposed to buy a new car at least every three years. Americans owed their identity—and paycheck—to Detroit. It was the American way. Thus, public opinion was formed through advertising and public relations to the benefit of the automobile industry. Public opinion had been privatized.

The experience of people and their love for automobiles were played out, according to the critics of privatizing public opinion, by industry after industry. The citizen consumer was held hostage to the whims and dictates of what was thought to be right, proper, and patriotic by large industry. What industry did was right. To criticize industry was just un-American, perhaps anti-American and even communistic. It attacked the American way of life. Industry knew best. It defined a lifestyle and way of life that was the envy of the world.

The evolution of this theme started in the middle of the 19th century as large industry replaced local or regional businesses. To operate as they preferred, the robber barons needed a favorable public opinion. They needed to be perceived as operating in the public interest. Although the first half of the 20th century saw a great deal of contentiousness over this view, the role industry played in World War II and postwar prosperity clearly demonstrated to believers in this version of the American way that the public owed deference to industry. It helped a million soldiers win the war and brought an era of

prosperity that slowly put the Great Depression aside as a nightmare that had interrupted the American Dream. By the end of the 1950s, America had achieved the age of deference. Industry ruled supreme. It produced the cornucopia of goods and services.

If industry had privatized public opinion, the activism that marked the last four decades of the 20th century in the United States worked to “publicize” private opinion. Activists argued that industry must truly serve the public interest. The public interest defined by citizen activists—publics and stakeholders—would now tell industry the standards by which it would operate.

Out of this shifted equation, we had civil rights, consumer rights, environmental rights, animal rights, and so forth. The era of activism indicted the corporate view of public opinion and condemned many of the operating principles as violating what was the essence of the true American way. Industry did not have a right to clear-cut timber, stripmine minerals, or pollute indiscriminately to produce the American lifestyle. Activists were alarmed, for instance, when certain rivers would change color, since they suspected that manufacturers were changing dye colors and discharging their waste into the environment. Discharge into the environment became offensive rather than necessary.

Out of this dynamic clash of interests came a new sense of what public relations must be. This era of the 1960s launched increased interest into what became an issues management approach to corporate positioning and public communication. Dialogue replaced monologue. The definition of the principles and premises of society now clearly allowed for all voices to be heard. The dynamics of regulation and legislation changed. The American public became increasingly asked to bear the costs of increased operating standards that did not sell the environment, for instance, in the name of progress.

A rhetorical view of public relations features the dialogue between factions. It sees efforts by industry to privatize public opinion as being challenged by activists who argue for views that would “publicize” the private opinions of company executives, who must now position their companies and

industries to avoid clashes with politicized activists. Public relations plays a robust role for all sides in this grand debate.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Advertising; Age of deference (end of); Differentiation; Issues management; Position and positioning; Promotion; Propaganda; Public interest; Public opinion and opinion leaders; Publicity

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PRIZM AND VALS

See Segmentation

PROACTIVITY AND REACTIVITY

In the world of public relations, being proactive instead of reactive could determine whether an organization thrives or dies. Proactive public relations is associated with strategic planning, whereas reactive public relations consists of a piecemeal approach to addressing problems and opportunities.

There are numerous reasons an organization should involve public relations in its long-range planning:

- The goals of public relations are coordinated with the goals of the entire organization.
- Strategies and tactics can be carefully thought out and developed rather than haphazardly put together.
- Programs will feature a more positive, rather than defensive, approach.
- It's easier to formulate short-term, reactive plans when necessary—for example, in a crisis situation—if a long-term plan already exists.

Whether organizations lean toward proactive or reactive public relations may depend on three factors: whether the organization is an open or closed system, how top management views the public relations function, and the skills of the public relations practitioner.

OPEN VERSUS CLOSED SYSTEMS

The survival of any kind of system is based on how well the parts of that system work together. Organizations are no different; they are systems that consist of interdependent parts working toward a common goal—successfully achieving the mission of the organization. The degree to which these parts work together may be influenced by whether they work in an open or closed system. Although no organization can be totally open or completely closed, every organization leans toward one or the other.

The characteristics of an open system include honest, two-way communication cultivated by an atmosphere of trust. Open systems rely on feedback to adapt to changing situations and meet the expectations of their publics. Closed systems, on the other hand, foster an atmosphere of distrust that results in limited information being provided to key publics and little, if any, feedback. Closed systems risk the threat of dying because they are insensitive to their publics' needs and unwilling to change.

Characteristics associated with each system are often determined by the traits held by the senior management of an organization and, in particular, its chief executive officer.

THE VIEW FROM THE TOP

The proactive or reactive function of public relations depends on how it is viewed from the top. This perception may develop from the proximity of public relations to senior management on an organizational chart or from how the public relations department first came into being within the organization. Was the position created as a result of a crisis, because the CEO understood the value of public relations, or has the department just always “been there”?

Practitioners must also do their part to earn respect and maintain the support of management by engaging in honest relationships and keeping a track record of contributions to the organization's success. In addition to basic communication skills, public relations practitioners who possess knowledge of business and finance, problem solving, and research techniques are perceived as more strategic—and proactive—thinkers and are often given more opportunity to become part of the decision-making process.

A STRATEGIC FUNCTION

Within an organization's structure, public relations is most often a staff function, a position that provides counsel and advice to the line functions that produce profits. The practitioner's responsibilities once again depend on the organization and its senior management.

Practitioners working in an organization with characteristics of a closed system will focus more on implementing tactics—such as by sending out news releases or developing a brochure—that are independent of each other rather than part of an overall strategic plan. Such a reactive approach focuses on one-way communication and emphasizes the organization more than the publics it serves.

Organizations that lean toward a more open system provide a setting within which public relations practitioners can engage in a proactive approach that emphasizes strategic planning, features two-way communication, and focuses on the organization's publics.

REACTING TO CRISIS

Even in a proactive environment, crises may occur that require an organization to react. However, proactive organizations can weather storms more successfully simply because they have a reputation for being open and operating in their publics' best interest. In addition, their proactive nature has no doubt led them to prepare a crisis communication plan, which anticipates various crisis scenarios and ways to respond to them.

Two classic examples of proactive and reactive public relations during a crisis are the Tylenol scare of 1982 and the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in 1989. When seven deaths in the Chicago area were traced back to cyanide-tainted Tylenol, Johnson & Johnson, the makers of the pain reliever, stopped production of the capsules and recalled all 31 million bottles on store shelves throughout the country, a loss of \$100 million dollars. This short-term financial loss resulted in long-term financial gain, however, because of the proactive approach by Johnson & Johnson, which put the safety of its customers first.

Exxon took a reactive approach when its tanker *Valdez* ran aground in Alaska's Prince William Sound, spilling 11 million gallons of oil that altered the environment and killed an abundance of wildlife along 1,300 miles of shoreline. Exxon chose to be defensive about the accident rather than accept responsibility and, in doing so, appeared to only take actions when public outcry required it to do so. Exxon customers cut up their credit cards, the company's "most admired company" ranking dropped more than 100 places, and its \$3 billion environmental cleanup received little notice.

—Ann R. Carden

See also Crisis communication; Exxon and the *Valdez* crisis; Management theory; Openness; Systems theory

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PROCESS RESEARCH

Process research is the easiest of all forms of research a public relations practitioner encounters.

Process research keeps track of what tasks have been performed and which tasks still need to be performed in the public relations activity. One can think of process research as a checklist of things to do or a shopping list. If you go to the grocery store without your shopping list, the odds are great you will forget something. The same is true for public relations activities. If a practitioner fails to identify all the tasks to be completed, the odds are great of missing a task. Depending on the task, such an oversight could cause the entire public relations activity to fail.

Process research also involves creating and monitoring schedules. Scheduling includes identifying and organizing the various tasks practitioners will need to accomplish to complete the activity and when each task should be completed to remain on schedule. A schedule tells a public relations practitioner what needs to be done and when it must be finished. The first part of scheduling is identifying what needs to be done—the tasks. It is critical to think of all the tasks that need to be done. Forgetting a task can throw off the schedule. It is good to brainstorm as a team, since more minds are better than one. The second part of scheduling is arranging the tasks in the proper sequence. The practitioner must understand which tasks are dependent on others and which tasks need to be completed in a specific order. For example, a practitioner cannot lay out a newsletter until the stories are written and cannot send a new release to the media until the proper people have approved it. The third and final part of scheduling is determining how much time each task will take. The entries on PERT and Gantt Charts provide additional information about scheduling. In the end, the schedule provides a guide of what tasks the public relations department must perform, the order of those tasks, and how long each task should take to complete.

The schedule also serves as a checklist. As each task is completed, it is marked off the schedule. It is common to note completed tasks on both PERT and Gantt Charts. The key is not to forget a task. It is terrible to have a public relations activity fail because someone forgot to complete something. Even seemingly small tasks can cause failure. The inability to

deliver material to a printer on time can delay the publishing of an important piece of the public relations effort or mean that it will arrive too late to be usable.

The danger with process research is that some practitioners confuse it with evaluative research. Saying you will send news releases to 15 media outlets and then sending them does not equate to success in a public relations effort. In doing this, you have not achieved an outcome objective; you have just completed a task and achieved a process objective. Claims of success can be greatly exaggerated when process research replaces evaluative research. If you wanted to determine if you had succeeded, you would study where the 15 news releases were used and what impact they had on target audiences. Process evaluation is a useful tool as long as it is not confused with or used to substitute for evaluative research.

There is a second, more advanced use of process research. In a public relations campaign that spans a long time period, such as four or more months, a practitioner may run checks to determine if the campaign is having the desired effect—if progress is being made toward achieving the objectives. If substantial financial and time commitments are being made to a campaign, a process check is advisable. If the test shows that the desired change is not occurring, there is time to make adjustments to tactics and/or messages. An example will help to clarify this point. MacCorp wants to establish itself as a leader in community development. It does a lot for the community, but the message does not seem to be reaching the residents of Niles, the town in which MacCorp is located. Research found that currently only 25 percent of residents view MacCorp as a leader in community development. Therefore, its public relations department has designed an 18-month public relations campaign to promote MacCorp's existing community relations efforts and to highlight three new initiatives designed to strengthen K-12 education in the community. The objective is: "After 18 months, 60 percent of the residents of Niles will view MacCorp as a leader in community development." The public relations department anticipates seeing some effects

after 6 months. At 6 months into the campaign, MacCorp's public relations department might do a survey to check on perceptions of its leadership in community development. If there is some movement in a positive direction, the public relations campaign would seem to be on track. If there is no change or a drop, aspects of the campaign might need to be redesigned to avoid a complete failure. For instance, the message may not be reaching the target, so different media options might be employed. Process research can be used to check on the progress of a public relations activity toward achieving its objective. Such a process check will cost time and money. However, it is a useful investment when an organization has already committed large amounts of both resources to a campaign.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Gantt Chart; PERT Chart; Public relations research

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PROFESSIONAL AND PROFESSIONALISM

Although there are challenges to the concepts of *professional* and *professionalism*, professions still dominate our world. They are seen as "both necessary and desirable for a decent society" (Freidson, 1994, p. 9). A survey of the literature on professionalism provides several justifications for that claim. Some arguments are that professions meet the societal need for expertise and credentialism, that professions provide a "crucial link between the individual's struggle for a fulfilling existence and the needs of the larger society," and that professions

are a stabilizing force in society, protecting vulnerable people, social values, and providing quality service. Emile Durkheim, one of the first writers on professions, said that it is within “special groups” or professions that “morals may be evolved” and that it is professions’ “business . . . to see they be observed” (1992, p. 7). This is especially true in areas where legal sanctions are not effective. Although everyone would agree that there have been moral slippages, many would argue that, as an ideal, professionalism is worth pursuing. Turning to the public relations field specifically, Doug Newsom, Judy Vanslyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg have suggested that “the best PR is evidence of an active social conscience” (2000, p. 3), and James E. Grunig and Todd T. Hunt (1984) have said that it is while acting as autonomous professionals that public relations practitioners could try to change the organization as well as the public.

Harold L. Wilensky, a sociologist, wrote that “any occupation wishing to exercise professional authority must find a technical basis for it, assert an exclusive jurisdiction, link both skill and jurisdiction to standards of training, and convince the public that its services are uniquely trustworthy” (1964, p. 138). He identified two criteria: the job must be technical and it must require adherence to “professional norms.” Professional norms require that the practitioner “adhere to a service ideal—devotion to the client’s interests more than personal or commercial profit should guide decisions when the two are in conflict” (p. 138). This concept of service entails a necessary level of professional autonomy. This is an example of the trait approach to defining professionalism and is how the concept has traditionally been defined.

In the 1950s Edward Bernays recommended licensing as a means of ensuring professionalism. There seems to be consensus in the public relations literature as to what it means to be a professional. J. E. Grunig and Hunt’s 1984 text, *Managing Public Relations*, listed five characteristics of a professional: a set of professional values, membership in strong professional organizations, adherence to professional norms, an intellectual tradition or established body of knowledge, and technical skills

acquired through professional training. The set of professional values was explained as follows: “In particular, professionals believe that serving others is more important than their own economic gain. Professionals also strongly value autonomy. That is, they prefer the freedom to perform in the way they think is right to the rewards they may get to conforming to what others want” (1984, p. 66). Similar perspectives can be found in popular public relations textbooks. This approach fits into the traditional professional paradigm.

The values, professional norms, body of knowledge, and technical skills are taught and inculcated in a variety of educational forms, such as degree programs, internships, and on-the-job training. In addition, various professional organizations offer the possibility of both accreditation and continuing education. Among these organizations are the Public Relations Society of America, the International Association of Business Communicators, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the International Communication Association, the International Public Relations Association, and the Institute for Public Relations Research and Education. Suggestions that the field of public relations adopt some sort of mandatory accreditation process and licensing have been rejected.

Recently the traditional paradigm of professionalism has been challenged. Depending on the scholar one reads, the challenge seems to have started in the 1960s and has been most discussed in the field of sociology. The reasons for the challenge have varied, again according to which author one reads. Among the reasons given are that various professions have abused their power, that they have been slow to reform, and that because of their power, they have not been accountable and cost-effective. Various system changes, such as increased specialization and division of labor, were also given as reasons for the challenge. The paradigm shift has already been felt in the traditional professions of law and medicine. The change has decreased the autonomy of the professions and increased the call for accountability. It has been praised for reducing the anomaly of being beholden to both a client and to a

nebulous public interest, and for reducing financial costs and hypocrisy. On the other hand, it has also been criticized as being the death knell of public spiritedness and as a way of changing the professions from “watchdogs” of the public interest into “lapdogs” of the business community (Zakaria, 2003, p. 226). This possible change in paradigms has been noted by several writers in the public relations field (Grunig, 2000; Pieczka & L’Etang, 2001) and is perhaps reflected in a change in the tone of the new PRSA Member Code of Ethics.

—Kathie A. Leeper and Roy V. Leeper

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PROFNET

PR Newswire (<http://www.prnewswire.com>), a targeted news distribution and monitoring service, offers reporters free access to industry experts

through ProfNet. Launched in 1992, ProfNet provides journalists with access to more than 3,000 corporations; 700 nonprofit organizations and hospitals; 100 government agencies, national laboratories, scientific associations, and think tanks; and 1,000 public relations agencies. ProfNet connects journalists and experts from around the world, including Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and Latin America.

Communication practitioners subscribe to ProfNet for a fee. Instead of making cold calls to reporters, practitioners can receive e-mail queries from journalists who are looking for expert sources or can send alerts to the media through ProfNet’s “Leads and Round-Ups.” ProfNet links reporters who need sources for their stories to practitioners who need media coverage of their organization. One of ProfNet’s biggest success stories is Marist College, a small college in the Hudson River Valley in New York. By using ProfNet to pitch faculty and students, the college has repeatedly secured media coverage in *The New York Times*, *CNBC*, Fox’s *Good Day*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, and *Good Morning America*. Despite its small size, the college has earned a national reputation of providing the media with experts on issues such as criminal justice, technology, and business.

Communication practitioners who quickly, accurately, and narrowly target their responses to journalists’ e-mail queries are the most successful in securing media coverage. Journalists sending e-mail queries through ProfNet Search can designate whether their organizations’ identities are visible to communication practitioners or cloaked (anonymous). Journalists often choose to cloak their e-mail queries if they work for highly competitive news organizations and do not want to tip off other journalists about a story they are pursuing. By cloaking their queries, they can reach practitioners without disclosing key information to their competitors. Cloaked queries only include generic descriptions of the journalist’s news organization, such as “a national daily” or “a major women’s magazine.” Journalists designate the deadline for their responses and the means of communication to be used—e-mail, phone, or fax.

Communication practitioners responding to journalists' queries must adhere to strict guidelines. Practitioners must limit their responses to three paragraphs and must include basic contact information, such as name, title, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, for the practitioner and source. Responses must also include the sources' credentials and how they are relevant to the journalists' query. Communication practitioners are not allowed to use contact information obtained through queries sent through ProfNet to create their own database or to send unsolicited e-mails to journalists. Practitioners who fail to adhere to ProfNet's strict guidelines can lose access to the service.

Practitioners who use ProfNet can also use its "Leads and Round-Ups" service for a fee. This service allows communication practitioners to proactively alert journalists about experts who can comment on timely news events. The "Leads and Round-Ups" service is not designed to announce news or pitch stories but rather to provide journalists with experts who can offer informed perspectives on current national and internal issues. Like responses to journalists' queries, these alerts must adhere to strict guidelines and contain certain information. In addition, ProfNet's editorial team screens these alerts and distributes the information to the media.

—*Cassandra Imfeld*

See also Practice

PROGRAM/ACTION PLANS

As part of the strategic planning process, a program/action plan is a tactical roadmap that links the goals and objectives developed during the preliminary precampaign planning process with the actual outcomes of the campaign. An effective program/action plan lists a series of tactics for operationalizing campaign strategies and clearly defines the specific steps, behaviors, and "actions" that are needed to effectively execute those tactics. Whereas the strategic planning process outlines specific goals and objectives for each targeted public, the program/action plan focuses on the tactics that will be

used to reach those goals and objectives. Tactics are specific communication behaviors, vehicles, or tools that are used to operationalize the strategies and impact the target. Campaign communication tactics can come in many forms and can make use of both controlled and uncontrolled media. Examples are letters, meetings, press releases, press conferences, placed media messages (advertisements), posters, billboards, and protests. For each tactic, the action plan must clearly identify who is accountable for performing tasks, meeting time-tables or schedules, deploying necessary resources, and staying within budget.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Public relations students and practitioners are often familiar with the acronyms used to describe well-known public relations campaign planning processes. Acronyms such as Marston's (1979) RACE (Research, Action Planning, Communication, Evaluation) and Hendrix's (2001) ROPE (Research, Objectives, Programming, Evaluation) represent the series of steps that are needed to effectively plan, implement, and evaluate a campaign. The goal of these planning processes is to provide a methodical and systematic mechanism that helps the campaign planner understand the issue at hand, clearly identify publics, develop realistic and attainable goals and objectives, select appropriate and effective strategies and tactics, execute those strategies and tactics, and finally evaluate effectiveness. It therefore not only serves as a blueprint for the nature (such as the selection of channels and media), order, and timing of all of the tactics to be used during the campaign, but also clearly articulates the roles and responsibilities for those who are involved and the allocation of available material and budgetary resources.

APPLICATIONS

When developing program/action plans, the careful practitioner must remain focused on the larger picture: the desired outcomes of the campaign. To reach those objectives, the practitioner must clearly identify the decision makers who make up the

publics that are or will be involved. Similarly, the practitioner must use current knowledge or research in determining what will influence the decision maker, factors and processes that will be used to arrive at a decision and take action, and finally how best to reach and impact that decision maker. These behaviors or “tactics” must be coordinated to maximize the effectiveness of the campaign strategies. Tactics are selected and prioritized by their ability to reach and affect the target public. Traditionally, at this stage the issues of channel selection and placement are addressed; that is, communication vehicles (a letter, press release, or advertisement) are selected for their ability to gain the target’s attention and to persuade or motivate the target public. Finally, the effective campaign planner will also build in some redundancy to increase the “reach” of the campaign and to reinforce the impact of previous strategies and tactics. For example, if voters in a local referendum are the targeted public, letters to the voter (based on lists of registered voters) might be coupled with an ad campaign that uses print or broadcast ads or with an advocacy approach that targets newspaper articles on the referendum issue. Multiple tactics should be used to increase the reach of the campaign, to reinforce previous strategies, and to build resonance whenever time, material, and budgetary resources are available.

The effective program/action plan also clearly defines the roles and responsibilities for all involved in executing a particular tactic. This high level of specificity not only allows for the more efficient use of resources such as time and manpower, but is also important in the budgeting process. As part of the delineation of roles and responsibilities, the action plan should also clearly identify the parties that are to be held accountable for effective execution of the tactics. When individuals and groups know that they will be held accountable for the effective implementation and execution of tactics, the level of follow-through and the quality of work increase.

The scheduling and timing of tactics are also an important aspect of a program/action plan. An effective campaign consists of a series of coordinated tactics that are used to reach a set of goals and objectives. This means that tactics should be

scheduled and implemented to maximize their effectiveness while minimizing the impact of competing effects such as distractions, possible distortion, or competing campaign messages. Moreover, careful attention needs to be given to the nature of the campaign, the complexity of the issues, and the levels of current knowledge and involvement of all key publics. Complex or unknown issues may take longer to develop than more well-known or simplistic issues.

For example, the importance of scheduling and timing can be demonstrated by examining the use of campaigns around American holiday seasons. Although some tactics can be “tied in” to holidays (such as MADD’s use of New Year to maintain awareness of the ravages of drinking and driving), many campaigns should avoid holidays because their targeted publics are focusing elsewhere, as are the mass media who might be used to reach them. Careful scheduling and timing also can maximize the efficiency of resources such as budgets and staffing. For example, unless the campaign is using the political process or needs to impact public opinion during an election period, a campaign tactic used around an election period will not only get less attention from the media and key publics (who are focused on the candidates and other electoral issues), but will also cost more because of the increased market costs of buying media time and space.

Tactics should be scheduled in a way that maximizes the use of available manpower or staffing. Realistic timelines need to be developed to ensure that all necessary steps are completed to produce high-quality messages and to effectively implement tactics. Although last-minute work and tight deadlines can be used to deliver fast results, poor message quality and staff “burnout” may detract from long-term success. When determining staffing, one should also carefully examine the use of paid and unpaid campaign workers; although volunteers who are committed to an issue can often perform as well as paid personnel, they may lack expertise or professionalism and may be “less available” when faced with competing events or schedules.

Finally, effective action plans must carefully include realistic budgetary outlines for all tactics

and may often include a small reserve to cover unforeseen costs, to target unexpected obstacles, or to counter messages and tactics used by competing organizations. The costs of all planning, production, and message placement, as well as postage and distribution, need to be factored into any budget. Similarly, the campaign professional builds the costs of interim or midcampaign evaluation into the planning process. Effective action plans can make use of preliminary research and formative evaluation, but they also should plan and budget resources for interim evaluations, especially when facing complex or emotional issues. The use of many levels of evaluation in a campaign can help to ensure that programming and tactics are achieving results and are on track to meet strategic goals and objectives.

—Dean Kazoleas

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PROMOTION

Promotion, a counterpart of publicity, is used by an organization to gain awareness, increase awareness, and foster positive thoughts and opinions about an organization, product, service, or issue. Whereas publicity is often aimed at achieving short-term awareness, promotion typically builds and changes audiences' and markets' views over time. Newson, Turk, and Kruckeberg defined promotion as going "beyond press agency into opinion making. Promotion tries to garner support and endorsement for a person, product, institution or idea" (2004, p. 4).

Publicity and promotion are among the most important functions of public relations. Each employs typical and specialized strategies and tactics. Publicity tends to be limited to media relations, whereas promotion "involves special activities or events designed to create and stimulate interest in a person, product, organization or cause" (Newsom,

Turk, & Kruckeberg, 2004, p. 400). In this sense, publicity is probably often a subset of promotion.

Two masters of promotion are featured in this encyclopedia: P. T. Barnum and Samuel Insull. Both realized that they needed continuous strategic communication to build and advance a market and to develop a customer base for their businesses. Barnum continually used media messages and events to keep public attention focused on his circus and his display of unusual items, animals, and people. Thus, he might publicize the arrival of a huge elephant and feature its name: Jumbo. People were attracted to novelty, as they are today, but today people might tune in to television to see an elephant. In Barnum's day, they had to travel to see the elephant, and it had to be taken to them. As the elephant traveled across the country, Barnum worked to get media comments and reports, which he could use in the next town to attract crowds to his show. Ever the showman and promoter, Barnum even took advantage of Jumbo's death. When Jumbo was struck by a train and killed, Barnum used that tragedy as a photo opportunity. Images can be seen on the Web today of people standing around and sitting on the massive beast, which was eventually stuffed and put on display.

Another master promoter, Sam Insull, knew that the fledgling electricity industry would fail without customers. The more customers, the more likely it would succeed. His efforts then were no different from those used to promote automobile sales by gaining media attention for cross-country races. He promoted the virtues of electricity over gas to illuminate houses. To do this, he featured homes that had electricity and asked neighbors to stroll by them to see how wonderful this innovation was.

Promotion, like publicity, occurs in a competitive environment. Voices compete in a public bazaar against one another for market share, brand equity, and favorable evaluation. Publicity can arise because of what reporters or other critics say about an organization and its personnel, executives, mission/vision, policies, products, and services. This publicity can be positive or negative. Negative publicity needs to be addressed by various strategies. Some change strategies are communication

based, and others may require improvements in the organization—in its personnel, plans, policies, products, or services.

Similarly, promotions by one company or industry typically meet counterpromotion whereby practitioners make claims seeking competitive advantage. Such promotions may be joined by an entire industry, such as carmakers, and then segmented into competing product claims by individual companies and product lines. Automobile companies have been legendary for their efforts to promote automobile and truck sales. For years, fall was the time when these companies launched their new products. Magazines as well as news features at movies covered the introduction of new models. To the uncritical eye, these promotional presentations seemed to express the objective opinion of reporters. The same techniques are used today. Print and electronic media outlets are essentially unfiltered conduits through which promotional claims flow to customers.

A central theme of automobile promotions is that the manufacturers are eternally bringing newer and better models to the customers, who are expected to demonstrate their pleasure by buying a new car every year or every three years at least. As the industry promoted itself, so did individual brand lines struggle for brand equity and market share.

Promotion is used to target specific customers or potential customers. Markets can be segmented by various demographics. Media, both print and electronic, develop to bring customers and vendors together. Thus, teen magazines and television programs are tailored to the youth market because of the news, commentary, and entertainment that appear there. Advertising and promotion then move in to help fill the space and time with messages that are tailored to the needs, wants, and preferences of the market. Promotion sustains a flow of messages to keep constant attention on products and services that may appeal to the members of the target market.

Some of the great promotional efforts include those for Disney characters, such as Mickey Mouse, and the Sesame Street characters. Companies may create museums featuring the heritage of the company, product, and industry. Customers and other interested individuals can be informed and

impressed as they visit such facilities. Perhaps no company has done that better than Disney. The media also engage in marketing promotion, such as with award shows—the Grammys and the Academy Awards.

Promotions are often used in conjunction with several other public relations functions. Colleges and universities have for centuries used promotions based on athletic competition, student accomplishments, and faculty merit to foster student relations, alumni relations, donor relations, and perhaps even government relations. Excellence is a product and service with many faces, purposes, and ends. Companies also use new product promotion to attract new and continuing customers. Such promotions are vital to publicly traded companies' investor relations.

Promotions are one of the oldest forms of public relations. Antecedents of modern public relations stretch back to the dawn of various civilizations. One of the oldest continuing forms of promotion, for example, is the fair. County fairs and state fairs have outlived the rural dominance of farm production in the American economy. They are a part of rural culture that now attracts thousands of urban dwellers. Fairs of agricultural produce even occur in urban settings. They promote agriculture, agricultural products, and agricultural lifestyle and are a meeting place of vendors and customers. They give an opportunity for farm equipment and automobile companies to meet customers and explain innovations. Local young women are featured as fair queens. County fairs lead to state fairs, which lead to trade fairs and world fairs. All of these events promote myriad aspects of a culture.

Promotions and publicity are the most typical public relations functions in terms of expenditure, but perhaps the most controversial. The efforts of Bernays to promote the sale of Lucky Strike Greens to women has been one of the most critically discussed promotional campaigns. In this sense, promotion can be seen as unethical because it rests less on facts about a product and more on activities and events that may create impressions and false motivations regarding a product or service. One of the ethical questions focuses on the extent to which

promotion reduces the target customer's ability to make an informed and rational choice about a product, issue, cause, or service.

Although fraught with ethical problems, however, promotion, along with publicity, is here to stay. It is a vital function of public relations.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Barnum, P. T.; Bernays, Edward.; Brand equity and branding, Insull, Samuel; Lucky Strike Green Campaign; Market share; Publicity; Target

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PROPAGANDA

The word *propaganda* comes from the Latin word meaning to propagate or to sow. In its most neutral sense it means to disseminate or promote particular ideas. Propaganda has been defined in many ways, most of which center on synonyms such as *lies, distortions, deceit, manipulation, psychological warfare, brainwashing*, and the more recent word *spin*.

Spin, in particular, emphasizes the frequent difficulty of differentiating public relations from propaganda in that it is associated with the manipulation of political and corporate information to affect the way in which news is presented. As a result, the term *spin doctors* is now often used as a synonym for professional public relations practitioners. Propaganda has been associated with mass communication, mass persuasion, mind control, and mass brainwashing. It has a history of being used to promote an ideology and way of life that benefits some to the disadvantage of others. Few examples are more notorious than the propaganda efforts of Hitler, which he claimed to have learned from the British and American propaganda machines during the First World War.

People often see tactics they don't like as "propaganda," whereas when they approve of mass media campaigns they call them "preaching of the truth." Modern practitioners of public relations and academics focus on the concepts of symbolic

manipulation, cognitive manipulation, scientific mass persuasion, and asymmetry as defining attributes that separate propaganda and unethical public relations from ethical and responsible approaches to the profession.

Many scholars have grappled with a definition of the word *propaganda*. The French philosopher Jacques Ellul, in his book *Propaganda* (1965), suggested that it was an essential part of modern technologically advanced societies, and Michael Sproule (1994) suggested that it is "the work of a large organization, nation, or group to win over the public for special interests through a massive orchestration of attractive conclusions packaged to conceal both their persuasive purpose and lack of sound supporting reasons" (p. 8). The social psychologist Leonard W. Doob summarized these definitional difficulties in 1989 by suggesting that "a clear-cut definition of propaganda is neither possible nor desirable" (p. 375).

Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell have created a definition that focuses on propaganda as a communication process, more specifically on the purpose of the process: "Propaganda is the deliberate, systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist" (1999, p. 6). This definition stresses that propaganda is "willful, intentional, and premeditated" (1999, p. 6). Although it clearly establishes propaganda as a neutral technique, it also comes close to a definition of public relations held by some of its practitioners and many of its critics, thus emphasizing the difficulty in establishing a clearer differentiation between the two practices.

The relationship of propaganda to public relations has always been a contentious one. Both of these practices stem from a common desire to affect the attitudes and perceptions held by people, collectively defined as publics, crowds, citizens, or consumers, toward an infinite variety of subjects, in order to shift opinion and beliefs in a desired direction. Propaganda in particular has been defined in largely negative terms because of its close historical association with religion, warfare, and political practices. Public relations, thanks largely to the strenuous

efforts of its own practitioners, has managed to establish itself as a legitimate activity that enhances the images and perceptions of a wide variety of institutions. However, the common ancestry of these two practices tends to blur the distinction between them, with the result that there is often confusion in the minds of the public as to what is propaganda and what is legitimate and ethical public relations.

Public relations emerged at the end of the 19th century as a means of utilizing the increasingly powerful mass communication media to further the objectives of American industry, as well as to shape the public perception of a wide range of institutions and influential individuals. It was not coincidental that public concern about the increasing significance of the media in modern life was brought into sharp focus at precisely the same time as part of the ongoing examination of the strengths and weaknesses of an increasingly urbanized and industrialized America. These critics, labeled as muckrakers by both their detractors and supporters, focused on issues that threatened the orderly development of a progressive democratic society. In 1905, the journalist Ray Stannard Baker published a series of five articles examining the scandalous business practices of the railroads. The first four essays were exposés of such things as excessive shipping rates and illegal rebates, but the final essay tackled a relatively new subject when it examined the manner in which the railroads were able to corrupt public opinion by using press agents and dubious financial relationships with newspapers and magazines. Baker's work was the initial foray for what was to be a series of exposés that examined how press agents, promoters, and the newly emerging practitioners of public relations were moving their influence outside of government and directly affecting and shaping public opinion.

Will Irwin in 1910 began his 15-part series for *Collier's* magazine, which examined the newspaper industry. As Michael Sproule indicated, "Irwin's ability to trace links between outside interests, newspaper content, and public opinion made his . . . [work] a cornerstone in the foundation of postwar propaganda consciousness" (1997, p. 24). Irwin meticulously detailed how newspaper editors

were being increasingly influenced by pressure from advertisers, including direct economic subsidies, as well as by privileged individuals with economic power. He rejected the notion of banning advertising, however, and hoped that the increasing professionalization of journalistic practices would do much to eliminate the current abuses.

In later years, George Creel, before he became head of the Committee for Public Information in the First World War, undertook a muckraking examination of the public relations practices of large charitable organizations, in particular the Rockefeller Foundation. Creel concluded that some gifts from these organizations did indeed affect the way in which information was presented to the public.

Walter Lippmann (1915), in one of his early essays, examined the role of public relations as used by American industry in the ongoing battle to establish a minimum wage. In recognition of the contentious role of press agency and other publicity techniques, the Post Office Appropriation Act of 1912 mandated full disclosure of a magazine's and newspaper's ownership and also required that all material published for payment had to be labeled as an "advertisement."

These and other muckraking attempts to illuminate the increasing role of public relations practitioners in manipulating public opinion became what is now known as the Progressive propaganda critique. This early confusion between legitimate public relations practices and more directive propaganda activities was only natural considering their similar objectives. In the period after the First World War, the increasing professionalization of public relations required that this emerging industry clearly differentiate itself from the discredited propaganda techniques associated with the war effort. George Creel's (1920) infamous book, *How We Advertised America*, left a bitter taste in the mouths of Americans who felt that they had been manipulated into supporting what was ultimately an unsatisfactory victory. The result of the massive efforts to mobilize public opinion was to leave a legacy of suspicion and hostility in the mind of the public, and the concept of propaganda became an anathema.

In this atmosphere, pioneers of public relations Ivy L. Lee and Edward L. Bernays established themselves as public relations professionals, perhaps because both had a solid background in propaganda activities. Lee had worked for the Red Cross and in later life was associated with the propaganda activities of both Japan and Nazi Germany. Throughout his professional career he stressed that “the essential evil of propaganda is failure to disclose the source of information” and used this as the cornerstone of his ethics of publicity (Lee, 1925, quoted in Sproule, 1997, p. 55).

Edward L. Bernays published a book actually entitled *Propaganda* in 1928, and he was not ashamed to use the word *manipulation* in his writings. In his earlier work, *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923), Bernays had outlined his philosophy of public relations and acknowledged the need for the public to be informed by specialists occupying the middle ground between lack of knowledge and a stubborn tendency to hold fixed views. He noted that “the advocacy of what we believe in is education. The advocacy of what we don’t believe in is propaganda” (p. 14). In *Propaganda* (1928) he fully acknowledged the need for propaganda activities in a modern society, suggesting that the best propaganda was that associated with socially sound objectives. In a series of popular articles and speeches in the interwar period, Bernays advocated the use of propaganda as an alternative to force and as a means of making known minority opinions to society as a whole.

Many students of Bernays’s profession believe he was imbued with the sort of analysis that made his double uncle, Sigmund Freud, an international icon for revealing the mysteries of the human mind. Bernays was fascinated by the workings of the human mind and had ample opportunity to study his uncle’s thoughts on people’s desire for identification, love of tribalism, and need for leadership. Bernays became a student of mass psychology and loved to speculate on the ways that the opinions of large numbers of individuals could be shaped. He became legendary for his self-touted ability to mold public opinion. Although he later worked to divorce himself from the tobacco industry, he at first

delighted in his success at promoting Lucky Strike Green packaging to women. To his credit, however, Bernays avoided developing a consulting relationship with Adolph Hitler and Joseph Goebbels, who had invited his counsel because they were familiar with his book on propaganda.

The culmination of the propaganda critique came with the establishment of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis (IPA) in 1937. The IPA, much to the consternation of its critics, saw its mandate as that of analyzing all forms of propaganda, and it did not limit itself to examining the increasingly ominous words emanating from foreign countries, particularly the fascist regimes in Italy, Germany, and Japan. It was only a matter of time before the institute tackled domestic propaganda as manifested in the manipulation of public opinion and attitudes by professionals directly engaged in this activity. During its short life it took on such contentious issues as the establishment of “suspect” research foundations devoted entirely to extolling the virtues of certain industries (a favorite tactic of Bernays), the role of public relations firms in opposing social legislation such as wage and tax reform, and the use of pre-prepared stories and photographs for distribution to newspapers and magazines that cast certain industries in a favorable light.

In an increasing atmosphere of international conflict, such activities as these did not endear the institute to its supporters, and eventually it was closed in January 1939, never to return after the war. This closing symbolized the demise of the propaganda critique, and it can be seen as a victory for the increasing professionalization of the public relations industry. Although the study of propaganda reached its zenith during the Second World War, it now concentrated on understanding the psychological processes of persuasion and the successful creation of specific targeted messages. The studies of propaganda techniques and strategies conducted for the United States government during this period serve as one foundation for the academic discipline of communication studies.

Many leading public relations practitioners, in addition to Lee and Bernays, had their tussle with the aura and ethics of propaganda. Two of the more

influential, John W. Hill and Albert Oeckl, are worth considering to appreciate the efforts that practitioners have made to separate their profession and its strategies from the taint of propaganda.

John Hill drew what he thought to be a clear line between the ethical approach to public relations and the unethical approach to propaganda that tainted it and its practitioners:

Public relations in its controversial usage is sometimes dubbed “propaganda.” Actually propaganda was a “good” word until brought into disrepute when Hitler and the Communists began to pollute the airways with their “Big Lies,” and made it a “bad” word. In a public relations battle in a free country it is important that there be no lies. Different interpretation of the facts is possible, and each side is entitled to present its views, leaving it to public opinion to decide which to accept.

The purpose of public relations in its best sense is to inform and to keep minds open. The purpose of “propaganda” in the bad sense is to misinform and to keep minds closed.

Business managements have every reason and right to communicate regularly with all segments of the public whose support they seek; and more, to work for better understanding of the private enterprise system. (1963, p. 6)

Relations between Hill and Bernays were always strained, for many reasons. Without doubt, one of those reasons was their views on the rationale for, and the strategic practice of, public relations. Hill aspired to the “journalistic” rather than “mass persuasion” tradition of public relations, which assumes a valued role for informing citizens who are capable of making informed decisions. For this reason, the virtue of public relations, he believed, was that it offered information for people’s consideration.

Hill was serious in his systematic efforts to work through his rationale of public relations in contrast to propaganda, which he believed discredited both the practitioner and the client:

I have no patience with those who try to attribute insidious and mysterious powers to public relations. Such ideas are wholly fanciful and without basis in fact. Quacks, charlatans, and so-called “hidden

persuaders” may come and go in the field of public relations but their time is short and their achievements ephemeral.

Nothing could be more absurd than to imagine that the so-called “corporate image” can be created by a clever use of words or by “slick” stunts. The ability of a specific business, or of business in general, to defend itself against its detractors and to project its worth to people begins with definitely existing policies and intrinsic values. The rightful purpose of public relations is openly to confirm, strengthen, and defend these values. Without integrity this cannot be accomplished. (Hill, 1963, pp. 161–162)

Bernays, in his own and others’ minds, was a practitioner who believed in the value of the “clever stunt.” Such was not the stuff of a practice claiming to add value to society, a goal worthy of a dignified profession.

Albert Oeckl is one of the most influential practitioners and academics on the development and evolution of the profession in Germany. He began his career as a junior lawyer in the Reichspropagandaministerium in Munich (1934–1935). However influenced he was by the works of Bernays and the legendary Goebbels, he matured to a view of public relations that featured working for the public, in the public interest, and in the public sphere. His view of public relations was that every message and strategic action must meet the ethical standard of contributing to the good of the community and serving its interest. He aspired to what has become featured as the symmetrical view of public relations.

Propaganda studies has seen a minor revival since the 1980s as political issues surrounding the study of the subject have become less contentious, thus allowing academics and others to examine the role and function of propaganda in modern society without fear of being criticized. In particular, the war in Vietnam and the two subsequent military campaigns against Iraq have provided an enormous opportunity to examine how public opinion can be manipulated and shaped. In very recent years, thanks largely to the emergence of the Internet, numerous sites have been established to examine precisely the interrelationship between public relations and what are deemed to be propaganda

activities. The result of all this activity tends to show that there is indeed an aspect of public relations practice that comes dangerously close to meeting a definition of propaganda.

In the world dominated now by the large media conglomerates, the role of propaganda assumes a greater significance and is practiced increasingly with an unseen subtlety. It often blends seamlessly with legitimate public relations practices, and it is highly likely that this trend will continue into the foreseeable future. Despite this problem, leading practitioners and academics have seen sound reason to divorce public relations from propaganda. Such diligent efforts are slow to pay off; the goal, however, is important and worthy of the effort. This debate, perhaps beyond any other, is the fundamental pursuit of leading practitioners and professionals in public relations. That struggle is enduring, not fleeting.

—Garth S. Jowett and Robert L. Heath

See also Bernays, Edward; Committee on Public Information; Hill, John Wiley; Lucky Strikes Green Campaign; Oeckl, Albert; Spin; Symmetry;

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PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Psychographics are audience segmentation methods that discover actionable audience segments by examining individual psychological, sociological, and anthropological factors—such as motivations, attitudes, self-concept, and lifestyle—that influence a particular decision about a product, person, ideology, or medium.

Although researchers Russell Haley and Emanuel Demby both claimed to originate the term *psychographics* in 1965, rapidly expanding technological access to audience descriptors in the following decades delayed a settled understanding of the concept. To illustrate the confusion, Heath writes that such widely used research techniques as geodemographics, which is generally considered psychographics, is not psychographics, whereas much survey-based research that includes a measurable attitude, interest, opinion, or lifestyle question is psychographics. Gunter and Furnham conversely classify attitudes and opinions research as psychographics, but suggest that lifestyle research is not. Rebecca Piirto Heath in 1995 dismissed as psychographics research any qualitative techniques such as focus groups, projective techniques, in-depth interviewing, and emotional probing. Yet in a 1996 article, she labeled these so-called psycho-qualitative tools as an important and growing trend in psychographics. Increasingly, any distinctions have been further weakened by a near-total knowledge of the behavior of individual consumers available through giant databases. Traditionally, the four major classifications of psychographic studies focused on geodemographics, personal values, lifestyles, and life cycles.

GEODEMOGRAPHICS

Geodemographics, in its most simple form, is plotting the residential location of concentrations of particular audience characteristics—of high-income single men, for instance—so that communication efforts can be directed with more cost-effectiveness. As extended by proprietary systems such as PRIZM or ACORN, researchers overlaid demographic

knowledge with further questions concerning consumer behavior and attitudes.

The oldest of the geodemographic methods, PRIZM, was introduced in 1974. PRIZM (Potential Rating Index for ZIP Markets) reduces U.S. Census block group statistics to six categories that the company asserts account for most statistical variance between neighborhoods: social rank, household composition, mobility, ethnicity, urbanization, and housing. The system then correlates these classifications with consumer purchase records to categorize an individual neighborhood of 250–550 households into one of 62 different consumer segments. The resulting segments are labeled with such names as Boomtown Singles (middle-income young singles who live in smaller cities), or Rustic Elders (low-income, older rural couples), and the company claims that they help communicators transform mailing lists of current customers into insights about what psychographic traits those customers have. That knowledge then allows marketers to know where additional similar customers could be found.

LIFE CYCLES/GENERATIONAL COHORTS

The generational cohort to which one belongs is another psychographic characteristic that aids professionals in more clearly defining their targeted publics. William Straus and Neil Howe have conducted extensive generational theory research. They define a generation as a cohort group whose length approximates the span of a phase of life and whose boundaries are fixed by peer personalities. Further, a generation is shaped by its “age location” (e.g., participation in epochal events that occur during one’s course of life). Examples include the Great Depression, the Korean War, World Wars I and II, the Vietnam War, and, most recently, the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. During each stage of the life cycle, a set of collective behavioral traits and attitudes is produced. Straus and Howe refer to each generational cohort’s traits and attitudes as its “peer personality.” Attitudes of one generation affect how that person’s children are raised and, later, how those children raise their offspring.

The Generational Influences Model offers a visual diagram of how the generation to which an individual belongs affects his or her behaviors in today’s marketplace. This model is derived from 30+ years of research collected via the Yankelovich MONITOR, an annual study that tracks American’s lifestyles and values. People possess individualized value systems that affect the way they interact and view the world around them. Our value systems are affected by an array of environmental conditions we experience as children. Members of a generation are linked through the shared life experiences of their formative years.

According to Yankelovich Market Research, a person’s “life stage” represents how old an individual is, and, therefore, where that individual is situated in life—either physically or psychologically. “Current conditions” reflect events that affect what a person buys (e.g., layoffs, recessions, wars, political turmoil, technological innovations). Our “cohort experiences” represent habits that define and differentiate the generation to which we belong. These experiences serve as the “filters” through which a person interprets all subsequent life experiences. As the Generational Influences Model explains, our life stage and current social and economic conditions play dominant roles in forming our cohort experiences, which, in turn, influence our values and preferences, and therefore have an effect on our marketplace behaviors as consumers (see Figure 1).

In short, the Generational Influences Model explains that a person’s life stage, in combination with current conditions, aids in the development of a generation’s cohort experiences. The cohort experiences, in turn, aid in developing individual core values, which influence preferences; these preferences and values serve as guideposts for marketplace behaviors.

To put these concepts into more concrete terms, each generation has its own typology. The literature offers a plethora of labels and categories: the more mainstream, research-based cohorts include the “Matures” (born pre-1930–1945, which include the GI Generation, Depression, War Babies); the “Baby Boomers” (born 1946–1964); “Generation X” (born

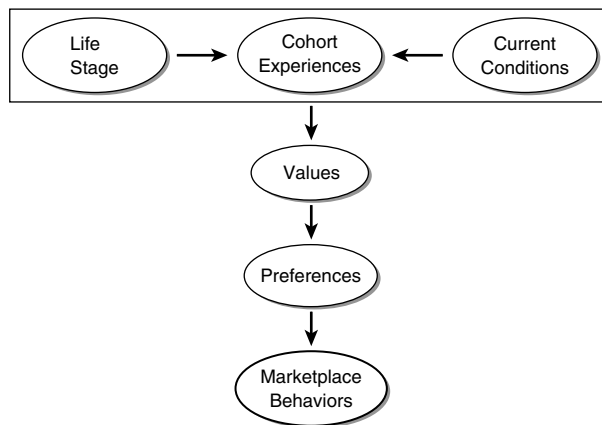


Figure 1 Generational influences.

SOURCE: Smith, Walker J. (1997). Reprinted with permission.

1965–1976); “Generation Y” (born 1977–1994); and “Millennials” (born after 1994).

PERSONAL VALUES

Values are central to peoples’ lives, and because of their importance, values have been known to influence attitudes and behaviors. The study of human values has been cited as early as 1931 (e.g., Allport & Vernon’s *A Study of Values*). Enjoying a history rich in empirical examination, values-related studies occur among an array of disciplines and within a variety of theoretical frameworks. However, until Milton Rokeach began conducting values research throughout the 1960s and 1970s, many of the previous studies that examined values included them as a subcategory of attitudes. Rokeach is credited for operationally defining and investigating values separate from those of attitudes.

Fundamentally, Rokeach’s values theory is derived from consistency theory. As consistency theory explains, people are driven to reduce inconsistencies in order to regain cognitive balance in their lives. All consistency theories begin with the same premise: people are comfortable with consistency. Values theory explains that people are guided by a need for consistency and that inconsistency creates a pressure to change. Specifically, Rokeach defined a value as

an organized set of preferential standards that are used in making selections of objects and actions, resolving conflicts, invoking social sanctions, and coping with needs or claims for social and psychological defenses of choice made or proposed . . . A value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. (1979, p. 5)

According to the values theory framework, values serve as standards that guide ongoing activities. Rokeach explained that values serve as general plans for resolving conflict and making decisions. Values also serve motivational functions and as the final analysis of conceptual tools we employ to maintain and enhance our self-esteem.

According to Rokeach, values are developed and learned by each person. They have dual purposes: they serve as cognitive representations of societal demands and as individual needs for morality and competence. Values transform these individual needs into shared goals and modes of behavior. Each person has a highly organized belief-attitudes-value system that guides behavior. These values are elaborately related to one’s attitudes and behavior. Whereas values represent abstract ideals—positive or negative—that are not tied to any one specific object or situation, attitudes focus on specific objects and situations. Further, values are more stable over time than attitudes because they are more centrally connected to an individual’s cognitive system. As a result, under some circumstances values serve as better predictors of an individual’s behavior over extended periods of time than do attitudes; thus values represent an efficient, measurable set of variables more closely tied to motivation behavior than are demographic measures.

According to Rokeach, once a value is internalized, it becomes, unconsciously, a standard or criterion for guiding action, for developing and maintaining our attitudes toward objects and situations that are relevant to us to justify our own—or others’—actions and attitudes, for morally judging ourselves and others, and for comparing ourselves with others. In short, values are our “internal barometers.” Put another way, values serve as that

little voice inside our heads that guide many of our decisions and behaviors.

Lynn Kahle and his colleagues sought to develop a measure that corresponded with Rokeach's values and Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and provided a way to operationalize Maslow's work. Through extensive research, Kahle developed the List of Values (LOV), an instrument that encompasses a nine-value typology for use in conducting consumer-based research. Kahle notes that the LOV does not claim to provide an exhaustive inventory of every personal value. However, it does provide a useful instrument applicable for an array of social science studies.

These nine LOV indicators may be better represented at a more abstract level by "value domains" that reflect either an external or internal orientation based on an individual's *locus of control*. This concept explains the degree to which a person feels that the control of his or her world belongs to self (internal) at one extreme, or to fate (external), at the other extreme. *Internally oriented* values include self-fulfillment, self-respect, fun and enjoyment, excitement, sense of accomplishment, and warm relationships with others; *externally oriented* values include sense of belonging, sense of security, and being well respected. The external values imply a dependence on people or circumstances *outside* the individual's own control, whereas the internal values imply a more self-controlled independence on self.

One of the earliest commercially accessible psychographic systems using this conceptualization was VALS (Values and Lifestyles), built by Arnold Mitchell and provided to the market by SRI International. The version introduced in 1978 used Maslow's hierarchy of needs as its conceptual model, defining four major hierarchical groups: need-driven, outer-directed, inner-directed, and integrated, which roughly corresponded to Maslow's taxonomy. To counter significant criticisms, the company developed VALS2, which deviated from the original's orientation toward social hierarchy and instead focused on multiple personality attributes that were more closely focused on individual buying behavior.

Today, there are a variety of instruments available for studying personal values (e.g., Rokeach Value Scale, Schwartz Value Scale, AIO, and Value Tracking via Yankelovich MONITOR). However, the LOV appears to be one of the more mainstream measures used by academicians and practitioners because of its brevity and ease of administration, its availability for public use, its ability to incorporate demographic measures, and its repeated success across various industries (e.g., high degree of reliability and validity).

LIFESTYLES

Lifestyles research examines psychological self-concepts that can then be analyzed to determine future actions. Originally, these insights were limited to information primarily interpolated from demographic data or from self-reported survey data. For instance, a marketing company might have asserted that households that had a family income in the top 10 percentile of the nation pursued an "affluent" lifestyle. Yet some families might use their income to rent villas on the French Riviera, and other families to purchase heavy construction equipment for their businesses.

The advent of all-encompassing databases that capture lifestyle behaviors, such as individual consumer buying habits, recreational choices, and media behaviors, has transformed all types of psychographic research and also changed the focus of psychographic research applications. Inventory control systems using universal product code technology give retailers and researchers the capacity to track an individual's buying behaviors, and huge computer storage capacity gives marketers the power to integrate those data with public information like auto registrations, as well as home prices with media subscription and direct marketing purchases, to obtain true information about what individual consumers value and how each perceives his or her self.

This lifestyle research has provided information that, when overlaid on previous psychographic systems, provides further valuable insight into and refinement of consumer motivations. It has also shifted the segmentation philosophy of psychographics.

Life cycle and geodemographics research methods basically overlaid certain psychographic data onto broad swaths of consumers defined by geography, class, income, or sex. The new database lifestyle research allows individual consumers to signal their membership in a psychographic class by their combinations of behaviors. For instance, a cost-effective psychographic classification is more likely to be assembled from what in-line skaters read, such as health and fitness and weight loss magazines, than from their age, sex, or income. This focus on product-specific segmentation has permitted insights for marketers, advertisers, and public relations practitioners that earlier, broadly based psychographic systems did not generate.

—Lisa T. Fall and William Thompson

See also Demographics; Segmentation

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PSYCHOLOGICAL PROCESSING

To the extent that public relations efforts attempt to influence the behavior of target audiences, practitioners must understand the psychological processes that underlie people's responses to messages on a given topic.

Psychologists generally differentiate between three aspects of the human mind that can influence

learning and behavioral decision making: the cognitive, the affective, and the conative. Simply stated, cognitions deal with what people know—the information and thoughts stored in memory. Affect relates to people's physiological responses, including level of arousal, feelings, and emotions. Conation deals with both the unconscious (automatic) and conscious (reasoned and deliberative) inclination to take action. Behavioral decisions made in response to public relations efforts typically involve some combination of these three processes.

THE ROLE OF COGNITION

The acquisition of new knowledge can be examined from three principal perspectives. *Classical conditioning* suggests that people learn by making associations between objects, illustrated by Pavlov's early psychological studies in which he taught a dog to associate the ringing of a bell with being fed. *Operant or instrumental conditioning* focuses on altering people's knowledge or behavior by giving them rewards. *Social learning theory* stresses that people learn by observing others, accepting the behaviors of others as norms, and then modeling personal behavior after others.

Cognitive learning usually begins by *exposure* to a message. *Perception* of a message uses the human senses to collect new information and is followed by *comprehension*, which involves making sense of a message. *Understanding* involves reconciling new information with a person's extant knowledge stored in memory. Importantly, *remembering* information involves more than the simple passing through of a message into the brain. Instead, people analyze the information, focus on key parts, amplify on those parts, and make "mental notes" about information in a process known as *elaboration*.

Schemas

Cognition refers to the mental mechanisms that lead individuals to perceive, think about, and elaborate on public relations messages and appeals. Although practitioners tend to assume that members of target audiences will respond in similar ways to communications, this is not necessarily the case.

Rather, individuals are constantly building unique frameworks of knowledge, beliefs, and expectations based on their personal history, current circumstances, future plans, and interactions with others. These cognitive structures—representing the attributes and relationships among people, objects, and events—are known as *schemas*.

Schemas are believed to improve the efficiency of cognitive processing by allowing people to process information quickly. They also provide predictability about people and events by creating expectations about topics in people's minds. Schemas influence the types of messages that people notice (*attention schemas*), how they process information contained in the messages (*encoding schemas*), as well as how they retrieve information from memory (*retrieval schemas*). Other types of schemas include *event* or *script schemas*, which govern the sequence of events that people expect in particular settings, and *role schemas*, which govern the way people expect others to act in particular roles.

Stereotypes are one type of schema. Stereotypes, or *person schemas*, are based on the physical appearance and behavioral characteristics of other groups of people. According to social learning theory, people form stereotypes based on what they learn from parents, peer groups, and mass media. From these and other sources, people learn to separate others into different social categories based on age, gender, race, and other characteristics. Stereotypes can lead people to habitually look for a particular desirable or undesirable trait in another group. Although stereotypes can contribute to the efficient processing of public relations messages, they can thus produce biased judgments and behavior.

People vary in their use of schemas to assess public relations messages. In many cases, for example, people compare or screen new messages for relevance to information already stored in memory and focus on inconsistencies. Schemas involve assertions between related topics, so creative messages often involve making linkages between two seemingly unrelated sets of schemas. Examples are as simple as using similes or metaphors to make comparisons.

Research indicates that schemas congruent with existing attitudes toward a topic are more likely to

be retrieved from memory than incongruent schemas. Also, schemas that are “primed” by exposure to specific messages are more readily accessible in memory and thus are more likely to influence subsequent behavior. Priming can occur even when people are unaware that they have been exposed to the priming messages. Effective message framing can facilitate the priming process by providing cues to what schemas should be evoked to process a particular message.

Schemas, once formed, are resistant to change and often produce self-confirming effects. However, public relations messages can and do lead to schema change under certain conditions. The *book-keeping model* suggests that the slow accumulation of information over time can lead to gradual schema change. Under the *conversion model*, schema change is rapid and occurs when people are overwhelmed by new evidence. According to the *subtyping model*, people create schema subtypes based on exposure to new information in messages. Research indicates that subtyping is the typical mechanism by which schemas change.

Heuristics

Heuristics are a second type of cognitive mechanism that can produce rapid reactions to public relations messages. Heuristics are “mental shortcuts” or “rules of thumb” that people use in place of deliberate thinking when making decisions. People tend to use heuristics when they lack information or are overloaded with information, when they lack time to think carefully, when the decision is unimportant, and when the heuristic rule comes quickly to mind.

Like schemas, there are many types of heuristics. The *simulation heuristic* is used to make decisions based on a mental rehearsal of the sequence and outcome of events. The *representative heuristic* is used to categorize people based on a few traits that appear typical of that category. According to the *availability heuristic*, information that is more easily recalled from memory will be correspondingly more influential in making decisions. Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman (1974) confirmed that individuals use heuristics automatically

and without awareness when making routine decisions.

The two leading persuasion process models—the Elaboration Likelihood Model and the Heuristic-Systematic Model—argue that heuristic cues (known as peripheral cues in the Elaboration Likelihood Model), can influence persuasion and are particularly important in cases when people are not motivated to pay attention to arguments.

Heuristics and schemas can increase the efficient processing and persuasiveness of public relations messages; however, they can also reduce accuracy, leading to errors in cognition. *Optimistic* or *negative bias* (the expectation of positive or negative outcomes) can influence the processing of messages, leading people to ignore or pay greater attention to negative messages concerning threats in the social environment. Errors can also occur when people rely on intuition or irrational assumptions when making decisions, or suppress thoughts that are inconsistent with behavioral intentions.

Cognitive Consistency and Dissonance

Social psychologists Fritz Heider (in 1946 and 1958) and Leon Festinger (in 1957) were among the first to argue that people strive toward consistency, balance, or consonance between mental representations of their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. Whereas Heider's balance theory primarily dealt with consistency among attitudes, Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance showed that the consistency principle was relevant to a wide variety of cognitive elements, including behavior and behavioral decision making.

When beliefs, attitudes, behavior, and other elements are inconsistent with one another, people experience a negative affective state of discomfort or tension known as cognitive dissonance. The magnitude of dissonance tends to be greater when the belief, attitude, or behavior is more important or highly valued by the person, as well as when the belief, attitude, or behavior is proportionally more dissonant with other cognitive elements.

To reduce tension and maintain cognitive consistency, people try to bring their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors into alignment with one another, typically

by modifying the cognitive element that is easiest to change. Exposing target audiences to messages that are contrary to existing attitudes and beliefs can thus provide a motivational force for behavioral change. In general, people deal with inconsistency through avoidance, reactance (countering), or discounting (dismissing the importance of the fact or the credibility of the source).

THE ROLE OF AFFECT

Affect is a broad term that encompasses emotions, moods, feelings, and other affective states. Professor Susan McLeod (1991) differentiated among various forms of affect based on their stability and intensity. *Feelings* are typically associated with physical sensations, such as pleasure or pain. *Emotions* involve distinctive physical and affective reactions to particular attitude objects (people, issues, or events). Emotions can be dominant or secondary in a given situation and can stand alone or combine to form various emotional states. *Moods* are more general in nature and express the positive or negative way people feel at particular times. Because moods are less intense and more fleeting than emotions, they are easier to change in desirable ways.

Psychologists differ as to whether cognition and affect represent separate systems within humans; however, they generally recognize that people devote varying levels of both thought and emotion to information processing and behavioral decision making. Professor Kristie Fleckenstein conceptualized affect and cognition as states located at the opposite ends of an affective continuum, so that it becomes meaningful to think of affect and cognition as linked and expressible in degrees. Moods, feelings, and emotions cluster at the affective end of the continuum, attitudes at the midpoint, and evaluation (assessment of information according to previously stored criteria) at the cognitive end of the continuum.

The priority of cognitive or affective influences on learning and behavioral decision making is the subject of ongoing debate. Affect, psychologist Fredric Bartlett argued in 1932, is not simply a product of rational thought but often assumes primacy, initiating the formation of knowledge

structures and serving as the basis for information encoding and retrieval. Conversely, people often employ cognitive techniques such as counterfactual thinking and thought suppression to regulate emotions, moods, and feelings. Thus, there is often close correspondence between cognitive and affective states and subsequent judgments and behavior.

Psychologists generally acknowledge that emotions, moods, and feelings can influence the way people process new information. Messages must arouse audiences in order for them to pay attention, and message creators can appeal to people's emotions to enhance message processing. The goal is to create sufficient levels of affective response—but not so much that people are overwhelmed so that they cease learning or become distracted. Thus, overly attractive spokespeople, highly graphic scenes of death or destruction, and excessive fear appeals can interfere with effective communication.

THE ROLE OF CONATION

A third aspect of the human mind relevant to public relations efforts is conation: the unconscious or conscious impulse, desire, inclination, or intention to take action. Until recently the study of conation has lagged behind that of cognition and affect, in part because the three domains are intertwined and often considered together when assessing human behavior. Isolating conation from other influences on behavioral decision making thus becomes difficult. Most psychologists agree, however, that conation is a separate and important element of human behavior and that decision making cannot be fully explained without taking conative factors into account.

In 1997, cognitive psychologists Richard Snow and Douglas Jackson placed conation between cognitive and affective domains, with motivation and volition constituting the conative domain. Motivation can involve achieving human *needs* (physiological, safety, social, esteem, self-actualization, etc.), *goals* (achieving particular outcomes), or *gratifications* (pleasure or satisfaction). Motivational factors provide the direction, energy, and persistence necessary to achieve change, while volition encompasses freedom of choice, the will to act, and self-regulation of behavioral effort.

Snow and Jackson envisioned motivation and volition as forming a sort of conative continuum or pathway by which individual wants, needs, and goals are transformed into intentions and actions. Other researchers are more inclined to interpret motivational factors from an affective perspective and volitional influences from a cognitive viewpoint. Conation—the inclination to take action—thus becomes the psychological “bridge” between affect, cognition, and behavioral change.

Conative behaviors in public relations generally deal with particular actions that are mutually beneficial for people and for organizations. The most obvious behaviors that practitioners try to influence in the for-profit and political arenas include buying, investing, working, donating, and voting. However, not-for-profit organizations help people to learn new skills, develop cultural or recreational activities, grow spiritually, engage in healthful habits, and avoid risky or antisocial behaviors.

INFLUENCING BEHAVIORS AND ATTITUDES

Influence in public relations involves altering a person's cognitive, affective, or conative behaviors. Most well-managed communications programs specify both organizational goals as well as behavioral change objectives that can help the organization achieve its desired outcomes. Although the behavioral objectives of many campaigns can be to merely increase a person's knowledge (awareness, recognition, or recall of a brand or key message point) or to generate affective response (emotional leaning toward a client's product, message, or organization), most programs specify conative actions as the desired outcome.

Traditional hierarchy of effects models suggest that behavioral change results from a person moving along a continuum from awareness to interest to desire to action (also known as the AIDA model). Variations of this notion emphasize awareness-comprehension-conviction-action and awareness-knowledge-liking-preference-conviction. Diffusion theory suggests a similar process that involves knowledge-persuasion-decision-implementation-confirmation. These models suggest that change

begins with learning, after which people develop feelings and then act. More recent research suggests that in some instances the sequence is reversed. Research about low-involvement decisions suggests that people develop feelings toward topics, engage in minimal cognitive learning, and then act. Alternatively, forcing people to change their behavior can effect behavioral change. In this dissonance-radical behaviorism approach, people develop affective responses and then learn by observing their own behavior.

Both these approaches and most behavioral change models suggest that attitudes toward topics moderate a person's eventual behavior. An *attitude* is a predisposition toward a topic that combines both cognitive and affective dimensions—what a person knows and how he or she feels about it (likes it, is neutral, or dislikes it).

Various attitude theories, such as the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behavior, suggest that attitudes are reasonably good predictors of behaviors, provided that a person is able to engage in the requisite behaviors and that the person's goals do not change. Thus, many public relations campaigns have as their stated purpose to *crystallize attitudes* (shape or form predispositions about new topics), *reinforce existing attitudes*, or *change attitudes* (the most difficult outcome to achieve in a campaign).

Importantly, if an attitude is composed of both cognitive and affective dimensions, public relations campaign strategies essentially can influence attitudes in two ways: change what people know about a topic or change how they feel about a topic (i.e., increase their affective response or how important the topic is in their mind).

IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

The influence of public relations messages and appeals on learning and behavioral decision making depends greatly on the cognitive, affective, and conative states of the people exposed to the messages. Public relations efforts can be directed toward shaping, reinforcing, or changing the cognitive or affective processing of messages to achieve

the desired end result. When a target audience is knowledgeable and motivated to process messages, a well-reasoned argument, supported by factual evidence, may be effective in shaping attitudes and behavior. When audience members are unwilling to process messages logically, however, an emotional appeal may increase acceptance of the messages. Since people differ in their ability to put their thoughts and feelings into action, messages aimed at helping audience members develop conative attitudes and skills—the setting of goals, the development of plans, self-regulation of effort, and commitment to achieving desired results—also become critical in achieving behavior change.

—Cindy T. Christen and Kirk Hallahan

See also Attribution theory; Communication management; Diffusion of innovations theory; Involvement; Persuasion theory; Social construction of reality theory; Theory of reasoned action

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Public affairs is the management function responsible for interpreting an organization's external environment, or in the case of a corporation, its noncommercial environment, and managing an effective and appropriate response to that environment. The public affairs function in an organization or corporation typically includes the government relations area, and it frequently has responsibility for other activities in the political, public policy, and public perception arenas, such as issue management, internal and external communications, community relations, and philanthropy.

Historically, there has been considerable confusion over the definition of *public affairs* and how it differs or is distinguished from *public relations*. In the United States of the 21st century, one can find

public affairs being used synonymously with *public relations* or as another name for government relations. And for a large number of organizations and corporations, *public affairs* is used as the name of the integrated department that includes all of the external, noncommercial activities.

Whereas the term *public relations* has been in common usage since the early 1900s, *public affairs* is of more recent vintage. Unfortunately, the exact origin and first use of *public affairs* are uncertain. However, an early use of the term was by Thomas Reid, who became the manager, public affairs of Ford Motor Company in the 1959–1960 time period. Use of public affairs has grown slowly in the corporate world. In 1970, only a small minority of the executives who participated in the Public Affairs Council had public affairs as part of their department's or their own title. By 2002, the Foundation for Public Affairs survey, *The State of Corporate Public Affairs*, indicated that although *public affairs* was the most common title used, it still was used by less than a third of the survey respondents. Clearly, there is no universal acceptance and use of the term.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES

Activities assigned to the public affairs department vary widely among corporations. Government relations, particularly at the federal level, is undoubtedly the oldest and most common activity in the public affairs function, with the first corporate Washington office being opened in 1901. The number of such offices grew modestly until the demands of the war effort on corporations during World War II resulted in a sharp increase. The growth of social activism in the 1960s, particularly the environmental and consumer movements, saw a significant expansion in staff and corporate resources directed at interpreting and responding to the ever increasing volume of laws and regulations flowing from Washington.

Likewise, the devolution of power from Washington to the states in the 1970s and 1980s saw a significant increase in corporate resources directed to state government relations. And the 1990s saw the need for corporations to become

more actively involved in local government relations. In addition to this changing geographical orientation, corporations developed new programs to deal more effectively with their external environment, such as grassroots and grasstops programs, political action committees, public policy development and assessment, issue management systems, public interest group relations, and crisis management teams and systems. Subject matter experts were also added in such areas as the environment, consumer matters, and government regulations to deal with the growing number of external issues impacting the corporation.

The responsibilities of many public affairs departments also include the traditional public relations activities of corporate communications, media relations, community relations, charitable contributions, employee communications, and investor relations.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

Studies over the last ten years and more by the Public Affairs Council and the Foundation for Public Affairs indicate that about half of all corporations utilize an integrated public affairs organizational structure that includes the traditional public relations activities as well as government relations. The other half of the corporations house the government relations activities and public relations activities in separate departments. These studies have consistently revealed a consensus among senior corporate and public affairs management that an integrated public relations and government relations department is the most effective organizational structure for dealing with the corporation's external environment. The reasons generally cited for this view are that the issues facing a corporation in today's external environment are quite complex. To be effective in this environment requires multiple approaches, with the full range of the corporation's communications arsenal fully utilized. An integrated department allows a corporation to more quickly and effectively harness all of its internal resources and external activities and bring them to bear on an issue, thus increasing the chances of success. There are also substantial natural synergies between

government relations and public relations that are more easily captured in an integrated department.

The studies indicate that senior managers in those corporations that have separate government relations and public relations departments also recognize the benefits of an integrated approach and expect close cooperation between the government relations and public relations units.

—Woodrow Madden

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

The Public Affairs Council, based in Washington, DC, is the leading professional society for public affairs executives in the United States. It provides state-of-the-art information, training, and other resources to its 500-plus organizational members and their employees to promote and support their effective participation in government, community, and public relations activities at all levels. For a profile of the Council, see Table 1. The council's corporate, association, and consultant members work together to enhance the value and professionalism of the public affairs practice and to provide thoughtful leadership as corporate citizens. For a profile of the membership composition, see Table 2 and for types of most active members, see Table 3.

Organizations join the Public Affairs Council to benefit from a variety of services, including *personalized information services* (council staff experts provide members with advice on public affairs best practices, political action committee [PAC] fundraising, grassroots advocacy, crisis communications, state government relations, and other public affairs topics); *education programs* (more

than 30 conferences are sponsored annually, plus seminars and workshops, including the largest national conferences on PAC management, grassroots organizing, and corporate philanthropy; it also holds state government affairs workshops in five states each year, along with meetings for global public affairs executives, Washington lobbyists, issues managers, and others in the public affairs field); *strong advocacy for the public affairs profession* (the council supports the important role that public affairs plays in business strategy; council outreach efforts to business leaders, business schools, and the news media explain how public affairs contributes to an organization's bottom line); *customized benchmarking services* (members can compare themselves to "best-practice" companies or see how their staffing and budgets measure up to competitors); *communications* (council members receive *Impact*, the council's award-winning newsletter, which covers public affairs news and trends as well as intelligence on emerging public policy issues; members also receive the council's annual *Public Affairs Review* and the organization's twice-monthly electronic news service and gain access to the valuable best-practice information and databases in the council's Web site (www.pac.org); and *unique connections to the public affairs community* (seminars, forums, online discussion groups, and board meetings facilitate idea sharing and the building of new relationships). For a summary of the Council's areas of expertise, see Table 4.

The council defines public affairs "as the management function that interprets and works to strengthen a corporation's business environment." It has been innovative in expanding the ways the business world responds to the rapid changes transforming politics and government at all levels in the United States and abroad. The record of the past half-century is dotted with milestones attesting to the creative approaches the Public Affairs Council has pioneered since it was created in 1954 as Effective Citizens Organization (ECO). Soon the ECO name gave way to Public Affairs Council, which seemed to the founders to better capture the mission of the fledgling organization. For example, political education for business leaders, today

universally accepted as a corporate imperative, was born in 1956 when the council launched a series of "practical politics workshops" for corporate executives at leading universities around the country. This effort at educating business leaders in practical politics would later be used as a pilot by other organizations intent on creating similar programs—the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce among them.

The new council was the catalyst for the creation in the 1950s of the first corporate public affairs departments. In the tumultuous 1960s, it pressed the concept of "corporate social responsibility," along with state government relations programs, and, later, the ideas of grassroots political action, issues management, international risk assessment, and strategic planning, to name a few. Thousands of public affairs executives learned the basics of lobbying at council "clinics." The first conference to be held abroad on the growing phenomenon known as public affairs was conducted by the council in Brussels in 1972.

Early on the council took the lead in educating business in the most effective use of corporate political action committees (PACs). Today, it is the main source for companies around the United States seeking instruction in making their PACs more effective or in starting a political action committee from scratch.

Volunteerism, corporate community relations, and corporate philanthropy, all now "traditional" public affairs programs, owe their corporate acceptance to the council's continual efforts to expand the public affairs department's portfolio.

In recognition of the increasing importance that technology and new-century management practices have in advancing the professionalization of public affairs, the council early in the 1990s created the Center for Public Affairs Management. It deals specifically with management problems of public affairs executives in a quality-conscious, technology-minded corporate climate.

The council in the 2000s is pressing for a partnering of public affairs and public relations techniques to ensure maximum public policy and communications effectiveness.

Table 1 The Public Affairs Council, in Profile

<p>Market Public affairs professionals from the nation’s key corporations (largely <i>Fortune</i> 500) and associations, plus their consultancies</p> <p>Products Member-tailored information, research, strategic intelligence, public affairs management, benchmarking and training in public affairs, lobbying, political action committee (PAC) management and grassroots management, and, of course, networking</p> <p>Leadership Members of the PAC’s executive committee and board of directors drawn from the corporations, associations, and consultancies cited in “Products”</p> <p>Formula for customer service and innovations in public affairs Constant measurement of programs and services through management and financial reporting, benchmarking against competition, formal customer satisfaction surveys, and an overall sense of community for those in the public affairs profession</p> <p>Partners and alliances The Foundation for Public Affairs as events and needs warrant, national influential media, business, professional and other organizations; and outstanding experts from the many fields of public affairs</p> <p>Headquarters team Veterans from the key fields of public affairs</p>
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SOURCE: The Public Affairs Council. Reprinted with permission.

Table 2 Membership Composition

<p><i>Fortune 500 corporations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging growth companies Associations Public affairs consultants <p><i>Industry sectors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manufacturing Utilities Retailing Transportation Financial services Health care Diversified service companies

SOURCE: The Public Affairs Council. Reprinted with permission.

Table 3 Most Active Members

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public affairs or corporate affairs vice presidents and senior vice presidents International affairs executives Grassroots and political action committee (PAC) managers Corporate citizenship directors Government relations directors Media relations directors Communications vice presidents and senior vice presidents Senior Washington office executives Legislative representatives Community relations directors
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SOURCE: Public Affairs Council (2003). Reprinted with permission.

Table 4 The Components of Public Affairs: The Public Affairs Council's Fields of Expertise

<i>Advocacy</i>
Coalition building
Grassroots programs
Public interest/public policy groups
<i>Corporate community involvement</i>
Community relations
Corporate contributions
Volunteerism
<i>Corporate issues</i>
Crisis management
Emerging issues
<i>Government relations</i>
Local
State
Federal
International
<i>Politics</i>
Campaign finance
PACs
Political education
Voter registration/get-out-the-vote efforts
<i>Public affairs management</i>
Benchmarking
Communication tools
Maximizing external resources
Organization and staffing
Performance measurement and evaluation
Professional ethics
Public affairs competencies
Staff training and development
Strategic planning
Effective use of technology

SOURCE: The Public Affairs Council. Reprinted with permission.

—Wes Pedersen

See also Community relations; Corporate social responsibility; Issues management; Lobbying; Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); Philanthropy; Public affairs

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PUBLIC HEALTH CAMPAIGN

A public health campaign is an effort to persuade a defined public to engage in behaviors that will improve health or refrain from behaviors that are unhealthy. The communication elements of public health campaigns reflect four critical elements. First, campaigns are strategic and organized efforts. Second, they are typically designed to yield specific outcomes or results. Third, they normally focus on a large number of individuals. Fourth, they usually have specific beginning and ending dates. Public health campaigns typically follow seven steps: defining the problem, developing objectives, identifying target audiences, developing message strategies and tactics, selecting appropriate communication channels, implementing the campaign, and evaluating both the process and campaign outcomes.

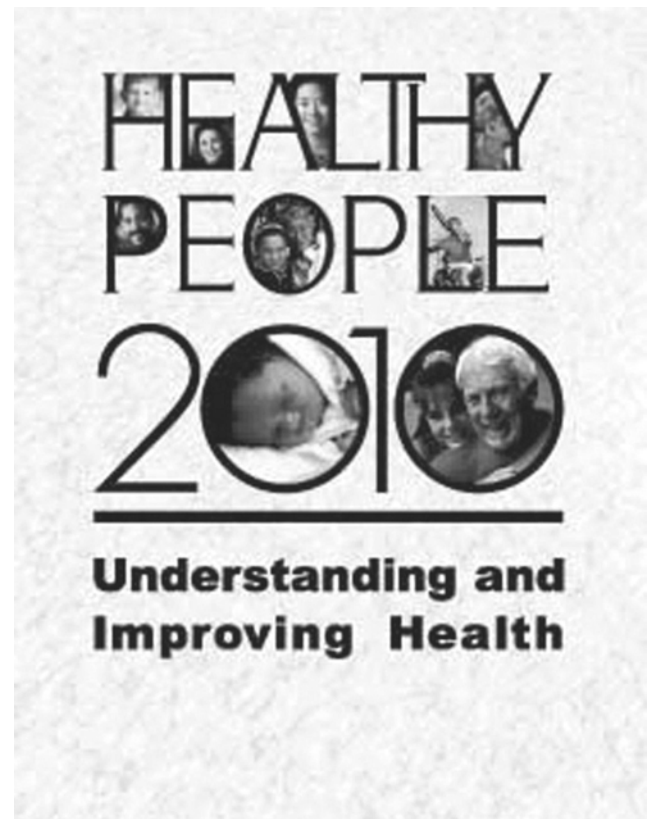
DEFINE THE PROBLEM

The first step in any public health campaign is to assess and define the nature of the health problem. In 1999, Christopher Rissel and Neil Bracht outlined two basic forms of community health analysis. The *health planning approach*, sometimes referred to as the “trickle-down” approach, associates the concept of health with the absence of disease. Government agencies most often use the health planning approach. Through the routine collection of data, tracking the outbreak of diseases along with other, related information, including demographics, living habits, and environmental risks, epidemiologists and other health experts identify and prioritize health threats on a local, national, or international level. The *community development approach*, sometimes referred to as the “bubble up” approach, examines community health

from a perspective that promotes individual and community empowerment. The broader concerns of educational, social, and economic vitality are factored into the analysis and any subsequent health intervention.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' *Healthy People 2010: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Outcomes* reflects a health planning approach. Armed with statistics of current and emerging health threats, epidemiologists and other health experts devised this report. The *Healthy People 2010* report is one of the major engines driving the prioritization of specific efforts in current health services and research. For example, statistics continue to show that African Americans are dying from some forms of cancer at rates disproportionate to Caucasians, revealing the need for more effort in promoting earlier disease detection among this at-risk population. As a result, state and federal departments of health are placing special attention on this problem.

An example of the community development approach is the Adolescent Social Action Program (ASAP), a public health campaign aimed at youths living in high-risk areas in New Mexico. The ASAP program is a collaboration of the University of New Mexico, the university hospital, the county detention center, and schools and communities throughout the state. The campaign involves teaming youths in small groups with jail residents and rehabilitation patients to discuss such topics as violence and substance abuse. By using a listening-dialogue-action model the youths are able to examine the stories of the inmates and patients and then discuss how those stories are relevant to their own lives. After several weeks the focus turns toward the topic of leadership and community development. At the end of a seven-week curriculum, the youths typically enter one of two programs, a peer education program where they will work with younger elementary students, or a social action program in which they explore ways to change risky behaviors in their communities. In both programs they are encouraged to use their creativity in devising either an educational or action plan.



The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2010: National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Outcomes is one of the major engines driving the prioritization of specific efforts in current health services and research.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2000.

DEVELOP OBJECTIVES

Once specific problems are identified, development of specific goals and objectives is the next step in the public health campaign process. The *Healthy People 2010* report reflects broad-reaching goals for reducing disease and improving the overall health of the U.S. population by the year 2010. The two major themes of the report include increasing the quality and years of healthy life, and the elimination of racial and ethnic disparities in health status. Ten specific health indicators are identified in the report: physical activity, overweight and obesity, tobacco use,

substance abuse, mental health, injury and violence, environmental quality, immunization, responsible sexual behavior, and access to health care.

These health indicators are supported by 21 specific measurable objectives that reflect the influence of behavioral and environmental factors and community health interventions. These 21 measures provide states and communities guidance in where to target public health campaigns and benchmarks for assessing the success of these campaigns. For example, the misuse of prescription medication can be a very dangerous health risk. One specific communication-related objective is to increase the proportion of patients who receive verbal counseling from prescribers and pharmacists about the appropriate use and potential risks of medications. The 1998 benchmark indicates that 24 percent of patients received verbal counseling from their caregiver, and only 14 percent of patients received verbal counseling from pharmacists. The target is to bring both percentages up to 95 percent, which would represent increases in the percentages of patients counseled by physicians and pharmacists of nearly 300 and 600 percent, respectively.

IDENTIFY TARGET AUDIENCES

Public health campaigns often involve segmentation of the community into a variety of dimensions that might include such factors as demographics (e.g., race, income level, and age) or psychographics (e.g., fear levels and readiness for change). Charles Salmon and Charles Atkin identified three basic types of target audiences in 2003. First is the focal audience whose health-related behavior is to be changed. The American Cancer Society's effort to persuade women age 50 and older to get annual mammograms is an example. The second audience is composed of those individuals who are capable of influencing focal audience members. An example is Partnership for a Drug-Free America's public service ads that urge parents to always ask their children where they are going and with whom. The third type of target audience is composed of individuals capable of altering the environment in ways that shape

individuals' health behavior. For example, over the past 10 years Mothers Against Drunk Driving has been successful in convincing lawmakers in many states to lower legal blood alcohol limits and stiffen penalties for alcohol-related infractions.

DEVELOPING STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

The effective use of strategies and tactics is key for a public health campaign's success. A sound foundation in social science theory is essential for a campaign to yield its full potential. A good example of a useful theory is Kim Witte's *extended parallel process model* (EPPM). Many health campaigns involve communicating some element of threat. The threat may come from continuing an unhealthy behavior or from not engaging in a healthy behavior, for example, continuing to smoke or not exercise. EPPM provides an explanation why some individuals react to a health message by going into a danger control response, which means taking action to control or eliminate the threat, while other individuals react to the same message by going into a fear control response, which means engaging in a process that controls fear rather than the threat. Often fear control responses are maladaptive and may involve message avoidance or erroneously rationalizing that one is not subject to a threat when in fact he or she is. Critical elements of the model include a person's perceived susceptibility to a health threat, the severity of the threat, the efficacy of responding to the health threat in a prescribed way, and a person's self-efficacy (i.e., his or her perceived ability to adopt the suggested behavior). The key is to tailor messages in a way that responds to each person's perceptions to promote danger control and minimize or eliminate fear control. The author is nearing completion of a four-year breast cancer screening promotion study that compares a tailored interactive computer program with a standard videotape program. Preliminary results indicate women receiving the EPPM tailored intervention are significantly more likely to get a mammogram than women who received the nontailored intervention, (40 percent vs. 27 percent).

SELECTING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

Once message strategies and tactics are developed, communication channels must be selected to deliver this content. The two major types are mediated channels and interpersonal channels. Mediated channels include traditional media such as television, radio, and newspapers, as well as interactive media such as CD-ROM programs, Web sites, and computer games. Charles Atkin (1994) has identified several media features to consider in deciding which channels are appropriate for a particular campaign. These include *reach* (the proportion of the audience exposed to the message), *depth* (the ability to provide detailed information), *accessibility* (the ease of placing messages in the channel), *personalization* (the degree to which messages can be tailored to individual needs), *economy* (the cost of placing messages in a channel), *targetability* (the degree to which audience niches can be reached), and *participation* (the degree to which audience members are involved while processing a message).

Often, the audiences most in need of health information are the most difficult to reach. For example, low-socioeconomic-status populations can be hard to reach. People in these populations typically don't go to the doctor regularly and they tend not to read newspapers or magazines. They watch a lot of television, but don't consume much news or documentary programming. Creative solutions are necessary for reaching this at-risk group. One example is an outreach effort by the Association of Black Cardiologists (ABC) to combat hypertension, a leading cause of heart attacks and strokes. These cardiologists have trained barbers and beauty shop operators in low-income neighborhoods surrounding downtown Atlanta to take blood pressure readings and to provide information about heart disease. The effort has been so successful that the drug maker Novartis has awarded ABC \$1.5 million to expand the program to five other states.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of a public health campaign should occur only when the previous steps have been

thoroughly developed. It is also important to understand the collaborative nature of many public health campaigns. As Timothy Edgar, Vicki Freimuth, and Sharon Hammond pointed out in 2003, few large-scale public health campaigns are implemented by a single organization. Often many partners such as foundations, state and local agencies, advocacy groups, researchers, pharmaceutical companies, health professionals, and private contractors work together to design and implement a campaign. These partnerships bring strengths to a project. Each organization has unique resources and expertise. For example, a foundation, government agency, or pharmaceutical company may provide the funding necessary to carry out a public health campaign. Researchers guide the scientific development in order to uncover new knowledge. A public relations firm develops and implements a publicity effort to inform the community about the health campaign and to recruit volunteers, and health professionals work with the campaign team to deliver care to patients and the resulting data to the research group. Although collaboration provides great benefits, it is important to realize that competing interests often characterize such partnerships. An understanding of group and organizational communication is critical in order to yield the most effective public health campaign.

CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

The final step is evaluation, although the process actually begins with the research conducted to determine needs before the start of a campaign, proceeds during the campaign to determine if benchmarks are being met, and continues after the conclusion of the campaign with the assessment of campaign outcomes. In 1999, Phyllis Pirie identified three basic types of evaluation. Evaluation for *accountability* seeks to determine if a campaign is worth the financial expenditure. Funding agencies and policymakers are particularly concerned with this. Evaluation for *program improvement* searches for ways to change activities for maximum benefit. This is a chief concern of campaign management and staff

whose focus is on promoting the success of their campaign. Finally, evaluation for *generalizability* seeks to determine if a campaign could be mounted effectively in other locations. In addition to researchers, policymakers are particularly interested in generalizability in order to decide whether they should advocate the program on a wider scale.

Pirie noted that outcome evaluation can be effective only when careful needs and process evaluation are done. Otherwise, one cannot know for certain what is accounting for the outcome. On a community level, “pre-post test” evaluations are generally not as strong because there are so many variables outside the campaign that might influence outcome. Pirie argued that comparison of similar communities without a program is a more certain way of gauging campaign outcomes. A good example of this is the American Legacy Foundation’s “Truth” campaign, a national tobacco counter-marketing effort launched in February 2000. The “Truth” campaign is based on the dramatic declines in youth tobacco that resulted from the Florida and Massachusetts antismoking campaigns, which have been much more successful than different approaches used in other states.

—Jeffrey K. Springston

See also Transtheoretical model of behavior change

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PUBLIC INTEREST

Public relations practitioners have always realized that their practice could serve or be at odds with the public interest. Realizing that, practitioners face two challenges. One is knowing what the public interest is and knowing how to serve it.

Considerations of what constitutes the public interest are central to discussions of the role of public relations in society and continues to challenge those who craft and implement codes of professional practice. Actual and proposed codes of ethics for public relations practitioners state that public relations should be practiced in the public interest. The Public Relations Society's Code of Ethics says, in part, "We are faithful to those we represent, while honoring our obligation to serve the public interest" (Public Relations Society of America, 2000, n.p.). Likewise, textbooks on public relations emphasize that the public relations profession shares with its clients a social responsibility. In fact, the "public interest, not personal reward, should be the primary consideration," according to *This Is PR* (Newsom, Turk, & Kruckeberg, 2000, p. 3).

There is no argument that public relations should serve the public interest. The challenges arise in defining and describing public relations practice in the public interest.

Earl Newsom quoted Walter Lippmann's somewhat unsatisfying definition of public interest, "the public interest may be presumed to be what men would choose if they saw clearly, thought rationally, acted disinterestedly and benevolently" (1971, p. 12).

In contrast to the challenge to be disinterested, public relations professionals are not disinterested; they are partisan. This and the persuasive functions of public relations to crystallize, change, and activate attitudes seem in conflict with Lippmann's definition of the public interest. Carried toward what can be called the propagandistic practice of public relations, a professional can aspire to shape attitudes to the interest of the client. Such efforts may be asymmetrical and work against the challenge of building mutually beneficial relationships.

Newsom, Ramsey, and Carell's 1992 survey of public relations practitioners revealed that practitioners feel responsible first to the client, second to the client's relevant publics, third to themselves, fourth to the public at large, and fifth to the media. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Statement of Professional Values codifies that perception of responsibility: "We serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for those we represent."

D. L. Martinson (1995, 2000) focused on the repetition of day-to-day actions and decisions as the source of practice in the public interest. Repeated truth telling will become habit and serves the public interest, he said. He further advised that practitioners avoid excess in advocating for a client when the client's interests are in conflict with those of society. Loyalty to a client does not require violation of the rights of others.

Thomas H. Bivins (1993) questioned whether it is even possible for a public relations practitioner to discharge his or her duty as an advocate for a client while at the same time equally serving the public interest. He concluded that this responsibility may best reside at the macro level, the level of the profession, rather than at the level of the individual. Yet, every practitioner knows that the devil is often in the detail. That means that at the broadest level it is easy to understand and serve the public interest. But when a fact needs to be presented, its presentation can raise ethical questions, as can the word choice that accompanies the fact.

To help solve problems of this sort, Bivins, in 1993, proposed three paradigms under which public practitioners might serve the public interest. Once he had laid out these paradigms, he disputed the notion of whether public relations practice within those paradigms actually served the public interest. In paradigm I, the public interest is served by every individual acting in the best interest of the client. This principle erroneously presumes that all clients operate in the public interest. In paradigm II, the public relations practitioner balances work for paying clients with pro bono work for causes. The cause-related work, however, serves a special interest. In paradigm III, the public interest is served by ensuring that every client in need of professional public relations service can receive that service. This paradigm would make access to professional public relations services an obligation of the profession as a whole and not to the individual practitioner.

To extend his analysis of the role public relations plays in serving the public interest, Bivins offered a fourth paradigm that attempts to codify the obligation of the profession to serve the public interest. According to paradigm IV, "If public relations as a

profession improves the quality of debate over issues important to the public, then the public interest will be served” (1993, p. 1). This might require pro bono work to ensure that multiple viewpoints are expressed. However, it does not require equal opportunity of all viewpoints to be expressed.

Scott Cutlip, Allen Center, and Glen Broom’s classic 1985 textbook, *Effective Public Relations*, relies on the utilitarian definition of public interest as “serving the larger good over short-term private interests” (p. 482). They located responsibility for such service within the notion of corporate social responsibility, as did John W. Hill. According to Hill, “Big companies, if they are properly managed, have a keen sense of public responsibility . . . and make sure that each of their plants is a good neighbor in its respective community” (1958, p. 39).

As counselors to management, public relations practitioners help their employers and clients find ways of “identifying its own interest with the public interest,” Hill (1958, p. 21) said. Corporate policies of maintaining the strength and welfare of the company in ways consistent with the community interest, building a labor force by providing the best possible working conditions and wages, and investing in the goodwill of those essential to the corporation’s success contribute to the corporation’s success. “Good corporate public relations depend, first upon sound policies truly in the public interest,” Hill (1958, p. 163) reasoned. Hill defined the public interest as that which “promotes the general welfare, well-being, and security of the citizenry” (1958, p. 238).

The entire public relations industry suffers when practitioners represent bad clients. But, Hill admonished, “the better informed the people are, the more capable they are of judging where the public interest lies” (1963, p. 256). Thus, he would agree with Bivins that the role of public relations in the public interest lies, in part, in stimulating and participating in open, public debate of issues relevant to various publics’ interest.

The responsibility for stimulating debate has become the core principle underscoring the 2000 revision of the PRSA Code of Ethics: “Protecting and advancing the free flow of accurate and truthful

information is essential to serving the public interest and contributing to informed decision making in a democratic society. . . . We provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate” (Public Relations Society of America, 2000, n.p.).

—Ann Preston

See also Codes of ethics; Corporate social responsibility; Ethics of public relations; Mutually beneficial relationships; Propaganda; Publics

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PUBLIC OPINION AND OPINION LEADERS

Public opinion can be defined in many ways, but most researchers agree that public opinion is the collected views of select individuals interested in a particular subject. Very few issues will generate an opinion by the entire population; rather, those

issues that someone has a personal interest in will be important to him and he will in turn seek the opinions of others as he tries to find more information about the issue. For example, a mother in a small town may not have an opinion on the quality of inner-city housing, but she may be extremely vocal on a local issue such as education.

Public opinion is extremely difficult to measure. This is partly because only a small number of people at any given time actually form an opinion on a particular issue. This is because the public tends to be passive. Rarely does an issue elicit opinion by every citizen; rather, a small vocal group is seen as representing the attitude of the general public when, actually, most people have no opinion on the issue. Additionally, one issue may elicit a response or attention from one portion of the public, whereas another issue may be the focal point for another group of citizens. Once a person who feels a personal connection to, or self-interest in, the issue forms an opinion, it is very difficult to change that opinion.

Public opinion can change over time in several ways. Events can trigger a rapid change in public opinion, such as the change in public opinion about President Clinton once the Lewinsky scandal broke. This was also the case for the quick rise in positive public opinion of President George W. Bush after the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

Mass media can shape public opinion in a number of ways. Through agenda setting, news reports shape public perception of issues by highlighting certain news stories and downplaying other current issues. Additionally, the way that news stories are framed or presented will influence public opinion on an issue. For example, how the media frame the debate on tax cuts or campaign finance reform will influence the public's perception of the issue.

Public opinion can change more gradually depending on the ebb and flow of public attitudes. As a result of the Iranian hostage crisis in 1979–1980, public support for an increase in defense spending surged during this time; but support gradually decreased as media reports of wasteful spending in the defense budget turned public opinion.

Change in public opinion can also be seen as evolutionary. Over time, American attitudes toward woman and minorities have evolved, leading to acceptance and support of minorities and women holding positions of political power. In both cases, opinion did not change rapidly, but rather gradually over time.

An opinion leader is someone who is viewed as influential and is respected. Opinion leaders help shape public opinion because people listen to what they say and they are seen as experts in certain areas. Opinion leaders form networks by talking to other individuals who share information and viewpoints on specific topics. Opinion leaders are highly interested in an issue and are better informed than the average person. They are avid consumers of mass media and are active in searching out information on the issue. Opinion leaders like to let their opinions be known.

Reaching opinion leaders is important in public relations because an opinion leader's view carries weight in the community. This is believed to be demonstrated through the two-step flow theory of communication. Sociologists Elihu Katz and Paul Lazarsfeld studied the influences involved in choosing political candidates. These researchers found that while the mass media have minimal influence on which candidate a person selects, voters were most influenced by what they heard through personal communication with opinion leaders. This theory holds that public opinion is formed by people who are active and gain information on the issue, evaluate the information, form an opinion on the subject, and then express that opinion to others.

Opinion leaders act as catalysts for the formation of public opinion. Opinion leaders are described as being highly interested in the subject, better informed on the issue, avid consumers of media, early adopters of new ideas, and good organizers who can get people to take action. Opinion leaders are broken down into two groups—formal and informal. Formal opinion leaders include elected officials, heads of companies, celebrities, and so on. Informal opinion leaders are individuals with clout within the community who influence their peers and are seen as role models.

The term *opinion leader* suggests that the individual has influence over the public and is more than an informed peer. Opinion leaders must be active in attaining and sharing information about the issue to maintain their “leadership” role.

Opinion leaders existed long before mass media. Religious leaders, politicians, and great thinkers such as Aristotle used their knowledge and charisma to influence people on behalf of their causes. Today, however, opinion leaders are able to reach more of the public through print, broadcast, and, of course, the Internet.

—Nancy Engelhardt Furlow

See also Agenda-setting theory; Coalition building; Framing theory; Social construction of reality theory; Two-step flow theory

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PUBLIC POLICY PLANNING

Public policy planning entails understanding the limitations and incentives provided by government policy that can affect the ability of organizations to operate so to achieve their mission and vision. Although public policy planning is vital to businesses, it is also relevant to decisions and actions taken by the executive managements of nonprofit organizations and government agencies.

In short, how any business operates is affected by market forces as well as government policies. Such policies are created and promulgated through legislation, regulation, and litigation. Legislatures create

broad and specific rules that can affect how an organization generates revenue as well as the costs of doing business. Typically, regulators implement legislation. Litigation can stop, modify, mitigate, or create policies created by legislators and regulators. In the past three decades, the United States has witnessed many sweeping policies that have been created by litigation, perhaps the most important of which is the definition of consumer protection and failure to warn on the part of businesses. Cases in industries such as asbestos and tobacco have been won by arguments that convinced juries that businesses in these segments of the economy failed to warn persons who used or came into contact with these products of their health risks.

Traditionally, public relations has been the organizational discipline that has worked, along with legal counsel, to help organizations know, understand, adapt to, and change the public policies that affect their futures. At the end of the 19th century and during the first decades of the 20th century, for instance, public relations served industry to create a favorable public policy environment to support increasingly large and concentrated business organizations. Public relations helped industries to battle activists, legislators, regulators, presidents of the United States, and one another. The reason for this engagement was the need to have public policy that allowed or did not constrain business activities against the design of corporate leaders, some of whom are rightly called robber barons.

Two broad forces create the environment that affects business practices and policies: market forces (called the private sector) and public policy (the public sector) of the economy. How public policy influences—supports, facilitates, or impedes business practices—constitutes the political economy of a country.

In essence, the public policy arena helps define opportunities and constraints for business practices by suggesting legitimate and illegal means for generating revenue and managing costs of operations. Costs of operations tend to rise when activists successfully achieve higher levels of operating standards, such as consumer protection or air quality through lower emissions. Business plans must

conform to the legislative, regulatory, and litigation constraints and opportunities that are created in what is the public interest.

Public policy planning, within this environment, consists of considering the constraints and opportunities created through government policy that can affect the strategic business plan that is developed by executive managements to achieve their business missions and visions. Until the early 1980s, business plans were often developed with little if any attention to the changing policies that could positively or adversely affect the future success of such plans.

The turbulent 1980s created a much different environment for executive managements in the United States. Strategic planning required a new sense of corporate leadership. Originally, if management wanted to create and implement a business plan, attention was largely limited to how it would position the organization vis-à-vis its competitors within an industry or across various industries. The questions were often reduced to “What will the market bear?” and “How can we position our business to succeed because it serves a niche or competes successfully for various reasons?” Much of the strategic planning in this era shifted from bureaucratic, to high uncertainty, and eventually to strategic responses to the prevailing changes in the public policy arena. The business response finally acknowledged the end to the era of deference.

Public relations and corporate legal counsel are often turned to in a reactionary response to public policy changes and increased constraints. The question or challenge posed by executive management is “What changes in policy can we make to allow us to operate as we wish.” The assumption behind this question is that public policy that does not allow management its prerogatives is broken and must be fixed through, for instance, lobbying and other forms of government relations strategies and tactics. A more enlightened approach is to proactively adapt to public policy changes and work with advocates of change through collaborative decision making to truly serve the public interest.

The foundation of the public policy arena and the corresponding policy planning comes from the reality that businesses are artificial citizens. They

are the creation of the state to serve some public interest. Thus, they operate at the pleasure of society as long as they serve the public interest. Businesses often lose sight of this reality and the subsequent demand that public relations in partnership with general counsel should engage in issues management. For this reason, the public relations discipline has argued that public policy challenges cannot be separated from the larger chore of strategic business planning. Some policies are truly in the public interest and the business must understand that. Other policies might not be, and they need to be opposed or changed. But this debate elevates above the interest of the company to that of the community served by that company.

Savvy public relations counsel through the 20th century in the United States cautioned business executives to never lose sight of their need to understand and operate in the public interest. As decades passed, businesses opted for a mentality that assumed that what was good for them was good for society. They turned the equation around and suffered a robust period of activism marked by the end of the era of deference.

Public policy planning by enlightened organizations begins with an honest and candid assessment of the prevailing standards of corporate responsibility and a proactive effort to “get right” with them. The organization cannot assume that society will bend to its needs. It must be responsive to the needs and interests of society. On this matter, societal values and expectations change. Public policy planning is best when it assumes this change will happen and can be understood and incorporated into the strategic business plan of the organization.

The public policy arena offers many opportunities for the strategic organization truly committed to effective public relations. Trend analysis supported by the expertise of public relations and corporate legal counsel can monitor and assess this trend, looking for advantages as well as threats to current operations and policies.

One trend is that changes that increase the cost of operations in one industry might offer business opportunity in another. Requirement of the chemical manufacturing and refining industry to do more to

abate its impact on the environment can mean new or more business for companies that sell services and products to that end.

Another trend is that the cost of business can be shifted from one industry to another. If lower standards of automobile safety lead to increased numbers of fatalities and long-term disability injuries, the insurance industry can work with other interested parties, including consumer advocates, to raise automobile safety standards.

Activists often call for higher standards of operations. Trade associations can respond in several ways. One is to speak with a single voice to support or oppose various changes. The strength of such cases increases to the extent to which the debate is collaborative and truly in the public interest. Changes in policy can lead to higher operating costs, but they can also lead to reduced likelihood of onerous litigation settlements because the activist claims can be used to assess the standards of corporate responsibility.

Also, changes that are not reflective of fact, appropriate value, and sound policy can and should be opposed in the public interest. Thus, perfect rationale exists for the use of government relations, but the strength of the case increases if companies realize their mandate to operate in the public interest.

In similar ways, public policy planning can be used to foster the future of nonprofit and governmental agencies. The extent to which public policy gaps exist leading to community needs not met by business or government creates opportunity and challenge for the fundraising efforts of nonprofits. Some nonprofit organizations directly or indirectly engage in government relations to create and change regulations and legislation. Government agencies benefit by understanding public policy trends as they pitch their budget needs to Congress and other legislative bodies.

Public policy planning has become increasingly important to all sectors of the economy. Market forces alone do not offer challenge and opportunity. These market forces are shaped by public policy. For this reason public relations has played many roles in public policy planning.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Age of deference (end of); Executive management; Government relations; Issues management; Lobbying; Position and positioning

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

However old the practice of public relations is, its identity as we know it today became a serious professional practice in the latter part of the 19th century in the United States. The 20th century witnessed its development as a refined set of strategic best practices, an academic discipline to prepare future practitioners, and the subject for refinements through sophisticated scholarly investigation and discussion. Along the way, it never lost its fondness for knowing and following the best practices of effective professional practitioners.

In the opinion of some, public relations can be defined as the art of stealthy manipulation of public opinion, the manipulation of the opinions of consumers and politicians. It is viewed as spinning the truth to the selfish interest of some organization, issue advocate, person, or viewpoint. Journalists and other critics have referred to practitioners as *flacks*, meaning that the practitioners of this art deal with self-interested promotion of idea, set of facts, or points of view.

In contrast, public relations has been seen as a professional practice and academic discipline dedicated to fostering effective two-way communication between some organization or entity, such as an industry, and persons whose opinions can make or break the future success of the sponsor. Some discussants of the nature of public relations have advocated that instead of fostering sham relationships,

senior practitioners are the consciences of their employers. They know better than other disciplines the moral standards by which their employers are judged. They advocate that first the organization must be good before it can be effective in its communication efforts. Practitioners recognize that the challenge of ethics is both broad and a matter of the devil is in the detail. Each word can pose ethical challenges as well as the formulation of the public relations policy of the organization.

Public relations is a set of management, supervisory, and technical functions that foster an organization's ability to strategically listen to, appreciate, and respond to those persons whose mutually beneficial relationships with the organization are necessary if it is to achieve its mission and vision.

Public relations practitioners are problem solvers. They are counselors who advise the organizational management on how to fit best into its environment. They are tacticians and technicians who design and craft communication tools such as media releases, employee newsletters, fundraising campaigns, publicity and promotion efforts, investor reports, and issue backgrounders and fact sheets.

No single definition of public relations exists. Throughout the plethora of definitions found runs a central theme. Public relations professionals communicate for and help to favorably position their clients to earn the favor of targeted markets, audiences, and publics. One of the earliest leaders of the practice, Ivy Lee, was characterized by his biographer as a "courtier to the crowd." His ideas, like those of many of his early successors, featured the democratic spirit that called on the practitioner to put accurate and credible information before the public that would—and could—then judge the worthiness of the case being made. In turn, judgment would be passed on the client of the practitioner. In this regard, public relations practitioners worked to bridge the relationship between the organization and the persons in society who could help or harm the organization. Ray Eldon Hiebert (1996) captured the essence of Lee's career: "His work was central to the entire problem of public communication in a complex and industrial environment"

(p. ix). Lee was compared to the likes of major figures of the American colonial period such as Sam Adams and Thomas Jefferson. "Like them, he understood the necessity for using words to get people to understand his point of view. Unlike them, however, he lived in an age when words could be used increasingly to maintain rather than prevent an excess of power" (1996, p. ix).

Public relations uses many forms, tools, and strategies of communication. One of the most typical is the media release or other tactical tools to attract reporters' attention to a service, product, organization, issue, and such. Attention, thus, is a vital goal behind the strategic use of public relations tools. Information and persuasion are part of the stock and trade of practitioners. In recent years, collaborative decision making and negotiation have become increasingly important. For these reasons, the rise of public relations in the past two centuries paralleled the growth and diversification of mass media. Today the practitioner may elect, or be required, to participate in any communication arena ranging from mass media to narrow and tailored messages presented, for instance, in a letter. The Web has become a vital tool and thorn in the heel of practitioners and clients.

Early on, the specter of the public, the audience, the judge and jury of approval, was the central theme of practitioners. None became more famous for his efforts to engineer consent than Edward Bernays. He believed that creating and responding to public opinion was the primary challenge facing practitioners on behalf of their clients. The challenge, as he framed it in 1923, was to respond to the public: "The public to-day demands information and expects also to be accepted as judge and jury in matters that have a wide public import" (1923, p. 34).

In the most mechanical definition of the discipline, it is viewed as the profession for placing information, as opposed to advertising, which uses paid access to the media to reach targeted audiences. In the worst sense, this view limits public relations to be defined as a stealth bomber that can get messages through the defenses of unwilling individuals who are manipulated by skilled spinners.

One of the legendary contributors to the definition of public relations is John W. Hill, the founding principal of Hill & Knowlton. At the time of his retirement in the late 1960s, his firm was the largest in the world. Hill believed that the practice of public relations operated in a climate of enlightened and rational public opinion. Public opinion, he thought, companies, governmental agencies, trade associations, and nonprofits operated in the climate of public opinion where they enjoyed the fruits of goodwill and suffered the consequences of its violation. They took their license to operate and prosper from their ability “to serve the needs or wants of people” (1958, p. viii).

Hill discussed public relations as a practice and as a condition. The practice focused attention on wise counseling and effective communication within the limits of the strength of the case that either side of a controversy could make as well as the ethical reputation of the organization. The objective of public relations as a practice was to create the condition of sound public relationships. Thus, he concluded, “Public relations bears directly upon the area of values associated with good will. Its task is not one of communications only, as some have supposed. Its roots reach to the very heart of corporate policy” (1958, p. ix). To this end, “Every corporation, group, or organization dealing with people has public relations, which may be good, bad, or indifferent” (1958, p. 163). The practice creates organized public relations that can affect the relationships an organization has with its publics. Thus, Hill reasoned, “I say ‘organized’ public relations advisedly. Every business, and for that matter, every activity with public overtones, has public relations whether or not it recognizes the fact, or whether or not it does anything about it” (1958, p. 259).

Communication could usefully increase understanding and allay misunderstanding. Thus, he advised, “Public relations is an outgrowth of our free society, in which the ideal of an enlightened and rational public opinion is brought ever closer as understanding increases between groups and individuals” (1958, p. vix). Unlike practitioners and other commentators who believe public relations is the skillful art or science of engineering consent, Hill cautioned,

It is not the work of public relations—let it always be emphasized—to outsmart the American public in helping management build profits. It is the job of public relations to help management find ways of identifying its own interests with the public interest—ways so clear that the profit earned by the company may be viewed as contributing to the progress of everybody in the American economy. (1958, p. 21)

The first step in public relations is to create sound policy that deserves the fruits of goodwill. On this point, Hill reasoned,

When corporate policy *is* sound, it serves the community interest and is deserving of the support of public opinion. But this is not to say that it will get this support merely because it deserves it. The people must be informed. Lacking correct information they may withhold their support. This is a job for public relations. (1958, pp. 54–55)

Hill believed that public relations served many functions that related to the organization’s relationship with its key stakeholders. As counselors, practitioners must be sensitive to the conditions in which an organization currently operates. On this point, Hill offered tried advice:

It functions in the dissemination of information and facts when noncontroversial matters are involved. But when controversy exists, public relations may become the advocate before the bar of public opinion, seeking to win support through interpretation of facts and the power of persuasion. (1963, p. 6)

These many functions of public relations are like spokes in a wheel. One of the ways of thinking about each spoke is that it is a separate, definable function of public relations. Its uniqueness comes from the specific kind of problem it was developed to address with a specific kind of market, audience, or public. Government relations, for instance, is a function developed to support or oppose legislation and regulation. Investor relations builds relationships with investors. Publicity and promotion attract attention, inform understanding and shape

opinions. Non-profits use publicity and promotion in tandem with fund raising. By the time Hill was sharing his experiences and philosophies, these functions had become well grounded in theory and best practices. They would be honed during the rest of the century.

Practitioners before and since the era of Hill have recognized that public relations is more than a communication function or discipline. It is a relationship building and repairing discipline that starts with the ability to understand the elements of the give and take, the exchange, between any organization and its stakeholders. An organization that is clever may be too clever. Hill advised, "Public confidence in the corporation as an institution must be earned and deserved. 'Smart publicity' will never replace sound management policies and acts in building a solid foundation of good will" (1958, p. 163). Thus, public relations practitioners need to serve as the corporate conscience, a concept explicitly stated by Hill nearly a half century ago:

Good public relations has been called the corporate conscience—an indispensable attribute of modern and progressive business. By keeping its conscience alive and alert, through good conduct and effective communications, corporate enterprise will merit a continued vote of public confidence. (1958, p. 173)

Hill recognized the strategic advantage of thinking in terms of key publics, audiences, or stakeholders instead of broadly focusing attention on the opinions and the organization's relationship with the larger sense of all of the public. Thus, he indicated he had witnessed a move among practitioners from an interest in press relations to relationships with other audiences. The list included customers, employees, government, stockholders, neighbors in the locations where the company operated, educators, and others.

For several reasons, counseling requires perspectives that call on practitioners' understanding of people, the media, and ethics. What did Hill think constituted public relations counsel?

Public relations counsel are not lawyers. They are not management engineers. They are not sales

specialists. . . . Then on what do they counsel? Curiously enough the recommendations for which they are asked in one way or another may impinge on any of these fields. (1963, pp. 131–132)

What is required for a practitioner to be prepared to meet this challenge? Thus, he answered, "counseling on public relations calls for a variety of special experiences, abilities, and qualification. In my opinion the most important single element is integrity, which is a matter of character. Next to integrity I would rank judgment" (1963, pp. 131–132).

Counselors are expected to meet many challenges and exhibit many traits.

The role of the counseling organization may be described as follows:

1. It provides objective counsel—advice uncolored by any subjective problems that may exist within the business.
2. It provides a diversity of experience in dealing with a multitude of public relations problems.
3. It gives client companies access to services, facilities, and the various specialists in phases of public relations, thus enabling the client to supplement its own staff operation.
4. It gives an outside viewpoint on probable public reactions to company policies and acts.
5. It underwrites with its own reputation the quality and continuity of the undertaking. (1963, pp. 135–136)

The counseling part of public relations counts a great deal for the outcome because

public relations has no mystical power to work miracles. What is achieved in any worthwhile sense must be based on integrity, and on sound attitudes, policies and actions at the very top level of management. This makes public relations a management responsibility, and it is so considered by most advanced companies today. The old slogan—if it ever existed—"The public be damned" has given way to the eternal question in the ear of managements, "What will people say?" This is bound to have a good effect upon the conduct of corporate affairs. (1963, pp. 259–260)

This democratic theme runs throughout public relations theory by persons such as Ivy Lee and John Hill. It suggests that the interests of its stakeholders must be known and considered by any organization wanting their goodwill. Without such goodwill, the organization might not fail, but it was bound not to flourish.

All of what the organization did became vital to the message it conveyed. Thus, Hill drew on the influence he received from Ivy Lee to conclude, "Public relationships, he wrote, involved not simply 'saying' but 'doing'—not just talk, but action" (1963, p. 16). Organizations had to strive to demonstrate their commitment to truth and the desire for goodwill. They could not use words alone to achieve those ends.

If the organization did this, it could receive and enjoy the license to operate.

It has been aptly said that business does not function by Divine Right, but only with the sanction of the people whose attitudes find expression through government. For this reason, enlightened managements of American industry have come to recognize the wisdom of conducting their affairs in ways that merit public approval. They are aware also of the value of communication as the next step in public relations, the aim of which is to build and hold goodwill and to help the business prosper. They know they should make their voice heard, listened to, and believed throughout the land. (1963, p. 263)

Luminaries such as those cited above recognize that public relations entails process and leads to the creation of meaning. In the 1940s, even before the writing of Hill, other pioneers sought to capture the essence of the discipline as they launched the era of modern texts in public relations, the teaching of the principles of public relations to undergraduates.

Soon to be lost under the influence of mass communication theory and systems theory, early authors featured the notion of relationship building. Authors who proudly announced the need to know, build, and repair relationships as the "new" essence of public relations may well have been turning the clock back to the 1940s. In that decade, Rex F. Harlow and Marvin M. Black featured that concept

in the revised edition of *Practical Public Relations*, published in 1952 under the auspices of the Public Relations Society of America. They believed that society required cooperation to function effectively. To public relations fell the responsibility of fostering cooperation. They defined public relations as "the art and science of getting along well with other people" (1952, p. 4). What they saw as the challenge of modern society was helping organizations deal with increasingly complex relationships. An organization must know and appreciate the needs and interests of its publics. It must adapt to those needs and interpret itself so the people understand how it is working to that end. To this end, professionals and the students who aspire to the calling need to understand the ethics and processes of relationship building.

At the same time Harlow and Black were carving up the definition of public relations, Scott Cutlip and Allen Center published *Effective Public Relations*, the college text that became the standard of academics and professionals. They noted the beehive of definitions and noted coatings other authors had put on that term. They were well aware of the counseling, technical, and relationship-building expectations voiced by other authors.

They knew public relations was often associated with hype, whitewash, ballyhoo, propaganda, and other ways to label shoddy manipulation. One of the contributions Cutlip and Center provided was a commitment to two-way communication. They defined public relations as

the communication and interpretation of information and ideas from an institution TO its publics and the communication of information, ideas, and opinions FROM those publics to the institution, in a sincere effort to establish mutuality and thus achieve the harmonious adjustment of an institution to its community. (2000, p. 6)

Eventually, this same text offered the following definition: "Public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends" (2000, p. 6).

The Public Relations Society of America's Official Statement on Public Relations stated: "Public relations helps our complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony. To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or publics such as employees, members, customers, local communities, shareholders, and other institutions, and with society at large."

James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) defined public relations as the management of communication between an organization and its publics. This view was later expanded by arguing that organizations that are excellent practice public relations different than their counterparts do. Excellent organizations tend to be more willing to foster, maintain, and repair relationships. They work in the mutual interest of themselves and those persons whose interest and goodwill they need to succeed.

No single definition of public relations is totally satisfying. People who like public relations and believe it adds value to society define it in positive terms. Its detractors see it as hollow, shallow, spin, and manipulation. Leading practitioners and academics know the division of opinion exists. They recognize that winning people to the positive side is not a matter of proposing a definition but of building the practice on sound principles. Any definition of public relations proposed by its proponents therefore constitutes not merely a description of what they think the practice is. It also constitutes a challenge and mandate for how the profession should develop.

Central then to these positive definitions is the challenge to realize as a positive aspect of society that differences of opinions and choices exist. People can disagree. They can make choices. They can criticize companies, nonprofit organizations, and governmental agencies. They may not understand or know what they need to know to approve of these organizations. They may not be informed. They may be misinformed. So, one continuing challenge is that organizations must serve as the first and best source of information about themselves.

But public relations is not only about information. It deals with positioning the organization to deserve genuine goodwill because its interests are interlocked in a mutually beneficial way with its critics. That too is a daunting challenge because critics often do not want a mutually beneficial relationship that truly acknowledges the worth of the target of their dislike.

Public relations is about choice and evaluation. It deals with the fostering and adapting to preferences. It looks to understand and aspire to meet or exceed the value expectations of persons whose interest and support is needed.

The practice of public relations requires a hierarchy of skills, managerial, supervisory, and technical. It requires communication skills. But it is more than communication. Leading academics and practitioners reason that it seeks to build and draw upon integrity. To meet professional challenges and allay criticism, practitioners must foster trust, which is constantly tested by what they and their employers say and do. Thus, good public relations creates good public relations. Likewise, bad public relations fosters bad public relations. For these reasons, any operating and useful definition of public relations is normative. For this reason, any definition of public relations must acknowledge that its role and presence in society is judged by whether and how it adds value to the members of a society, however global.

—Robert L. Heath and
members of the Advisory Board

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PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCY

A public relations agency, or firm, is a company hired by another organization to provide certain services. Some 3,000 or more public relations counseling firms operate in the United States.

The hiring organization is referred to as the client. Under the best of circumstances, the firm helps improve the client's reputation and its relationships with its publics. The services can range from strategic and managerial—such as planning and implementing annual major campaigns and providing senior-level counseling—to the more tactical, such as generating news releases or printed promotional materials.

Increasingly, companies are turning to outside counsel even when they have internal public relations departments. Most of America's most-admired companies have a relationship with a public relations firm. Clients hire firms for different reasons. There might be a need for expertise that the client doesn't have, or there might simply be a staff shortage that an agency can help fill.

Some companies prefer to use the term *firm* to connote their emphasis on counseling and strategic planning and to differentiate from advertising agencies. Public relations is a management team concept that the term *agent* or *agency* doesn't imply. Many, though, use the terms interchangeably.

The Council of Public Relations Firms, a trade association representing large U.S. public relations firms, estimates that about 20,000 public relations practitioners work for public relations firms in the United States, and more than 40,000 worldwide. The larger companies, such as Hill & Knowlton, employ as many as 2,000 people worldwide. However, public relations is also a field in which independent practitioners, or freelancers, can thrive.

Several publications and organizations—including *O'Dwyers Directory of Public Relations Firms*, *PR Week*, and the Council of Public Relations Firms—track rankings of the top companies by revenue. Rankings can shift annually due to mergers and acquisitions and business factors, as well as ranking criteria and firms' willingness to disclose financial information. Some of the largest U.S. firms (based on global revenues) are BSMG Worldwide; Burson-Marsteller; Edelman Public Relations Worldwide; Fleishman-Hillard International Communications; GCI Group/APCO Worldwide; Golin/Harris International; Hill & Knowlton; Incepta (Citigate); Ketchum; Manning, Selvage & Lee; Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide; Porter Novelli; Ruder Finn; and Weber Shandwick Worldwide. Fifty percent or more of public relations revenues are generated by the top 10 firms.

STRUCTURE/OPERATIONS

Account team

Typically, the agency will assign a specific team to work on the client's business or *account*. Titles vary within an agency, but there is usually an account supervisor or manager responsible for handling the account. Other account team members, such as the account executive, coordinator, and others, report to the supervisor.

Compensation

The client pays the firm for its work either by providing a retainer (a set monthly fee), an hourly rate, or a combination of these. Hourly rates vary for each person who works on the job, whether senior, mid, or junior level, intern, or administrative staff.

TRENDS

Growth

Government figures project rapid growth for public relations firms through 2010 as companies increasingly hire external consultants rather than hire full-time staff.

Jobs less centralized

The larger firms and most jobs tend to be concentrated in large cities, such as New York, Washington, DC, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, where major media, corporations, and policymakers are headquartered. Many firms have local offices in other metropolitan areas. Clients often prefer that firms have offices in their locales, so many major firms will even open up an office to serve a large client.

Ownership

In recent years large advertising agencies and communications holding companies have acquired many of the top public relations firms. Examples are Omnicom Group Inc., which owns Fleishman-Hillard, Ketchum and Porter-Novelli; and London-based WPP Group PLC, which owns Hill & Knowlton Inc., Burson-Marsteller and Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, among others. In 2003, only one of the top 10 firms, Edelman, was still independent.

International focus

Public relations is becoming increasingly global. Numerous U.S. public relations firms have opened offices around the world or have merged with or acquired firms in other countries. Large European companies such as WPP Group PLC and Publicis have acquired medium and large U.S. firms to help increase their global presence.

Consolidation

Once it was common for major corporations to employ numerous public relations firms for different parts of their business, but now, many have cut down to a few or just one. For example, International Business Machines Corp. (IBM) and SAP AG, Europe's largest software producer, reduced their number of public relations firms from as many as 50 to 3 (IBM) and from 12 to 1 (SAP). On the other hand, hundreds of firms reported gaining new clients who had never before used public relations.

HISTORY

The practice of hiring a public relations agency dates back to the early 1900s, when the first publicity firms were established. These developed partially because companies began to realize they needed to respond to the "muckraking" activities that called for political and business reforms. The first known firm was The Publicity Bureau, founded in Boston in mid-1900. These firms were narrow in focus, chiefly providing media relations services such as disseminating press releases in an effort to get a client's name in the newspaper.

Ivy Ledbetter Lee established a cornerstone of modern-day public relations principles when he founded his firm, Parker & Lee, in 1906 and issued his famous Declaration of Principles. Lee declared that his company would not work in secret like other firms (such as The Publicity Bureau, which secretly operated news bureaus for the railroads). Instead, his firm would fully disclose its work on behalf of the client. He also stated that the firm would disclose information of value and interest to the public. These principles are now, in fact, important tenets of the Code of Professional Standards for the Practice of Public Relations of the Public Relations Society of America, the world's largest professional society for public relations practitioners.

Other important agency figures of the early 1900s included William Wolff Smith, George F. Parker (Lee's partner), Hamilton Wright, Pendleton Dudley, and Thomas R. Shipp.

World War I and the Committee on Public Information, or "Creel Committee" (1917–1918), provided training ground for numerous practitioners, including Carl S. Byoir and Edward L. Bernays. Other important counselors of the post-WWI period were Doris A. Fleischman (Bernays's wife); Harry A. Bruno; John W. Hill (of today's top-10 firm Hill & Knowlton); Edward D. Howard II of Cleveland; and Glenn C. Hayes of Chicago. Joseph Varney Baker opened the first minority-owned firm in Philadelphia in 1934, and the political campaign consultancy got its start in 1933 when Clem Whitaker and Leone Baxter opened their firm in San Francisco.

Post-World War II growth saw the establishment of firms such as Burson-Marsteller and Edelman. Earl Newsom became one of the practice's first independent counselors, advising companies such as the Ford Motor Company and paving the way for a new era in public relations firms.

—Catherine L. Hinrichsen

See also Baker, Joseph Varney; Baxter, Leone and Whitaker, Clem; Bernays, Edward; Byoir, Carl; Client; Dudley, Pendleton; Fleischman, Doris Elsa; Hill, John Wiley; Lee, Ivy; Muckrakers (and the Age of Progressivism); Parker, George; Public Relations Society of America; Publicity

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PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

A public relations department is the unit within an organization responsible for its public relations function, whether externally, internally, or both.

These departments were first established in the United States in the early 1900s. Today, more than 5,000 United States companies and 2,000 trade associations have public relations departments. Corporations, nonprofit organizations, religious groups, government agencies, and universities all engage in public relations activities. Even some public relations firms have their own public relations departments.

Some larger companies, such as AT&T, have employed as many as 800 people in their public relations departments, while others are a one-person operation. The department size is related to the size of the organization and perhaps the perceived importance of

public relations within the organization. The trend, though, is toward smaller departments than in the past. Some might also oversee the activities of a public relations agency. Regardless of the size, the department is most effective when it has close access to senior management.

STRUCTURE

Organizational structures vary and largely depend upon how and why the department was first established. While some organizations have a stand-alone public relations department with its own senior executive, public relations is often a subgroup of marketing, sales, human resources, or a related department.

Most public relations counselors agree that ideally the public relations department director should either report directly to the CEO or have a close working relationship with that person. They believe the public relations staff should have a voice in shaping the company's mission and strategic planning, and serve as a counselor to senior management.

Public relations is the most common name and is used by about 30 percent of departments. Others include Corporate Communications, Public Affairs, and Community Relations. The U.S. government, which employs thousands of public relations people, tends instead to use titles such as public affairs or communications, because of a law prohibiting the hiring of "public relations" people.

Public relations might need to compete with different departments, such as advertising, for a share of the budget. However, a study of America's most respected companies found that the more a public relations function is designed, practiced, and evaluated against the organization's strategic business goals, the greater its support from top management for budget size and the greater its perceived contribution to the organization's success.

ADDRESSING PUBLICS

The public relations staff can demonstrate its value to senior management by participating in the organization's decision-making process and measuring

its impact on its publics, rather than focusing too narrowly on tactics and communication output. The ability to anticipate and consider the perspectives of different publics is another way the public relations department brings value to the organization.

Examples of publics—also called stakeholders—can include employees, board of directors, shareholders, local residents, suppliers, government officials and regulators, financial analysts, customers/consumers, donors, volunteers, students, faculty, media, and others. The public relations department should conduct research among these publics to measure attitudes about the company and its programs and policies, and recommend to executives how best to address the needs of these varying publics. The ability of the department to establish long-term relationships with them is another measure of public relations' value to the organization.

UNDERSTANDING THE INDUSTRY

A successful public relations department, in addition to understanding communications and management, also understands the company's business and the industry in which it operates. Sometimes a lack of broad business experience and technical knowledge can hinder the staff's ability to effectively counsel management. The public relations department is more effective when it can use its in-depth knowledge of the organization and the industry to counsel leaders. It also gives inside staff an advantage over outside counsel.

USE OF OUTSIDE COUNSEL

In addition to the public relations department, an organization might also employ outside counsel, such as a professional public relations firm or freelancers, supervised by the inside staff. The department can often benefit from an outsider's perspective, and the firm usually offers expertise lacking among the in-house staff. Some leaders feel that the days of the traditional large in-house public relations department are coming to an end as companies increasingly downsize staff and turn to outside counsel. The ability to effectively manage outside

counsel is another valuable service the public relations department can offer.

HISTORY

The history of public relations departments has contributed much to their relevancy today. In the early 1900s, publicity and public relations went through a boom period, and organizations began forming their own in-house functions. This is largely due to growing public pressure for corporations to begin acting in the public interest and be accountable to the public. Some of the earliest public relations departments were for nonprofit organizations, such as the YMCA, whose 1905 fundraising campaign was a forerunner of today's United Way drive.

Public relations pioneer Ivy Ledbetter Lee, recognized for his role as an early public relations counselor, was also instrumental in shaping public relations departments. He helped spur the growth of publicity departments and trained many corporate public relations managers.

In the 1930s, many businesses—including Bendix, Borden, Eastman Kodak, Eli Lilly, Ford, General Motors, Standard Oil, Pan American, and U.S. Steel—established public relations departments to help them regain public confidence that had been worn down by the Great Depression.

Paul Garrett was an early leader in corporate communications. His program for General Motors, which hired him to set up a corporate communications department in 1931, was a model for many corporations.

Another influential leader was Arthur W. Page, who became AT&T's first public relations vice president in 1927. Page was instrumental in defining the role of the public relations department within the company. When he was hired, he made it clear that he would not be a publicity man; rather, he would help shape policy. He also pointed out that the company's reputation would be determined by its performance: "All business in a democratic country begins with public permission and exists by public approval." Page was the first person with a public relations title to serve as an officer and member of the board of directors of a major corporation.

In honor of Page, senior public relations executives created the prestigious Arthur W. Page Society in 1983, to strengthen the management policy role of the chief corporate public relations officer.

Today, companies still turn to their public relations departments in times of economic downturn and prosperity alike, realizing that public trust and confidence are indispensable to the company's success.

—Catherine L. Hinrichsen

See also Lee, Ivy; Page, Arthur W.; Public relations agency

PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION, HISTORY OF

As publicity and public relations boomed in the United States during the 1920s, colleges and universities began to offer courses that were the forerunners of modern public relations education. These courses came on the heels of the emergence of journalism as a separate field of study at universities, especially land-grant institutions in the Midwest.

The first public relations course was offered in 1920, only two years following World War I, at the University of Illinois by Josef F. Wright, the university's newly appointed publicity director. As would be the case later at other schools, there was little demand for Wright's "Publicity Methods" course, but Wright was motivated by a desire to bring prestige to his calling.

Indeed, many of the first courses in publicity were taught by college publicity directors such as Frank R. Elliott, who introduced a course in "Publicity" at Indiana University two years later. Eventually, however, regular faculty started teaching publicity. One notable example was Lawrence Murphy, who took over Wright's course at Illinois in 1927 and later became director of the journalism school at Minnesota.

The first course titled "Public Relations" was offered by Edward L. Bernays at New York University (NYU) in 1923. Bernays had just authored his seminal work, *Crystallizing Public*

Opinion. He taught the one-semester courses two times in the Department of Journalism, then a part of NYU's School of Commerce, Accounting and Finance. James Melvin Lee, the department head and noted journalism historian, was skeptical but urged Bernays to proceed. Lee urged Bernays to attract working journalists by promoting the class in professional publications such as *Editor & Publisher* and *Printer's Ink*.

In the same year, NYU's School of Social Work also offered a course under the direction of Evart and Mary Swain, who had pioneered publicity and philanthropic fundraising at the Russell Sage Foundation. The course quickly became an established part of the social work curriculum and was augmented by other courses in writing and communication.

Other schools followed suit, including the University of Oregon, where a course in publicity was taught by public relations officer George Godfrey in 1927, and the University of Minnesota, where Thomas E. Steward taught a class in "Press Relations" in 1929. After two years, a course at the University of Washington taught by Byron Christian was suspended following a torrent of criticism from the state's newspaper editors and publisher organizations. By the late 1930s, courses were added at such diverse schools as American University, the University of Texas, and Wayne State University. Meanwhile, courses in public opinion had begun to be offered at schools such as Princeton.

Rex L. Harlow, a pioneer educator known as the father of public relations research, was on the faculty of Stanford University's School of Education when he began teaching a public relations course in 1939. This was the same year that Harlow organized the American Council on Public Relations (which later merged to create the Public Relations Society of America). Harlow was a recognized leader in practitioner education and crisscrossed the country giving workshops and seminars. He is credited with providing as many as 10,000 practitioners with their first formal introduction to the field.

At the same time, Kalman B. Druck, a young executive at the Carl Byoir firm who later formed his own major agency, taught a course at the City College of New York. Druck's class emphasized

modern public relations principles—the importance of two-way communication, defining publics, and avenues for communication to and from key constituencies. The course later became a model for other classes after being described at length in an industry directory in 1945–1946. Ironically, the course could list only eight book titles as references.

During World War II, the first major in public relations was established at Bethany College, a small church school in West Virginia that continues to offer public relations today. Following the war, public relations education enjoyed a major growth spurt as colleges and universities hired staff to teach public relations methods. The most prominent program created during this period was at Boston University's School of Public Relations and Communications, founded in 1947. Most notable among the second-generation educators hired after World War II was Scott M. Cutlip, who was hired by the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

In 1946, one survey by Prof. Alfred McClung Lee found that at least 30 schools offered 47 different courses under public relations titles. By 1956, that number increased to at least 136, including 14 programs labeled as offering a major in public relations. The period also was marked by the first substantial output of books and articles on the booming craft, and recognition of the field as a unified profession under the aegis of the Publicity Society of America.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, educational offerings by colleges and universities continued to expand. The faint beginnings of legitimate research started to emerge from among more than a handful of teachers in the field. The first organization of teachers, the Council on Public Relations, was organized in 1956 as a unit of the Association for Education in Journalism. PRSA set up an Educational Advisory Council in 1959.

By the mid-1970s public relations education flourished as academic departments committed themselves to the professional training of practitioners. These included speech and communications departments in addition to journalism programs. In 1968 Prof. Walt Seifert of Ohio State University proposed creation of the Public Relations Student Society of America to encourage

students in public relations careers. Whereas traditionally public relations workers had been former newspaper or magazine writers or editors, public relations agencies and departments began to recruit young professionals directly from colleges.

Standards for instruction at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels became concerns of professional and educators alike, leading to the creation of several Commissions on Public Relations Education. The first Commission to promulgate guidelines for education was organized in 1975 by Scott M. Cutlip and J. Carroll Bateman, president of the Insurance Information Institute. Subsequent commissions updated their work in 1984 (under the direction of practitioner Betsy Ann Plank and Professor William Ehling) and in 1999 (led by consultant John Paluszek and educator Dean Kruckeberg). *A Design for Graduate Education in Public Relations* was completed in 1987.

Scholarly research in the field languished in the early years, in part because of the limited publications that accepted serious research on public relations topics. In 1975, *Public Relations Review* was launched under the editorship of Prof. Ray Eldon Hiebert of the University of Maryland, who continued to edit the publication during its first 30 years. Initial financial support was provided by the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education (later organized as the PRSA Foundation).

In 1984–1985, Professors James E. and Larissa A. Grunig, also of the University of Maryland, launched a second journal that ran a brief stint. Their efforts were resurrected four years later by publication of a *Public Relations Research Annual* for three years, which was converted to the quarterly *Journal of Public Relations Research* in 1992. Codification of the field's literature was further advanced with PRSA's Body of Knowledge project in 1988 under the leadership of Professor James K. Van Leuven.

Several bibliographic studies chronicle the increased research productivity of educators in the field (Pasadeos & Renfro, 1992; Pasadeos, Renfro, & Hanily, 1999). Separately, a Delphi study sought to identify the most productive scholars in the field. Eight academics garnered 20 or more votes from

61 expert judges. The top vote-getters (in alphabetical order) were: Glen M. Broom, Scott M. Cutlip, David M. Dozier, James E. Grunig, Larissa A. Grunig, Robert L. Heath, Dean Kruckeberg, and Elizabeth L. Toth. Of these, James E. Grunig, Scott M. Cutlip, Robert L. Heath, and Glen M. Broom were identified as the most influential in a second round of analyses.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Bateman, J. Carroll; Bernays, Edward.; Cutlip, Scott M.; Public Relations Society of America

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PUBLIC RELATIONS FIELD DYNAMICS (PRFD)

Public Relations Field Dynamics (PRFD) is a model that allows for the concurrent measurement and monitoring of multiple parties in a perceptual environment. PRFD is adapted from the study of small group communication and derived from Bales and Cohen's System for the Multiple Level Observation of Groups. At the center of PRFD is

the notion of a fluid field encompassing all relevant actors. These actors (e.g., an organization and its publics) can be measured at one point in time or across the development of a controversial issue. A field theory like PRFD takes into account that every behavioral act takes place within the overall context of the interactive field.

Jeffrey Springston adapted the group system to macro-level applications vital to public relations. The dimensions in the PRFD system reflect (a) a friendly versus unfriendly relationship, (b) self-orientation versus community orientation, and (c) low influence versus high influence capability. These three dimensions are essential to the study of public relations. Perceptions of friendly versus unfriendly behavior are relevant at all levels of interaction. This dimension taps fundamental notions of friend or foe.

The community versus self-orientation dimension reflects perceptions of how motivated an organization is to achieve either an integrative or distributive outcome in a given situation. This ties directly into perceptions of trust. Companies that are perceived to be more interested in the bottom line at the expense of the community have serious public image problems. One such example in recent times is the managed care industry, which has been accused by some as being more interested in costs than care. Members of the media are often particularly skeptical of an organization's community orientation. In general, the more an organization can demonstrate to the media and other publics that it has a genuine community orientation, the more successful the organization is in negotiating its position.

Finally, the influence dimension measures how much power or influence an actor is perceived to have in a given situation. Knowledge of this can help an organization determine which groups will be most attentive and involved in a public relations situation. For example, if a group perceives an organization to have a large influence on them, they will likely be more attentive to the organization than groups that perceive little organizational influence. Conversely, knowledge of how influential a public sees itself to be in relation to the organization

provides insight into how likely that public is to exhibit active behavior, helping practitioners determine communication strategy.

PRFD allows organizations to identify allies, antagonists, and potential mediators. Combined, the three dimensions provide a powerful framework to map the entire field or public relations environment.

The system is graphically displayed placing the friendly-unfriendly dimension on the horizontal axis and the community versus self on the vertical axis. The influence dimension is represented by circle size—the more perceived influence, the larger the circle. Figure 1 displays three hypothetical actors in a relational field.

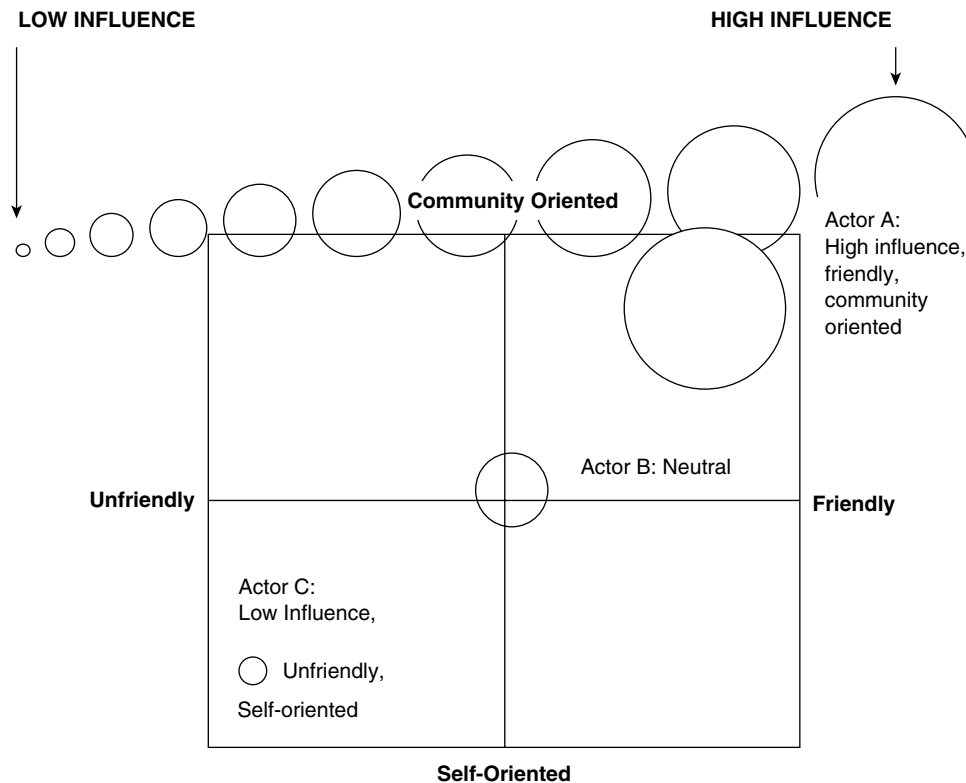


Figure 1 Field diagrams of the perceived relational landscape.

SOURCE: Springston, J. K., Keyton, J., Leichty, G. B., & Metzger, J. (1992). Field dynamics and public relations theory: Toward the management of multiple publics. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 4(2), 81–101. Reprinted with permission.

Situating the three behavioral dimensions with field theory provides several advantages. First, the three dimensions are viewed as mutually exclusive. Thus, for any one interaction, behavior may be described as high influence, or as low influence, but not as both. Second, the dimensions are orthogonal. Placement on one dimension does not predict placement on other dimensions. Third, any specific placement on a dimension is not seen as inherently good or bad. Rather, the evaluation of behavior depends upon other interaction in the public relations field.

Fourth, Public Relations Field Dynamics allows behavior and perceptions to be tracked over time within a comparative framework. This is particularly useful to the study of issue negotiation, as it allows organizations to test alternative public relations strategies as issues develop and change over time. Fifth, PRFD is a system for viewing the impact of a public's or organization's internal dynamics on the larger interdependent field.

Another key strength of this system is its ability to map the relative degree of polarization and

unification among the salient parties within a given environmental field. Polarization is the degree to which constituents are dissimilar in their opinions and perceptions; unification is the degree to which constituents are similar. Polarization and unification can occur on a single dimension, on two dimensions, or on all three. The more dimensions apparent in the polarization, the more difficulty publics will have in communicating with each other in ways that make “sense” to the other publics. For example, an organization that perceives itself as having high influence would likely use dominating rhetoric in an attempt to defeat a less influential organization. Such an attempt would likely be seen as confirmation that the dominant organization is not willing to listen to the voices of others. The more dimensions on which parties are polarized creates additional opportunity for public relations rhetoric to be outside the scope that can be understood or tolerated by another public.

One key component of the system is its ability to identify potential mediators in a given situation. As in any type of negotiation, organizations attempting to negotiate public relations issues with publics or other organizations are often confronted with environments in which some key publics are too polarized from the organization to enter into meaningful dialogue. In such cases, the most useful strategy may be to work with a mediator to establish productive contact. Almost any actor in a relational field can be a mediator, but those actors who are most likely to be acceptable to disparate parties are ones who are more friendly than unfriendly, who are more community-oriented than self-oriented, and who have greater influence in the relational landscape. Because a mediator is likely to be in a more neutral position than extreme ones held by other actors, the mediator can translate or interpret from one position to another in a way all involved parties can trust.

—Jeffrey K. Springston

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PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH

The topic of public relations research is vast. Consider that this volume has more than 20 entries that are directly related to research. This entry provides an overview to public relations research and indicates how it is utilized in the public relations process. The first half discusses research in general including the two basic approaches to research and some of the methods used in research. The second half explains the role of research in the practice of public relations and building the public relations body of knowledge.

Research involves the collection of data or information. Data are simply observations about the world around us. Research can be divided into two general approaches: qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative methods are descriptive and interpretive. Researchers collect data that provides descriptions of behaviors or events in a naturalistic setting—the data are collected in the “real world” rather than a laboratory. Researchers then interpret what the data mean. Different researchers can derive different interpretations from the same data. That is why qualitative methods are considered subjective; the data are open to multiple interpretations and all can be correct. Qualitative researchers are not trying to generalize their results beyond the sample they have studied. Their results only apply to the sample they studied.

Quantitative research is objective and reduces data to numbers. These numbers are then analyzed by using accepted statistical principles and statistical

tests. The agreement on the statistical measures and principles makes the results objective. Multiple researchers looking at the same data analysis should reach the same basic conclusions. For example, a basic statistical test is the correlation. A correlation looks for relationships between two variables. It indicates if two things vary in a similar fashion. For instance, the value of one variable increases each time the value of a second variable increases. Each statistical test has an accepted level of significance, a point at which the finding is considered important. The level of significance in public relations research tends to be .05. That means the results have only a 5 in 100 chance of being an accident. (See the Statistical Analysis entry for a more detailed discussion). This means that if 10 researchers ran the same set of data and the correlation had a significance of only .10, all 10 would say there is no relationship. The reliance on numbers and statistics provides the agreement that makes quantitative research objective. Moreover, quantitative researchers are trying to generalize. They want to claim that the results should hold true for the general population and not just their sample. (*See* Experiment/experimental methods and Sampling for more information on generalizability.)

Researchers have a variety of methods for collecting data. Qualitative research might use surveys or experiments. Quantitative researchers might use case study or focus groups. Each of these methods has specific entries in this volume. The way you collect data reflects your general orientation to research and whether it is qualitative or quantitative.

The importance of research to public relations can be traced through its basic use in public relations—the importance practitioners place on research, and research’s growing importance in training public relations practitioners. We can see how research fits into the practice of public relations by quickly reviewing four steps in the public relations process. Several similar four-step plans have been presented to describe the public relations process. Scott Cutlip, Allen Center, and Glen Broom’s model is a commonly used one. Step one is situation analysis; the practitioner needs to understand what is happening in the situation. The

practitioner must understand what is happening before planning a response. Step two is strategy; the practitioner decides what should be said and done. This involves creating objectives, identifying target audiences, and creating messages. Step three is implementation; the practitioner decides how and when to deliver the messages. This concerns the selection of communication channels or media and the timing of the message. Step four is assessment; practitioners determine whether or not the objectives were achieved. The focus is on finding evidence of success or failure.

The situational analysis is formative research. Formative research (*see* Formative research for more details) provides the information needed to identify the problem or opportunity, identify target audiences, and develop objectives. The public relations process begins with research. Without this information or data, it is impossible to develop the strategy step. Implementation involves the use of process research. Process research tracks what the practitioner has done. Moreover, practitioners would research the various media options available before selecting the media to be used in a public relations action. Assessment is evaluative research. Evaluative research provides evidence of the practitioner’s ability to meet the objectives. Research is used throughout the entire public relations process and is essential to the process.

Research is essential to building the body of knowledge for public relations. The body of knowledge is what we know about the practice. It includes theories and concepts that can be used to explain how public relations works. A growing body of knowledge should improve the practice of public relations by providing new insights into the profession and providing new ways of executing various aspects of public relations. Every profession needs a developed body of knowledge. Medicine, for example, draws upon a large body of medical research to fuel its development and growth. Research is essential to creating knowledge, in general, and for developing theory. Research helps us to understand various aspects of the public relations process—it builds knowledge about public relations. Theory must be tested to determine if it is

valid. Theory can only be tested through research. Public relations research is applied. It tries to solve problems encountered by practitioners. In turn, this applied research generates new knowledge about public relations and theories of public relations. As research solves practitioner problems, the practice of public relations should become more effective. An illustration is the Jones and Chase model of issues management. The model improved the practice of issues management by making it more systematized and effective. New knowledge and theories about public relations improve the practice of public relations.

For years, public relations researchers were the ones exclaiming the value of public relations research. Practitioners nodded in agreement, but little was done to make research an essential part of the public relations practice. That trend has changed as practitioners now value and try to utilize research. The 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education and the Public Relations Society of America's Silver Anvil Awards stand as testimony to the respect research has gained among practitioners.

The Commission on Public Relations Education was composed of practitioners and educators. Their task was to decide the shape of public relations education for the next century. As a field evolves and changes, the training required to enter the field will change. The Commission sought to understand the current and future demands of the field. Those demands would provide the foundation for the curriculum used to train future public relations practitioners. Research emerged as one of the key skills needed by future practitioners. A significant change in the curriculum from the previous Commission report was the addition of a class dedicated to public relations research. Research was now recognized as a central job skill in public relations and a critical component of the public relations curriculum/training. Research had moved from the periphery to the core of the public relations practice and education.

The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) is the largest professional organization of public relations practitioners in the United States. Each year PRSA sponsors the Silver Anvil competition. This competition recognizes the best work in

the field and is one of the highest honors a public relations department or agency can achieve. Following the four-step process of public relations, each entry is judged on (1) research—collect information/data used to create objectives, target audiences, and key strategies; (2) planning—identify objectives, target audiences, and key strategies; (3) execution—explains the tactics used in the public relations effort; and (4) evaluation—assessment of outcomes to show whether or not an objective was achieved. Research is essential to earning one of public relations' highest honors. Formative research documents the research criteria, process research documents the execution criteria, and evaluative research documents success or failure to achieve an objective. Practitioners are reminded of research's value and the practice reaffirms its importance through the Silver Anvil Awards.

Research is establishing itself as a core element of public relations. That does not mean all practitioners embrace or even use it. If you review Silver Anvil Award entries, you will find lapses even in those public relations efforts seeking to be honored. However, public relations research is now a required element in a public relations curriculum. This means that future practitioners, coming from strong public relations programs, will have the skills and knowledge necessary to execute public relations research. As recently as the 1980s and 1990s, properly trained practitioners were not being provided with the research skills. As a result, research had been neglected out of a lack of skill. Lack of skill should not be a barrier with recent and future graduates.

Beyond developing knowledge and improving the practice, research has a bottom-line component. Public relations practitioners, like others in the business world, are becoming more accountable for their actions. Management wants to know what a unit is actually contributing to an organization or what an agency is providing to a client. Research provides hard evidence of what public relations is or is not contributing to an organization or client. Setting and achieving objectives is hard evidence of contributions. It is through research that objectives are formulated and evaluated. Public relations

practitioners need to engage in proper research to establish their contributions to the organization or client. Performance reviews require the type of hard data research can provide. Documenting public relations' contributions through research can influence critical factors such as size of a budget, retaining a client, or retaining one's job. Research makes intellectual and practical contributions to the practice of public relations.

—*W. Timothy Coombs*

See also Experiment/experimental methods; Formative research; Process research; Qualitative research; Quantitative research; Sampling; Statistical analysis

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PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Immediately following World War II, pent-up public demand for products and services ignited the American economy. The marketplace explosion also generated new needs for marketing publicity, public relations, and people who knew their way around a typewriter.

Earlier in the 20th century, the value of public relations had been established by such pioneers as Ivy Lee, John Hill, Edward Bernays, Arthur W. Page, and Rex Harlow. But few in the postwar population entering the field had knowledge of or experience in the practice. Facing a new environment that required wedding client objectives to public interests, many neophytes—as well as veterans—recognized the need for a national, collegial association in which they could share experience and

make connections, establish standards of practice, and hone professional skills.

On August 7, 1947, at Chicago's Lake Shore Athletic Club, that "gleam in the eye" became reality with the formation of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). It was not a case of spontaneous generation. In 1936, the New York-based National Association of Public Relations Counsel (NAPRC) had held its first meeting. In 1969, the West Coast produced the American Council on Public Relations (ACPR). In 1944, Washington, DC, was the birthplace of the American Public Relations Association (APRA), and publicity clubs were up and running in a few major cities.

Convened at the Chicago table were six leaders from the ACPR and NAPRC. (APRA had declined the invitation and its merger with PRSA waited until 1961.) Six months later, the state of New York chartered the new national organization. It began with six chapters—Chicago, Detroit, Hawaii, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco—and President W. Howard Chase, also chairman of the executive committee, and Earl Ferris, chairman of the board of directors.

The first committees addressed eligibility, education, and professional standards. The *Public Relations Journal*, established in 1945 by ACPR, became the official publication of the new Society.

During November of 1948, PRSA held its first national conference in Chicago. In an October 1970 *Public Relations Journal* article, Rea Smith, acting executive director of the PRSA, recalled that two of the impressive speakers were Margaret Mead and S. I. Hayakawa.

From those ambitious beginnings in the late 1940s, PRSA has continued to track and contribute to the development of the contemporary profession and its growth in specialized areas of practice. The first special-interest section formed was the Counselors Academy in 1961. Today, that section roster includes 16 others: Association, Corporate, Counselors to Higher Education, the Educators Academy, Employee Communications, Environmental, Financial Communications, Food and Beverage, International, Independent Practitioners

Alliance, Military and National Security, Multicultural Communications, Public Affairs and Government, Strategic Social Responsibility, Technology, and Travel and Tourism.

Concern for ethical and professional standards has always been dominant on the Society's Agenda. In 1954, PRSA drafted a Code of Principles and a Code of Ethics. In 1960, it adopted a definitive Declaration of Principles, a Code of Standards, and enforcement procedures through Judicial Panels. From time to time, the Code has been revised, especially to keep pace with the requirements of the financial practice. PRSA's most critical—and embarrassing—ethical crisis occurred in 1956, when its president was charged by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) with insider trading. Rather than undergo the Society's judicial process, he chose to resign his membership. President-elect John Felton promptly stepped into the position, becoming the only person to serve more than one term as president.

By the 1990s, it was apparent that the complex enforcement process rushed increasing litigation and change to the authority of a professional association. Thus, today, enforcement responsibility is vested in the board of directors, which may expel a member who is found guilty by a government authority or court of illegal behavior. The recent charge to the Board of Ethics and Professional Standards is to focus on raising the understanding of the code by all Society members.

Stressing both ethical and professional performance is PRSA's accreditation program, a written and oral examination of a member's knowledge, mastery of, and qualifications for public relations. Initially proposed in 1963 by the Counselors Academy solely for its members, the PRSA Assembly voted to extend the opportunity to all eligible members of the Society. Accredited members must now maintain and update their qualifications every three years. Now a major item in the Society's budget, the examination is periodically reviewed and revised, and by 2003, more than 4,000 members had earned the hallmark of Accredited in Public Relations (APR).

Organizations that partner in accreditation through the Universal Accreditation Board include

the Agricultural Relations Council, the Florida Public Relations Association, Maine Public Relations Council, National School Public Relations Association, Religion Communicators Council, Society for Healthcare Strategy and Market Development, Southern Public Relations Federation, and Texas Public Relations Association.

Education for the increasing number of public relations students in U.S. colleges and universities became an ongoing PRSA priority in the 1960s. With more schools offering public relations studies, the Society established the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) in 1968 and in the following year chartered 17 schools for "alpha" PRSSA chapters, each sponsored by a PRSA chapter and having both faculty and professional advisors. By 2004, there were 243 PRSSA chapters with more than 8,000 members. Since 1973, PRSSA has been self-governing through a national committee of students, with guidance by professional and faculty advisors.

Annual conferences of PRSA and PRSSA are held simultaneously in the fall. Attended by 1,500 to 2,000 members and guests, the PRSA International Conference features leading authorities on major issues and more than 70 professional development sessions. While the two conferences have separate programs, there is much opportunity for interaction between professionals and students, who are invited to the Society's general sessions. PRSSA produced its own conference, with more than 1,000 students attending.

Paralleling PRSA's nurture of students has been Commissions on Public Relations Education—in 1975, 1987, 1999, and continuing—to research and recommend guidelines for formal education in public relations. Sponsored by PRSA and the Public Relations Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the commission also invites other professional and academic groups to participate. While researching and developing a report, the commission customarily meets at least three times annually and is co-chaired by a leading practitioner and educator. Research conducted by both the 1987 and 1999 commissions revealed surprising agreement among practitioners

and educators about what should be taught in public relations studies. Both commissions recommended at least five courses in a public relations undergraduate program and that had become a standard for chartering a school for a PRSSA chapter.

PRSA also holds two seats on the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, which reviews and accredits academic units where public relations is frequently taught. For public relations programs in these units or those housed in other units, PRSA offers a voluntary review and certification program administered by the Educational Affairs Committee.

To recognize and encourage exemplary performance, annual awards play a major role in PRSA. An inheritance from the APRA merger, the annual Silver Anvils honor outstanding public relations programs and the Bronze Anvils recognize outstanding tactics within a program or campaign. Awards to individuals include the Gold Anvil for an exceptional lifetime career and contributions to the profession; Outstanding Educator; the Paul Lund Community Service Award; the Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to PRSA; and the Public Relations Professional of the Year. The annual honorees receive their awards and recognition during the annual International Conference.

Another honor is membership in PRSA's College of Fellows. Founded in 1990, the college is a group of more than 300 accredited members distinguished by their careers, ethical performance, community service, and commitment to the profession. Each has been elected to the College and is expected to serve as a role model and mentor to other PRSA members and to aspiring students. Recently the College has encouraged Fellows to make gifts and bequests to public relations studies in colleges and universities of choice.

PRSA's foundation efforts have had a bumpy history and are now in a second reincarnation. Established in the mid-1950s, the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education had its halcyon years in the early 1960s, when it sponsored a series of annual lecture-essays on the role of public relations in the early history of the United States and Canada. Written and presented by such noted historians as Dr. Allan Nevins, Dr. Eric

Goldman, and Dr. Ray Allen Billington, the published lectures endure as one of the most enlightening and proud records of the profession's heritage. Other major initiatives of that foundation included a fellowship program for educators, a scholarly journal (*Public Relations Review*), and a bibliography of public relations literature.

In the 1980s, however, an unfortunate controversy developed and that original foundation became the Institute for Public Relations, headquartered at the University of Florida. Subsequently, PRSA established another PRSA Foundation, responsible for student scholarships, research awards, and the Society's Body of Knowledge. In the 1990s, the Body of Knowledge began supporting the Communications Career Academies' program to interest bright high school students—primarily African Americans—in public relations careers. The foundation's curriculum of more than 50 lesson plans for that program is also available to PRSA chapters for their outreach to high schools throughout the country.

Recognizing that much of the PRSA's work, particularly in education and professional development, qualified for a 501(c)(3) status, the Society took that significant action in 2003–2004. As one result, the foundation board became advisory, reporting to the PRSA Board of Directors, and part of larger funding efforts to support cancer research, scholarships, and other programs of life-long education.

After 47 years as the Society's publication of record, the *Public Relations Journal* was succeeded in 1995 by the *Public Relations Strategist*, a quarterly magazine addressing major trends and issues facing public relations and its clients and designed for readership by both public relations and business management. The year before, PRSA introduced *Tactics*, a monthly publication reporting immediate news of professional interest, practical counsel, ideas, and commentary.

PRSA's membership of more than 17,000 is organized through 18 districts and 116 chapters. Governance includes a representative national assembly of approximately 360 members and a 17-member board of directors. In addition to the president/CEO, president-elect, treasurer, secretary, and immediate

past president, one board member represents each district and two are at-large members.

The PRSA staff of approximately 50 is responsible to Executive Director Catherine Bolton, APR. In 2004, the board approved relocation of the PRSA headquarters to 33 Maiden Lane, in Manhattan's financial district.

The makeup of PRSA's leadership has evolved over the years. In early years, most presidents came from the corporate sector, and increasingly, they have come from agency practice. In 1973, PRSA named its first woman president (the author) and by 2005, nine women will have been elected to head the Society. In the ranks of president, one has been of Hispanic heritage, one African American, and two have been educators. Many PRSSA alumni have served on the board, with two becoming president (in 2002 and 2004).

Despite that ascension to leadership by the new generation, an ongoing challenge is persuading the majority of PRSSA graduates to transition to the professional Society. Entry-level salaries often discourage joining and not enough employers yet sponsor membership and the professional opportunities it brings. If those alumni do join, they are often "lost" in a sea of seasoned veterans and become discouraged. Recognizing that problem, some PRSSA chapters are making special efforts to welcome and serve those younger members. In 2004, those efforts inspired a national group, New Professionals, to serve associate members—particularly PRSSA alumni—who seek mentoring and help in lubricating early career progress and participating in the Society. A month after the group's launch, more than 100 members enrolled and 40-plus senior members volunteered as mentors.

PRSA members have many opportunities to participate in leadership activities through numerous committees populating PRSA at chapter and national levels. The customary route to national positions is through chapter leadership.

Since 1980, PRSA objectives and goals have been driven by a strategic planning process, customarily with blueprints for action in five-year increments. The process has addressed issues from sophisticated communications technology to serve members

more effectively to a stronger role in international public relations.

International interests have early roots in PRSA. In 1952, three Society delegates attended the organizing meeting of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). In 1961, PRSA joined the Inter-American Federation of Public Relations Associations and developed an ongoing liaison within the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS). In 1964, PRSA co-sponsored with CPRS and IPRA the Third World Congress in Public Relations held in Montreal. The Society has also co-sponsored two World Congresses in the United States. It now takes a leading role in the new Global Alliance of 60 professional associations throughout the world. Meeting semiannually, the Alliance agenda includes such subjects as ethical standards, professional development, and legislation.

In 2003, PRSA adopted the following three ongoing program priorities:

Professional development—a concept of lifelong learning, embracing all of the Society's educational efforts, from academic to continuing education at every level. The latter includes such member services as seminars through meetings and the PRSA Web site, conferences, the Professional Resource Center, and publications.

Diversity—seeking a membership which is more representative of American society, serving and being responsible to multicultural needs, and supporting client objectives related to diversity.

Advocacy—spokesmanship for the profession and ethical practice to the public at large via media, speaking platforms, and coalitions with other public speaking groups; a vigilant "watch" for legislative and judicial actions which could have a negative impact on the practice.

In sum, they reflect the following pervasive professional concerns:

Improving the capabilities of professionals and their prospects for moving up the ranks of management rather than being subordinate to such functions as marketing, advertising, and human resources.

Persuading more minorities to enter the field, particularly as American society becomes more

diverse. Not only is this a “right thing to do,” but professionals who understand and give voice to the culture of growing constituencies are essential to building productive relationships for clients.

Gaining respect for public relations, its role and value, remains an elusive goal and stubborn frustration. Its perception as a “soft,” expendable function in cost-cutting crunches and client crises continues to be the profession’s own public relations problem, and its problem to solve.

Going on 60, PRSA has become the world’s largest association of public relations professionals. Even more significant, it is parent to the largest paraprofessional organization of students preparing for future practice. Beyond size alone, as the practice has grown, changed, and matured, so has PRSA. Both face escalating challenges to performance, ethical behavior, and trust. However, the fundamental mission of both remains the same—to foster responsible, constructive dialogue and relationships in a democratic society where decisions are shaped and made in the workplace and home, marketplace, and voting booth.

—*Betsy Plank*

Betsy Plank was the PRSA’s first female president in 1973, and is the only person to win three of the organization’s top individual awards—the Gold Anvil, the Paul Lund Community Service Award, and the Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to PRSA, and founded the PRSSA in 1968.

See also Plank, Betsy; Public Relations Student Society of America

PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENT SOCIETY OF AMERICA

In retrospect, the late 1960s were curious, unlikely times for the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) to launch a student organization.

Author’s Note: The author thanks the Public Relations Society of America’s staff and Professional Resource Center for their contributions to this entry.

Students were rebelling against the Vietnam War and constraints imposed by the “elder culture.” Campus unrest—even riots—made daily headlines. Members of older generations were shocked at the “flower children,” their penchant for drugs, indiscreet sex, and suggestive music, their protests, and their contempt for traditional American values.

None of that had been evident in the growing relationship between PRSA and its younger generation.

In the 1960s, education for public relations was beginning to flourish in U.S. colleges and universities, which recognized the practice as a burgeoning career field for their graduates. Increasing numbers of educators were highly respected and influential in PRSA and they championed student-professional encounters. There were public relations “clubs” at six schools: the universities of Florida, Southern California, Texas, and West Virginia, and at San Jose State College and Utica College.

As early as 1950, PRSA had considered a student organization, but didn’t act on that vision until 15 years later. A rapid chronology then followed:

1965—President Ovid Davis invited students of the six clubs to attend PRSA’s National Conference.

1966—President Robert Wolcott repeated the conference invitation.

April 1967—Board member Jon Riffel arranged for San Jose State’s club members to meet with the Spring Assembly in Pebble Beach, California, and demonstrate how a professional-student relationship could work well.

In a statement to the Assembly, the Long-Range Planning Committee said “Perhaps our greatest concern for the future is the questions of where the next generation of practitioners will come from. Let public relations grow wild, without benefit of academic preparation, and a half century from now, it will be as forgotten as phrenology.”

The Assembly unanimously approved a resolution by Professor Walter Siefert to form a committee to study creating a student organization and report to the Fall Assembly in Philadelphia.

President J. Carroll Bateman appointed a joint committee of PRSA and the Association for Education in Journalism (AEJ) to develop the report, with assistance by Dr. F. H. "Chris" Teahan, director of education (later vice president) of PRSA.

November 1967—The report to the Assembly recommended formation of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). The vote was unanimous.

January 1968—President Edward P. VonderHaar appointed a committee of two practitioners, two educators, and two students and chaired by Jon Riffel. Its charge: develop plans for PRSSA and requirements for its chapters.

By year-end 1968—The Board had chartered 14 schools for PRSSA Chapters: the universities of Central Missouri, Florida, Houston, Kent State, Maryland, North Dakota, Northern Illinois, Ohio State, Southern California, Syracuse, Texas, and West Virginia, and San Jose State College and Utica College.

These and additional chapters thrived and grew. PRSSA organized them into districts, following the PRSA pattern. PRSSA agencies and "Pro-Am" program increased. So did internship opportunities. More students attended the PRSA National Conference and took advantage of internship opportunities. PRSSA launched a national publication, *Forum*. More students attended the PRSA National Conference. All were signals of an enthusiastic and productive relationship.

Nationally, a PRSA Committee on Student Organization governed PRSSA. It had two "token" students. By 1973, student leaders began to chafe at that junior role. At the 1973 PRSA Conference in Honolulu, they felt their muscle and persuaded the Board and Assembly to permit self-governance.

Students promptly elected their first national chair, Joan Patrick O'Connor of the University of Southern California, and other members of the National Committee: vice chair, editor, and nine district chairs. The PRSA Board appointed the faculty and professional advisors—but with limited voting privileges. Chris Teahan was administrator of the new national organization.

Another seminal action at the Honolulu conference was the introduction by the PRSA Education Committee of a PRSSA competition. Now known as the J. Carroll Bateman Case Study Competition, it has become the premier program in which chapter teams demonstrate their research, planning, and performance skills.

The downside of the student organization's rapid growth was the severe strain on the PRSA budget to support PRSSA. The National Committee recognized the program, took responsibility, and initiated national membership dues.

Students continued to attend the Society's annual conferences in the fall. In 1976, however, PRSA and the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) co-sponsored the Seventh World Congress of Public Relations in Boston. Scheduled in August, it served as the Society's Annual Conference. For students, the timing conflicted with summer jobs, school, and vacations.

Rather than skip a conference opportunity, the resourceful PRSSA President, Maureen Prater, risked producing a separate conference at her own school, the University of Dayton, in October. The venture was a success, attended by 300 students and professionals, and even eked out a minuscule profit. It also set a precedent. Since that time, PRSSA has produced its own national conferences, held simultaneous to the PRSA conference to take advantage of interaction with professionals. Today, more than 1,000 students customarily attend.

In 1981, the student organization claimed a unique group of advocates: the Champions for PRSSA. Designed to identify PRSA members and chapters having a special interest in students and their education, the Champions supplement the support provided by PRSA to PRSSA. Among the Champions' contributions are sponsoring annual PRSSA chapter awards for outstanding performance; producing a publication and videotape recounting PRSSA history; recognizing retiring National Advisors; sponsoring the annual scholarships for outstanding students; publishing a handbook of advice for getting and keeping entry-level jobs; and serving as speakers, judges, and counsel for PRSSA programs.

Several other PRSSA scholarships and awards also honor or have been established by individuals. They include the Altschul Internship Award, the Lawrence G. Foster Award, the Professor Sidney Gross Memorial Award, the Steven Pisinski Memorial Award, and the Gary Yoshimura Scholarship. An annual scholarship is also awarded by PRSA's Multicultural Section.

The role of the PRSSA administrator is key to PRSSA's continued performance. PRSSA leaders and members are on the scene for only a brief period of time—usually two years at the most—before they graduate and move on. Thus, their administrator provides essential continuity to the student organization. The first and longest serving was legendary—the late Chris Teahan, who, along with Jon Riffel, is a First Founding Father of PRSSA. After his retirement, Colleen McDonough served PRSSA, then was succeeded by Elaine Averick, who became the students' "Godmother" before she retired. Today's new Godmother-in-Progress is Janeen Garcia, wise counsel to PRSSA and broker of its relationships with PRSA.

In recent years, PRSSA changed its National Committee structure from geographic districts to program areas. There are now elected Vice Presidents for Chapter Development, Member Services, Professional Development, Public Relations, Regional Activities, and Internships/Job Services. A Webmaster position was also added to support and keep pace with PRSSA's increasing use of the Internet to communicate with and provide services to members. The PRSSA President makes annual reports to the PRSA Assembly and is a voting delegate.

Education has always been the driving force behind PRSSA's relationship with PRSA. Both educators and practitioners had long been concerned about preparing students for the profession that continues to grow in its scope and responsibilities. Students themselves recognize that this preparation spans academic study, practical experience, and mentoring.

PRSA's original provisions for chartering a school for a PRSSA chapter reflected those interests. PRSA Bylaws (Article XVI, Section 2) state its aim

for PRSSA to "foster the students' understanding of current public relations theories and procedures, encourage them to the highest ideals and principles of the practice of public relations, instill in them a professional attitude."

Originally, PRSA's requirement for a school charter was the offering of at least two courses in public relations. In the mid-1970s, that provision obviously shortchanged preparation for the growing field. As a result, PRSA and the Public Relations Division of the Association for Education in Journalism decided to take a new look. They co-sponsored the First Commission on Public Relations Education, co-chaired by Scott Cutlip and J. Carroll Bateman. In its 1975 report, the Commission recommended four courses and outlined their content. The PRSA Assembly then adopted that standard for chartering a school.

The Second Commission went to work in the mid-1980s and was co-chaired by William Ehling and Betsy Plank. It had 25 members representing professional and academic groups. The Commission's 1987 report recommended 15 semester hours of public relations study—the equivalent of five courses—and their content. The PRSA Assembly then adopted that increased standard for school charters. At its next Assembly, PRSA also endorsed the five-course requirement, reaffirming its commitment to education.

Appointed in the late 1990s, the Third Commission was co-chaired by Dean Kruckeberg and John Paluszek and included 47 educators and practitioners. Its 1999 report, "A Port of Entry: Public Relations Education for the 21st Century," had worldwide distribution and impact. It confirmed the five-course standard, but emphasized that it was a bare minimum, with eight courses as the ideal undergraduate education in public relations. The Third Commission continues to monitor education and is responsible for future updates and recommendations.

Both the Second and Third Commissions began their work with extensive research among educators and practitioners, who expressed substantial—and unexpected—agreement on course content.

Initial predictions for the impact of the five-course requirement had been dire. Many schools

would find it unacceptable and a threat to their curriculum authority and would abandon their charters. The predictions were wrong. Instead, schools qualifying for charters increased.

Oversight of adherence to that charter requirement is vested in PRSA's Educational Affairs Committee. Based on Commission reports, its recommendation for courses—or equivalent content—are Introduction to Public Relations, Writing and Production, Research, Supervised Public Relations Experience (e.g., internships), and Strategy and Implementation (i.e., Case Studies and Campaigns). The PRSA National Committee has oversight of other charter requirements: at least 10 members in good standing, a sponsoring PRSA chapter, and faculty and professional advisors who are PRSA members. The PRSA Board retains authority to grant or withdraw charters, based on recommendations of the PRSSA National Committee and the PRSA Educational Affairs Committee.

The educational underpinnings of PRSSA have given it integrity, unique statures, and respect as the world's largest paraprofessional public relations organization in schools of higher education.

One related issue remains thorny. While chartered schools are required to offer five public relations courses, there is no eligibility requirement for formal public relations study by PRSSA members. In practice, most have declared a major in public relations or are minoring in the discipline. The traditional rationale for open membership is to allow interested students from other areas of study—journalism, advertising, or business, for example—to be members so that they can become familiar with the role of public relations and bring that understanding to their future careers. Based on their interest or PRSSA experience, many of these students take an introductory course in public relations. Nevertheless, the debate about PRSSA eligibility continues and awaits future resolution.

Another stubborn issue of concern to both PRSSA and PRSA is how to encourage PRSSA graduates to transition to the professional Society, particularly to take advantage of its opportunities for professional development, contracts, and leadership. Estimates are that only 18 percent of graduates

become PRSA associate members. Recognizing that not all graduates enter the field, the stretch goal is 50 percent. Obstacles for achieving that include the prohibitive price of dues for entry-level workers, limited employer sponsorship, discomfort in transitioning from campus to an intimidating company of veteran professionals pursuing their own agendas, and difficulty in finding career mentors.

Both PRSA and PRSSA have launched strong efforts to address these problems. The student organization has mounted an ongoing campaign to promote the value of PRSA membership to early-career progress and to encourage students to aim for Associate membership immediately after graduation. The campaign is working—PRSA chapters are joining the effort. A few have already initiated successful programs to attract and serve young professionals. Spurred by those examples, in January 2004, PRSA formed a national New Professionals advocacy group. Co-chaired by Gail Liebl, past president of PRSA and past chair of the PRSA Technology Section, and Mary Beth West, PRSSA alumna and former PRSA Board member, the group's first announcement yielded an initial enrollment of more than 100, with more than 40 professionals volunteering as mentors.

Meanwhile, PRSA and the Champions co-sponsor Associate membership for graduates of the PRSSA National Committee. Beyond its deserved recognition of service to PRSSA, it assures that the senior Society will claim the proven leadership promise of these “best and brightest.”

By 2004, PRSSA claimed 243 chapters, more than 8,000 members, and was still growing and going strong.

At the conclusion of his “Brief History of PRSSA,” Chris Teahan posed a rhetorical question: “Given the knowns, is it a risk to predict that within the next few years one of these erstwhile ‘kids’ will be elected to the PRSA presidency and that future Grand Old Men and Women of Public Relations will be alumni of PRSSA?”

The first half of his prophecy came true in 2002 and 2004 when two PRSSA alumni—Joann Killeen and Del Galloway—became PRSA Presidents. As

for becoming Grand Old Men and Women of Public Relations, that, too, will happen. Just wait and see.

—*Betsy Plank founder of PRSSA*

PUBLIC SECTOR

Simply, the public sector is that part of society that is not the private sector. Or, conversely, the private sector is that which is not inherently public. The private sector is generally thought about as private decisions and actions by individual and corporate persons. Thus, in contrast, the public sector is that which is not private, that which deserves to be done and thought because it is in the interest of all people—natural or artificial. In that balance between the public and private sectors, a crucial nexus is the point at which the private violates public expectations and public interests. Likewise, theorists are concerned at which point the public sector intrudes incorrectly into private activities, choices, and preferences. Knowing and managing this balance is one of the tasks of public relations practitioners and is, perhaps, the most profound rationale for the profession and its practice.

Public relations theory building over the past several decades has generated a considerable body of literature suggesting new perspectives and processes for public relations. A key concept in this theory building has been the questioning of the definition of *publics* and *the public* as they affect public relations in normative and positive theories and models. James E. Grunig has argued, “A positive model is a theory that describes and explains how public relations is practiced. A normative model explains how public relations should be practiced” (2001, p. 13). Perceptions about “publics” and “the public” in both types of empirically based and normative theories has a significant impact on the understanding of how public relations should be practiced and how public relations is practiced.

In an opening discussion in their textbook *This Is PR*, Doug Newsom, Judy Vanslyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg quoted Lucien Matrat’s perspective on public relations. Matrat said,

Public relations, in the sense that we use the term, forms part of the strategy of management. Its function is twofold: to respond to the expectations of those whose behaviour, judgments and opinions can influence the operation and development of an enterprise and in turn to motivate them. (2004, p. 2)

Establishing public relations policies means, first, harmonizing the interests of an enterprise with the interests of those on whom its growth depends. The next step is putting these policies into practice. Newsom, Turk, and Kruckeberg moved the argument by quoting Matrat further: “This means developing a communication policy which can establish and maintain a relationship of mutual confidence with the firm’s multiple publics” (2004, p. 2). This perspective on multiple publics is reflective of much of the scholarly definitions of public relations. Individually, these groups are defined as *publics*. Much of the research and practice has been focused on defining the precise nature of these groups (publics) and to effectively relate with them and to move away from the concept of *the public*. The dominance of the “publics” perspective is illustrated by Scott Cutlip when he stated “there is no such thing” as the general public (1994, p. 360).

In 2001, critical scholars Shirley Leitch and David Neilson took issue with the dominance of the perspective and deconstructed the basic theory of publics and presented a revised version of the concept. Leitch and Neilson deconstructed the concept that there is no general public by using the theoretical frameworks of Habermas (1962/1991). In Habermasian terms, there is “the public” and “the public sphere” (Leitch & Nielson, 2001, p. 130). From this perspective, “The public is made up of all the citizens of a nation. The public sphere, as distinct from the private sphere, is the ensemble of public spaces available for debate between citizens” (2001, p. 130). Leitch and Neilson suggested that these public spaces may be a community meeting or a public chat room on the Internet. Leitch and Neilson argued that public relations theory and model building that is centered on the concept of publics is heavily weighted in favor of organizations and attempts to abandon the concept of the

democratic processes within society. This, they stated, is detrimental to society and also may be detrimental to the very organizations that marginalize or ignore the discussions among members of the society.

Leitch and Neilson indicated that the discussions that are held in the public sphere are the essence of a democratic society. They stated, "Democratic debate by the public within the many sites of the public sphere occurs in relation to, but distinct from the 'system.' The system includes both 'political subsystems' (state) and 'economic subsystems' (economy)" (2001, p. 130). They argued that in its ideal form the public sphere is the site where public opinion can form. The authors suggested that "through the democratic structures of society, public opinion places limits on and leads to reforms within the system." (2001, p. 130). Leitch and Neilson recognized that in practice the concept of public opinion is not unitary nor may it be easily interpreted. This, however, is one of the challenges of effective public relations research and strategies development because it is out of this public domain and public opinion that organizations often face serious challenges from groups that emerge from the discussion.

Many questions remain regarding how individuals form opinions in the public sphere. How do these individuals come to think in particular ways and then how do these individuals become part of larger groups holding similar positions? Robert L. Heath argued that the forming of opinions comes from the individual's interaction with the system in a particular situation. For example, an individual in a neighborhood may form an opinion in opposition to a governmental system that wishes to place a new prison in the individual's community. If other members of the community also share the feeling that they do not want the prison in their community, there is, in Heath's terms, a zone of meaning held by those individuals. That is, they share the same meaning for the issue. Heath suggested that the zones of meaning may apply to an issue, an event, or even an organization. Although the shared zone of meaning often results from opposition to issues, events, and organizations, the shared zone of meaning

may also be in support. An example of this may be support by parents for additional school crossing guards to ensure the safety of their children. This, of course, is the ideal situation for an organization that is supporting this action.

Although the discussion has focused on the zone of meaning being shared by a group, a zone of meaning may be held by an individual. This individual may be of concern to organizations within the system. An example of this may be the resident critic of the city council who represents only his or her views. When this zone of meaning becomes shared by others, the concern for organizations may be even greater.

The sharing of this zone of meaning may result in actions by the individuals holding the meaning. If the individuals join together in some form of united effort and action, they are called an activist group. This group may then move to attain the goals that reflect the zones of meaning shared by the members of the group. If these groups are effective, they may stop an activity that they oppose. An example of this is the community group suggested previously that wished to prevent the building of the prison. If they are effective they may be able to convince the legislature that there is a better place to build the prison. However, if an activist group shares a zone of meaning that the building of a new prison may be economically beneficial to their community, they may take actions to convince the governing body that their community is a better place to build the prison than some other community.

The organizational structures of these activist groups are problematic. As Leitch and Neilson have suggested, their perspectives and resulting action may not be unitary or easy to interpret. Individuals and groups that share concerns in a particular sphere may not be taking exactly the same path to alter the environment. As Leitch and Neilson reasoned, there are numerous voices and organizations in areas such as women's rights and the environment. Because there are significant differences of approach and action by the various activist individuals and groups, organizations wishing to form relationships must be cognizant of the differences within the activist groups.

The importance of the activist groups to organizations is that they, the activist groups, may come to control the social, political, or economic agenda within society. That is, the positions and perspectives that the activist group holds become the dominant viewpoint or opinion in the society. J. E. Grunig has argued that “indeed, many public relations practitioners believe their organization have lost control to activist group” (2001, p. 18). This loss of agenda setting to the activist individuals or groups may be severely detrimental to organizations that hold positions in opposition to those of the activist groups.

If the deconstruction of Leitch and Neilson and theoretical underpinnings of Heath, that there are zones of understanding in the public sphere, public relations theories and models must recognize and include the concepts of group development. This understanding must be included in the normative model and in the positive model. This should lead organizations into the concept of environmental scanning, that is, to monitor the environments of society to understand the various zones of meaning that may exist in the public sphere. As suggested by Hugh Culbertson, Dennis Jeffers, Donna Besser Stone, and Martin Terrell in 1993, the effective models must scan the social, economic, and political environments where an organization may exist.

—John Madsen

See also Privatizing public opinion (and “publicizing” private opinion); Public opinion and opinion leaders; Public sphere discourse; Publics; Zones of meaning

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS (PSAs)

Public service announcements (PSAs) are public relations tools used to broadcast announcements free of cost. The tradition of the Federal Communications Commission has been to expect television and radio broadcasting companies to demonstrate their community responsibility by providing free air space for important, noncommercial announcements. Because radio and television stations prosper through the sale of advertising time, they are reluctant to provide very much time and space for such announcements.

Such announcements have real value to non-profit organizations, which can use them to notify members of the community of some event, such as a blood drive, or some need, such as limited available supplies of blood for transfusions. At times, companies can also qualify for free advertising time by being engaged in some community activity that the stations deem valuable enough to broadcast. Perhaps large and continuing commercial advertising time purchases qualify these businesses for free time for PSAs.

At various times, PSAs have been viewed as not worth the effort. All too often stations were only willing to run them at extraordinarily low viewer or listener times. Many of these ran in the late night and early morning when stations have a hard time getting advertisers to spend dollars to reach “non-existent” viewers or listeners.

As times change, so has the future and fortune of PSAs. Many radio and television stations now partner with the more visible and worthy nonprofit organizations. For instance, on a monthly or quarterly basis, a

station may take on a strategic partnership that serves to enhance the station's community image. It might promote the Salvation Army at Christmas. It might promote the March of Dimes or the American Heart Association (near Valentine's Day). The station tells of events, perhaps in the news segment, to publicize them. In this way, that version of a PSA actually has more clout that it would if run only as an "ad."

Radio and television stations may also agree to cover events, such as a charity fundraiser. They announce its day and build up to then. They cover the event and report on its success as a fundraiser. This is viewed as "soft news," which gives the image that the station cares about the community and serves the role of publicizing the event, the cause, and the nonprofit organization.

Radio and television stations often have a calendar of events. They may announce that periodically during a broadcast day. That tool helps nonprofit organizations to get out word to the listeners and viewers at no charge to the charity. In the broadcast of this information, the station can demonstrate that it is benefiting or serving its broadcast community.

With the advent of the Internet, radio and television stations can go one additional step in this community service. They can indicate that more information on an event or cause "can be found at our Web site." At the Web site, the station can link to the charity. The charity may also link back to the station, which is a way to repay it for its community service.

—Robert L. Heath

PUBLIC SPHERE (ÖFFENTLICHKEIT)

The term *public sphere* has been discussed for many years, especially in European countries. The term is relevant to the theory, teaching, and practice of public relations because it forces attention and gives substance to efforts to understand the form and content of the public arenas where practitioners do their work and academics conduct research.

Many writers have been interested in the implications of this term, including Immanuel Kant, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, and John Stuart Mill in the 18th and 19th centuries, and Hannah Arendt and Joseph Schumpeter in the 20th century. Their discussion has dealt with the phenomena captured in terms such as *the public*, *publicité*, and *the public sphere*. Even earlier, the adjective "publicus" was used to designate a political order, or polity, in which the people were the carrier and the guarantor for the ruling law. During the 18th century, the German noun *Öffentlichkeit* (public sphere) developed out of the verb *öffentlich* (public). Since the 18th century, the term has much to do with claims for reasonable thinking in the tradition of the European Enlightenment.

In communication science and in public relations research, we can read much about *publics*, a term that refers to specific groups of individuals. In a similar way, public relations practitioners and academics sometimes discuss *the public* as some kind of totality of publics. In contrast to these terms, the term *public sphere* is discussed in sociology and is connected with sociological and political analyses. Today, primarily in a European perspective, we can find several traditions relevant to the use of the term. This discussion essentially distinguishes at least two important, different, and modern models of what is called the "public sphere." The first model is a *deliberative* or *discourse model*; the second can be called a *mirror model* or a *liberal model*. The first model is connected with the writings of Jürgen Habermas (1991), especially his classic book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit)*; the second model is based on the liberal theory of democracy (e.g., Ackerman, 1989) and systems theoretical approaches, especially writings of the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1990).

In 1962, the German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas (1991) published his book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, which was translated into English and published in 1989. During the same year, a conference was organized by the American sociologist Craig Calhoun in which the Habermas approach was discussed

extensively and critically. In this treatise, Habermas described the historical development and transformation of the public sphere beginning with ancient understandings and continuing with the representative public sphere in the Middle Ages, until modern understandings beginning with the 18th century.

On the basis of historical and semantic analyses (public vs. private; public vs. secret), he distinguished two distinct spheres: the private sphere and the public sphere. In the modern form, beginning with the bourgeois society, the “public sphere” first appears as a specific domain, a domain of social life in which such a thing as public opinion can be formed. The public sphere is open in principle to all citizens. A portion of the public sphere—so reasoned Habermas—is constituted in every conversation in which private persons come together to form a public. Citizens act as a public when they deal with matters of general interest. Public sphere

is defined as the public of private individuals who join in the debate of issues bearing on state authority. Unlike the Greek conception, individuals are here to be formed primarily in the private realm, including the family. Moreover the private realm is understood as one of freedom that has to be defended against the domination of the state. (Calhoun, 1992, p. 7)

Later, Habermas defined the *public sphere* as a kind of network for the communication of contents or topics and opinions. Communication flows are filtered and synthesized in such a way that public communication is condensed to topics from which the specific public gathers and forms opinions. Public opinions are not representative in a statistical sense and are not the same as the aggregated individual opinions. The public sphere is characterized by a typical communication structure, which refers to the social space that is generated through communicative acting. For Habermas (1991), “public sphere” still is a central sociological concept like “act,” “actor,” or “group.”

For Luhmann (1990), the public sphere also can be seen as a net of communication acts without being forced to connect further communication acts. The concept of the public sphere refers to social systems, not to psychic systems. Based on the distinction

between medium and form (Fritz Heider) Luhmann in his systems theoretical approach defined the “public sphere” as a kind of medium in which forms are continuously built and resolved through communication. In the view of Luhmann, it is—in contrast to Habermas—not necessary to combine the concept of the public sphere with implications of rationality or irrational elements of “mass psychology.” Topics, and even more specifically issues, are continuously generated as “forms” of the public sphere. Luhmann proposed to use the mirror metaphor to designate the most important social function of the public sphere. The mirror public sphere is necessary for the political system, one of the functional systems of society, to observe not only the own face but also the observations of other actors (e.g., opponents and rivals). Like the market, public sphere—as a mirror—is an observation or perspective of observers and is to be suited or fitted for self-observation of the society and for building up certain expectation structures.

Both models, the discursive model of Habermas and the mirror model of Luhmann, are essentially normative. One critical argument concerning the Habermas model always has focused critical attention on the difficulty of separating (historical) descriptive from normative parts in his approach. One problem with both approaches is the difficulty of linking them with empirical studies that could generate arguments for testing the strength of one model or the other.

From these reasons, a new theory of the public sphere has been developed in the Social Science Research Center Berlin (Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin) starting in the early 1990s. Friedhelm Neidhardt, Jürgen Gerhards, and others have developed a modern theory of the public sphere, in critical discussion with Habermas and Luhmann, that describes the structures of modern public sphere yet positions them so that empirical studies can be connected with the model.

The public sphere in this perspective is defined as a “forum for communication,” an open “communication system” that, in principle, is open for all actors who want to inform themselves about something, who want to communicate, or want to

observe the communication of others. Certain “arenas” exist in this forum in which different actors inform other actors and communicate with each other. The most important actors are different types of “speakers” and the media. At the “gallery” of the arenas, a more or less great account of spectators is assembling, the *auditorium* (Publikum). The auditorium observes the arena communication in which speakers and the media, under certain conditions, come to a relative “consonance” on the basis of different opinions. In this case of consonance of opinions, the model speaks of “public opinion.” Public opinion is the common opinion between the speakers and the media in the arena. Different from this public opinion are the aggregated opinions of the spectators in the gallery. It is an empirical question regarding which opinions of the spectators, both in kind and content, are the same as the public opinion (in the arenas).

Three *functions* of the public sphere are distinguished through the analysis of various theorists: the *transparency function* (open for all actors, for all topics of general importance), the *validation function* (arguments and positions should be open for changes through public discussion), and the *orientation function* (public communication generates public opinions that can be convincing in various ways and degrees by the audience). The model further distinguishes between types of arenas that occur on *different levels*: the first level is called the level of “Encounters.” Communication that occurs in the bus, on the street, in railway stations, in waiting lines (queues), or at university campuses mark an elementary type of a “small” public sphere. Typical for that type of public sphere is the instability and the relative poorness of structures (not many structures of this type exist).

The second level is arenas of assembly. Assemblies normally are not only public, but also focused at topics or issues. In the history of the public sphere, the “freedom of assembly” was an important step in the struggle for civil rights. The freedom to have demonstrations is another institutionalized form of the freedom of assembly. In modern societies, the public sphere is essentially defined through mass media.

The third level of arenas and public sphere has primarily developed during the 19th century; freedom of the press is the historically first, institutionalized form of the mass media communication level. The three levels of arenas can be interpreted as three qualitatively different steps in the process of historical development and differentiation of an autonomous system of public sphere. On each level the capacity of information gathering and information processing of the system increases. At the same time, from level to level, a professionalization of communicator roles (journalism, public relations) can be observed along with a decrease of audience roles and audience activities.

Communicators (“speakers”) and the (mass) media are the most important actors in the public arena on the third (mass media) level. The audience only plays the role of an observer, although some individuals from the audience can change and become actors in the arena. The reverse process is also possible. Peters (1994) and Neidhardt (1994) distinguish between four types of “speakers”: *representatives*, *experts*, *advocates*, and *intellectuals*. Representatives represent organizations like private companies, political parties, associations, churches, and so on. They can act professionally (as responsible for the communication of the organization) in their main job or avocationally. *Advocates* don’t have political power, but they speak for troubled persons or professions. Examples are foundation administrators, social workers, alcohol rehabilitation speakers, and so on. *Experts* and *Intellectuals* are also important actor groups for the modern public sphere. The “speakers,” but also the media organizations, work with different specific end *strategies* (*attention strategies*, *selection strategies*, *persuasive strategies*, bottom-up, top-down strategies, etc.), which lead to certain *public communication patterns* like an *information* (communiqué) model and an *agitation* model, and so on.

This concept of the public sphere today is relevant not only for sociologists, but also for theoretical considerations of public relations activities of organizations. Holmström (1996, p. 149) argued that both the Habermas and the Luhmann theories represent two different worldviews. If that is true, a second problem arises: which of the two paradigms is most adequate

in describing public relations phenomena. This line of questioning and the answers given depend on which aspect of the phenomenon one wishes to describe. The “arena model” of the public sphere seems to be convenient. It serves as a theoretical basis for public relations research not only because there are good possibilities of connecting this model with middle range public relations theories, but also because the results of empirical public relations and communication research can be combined with this theory.

—Günter Bentele

See also Public opinion and opinion leaders; Public sphere discourse; Publics

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PUBLIC SPHERE DISCOURSE

In 1962, Jürgen Habermas wrote the seminal *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Since then, the concept of the public sphere has been the subject of much analysis and criticism, and the theory has undergone some minor revisions. The concept of the public sphere was presented by Habermas as both an empirical description and an ideal.

As conceived, the bourgeois public sphere was viewed as “the sphere of private people come together as a public” (Habermas, 1991b, p. 27). It was an arena in which there was equality among all of the participants in social discourse, where all topics were open for discussion, and was inclusive, at least in principle. Habermas conceded that, in fact, some potential participants were excluded, but argued that all had an equal chance to meet the criteria of education and property to be included.

The public sphere is a space where public opinion can be formed. The formation of public opinion “refers to the functions of criticism and control of organized state authority” (Habermas, 1991a, p. 399). The public sphere mediates between the realms of the private and the state, and the guarantees of the basic rights of citizens in the liberal state depend on the demarcation between the two. For such mediation to be effective, discourse in the public sphere must be critical and rational. Above all, such discourse must rise above simply aggregating individual interests and form a bridge between self-interest and the common good. (Habermas’s writings on communication action and on discourse ethics, drawing on the works of George Herbert Mead and Lawrence Kohlberg, are an attempt to show how this can be done.) For this bridge to exist, society must institutionalize the “practices of rational public debate” (Habermas,

1992, p. 448). Habermas's last major work, *Between Facts and Norms* (1996), addresses the basic constitutional guarantees he sees as necessary structures. Among the structural guarantees are freedom of press and assembly. This recognizes the importance of communication institutions to achieving the functions of the public sphere.

In his empirical description of the evolution of the public sphere, Habermas saw it as a product of a particular epoch, arising first in Great Britain around 1700 and then in France (c. 1750) and Germany (c. 1800). The social precondition was a market economy that led to exchange relationships based on contract and parity of individuals before the law. Legitimation of the law became dependent on public opinion.

This seemingly ideal public sphere was transformed during the late 1800s. It became squeezed by the state taking over more and more functions of the private sphere and private interests assuming a more public character, thereby stressing self-interest at the expense of the common good. The communication industry changed by decreasing its political and news or information functions and becoming increasingly involved with turning the public sphere into an arena of consumption, both of products and of culture. As a result, Habermas wrote, we now have a public sphere "in appearance only" and the "sounding board of an educated stratum tutored in the public use of reason has been shattered" (1992, pp. 171–175).

This change came about, at least in part, because of the rise of the new media. In Habermas's analysis, public debate was supposed to achieve a consensus on what is in the best interest of all. But the rise of the new media expanded the public sphere to include those less educated and less oriented to a concern for the public interest. Conflicts based on self-interests emerged and the public sphere became an "arena of competing interests" as opposed to a search for the common good. When such private interests are taken into the public realm, the original relationship of the private and public realms dissolved. This expanded public sphere lost its public character and became more consumer oriented, focusing on tastes and preferences. It became a

public sphere in name only. In Habermas's words, "the public is split apart into minorities of specialists who put their reason to use nonpublicly and the great mass of consumers whose receptiveness is public but uncritical. Consequently, it completely lacks the form of communication specific to a public" (1992, p. 175). The media changed from "being a merchant of news to a dealer in public opinion," a purveyor of advertising and private interests. This change has been exacerbated by the increasing concentration in the media, which has come to dominate, and manipulate, the public sphere.

Specifically addressing the practice of public relations, Habermas wrote that "economic advertisement achieved an awareness of its political character only in the *practice of public relations*" (1992, p. 193, italics in original). He sees public relations techniques as dominating the public sphere. Whereas advertising is generally in the private sphere, "opinion management" lays claim to the public sphere by hiding its private agenda in the guise of interest in the public welfare (Habermas, 1992, p. 193). Habermas claimed that "public relations do not genuinely concern public opinion but opinion in the sense of reputation. The public sphere becomes the court *before* whose public prestige can be displayed—rather than *in* which public critical debate is carried on" (1992, pp. 200–201, italics in original). In sum, Habermas saw public relations as corrupting the public sphere.

Habermas's development of the concept of the public sphere has been subjected to several criticisms, among them that there were competing public spheres, not one, and that the exclusion of the role of women in his initial analysis was an omission. While defending his initial analysis, he conceded the validity of these and other criticisms. As a result, he revised his theory in several ways. The revisions were, first, that the rise of the social-welfare state has resulted in inappropriate bureaucratic and social intrusions into various spheres of activity that must be taken into account. Second, while Habermas defended his interpretation of the changing nature of the media infrastructure as moving from critical to manipulative, he suggested that the analysis was too simplistic and pessimistic.

Third, that the consensus formed in the public sphere may result in a tyranny of the majority, as opposed to being a constraint on power.

For Habermas, the public sphere provides a space for rational and critical debate. For this to happen, problems and issues must be identified and thematized, solutions developed, and the issues dramatized to the extent that they are taken up by the political structures. But he wrote that it is an open question whether “a public sphere dominated by mass media provides a realistic chance for the members of civil society” to bring about meaningful changes (1992, p. 455). It is also an open question as to whether the new interactive media can recreate the original concept of the public sphere.

Perhaps because of this pessimism, Habermas has turned his attention from the public sphere to discourse ethics. His concern and approach to ethics is mirrored in the discussion in recent public relations literature about different models of public relations (press agency, two-way symmetrical, etc.) and the resulting ethical implications of those models. Habermas’s indictment of public relations seems to be less applicable to public relations models based on interaction, transparency, and relationship building.

The concept of the public sphere, as developed by Habermas, is important for both the field of public relations and for our notion of a democratic civil society. A space where issues can be rationally discussed, critical opinions formed, and that is inclusive in scope is an ideal worth striving for and lends legitimacy to the system. It can be argued that such a civil society is, ultimately, in the best interest of any and all particularized private interests. At its best, public relations has a positive role to play in achieving that ideal.

—Roy V. Leeper

See also Critical theory; Public opinion and opinion leaders; Publics

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PUBLICIST

A publicist is an individual who generates publicity. The act of obtaining publicity is simply the dissemination of planned messages to targeted media in hopes of obtaining media coverage and thereby furthering the organization’s interests. In most cases, the coverage is intentionally placed by an individual rather than a news reporter covering an assigned story for publication. Publicity can be sought by any individual, but those who specialize in it are called publicists. Many public relations practitioners, whose job title may not be that of a publicist, usually are involved in some activities that generate publicity. Although publicity may be a strategy used in a public relations program or campaign and is often confused with public relations, public relations is a much broader concept. Skilled publicists are experts in media relations, a sophisticated specialty that involves forming ongoing positive relationships with media gatekeepers.

Publicists act as conduits for information flowing from an organization to a public through the use of mass media so that the public will understand, sympathize with, and be favorably predisposed toward the organization. *Publicity* is a broad term that refers to the publication of news about an organization for which print space or broadcast time is not purchased, such as in the case of advertising. Unlike advertising, which is a controlled tactic, publicity is uncontrolled. Although a publicist can attempt to place a very different story than what actually appears in the media, news media in the form of stories as opposed to advertising appear to be a third-party endorsement by the media organization.

Much of the information in the media originates from public relations sources, particularly those in the role of publicist. Good publicists become a trusted source to media gatekeepers, earn a reputation of accessibility and honesty, and know their topics well. They are keen at what makes news and develop messages that are purposefully planned, executed, and distributed through selected media to further the particular interest of their organization or client. Publicists know when journalists are on deadline, thoroughly understand the editorial profile of the particular media they are targeting, and are familiar with the work of the journalists they are contacting.

Publicists write a variety of public relations tactics, including news releases, feature stories, backgrounders, position papers, biographies, fact sheets, and media advisories. They produce press kits, write pitch letters, and make pitch calls and work with many different media gatekeepers, including city editors, feature editors, section editors, assignment directors, radio news directors, and television producers. Moreover, publicists are astute at managing online newsrooms for their organizations and clients. They work with media directories, know the editorial calendars of publications that interest them, and subscribe to clipping services so they can track coverage.

In general, practitioners in the public relations practice use publicity as just one of the many tools in the communication step of the public relations process, but there are certain fields where publicists can be found in abundance. For instance, they are commonly found in government and entertainment-related industries. Publicists working primarily for government institutions or agencies are called public information officers. Publicity also plays a large part in entertainment. An entire field of journalists reports on the expansive world of entertainment to satisfy their public's interest. Publicists in the entertainment field focus their time on gaining coverage for their clients, attractions, or organization. They prepare press materials and pitch stories to media gatekeepers. They work with feature editors of metropolitan newspapers, associate editors of magazines, assignment editors of television news

shows, producers of television programs, news directors and program directors of radio stations, and a myriad of other journalists. A skilled publicist studies the work produced by a particular journalist and the editorial environment of the publication or show in an attempt to develop an interesting angle tailored for that particular media outlet.

Four models are widely accepted to describe the evolution of public relations: the press agency or publicity model, the public information model, the two-way asymmetric model, and the two-way symmetric model. The earliest, which is the press agency or publicity model, is described as one-way communication in which truth is not an essential component. The public information model focuses on publicity, however, to the extent that disseminating truthful information is central to the practice. The two-way asymmetrical model tries to persuade and relies on feedback from stakeholders. On the other hand, the two-way symmetric model is considered the most sophisticated form of practice because it focuses on mutual understanding, mediation, and two-way balanced flow of information.

Press agency is closely associated with publicity in the entertainment world. Press agency is the practice of attracting the attention of the press through techniques that manufacture news. Methods associated with press agency include staged events, publicity stunts, faux rallies or gatherings, spinning, and hype. A common practice in the late 1800s and early 1900s, press agency is not part of mainstream public relations. Rather, it is a practice primarily associated with major entertainment-related events, such as Hollywood premieres and boxing matches. The goal of press agency is to attract attention rather than gain understanding. Even today, however, the term *press agent* is sometimes used interchangeably with *publicist* in traditional Broadway theater and motion picture industries. Today's entertainment industries are populated with publicists rather than press agents. Publicists are individuals skilled in media relations and they attempt to get the name of their clients or events in the media by carefully constructing messages that inform, educate, and persuade. Some are astute in branding and positioning strategies to aid the careers and

success of their clients. On the other hand, press agents want attention—good or bad—in most any form.

Press agency has been called persuasion for short-term advantage, through the use of truth bending and even distortion, but it can also be simply the staging of provocative acts to get publicity and draw attention to an individual, event, or cause. Therefore, it is understandable that one of the earliest proponents of press agency was Phineas Taylor (P. T.) Barnum, the famed American showman and promoter who put Gen. Tom Thumb on exhibit and launched a mobile circus featuring Jumbo the elephant and freak shows. Barnum was a master of press agency. For instance, he wrote letters both praising and criticizing his circus show to newspapers under an assumed name.

In the early part of his career, Edward L. Bernays indeed was a master of press agency. He persuaded 10 debutantes to hold up Lucky Strike cigarettes, manufactured by his client, the American Tobacco Company, as “torches of freedom” while participating in New York’s Easter parade. In 1929, Bernays staged a global news event by organizing the “Light’s Golden Jubilee,” a worldwide celebration commemorating the 50th anniversary of the electric light bulb for his client, General Electric. Bernays managed to secure several prominent individuals for the event, including carmaker Henry Ford, electricity scientist Thomas Edison, and President Herbert Hoover.

Henry Rogers, one of the founders of Rogers and Cowan, the largest and most successful West Coast entertainment publicity firm, became well known when he promoted an unknown contract player for Columbia Pictures named Rita Hayworth. He contacted *Look* magazine with a telegram from the Fashion Couturiers Association of America, a fictitious group, claiming that Hayworth was the best-dressed off-screen actress. *Look* magazine took the bait and put Hayworth on the cover and published 10 pages of photos.

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Bernays, Edward; Entertainment industry publicity/promotion; Lucky Strike Green

Campaign; Media relations; Press agency; Promotion; Publicity

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PUBLICITY

Publicity is one function of public relations that involves deliberately disseminating strategic messages through mass media outlets (such as newspaper, television, radio, or Internet), without payment to the media, to advance the particular interest of the publicity client. While publicity generally refers to information placed in the mass media, publicity can also involve placing information in a controlled medium such as an organizational publication or corporate report.

While publicity is a critical function of public relations, it is not synonymous with public relations. This is a common misperception among those who do not fully understand the role or scope of public relations, because publicity is among the most visible parts of public relations. Publicity is focused on the information dissemination aspect and is not generally considered a management function. Publicity is geared toward coverage obtained and does not play a role in setting policy or providing counsel at a top organizational level.

Generating publicity involves advancing the client’s interest through target-media coverage of strategic messages and events. A good publicist has a

comprehensive understanding of media outlets and appropriate content in those outlets and is able to carefully select the most appropriate outlets to obtain free coverage and be of interest to the client's target audience. Much of the success or failure in obtaining publicity hinges on the ability to understand what the media gatekeeper deems newsworthy.

Publicity is not always favorable, however. In the time of a crisis, negative publicity is also generated. It is a public relations practitioner's responsibility to provide the organization's side of the story in a way that accurately and favorably represents the client.

Some similarities between publicity and advertising do exist. For example, both use mass media as a channel to distribute messages. Format and context are different, however. Publicity appears in the mass media as a news or feature item or editorial content, and the source of the material is a public relations practitioner. One major advantage that publicity has over advertising is the added element of credibility because of the implicit third-party endorsement of the news medium. Information that has been deemed newsworthy by the media outlet is often perceived as more credible than a paid advertisement. Another advantage of publicity is the cost. There is no cost for the time or space in the mass medium; however, the publicist does incur some expenses for the time and energy associated with the publicity process.

A major disadvantage of publicity, however, is the lack of control over the message and delivery of the material. An editor may choose to print the written material precisely as it was written in the news release, or it may be altered dramatically, to paint a negative picture or include competitors. The information goes to a metaphorical media gatekeeper who has the responsibility of making the decision to let the information pass through to the mass media channel or not to use the information at all. Therefore, the information appearing in the media is uncontrolled.

Advertising is a result of time or space in the mass media outlet that has been purchased by the advertiser; the advertiser therefore has complete control of the message content as it will appear to readers, listeners, or viewers.

Publicity is one of the oldest forms of public relations. In fact, many public relations historians believe that the modern-day practice of public relations is an outgrowth of 19th and early 20th century publicity. Along with the development of industry in the late 19th century came technology advances that allowed communicators the opportunity to communicate to mass audiences without a fee. This gave rise to the growth of publicists who were well skilled in promotion for the sole purpose of making news. Many early publicists were so intent on generating free coverage in any way possible that they allowed accuracy and ethics to fall to the wayside. This gave the practice of press agency a dubious distinction. Publicity and promotion are considered only a part of the public relations process today.

Publicity has come under fire for being ethically suspect due, in part, to the early days of press agency, and also because material masked as "news" is often coming directly from a public relations practitioner. This makes several factors of special importance when generating publicity. Because public relations information is designed to assist in the news gathering process, it is important that all information released by the public relations practitioner is accurate and current. While the news story may or may not identify the source of the information, it is important that the publicist provide the source of the information on all publicity materials.

One common method for generating publicity is via research, polls, or surveys with an interesting and appropriate human interest angle for the media outlet. In fact, some research is designed for the sole purpose of generating publicity. Other tactics used to generate publicity include news releases often as part of a press kit, interviews (sometimes generated from an interview query letter) that require a well-prepared public relations spokesperson, coverage of an event resulting from a media advisory or media alert, video news releases (VNRs), and B-roll. Additionally, news articles that have appeared may be reproduced and used as part of a press kit. This is called a reprint.

Some guidelines to increase the odds of effectively generating publicity include the following:

Timeliness—News value of the information hinges in large part on how current the information is and the degree to which it can be incorporated into other current news angles. It is also crucial for the publicist to keep abreast of journalists' deadlines and lead times, so the information can be delivered at the most appropriate and useful time.

Newsworthiness—Material that is directly linked with a promotional event or sales element will not likely garner media attention. It is essential that the writer construct a logical link between an angle of interest to the gatekeeper and a favorable angle about the company or client.

Style—News editors prefer to receive information in journalistically approvable format. This often includes writing in AP style and inverted pyramid format. Materials that must be reorganized, rewritten, or edited are frequently disregarded in lieu of material that is already in the correct style.

Eliminating Errors—This includes spelling, grammar, and mechanics as well as facts, dates, figures, titles, and statistics. A public relations practitioner should always double check his or her copy before it is submitted to the journalist. Any errors will not only ruin chances of publication, but may also jeopardize future credibility.

Medium—Consider if the nature of the material is appropriate for a trade publication, or would it be better suited for an alternative-news weekly? Don't forget to carefully research and consider which specialized news outlets would be considered credible for the ultimate target audience of the message. It's also helpful to find out ahead of time how the journalist prefers to receive information (via facsimile, e-mail, phone call, or regular mail).

There are several common ways to measure publicity. Most organizations monitor common news outlets for publicity about the organization. However, this can be a daunting task, so press clipping services are often used. Press clipping services are available, usually for a monthly fee. Agencies that monitor thousands of news publications create press clip books, which contain copies of the relevant news stories as they appeared in the various media outlets. Press monitoring and clipping agencies are also able to verify that a VNR has appeared

in broadcast media and can monitor Internet content as well. Electronic versions of a clip book are now also available. Once the stories have been compiled into a press clip book, a content analysis of the type of coverage can be conducted. This gives the public relations practitioner a better idea of which key messages were commonly incorporated into the news stories and how favorable or unfavorable the coverage of the issue was.

Another way to help quantify the exposure garnered by the publicity is to calculate media impressions, which provide an estimate of the approximate number of individuals exposed to the news story or broadcast segment. To calculate an impression number, multiply each placement by the circulation or audience number of each hit. Public relations practitioners may also seek to quantify the value of publicity by determining and advertising equivalency number. Had the message appeared as a result of paid time or space in the medium (by estimating column inches or length of broadcast time, for example), how much would it have cost? Of course, this figure does not include the added element of credibility from the third-party endorsement of the news source and can be misleading.

—Lisa Lyon

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PUBLICLY HELD COMPANIES

A publicly held company is one whose stock is owned and traded by the public. A company becomes publicly held through an initial public offering (IPO) of securities in compliance with the

registration requirements of the Securities and Exchange Act of 1933 (“the 1933 Act”) as well as applicable state laws. Companies “go public” to raise money for working capital, research and development, new business ventures, or debt retirement. Additionally, a corporation may become publicly held to improve shareholder liquidity, boost the firm’s marketplace profile, or to improve its chances of attracting and retaining qualified personnel. On the other hand, an IPO is an expensive and time-consuming experience that subjects the company to state and federal filing and disclosure requirements, exposes management to increased personal liability for corporate actions, and results in a loss of corporate flexibility and control.

Public relations practitioners who represent organizations that intend to go public must be aware that Section 5(c) of the 1933 Act prohibits companies from offering stock before filing a detailed registration statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The 1933 Act defines an “offer” broadly as any “attempt or offer to dispose of, or solicitation of an offer to buy, a security or interest in a security, for value” (15 U.S.C. §77b[3]). A company that issues a press release about an intended public offering before a registration statement is filed, for example, is likely to have made an illegal offer to sell an unregistered security. Although public relations practitioners can continue to provide product-based information and engage in regular communication activities during this prefiling period, care must be taken to avoid what the SEC calls “conditioning the market” by generating publicity that arouses interest in the company’s securities.

After the registration statement is filed, the SEC imposes a waiting period during which the company must refrain from advertising its shares or otherwise offering them for sale except pursuant to a preliminary prospectus that complies with the requirements of Section 10 of the 1933 Act. This “quiet period” is designed to give potential investors time to familiarize themselves with the detailed information disclosed in the registration process. After the SEC declares the registration statement effective, the registered securities can be bought and sold legally.

While the 1933 Act regulates primarily the initial issuance of securities, the Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 (“the 1934 Act”) regulates the subsequent trading of those securities. Pursuant to the 1934 Act, most public companies must file annual, quarterly, and current reports with the SEC about their operations. Especially relevant for public relations practitioners are the 1934 Act requirements that public companies provide an annual report to shareholders and conduct a yearly shareholder meeting where shareholders elect the board of directors and vote on corporate policy proposals, including proposals submitted by shareholders. Shareholders who cannot attend the annual meeting can vote by proxy. Under the 1934 Act, shareholders must be furnished with proxy statements that disclose all-important facts about matters to be voted on at shareholders’ meetings.

SEC Rule 10b-5 requires a public company to make full and timely public disclosure of all material information that could affect an investor’s decision to purchase, sell, or hold the company’s stock. Companies that knowingly make false or misleading statements of a material nature have committed securities fraud. Furthermore, any corporate insider (including public relations representatives) who knowingly disseminates a false or materially misleading press release or other corporate communication is also liable for fraud. Ignorance is no defense—public relations practitioners are expected to conduct a “reasonable investigation” to determine if statements made in corporate communications are, in fact, true. State “blue-sky” laws also prohibit fraud in connection with the sale of securities.

In 2000, the SEC adopted Regulation FD (Fair Disclosure), which provides that if a company intentionally discloses material nonpublic information to securities analysts or selected shareholders, it must also simultaneously release that information to the general public by means of an SEC filing, a press release, a teleconference, or a Webcast. According to the SEC, the rule is meant to eliminate a company’s ability to give certain brokerage firms or institutional investors an unfair marketplace advantage by informing them of material information before communicating it to the investing public.

Rule 10b-5 also prohibits insider trading, which is the purchase or sale of company stock by corporate insiders who have access to material information that is not publicly available. Company officials, including public relations staffs, must refrain from purchasing stock in their own or anyone else's name until such inside information has been disseminated fully to the public. Furthermore, corporate insiders are also guilty of securities fraud if they "tip" family members or friends by passing them nonpublic material information to enable them to trade in the company's stock. In this situation, the "tippee" may also be liable for fraud.

In response to financial scandals such as Enron, Congress passed the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 ("the 2002 Act"), which imposes additional disclosure and certification requirements on public companies and their officers. Notably, the 2002 Act requires all public companies to have independent audit committees, to adopt a code of ethics for senior financial officers, and to include in each annual report an assessment of management's financial reporting practices. The chief executive and chief financial officers of public companies must personally certify the accuracy of the information contained in their annual and other financial reports. Furthermore, corporate attorneys must report evidence of material violations of federal securities laws to company officials, the audit committee, or the board of directors.

—Nicole B. Cáarez

See also Annual financial report; Investor relations; Material information; Securities and Exchange Commission

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PUBLICS

Publics are specific groups of people who are linked by a common interest or problem. In modern public relations, there is no such thing as a "general public." Strategic public relations manages relationships with key publics on whom the success of the organization depends. Such publics are more homogeneous and more easily identified than a nebulous, general public. Most organizations have a diverse set of publics derived from what an organization does and whom it affects. Some of these publics require constant and long-range relationships, whereas others exist as temporary and short-term relationships, as we discuss below.

Public relations is managed strategically when it is designed to build and maintain relationships with the publics most crucial to the success of the organization. The key to effective public relations is systematically identifying key publics and appropriately prioritizing these publics according to the situation. James E. Grunig and Fred Repper defined three stages in the strategic management of public relations: the stakeholder stage, the public stage, and the issue stage. Following this framework, publics can be identified in three ways: relationship to the organization (stakeholder stage), relationship to the situation (public stage), and relationship to the public relations strategy (issue stage).

RELATIONSHIP TO THE ORGANIZATION

Publics' relationships to the organization are usually identified with a stakeholder analysis. J. E. Grunig and Repper defined a stakeholder as "people who are linked to an organization because they and the organization have consequences on each other" (1992, p. 125). In the stakeholder stage, public relations should engage in environmental scanning, conduct research on stakeholders, and build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders. The first step in a stakeholder analysis is to identify publics based on the consequences they and the organization have on each other. One approach to identifying stakeholder publics is to consider how they are "linked" to the organization.

J. E. Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) used a linkage model based on the work of Milton Esman (1972), William Evan (1976), and Talcott Parsons (1976) to identify stakeholder relationships to organizations. The resulting model has four linkages that identify stakeholder relationships to an organization: enabling linkages, functional linkages, diffused linkages, and normative linkages.

ENABLING AND FUNCTIONAL LINKAGES

Enabling linkages are those that allow organizations to exist, such as relationships with government regulators and legislators. Functional linkages are those that allow the organization to function, by providing the resources (such as labor and raw materials) for the company to exist and market products or services. Organizations must maintain frequent communication with enabling and functional linkages to develop healthy long-term relationships, because the stakeholders in these linkages can have immediate consequences on the organization. The enabling linkages identify stakeholders who have some control and authority over the organization, such as stockholders, board of directors, governmental legislators and agencies, and so on. These stakeholders enable an organization to have resources and autonomy to operate. When enabling relationships falter, the resources can be withdrawn and the autonomy of the organization restricted.

Applying systems theory, J. E. Grunig and Hunt divided the functional linkages into input linkages and output linkages. Employees, unions, suppliers, contractors, and others link themselves with an organization by what they provide to the creation of an organization's products or services. Consumers, corporate purchasers, outlets, and other individuals or agencies that use the organization's products or services comprise the output linkage. Functional stakeholders are essential to the day-to-day operations of any organization and necessitate an open flow of communication.

NORMATIVE AND DIFFUSED LINKAGES

Normative linkages are associations or groups with which the organization has a common

interest. Diffused linkages are those in which the organization must respond to sporadic publics such as activists or special interest groups. Communication and interaction with the diffused and normative linkages are less frequent and tend to focus on short-term relationships or crises. Stakeholders with a normative linkage to an organization share similar values, goals, or problems. Many organizations belong to industrial or professional associations made up of competitors and peer institutions, or align themselves with political action committees to address common issues. The organizations that have the most systematic public relations programs with normative publics are the associations that represent the collective interests of their members.

Stakeholders belonging to the diffused linkage often identify themselves when the organization does something that affects them, in which case they would become an active public. These publics include members of the community, environmental groups, the media, voters, and other groups that organize to face a situation involving an organization. Diffused publics are usually situational and their relationship to the organization is often temporary. They attempt to affect the organization by working through members of the enabling or functional linkages. Appeals to governmental regulation and calls for boycotts represent such attempts.

Sometimes the organization identifies the publics needed to accomplish its goals and objectives (these are often the enabling and functional linkage publics). Sometimes the publics identify themselves (these often come from the diffused linkage). When publics begin to organize, public relations efforts move from the stakeholder stage to the public stage.

RELATIONSHIP TO THE SITUATION

Publics organize from among the ranks of stakeholders when they recognize a problem and decide to do something to seek redress. According to John Dewey (1927), a public is a group of people who face a similar problem, recognize the problem, and organize themselves to do something about the

problem. Dewey explained a public as a group that evolves around a situation.

Building on the Dewey definition of a public, J. E. Grunig (1983) developed a situational theory of publics to segment them based on active or passive communication behavior. Those publics who do not face a problem are *nonpublics*, those who face the problem but do not recognize it as problematic are *latent publics*, those who recognize the problem are *aware publics*, and those who do something about the problem are *active publics*.

J. E. Grunig's variables that help predict whether a public will be a nonpublic, latent, aware, or active are: level of involvement, level of problem recognition, level of constraint recognition, and information seeking versus information processing behavior. Level of involvement is measured by the extent to which people connect themselves personally with the situation. However, people do not seek or process information unless they recognize the connection, which is the level of problem recognition. Whether people move beyond information processing to the information seeking behavior of active publics often depends on whether they think they can do something about the problem. Those who think that nothing can be done have high constraint recognition and are less compelled to become active in the resolution of the problem. Another consideration, referent criteria, is the guideline that people apply to new situations based on previous experiences with the issue or the organization involved.

By breaking down publics according to their perceived relationship to the issue, communication messages and strategies become clearer. Latent publics need more information about the issue to help them recognize the problem. Aware publics with high constraint recognition need information about how they can become involved and make a difference. Active publics seek information and are predisposed to act, so the strategy should focus on two-way communication strategies that involve the publics in the issue. (*See* Situational theory of publics for information on how these groups can be further segmented into all-issue, apathetic, single-issue, and hot-issue publics.)

RELATIONSHIP TO THE STRATEGY OR TACTIC

When publics have organized themselves around an issue, public relations management moves to the issue stage. In this stage, public relations managers engage in communication strategies such as issues management, public information campaigns, symmetrical negotiation, and crisis communication. As stated before, for any organization to accomplish its stated goals and objectives, it needs the participation and cooperation of its key stakeholders. Targeting the key publics for strategic public relations efforts is a critical step. According to Laurie J. Wilson (2000), there are three types of publics to consider when developing public relations strategies: target publics, intervening publics, and influentials.

The publics whose participation and cooperation are required to accomplish organizational goals are the target publics. To communicate effectively with these publics, an organization must understand them as much as possible. Target publics can be profiled by their demographics, lifestyles and values, media preferences, influentials, and self-interests. Effective strategies appeal to the self-interests of the target publics and reach them through the most appropriate channels. At the same time, knowing publics according to these characteristics will help an organization plan goals consistent with its publics' needs and interests.

The intervening publics pass information on to the target publics and act as opinion leaders. Sometimes these publics, such as the media, are erroneously identified as target publics. If an organization is satisfied when the message stops at a public, then it is a target public. If the expectation is that the message will be disseminated to others, it is an intervening public. In most cases the media are intervening publics. Other influentials can be important intervening publics, such as doctors who pass information on to patients and teachers who pass information on to students. The success of many campaigns is determined by the strength of relationships with intervening publics.

Influentials can be intervening publics, but they also affect the success of public relations

efforts in other ways. Influentials can either support an organization's efforts or work against them. Members of some publics will turn to opinion leaders to verify or refute messages coming from organizations. The opinion of these personal sources is much more influential than the public relations messages alone. Therefore, successful campaigns must also consider how messages will be interpreted by influentials that act as either intervening or supporting publics.

STAKEHOLDERS, PUBLICS, AND MARKETS

There are subtle differences among the terms *stakeholder*, *public*, and *market*. Stakeholders are always connected to the organization by consequence, and smaller publics organize from this broader group in concern with a particular issue. Publics are different from markets in that publics usually arise and organize on their own and markets are created by the organization. Publics are usually more active than markets and often do not have an exchange-based relationship with the organization as markets do. Careful segmentation of publics can help a public relations program reach only those who care about the issue or message, at the appropriate information and education level to be understood, and can ultimately prevent waste of funds on publics who care little about the issue at hand. Employed symmetrically, the concept of publics is an essential element of building and maintaining relationships with those groups most vital to the organization.

—Brad L. Rawlins and Shannon A. Bowen

See also Situational theory of publics; Stakeholder theory; Symmetry

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PUFFERY

Puffery is the use of unsubstantiated praise or vague or implied claims in advertising, publicity, and other forms of promotional communication. The claims are intended to enhance the attributes of the subject and often take the form of exaggerations (e.g., “whiter than white” and “miracle cleaner”), superlatives (e.g., “best,” “ultimate,” “tastiest,” and “sexiest”), vague adjectives (e.g., “brilliant,” “amazing,” “exceptional,” and “great”), or opinions, which may not be attributed to anyone. From a legal standpoint, a distinguishing characteristic of puffery is that it consists of statements of value or opinion, not of fact. The attributes claimed are impossible to measure, confirm, or deny because they are a matter of taste or individual judgment.

Puffery is associated with the early press-agentry tactics of public relations, such as P. T. Barnum's classic slogan to promote his circus, “the greatest show on earth.” Although puffery continues to be an accepted and ubiquitous practice in advertising, its use in public relations is widely denounced within the field today. It is viewed as amateurish and ineffective because it sacrifices long-term credibility for short-term public attention. Many journalists will immediately disregard publicity pitches that rely on puffery rather than factual information.

The continued use of puffery in public relations contributes to a negative image of public relations practitioners as “flacks.”

LEGAL AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

The United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC) permits the use of puffery in promoting products, services, and ideas. Promotional materials, such as press kits, videos, brochures, and other collateral, are viewed as vehicles of commercial trade and subject to regulation by the FTC. Although there may appear to be a fine line between puffery and deceptive advertising, there are legal distinctions. U.S. courts have repeatedly upheld the legality of puffery. The courts' rationale is that it should be expected that “any seller will express a favorable opinion concerning what he has to sell; and when he praises it in general terms . . . buyers are expected to and do understand that they are not entitled to rely literally upon the words” (*Restatement of the Law of Torts* 48, 1965, para. 542). Guidelines created by the FTC to define deceptive advertising exclude puffery, noting, “The commission generally will not bring advertising cases based on subjective claims, such as taste, feel, appearance or smell” (*FTC Policy Statement on Deceptive Acts and Practices*, 1983).

Puffery becomes deceptive only when it falsely claims the substantive superiority of a product or service, and when it can be demonstrated that the false claim is likely to affect consumer choices. The law pertaining to false advertising under Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act requires that plaintiffs demonstrate that the ad or promotion is either literally false or that it is likely to mislead and confuse consumers. To prove that it is misleading, the plaintiff must introduce empirical evidence of the statement's impact on consumers. The bottom line: As long as claims are so vague or subjective that they cannot be directly tested or substantiated, they are considered puffery and are legal. Puffery cannot be false representation, because it does not include statements of fact.

In a 2001 case involving two U.S. pizza chains, Pizza Hut sued Papa John's, claiming its slogan,

“Better Ingredients. Better Pizza,” was false advertising. The Fifth Circuit Court ruled that the slogan was mere puffery, a vague expression of opinion. In addition, the court ruled that Pizza Hut provided insufficient evidence to show that consumers purchased Papa John's pizza because they believed the company used better ingredients. However, Papa John's was ordered to stop making more specific claims about the superiority of its dough and sauce. Because these were material, measurable claims, they were not considered puffery and were unprotected if not substantiated.

There are other legal considerations related to puffery that should be of concern to public relations practitioners. Statements of puffery in advertising and promotional materials may unintentionally create express warranties that can leave a company vulnerable to consumer lawsuits. Agencies and individual practitioners may be legally liable if it can be shown that they participated in the production or dissemination of a statement that they knew, or should have known, was false or misleading. For publicly traded companies, puffery may present a potential conflict with securities laws that require companies to accurately report all information that might influence investors.

The Public Relations Society of America's Code of Professional Standards does not address puffery per se; however, its statement of professional values notes that “we adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those we represent and in communicating with the public” (Public Relations Society of America, 2003, p. B16). Similarly, the American Association of Advertising Agencies' Creative Code states “we will not knowingly create advertising that contains false or misleading statements or exaggerations, visual or verbal, of claims insufficiently supported” (*Standards of Practice of the American Association of Advertising Agencies*, 1990).

Ivan Preston, a leading authority on the topic of puffery, as well as other scholars and consumer advocates, have attacked puffery from ethical and legal standpoints and called for changes to address the legal loophole presented by puffery cases. Preston (1996) argued that puffery is, in fact, deceptive,

because it causes consumers to more highly appraise the attributes of products and the importance of those attributes. Inflated expectations of the product's performance may in turn influence purchasing decisions. Targeting puffery to vulnerable populations, such as children or the elderly, raises particular ethical concerns.

AVOIDING PUFFERY IN PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING

Public relations textbooks and the trade press discourage the use of puffery in public relations writing. Instead, media releases and other press materials should closely model the objective tone, factual substance, and concise characteristics of journalistic style. Adjectives praising a product or service and product claims should be substantiated or encapsulated in quotes from an identified source. Practitioners should also check for industry-specific guidelines for language use issued by the FTC, including those for the dietary supplement industry, Web site operators, home study courses, and environmental claims. Certain words, such as "new," "recyclable," and "biodegradable," may only be used if the product meets FTC guidelines for those words (Wilcox, Ault, Agee, & Cameron, 2001, p. 236).

—Katherine N. Kinnick

See also Barnum, P. T.; Press agency; Spin

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PYRAMID STYLE

The pyramid style is used by journalists when writing news stories and public relations practitioners when writing media releases and other pieces. Using this format, the most important information goes at the top of the story and the least important information goes at the bottom.

In a media release, the pyramid begins with the "lead," the main purpose of the release that contains the news angle. This is followed by the five W's used by journalists—who, what, where, when, and why. At this point, usually a few sentences in length, the release should be able to stand on its own without additional details, if necessary. Supporting information comes next. Using this format, if the release is edited from the bottom, no critical information will be lost.

The pyramid style, also referred to as inverted pyramid style, may be used in other types of writing as well. For example, each entry in this encyclopedia is written in pyramid style. Just as an editor may read only the first few lines of a media release, readers of this book may not read each entry in its entirety. Therefore, each entry begins with a definition of the topic, an explanation of why it is important and basic information. The topic is then more fully discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

THE PYRAMID

Ronald D. Smith (2003) provided the following outline of the inverted pyramid used in public relations writing:

News lead. This is the most important information. An editor should be able to read this first line or two and determine why the information is newsworthy—or why the media release should be thrown away.

Benefit statement. Once the newsworthy information has been clearly stated in the lead, the writer must show why the information is significant to the audience.

Secondary details. Any of the five W's not already mentioned come next. At this point, the audience should have all the information it needs to pursue the topic.

Background information. As the pyramid works its way to the bottom, it's time to add supporting information on the subject of the media release.

Action statement. The release closes with information on how the audience—not the media—can get more information on the topic.

Organizational identification. An optional component of the inverted pyramid is the organizational identification, a one- or two-line description of the organization's mission—what it does, why it

exists. This should be consistent for every release regardless of the topic.

As mentioned earlier in this entry, reporters and public relations practitioners both write using the inverted pyramid format; however, benefit statements, action statements, and organizational identifications are exclusive to public relations and are not used by journalists when writing stories.

—Ann R. Carden

See also Media release

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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

A large part of public relations research is found in the realm of qualitative research. Qualitative research—also called informal research methodology—is the gathering of information that is restricted to the setting in which it was obtained. Research employing a qualitative orientation includes data-gathering methodologies such as case study, historical and secondary, focus group, interviewing, and participant-observation. A sixth methodology often associated with qualitative research is content analysis, but its inclusion as a qualitative method has been questioned by its proponents, who argue that it is a quantitative method. Based on public relations use, it is considered an informal or qualitative method.

Many people misunderstand qualitative research. This usually stems from the assumption that *qualitative* means that numbers are not employed or assigned to the “data” gathered or that the research is devoid of theory. Qualitative research does employ numbers, and it is typically associated with *grounded theory*, or theory that arises from observations made in specific situations.

Data gathered using qualitative methods have a major restriction placed on their interpretation. The data are tied to the specific situation in which they were gathered. That is, the results cannot be

generalized to a larger situation with any degree of confidence. This restriction is important, because misuse of qualitative research occurs most often either when data gathered for a case study are applied to a similar situation or when an interview is taken out of the context in which it was conducted and placed in a more general context.

Qualitative research does provide the researcher with several important advantages over its quantitative counterpart. First, the data are rich, in that they provide an in-depth understanding of a person, organization, event, or other research object. Second, the data gathered are not impersonal facts; they are value-based. John Hocking, Don Stacks, and Steven McDermott have argued that communication research asks four basic questions: what is it (definition), how much of it is observed (fact), how good is it (value), and what should be done (policy). All research methods address questions of definition, but qualitative methods are best at answering questions of value and policy (how well did the campaign do [value] and should we do it again [policy]), whereas quantitative methods are best at answering questions of fact and may address questions of value as population norms or normative expectations. Furthermore, whereas quantitative methods look at large numbers, qualitative methods look at small numbers; the quantitative survey may require 400 or more people to answer questions, whereas

the interview may focus on only one person. What the survey provides is an understanding of what a large number of people think or will do and establishes norms; the interview examines significantly fewer people but provides a much fuller understanding of what each person thinks and why.

Third, qualitative methods provide an *ex post facto* understanding of the normative behaviors of larger groups. In this regard, qualitative research often expands upon what has been found in surveys and attempts to explain why the audience or public thought or behaved as it did. The key here is that the methods provide an explanation after the fact by choosing influential or appropriate people or messages. This, of course, means that qualitative methods cannot establish a cause-effect relationship, something only an experiment can do.

Fourth, qualitative methods work best when public relations requires environmental scanning or monitoring in relation to a specific public relations problem. Informal interviews, focus groups, content analyses, and participant-observation all establish expected behaviors from a day-to-day observation (or *ethnomethodology*); hence, these methods provide what Hickson noted as the daily activities of an ongoing organization or social unit. By focusing on daily events, researchers are informally looking for patterns that may or may not be followed, thus alerting them to possible problems.

QUALITATIVE METHODS

Qualitative methods are represented by at least six distinctly different ways of gathering information or data. Each differs from the others by the kind of information gathered and the amount of control that each provides the researcher. The first qualitative method, historical or secondary research, is found in almost all research methods, but is considered a qualitative method when the end result is the gathering of historical facts and figures (often this occurs during the definitional stage of a research project). Historical/secondary research can be broken into two complementary parts: strict data gathering and rhetorical analysis. Strict data gathering occurs when researchers examine extant documents

found in libraries, databases, the media, and various industries to better understand a person, product, campaign, or industry. Thus, the historical or secondary method looks at primary (the actual reports or data), secondary (the data or reports as reported elsewhere, such as in the media or in books), or tertiary (reports of the published reports) sources. Rhetorical analysis takes that data and examines how it was used as a message by the messenger in specific situations or occasions. The key is that the information is extant; the research that produced it has already been published or presented in some fashion. All research methods—qualitative or quantitative—require historical/secondary research, but not all may include rhetorical analyses.

A second qualitative research method is the case study. The case study is an in-depth look at some person, organization, event, or campaign. It is specific to a particular problem, occasion, or opportunity, and the researcher controls what and how information is used in building the case. Case studies help in understanding why the particular object under study acted as it did or what lessons may be learned from its actions. Case studies are often used to establish business and public relations “best practices”, examining how good business strategies or winning public relations campaigns operated. In some instances, looking at “worst practices” allows public relations practitioners to avoid pitfalls. As with all qualitative methods, however, the case study is unique and cannot be generalized to other cases, even if they are similar.

The interview is the third qualitative method employed in public relations. An interview provides in-depth information from an individual about themselves, events, or other things. The interview is controlled largely by interviewers, who have, through historical/secondary research, done background research on both the individual and the topic to be discussed. An interview schedule or questionnaire is then used to ensure that all relevant questions are answered and subsequent probe or extended questions are sometimes employed and the interviewee’s responses are recorded for later analysis. In some instances, the interview of one person is the entire research project, such as an interview of the

head of a leading public relations firm. Sometimes, several different interviews will be conducted—interviews with the heads of the top public relations firms, for example—to provide an understanding of a larger question. The key is that each interview is conducted separately from the others. Regardless of the number of interviews, the results are specific to those people interviewed at the specific time, place, and circumstances in which the interviewer found them.

Expanding the concept of interviews to a larger group of people “interviewed” at once is the underlying concept behind the focus group. The focus group method of research collects information from a group of participants who focus on a specific concern, concept, or product as led by a moderator. The moderator, like the interviewer, works from a set of prepared questions, but allows the participants to “tag” or expand on others’ comments in the discussion. The focus group provides a variety of perspectives on the research object while maintaining group focus and cohesiveness through the moderator’s direction. Focus groups typically consist of 5 to 15 members who meet at the same time in a room set up for the discussion. The discussion is usually recorded and transcribed for later analysis. Focus group research is also restricted in generalizing findings to larger audiences or the public due to the small number of participants and the fact that most members are volunteers, and thus do not represent a valid cross section of the larger group from which they are drawn.

Participant-observation is a qualitative method that is often overlooked in public relations research. Participant-observation requires that an individual become a part of a larger group—a company or a team, for example—and observe what occurs in daily interaction between members. As such, the researcher has no control over the group. The method’s advantage is in the establishment of the group’s norms or expected behaviors—its routines, rules for communication, and the roles that group members take on in different situations. Participant-observation takes a long time to conduct, but when approached from an informal basis it is something that all public relations people do

daily. Participant-observation may indicate the need for a larger research project based on whether the practitioner sees behavior that does not fit established norms. It is particularly effective as a method for gathering information when conducting an environmental scan or monitoring a problem.

The final qualitative method is content analysis. Although some question whether content analysis is a qualitative or a quantitative method, its use in public relations is most often seen as qualitative or informal. Content analysis provides a way to evaluate messages both objectively (by counting occurrences such as specific words, phrases, or graphics) or subjectively (by evaluating the themes or theses contained in messages). It approaches a quantitative, formal method in that certain rules for its conduct are established beforehand and the messages are then analyzed according to those rules. Because it works on messages that have already been uttered, written, presented, or published, it may fit better as a qualitative method; when used as a measurement instrument, however, it fits better as a quantitative method.

It should be noted that, within qualitative research, all methods may be employed. This is probably seen best in a case study in which extensive background (historical/secondary/rhetorical) research has been undertaken. To better understand what occurred in the case, interviews and focus groups may be conducted to obtain the points of view of the people involved with the case study. Participant-observation may have been employed, as the case may be something the researcher had actually been a part of and represents a reflective examination of what happened. Content analysis of important messages may provide insight into the communication strategies and tactics that were employed in the case. Employing multiple methods is called triangulation, and a good qualitative research study will use as many methods as possible to establish study validity.

—Don W. Stacks

See also Case study; Content analysis; Environmental scanning; Focus group; Interview as a research tool; Quantitative research; Theory-based practice

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QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Quantitative research is almost always associated with the formal evaluation of numbers. That is, quantitative research is something that extends from the physical sciences to the social sciences and focuses on methods that follow certain prescribed rules for the gathering of, typically, numeric data. That said, it is important to understand that numbers by themselves have no meaning except the meaning that we establish in our theory. Quantitative research, then, focuses on research methods that allow researchers to say, with a certain degree of confidence, that something they systematically measured (via numbers) actually represents a larger number of people, or that something actually caused a change in something else.

The key to quantitative research is found in (1) measurement and (2) the collection of data in such a way that it can be reliably and validly interpreted when replicated by others. This, in turn, is found in the formal rules of quantitative research methods. These methods include survey research and experimental research, but arguments have been made to include content analysis as a formal, quantitative method. However, the majority of content-analytic studies focus on simple counts (Was a release picked up or not? Where or when was it reported?); thus, its use is more informal than formal. (It must be noted that thematic content analyses, which require a measurement item or scale for evaluation, may approach the formal nature of quantitative measurement.)

The key to any quantitative method is the gathering of data via some form of measurement. Measurement is the assigning of numbers to observations in a manner that has established validity and whose reliability can be assessed. All attempts at evaluating the attitudes, beliefs, or values of others requires the creation of some type of scale, a measure that focuses not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. Measurement scales attempt to identify how people will or have behaved, and why they behave in those ways. Once the data have been gathered, it is analyzed using statistical analysis. Because the responses to stimuli questions or experimental conditions are collected as numeric data, they are submitted to descriptive and/or inferential statistical analysis. This analysis collapses the individual responses to those of the group to which the individuals belong.

Quantitative research differs significantly from qualitative research in that quantitative research methods are not concerned with individual respondents per se. Users of quantitative research are more interested in how large numbers of subjects responded to stimuli. Thus, whereas qualitative methods provide rich data, quantitative methods provide normative data that can be parsed according to demographic or psychographic differences.

Part of quantitative research involves how data are collected. Because it is impossible to follow all members of a population around or ask them questions regarding their intentions to exhibit a behavior, quantitative research samples from a population in an effort to draw conclusions from the sampling. Public relations research often surveys respondents from some population to better understand how people feel or will behave. Some sampling techniques allow for conclusions that describe only those people who might have been available at the time of data collection. Other sampling techniques allow conclusions to be drawn about the larger population from which the sample was obtained. The former sampling techniques are called *nonprobability* (or *convenience*) sampling, whereas the latter are called *probability* sampling.

Sampling also occurs in experimental research. Experimental sampling is not concerned with generalizing to a larger population. Instead, it is employed to ensure that participants are chosen in such a way

as to discount any possible biases that participants may bring with them to the experiment.

SURVEY

The dominant quantitative research method found in public relations is the survey or poll. Polls are distinguished from surveys by their length and the type of information that each attempts to obtain. Polls are very short—often comprising no more than 10 questions, including demographic or psychographic information—and last a few minutes at most. Surveys are longer, often taking over 15 minutes to complete, and attempt to delve into the reasoning behind why respondents think or act as they do. Both polls and surveys sample from a larger population.

When respondents are randomly selected from the population in such a way that any member could have participated in the study—a probability sample—the results can be generalized to that larger population. When respondents are selected due to availability or because of certain characteristics—a nonprobability sample—the results are limited in their ability to be generalized beyond those people surveyed or polled. Probability sampling allows researchers to estimate both how accurately they sampled the population and the potential for error in the measurement of respondents' answers. Nonprobability sampling, while allowing for estimates of measurement error, cannot establish sampling accuracy because the sample was not drawn at random.

There are two basic survey or poll types. The most common is the “snapshot,” wherein one set of respondents is surveyed or polled once. When researchers are interested in what people think over time, a cross-sectional survey or poll is conducted. Cross-sectional surveys or polls measure from a population at various times and allow for comparison, and are often called “longitudinal” research designs. Cross-sectional designs are of three types: trend, in which different snapshots are taken from different samples over time; panel, in which the same sample is measured at various points in time; and the cohort-trend design, which follows different groups who share certain characteristics, such as age (e.g., a yearly survey of 18-year-olds of their views on voting).

Surveys or polls can be conducted in a variety of ways. Most commonly, respondents are asked questions over the telephone. Other ways of contacting people to gather survey or poll data include physical, person-to-person contact whereby a formal interview is conducted; the mail questionnaire, in which a questionnaire is printed and mailed to respondents; and the electronic (Internet or fax) method, in which questionnaires are sent to respondents via facsimile or on the Internet.

EXPERIMENTS

The experiment is rarely found in public relations research. Experiments typically test theoretical relationships between concepts and are the only way that a researcher can infer that something actually caused something else to occur. Experiments are highly controlled and contrived research projects that establish, in isolation, the impact of one variable (a concept or idea that has been defined in such a way as to be potentially observable or measured) on another. Experimental variables are either measured (the dependent variable) or manipulated (the independent variable) under highly controlled circumstances. It is this control that allows the researcher to say within a certain degree of confidence that the impact of changing the independent variable caused a change in the dependent variable. Further, because of the formal nature of experimental measurement, the dependent variable's reliability and validity can be established and compared to preestablished accepted norms.

The experiment also allows very sophisticated statistical analyses to be conducted. Because of the experiment's controlled nature, the direction of and confidence in the impact of one variable on another can be estimated and presented within those set acceptance levels (typically a 95 percent level of confidence that one variable caused a change in the other variable). Further, because the relationships between the variables have been theoretically established, the impact of several independent variables on one or more dependent variables can also be examined.

The experiment is a very powerful research method. Its very power, however, is also a limitation. Whereas a random survey of a sample allows

researchers to generalize results to the larger population, the experiment's generalizability is almost nonexistent. The experiment's need for control makes findings difficult to extend to other contexts, but it does tell us that under the same circumstances a causal relationship will exist.

—*Don W. Stacks*

See also Experiment/experimental methods; Measuring/measures; Reliability; Sampling; Scales; Statistical analysis; Survey; Validity

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RACE AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Organizations face a wide range of potential crises ranging from rumors about the company, to environmental catastrophe, to product tampering and consumer death. By their nature, crises can be, to some degree, anticipated but not completely eliminated. All crises have the potential to inflict harm to the organizational image, but few are as potentially damaging as those involving race. Such crises have the potential to garner significant negative attention from the public, press, and important stakeholders.

Racially oriented crises have affected large companies such as Texaco, Denny's, and Cracker Barrel restaurants as well as smaller groups and organizations and even state and local governments. Although it is impossible to completely inoculate a company from racial crises, a thorough and annual review of practices and communications can identify potential for racial crises in areas such as hiring practice and procedures or customer relations. However, a racial crisis can erupt from a single statement or event.

Researcher Gail F. Baker (2001) has written that racial crises generally take one of three forms: actions, words, or symbols. Restaurants refusing to

serve members of a particular ethnic population, or an organization with an apparent history of failure to hire or promote members from a particular population are two examples of activities that can and have resulted in racially oriented crises stemming from actions. Public or even private communication from a prominent member of an organization that includes racial slurs or other derogatory comments would be an example of words leading to a potential racial crisis. However, even a less prominent member of an organization (e.g., a mid-level manager) can create a similar crisis with the use of inappropriate words. In the heat of crisis escalation, if the organization does not separate itself from the individual, that person can be characterized as representative of the whole organization, thus fostering the crisis. Corporate or organizational symbols could include a logo, caricature, or design that is associated with the organization. Such symbols can, and have, led to crises requiring some form of change on the organization's part. A prominent example of such change was seen when high school, college, and professional teams across the nation changed their mascots from names or caricatures that might have been deemed offensive to some groups to images that moved away from potentially derogatory ethnic identification. For example, many teams formerly called "Redskins" were renamed with tribe names from their region.

When a racially oriented crisis occurs, organizations must respond quickly with the crisis response strategy that they deem appropriate. The full range of crisis strategies can come into play, from denial to capitulation. Organizations responding to racially oriented crises need to carefully measure the current level of attention to the alleged wrongdoing, the assessment of their own level of error, the type of response desired by affected publics and stakeholders, and the costs and appropriateness of those responses. Decision making, which includes all of those factors, will frequently not lead to an obvious decision on the appropriate steps to take, thus making the public relations or crisis manager's decision a difficult one.

—David E. Williams
and Bolanle A. Olaniran

See also Crisis and crisis management; Crisis communication; Exxon and the *Valdez* crisis

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RAILROAD INDUSTRY IN THE 19TH CENTURY

The railroad industry dramatically changed the United States during the 19th century. It gave rationale and lots of work to journalists and other writers who molded the practice of public relations. In that regard, the railroads helped spawn the public relations profession.

The relationship was synergistic. Public relations helped gain acceptance for this essential element of the U.S. infrastructure at a time when it met lots of

resistance. It was noisy and spewed sparks. It scared people and farm animals. It was opposed because it competed with established modes of transportation. Public relations added to the ability of railroad entrepreneurs to gain legislative support for their innovation. Once the railroads were beginning their operation, they needed to expand. They would die without markets for their services. They used far-reaching promotion campaigns to attract riders and freight.

Before, during, and after the Civil War, vast regions of the East, Midwest, Southwest, and Far West began to open to farmers and merchants. Railroads followed and facilitated westward migration. Minerals, farm products, and other resources could now be moved over longer distances. All of this activity was a source of raw materials, labor, and markets for new industrial products, especially farm implements and other industrial equipment.

As it was introduced to the fledgling railroad industry, society was hesitant to adopt this industrial beast that shocked citizens' sensibilities of safety. The industry truly was unsafe. Engines could start fires along the lines. Employees worked at great risk, a problem that persisted into the 20th century. Newspaper editors and other concerned citizens alarmed citizens to the peril of this industrial monster.

By 1850 much of this opposition had waned. Events demonstrated the virtue of rail transportation. Towns welcomed the arrival of railroad service. Bands played. Politicians spoke. Local militia marched and displayed community enthusiasm for the trains that brought mail, relatives and friends, and freight.

The Civil War demonstrated the virtues of an efficient rail system. Without doubt, one of the advantages of the Union during the war was superior ability to move men and materials strategically and quickly. The Civil War also cost the lives and working ability of thousands of men in the prime of life. Immigrants were needed to open the new regions of the nation, exploit its resources, and supply industrial labor needs.

Public relations was a fledgling profession at the time. The broad array of newspapers served as a

primary mass medium supplying information and appeals to a broad set of audiences. This medium, coupled with other forms of communication, became widely and enthusiastically applied to publicize and promote railroads and the countryside they opened to domestic and foreign laborers and families looking for a better future.

Railroads needed settlers. They were heavily subsidized by a federal government willing to give land, which could be sold to finance railroad construction and operation. To turn raw land into operating capital, the executives of the rail industry turned to professional communicators to get the word out that land was available. Opportunity awaited those who were bold. Bounty was to be had for the taking. This migration would sell land. Farmers would produce crops. They would need supplies and equipment. Towns would spring up like prairie flowers in spring. Vast fortunes would be made. States would be established. Minerals would be brought east to the manufacturing centers. The nation, and its citizens, would prosper. Popular culture would develop as legends abandoned facts. Even the motion picture industry, not even born, would use the West and railroads as the fodder of countless visions on the flickering screen. No longer was the western migration moving at the speed of plodding animals pulling wagons. The scream of the whistle time and again announced a new force firing the nation. This was a dream. But people needed to get the message and fall in love with the dream.

The publicity effort in one sense was simple. Newspaper persons were hired by railroad companies or thriving communities to write books and favorable news stories that would reach target audiences. Or newspaper persons were given free trips with ample adventure and boosterism conversations. Countless writers strained their thesauruses to find ever more glowing terms to fuel the migration. These messages were translated into languages of all of the people of Europe and even China, where labor was abundant and times were hard.

As is ever the case with companies, railroad companies needed to achieve name recognition. Regions and towns were made legendary by the

names that became embedded in popular culture: Baltimore & Ohio; Southern Pacific; Northern Pacific; Great Northern; Burlington; Atchison, Topeka, and Sante Fe; Denver & Rio Grande; Illinois Central; Southern Pacific. The Southern Pacific knew that it needed markets to be viable. Even before its rails reached Los Angeles, its publicist, Charles Nordhoff, was hired. He was a reporter for the *New York Evening Post* who understood the Eastern press. He wrote *California for Health, Pleasure and Residence*, published in 1872, to attract a wide array of readers who identified with those motives.

Publicity was used to demonstrate to influential citizens the need for certain routes. Owners attracted investors and built relationships with legislators. These relationships often led to problematic business relationships. Perhaps the worst was the willingness of legislators to overlook the railroads' notorious lack of safety. Railroad operations killed or injured workers by the hundreds. Safety devices solved part of the problem, but labor relations were a constant source for the need of public relations.

As much as it needed continuing government relations, the industry fostered publicity and promotion. Techniques developed by the industry became the stock and trade for the profession. Investors needed to be assured that each company operated in ways that protected and promoted the interests of shareholders. Personal contacts were always important. Rail leaders wanted to be able to talk personally with legislators, newspaper people, investors, and influential local citizens. Favorable press was sought. Boosterism was the constant message set before this array of publics. The industry hired lobbyists. Prominent citizens from other walks of life could look forward to being paid for their opinions on extending railroad routes, as well as for their defense of rates and safety records.

Promotion required an endless string of favorable newspaper stories. Meetings and conventions were held. Some were staged events that in turn could be the subject of favorable news reports and editorials. Advertising was widely used. Newspapers that needed advertising dollars might be less willing to write harsh and accurate stories about the industry.

Secret press agents were widely employed. Reporters and editors were offered free passes. A trade association sponsoring the industry publication, *Railway Age*, established in 1880 a Bureau of Information. Executives were quite willing to commission and fund favorable books and articles. Railway staff might write such articles and then look for prominent citizens who would lend their names as authors. The objective was to get opinion leaders to support and promote the industry. Such leaders were co-opted to be “objective” spokespersons for the industry in an effort to attract support of other power elites. Local officials within a community—or even the governor—could often be relied on to participate in ground-breaking ceremonies.

Guidebooks and pamphlets were published in huge quantities. These publicity tools extolled the virtues of the West as the land of opportunity. Often quite shoddy in content as well as publication standards, these tools were often remarkable in their exaggeration. Wealth and health were standard themes. They featured opportunity to virtually every segment of the U.S. and European populations. They placed stories in European newspapers to attract investors, labor, and customers. They exploited chance circumstances. Having no role in the discovery of minerals in the West, they were quick to broadcast discoveries to lure passengers to gold fields and merchants to prey on miners. They hauled ore and supplied workers with food and dry goods. They made markets that they in turn served—the true mark of the entrepreneur.

To residents in crowded cities and disparate parts of the world, the vast expanse of the American West had huge appeal. Land offices were opened where people were likely to be looking for opportunity. Pamphlets were published in English, German, French, and the languages of Scandinavia and Eastern Europe. Letters from “success story” authors were placed in influential newspapers. These manufactured firsthand accounts were carried by emigrants as “contracts” of their new and bountiful future. To persons accustomed to thinking of land parcels in the few acres, dreams of vast and unclaimed acreages in the thousands were irresistible.

Without doubt one of the greatest publicity stunts of American culture occurred on May 10, 1869, at Promontory Point near Ogden, Utah. Dignitaries drove spikes of gold and silver to celebrate the creation of a transcontinental railroad by linking the Union Pacific and Central Pacific. Another burgeoning industry made the event even more dramatic. Telegraph wires were attached to the heads of the hammers and to spikes. Each time a hammer struck a spike that message was transmitted to awaiting news reporters, dignitaries, and the general citizen. This moment created a new word for the American vocabulary—transcontinental.

Practitioners, as the railroad industry demonstrated, were vital to gaining attention and creating meaning that became part of a culture. They helped to create a way of thinking and acting. They also engaged in defensive efforts to protect an industry challenged on safety issues by workers and by customers who fought for fair rates. Railroads helped to create the full range of activities associated with public relations.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Event; Government relations; Pamphlet; Promotion; Publicity; Trade associations (and Hill & Knowlton’s role in)

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REACH

Reach, as used in public relations, remains close to the general definition of the verb *to reach*, although in public relations it most often appears as a noun. As a verb, *reach* has been in the English language since the 16th century, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), originally meaning to stretch out, extend, thrust, to touch or grasp, often by extending a part of the body (usually a hand). Today,

according to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, *reach* also means to make an impression on, to communicate or, as a noun, the distance or extent of reaching or the ability to reach. This meaning comes closest to our usage in public relations as well as in marketing and advertising. Of course, today, reach goes far beyond the hand or voice.

In public relations, reach is useful as a measure. Reach refers to the number of connections a public relations program, campaign, or even press release achieves within the targeted audience. Reach may be defined to include the quality of connections. Many people who heard the campaign message that "seatbelts save lives" did not act. They were reached with the message but not motivated to act, to use seatbelts. To motivate the audience to "buckle up" took legislative clout in addition to the educational message.

Reach may also define the distance a public relations message travels as it connects. In today's global economy, public relations often must plan for global reach. A press release sent to and published by an energy trade publication in Houston, Texas, may be read in Melbourne, Australia, and Aberdeen, Scotland. Today's public relations message may require a global reach within a targeted segment of the world's population.

Whatever the distance, reach within a public relations campaign indicates the connectivity within the targeted audience. A press release announcing business news that is published in a daily newspaper may be read by many who are outside the target population and of no interest to the sending organization. Reach, to be useful, is defined within the target. The reach may be broken into levels. It may ripple out from the primary receiver. In the daily newspaper example, there is first the media that receive the release, narrowed to those that use it. Next are those who read the article and are a part of the targeted audience, then those who learn by word of mouth. Beyond those groups within the target audience, in keeping with the goals and objectives of the campaign, the reach of the message has minimal or no usefulness to the business. For instance, the popular AT&T advertising campaign slogan "Reach out and touch someone" is

still alive and well. In a Google search, it yielded 18,800 entries, long after the campaign was ended. Most have no mention of (or value to) AT&T at all.

The question arises: How do we identify the reach, how do we count it, how do we evaluate it? Instruments exist, but measuring public relations reach is far from an exact science, even today. Clippings count the media publishing press release information. Circulation numbers count those receiving (but not necessarily reading) the information. A direct mail letter reaches those on the mailing list, or if it doesn't and it went first class, subtracting letters returned from letters sent gives a close estimate but doesn't include letters received but not read. If the campaign asks the recipients to take a measurable action, the number who do so provides a qualitative reach figure to go along with the quantitative reach (those receiving the letter). These are simple instruments used only as an example.

To go full circle, to be useful in measuring the outcome reach must be an integral element for consideration and definition at the very beginning. Reach must be incorporated into the goals and objectives of a public relations effort. It must be a part of the plan.

—Barbara Langham

See also Campaign; Measuring/measures; Public relations research; Research goals; Research objectives

REGULATED MONOPOLIES

Regulated monopolies are organizations that are granted the legal right to operate in an environment where there is freedom from competition. The grant to operate in this manner is given by governmental agencies, and there is recognition that the monopoly is counter to traditional free-market theory and policy.

To offset the freedom from competition, the granting agencies may stipulate a variety of conditions that may include, but may not be limited to, the rates charged customers, the services that are to

be rendered, the required amount of infrastructure building and maintenance, and the level of services that are required of the monopoly holder. Because of this unique arrangement, organizations operating regulated monopolies have need of business and public relations strategies to support their continued successful operations. Effective strategies must reflect the history and role of the regulated monopoly in the economic system.

The concept of the regulated monopoly in the United States began at the end of the 19th century and start of the 20th century. Prior to the late 19th century, the governmental philosophy at the federal, state, and local levels was generally one of *laissez-faire*—keep government out of regulation and let competition determine the provider of services. Government recognized the importance of competition, and in 1890 the Sherman Antitrust Act was passed to reduce monopolies and ensure competition. President Theodore Roosevelt used the act in the early part of the 20th century to attack the power of the industrial trusts. The growth of the industrial empires and the monopolies that they created and the resulting abuses of economic power became issues of public discussion. For example, unregulated railroads that had monopolies in certain areas of the United States could charge shipping rates that made it difficult for producers to maintain a profit for their ventures because shipping rates were set very high by the monopolistic rail carrier.

Much of the impetus for government action was the public discussion of the economic abuses by large monopolistic organizations caused by the writings of journalists called *muckrakers* by President Theodore Roosevelt while he was in office in New York. He later came to respect the writings of the muckrakers as they supported him as he sought to ensure competition in the American economic system. These writers and their publishers centered articles on the alleged economic and social hardships that the monopolistic organizations had created in society.

Out of this environment grew the regulated monopoly. The concept was used to ensure that essential services would be provided at reasonable economic cost, but the possibility for abuse was to

be diminished by governmental control. Many of the controlled monopolies were created out a need for services, but where the cost of providing duplicate investments that would ensure competitive services was economically unfeasible. Examples of these monopolies were municipal water, sewer, and telephone systems, and electrical and gas systems. These services are often provided by corporations owned and operated by municipalities (municipal corporations). In many communities these vital services are provided by for-profit private corporations. The following discussions are premised on the idea that the regulated monopoly is a business entity that is privately owned or a corporation that is owned by stockholders. In most states municipal corporations as well as for-profit corporations are regulated by policies of a state board or regulatory commission. In some states these boards and regulatory commissions are elected; in others these boards and commissions are appointed, usually by the governor with confirmation of the appointees granted to the legislature, often the higher-ranking body if the legislature is bicameral.

The monopoly may be granted through license, contract, or franchise. In most states and communities the monopoly is granted for a period of time and must be renewed from time to time through a prescribed set of state regulations. These regulations, as noted earlier, may also indicate the rates, level of service, and other requirements. If rates are to be increased, or in some cases decreased, the rate change must be sought and received through the regulatory agency.

Public attitudes about regulated monopolies may change over time. Two examples may be considered. In the early part of the 20th century, much of the U.S. telephone system was controlled by regulated monopolies, especially AT&T. In the last quarter of the 20th century, the government and the courts moved strongly to end many of the monopolistic practices and to deregulate the industry. It was argued that technology made it economically possible to have competing providers. The argument was also made that competition would result in better service at lower cost. A similar, ongoing, and unresolved example is the public school system, which is, of course, a publicly owned and operated system.

Advocates of privatizing the public school systems argue that the public schools are a regulated monopoly and that competition would result in better schools at lower cost. Many same-thinking individuals suggest that all services provided by governmental regulated monopolies could better serve the society if privatized.

An organization that is a regulated monopoly must develop business and public relations strategies that will allow it to function effectively in the environment in which it exists. The strategic challenges for the regulated monopoly are similar in many ways to those of organizations operating in the private realm, but the regulated monopoly must recognize its unique place in the environment.

Key to the effectiveness of public relations strategies for the regulated monopoly is to recognize those publics that will influence its ability to function effectively. Among the publics that must be considered are the customers or clients, the regulators and policymakers, the activists concerned with the industry or service, the media, employees, and any of their organizations such as unions, suppliers, and political forces that may have dominion over the environment in which the regulated monopoly exists.

Perhaps the most intriguing challenge for the regulated monopoly is the building of relationships with the regulators. Individuals appointed to the boards or commissions that regulate the monopoly are usually selected through the political process and often represent the political and economic philosophy of the dominant political power. The person or persons appointed to such boards and commissions have the power to regulate, and, therefore, they are critical to success for the organization. Regulated monopolies must understand and become involved in the selection process of the regulatory boards or commissions. There may be many relationships that have to be built. If the individuals appointed are named by an executive, such as a governor, elected county executive, or mayor, it is imperative that the regulated monopoly attempt to build relationships with these executives. If an effective relationship has been built, the executive may consult with the organization before naming a new candidate or reappointing a seated member

seen as favorable to the organization. If individuals viewed as antagonistic to the regulated monopoly are nominated by an executive but must be confirmed by a legislative body, the public relations strategy may be to build relationships with the confirming body with the purpose of preventing the confirmation of the nominee. Should this strategy fail, the appointee may be more difficult to work with in the future, so the strategy is not without risk to the regulated organization. If the regulators are elected, the regulated organization may wish to recruit individuals to stand for election that are favorable to the management strategies of the regulated monopoly. During the course of the election campaigns, the regulated monopoly organization may work for the election of those favorable to its positions and work in opposition to those individuals opposed to its positions.

Once the regulatory agency is in place, keeping good relations with the agency is paramount for management and public relations strategy. Key to this is the recognition that the customers served by the regulated monopoly may be the organization's strongest allies, or may be the strongest antagonist if services are not provided to fulfill the needs and wants of the customers satisfactorily. Because many regulated monopolies provide essential services, their efforts are critical to the customers. If the services are not delivered effectively, significant opposition can be expected from the customers, and this can result in significant pressure on regulatory agencies to become more restrictive. This may be especially true in times of crisis, and effective public relations strategies must be prepared by the regulated organization in these situations.

An example of such a crisis was the failure of the electrical systems in the summer of 2003, when significant portions of the northeastern United States and much of southeastern Canada were plunged into darkness. At this time several activist individuals and groups issued statements critical of the electrical companies and their policies, and these statements were reported by the media. The media also sought out individuals and organizations that had been monitoring the electrical industry as part of their activist activities.

If regulated monopolistic organizations are to conduct effective public relations, they must have significant crisis plans in place, and they must also have strategies and policies to effectively counter-balance the activist individuals and organizations.

—John Madsen

See also Activism; Muckrakers (and the Age of Progressivism)

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REINFORCEMENT THEORY

Reinforcement theory was proposed in 1960 by Joseph T. Klapper to challenge the dominant media effects theory, which had become popular during the middle decades of the 20th century. Reinforcement theory argued that the media do not have a dominant effect on readers', viewers', or listeners' attitudes, beliefs, and motives. The effect is limited or minimal, largely because people filter life experiences selectively. Klapper's work cannot be considered definitive, but it established criteria by which research on the effects of the media must be judged. He acknowledged that some mediated campaigns work wonderfully to reach audiences and form opinions in ways predicted by propaganda experts; however, in other cases campaigns are notorious failures, achieving very little if any effect on opinions and behavior. At best, reinforcement theory reasons, mass-mediated messages can situationally and functionally have varying effects, but for the most part the effects are limited because of myriad countervailing factors.

Prior to Klapper's work, researchers had sought to examine—and sometimes to prove—that media have dominant effects. Out of this research came the axiom "Scholars are interested in who says what through which media to effect changes in targeted audiences." The assumption of this propaganda research was that strategic effects would always occur. However, many studies conducted by the

time Klapper's 1960 book, *The Effects of Mass Communication*, was published had demonstrated that mediated messages were likely to be only partially effective, or even substantial failures, in achieving specific targeted goals.

In contrast to this body of scholarship and popular concern, simply stated, reinforcement theory reasoned that audiences of mass-mediated communication are likely to engage messages selectively and to have multiple influences, including interpersonal communication, that must be acknowledged to explain how much impact the media have on people's opinions. The theory reasons that changing opinions requires substantial cognitive effort. People do not change capriciously. They are exposed to a wide array of themes, arguments, and conclusions in the media to which they attend. They seem to consolidate or reinforce existing opinions rather than change them each time they are exposed to a new set of opinions presented through the media.

Reinforcement theory was developed to respond to the prevailing dominant media effects theory, which reasoned, in part based on the assumptions of propaganda research, that people are dramatically influenced by the messages they receive from the media. Television, for instance, was new and popular. Media scholars and critics wanted to believe that people passively watch lots of television and quickly adopt the ideas, news, and marketing that they see pouring out of their television screens. The essence of dominant effects theory describes mass-mediated messages as being a "magic bullet." The advertiser or program developer, according to this theory, loads the message into news or program content and fires the bullet into the minds of viewers, who accept it uncritically. For the better part of the 20th century, supporters of this line of analysis argued that the media have dominant effects. Others believe the media have moderate or minimal effects on the opinions of listeners, viewers, and readers.

The Effects of Mass Communication was a soundly based review of a substantial amount of social science research, which in essence concluded that people use the media selectively based on what they already know and believe, rather than

passively accepting any and all of the ideas they receive through the media. Selectivity occurs at many points in the communication process. First, for instance, people choose to read, listen, and view some materials and not others. Since they can't consume all of what the media offer, they are selective. Children watch television shows tailored to them and are quickly bored by entertainment and news intended for adults. Likewise, adults select entertainment designed for their demographics and avoid that created for other demographics, including children's programming. Parents may watch programming with children but choose to do so for reasons other than sheer entertainment.

Klapper argued that five mediating factors or conditions need to be considered by investigators and media critics who seek to explore and explain media effects: (a) the clusters of predispositions that result in selective exposure (which messages to receive), selective perception, and selective retention; (b) the groups and their norms, which influence media use, predisposition, and impact; (c) the information, content, and predisposition that is disseminated via interpersonal communication; (d) opinion leadership; and (e) the nature and role of the mass media in a society with an operating disposition to freedom of speech.

People are selective in how they receive and interpret the content of media. Klapper argued, "By and large, people tend to expose themselves to those mass communications which are in accord with their existing attitudes and interests" (1960, p. 19). Liberals may watch the same news program as conservatives, but get completely different messages. People do not view in a purely neutral or objective fashion. They are not passive, at least when they have well-formed opinions and preferences. They filter what they see, hear, and read through the attitudes, beliefs, and values they possess prior to the media experience. Thus, for instance, if children or adults see ads for products such as beer or cigarettes, they will accept or reject the messages not only because of the intrinsic appeal of the message as presented, but also based on attitudes toward and knowledge about the product. People, according to this theory, are not merely

sponges that take in messages like water. The messages are more likely to reinforce or be rejected based on what perceptual filters the viewer, reader, or listener brings to the experience. Thus, if a public relations practitioner uses promotion to increase the audience for a rock concert, that message conveyed through the media is likely to attract attention and be persuasive based on what audiences believed and preferred prior to receiving the information rather than due to the message as such. Fans of the group may be excited and even seek more information, whereas others might see it as uninteresting.

Selective retention or recall is another factor that, according to reinforcement theory, leads to minimal or limited effects. People do not recall all of what they see, hear, and read. What they "think they saw, read, or heard" may actually be what they wanted to "see, hear, or read" to reinforce existing opinions, preferences, and even stereotypes. For this reason, several people who encounter the same ad or promotional public relations message are likely to recall the message differently. The same can be said for responses to crises and issues. People with a favorable view of a company are likely to have a positive bias toward the reports on a crisis it is suffering. People who hate the company are likely to focus on the negative. Also, people are likely to recall news and promotional messages differently. We can even predict substantial amounts of distortion in this recall. Crucial facts that conflict with the person's preferred position on the matter may be forgotten, distorted, or discounted.

One of the most important factors in predicting media use and impact is the degree to which individuals find the content useful. In essence, people ask: Is it amusing? Does it help me form opinions that separate good outcomes from bad ones? Does it allow me to have deeper insight into which outcomes are good and for which reasons?

People also rely heavily on group norms—the persons with whom they identify most—for the formation of opinions. These norms have a telling effect on the likelihood that individuals will use mediated messages to change their opinions unless the group has or is tending to make a similar shift of opinion. Thus, if the message in the media

conforms with group norms, the media can be thought to have dominant effects, but this is misleading because it ignores the greater influence of group norms. Group norms are a vital part of audience profiling through demographic profiles. Selectivity in this regard can be really sneaky. People tell one another what they saw, read, or heard in the mass media. Thus, the first person is likely to have given a selective interpretation of the message that is reinforced in impact because of the positive interpersonal connection between the two parties.

Since media reports often contain opinions of people who are opinion leaders, it may well be the effects of opinion leaders rather than the media per se that influence audience opinions. This can be true of news, especially when both sides are presented. People tend to favor one interpretation of the news, that of the person whom they see as an opinion leader. The same phenomena operate in advertising and promotion. Third-party opinion can be a major influence on the impact of news, promotion, and advertising.

Reinforcement theory advocates do not discount the possibility that media under specific circumstances can have a telling impact on the formation and/or conversion of opinions, but that is not the norm. Rather, people tend to use mediated messages, along with interpersonal influence, to reinforce rather than to dramatically change their opinions.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Advertising; Demographics; Promotion; Propaganda

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RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT THEORY

The term *relationship management* refers to the process of managing the relationships between an

organization and its internal and external publics. In this context, John Ledingham (2003) defined an organization-public relationship as “the state which exists between an organization and its key publics in which the actions of either can impact the economic, social, cultural or political well-being of the other” (p. 184). Moreover, the concept recognizes relationships as the core focus of public relations.

The notion of relationship management represents a pivotal change in the nature and function of public relations. That change involves a rethinking of the role of communication message production and dissemination in public relations. Whereas earlier practitioners saw communication as the central function of public relations, today’s public relations managers recognize the management of key relationships as the core function of public relations. Within that context, communication is envisioned as a strategic tool of public relations, with program evaluation centered on the impact of program initiatives on key relationships. That is, in today’s practice, program success or failure is determined by the *quality* of organization-public relationships rather than the *quantity* of messages produced or the number of messages placed in the mass media.

The notion of relationships as the core concern of public relations emerged in the mid-1980s and has been the subject of a great deal of systematic inquiry over the past 20 years. The framework for *managing* relationships is the traditional management process of situational analysis, planning, program implementation, and impact evaluation. Further, relationships are seen as an exchange designed to support understanding and benefit both for an organization and interacting publics. Experience has shown that mutuality of understanding and benefit engenders long-term relationships, whereas initiatives designed primarily to benefit an organization—with public interest secondary—are not sustainable over time.

It also has been found that managing relationships in such a way as to generate mutual benefit results in positive public perceptions of an organization, perceptions that are manifest in support for an organization’s public positions. Moreover, mutually beneficial relationships encourage loyalty

toward an organization's product and/or services, providing a marketplace competitive advantage. Also, mutually beneficial relationships have been shown to protect an organization's market share in a competitive environment. Similarly, developing positive relationships with internal publics—such as employees—builds organizational morale, an important element in employee productivity. For the study and teaching of public relations, the so-called relational perspective provides an overarching framework for scholarly inquiry and for developing educational curricula.

It has been said that the emergence of relationship management as a foundation for public relations practice was spurred by four key developments:

1. *Recognition of the central role of relationships in public relations.* Recognition of the central role of relationships—rather than the organization, the public, or the communication process—provided a unifying concept for public relations and gave rise to a major shift in the core focus of the discipline.
2. *Reconceptualizing public relations as a management function.* The notion of managing organization-public relationships introduced managerial concepts and processes to a practice previously driven mainly by message production and dissemination. Reconceptualization focused attention on the need for public relations managers to be proficient in all aspects of the management process and to be accountable for public relations expenditures.
3. *Identification of components and types of organization-public relationships; their linkage to public attitudes, perceptions, knowledge, and behavior; and relationship measurement strategies.* Key dimensions of organization-public relationships were identified and linked to public perceptions, attitudes, and choice behavior. An organization-public relationship measurement scale was developed for use in predicting public loyalty, satisfaction, and behavior, providing the tools needed to access public relations value in terms of relationship quality.
4. *Construction of organization-public relationship models.* Models of the organization-public relationship were advanced, including a management process model and a multi-step developmental

model, to provide greater insight into the “coming together” and the “coming apart” of organization-public relationships.

Research indicates that organization-public relationships mimic interpersonal relationships in terms of critical determinators of relationship quality. These include trust, openness, credibility, emotion, intimacy, similarity, immediacy, agreement, issue perception, and shared interests, as well as relational history (see Table 1). Moreover, organization-public relationships have been found to cluster into three relationship types—*interpersonal*, *professional*, and *community*. “In this context, *interpersonal relationship* refers to the personal interactions of organizational representatives and public members. *Professional relationship* refers to the delivery of professional services to public members, and *community relationship* is tied to perceptions that the organization supports the interests of the community. Also, relationships may be seen as communication driven (*symbolic*), or behavior driven (*programmatic*), underscoring the importance of both in developing long-term, mutually beneficial relationships.

A relationship management process model, SMARTS, is based on the four-step management model of (1) analyze, (2) plan, (3) implement, and (4) evaluate (Ledingham, 2003). The SMARTS model includes *scan* (environmental surveillance), *map* (setting goals and objectives), *act* (developing and pre-testing initiatives), *rollout* (putting programs in place), *track* (evaluating the success of the initiatives), and *steward* (monitoring and maintaining relationship quality). Moreover, a 10-step developmental model, based on an interpersonal relationship model, illustrates the “coming together” and the “coming apart” of an organization-public relationship.

In addition to managing relationships with internal and external publics, public relations practitioners working within an organization structure have learned the importance of developing relationships with senior management, the coalition that determines organizational policy and procedures. In that interaction, public relations practitioners are increasingly called upon to demonstrate the linkage

Table 1 Dimensions, Types, and Models of Organization–Public Relationships

<i>Dimensions, Types and Models of Organization-Public Relationships</i>				
<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Types</i>	<i>Models</i>	<i>Relationship State: Indicators of and Contributors to</i>	<i>Monitoring Strategies</i>
Trust	Symbolic	Org-pub model	Communication	Scanning
Openness	Behavioral	Expanded model	Frequency	Observation
Credibility	Personal	Developmental model	Complexity	Coorientational
Intimacy	Community	Professional model	Use	Measurement
Similarity		SMART model	Perceptions of:	
Immediacy		Phases model	Personal relationship	
Agreement			Professional relationship	
Accuracy			Community relationship	
Common interests			Problem agreement	
Relational history			Needs fulfillment	
			Goal sharing and reciprocity	
			Mutual legitimacy	
			Satisfaction and benefit	
			Consensus	
			Accuracy	
			Social exchange	
			Transactions	
			Submissiveness	
			Formalization and standardization	
			Symmetry and intensity	
			Duration, valance and content	
			Information resource and flow	

SOURCE: Ledingham, John A. (2003). Explicating Relationship Management as a General Theory of Public Relations, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 15(2), 181–198. Reprinted with permission from Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

between program initiatives and organization goals. Hence, the field is seeing increased exploration of relationship models and application of various relationship-measurement strategies.

The literature of public relations provides principles for public relations practitioners charged with managing organization-public relationships. Ten such principles are presented next:

1. The core focus of public relations is relationships.
2. Successful relationships involve benefit both for an organization and interacting publics.
3. Organization-public relationships are dynamic; that is, they change over time.
4. Relationships are driven by the needs and wants of organizations and publics, and relationship quality depends on perceptions of the degree to which expectations are fulfilled.
5. Effective management of organization-public relationships leads to increased understanding and benefit both for organizations and publics.
6. The success of an organization-public relationship is measured in terms of relationship quality, rather than message production or dissemination.

7. Communication is a strategic tool in managing relationships, but communication alone cannot sustain long-term relationships in the absence of organizational behavior.
8. Organization-public relationships are influenced by relational history, the nature of the interaction, the frequency of exchange, and reciprocity.
9. Organization-public relationships can be categorized by type (personal, professional, community), and whether they are symbolic (communication driven) or behavioral (program driven).
10. Relationship building is applicable in all aspects of public relations study and practice.

Note: Use of the term *organization-public relationships* is a convenience and is not intended to suggest greater importance in the relationship of an organization compared with a public.

—John A. Ledingham

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RELIABILITY

Reliability is often defined as the dependability or consistency of the scores on a measurement scale or

the coding of a content analysis. That is, something that is reliable is also dependable. It may not be accurate, but it is dependable—like a watch that keeps perfect time but is always five minutes late. In research terminology, however, reliability is something that can be measured and is found in establishing a measure's scale or, in the case of content analysis, coding dependability. Reliability requires two things. First, the measure that is being tested for reliability must be quantitative and it must be numeric. Second, there must be at least two items in a scale—two coders, or a single coder who recodes after a period of time. Based on these criteria, reliability may be established through statistical analysis. Which analysis is employed depends on the type of research conducted.

Reliability is often discussed as the difference between what we know and what we do not know. By this we mean that all measurement or coding has the potential for error. Some of that error is *systematic* and known; the rest is *random* and unknown. Reliability establishes the relationship between known and unknown error in a measure or coding. *Excellent* reliability is one that accounts for more than 90 percent of the systematic error; 80–90 percent reliability is typically referred to as *good*; and reliability below 80 percent is worrisome. Numerous reliability statistics are used, and they differ according to what the research is seeking to measure.

TYPES OF RELIABILITY

As noted, we can establish reliability for both scores on measurement scales (attitudinal or general knowledge tests) and content analysis coding. All statistical reliability tests provide indices that range from 0 to 100, either as a *correlation* or as a percentage-of-agreement score. Further, the type of data acquired dictates which specific tests are employed. In general, data can be defined as being either categorical (i.e., the data represent frequency counts and percents of specified categories, such as yes or no, male or female, good or bad) or continuous (i.e., the data represent responses on a continuum where the distance between one unit and the other is equal, such as age or income).

MEASUREMENT RELIABILITY

In traditional measurement a measure's reliability in general has been established by examining how people respond to the statement in a measure. If the measure represents an attempt to assess attitudes or beliefs, then reliability is established via statistical analysis for the appropriate type of data the measure yields. If the measure is to be used over time, a different type of reliability is employed—one that is more applied and typically relies on correlational analysis.

When creating an attitude measure or *scale*, the researcher attempts to predict how individuals feel or evaluate some abstract object, such as credibility or persuasiveness. Although there are many different types of attitudinal measures, public relations typically employs what is known as the *Likert-type scale*, which requires people to respond to a series of statements as to whether they (5) strongly agree, (4) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (2) disagree, or (1) strongly disagree with each statement. The responses are then summed across items. This assumes the data are continuous in nature and the computed score represents the participants' evaluation on the item. Reliability for Likert-type scales is established using *coefficient alpha* statistics. A coefficient alpha of .80 or better is generally accepted as good to excellent, an alpha of .70 adequate, and an alpha less than .70 problematic. An example of this type of measure would be James E. Grunig and Linda Childers Hon's 1999 measure of relationships. A second attitudinal measure asks people to pick only the statements that they agree with. This type of measure yields categorical data, and its reliability is established statistically by the KR-20 statistic.

Once a measure has its internal reliability established, it is often tested to see whether it is reliable in comparison with other groups or populations. In some cases the same people are administered twice, with a period of time separating each administration. This is *test-retest reliability*, with scores between the two administrations correlated to see if the participants responded similarly in both administrations. In other cases, the measure would be split into two

representative questionnaires, and different groups would receive one or the other questionnaire. This is *split half reliability*, and the correlation between the two groups establishes the measure's reliability.

CODER RELIABILITY

Coder reliability establishes how dependable the coding is in a content analysis. Content analysis codes messages for certain *units of analysis*, placing instances of each into predetermined categories. A unit of analysis might be viewer sex using the categories male and female. To ensure that the coding is accurate and dependable, coders individually place the content into the appropriate categories (or if there is only one coder, the material is coded twice after a sufficient time between codings) and the number of correct versus incorrect codes is established.

There are at least four different types of coding reliabilities that can be used in a content analysis. Most common is Oli R. Holsti's coding formula that identifies how many items have been coded and then calculates the number of coded items for each coder, yielding a reliability coefficient between 0.00 (totally unreliable) to 1.00 (totally reliable). However, Holsti's formula fails to take into account that the coders may have agreed by chance on their coding. Cohen's (1960) kappa basically computes the same formula as Holsti's formula but takes into account chance, and is found in a number of statistical computer packages. Both, however, fail to take into account that the coders may have agreed by chance on their coding. William A. Scott's pi index and Klaus Krippendorff's alpha attempt to take chance out of the equation. Because they are more difficult to calculate, they are reported less often.

RELATIONSHIP TO VALIDITY

As noted earlier, reliability establishes how dependable the scores on a measure or coder are. It does not, however, establish whether that measure or coder is actually reflecting what it should. This reflects a measure or coder's *validity*. Reliability is required before validity can be established; without accurate

measurement, the validity of the measurement or coder cannot be assessed. Thus, reliability is an initial requirement of any form of measurement or coding scheme, but it may not actually be measuring or coding what the researcher wants.

—Don W. Stacks

See also Measuring/measures; Scales; Statistical analysis; Survey; Validity

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REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Reputation management is the strategic use of corporate resources to positively influence the attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and actions of multiple corporate stakeholders including consumers, employees, investors, and the media. *Fortune* magazine relies on eight attributes in the development of the annual list of America's Most Admired Companies: innovativeness, quality of management, employee talent, quality of product/services, long-term investment value, financial soundness,

social responsibility, and use of corporate assets. This list illuminates the extent to which reputation management emanates from everything a corporation does and says, whether voluntary or involuntary. When managed properly, corporate reputation can improve an organization's ability to sell products and services, attract investors, hire talented personnel, and exert political influence. Although not a zero-sum game, reputation management relies on a corporation's ability to distinguish itself from its competitors in the hearts and minds of various publics, thereby enhancing its overall position in the marketplace.

Reputations are value judgments that evolve over time based primarily on the emotional, financial, social, and cultural attachment between an organization and various publics. A 1990 study by Charles Frombrun and Mark Shanley suggested that publics attribute corporate reputations on the basis of three main factors. First, publics look at how the organization is positioned in its industry by using market and accounting signals to indicate performance. Second, organizational signals regarding conformity to social norms are evaluated. And finally, organizational strategic positions are considered in the construction of corporate reputation. The depth and breadth of reputation construction underscores the importance of reputation management to the overall well-being of a corporation—a fact not lost on corporate executives. According to a recent study of CEOs by Hill & Knowlton USA and *Chief Executive* magazine, 96 percent of the CEOs surveyed consider corporate reputation a vital component of business success.

Good corporate reputations do not just happen. Rather, the corporate reputation must be managed and cultivated. Organizations reinforce the desired corporate reputation across all business functions, including internal and external communication activities. It is the vast nature of corporate communication that makes it simultaneously the most important and the most difficult component of reputation management. For many multinational corporations, the consistent communication of organizational values is one way to ensure consistency across business units and among various

stakeholders. For reputation management to be successful, the communication of corporate values and goals needs to be in sync with the lived experiences of the organization's stakeholders. For example, the recent Philip Morris campaign promotes the company as a leader in philanthropic giving. The campaign is technically accurate; Philip Morris does contribute over \$60 million annually to different charitable organizations. However, the idea of Philip Morris as a philanthropist is so far removed from the lived experiences of the majority of publics that the message may have low salience, or worse, further enhance public perception that Philip Morris is less than honest.

Corporations are increasingly aware of the salience of reputation and the difficulty in repairing a tarnished reputation. Nearly 20 years after the *Valdez* spill in Alaska, recent news articles about the Exxon-Mobil merger include reference to the incident. Conversely, Jim Hutton, Michael Goodman, Jill Alexander, and Christina Genest (2001), suggested that well-managed communication activities have the potential to convert peripheral stakeholders into reputation advocates for corporations. Consider the case of Microsoft and its antitrust suits. It can be argued using Frombrun and Shanley's (1990) criteria that Microsoft managed its business and corporate reputation in a manner that appealed to the American ideal of capitalism even for those publics that may not have had a direct connection to the situation.

Media outlets influence corporate reputation both in the quality and quantity of coverage of a corporation's actions, leadership, and financial performance. Craig E. Carroll and Maxwell McCombs (2003) relied on agenda setting to explain the role media has in influencing stakeholder perception of a corporation's reputation. Through the agenda-setting lens the ability of the media to give salience to a particular reputation becomes apparent. For example, in the late 1990s Enron's reputation as an innovative, influential, and generous corporation gained salience through the coverage it received in the media. Enron and former CEO Kenneth Lay were the focus of numerous television and print special editions touting the corporation's positive

attributes. Critics contend that the salience of Enron's reputation may have delayed response to the growing evidence that corporate reality belied the corporate reputation.

In addition to traditional media outlets, the Internet has influenced reputation management by giving voice to the "other." Specifically, publics that are disgruntled with an organization can establish a Web site devoted to alternative readings of the corporate reputation. Among those corporations that have had Web sites devoted to damaging their reputation are United Airlines (untied.com), All-State insurance company (allstateinsurancesucks.com), and Nike (Saigon.com/~nike/).

Scandal, however, is not the only factor that influences the news coverage a corporation receives. Five other factors, as outlined by Carroll and McCombs (2003), may influence a corporate reputation and the extent to which it receives news coverage:

- The size and age of the organization
- The degree to which the corporation is involved in more than one business segment
- The proximity of the organization to a particular news source
- The placement of the news coverage
- The perceived level of elite or celebrity status given to the organization's CEO or others closely tied to the overall corporate reputation

—Amy O'Connor

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RESEARCH GOALS

Research in public relations includes both practitioners constructing and executing public relations actions and researchers in pursuit of knowledge. The “Goals” entry in this encyclopedia refers to strategic actions and choices made by practitioners to achieve specific campaign-driven outcomes. In that case, research should not just happen, but should be designed to reveal something that is relevant to understanding and solving the problem facing the public relations practitioner.

Research goals are what direct public relations researchers. Research goals guide the research study and are the general outcomes desired by the researcher. The general goal of public relations researchers is to create knowledge and build upon the public relations body of knowledge. Research goals can be divided into two types: applied and basic. The goals of applied research involve trying to solve some practical problem, such as what publics are most likely to communicate on an issue or which message strategy would be most persuasive for the target public. The goal is the practical application of the research results. In most cases, practitioners are pursuing applied research goals.

Basic research goals seek to develop theory. A theory is a systematic view of a phenomenon, which specifies the relationship between variables; it explains how things work by establishing relationships between concepts/variables. These relations must be tested to prove the value and accuracy of the theory. The goal of some research is to test aspects of a theory, such as proving that two variables are related as prescribed in a theory. The articles published in research journals often pursue basic research goals, and the reader must decide how to apply that knowledge to public relations situations. However, public relations research can pursue both goals in the same study. Public relations is applied in nature, so testing a theory will often provide answers to practical problems as well. Research designed to test situational crisis communication theory, for instance, provides insights into how best to communicate after a crisis occurs.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Campaign; Crisis communication; Goals; Research objectives

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Like practitioners, public relations researchers need to develop objectives to guide their research projects. A research objective works with the research goal and specifies what is to be studied. Research objectives can take the form of a research question or a hypothesis.

A research question is stated as a question that explores the relationship between two or more variables/concepts. Research studies abbreviate research questions as *RQ*. Here is a sample RQ from an actual study: “How do journalists perceive the role of information subsidies supplied by public relations practitioners in the construction of news?” (Curtin, 1999, p. 58). The example is an open-ended research question because it leaves the direction of the relationship open; it just indicates that a relationship does exist. The sample RQ simply looks to see what type of relationship exists between journalist perceptions and information subsidies. A closed-ended research question will specify the direction or form of the relationship. A closed-ended version of the earlier RQ might be “Do journalists perceive the role of information subsidies supplied by public relations practitioners in the construction of news negatively?” The revised RQ specifies that journalists will have a negative perception of information subsidies.

A hypothesis states a predicted relationship between two or more variables/concepts. Research studies abbreviate hypotheses as *H*. Here is a sample H from an actual study: “Respondents in the favorable relationship history condition will hold more positive organizational reputations than those in the unfavorable condition” (Coombs & Holladay, 2001, p. 326). The sample H is a one-tailed hypothesis because it states the direction or form of the relationship between the variables. There will be a positive relationship between relationship history and organizational reputation. A two-sided hypothesis states that a relationship will exist between two

or more variables/concepts but does not indicate the form or direction of the relationship. A two-sided version of the earlier H might be “There is a relationship between the relationship history condition and organizational reputation.” The revised H does not specify the direction of the relationship, but just indicates that a relationship exists.

Each research study you read should provide an RQ, H, or both. The study will be designed to answer the RQ and/or H while the text of the research report will focus on explaining the answers.

—W. Timothy Coombs

See also Objectives; Public relations research; Research goals

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RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Firms and individuals have a variety of alternatives for employing their scarce capital. Return on investment (ROI) is one of the many analytical methods individuals and firms employ to aid in the allocation of funds. Although there are many definitions of ROI depending on the context, a working definition can be the amount that an individual or firm earns on the capital invested.

From the viewpoint of the individual, ROI is often considered in the context of investing in a common stock. For example, if the investor buys 100 shares of XYZ Corp. at \$20 per share and sells the same stock at \$25 per share (ignoring commissions), the ROI is $(25 - 20)/20$, or a 25 percent ROI. The question of whether the 25 percent ROI on XYZ Corp is “good” depends on the benchmark to which the ROI is compared. The most common

benchmark to which common stock ROIs are measured is the S&P 500 Index (which measures the return of the 500 large stocks on an unmanaged basis). For example, if the S&P went up 30 percent during the same period of ownership, the XYZ ROI of 25 percent would be considered a poor relative ROI. Conversely, if XYZ Corp. stock went down 10 percent when the S&P 500 went down 15 percent, XYZ Corp. would be considered a good relative investment because it outperformed its benchmark.

From the viewpoint of the corporate financial manager, ROI is employed in the process of selecting among the various capital project investment opportunities available to the firm, such as building a new plant, launching a new product, entering new markets, and so forth. *Capital budgeting* is the process the manager employs to determine which project(s) a firm should undertake to maximize firm value and, hence, the firm’s ROI to shareholders and creditors.

There are many methods to rank the attractiveness of a firm’s capital projects, including payback period, internal rate of return, and net present value. In general terms, an investment to the firm has value if the return on investment is more than it costs the firm to acquire. How the ROI is calculated depends on the method employed by the manager. As a rule of thumb, the best measure of ROI in the capital budgeting context is the net present value method, which indicates that the projects that provide the highest positive net present value should be given the highest rank.

There is no magical ROI threshold that is appropriate for each security investment or capital budgeting project. Each investment must be evaluated according to its risk profile, the firm’s cost of capital, and norms of the industry in which the firm operates. Moreover, it is necessary to evaluate the ROI over relatively long periods of time, say 5 to 10 years, to get a feel of how a firm deals with the ups and downs of the business cycle.

Public relations is one of many organizational functions that is called upon to enhance businesses’ ROI. For this reason, strategies such as publicity and promotion are used to support marketing. Also, public relations can help reduce costs by successful crisis and issues management.

—Henry Hardt

See also Crisis and crisis management; Issues management; Promotion; Publicity

RHETORICAL THEORY

Messages and the meaning they produce are an essential result of public relations. Practitioners are in the message and meaning business. Among other concerns, public relations theory and professional best practices require a solid understanding of messages and the meaning they can create. Practitioners are paid to influence what people know, think, and do. The rhetorical heritage provides a long-standing and constantly developing body of strategic and critical insights to help practitioners be effective and ethical in the way they create messages and participate in the process by which society creates meaning.

Systems theory is useful for understanding and shaping the process of public relations, but it fails to help practitioners and scholars understand the messages that are strategically and ethically relevant to each task. For over 2,000 years in Western civilization, the rhetorical heritage has examined the nature of messages and the strategic challenges in addressing rhetorical problems that demand the formation of shared meaning. Critical studies complete the troika of leading approaches to public relations. Some lines of critical investigation grow from the rhetorical heritage. Other approaches to criticism draw heavily on social theory to investigate and critique the roles large organizations play in the discourse of society.

Rhetorical theory features the role information and fact play in shaping knowledge and opinions as well as motivating actions. It addresses the ways that evaluations are debated and confirmed or challenged through discourse. People compete in public debate to assert the strength of their ideas and their interpretations of facts. They know that others may disagree. They often respond because they disagree. This spirited debate is the essence of the rhetorical heritage that values the right and ability of people to get messages and make judgments accordingly.

Rhetoric, as a term, has fallen on hard times in the past four decades. During the antiwar and activist protest era of the 1960s, the cry of the

agitator in response to any establishment statement was "That is pure rhetoric." Rhetoric, instead of signaling informed and reasoned discourse, came to be associated with sham and hollowness. Media reporters picked up this meaning of the term.

By this influence, many people acquired a narrow and limited understanding of rhetoric as deceptive and shallow statements made falsely in an effort to manipulate and control rather than to reveal or assess fact, value, and policy. It is associated with spin, vacuous statements, propaganda, and pandering to audiences' interests. Some may see it only as telling people what they want to know or are willing to accept, rather than relying on judgments of knowledge, truth, and reason.

Adhering to the best Western rhetorical heritage, academic programs in English and speech communication include courses in rhetoric and rhetorical studies. Studied and taught in that context, the term *rhetoric* refers to the strategic options of communication influence within ethical standards. It is the rationale for suasive discourse. As a discipline, it addresses the ways people persuasively assert and challenge fact, value, and policy. It recognizes that humans deal with their lives through words and other influential symbols. They create collective action by appealing to one another. They dispute, cajole, agree, identify, challenge, and confirm. All of this is the domain of rhetoric, the rationale for forging conclusions and influencing actions. Rhetorical theory explains how people co-create meaning through dialogue that can define and build mutually beneficial relationships.

Rhetoric is the rationale for effective discourse. It consists of a well-established body of strategic guidelines regarding how messages need to be proved, structured, framed, and worded. It is concerned with how each message needs to be designed to be informative and persuasive. Because rhetorical theory arises out of disputes and differences of opinion, it offers guidelines on how people can negotiate differences and work together in collaborative decision making. It informs, creates divisions, and bridges divisions. It motivates people to make one choice in preference to another. If people everywhere shared the same information, opinion, and motives, there would be no need for rhetoric.

At its best, rhetoric is founded on the substance of good reasons and can help make society better for all. At its worst, it can involve deception, manipulation, slander, character assassination, distortion, misinformation, and disinformation.

Champions for the rhetorical heritage believe that freedom of discourse is the answer to the misuse of the art. The best corrective for deception, for instance, is a demonstrated case that one side of a controversy is engaging in deception. Public discourse, the forum of rhetoric, allows for combatants to challenge, correct, and elevate the discourse of society.

Society, according to Kenneth Burke, is a marketplace of competing ideas. This marketplace requires rhetoric that addresses “the Scramble, the Wrangle of the Marketplace, the flurries and flare-ups of the Human Barnyard, Give and Take, the wavering line of pressure and counter pressure, the Logomachy, the onus of ownership, the War of Nerves, the War” (1969, p. 23). For society to function, actions of the people of society need to be coordinated. Cooperation, even competition, requires rhetoric to foster shared perspectives and ways of acting in concert. Each perspective is a way of thinking. It is based on a set of facts and an interpretation of those facts. Each perspective offers its unique way of viewing reality. The terms of the perspective focus attention in unique ways and feature some alternatives as being preferable to others. For instance, sports enthusiasts share a perspective in which athletic competition is entertaining. That perspective might clash with one that is based on the fine arts. We can easily imagine the perspective of a sports enthusiast leading to different motives compared with those by one who prefers the fine arts. One person, by this logic, would want to see a ball game rather than attend the opera or symphony. Family feuds come from competing perspectives. Religions constitute different perspectives. Perspectives are fostered and countered by marketing, advertising, and publicity. Some people want pickups, and others prefer sports cars. Some individuals support the unlimited possession of guns; others call for restraint, reflecting a different perspective. Activists—concerned citizens in a

community—might argue with school board officials to oppose cuts in spending for the arts while athletics remains fully funded. Thus, rhetoric gives voice to competing preferences.

Championing the role of rhetoric in society, Christopher Lentz reasoned, “Truth should prevail in a market-like struggle where superior ideas vanquish their inferiors and achieve audience acceptance” (1996, p. 1). A scholar of the rhetorical heritage, George Kennedy recognized the role ancient Greek and Roman societies played in its development. “In its origin and intention rhetoric was natural and good: it produced clarity, vigor, and beauty, and it rose logically from the conditions and qualities of the classical mind” (1963, p. 3).

Rhetoric is enlivened with facts, as well as values and policy recommendations. It deals with choice. Which is best, most correct, and preferable? Rather than featuring rhetoric as vacuous statements, Aristotle believed that the communicator is obliged to prove any point he or she asserts. Proofs of several kinds were the substance of rhetoric. These proofs were logical when they dealt with facts and reasoning. They featured emotions as part of human nature. They revealed the character of the speaker. In this way, an audience could assess the credibility of all speakers by considering the values on which they based their life and built their messages. The end to which all discourse should be aimed, Aristotle reasoned, was what was good for society. He worked to inspire people who used rhetoric to do so because it advanced the quality of society. Values and good reasons have been a classic ingredient of rhetorical discourse, along with a scrupulous interest in the soundness of arguments based on fact and flawless reasoning.

Ethics is a fundamental ingredient in rhetoric. Drawing from the work of Aristotle and other Greeks, a Roman teacher, Marcus Fabius Quintilian (1951), was firm: “My ideal orator, then, is the true philosopher, sound in morals and with full knowledge of speaking, always striving for the highest” (p. 20). He continued, “If a case is based on injustice, neither a good man [or woman] nor rhetoric has any place in it” (p. 106). Such advice should inspire organizations using public relations to seek

first to be ethical as a prerequisite for sound communication. For more than 2,000 years, persons who have considered the nature and societal role of rhetoric have recognized the need to be ethical as a first step toward being an effective communicator. Any organization that does not aspire to the highest levels of corporate responsibility is likely to find that its actions discredit its statements. Actions speak, and speak louder than words.

Appeals to join one point of view, to make one choice in preference of another, is the rationale for rhetoric. People identify with one another as they share perspectives. Thus, perspectives become the basis of rhetorical appeals. Advocates reason that one perspective is superior to its competitors. They court others to agree, to see the world in a particular way, and to prefer some actions instead of others. Public relations uses identification in publicity. It informs, evaluates, and recommends. For instance, practitioners might publicize a baseball team, an amusement park, or a brand of exercise equipment.

Rhetoric entails appeals to make adjustments. Skilled communicators adapt ideas to people. They know that if ideas are too foreign, they will be rejected. Ideas change slowly. A nonprofit organization might, for this reason, ask that donors adapt to the ideals and mission of the organization by giving modest amounts of money to support its charity. The nature of its charity has to be adapted to the people, by demonstrating that it fits with their values and preferences. Rhetoric also asks that people adjust to ideas. They might not at first accept the rationale for giving, but over time they can be convinced that this charity makes the community a better place to live.

Where there is agreement, rhetoric is not needed. Its rationale comes from uncertainty, doubt, difference of motive, and difference of opinion. In ancient Greece and Rome, individuals spoke in public to advocate one point of view in contest with competing views. Today, in an increasingly global society, organizations tend to speak or otherwise communicate instead of people. Even when individual voices stand out, they do so because they speak for an institution, an organization, and even a

nation. The newsworthiness of their case is not only where they agree with others, but also where they disagree. This is as true for the promotion of products as it is for the advocacy of going to war or seeking peace. The voice might be a publicist for a small company advocating the virtues of its product or the president of a mighty nation seeking support for some policy or course of action.

Rhetoric can emphasize difference. Public relations practitioners may communicate to differentiate one product or service from another. Activists offer publics a choice between one vision of the future versus another. They might ask audiences to support them for increased sanctions against drunk driving as a choice to save lives and reduce injuries.

Rhetorical statements create narratives that give meaning to person's lives. We can imagine that narrative is one of the most characteristic forms of rhetorical statement. From childhood, we are taught that stories begin with "once upon a time" and may end "happily ever after." They might also have tragic endings. Narrative gives form and substance to rhetorical statements. Reporters use the form and substance in news reports. If the report is a crisis, then responding organizations engage in the narrative so that society eventually learns the "story" to account for what happened, why it happened, and what will be done to prevent its recurrence. Events, a standard public relations tool, are designed to have narrative form and content. Practitioners want audiences to pay attention to see who is doing what, why, how, when, and where. One of the major publicity events each year in the United States is the Academy Awards ceremony. Prior to the big night—and following it—stories are told about actors and other artists to attract audiences to see who won, why they won, what they wore, how they reacted to victory or defeat, and where their movie will be playing next.

Large organizations and activists often engage in advocacy and counter-advocacy regarding narratives of the future. The focal question is whether certain products or services as well as operations will lead to a tragic end or a "happily ever after" outcome. This competition asks listeners, readers, and viewers to adopt one narrative, one vision of the

future, and make choices based on that preference. Activists often use the rhetorical tactic of comparing a picture of a dire future to one that is better. They advocate changes to avoid the dire future and achieve the better one.

Society cannot function without rhetoric. When it is working at its best, rhetoric serves society in fostering enlightened choice. Its vitality originates from the reality that facts require interpretation, some values are better than others in making specific decisions, and policies always require contingency and expedience.

Each rhetorical statement is a strategic response to a rhetorical problem. A rhetorical problem is an exigency that must be addressed because it raises doubt on some matter relevant to the actions and choices made by an organization. This problem sets the conditions for an appropriate response. A crisis, for instance, might constitute a rhetorical problem. This problem is different depending on the cause of the crisis.

A rhetorical enactment view of public relations acknowledges that all of what each organization does and says becomes meaningful because of the interpretations—meaning—people place on those actions and statements. Markets, as well as publics, can be influenced by what the organization does and says—and by what it does not do or does not say.

Publics offer competing perspectives through their rhetorical efforts that challenge the views and actions of organizations. For instance, activists in a community might be concerned about soot emitted from a manufacturing facility. They may call for higher standards of environmental aesthetics as well as of public health and safety. These calls might include letters to opinion leaders, speeches and rallies, and lobbying efforts with appropriate regulators. Disgruntled customers vote with their feet—and credit cards. They support one business by making a purchase from it. At the same time, this choice makes a statement of a lack of support for competitors.

Rhetorical theory champions the spirit and principles of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The right to speak is testimony to the positive role that public discourse plays in society.

Rhetoric is a body of principles and strategies that strengthens the voice and enlivens the ideas of competing points of view. As it informs the way individuals communicate for themselves, it also is relevant to the practice of public relations. It offers strategies and challenges, but ultimately rests on the principle that to be effective each individual or organization needs first to be ethical, good.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Collaborative decision making; Critical theory; Event; Promotion; Propaganda; Publicity; Publics; Stakes; Systems theory

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RISK COMMUNICATION

Risk communication is a community infrastructure, transactional communication process among individuals and organizations regarding the character, cause, degree, significance, uncertainty, control, and overall perception of a risk. Risk communication provides the opportunity to understand and appreciate stakeholders’ concerns related to risks generated by organizations, engage in dialogue to address differences and concerns, carry out appropriate actions that can reduce perceived risks, and create

a climate of participatory and effective discourse to reduce friction and increase harmony and mutuality.

The community infrastructure model of risk communication features building and sustaining relationships that foster discourse and the sharing of perceptions, and communication and action structures based on shared meanings across varied and multiple constituencies, issues, and levels of understanding. Risk assessors and communicators realize that each key public makes an idiosyncratic response to each risk based on its unique decision heuristic. Each concerned public has an inclination to engage in or at least support activism to exert public policy solutions to correct intolerable risk perceptions.

Risk communication public relations campaigns typically involve large organizations, such as manufacturing facilities or energy transportation lines, whose activities can pose a risk to key members of a community. Strategic risk communication contends that people in key communities need to understand the levels of risks that they suffer from working or living in proximity to risk sources, and that they can take measures that would reduce their risks by understanding the prevailing risk and collectively taking actions so that it is reduced to or does not exceed tolerable levels. Risk communication based on this shared, social relations–community infrastructural approach works to achieve a level of discourse that can treat the content issues of the risk—technical assessment—and the quality of the relationships, as well as the political dynamics of the participants.

Views on risk communication have evolved from at least three separate streams of thought to guide the way risks are calculated, evaluated, and controlled: (a) scientific positivism, whereby data and methodologies of scientists dominate community efforts to ascertain the degree of risk and subsequent communications about the risk on behalf of the community; (b) constructivism/relativism, which assumes that everyone's opinions have equal value so that no opinion is better or worse than anyone else's; and (c) dialogue, which through collaborative decision-making ensures that scientific

opinion becomes integrated into policies that are vetted by key publics' values.

Risk communication began when, at least in the perception of key publics, private-sector and public-sector organizations failed to understand and exhibit appropriate levels of corporate responsibility by failing to achieve proper control of risks associated with their activities. For example, the U.S. government became deeply involved in chemical-related risk assessment and communication processes in response to the 1984 Bhopal chemical spill, which motivated elected representatives and citizens to question whether similar risks loomed near their homes or at their work locations. Addressing such concerns, federal legislators created the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986, title 3 of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA). Legislators believed SARA would create a communication apparatus and strategic business planning process to empower people regarding estimated risks and risk perceptions.

Codifying environmental risk communication, SARA requires chemical companies to inform citizens regarding the kinds and quantities of chemicals that are manufactured, stored, transported, and emitted in each community. SARA's underpinning assumption was that as companies report toxic data about the materials they produce, transport, and store, people could become informed of the level of risk in their neighborhood. The Environmental Protection Agency established risk communication as a means to open, responsible, informed, and reasonable scientific discussion of risks associated with personal health and safety practices involved in living and working in proximity to harmful activities and hazardous substances.

Risk communication, as a subdiscipline of public relations studies, grew out of such risk perception and risk management efforts. Initially, risk communication research and activities took on a source-oriented, linear approach to communication, characterized as an exchange of information about risk among interested parties. During this period, classified as the technical risk assessment period, industrial spokespersons were advised to appease or

assuage publics' apprehension by being credible and clear. Risk communication progressed beyond a source-oriented approach to a more interactive risk perception and risk management approach, where communication is viewed as an interactive process of exchange of information and opinion among individuals, groups, and institutions.

The current version of risk communication features complex social relations operating within community infrastructures.

Risk communication requirements are a political response to popular demands. . . . The main product of risk communication is not information, but the quality of the social relationship it supports. Risk communication is not an end in itself; it is an enabling agent to facilitate the continual evolution of relationships. (Otway, 1992, p. 227)

Numerous researchers from a variety of academic and professional fields including public relations, risk management, psychology, rhetoric, political science, and sociology have developed a typology of infrastructural risk communication process variables. For example, Robert L. Heath and D. D. Abel introduced a model in 1996 that included variables such as uncertainty, trust, information seeking, and cognitive involvement. Other infrastructural risk communication process variables include control, cognitive involvement, credibility, dread, firsthand experience, knowledge, perceived economic benefit, support/opposition, trust, and uncertainty.

Uncertainty, for example, is a central variable in the risk perception and communication process. Risks by definition are matters of uncertainty. In this vein, Terrance L. Albrecht (1988) defined uncertainty as the lack of attributional confidence about cause-effect patterns. Publics want information to reduce their uncertainties about the subjects under consideration and about the people who are creating those uncertainties. Thus, uncertainty is a measure of confidence regarding (a) the ability to estimate a risk and its consequences and (b) the ability to communicate knowledgeably on the facts and issues surrounding any specific risk.

People often decide what levels of risk are acceptable on the basis not of technical data

analysis, but rather of a question of value, such as fairness. Although people in general may debate the perception of risk in value terms, experts remain examiners of the actual risk, though not entirely removed from value judgments. Perceived risk has a structure that differs from the structure of expert judgments about risk.

For community residents, risk messages can be confusing because they come from a variety of media sources (can labels, public meetings, newsletters, media, activist documents, etc.) that involve a multitude of parties and often reflect competing scientific conclusions. Experts and regulatory agencies often operate on the assumption that they and their audiences share a common framework for evaluating and interpreting risk information. This confusion also stems from the fact that prominent government officials take opposing viewpoints about environmental risk matters and participate in highly public debates about risk estimations.

Numerous views of risk communication, however, identify understanding as the final dependent variable. People may understand, for example, what a plant manager says about air particle emissions at a community refinery. Those people may not agree with the risk assessments because they are not satisfied that those assessments achieve or constitute the proper levels of risk. This line of reasoning makes explicit the fact that risk communication is not merely a scientific or knowledge-based activity.

One of the consistent findings of risk assessment studies is the recurring theme that risks are a trade-off of costs and rewards. If risks are perceived to be acceptably low and the rewards or benefits of taking the risks are perceived to be high, then one can predict that the risks will be tolerated. For example, Brian R. N. Baird (1986) found that judged benefits of a hazard were ranked first among other variables in correlation with risk tolerance. People tolerate higher risks from activities seen as beneficial, if benefits extend beyond economic to include personal and family variables such as basic needs, safety, security, and pleasure.

A second factor that predicts support is the perception of the likelihood of adverse events as a

result of the risk. According to Howard Kunreuther, Douglas Easterling, William Desvousges and Paul Slovic (1990), support is sensitive to the perceived likelihood of adverse events such as accidents or catastrophes. When risks seem more likely and are expected to have adverse effects, they are less likely to be tolerated and more likely to be opposed.

—*Michael J. Palenchar*

See also Crisis communication; Issues management

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ROBERTS, ROSALEE A.

Rosalee A. Roberts (1943–) was president in 1992 of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the first and only Nebraskan elected and the fourth woman president. As president, she initiated the Visioning Committee, designed to re-create a strategic planning process to create the new direction and focus for PRSA into the next century. Also, she supervised a KPMG Peat Marwick complete resource and governance review of internal and external activities for PRSA. She supervised the completion of the first Professional Progression Guide to enable members to track their professional progress in the public relations profession.

As PRSA president, Roberts chaired the National Task Force on the Study of Ethical Issues, designed to increase awareness of ethical issues among PRSA members and the public relations profession and to aid in encouraging participation of senior level public relations practitioners.

Roberts is president of Rosalee Roberts Public Relations, Omaha, Nebraska, a public relations/marketing firm handling strategic planning, issues management, risk communications, reputation management, community relations, and media relations.

From 1995 to 1998, she was vice president of community relations and development and Executive Director, Children's Hospital Foundation for Children's Healthcare Services, Omaha, Nebraska. In this position, Roberts experienced in 1997 the international media story of the 3-year-old Woracek twins, who wandered into subzero temperatures in the middle of the night of January 17, 1997. She received worldwide media attention because of the twin's stay and release from Children's Hospital in Omaha, taking all calls in the high-profile story while protecting the children's and parents' wishes for privacy.

Roberts began her public relations career in 1965 after graduating from college and breaking an ankle in Quebec, Canada, where she'd gone to learn French so that she could enter the Peace Corps. She worked from 1969 to 1973 as promotions and public affairs manager at KETV–Channel 7. Then she joined Bozell public relations, working there for 20 years to become a partner at Bozell Worldwide, Inc., handling local, regional, and national clients.

Roberts was named national volunteer of the year in 1997 by the Arthritis Foundation and served on the boards of the Better Business Bureau, Child Saving Institute, Keep Omaha Beautiful, the Nebraska Humane Society, and the Omaha Literacy Council. Other civic activities include All Our Kids, a nonprofit youth mentoring and scholarship organization, and the Literacy Center for the Midlands.

Roberts received 2000 certification, Senior Level Ten, Environmental Risk Communications, from the Center for Risk Communications at Columbia



Rosalee A. Roberts

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University. In 1994, she was named to the College of Fellows of the Public Relations Society of America. In 2003, she chaired the subcommittee studying a PRSA foundation endowment for the PRSA College of Fellows.

Roberts has received numerous awards for her professional and civic activities, including being named Nebraska Citizen of Distinction by the governor of Nebraska, the Arthritis Foundation National Volunteer Award, many PRSA presidential citations, and Outstanding Woman of Distinction for Communications, YWCA.

—*Elizabeth L. Toth*

ROSS, THOMAS J. "TOMMY"

Thomas J. ("T.J." or "Tommy") Ross was one of the rare third-generation practitioners working in the

20th century. He was a partner in a New York City agency named Lee & Ross, with Ivy Lee. The firm began in 1904 as Parker and Lee, founded by George Parker. Lee started his career by joining Parker. Ross continued a practice that was decades old. Tommy Ross, as he was known to his friends, was one of the original members of the Wise Men, a professional association of senior practitioner counselors in New York City, started by John W. Hill in 1938.

Typical of many public relations pioneers, Ross began his career in newspapers. Ross joined the Ivy Lee firm in 1919 and almost immediately became one of the most important forces in the destiny of that firm. The importance of the assignments increased as he demonstrated how well he could add value to the interests of clients and to the agency's success. He became a partner in 1933. Ross had demonstrated his ability to work with difficult projects for major corporate clients in service to Walter Chrysler of Chrysler Corporation and the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Ross acquired part of his counseling style and client list from Lee. Like Lee, he was an excellent listener and earned the reputation of always answering clients' questions clearly and frankly. From Lee, he made client connections with major companies, such as the tobacco industry. Both would work for publicity, but they knew that it must be grounded in sound business policy. Counseling before action was wiser than trying to answer for mistakes in judgment.

Like Lee, Ross worked quietly on behalf of clients. Reporters knew who his clients were and whence news releases came for those clients. In that regard, the agency did not act in secrecy. But they wanted clients to get the credit for effective public relations, not the agency. Client satisfaction and return business was the goal, not glory for the agency. In that regard, Ross viewed public relations as a *staff* function, not one that would presume to manage the company. Public relations was intended to inform and guide management in making decisions and responding to difficult or strained relationships.

Ross was part of the counseling team that took primary interest in the American Tobacco

Corporation account, starting in 1927. Like other industrial enterprises, the tobacco industry was having a hard time accommodating to the changing public policy environment of business. This industry is legendary in the 20th century for its clashes with antitrust lawyers and public health critics.

Lee and George Washington Hill of American Tobacco were good friends. As Lee was becoming more interested in the philanthropy of his most affluent clients, Ross became the leading counselor in the firm on clients' business relationship problems. This was especially the case in working for the American Tobacco, Chrysler, and Pennsylvania Railroad accounts.

George Washington Hill was flamboyant. He would go to any length to gain publicity for himself and his company, which relied heavily on the profits from Lucky Strike cigarettes. Hill retained Lee and Ross as well as Edward Bernays on this account, believing if they were the best and he hired them both, they could not be working for the competition. This account began with the primary focus on selling cigarettes, but by the early 1950s it had the added burden of responding to growing criticism from the health care industry.

The Chrysler account focused on selling automobiles, but also required attention to periodic differences with labor unions. One of the major issues facing the railroad industry, and Pennsylvania Railroad, was the desire on the part of some critics to nationalize the industry.

For such clients, Lee and Ross began by focusing on the soundness of the policies and practices of the clients. They knew, and frankly advised their clients, that you cannot convince any segment of the general public to believe something and act against their own interests. Thus, policy must begin with an honest assessment of the connection, the relationship, between the interests of each public (or market) and the client organization.

Ross was one of several leading practitioners who served on an advisory panel to create the Commission on National Voluntary Health Agencies from 1959 to 1960. Also on this committee were Arthur Page, Lindsey Kimball, National Fund for Medical Education president S. Sloan Colt, Arthur S.

Flemming (Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare), Marion B. Folsom (former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare), Eugene Holman (chairman of Standard Oil of New Jersey), James A. Linen (*Time* publisher), and Juan Trippe (president of Pan American Airlines). Membership on such panels, along with other prestigious members, suggests the important role public relations practitioners can play in formulating governmental agencies and policies in the public interest.

After Lee's death, his name was dropped from the agency's title, which changed to T. J. Ross & Associates. This change, on October 1, 1961, occurred at the request of Lee's widow because none of her sons was any longer associated with the firm. The agreement created between Lee and Ross committed to the principle that the firm would support either partner's widow, who would have an interest in its management.

Ross retired as chairman of the firm in 1971 and died on May 27, 1975. Eventually, the agency this legendary figure had helped Ivy Lee to create and sustain became part of Golin-Harris. As was true of the other princes of public relations, Lee and Ross had helped to position and reposition companies and industries that defined the gross national product for much of the 20th century. Their clients were in railroads, chemicals, tobacco, manufacturing, electricity, banking, oil, food products, and coal, to mention some of the more obvious interests. They also counseled foundations and the arts, such as the Metropolitan Opera Association. The practice was more than publicity and press agency. It recognized the value of relationships and the public interest. Summing his views based on years of experience, L. L. Golden observed, "After a half-century of practice, one of Ross's definite views is that the best public relations must stem from corporate performance. It is the action of the corporation that gives it a good reputation, not what it says about itself" (1968, p. 73).

—Robert L. Heath

See also Bernays, Edward; Counseling; Hill, John Wiley; Lee, Ivy; Page, Arthur W.; Parker, George; Press agency; Promotion; Public interest; Publicity

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RULES THEORY

Rules theory addresses the cultural and societal prescriptions and proscriptions for behavior in communication contexts. Rules can be explicit or implicit. Scholars use rules theory to understand how individuals and groups achieve their goals through communication. In the practice of public relations, rules theory addresses the ways organizations must, must not, should, or should not communicate with their publics in order to achieve their goals. Specific communication goals are often specified as compliance-gaining; relationship formation, maintenance, or dissolution; persuasion; and consensus building. Although research on rules theory has accumulated in the disciplines of organizational communication, social psychology, and sociology, the application of rules theory to the area of public relations is in its early stages of development.

The origin of rules theory has been credited to the 1953, posthumous publication of philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein's book *Philosophical Investigations*. The introduction of rules theory for communication often is attributed to Donald P. Cushman and Gordon C. Whiting (1972). Their approach was influenced by the symbolic interactionist perspective developed by George H. Mead and focused on how communication is used to accomplish goals and construct meaning.

In 1980, Susan B. Shimanoff's highly influential book *Communication Rules: Theory and Research* was published. Shimanoff's book was the first book to systematically synthesize previous definitions of rules, differentiate rules from other concepts, and offer methods for measuring rules and developing theory.

Although scholars may have different views on rules, most agree communication rules are invoked in situations where there is human communication—whether it is interpersonal, group, organizational, or mass communication. Rules are socially constructed and are distinguished by their strength, the perceived consequences of noncompliance, and their contextual range. Shimanoff wrote, “A rule is a followable prescription that indicates what behavior is obligated, preferred or prohibited in certain contexts” (1980, p. 57). In her work, Shimanoff noted that another characteristic of a rule is that it must be physically or otherwise followable.

Cushman (1977) has pointed out that for rules to be present, parties in communication must agree upon what constitutes the rules for communication. In addition, Cushman has noted that part of what makes rules contextual is that not only are they tied to specific situations, but they are also determined by the communicator's role (i.e., a police officer may address a kindergarten class or his fellow officers). Rules are not the same as norms, laws, habits, heuristics, and principles.

RULE STRENGTH

Rules generate their power from the perceived social consequences that serve as enforcements. This social force originates from an individual's knowledge, experience, and/or perception of the social judgment that will be made about him or her for following or not following a rule. The social judgments that result from adhering to or defying rules may result in some form of censure or approval. The degree of censure or approval corresponds to the strength of rule that was (un)heeded.

Shimanoff introduced three kinds of rules classified by their strength: prohibitive, obligatory, and preferred. She defined prohibitive rules as those that proscribe what one *must not* do (e.g., use discriminatory language in the workplace), whereas obligatory rules prescribed what one *must* do (e.g., provide a news release about financial earnings statements). These two types of rules were considered to have greater social force than the third rule she identified, preferred rules. Accordingly,

preferred rules dictate what one *should* or *should not* do. The probability that judgments about the communicator will result from not honoring preferred rules is less certain than the probability that judgments will result if one defies an obligatory or prohibitive rule.

Cushman and Whiting also distinguished rule strength in their discussion of procedural rules, or rules about communication order and interaction. The authors use different terms to describe rules. For them, rules can be formal (more permanent) or informal (more flexible). The authors also proposed that rules must be able to be presented as “in context X, Y is required or permitted” (1972, p. 228). For example, when introduced to a colleague, it is generally required that one reply, “Very nice to meet you.” Rules that are required are considered formal rules, and those that are permitted are perceived as more informal because the consequences of rule compliance, censure, or approval, are applied less rigorously. In her book, Shimanoff (1980) noted that she favored the use of the term preferred instead of permitted, because, she argued, the latter does not imply that sanctions or rewards are applied.

Shimanoff did note that rules also differ by their intensity: “The intensity of a rule is measured by the degree of its salience in a given situation: the less important a rule, the less likely deviations from that rule will be negatively sanctioned” (1980, p. 97). Here, she suggested that even among obligatory rules, some carry more weight in an evaluation than others (i.e., covering up corporate negligence and disregard for car passenger safety may be viewed as more severe than telling a reporter, “No comment”).

Recent research treats rule strength as a continuum, where the strength of a particular rule is a point on a continuous scale, whereby the scores near the top of the scale are viewed as more obligatory or prohibitive and those rated on the middle of the scale are viewed as preferred. In this way, proscriptive and prescriptive obligatory rules can have the same strength, but the valence of that strength ranges from positive to negative. Rules with strength in the bottom quartile are deemed rules with very little strength or, in the case where

the rating is close to zero, not rules. This conception of rules unifies previous conceptualizations and allows for the comparison of strength among rules regardless of their valence.

COMPLIANCE

Rule compliance specifies whether rules are followed. Shimanoff suggested that rules can be either met or violated and indicated that rules for preferred behavior were “empowered by rewards rather than punishments, but smaller or fewer rewards may be viewed as a type of punishment” (1980, p. 94). For Shimanoff, rule violations were measured on a continuum and meeting rules was viewed as dichotomous.

It has been suggested that rule compliance be designated as a continuum. Rule violations occur when rules are not followed and lead to negative evaluations (i.e., the company does not take responsibility for the safety of its products, blames an employee, and is rated negatively). Rules are met when the individual follows the rule (i.e., the company takes responsibility for its product’s defect). The new concept introduced is that of surpassing the rule. This happens when the rule is followed but also exceeds expectations in the positive direction (i.e., not only does the company accept responsibility, but it reimburses its customers for the cost of the product).

Figure 1 is a diagram of the continuum that visually demonstrates that rule compliance does vary and hence censure and approval, rewards and sanctions, also vary by strength.

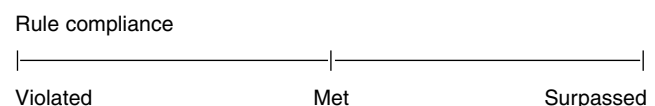


Figure 1 Rules compliance continuum

CONTEXTUAL RANGE

A rule’s contextual range relates to the variety of situations in which a rule can be applied. Cushman and Whiting defined the range of rules as “the

number of different contexts or circumstances in which the same action is applicable” (1972, p. 233). In other words, some rules are more generally applied across situations, whereas others are more restricted to use in specific circumstances.

An examination of rules theory at the interpersonal level has suggested that if there is co-orientation between communicators on rules (i.e., communicators understand and agree on the interpretation of rules), then communication symmetry is possible. Thus, communication becomes dialogic.

Other researchers have used rules theory in the context of relational communication, such as Web site rules for organizations providing customers with product information corrections, bylines for information sources, and promotional e-mail communications.

A recent exploratory study identified communication rules consumers held for interacting with both informational and e-commerce Web sites. It was found that there are different expectations depending on whether the Web site’s main function is to provide information (e.g., news Web sites) or to sell products to consumers (e.g., e-commerce). This research indicates that at the level of person-to-organization communication, rules are dependant on the role of the individual (consumer vs. news reader) and on the role of the organization (e-commerce vs. informational site).

This line of research has implications for the concept of rule compliance and organizational roles. Typically, an online public’s increased liking for an e-commerce organization occurs only when communication rules for online communication are surpassed. This suggests that meeting rules is not enough to improve organization-public relationships—surpassing expectations for communication rules is necessary.

Public health campaigns researchers are concerned with understanding group rules in order to increase the adoption of healthy behaviors within certain populations. Rajiv Rimal and Kevin Real’s (2003) research is representative of this trend. They examined how perceived rules (they used the term injunctive *norms*) and group identity influenced

alcohol consumption by college students in order to determine how to develop messages to reduce alcohol consumption on campuses. They found that “those who perceived that society *disapproves* of consumption and simultaneously believe that most of their peers drink were themselves more likely to drink” (p. 197, italics in original). From this, a rule for the subgroup of consumers can be inferred: College students should not conform to societal expectations. This information can help those designing public health campaigns.

Barry Schlenker and Bruce Darby (1981) examined the social rules for providing apologies. They found that rules for apologies varied by how responsible the individuals felt the offender was for the accident and the severity of the resulting injury. The researchers learned that people expect more complete apologies when the consequences of an accident are more severe.

Research on rules from the interpersonal literature is particularly relevant for the areas of relational public relations and crisis management. In the 1980s, rules theory was applied to organizational communication to examine how rules affected communication within organizations. Since the 1980s, academics have studied communication between supervisors and employees, and displays of emotion in professional settings (nonverbal communication) and in employee selection.

Although rules theory is relatively new to public relations, it is used to (a) examine co-orientation to foster symmetrical communication, (b) determine how communication affects perceived relationships between individuals and an organization, and (c) identify and predict how messages will be received and effect behavior change.

—*Maria E. Len-Rios*

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SAMPLING

Sampling refers to the process of selecting the people or the objects to be used in an analysis. Although sampling is most commonly associated with surveys, sampling also can be used to select messages for analysis. For example, a practitioner may be interested in examining a subset of the news stories that appeared about a product recall, a lawsuit, or a plant opening. Although this discussion will focus on sampling people, similar principles can be applied to sampling messages.

Researchers use sampling when they cannot survey everyone from the population of interest. A population refers to the group of people of interest. A census is when researchers are able to survey everyone from the population. However, typically this is not feasible. Researchers determine a sampling frame—a complete list of the membership of the population from which they will select their sample. The sampling frame is composed of the set of people that have a chance to be sampled. Researchers use a sampling method to obtain a sample, a subset of the population that is used to represent the population. A primary goal is to ensure that the sample closely matches the population so that one can generalize from the sample to the population. In other words, you want the sample to represent the population. This discussion briefly

overviews basic concepts associated with sampling. Readers should consult additional references for more detailed information.

There are two categories of sampling methods: (a) probability (scientific) sampling and (b) non-probability (convenience or nonscientific) sampling. Probability sampling requires the use of a random selection of people to be included in the sample. Every member of the population has a known probability of being included in the sample. Probability sampling is preferred because it can provide more accurate, unbiased data and permits the calculation of the sampling error. Sampling error often is reported as the “margin of error” and reflects how confident the researcher can be in the accuracy of the results. Sampling error is calculated using a formula that assumes the random selection of cases to be included.

Sample size is a concern for researchers because it affects the accuracy of the sample. Statistics books provide tables indicating the sample size desired for a particular level of confidence in the accuracy of the results.

Commonly used strategies for probability sampling include simple random sampling, systematic sampling, and stratified sampling. Simple random sampling resembles drawing the sample from names put in a hat. Names of the members of the sampling frame are put into the hat and the desired

number are drawn. Computer programs can be used to approximate pulling names from a hat.

A second sampling method is systematic random sampling. This method requires an unordered list of members of the sampling frame (e.g., members are not ordered by geographic region, age, or any other characteristic). A starting point is selected randomly (e.g., the 12th, 37th, or 101st name on the list) and every n th name (e.g., every 11th, 20th, or 35th name) is selected for inclusion in the sample.

A third method of random sampling is stratified sampling. It is called stratified because the people are organized (stratified) based upon some characteristic of interest, such as age, ethnicity, or sex. These stratification variables are selected because you believe they would make a difference in how people would respond to your survey. Then simple random sampling or systematic sampling is used to select a proportional representation from each strata of interest. For example, if your sampling frame is comprised of 70 percent women and 30 percent men, you may want to ensure that those proportions of women and men are evidenced in your final sample. This would enhance the precision of your sample.

Although random sampling methods are preferred, it may be impossible to meet the requirements for probability sampling. In this case researchers use non-probability sampling. However, it is important to note that non-probability sampling precludes calculation of sampling error, offers questionable generalizability, and is subject to bias in participant selection. Non-probability samples demonstrate bias because respondents are not selected randomly. Perhaps the survey participants differed from those who did not participate on important variables of interest, such as attitudes toward the organization or the campaign. Data obtained from the survey participants may not reflect the data that would have been obtained from a randomly selected sample. Researchers often turn to non-probability sampling when a complete sample frame is difficult to determine or cost considerations make probability sampling less attractive.

Convenience sampling, purposive sampling, and snowball sampling often are used. In convenience sampling, a sample is selected based upon being in the right place at the right time to be asked to

participate. For example, people walking by a kiosk in a shopping mall might be asked to complete a survey. Or people waiting in line for an art exhibit might be asked to participate. Their availability and willingness to complete the survey are the basis for their inclusion in the sample.

Purposive sampling is used when researchers need to select participants who possess certain characteristics of interest. Characteristics might include having used a particular product, knowledge of a controversial issue, or a subscription to a local newspaper. For example, a researcher might be interested in the opinions of people who have seen a series of public service ads (PSAs) on television. The researcher does not want to include those who have not seen the PSAs since they would not be able to answer the survey questions. The researcher might attempt to recruit participants at community picnics, driver's license facilities, and high school football games. The researcher only asks those who have seen the PSAs to participate in the surveys.

In snowball (network) sampling, a person who has already participated in a survey might recruit others to participate through word-of-mouth referrals. Participants give researchers access to other potential participants who might be recruited by the researcher. This method is useful when organizations are reluctant to release the names of their members due to confidentiality issues (e.g., support groups for families of alcoholics) or when informal networks of people who are likely to be interested in or affected by the same issues need to be reached (e.g., dog owners who are concerned about or might be affected by a community action, such as dog owners using a dog park or participating in local events involving dogs). For example, a researcher might be interested in the attitudes of "soccer moms" toward the proposed building of a soccer field near a landfill. Because the city's soccer club organizers do not release the names of people involved in the club, the researcher contacts a few soccer moms who then provide the names of other soccer moms who could be contacted for participation in the survey.

—*Sherry J. Holladay*

See also Survey

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SANDBAGGING

Sandbagging is a term used to describe the efforts of an organization or an individual to avoid answering questions asked by reporters or key publics. Sometimes the response is as simple as “No comment.” At the extreme, the response is couched in more complex terms, such as “We are establishing a commission to investigate. When we have found the facts, we will report them.”

The term has military roots. For example, in the late 19th century it meant “to strike unexpectedly; to take by surprise.” In the early 20th century, it meant “to intimidate, coerce, bully as by threats.” This slang term further shows up as a verb in cooperation with “ghosting” and “goldbricking” when referenced as a Vietnam War slang term to mean “hiding out in the rear as if not seen.”

This slang term also appears as part of mainstream gambling terminology—“to downplay or misrepresent one’s ability in a game or activity in order to deceive (someone), especially in gambling.” Further, various online dictionaries describe this term (verb) as follows: “to treat harshly or unfairly; to misinform, mislead—to give false or misleading information” and “to conceal or misrepresent one’s true position, potential, or intent, especially in order to take advantage of.” A person who carries out such behaviors is a “sandbagger” (noun). This term appears to also be framed as a propaganda technique when used in a political context.

—Lisa T. Fall

See also Spin

SCALES

The term *scales* may have multiple meanings to public relations practitioners. One use of the term

denotes a particular measurement instrument such as a scale to measure reputation, credibility, or ethical climate. This use typically references an established measurement instrument developed by researchers, for which validity and reliability information is available.

Another use of the term describes a type of measure or scale, such as a Likert scale or Semantic Differential scale, which uses particular types of response options or answer scales. The scale refers to the way in which respondents record their answers.

Another use of the term is related to the previously mentioned use of answer scales and is synonymous with level of measurement or kinds of data to be analyzed. Practitioners may speak of answer scales that refer to how respondents record their responses to survey questions, which in turn produce certain types of data for analysis. Level of measurement is important because it dictates the types of statistical analyses that can be performed on the data.

In 2002, Don W. Stacks identified two types of attitude measures commonly used in public relations research: (a) Likert-type scales and (b) Semantic Differential scales. These scales can be adapted to examine attitudes toward a variety of things.

Likert-type scales use standardized response categories to record reactions to a series of statements reflecting issues of interest. Likert-type scales often provide five options for responses: (a) strongly agree, (b) agree, (c) neither agree nor disagree (neutral), (d) disagree, and (e) strongly disagree. Alternatively, the scale may be enlarged to seven categories by adding two options to the ends of the answer continuum: (f) very strongly agree; and (g) very strongly disagree. An advantage of the Likert-type scale is its consistent use of answer options that respondents find easy to complete. A practitioner might be interested in assessing community support for a proposed landfill to be built outside of town. The practitioner could write a series of statements reflecting issues related to the proposed landfill in order to gauge community sentiment. Statements might include (a) “The proposed landfill would provide jobs for the community,” (b) “The proposed landfill would pose health hazards to community members,” and (c) “The proposed landfill is necessary.” A survey

containing these items would be administered to a randomly selected sample of community residents. Respondents would record their reactions to the statements using the Likert-type scale options. The practitioner would analyze the data to obtain a clearer view of community attitudes toward various aspects of the issue.

The Semantic Differential scale consists of a series of items designed to assess the connotative meanings associated with a stimulus or attitude object, such as an organization, a person, a practice, a product, or a concept. The term *semantic* refers to meanings and *differential* reflects differences. A connotative meaning is a personal or emotional meaning, whereas a denotative meaning is the “dictionary meaning.” Whereas there generally is high agreement on denotative meanings, this is not true for connotative meanings because they arise from personal experiences and perceptions. For example, the denotative meaning of “McDonald’s” would relate to its being a fast-food restaurant. In contrast, the connotative meanings associated with McDonald’s might vary widely and include meanings such as “fun,” “playful,” “convenient,” “unhealthy,” “inexpensive,” and “tasty.”

Practitioners often are concerned with connotative meanings because they reflect personal perceptions and these are important for understanding stakeholders. The stimulus used in research might be a person like “George W. Bush” or a well-known community leader. Alternatively, the stimulus might be a product like “genetically engineered food” or an organization like “A2Z Corporation.” The different meanings reflected in the responses to items on the Semantic Differential scale can be compared to the meanings for other related stimuli, such as other restaurants, opposing political candidates, or different organizations.

The Semantic Differential scale consists of a series of bipolar (opposite) adjective pairs (good/bad, weak/strong) separated by a number of blanks or lines (usually seven) signifying response options. Respondents are asked to indicate their reactions to the stimulus by marking the blanks/options reflecting their connotative meanings on dimensions of interest. Traditionally, the three meaning dimensions used are evaluative (good/bad, valuable/worthless,

realistic/unrealistic), potency (weak/strong, large/small), and activity (active/passive, hot/cold, weak/strong). The reactions can be summed to provide a summary evaluation of the stimulus. The Semantic Differential scale’s usefulness stems from its ability to discern connotative meanings and its ease of completion.

When the term *scale* is used to refer to level of measurement, it refers to the type of data to be used for analysis. There are four levels of measurement. The first level of measurement is called nominal. Nominal data represent unordered categories, names, or labels for a variable, such as sex (male or female), employment status (employed or unemployed), political party affiliation (Republican, Democrat, or Independent), or place of birth.

Ordinal-level measurement provides data that reflect the rank order of a variable on a single dimension. The options signal relationships to one another. However, there is no assumption of equal spacing between the options. For example, the answer options “good,” “fair,” and “poor” might be provided for a question about the respondent’s assessment of the current employment opportunities in the community. In relation to the other two options, “good” is assumed to reflect a more positive assessment whereas “poor” reflects a more pessimistic assessment. However, it cannot be assumed that the “fair” option is truly halfway between the two options. “Fair” is only assumed to be more positive than “poor.”

Interval-level measurement assumes equal distances or standard intervals between options. The Fahrenheit or Celsius temperature scales provide good examples from the sciences. Each degree represents a known interval. In research, true interval level measures are rare. Because statistical tests for interval-level measures often are more powerful and better known than tests for ordinal-level data, researchers tend to prefer interval-level data and analyses, and often treat ordinal-level data as interval-level data in their statistical analyses—a practice that is not without debate. For example, the commonly used Likert-type scale is technically an ordinal-level measure but is often treated as an interval-level measure. To elaborate, there is no

standard interval or equal distance between “strongly agree” and “agree” or any of the other options. Although “strongly agree” is closer to “agree” (thus reflecting ordinal measurement), it technically is not correct to say that there are equal intervals between any of the options. However, in practice, researchers often act as if these do represent equal intervals.

Ratio-level measurement is considered the highest level of measurement and assumes a true zero point. A zero represents an absence of that variable. For instance, income, number of years of formal education, and number of purchases from a particular vendor represent ratio-level data because they potentially have zero as an option. Theoretically, respondents could report no income, no formal education, and no purchases from the vendor.

—Sherry J. Holladay

See also Measuring/measures

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SCAN

See Environmental scanning

SCHOONOVER, JEAN

Jean Way Schoonover (1920–) was president of Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy (D-A-Y), the first major public relations firm in New York City to be owned and managed by women.

D-A-Y traces its history to its founding by Pendleton Dudley in 1909. Schoonover and her sister Barbara Hunter purchased the firm from the original partners in 1970. It was acquired by Ogilvy & Mather in 1983.

Schoonover grew up in Westport on Lake Champlain, New York. She graduated with a B.A. from Cornell University in 1941, majoring in English and education. Her first jobs were as an English

teacher and librarian at Castleton Union School in Hudson, New York, from 1941 to 1943.

Schoonover moved to New York City in 1943 in hopes of finding a job as a newspaper reporter. She worked as a ticket seller at Penn Station until she was finally hired as a reporter for *Food Field Reporter*, a biweekly trade paper for food industry executives. Schoonover interviewed Clarence Birdseye, who had sold his frozen food business to General Foods. Her story was noticed by George Anderson, a partner at D-A-Y, who hired Schoonover as an account executive in 1949.

Schoonover and Hunter purchased D-A-Y when it was ranked 15th among national public relations companies. They incorporated the company, with Schoonover as president and Hunter as executive vice president. When Schoonover signed the first paychecks, she discovered that the male executives were making \$25,000 a year while she and Hunter were making \$18,000. Later, Schoonover became chairman and CEO and Hunter became president of D-A-Y.

D-A-Y had the first home economics department and test kitchen in the agency business, with a staff of home economists developing recipes for food and wine accounts. Clients included Accent International, Florida Citrus Commission, Gelatine, Nestle Co., SuCrest Corporate, Taylor Wine Co., United Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Association, Wash ‘n Dri, and Canaan Products, Inc.

Under the leadership of Schoonover, D-A-Y won a number of Public Relations Society of America Silver Anvil awards. On a budget of \$25,000, D-A-Y handled the publicity for the bicentennial reenactment of the capture of Fort Ticonderoga from the British.

D-A-Y pulled off the public relations triumph of 1983 with the 100th birthday party for the Brooklyn Bridge. Over 2 million New Yorkers and tourists came out for the eight-block-long parade, and 1,200 journalists reported on the story around the world.

After a botulism incident occurred, D-A-Y helped the Tuna Research Foundation with counsel on acting responsibly and making changes to maintain customer confidence and product loyalty, containing the crisis that could have destroyed sales.

D-A-Y clients received help with the women's market through programs on Women as Economic Equals, in cooperation with *Ladies' Home Journal* and a credit card company. D-A-Y assisted AT&T with a conference titled Women in the Workforce.

Upon selling D-A-Y to Ogilvy & Mather in 1983, Schoonover managed D-A-Y, which eventually folded into O&M public relations offices, with offices in New York, Washington, Chicago, Atlanta, Houston, and Los Angeles. In 1988 Schoonover became vice chairman of the Ogilvy & Mather Public Relations Group and a senior vice president of Ogilvy & Mather U.S.

Schoonover retired in 1990. Since her retirement, she has spent her time in pro bono activities and serving on the board of directors of Bliss, Gouverneur & Associates, a New York public relations firm.

Schoonover volunteered her leadership as president of the YMCA of the City of New York from 1994 to 1998. She was president of the Women Executives in Public Relations in New York City from 1979 to 1980, and president of the Public Relations Society of New York in 1979. In 1987 through 1989, she was a member and vice chair of the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS). Her role was to report to commanding officers and the Department of Defense about military base conditions for women. She was on the Cornell University Board of Trustees from 1975 to 1980. She helped the International Women's Forum publicize "Why Women Lead" by Dr. Judy Rosner, featured in the 1990 issue of *Harvard Business Review*.

Schoonover has spoken to various groups, including a *Vital Speeches* selection, "Why Corporate America Fears Women," presented in 1974 to a seminar for life insurance executives.

Schoonover has won many awards for her achievements: (a) Advertising Woman of the Year Award (1972); (b) Matrix Award from Women in Communications (1976); (c) *Business Week's* Top 100 Corporate Women; (d) International Association of Women Business Owners Leadership Award; (e) National Association of Women Business Owners Entrepreneurial Woman Award; (f) National Headliner Award in Communications Inc. (1984);

(g) Big WEAL Award, Women's Equity Action League (1985); and (h) Achievement Award from the League of Women Voters of New York City (1997).

—Elizabeth L. Toth

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SEARCH ENGINE

A search engine refers to a tool used by computers to find information. Modern search engines typically employ graphic interfaces. The term *search engine* is closely associated with the tool used to search for information on the World Wide Web. Any graphic-search interface such as those used by universities and public libraries to search for books, magazines, multimedia documents, and so forth can be called a search engine. Without the search engine, it would not be possible to locate specific information from among the billions of unique Web pages that currently exist on the World Wide Web (Kent, 2001).

Search engines work by examining archival databases generated from the billions of Web sites currently accessible. Search engines use an assortment of indexing logics. Most search engines create indexes based on keywords, phrases, categories, and other heuristics. Many search engines also allow users to employ *real language*. Ask Jeeves, for example, lets users phrase their searches as actual questions rather than a collection of keywords. Other search engines, such as Google, employ networking logic, ranking pages by their connectedness to other Web sites. The more popular a page is, the more likely it is to rise to the top of Google's list.

When searching the Web, most search engines allow users to employ (a) Boolean logic (AND, OR, NOT), (b) phrase searches (surrounding words with quotation marks), (c) wildcard searches (replacing prefixes/suffixes with an *), and (d) nested searching (complex searches created by using parentheses and

algebraic logic). Because search features vary from search engine to search engine, users are encouraged to learn the particular features supported by their preferred search engines.

Suggestions for effective Web searching include

1. Use multiple keywords—sometimes a dozen or more.
2. Search for phrases (“words in quotes”), especially with names, whenever possible.
3. Rare or unusual words such as *defenestrate* make it easier to narrow results.
4. Common words such as *computer* make it difficult to narrow results.
5. Order search terms from most important to least important.
6. Do not waste time searching through large lists of hits—more success will result by adding new search terms or rephrasing the search by adding quotation marks.

There are currently hundreds of search engines available for use on the World Wide Web. Notable search engines include AltaVista, Ask Jeeves, Google, Ixquick, Lycos, Mamma, and Yahoo.

—Michael L. Kent

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is the federal agency established to enforce the laws and rules governing United States securities markets. The SEC’s primary functions involve the registration of securities and compliance with the rule of full disclosure—timely, relevant, and accurate information about a security and the issuing company

that helps an investor make a buy, sell, or hold decision. The expertise of investor relations professionals depends in part on knowledge of the SEC and its regulations concerning securities and the publicly held companies that issue those securities. Investor relations professionals must also understand disclosure opportunities beyond filing requirements that could occur in releases, responses to rumors, and comments.

The SEC administers the Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, along with a cohort of laws created to help protect investors. Those include the Trust Indenture Act, the Investment Company Act, the Investment Advisors Act, and the Public Utility Holding Act. These laws were written to prevent the kind of market collapse that culminated in the crash of October 1929.

Investors had no such protections in the boom of the 1920s when market manipulation and an absence of ethics, rules, and laws were prevalent. A highly speculative stock market and other weaknesses in the economy courted financial catastrophe and an ensuing depression. Congress held hearings to find ways to restore the public’s faith in the securities markets. Participants in the hearings agreed that a corporation issuing a stock or bond must be fair and honest in disclosing to investors information about the company, the security, and level of investment risk, while brokers, dealers, and exchanges must be fair and honest in issuing securities to investors.

The Securities Act of 1933 established strong civil and criminal liabilities for omissions and distortions of facts concerning the issue of stocks or bonds. The Securities and Exchange Act of 1934 created the SEC and required stock exchanges to register with the five-member commission. The Trust Indenture Act of 1939 required that debt securities (such as bonds, debentures, and notes) not be offered for sale to the public unless a formal agreement (the trust indenture) between the issuer and the bondholder conformed to standards of the act. The Investment Company Act of 1940 focused on compliance of disclosure of information about mutual funds and investment objectives as well as on investment company structures and operations. The

Investment Advisors Act of 1940 required that investment advisor firms or sole practitioners register with the SEC and conform to regulations. The act was amended in 1996 to limit registration to advisers with at least \$25 million of assets. The Public Utility Holding Act of 1935 established regulation of interstate holding companies engaged in the electric utility business or in the retail distribution of natural gas.

The SEC is currently implementing the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, which will require corporate officers to certify company financial statements or be subject to criminal penalties. Among other provisions, the act has mandated creation of the new Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB). The act was signed into law in the summer of 2002 in response to questionable accounting practices and poor internal controls that led to the failures of such high-profile public companies as Enron, WorldCom, and Global Crossing.

SEC commissioners are appointed by the president of the United States and a chairman is designated from among the five members. The SEC is organized into four divisions and 18 offices, headquartered in Washington, DC, with offices in New York and other regional locations across the United States. Approximately 3,100 analysts, accountants, lawyers, technical staff, and assistants work with commissioners to oversee the U.S. stock exchanges, broker-dealers, investment advisors, mutual funds, and public utility holding companies.

Publicly held companies meet certain filing requirements with the SEC, and the Division of Corporation Finance is charged with reviewing those documents, which include (a) registration statements for newly offered securities; (b) annual and quarterly filings (forms 10-K and 10-Q); (c) proxy materials sent to shareholders before an annual meeting; (d) annual reports to shareholders; and (e) filings related to tender offering filings, as well as mergers and acquisitions. Corporation Finance also works in conjunction with the Office of the Chief Accountant to monitor activities of the accounting profession, particularly the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB), that form generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

The Division of Market Regulation regulates broker-dealer firms and self-regulatory organizations (SROs), which include the stock exchanges and the National Association of Securities Dealers (NASD). This Division also oversees the Securities Investor Protection Corporation (SIPC) that insures customer accounts of member brokerage firms against the failure of those firms.

The Division of Investment Management oversees and regulates the \$15 trillion investment management industry and administers the securities laws affecting investment companies (including mutual funds) and investment advisers.

The Division of Enforcement investigates possible violations of securities laws, recommends action, and negotiates settlements on behalf of the SEC. Typical violations include: (a) insider trading; (b) misrepresentation or omission of important information about securities; (c) manipulating the market prices of securities; (d) stealing customers' funds or securities; (e) violating broker-dealers' responsibility to treat customers fairly; and (f) sale of securities without proper registration.

—Rebecca G. Aguilar

See also Annual financial report; Investor relations

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SEGMENTATION

Segmentation is dividing an audience into smaller groups that are predicted to more likely react in a homogeneous manner to a particular motive in the reception of a message or product. As a public relations concept, segmentation helps practitioners focus actionable receivers' attention on specific

messages most important to them, lowers total message distribution costs, encourages a broader spectrum of audiences to attend to a message, limits distracting or counterproductive messages being distributed to alternative audiences, and increases the perception of service from public relations practitioners to media gatekeepers.

Segmentation was initially formalized as a marketing concept by Wendell R. Smith in 1955. Although there are nearly an unlimited number of different segmentation possibilities, most authors group them into one of four broad categories: geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioral. Geographic segmentation differentiates between audiences that live in different geographic subdivisions, ranging from nation-states to individual neighborhoods or rural or urban environments. Demographic characteristics classify audiences based upon such personal qualities as age, sex, marital status, nationality, income, occupation, or education. Psychographic segmentation relies upon an individual's social status, personal lifestyle, or personality qualities to determine an actionable category. Finally, behavioral segments analyze an individual's product use, buying behavior, or media use patterns to form a segment.

Segmentation has been more often and more formally employed in advertising and marketing communication than in public relations, likely because of the research costs involved with establishing audience segments and the comparatively low-cost messages, compared with advertising media, of transmission media used for public relations. Public relations tacticians have discouraged "shotgunning" a single news release to numerous and diverse media. In some public relations writing, practitioners have urged media research to determine placement opportunities that hold concentrations of important audiences, and "story splitting" routines to discover aspects of public relations messages to share with different audiences, or to design events, products, or services that appeal to important audiences.

Although targeting public relations messages to specific audiences is a crude form of segmentation, marketing and advertising professionals have employed much more sophisticated models. Michel

Wedel and Wagner Kamakura outlined a broad range of segmentation methods, notably focusing on tracking multiple identifiers for individuals within a universe of potential customers. Such multivariate statistics routinely uses cluster analysis, which mathematically groups similar people in clusters distinct from others within the sample; or conjoint analysis, which analyzes motive preferences for various combinations of attributes.

These models may pale in importance to further developments in segmentation in which individual consumers place themselves into their own segments. Inventory control systems, combined with the Internet, just-in-time manufacturing protocols, and new order-taking and shipping technology have integrated message transmission systems and message receiving systems so individuals can access messages that precisely meet their needs, and then create a precise product or service that matches their motives. As these systems further develop, public relations practitioners may need to turn their attention to developing media paths so that individual audience members can pursue information discovery that will lead to behaviors useful to their client organizations.

—William Thompson

See also Demographics; Psychographics

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SEMIOTICS THEORY

One of the new trends in critical theory is the move to the application of structuralism and semiotics for finding meaning in media texts and campaign messages. The theories of structuralism and semiotics, incorporated into the body of knowledge known as critical theory, are closely related and operate on similar assumptions. These theories explore how language and communication have meanings based on underlying assumptions of the persons making meanings from messages.

These two theories explain that a kind of language, or structure, works at an unconscious, or deep, level of a person or a culture that nevertheless causes or prompts language and meaning at the conscious level. These became popular theories for critical scholars who were searching for additional ways to explain processing of meaning, ideology, and symbol use in all kinds of communication. Critical scholars turned to structuralism and semiotics theories that were being developed in linguistics and in anthropology and applied them to the understanding of media texts, campaign message texts, and other popular culture artifacts.

STRUCTURALISM

First, a look at structuralist theory as it developed in anthropology suggests that a deep structure in a culture, much like a hidden language speaking to the culture, gives rise to the surface structure of other language forms. Anthropologists argue that unconscious structures of myth, rituals, or symbols are unconscious or deep structures that all cultures have. These operate much like an ideology—an unconscious worldview that we follow but do not know that we follow—to shape each culture's beliefs, symbols, rituals, and language that are used to communicate to others and to oneself and to give meanings to oneself and others.

For example, research of campaigns from a structuralist perspective reveals hidden ideologies, rituals, symbols, and imbedded meanings in the messages. The tobacco wars between the tobacco industry and the antismoking activists, the pro-life and pro-choice campaigns on abortion, or the campaigns sponsored by those against breast implants and those who feel implants are representative of women's rights to their own bodies reveal ideologies such as civil rights, the right of a mother to control her own body, the right of the unborn fetus, patriarchy, feminism, and the religious right. All the campaign messages generated on both sides of each issue also divulge rituals such as the pleasurable act of smoking and the disgusting ritual of smoking, and symbols such as the humanity of the unborn fetus and a bloody coat hanger. A structuralist approach also allows a study of the various meanings that the

messages might contain, such as that human rights supersede personal rights, personal rights supersede medical risks, or a woman has the right to control her own body.

In these examples, the messages are mediated images that represent deep structures and the many ideologies of our capitalist, industrial, and personal-rights culture. Structuralist studies of all kinds of texts are of interest to critical scholars because they provide another system of uncovering meaning and explaining how individuals use and get meanings from media and campaign texts.

SEMIOTICS

Semiotics developed from linguistics but is very similar to the structuralist model of a deep, ideological, or unconscious structure that affects the conscious, surface level of communication and meaning. Linguistics names the underlying structure of language *langue*, that is, a set of rules the culture—unconsciously—follows to shape the everyday communication of the culture. The term *parole* is the name for this everyday communication, vocabulary, syntax, and grammar that a culture follows. In other words, each culture has its own unique langue and manifested parole that characterize that culture and that language. For example, a semiotic study of nightly news reports carried on network television can identify the words and visuals used to report on each story; these are the parole. Then the attempt to identify the underlying cultural ideologies and rules that govern and dictate the choice and the format of these messages represent the langue.

Semiotics provides a three-part model of meaning that can be used to uncover the imbedded and the obvious meanings of a text. Semiotics specifically means the study of signs, or things that represent something other than them. The semiotic model of meaning contains (a) an idea or object that is represented (known as the *signified*); (b) an image or word that represents it (known as the *signifier*); and (c) the combination of the signified and signifier that brings together the signifier and the signified to reveal the meaning of the object (known as the *sign*).

Any object, word, or message can be studied as a sign itself or for the signs that it contains. For semiotics an object or word that has meaning for a person is more than just the object or word. The object or word is pregnant with or full of meaning, understood according to the culture that contains it but also determined individually by the person who brings meaning to it. The semiotic model of meaning privileges culture or social context as the ultimate source of meaning for items that surround people in the social formation. For semiotics, any text in a culture possesses, first, the meanings that people in the society agree it contains and, second, the meanings that an individual who lives in the society is necessarily drawn to bring to the text.

Some examples can indicate the power of signs to deliver meanings. The Nike “swoosh” is an excellent example of the power of a sign. Nike has worked for years to establish their trademark swoosh as a sign of their company. In fact, the swoosh is so well known in our culture that this symbol used alone is enough to signify a Nike product to any individual. Examples of signs in all kinds of campaign communication reveal the power and importance words and visuals serve as signs that lead people to recall the organization that created them: the Budweiser Clydesdale horses, the unique lettering of the Pepsi or Coke logo, the donkey and elephant of the two political parties, or our national flag. The bottom line is that semiotics recognizes that symbols or cultural artifacts are more than just that; they are “meaning-full” artifacts that can represent significant meanings to people.

The theory of semiotics is informative because it is used to explain both how any cultural text is a conscious expression of meaning and cultural worldviews and how any text contains the underlying ideologies and language that give rise to these particular messages. Semiotics is used to study meanings as unconscious and conscious structures necessarily revealed in all kinds of texts. Any word or visual in a text has the potential to act as a sign representing the organization but delivering meanings because the word or visual is both a cultural sign and, from that, inevitably a personal sign for the person who lives in the culture.

APPLICATIONS

Semiotics has recently been applied to understanding campaign messages. Critical scholars who want to look closely at public relations, advertising, and marketing messages have initiated this relatively new line of research. This research attempts to uncover the underlying social pressures or cultural issues—the *langue*—that become expressed in commercial messages—the *parole*. Findings from the close critical textual analysis of campaign messages are very revealing.

Findings suggest that campaign messages not only advertise a product or present a corporate image as signifieds, but they inevitably signify social issues. For example, the widespread, underlying ideologies of patriarchy, of the physical ideal of women, of the organization’s desired corporate image, and even ideologies that a person can buy happiness in a bottle of perfume or after-shave or buy a new identity through clothes or tennis shoe purchases are social and cultural assumptions that prompt, even dictate, the content of media messages.

Consider advertisements for a luxury, upscale product such as a Rolex watch or a Jaguar automobile. The very name *Rolex* signifies “expensive watch” and, further, means that any person observed wearing a Rolex most likely has disposable income and perhaps a lucrative job. The Rolex might be manufactured just as any other watch is, with perhaps a bit more care and with better-quality components. However, the name *Rolex* is a sign, and the word *Rolex* is also a sign, meaning luxurious and posh. The Rolex watch is more than just a watch; it is a watch with meanings attached to it as a sign. Advertisements for a Jaguar automobile also present upscale persons, huge and exclusive houses, perhaps situated in a country club setting; again, well-dressed persons, expensive houses, and country clubs are all signs that add to the desired sign and meaning of the Jaguar automobile as a luxury product for the very rich.

—Mary Anne Moffitt

See also Critical theory

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SITUATION ANALYSIS

A public relations situation can be described as the set of circumstances or problem an organization faces. A *situation analysis* is the detailed explanation of everything the communication professional can learn about the problem at hand. Ronald D. Smith wrote, “Without a clear and early statement of the situation to be addressed, you will not be able to conduct efficient research or define the goal of your communication program later in the planning process” (2002, p. 19).

The situation analysis makes it possible to develop hypotheses about causes of and solutions to the problem. Through research, the public relations practitioner can gain a thorough understanding of the organization’s relevant publics, its environment (*see* Environmental scanning), and opportunities as well as challenges related to solving the problem. The situation analysis also helps identify the additional research needed in order to develop a successful plan. As Donald Parente (2000) wrote, the situation analysis should be organized, structured, detailed, and focused.

Why is situation analysis important to public relations practitioners? Public relations planning begins with a situation analysis—whether the planning is for a comprehensive public relations campaign or just one element, such as a writing project. Because the effectiveness of the plan correlates directly to the quality of information gathered in the research process, a thorough situation analysis is critical to a successful outcome of the project.

A situation analysis is also a key to successful decision making. Before a situation or problem can be addressed, the communication team and the organization’s leadership must come to a shared

understanding of the issue. The situation analysis should clarify the current situation and provide evidence to support any hypotheses.

A situation analysis can be useful as an initial step in crisis communication planning as well.

How do practitioners conduct a situation analysis? Situation analyses can be structured in a variety of ways, posing a myriad of questions about the current problem, the background of the organization, the organization’s environment, and the significance of the situation. The situation analysis may also reveal gaps in existing information, pointing the way to the development of a plan for primary research.

Smith (2002) wrote that a traditional method of conducting a situation analysis drawn from the discipline of marketing is the SWOT analysis. Looking both inside and outside the organization, its strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) are analyzed, and its opportunities (O) and threats (T) are identified. Robert A. Sevier (1998) described strengths and weakness as internal/institutional, whereas opportunities and threats are typically external/environmental. Sevier cautioned that different audiences may place the same characteristic in opposite categories—one considering a characteristic to be a strength whereas another considers the same characteristic to be a weakness.

Another approach is to divide a situation analysis into categories of internal and external factors. Content of the internal factors that should be examined includes

1. *Mission*: Organization mission statement, charter, bylaws, structure
2. *History*: Descriptions of programs, services, products of the organization
3. *Resources*: Statistics on budget, staffing, sales, profits, stockholders
4. *Policies*: Policies and procedures related to the problem
5. *Position statements*: Opinion quotes from key executives regarding the problem
6. *Current plan*: Description of the current handling of the problem

7. *Stakeholders*: Description of the organization's current internal stakeholders
8. *Media*: Samples of internal communication tools such as newsletters and memos

Content of the external factors that should be examined includes

1. *Media*: Clippings, transcripts, and tapes of news media coverage of the organization and the problem situation; content analysis of news media coverage; lists of journalists covering related situations
2. *Supportive stakeholders*: Lists and background information on those who share the organization's positions on the situation
3. *Opposing stakeholders*: Lists and background information on those who oppose the organization's positions on the situation
4. *Public opinion research*: Information on public opinions related to the situation
5. *Events*: Lists of important dates or events related to the organization and the situation
6. *Regulatory bodies*: Lists of government agencies and others with power affecting the situation; copies of relevant legislation, pending bills and government publications
7. *Existing research*: Published research on topics related to the situation; relevant books, records, directories

Additional areas to consider in the situation analysis include the organization's culture, external communication tools (such as the annual report or Web site), emerging issues and trends in the organization's environment, history of the problem, consequences of the problem, opportunities for solutions, challenges or obstacles to solutions, publics that may not yet fit into the supportive or opposition categories, and the organization's competition.

A public relations audit may also be part of the analysis of internal factors. The audit may include examination of the organization's performance—the quality of goods or services as well as the viability of its causes and ideas. Structure may also be considered

in the audit. This includes review of the organization's mission as it relates to the problem, the role public relations plays within the decision-making body, and identification of resources (personnel, equipment, budget, time) that may be needed to address the situation. The final area of focus for the audit (Smith, 2002) is the public perception of the organization's visibility and reputation.

Information for the situation analysis can be gathered using both formal and informal methodologies. Secondary (or existing) research can be gathered from organizational records or libraries. Primary (or original) research may use focus groups, interviews, content analysis and surveys, for example.

The situation analysis should clarify all assumptions and back up assertions with evidence.

—Phyllis Vance Larsen

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SITUATION ETHICS

Situation ethics began in the 1940s and 1950s as a movement among Roman Catholic theologians who saw in the post–World War II environment a constellation of unique moral challenges that the traditions of law and casuistry were not equipped to address. Law and casuistry were tied to hierarchy

and authority, and the experience of World War II showed how immoral following orders could be. So these theologians sought a way to listen for the voice of God in complex, particular circumstances. Spurning rules and paradigm cases as being too rigid, they argued that truly moral decision making was marked by deep personal responsibility and dialogue. But these theologians failed to persuade their superiors. In 1952, Pope Pius XII put an end to the movement among Roman Catholics by condemning situation ethics as dangerously subjective and relativistic.

Situation ethics returned as a Protestant debate in the 1960s. Popularized as “the new morality” by Episcopalian ethics professor Joseph Fletcher (1905–1991), this incarnation of situation ethics was championed as the golden mean between legalism at one extreme and licentiousness at the other. According to Fletcher, situationists are neither slaves to rules and regulations nor heedless of the needs of others. Rather, they follow only one rule, and that is to do the loving thing in every situation they face. Fletcher argued that no behavior is right or wrong intrinsically; more accurately, behaviors are right only if they lead to good consequences and wrong only if they cause harm. “The situationist enters into every decision-making situation fully armed with the ethical maxims of his community and its heritage, and he treats them with respect as illuminators of his problems,” Fletcher wrote. “Just the same he is prepared in any situation to compromise them or set them aside *in the situation* if love seems better served by doing so” (1966, p. 26). Fletcher summarized his situation ethics in six propositions: “Love only is always good, love is the only norm, love and justice are the same, love is not liking, love justifies its means, and love decides there and then” (1966, p. 9).

In philosophical terms, situation ethics falls under the category of teleology, a way of justifying behavior according to consequences rather than principles (the ends justify the means). More specifically, it is a type of utilitarianism (the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people). Because situation ethics came out of the Christian faith, it is sometimes referred to as

act-agapism, referring to *agape*, the Greek word for selfless love used in the New Testament. In act-agapism, good emerges when the individual chooses the most loving course of action on a case-by-case basis.

Striking a responsive chord at a time when traditions were being questioned, situation ethics found a wide range of business applications. In *The Moral Crisis in Management*, Thomas Petit wrote, “The situational model . . . best fits the American manager’s self-image of a tough-minded individual who demands freedom and is willing and able to be responsible in its exercise” (1967, p. 167). Fletcher himself applied situation ethics to business management, asking, “What, in the situation, is the most constructive decision to make, as measured by a primary concern for people, and not for profits alone nor only for . . . one company’s sake?” (1967, p. 167). In an example of a clothing manufacturer who pays an illegal kickback to keep an essential order from a department store chain, Fletcher said that the manufacturer’s bribe was the right thing to do in the circumstances. He broke a law certainly, but more importantly he kept his employees working and did not have to cut their pay. In this case, following the law would have devastated his employees and their families.

Applications of situation ethics to public relations followed. The most common example involved a company with a policy of full disclosure to the media being justified in deciding to withhold information that could harm an employee, a client, or the community. A more extreme application was put forth by Marquette University professor Steven Goldzwig, who argued that serious social change—he gave as an example the struggle against racial inequality—could at times justify “suggestion, innuendo, even misuse of facts.” Desperate situations require desperate measures, argued Goldzwig, who said that demagoguery and techniques of propaganda may be “legitimate means of pursuing laudable social ends” (1989, p. 220).

The main attraction of situation ethics is its commonsense recognition that circumstances matter when making moral decisions. People generally follow the rules—they tell the truth and keep

promises, for example—but they also understand that breaking the rules is occasionally warranted. Sometimes lies need to be told—to catch criminals, perhaps, or to protect national security—and sometimes a promise needs to be broken—if it was made in haste and keeping it would cause more harm than good. Situationism is often congruent with lived experience.

Another appeal of situation ethics is that it takes very seriously Immanuel Kant's philosophy that people should always be treated as ends in themselves, never as means to an end. Slavishly following rules, by contrast, can cause immense harm. "Always produce maximum profits" is a common rule that pleases Wall Street investors, but among other things leads to wages that are below subsistence, employment that does not provide for health care, and working conditions that endanger employees. Similarly, merely following the rules can keep companies out of legal trouble while they ignore concerns for employee welfare, public safety, and the environment. Situation ethics avoids these pitfalls by focusing on people rather than rules.

Despite these attractions, situation ethics has fallen out of favor. Its greatest weakness is that it grossly underestimates the value of moral rules. Understood in their broadest sense, moral rules are needed to sustain human community. People seldom or never need to decide whether to deceive, to cause pain, or to break a promise. Following moral rules maintains community; breaking moral rules destroys community. For this reason, following moral rules does not require justification. However, breaking moral rules always requires justification because it damages the basis of civilized society. Breaking moral rules introduces distrust, thus undermining the cooperation necessary for community.

Situation ethics has fallen out of favor for more practical reasons as well. It privileges individual judgment over conventional wisdom and assumes that the individual is capable of transcending his or her own self-interest and limited perspective when deciding to break a moral rule. For that matter, it assumes that the individual can calculate the potential harms and benefits of any particular action, as

if the individual can peer into the future to see short-term and long-term effects of any particular act. It is even conceivable that maximizing the happiness of most people will cause harm to a few, thus creating what British philosopher and economist John Stuart Mill called "tyranny of the majority." Mostly, though, situation ethics ignores the fact that moral rules generally work, and work well. That is why certain practices achieved the status of moral rules.

To say that situation ethics has fallen out of favor is an understatement. The term is used today with utter scorn and contempt. Instead of meaning the application of *agape* in concrete circumstances, as Fletcher intended, situation ethics has come to refer to self-interest, rationalization, and a lack of professionalism. It now means immorality pretending to be good, an attempt to excuse unethical behavior. Canadian public relations specialist Nigel Atkin typified today's low regard for situation ethics when he defined it as "where you do that which is least painful, and hope that not many people find out about it" (1999, p. 349). Public relations practitioners have spent the last few decades writing and revising codes of ethics, looking for principles that can be applied locally, nationally, and even internationally. They are more likely than ever to reject the situationist claim that rules are meant to be broken. Instead, they are still searching for meaningful rules that their colleagues can agree to follow.

—John P. Ferré

See also Codes of ethics; Deontology; Ethics of public relations; Moral philosophy; Utilitarianism

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SITUATIONAL THEORY OF PUBLICS

James E. Grunig of the University of Maryland developed the situational theory of publics to put meaning into the term *public*, which is one of the two key words in the phrase *public relations*. Public relations practitioners often use the term *public* to refer to the mass population, which they also call the general public. At other times, they use the plural term *publics* to refer to the groups for which public relations programs are planned—especially journalists, employees, consumers, investors, governments, local communities, and members of associations and nonprofit groups. Practitioners also commonly use the terms *stakeholders* and *publics* interchangeably.

In contrast, J. E. Grunig distinguished between stakeholders and publics and used the two concepts to segment the general population into categories that help communication professionals identify strategic publics and to plan and evaluate public relations programs. He considered the term *general public* to be a contradiction in terms because a public is always a specialized group whose members have a reason to be interested in the activities and behaviors of organizations.

In its current state, the situational theory of publics is part of J. E. Grunig's theory of the role of public relations in strategic management. Following the lead of John Dewey, who wrote about publics in the 1920s and 1930s, Grunig theorized that publics arise when organizations make decisions that have consequences on people inside and outside the organization who were not involved in making that decision. In addition, publics often want consequences from organizational decisions that organizations might be reluctant to provide—such as lower prices, stable employment, or less pollution.

Grunig reserved the term *stakeholder* for general categories of people who are affected by the actual or potential consequences of strategic, or important, organizational decisions. Stakeholders are people who have something at risk when the organization makes decisions. Stakeholder categories generally are the focus of public relations programs, such as employee relations, community relations, investor

relations, consumer relations, or government relations.

Within each of these stakeholder categories, however, the situational theory can be used to identify types of publics that differ in the extent to which they communicate actively, passively, or not at all about organizational decisions that affect them. Active publics, in turn, can develop into activist groups, or join or support activist groups. Active and activist publics make issues out of organizational consequences, and these issues may lead to crises. Thus the situational theory can be used to identify active publics in programs of environmental scanning, issues management, and crisis communication.

The situational theory is built from an explanation of why people communicate and when they are most likely to communicate. It uses the concepts of active and passive communication behavior to segment the general population into publics likely to communicate about one or more problems that are related to the consequences of organizational behaviors. The theory is situational because problems come and go and are relevant only to people who experience problematic situations related to organizational behaviors. As a result, publics arise and disappear as situations change, and organizations rarely, if ever, have a permanent set of publics.

In addition to explaining who an organization's publics are at a specific time, the situational theory also explains when communication programs are most likely to be effective—that is, to have effects on the short-term cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors of different publics and on the long-term relationships with these publics. Finally, the theory explains when publics develop from loose aggregations of individuals into organized activist groups. As a result, the situational theory provides a useful tool for strategically managing public relations programs—identifying publics, choosing realistic short- and long-term objectives for communication programs, and evaluating the outcomes of these programs.

The situational theory is similar to theories of market segmentation because it provides a method for segmenting the general population into groups relevant to public relations practitioners. Marketing

theorists provide several criteria for choosing a concept for segmentation. Segments must be mutually exclusive, measurable, accessible, pertinent to an organization's mission, and large enough to be substantial. Most importantly, the people in market segments must have a differential response to marketing strategies.

In this sense, the situational theory of publics predicts the differential responses most important to public relations professionals: (a) responsiveness to problems and issues; (b) amount of and nature of communication behavior; (c) effects of communication on cognitions, attitudes, and behavior; (d) the extent and quality of organization-public relationships; and (e) the likelihood that publics will participate in collective behavior to pressure organizations.

The situational theory also helps to explain the nature of public opinion because it incorporates the assumption that two of the classic theorists of public opinion, John Dewey and Herbert Blumer, first made about publics: Publics arise around problems that affect them. Dewey also recognized the crucial role that publics play in American democracy: After recognizing that problems affect them, publics organize into issue groups to pressure organizations that cause the problems or to pressure government to constrain or regulate those organizations. The situational theory relates these classical theories of public opinion to public relations by showing that organizations need public relations because their behaviors create problems that create publics, which may evolve into activist groups that create issues and threaten the autonomy of organizations. The situational theory formalizes the classical conceptions of publics and provides concepts and variables for identifying and measuring publics and their opinions.

When the situational theory is expressed formally, it consists of two dependent variables (active and passive communication behavior) and three independent variables (problem recognition, constraint recognition, and level of involvement). The theory also specifies that active and passive communication behaviors lead to different cognitive, attitudinal, behavioral, and relational outcomes. The two dependent variables, active and passive communication

behavior, also can be called information seeking and processing. Information seeking is premeditated—"the planned scanning of the environment for messages about a specified topic" (Clarke & Kline, 1974, p. 233). Information processing is message discovery—"the unplanned discovery of a message followed by continued processing of it" (p. 233).

The independent variables are situational variables because they measure the perceptions that people have of specific situations, especially situations that are problematic or that produce conflicts or issues. The three independent variables are defined as follows:

Problem recognition: People detect that something should be done about a situation and stop to think about what to do.

Constraint recognition: People perceive that there are obstacles in a situation that limit their ability to do anything about the situation.

Level of involvement: The extent to which people connect themselves with a situation.

The theory states and research has confirmed that high problem recognition and low constraint recognition increase both active information seeking and passive information processing. Level of involvement increases information seeking, but it has less effect on information processing. Stated differently, people seldom seek information about situations that do not involve them. Yet, they will randomly process information about low-involvement situations, especially if they also recognize the situation as problematic. Because people participate more actively in information seeking than in information processing, information seeking and the independent variables that precede it produce communication effects more often than information processing. In particular, people communicating actively develop more organized cognitions, are more likely to have attitudes about a situation, more often engage in a behavior to do something about the situation, and are more likely to develop a relationship with an organization.

J. E. Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) used combinations of the situational variables to define a range of

publics (including nonpublics, latent publics, aware publics, and active publics) and to calculate the probability of communicating with and having effects on each type of public. Grunig described a large number of studies that have used the situational theory and described the kinds of publics identified in this research. These studies consistently have identified four kinds of publics: (a) *all-issue publics*, which are active on all problems measured in the study; (b) *apathetic publics*, which are inattentive to all of the problems; (c) *single-issue publics*, which are active on one or a small subset of the problems; and (d) *hot-issue publics*, which are active only on a single problem that involves nearly everyone in the population and that has received extensive media coverage. J. E. Grunig also included quantitative measures of the situational concepts and described the multivariate statistical techniques used to analyze survey data based on these measures.

—James E. Grunig

See also Activism; Crisis communication; Environmental scanning; Issues management; Public opinion and opinion leaders; Segmentation; Stakeholder theory; Strategies

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SMITH, REA

Rea W. Smith, APR (1918–1981), served the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) for 23 years—first as assistant to Shirley D. Smith, PRSA executive director, and her husband; then as vice president of administration in 1960; and finally as first woman executive vice president from 1975 to 1980.

In 1980, Smith became executive director of the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education (now the Public Relations Foundation) until her death in 1981.

Her pioneering staff work for the national office of the PRSA included staff executive for judicial and grievance matters, for legal affairs, for committees on the development of PRSA's Code of Ethics, and for the Accreditation Boards, following the initiation of accreditation in 1962. She authored the organizational plan for establishing the International Accreditation Council, adopted in 1975.

Smith was born in Jamestown, New York, and began her career in public relations in the early 1940s. She was a TV talk show moderator and in Memphis, Tennessee, was one of the first women to produce political TV broadcasts. From 1946 to 1957, she and her husband were partners in Shirley D. Smith & Associates, a Memphis public relations firm.

Smith wrote many articles dealing with public relations and PRSA. She was treasurer of the Women Executives in Public Relations from 1971 to 1973, and a board member from 1977 to 1978.

—Elizabeth L. Toth

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SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY THEORY

The social construction of reality theory contends that reality is socially constructed and that the sociology of knowledge must scrutinize the manner in

which this occurs. From this orientation, Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann described reality as “a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognized as having a being independent of our own volition” and knowledge as “the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess specific characteristics” (1967, p. 1). In essence, people conceive their own distinctive social reality through contact and interaction with others.

Building on the work of Alfred Schutz, Berger and Luckmann argued that the reasonableness of knowledge in everyday life presents itself as a reality interpreted by individuals and subjectively meaningful to them as a rational and coherent perspective.

The world of everyday life is not only taken for granted as reality by the ordinary members of society in the subjectively meaningful conduct of their lives. It is a world that originates in their thoughts and actions, and is maintained as real by these . . . the objectivations of subjective processes (and meanings) by which the intersubjective commonsense world is constructed. (1967, pp. 19–20)

For public relations scholars and practitioners, the social construction of reality theory raises questions about whether the differences between key stakeholders’ realities may not be understood in relation to various differences between the two or more publics. Though not directly naming public relations, David R. Seibold and Brian H. Spitzberg argued that communication cannot be considered and realized without an appreciation for the interpretations communicators bring to symbolic discourse.

Without attention to the ways in which actors represent and make sense of the phenomenal world, construe event associations, assess and process the actions of others, and interpret personal choices in order to initiate appropriate symbolic activity, the study of human communication is limited to mechanistic analysis. (1982, p. 87)

Language, as such, is the means by which people function on two levels: that of their individual thoughts, and the realization that others have similar meanings and interpretations. By concentrating on

language and the subsequent symbolic meaning, public relations research can provide insight on relationships between words and issues, and between content and meaning, as well as by examining how interaction transpires regarding issues development.

Communication and public relations scholars examine the social construction of reality through the scrutiny of symbols and meaning within the substance of messages constructed and shared by organizations with key stakeholders. It is through these messages (symbols) that people create, manage, and share interpretations of reality through social interaction, which allows society to function by the sharing and giving of meaning to physical and social realities. Ultimately, this sharing provides a footing for cooperative behavior through social reality—the understanding each person has of what other people know.

A large amount of public relations research comes from the traditional theoretical position known as objectivism. This perspective operates on the assumption that awareness, knowledge, behavioral intentions, and behaviors are a given in nature, essentially uncontaminated by social factors.

On the other hand, a social constructionist orientation is a generally accepted and growing perspective in the field of public relations, arguing that public relations claims are subject to social interpretation and negotiation. From a rhetorical perspective to public relations, it is through dialogue that participants identify, create, and manage meaning by the rhetorical processes of statement and counterstatement. The study of public relations in this sense

seeks to advance marketplace and public policy discourse by pursuing relational excellence in actions (organizational responsibility) and discourse that lead to the co-creation, co-management, or co-definition of meaning (zones of meaning) that reconcile strains and alienation and foster mutually beneficial relationships (Heath, 2001, p. 35)

From a public relations perspective that appreciates and incorporates social constructionist perspectives, steeped in rhetorical traditions, public relations can help individuals and groups from lay

persons to decision makers understand, critique, and employ socially constructed, value-laden choices.

It was Berger and Luckmann's contention that the sociology of knowledge must concern itself with whatever passes for knowledge in a society, created by individuals and groups within that society, regardless of the ultimate validity or invalidity of such knowledge or the criteria used to evaluate such knowledge. This human knowledge, or perception, is identified, developed, rationalized, maintained, and altered in social situations. As if almost directly speaking to public relations scholars, they argued that "the sociology of knowledge must seek to understand the processes by which this is done in such a way that a taken-for-granted 'reality' congeals for the man in the street" (1967, p. 3).

Communication theories abound in public relations literature, and the concept of socially constructed knowledge and perceptions permeates the field's literature. A limited list of theories developed from this perspective include social cognition theory, social exchange theory, social identity theory, social judgment-involvement theory, social learning-social cognitive theory, social penetration theory, and the broader category of social theories of media effects.

For example, the relevance of mass communications studies to public relations is bound up with socially constructed realities; because mass communication is bound up with society, it is strongly influenced by the immediate circumstances of culture, history, and society. The forms of the symbolic environment, though socially constructed, are often reflected in and perceived through mass media.

Within risk communication studies, social constructionist concepts treat risk as social constructs that are determined by structural forces in society. Issues such as trust, control, and fairness among others are reconstructed from the beliefs and rationalities of people in society, and these social constructions reflect the interests and values of the individuals and the shared meaning of terms, cultural artifacts, and natural phenomena among groups. In a sense, what individuals and societies choose to call risky is largely determined by the social and cultural construction of perceptions, rather than some objective nature.

Within organizational studies, Eric H. Neilsen and M. V. H. Rao (1987) viewed organizational legitimacy as a complex process of a socially constructed reality, based on localized social norms and values. In the science/health communication field, numerous researchers have examined media coverage of scientific findings as partially socially constructed. Many researchers in the field of sociology of ignorance argue that scientists' claims regarding knowledge are either inherently social or at least partially subject to social processes.

Though not specifically coining this theory, aspects of social construction theory can be traced back to at least Plato's famous cave analogy, where the prisoners not only see shadows or reflections, but their knowledge of the people outside the cave is also created by shared perceptions. This shared, socially constructed perception is a result of their discourse about those shadows and reflections.

Building from the lead of philosophers and historians like Nietzsche, Dewey, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Scheler, and Kuhn, social construction theorists generally accept the claim that knowledge is socially determined and constructed.

Earlier this century, Walter Lippmann discussed similar important aspects of the social construction of reality in describing how democracy works and the role of public opinion within the democratic system. Lippmann argued that "man is no Aristotelian god contemplating all existence at one glance" but rather develops views of the world based on the "behavior of other human beings, in so far as that behavior crosses ours, is dependent upon us, or is interesting to us" (1922, p. 18). The individual and collective sense of reality is ultimately constructed by our experiences and relationships with others who also shape our experiences.

The social construction of reality theory argues against a purely objective sense of perception. Knowledge is not something that exists only in our heads and is learned from informative communication; rather, "the production of discourse . . . comes into being through social interaction, because discourse can be recognized as discourse only after it becomes part and parcel of the normative conventions

that form the social communities in which we all must live and work” (Kent, 1993, p. 79).

—*Michael J. Palenchar*

See also Social exchange theory; Social movement theory

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SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

Social exchange theory adapts microeconomic theory to a wide variety of exchanges between people and groups. Indeed, social exchange theory is not one theory but several theories that describe the emergent properties of social interaction. The most extensive application of social exchange has been in the area of interpersonal relationships. Social exchange theory has been invoked to explain how social relationships form, expand, and wither. More recently these theories have been used to characterize relationships between individual stakeholders and organizations.

Social exchange differs from economic exchange in that social exchange is relatively informal. It involves obligations that cannot be specified in

advance; the exchange is less time bound than economic exchange. Unlike economic exchange, the elements of social exchange are quite varied and cannot be reduced to a single quantitative exchange rate. Social exchange requires one to trust others to honor their obligations. Relationships emerge out of tit-for-tat reciprocity in minor social transactions as both parties display their trustworthiness. Social exchange contrasts with economic exchange in that it tends to foster feelings of personal obligation and gratitude.

Simple social exchange models assume that rewards and costs drive relationship decisions. When relationship rewards exceed costs, a person moves to expand the exchange in a relationship. In contrast, when costs exceed rewards, the person will halt relationship advance or even terminate the relationship. In a mutually beneficial exchange, each party supplies the wants of the other party at lower cost to self than the value of the resources the other party provides. In such a model, mutual relationship satisfaction ensures relationship stability.

However, people often put up with less-than-satisfactory relationships. John Thibaut and Harold Kelley (1959) proposed two comparison standards to differentiate between relationship satisfaction and relationship stability. Relationship satisfaction increases when the balance of rewards and costs in the relationship exceeds the person’s comparison level. The comparison level is based on the person’s past experience or social observation. When the reward/cost balance falls beneath these expectations, the person will be dissatisfied with the relationship. Some people demand higher profits from their relationships than other people do. What is a satisfactory exchange to one person will be an unsatisfactory exchange to another person.

Relationship stability is determined by how the present relationship compares with the comparison level of alternatives—or the level of rewards that the person thinks she can obtain in other relationships. If the current relationship is perceived to be more profitable than the alternatives, the relationship should endure, independent of the person’s relationship satisfaction. Combining these two standards, we can distinguish four kinds of relationships: (a) the *still-born relationship*, in which the

association falls beneath the person's comparison level and available alternative relationships (i.e., low satisfaction and low perceived alternatives); (b) the *unstable relationship*, in which the relationship compares favorably with one's expectations but lags behind the perceived relationship alternatives (i.e., satisfied but attracted to other relationships); (c) the *malaised relationship*, in which a relationship compares unfavorably with the comparison level, but rates better than the alternatives; and (d) the *blissful relationship*, in which the target relationship exceeds one's expectations and the comparison level of alternatives.

One particularly useful version of social exchange theory is found in Caryl Rusbult's (1987) investment model. This model proposes that investments also serve to stabilize relationships. The greater the non-transferable investments a person has in a given relationship, the more stable the relationship is likely to be. In this formulation, relationship stability or commitment is a function of relationship satisfaction plus relationship investment minus perceived relationship alternatives. People sometimes find they have too much invested to quit a relationship or an enterprise. Therefore, they pour additional resources into the relationship to try to salvage their endangered investments. The investment model accommodates a variety of relationships such as employment and customer relationships.

The importance of relationship investment is illustrated in the tenets of relationship marketing. Relationship marketing advocates building a differentiated and unique relationship with each customer via the use of computer databases and information processing technologies. According to Don Peppers and Martha Rogers, the customer tells the firm what she wants; the firm then makes it and remembers the customer's preferences for the next time. The "learning relationship between a customer and an enterprise gets smarter and smarter with every individual interaction, defining in ever more detail the customer's own individual needs and tastes" (1997, p. 15). In theory this increasing degree of convenience represents a customer investment that will be lost if she deserts to a competitor. Peppers and Rogers wrote, "The learning relationship creates

what is, essentially, a barrier that makes it more difficult for a customer to be promiscuous than to be loyal" (1997, p. 16).

One can increase one's relationship influence by slowly expanding the other party's investments in a relationship. Increased dependency in a relationship increases the means of influence that the other party can exercise within that relationship. Resource dependency theories apply this principle to investigate the power dynamics of relationships. The balance of dependencies in a relationship determines the power the party has in the relationship. This is stated in the principle of least interest, which says that the person who has the least interest in the association (i.e., is less dependent upon the relationship) has the greatest influence over the trajectory of the relationship.

Social exchange theory also investigates how people respond when they experience relationship dissatisfaction. For instance, people develop power strategies to deal with relationship inequities. They may seek alternative sources of resources, reduce the other party's rewards, call for greater commitment on the other person's part; or try to enhance the perceived value of their own resources to the other party. In the worst case, they engage in sour grapes and devalue the other's resources for the self. Albert Hirschman (1991) developed the typology of exit, loyalty, and voice to explain how people in organizations responded to organizational decline. Caryl Rusbult and colleagues added the category of neglect to this model. Subsequent research has shown that people tend to exit relationships when they have low investments and perceive many alternatives. The options loyalty and voice are exercised when a person has high levels of investment in and satisfaction with a current relationship. Finally, the option of neglect is often exercised when satisfaction with the relationship is low, but the person perceives few alternatives.

The relationship management metaphor has gained popularity in marketing and public relations. However, the metaphor more readily applies to some organization-stakeholder relations than others. Wendy Zubava Ford (2001) investigated the expectations that customers have for interactions with service providers. Encounter-oriented customer

exchanges focus on efficient service delivery. Different service providers offer identical services; hence the customer interacts with a role more than a person. In interactions with professionalized roles, customers expect relationship-oriented service. Here the offered services are adapted to the individual's preferences. The customer expects the service provider to discover the individual's needs and to construct an individualized plan to meet those needs. Ford found that a relationship orientation was positively related to personalized service communication.

Ellen Garbarino and Mark Johnson (1999) distinguished between low and high relationship-oriented organizational stakeholders. They found that trust, satisfaction, and commitment played different roles in predicting outcomes for these two groups. In addition, scholars have developed models that specify different kinds of relational processes for different kinds of organization-stakeholder ties. Dennis Arnett, Steven German, and Shelby Hunt (2003) developed a model of relationship marketing for nonprofits that took into account the individual's self-identification with the target institution. They found rather different predictors of stakeholder behavior depending upon whether the person had a low or a high relationship orientation toward the institution.

Social exchange theories continue to contribute to the study of organization-stakeholder relationships. For one, the metaphor that characterizes public relations as "relationship management" should acknowledge that not all long-term relationships are healthy or mutually satisfactory for the parties involved. Perspectives such as the investment model and resource dependency theory remind us that many relationships have dark sides. In summary, social exchange theory seems likely to continue as a helpful heuristic in exploring the ongoing interaction between individuals, organizations, and stakeholders.

—Greg Leichty

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- Charles J. Stewart, Craig Allen Smith, and Robert E. Denton, Jr. (1994) referred to the second half of the 20th century as "the age of the social movement in America" (p. 1). Though many definitions of social movements exist, Stewart et al. defined a *social movement* as "an organized, uninstitutionalized, and large collectivity that emerges to bring about or to resist a program of change in societal norms and values, operates primarily through persuasive strategies, and encounters opposition in a moral struggle" (1994, p. 17). They further defined persuasion as a "pervasive element" in a social movement. The focus on study of persuasive techniques and strategies has dominated the study of social movements and collectives by communication scholars.
- Stewart et al. suggested that social movements, although not referred to by that name, were present in the American experience from the colonies forward. They argued that the American Revolution began as a social movement. Beginning public relations students learn from the history of public relations that public relations activities existed far before the naming of the discipline. Michael Pfau and Roxanne Parrott (1993) cited Cotton Mather's 1721–1722 efforts to persuade Boston citizens to

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inoculate against smallpox as one of the first social action campaigns in America. Public relations textbooks often cite examples from the American Revolution, such as Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* and the publication of *The Federalist Papers*. Scott M. Cutlip, Allen H. Center, and Glen M. Broom (1994) noted that "the tools and techniques of public relations have long been an important part of political weaponry. Sustained campaigns to move and manipulate political opinion go back to the Revolutionary War and the work of Samuel Adams and his cohorts" (p. 91). In 2001, Gabriel M. Vasquez and Maureen Taylor described the foundations stage of public relations and noted the work of J.A.R. Pimlott and Cutlip when making reference to the use of public relations efforts by American colonists who sparked the American Revolution. Cutlip et al. (1994) noted,

Twentieth century developments in this field (public relations) are directly tied to the power struggles evoked by political reform movements. These movements, reflecting strong tides of protest against entrenched power groups, have been the catalytic agents for much of the growth of public relations practice, because the jockeying of political and economic groups for dominance created the need to muster public support. (p. 90)

Other social movements in American history included the temperance movement, the abolitionist movement and the women's rights movement. Just as the development of the mass media aided the emerging practice of public relations, so it aided the leaders of the social movements.

A discussion of social movements in a public relations encyclopedia must naturally turn to the influence of the research findings of other disciplines on public relations. In other words, what can public relations learn from research on social movements that has been done in communication, sociology, and other fields of study? Furthermore, what does that knowledge on social movements add to the body of knowledge in public relations?

Social movement study as a discipline is generally recognized as an outgrowth of collective behavior theory of the 1940s and 1950s. Sociologist

Herbert Blumer published his "Outline of Collective Behavior" in 1934. In this work, he provided guidelines for studying the formation of new forms of collective identity and for classifying crowd behavior. Blumer outlined a new way of classifying social movements as collective behavior.

Understanding the relationship between social movement theory and public relations requires an understanding of the relationship between rhetoric and public relations. Many authors have effectively made an argument for this link. Focusing on the dynamics of individual and organizational roles in social debate, William N. Elwood (1995) wrote,

The individual and the organization both play important roles in the network of symbolic activity that is social life. The "individual" by participating in or associating with a variety of organizations is party to many kinds of "rhetorical situations" (and often multiple) exigencies through the use of persuasion. (p. 11)

Expanding on this observation, Elwood (1995) noted, "Thus the rhetorical situation applies to public relations inquiry" (p. 11).

The link between rhetorical analysis of individual speakers and rhetorical analysis of the organization's discourse has already been established in the literature. Elizabeth L. Toth and Robert L. Heath emphasized the need for a rhetorical perspective on public relations:

Rhetoric has to do with relationships—how they are shaped—typically between organizations and individuals. Sometimes these relationships are constructive, based on fact, truth and cooperation. Sometimes they are destructive, resulting in a clash of base interests and narrow perspectives. (1992, p. xiii)

Pfau and Parrott (1993) clarified the relationship between the study of rhetoric and public relations campaigns in the preface to their book *Persuasive Communication Campaigns*.

Although there are textbooks that focus on persuasion, commercial advertising, political campaign communication, and social action campaigns, there is no book that attempts to integrate these areas. This omission is an unfortunate one, because what

Kenneth Boulding observed in very general terms to lead off this preface applies perfectly to the status of theorizing and research in influence: Much is presently known, but because scholars and practitioners focus their efforts in very specific fields, and because of inadequate communication across fields, there is duplication and wasted effort. Relationships between organizations and their stakeholder publics are certainly important to both social movement literature and public relations literature. An understanding of social movements or collective behavior is useful for the public relations practitioner because the actions taken by activists, as indicated above, often present themselves in the form of public relations issues or crises the organization must address. Study of social movements from a rhetorical perspective clearly demonstrates the ways public relations practitioners and academics can benefit from this additional knowledge base.

Public relations scholars have also examined organizational responses to the issues presented by social movements and activists through the study of issue management. Social movements and activist groups can result from the efforts of individuals who perceive situations facing them as undesirable and unite to collectively fight larger organizations and government.

Heath (1997) added to the knowledge on social movements and issue management by providing a five-stage model of activism. The five stages include strain (problem recognition), mobilization, confrontation, negotiation, and resolution. By this logic, public relations practitioners and issue managers who seek to monitor and respond to issues presented by social movements and activist groups can use the five-stage model to prepare a strategic response and monitor the development of various issues.

—Becky McDonald

See also Activism

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SOCIETY

All professions take and measure their contribution from their ability to add value to society. The history of the profession of public relations is inseparable from the changing nature of individual societies as well as the larger sense of what constitutes society. Legendary practitioners such as Ivy Lee, Edward Bernays, Earl Newsom, and John W. Hill recognized that their profession had to add value to society through their services to clients. They shaped what they believed was the ethics of their practice as well as the skills of their service by studying and dedicating to society. They may be faulted for failures, some of which are more clearly understood in retrospection, but no one can deny their concern. They took this responsibility seriously and thought in

terms of it as they defined and added to the role of public relations in society.

They were not alone in this exploration and dedication. The Public Relations Society of America's "Official Statement on Public Relations" states,

Public relations helps our complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony. . . . To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationships with many different audiences or publics such as employees, members, customers, local communities, shareholders, and other institutions, and with society at large. (Public Relations Society of America, 1997/1998, p. 2)

If we trace the antecedents of public relations broadly, we will find it at the very fabric of the evolution of ideas, policies, values, and organizations in every country, culture, and society. For instance, John W. Hill, principal founding partner of Hill & Knowlton, recognized the reality that public relations practitioners were needed to help organizations understand and meet their contract with society. They were the servants of society that gave them life. Hill advised, "Public relations is an outgrowth of our free society, in which the ideal of an enlightened and rational public opinion is brought ever closer as understanding increases between groups and individuals" (1958, p. vix). For Hill, the primary role of public relations was to "serve 'the public interest' {which} evolves from the properly combined energies and principles of all positive elements of our society" (1963, p. 256). Leaders in the profession have long recognized that their obligations, rights, responsibilities, and ethics derived from the societies where they operated.

Sensitivity to public relations' role in society has been a constant theme in published studies on the discipline. The early years of the *Public Relations Review* witnessed many articles that addressed that theme and the standards of corporate responsibility that must guide practitioners and their clients. In those treatises, service to society was a constant and serious theme. More recently, Ron Pearson

(1992) examined in detail how critical standards surrounding the practice reflected different views of the role of business in society. Practitioners were in a position to adjust business to society or society to business. They could be the pawns of business or the servants of society. These were ethical and professional choices. Similar analysis underpinned Larissa A. Grunig's (1992) reasoning that public relations needs to add definable value to society if it is to have the status of a true and worthy profession. Central to its charge is the challenge facing it to raise the ethical standards of the organizations the practice represents. Studies of this kind by academics such as Roy Leeper in 2001, were accompanied by substantial investigation of the implications and challenges over the meaning of community and communitarianism.

Systems perspectives on public relations reason that an organization cannot long prosper or even survive if it is out of harmony with the interests of its publics and other organizations—with the larger society. A rhetorical perspective on public relations contends that dialogue is the essence of the struggle to achieve this balance of interests and perspectives. The fostering and vetting of ideas occurs in public through the process of statement and counter statement. However idealistic, this view of public relations assumes that public discourse refines ideas, vets facts and sharpens their interpretation, evaluates value priorities, and scrutinizes personal and sociopolitical policies and actions. Fundamental to this wrangle is the reality of social exchange whereby no organization is thought to be able to survive and thrive if its presence creates costs greater than its apparent benefits. One additional line of analysis, generically called *cultural/critical theory*, adds depth to these considerations by exploring the presence, causes, and remedies to alienation. For this reason, contemporary thought charges public relations theory with addressing the role and solution of alienation in society. To this end, and that of the other perspectives central to public relations theory, the fundamental concepts are balance and harmony.

Balance and harmony appear as central paradoxes on discussions of society. Authors for centuries have

discussed the concept of society. It is a matter of eternal fascination to academics and practitioners of various kinds. The eternal question is not “Does each profession serve society?” but perhaps “How does society sustain each profession?”

One such curious mind led George Herbert Mead to explore this set of questions from the viewpoint of the behaviorist in 1934. He wanted to better understand and explain how individuals’ experiences and relationships resulted from and formed their mind as well as their individual and collective sense of self. His analysis builds on the belief that individual awareness and normative behavior results from individual and collective dialectics of mind, self, and society:

Our society is built up out of our social interests. Our social relations go to constitute the self. But when the immediate interests come in conflict with others we had not recognized, we tend to ignore the others and take into account only those which are immediate. The difficulty is to make ourselves recognize the other and wider interests, and then to bring them into some sort of rational relationship with the more immediate ones. (1934, pp. 388–389)

A society—composed of people and the organizations they create—learns from actions, reactions, mistakes and reevaluations based on the analysis of mistakes. As a profession, public relations can serve society by helping to solve these mistakes. Public relations can add value to organizations by making them good as a prerequisite for their being articulate.

Fundamental to the nature of society is the individual and collectives of individuals. Perhaps the ability to create collective behavior is a human trait that fosters survival, as perhaps today many might think that it endangers the species. To create society, humans need to foster a sense of mind, self, and society. Mind, as a collective entity, requires shared meaning. Without shared meaning, coordination of human activity as we know it is impossible. The key elements of information (facts and knowledge), evaluation (attitude and value), and action (based on choice) are the essential ingredients of rhetoric. Through symbols that allow discourse, people arrange society rather than merely

enact it at a sensory level, which is more typical of other social animals. In the blending of collective interests, people must manifest and manage their self-interests.

Discourse allows the human species to recognize and balance interest, self, self-interest, and the interests of others. As Mary Douglas postulated, “Cultural theory is a way of thinking about culture that draws the social environment systematically into the picture of individual choices” (1992, p. xi). If individual choices could truly be independent, there would be no need for society as the essence of collective action characteristic of the human species. For her, “it is possible to write an objective account of how the ideas of the self (the ideal of it, of course, not the self itself) is [*sic*] treated in the normative debate which is the source and origin of culture” (p. xi). The rationale for society and culture grows from the awareness of and shared sense of danger. Danger is recognized as being antithetical to self, to self-interest, and to the interests of others. The rationale for society, by this account, is the collective management of risks. It entails enlightened choice making, a basic principle of rhetoric (Nichols, 1963).

As characterized by Douglas, the rationale for society and culture is the collective management of risk—joint problem recognition and problem solution. As she reasoned, “At the inception of any community a debate is opened about the future form of the society. This is an ongoing normative debate about values and beliefs about the world. It never stops” (1992, p. 43). So conceived, each profession plays a unique role in the collective management of risk. Out of this dialogue emerge idioms that express views of reality and preferences—norms.

In the search for security, words (symbols) count. Meaning defines interests, the balance of interests, risks, and the management of risks. Is this not the realm of public relations, not alone, but in conjunction with other professions? What is meaning? What meaning counts? What meaning is normatively preferable to balance competing interests? One of the best expressions of the logics that help discuss this view of society was made by the famed linguist Edward Sapir, who, in discussing the

centrality of language and meaning to the human experience, observed,

Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, not alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation. (quoted in Whorf, 1956, p. 134)

Society, by this view, can be conceptualized as a complex of cultures, each with its peculiar language culture. Interests are reflected, defined, challenged, and denied through language. Privilege and marginalization are challenges ever alive in society.

These polarities are basic to various competing philosophies of public relations for all of the understandable reasons. At times some organizations have used public relations to privilege their view of reality—their terministic screens (Burke, 1966). The concern over a propagandistic view of public relations focuses on the ability of some entities in society to use distortion, lies, misinformation, false reasoning, masked interests, blame shifting, and imbalanced relationships to benefit some interests at the disadvantage (marginalization) of others.

It is unrealistic to expect any profession to set things right. Many take their rationale from that challenge. None is solely responsible for creating divisions that are inappropriate to the greatest good of society. Likewise, none is solely responsible for correcting problems. But, as noted previously, the Public Relations Society of America asks a lot of its members and those dedicated to the profession. “Public relations helps our complex, pluralistic society to reach decisions and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony” (Public Relations Society of America, 2004, para. 1). Definitions of professions are enriched by setting the challenge for themselves to serve society—the larger interests of humanity. Public relations (its practice and academic study) cannot be justified or studied appropriately independent of an

ongoing concern for its contributory role to the good of society. In this challenge, concerns about balanced interests offer rationale for a relationship approach to the discipline and challenge practitioners to think about the rationale and strategies needed to achieve mutually beneficial relationships.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Antecedents of modern public relations; Bernays, Edward; Hill, John Wiley; Lee, Ivy; Mutually beneficial relationships; Newsom, Earl

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SONNENBERG, BEN

The name of this legendary publicist/press agent is lost or blurred in modern discussions of public

relations innovators. During his heyday in New York City, Ben Sonnenberg was larger than life. Image without substance, colorful, flashy, dapper, lavish, self-made, dominating, grandiose, glitter, aura, doer of favors, giver of gifts, ostentatious—these and many other similar phrases were used to describe his character and career. He was one of the princes of public relations who created an agency largely based on his personality. Like so many of these pioneers in the middle years of the 20th century, he left only a partial record of his work. No agency bears his name as his professional legacy. An oft-quoted line opens a feature story by Crosswell Bowen and George Clark on Sonnenberg in the February 1950 issue of *Harper's Magazine*: “Benjamin Sonnenberg may not be the richest or the most powerful man in his trade, but he is certainly the most successful in giving that impression” (p. 39). In that way, he became the prince to many merchant princes, individual leaders of government and commerce.

Born into crushing poverty in Brest Litovsk, Poland, on July 21, 1901, Sonnenberg came with his parents to New York City, where he became famous for creating legends for others through his publicity skills. He died on September 6, 1978, after having created a high lifestyle that included owning one of the most lavish mansions in New York City. In the judgment of Bowen and Clark, “Sonnenberg’s role is conceived to stand out in bright, theatrical lights. His clothes, his house, his mode of transportation, eating habits, and manner of doing business all bear the unmistakable imprint of a character equipped to function in a lively and competitive field” (1950, p. 39). The side of the profession that appealed to Sonnenberg was press agency aimed at getting high-profile recognition for his clients. He proclaimed that for a hefty fee he would see that his clients received “honorary degrees, the French Legion of Honor, and their pictures on the cover of *Time* magazine” (p. 39).

The walls of his lavish Park Avenue office were lined with framed magazine stories he had arranged to feature the professional reputation of his clients. Along with these stories were signed pictures of the powerful and famous: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Herbert Hoover, Fiorello La Guardia, “Wild Bill”

Donovan, Ely Culbertson, Prince Matchabelli, and Grand Duchess Marie of Russia. In the midst of this publicity clutter one could also find framed cover-page pictures of the barons of industry. A personal-ity in his own right, Sonnenberg dealt in personae. He worked successfully to carve images for the rich and famous—for hefty annual fees.

Sonnenberg’s lifestyle was not the result of his success. It was its foundation. He created personae for others. He did so for himself, as evidence of what he could accomplish for clients. His dress, mansion, bold mustache, and characteristic dress attracted attention—some of which was unflattering. The conservative John W. Hill slammed Sonnenberg’s approach. Hill believed that he was not king of his agency, but one of many smart and ethical counselors who toiled to put information before the public to gain goodwill for clients. Second, the ostentatious lifestyle, perhaps most particularly his apparel, was Hill’s target for the sharpest comment in private correspondence to Tommy Ross. Hill noted what he had learned about success in public relations from reading the *Harper's Magazine* piece: “After reading it I have decided to go in for elongated sideburns and a sailor suit” (private correspondence from John W. Hill to Tommy Ross, March 14, 1950).

Like others in his profession during the middle years of the 20th century, his goal was to attract clients who wanted to be recognized. His business clients wanted to become household names. They sought to be familiar and friendly parts of the lives of the American consumer who had turned away from business for many reasons, most particularly the damage done to business’s reputation during the Depression. He spoke the language of business leaders and influential political leaders. He could build bonds of friendship and trust between them. Each sought the favor of the other. He not only believed that power of a society rested in hands of the few, but he also made that principle work hand-somely for others who held a similar view of society, politics, and commerce.

He knew also that customers and community were important to his clients’ interests. He convinced the leaders of the Texas Company (later Texaco and now

Chevron-Texaco) that clean restrooms attracted travelers, who also bought gasoline and other products. His love for theater sparked in him a mission that motivated his effort to convince the company to sponsor Metropolitan Opera broadcasts. That sponsorship is one of the longest and best signatures by an American company. Thousands have enjoyed an afternoon of opera because of his desire to define the persona of the company and build customer and community goodwill.

His professional counseling emphasis was more on image than issue. Rather than working an issue with the substance of sustained debate, he was more likely to work on the image of the client. His forte was creating justification for the actions and aspirations of his clients as the basis for achieving goodwill. Like others of his age, he believed that government and business policies stand before the court of public opinion. He thought that character was the essence of such debates. His client list included the barons of industry and the highest political leaders who wanted to be known and respected for their influence.

Each day he courted the favor of clients, prospects, and reporters. He thought a lunch without someone from those categories was a wasted opportunity. He courted the favor of the press. He wanted reporters to know him personally and to like doing favors for him. During the decades when leaders of major public relations firms were working to create professional associations to foster the ethics and style of the practice, Sonnenberg was one of several loner publicists and counselors who did not join in this professional leadership. He operated by his own standards and saw success as the ultimate ethic. He told Bowen and Clark, "I do what I do because it works" (1950, p. 49). By his own measure he was an adapter. He believed those who adapt to their culture and circumstances thrive; those who do not, perish. By that standard, this self-made millionaire was an adapter. He was larger than life—for himself and his clients.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Goodwill; Hill, John Wiley; Press agency; Publicist

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SOUND BITE

When a reporter interviews a subject for a news story, often only a small segment or a single quote from the actual interview will be used in the broadcast. These small segments are known as *sound bites*. A sound bite is a reference to the short comments that broadcast media use during news stories.

Although an interview with a reporter may last 30 minutes, what actually appears in the edited broadcast version will most likely be paired down to a 30-second (or less) sound bite. A sound bite is on average less than 10 seconds. Radio broadcasts tend to limit sound bites to only one sentence, a mere 8 to 10 words. Television sound bites are only one or two sentences in length, or about 25 words.

Because the length of a sound bite is so limited, it is important to have statements prepared in advance of an interview to increase chances of having the media use crucial portions of an interview. Once the prepared message has been delivered, it is important to stop talking. Answers to questions during the interview must be short and direct. Also, using clear and concise language as well as colorful and descriptive words will increase odds of the media using portions of an interview. By using short and direct responses and providing short sound bites, it is possible to have two short bites appear in one news segment.

For an effective sound bite, it is important to distill information into two or three key points. It is necessary to have a clear and concise message and corresponding key points to convey during an interview. By sticking to three key points or less, the audience is less likely to be confused and lose interest.

Unfortunately sometimes the sound bite may be taken out of context and be misleading. It is important that any spokesperson for an organization be prepared for an interview—have key messages

already prepared that will make great sound bites and avoid using terminology that may be used out of context and sound negative. An interview subject who talks in sound bites is more likely to be included in the story since it facilitates editing and is short enough, and interesting enough, to fit the quick time frame of broadcast news.

—Nancy Engelhardt Furlow

See also Actuality; Interview as a communication tool; Media relations

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SOUTH AFRICA, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

INTRODUCTION

Public relations in South Africa developed largely in isolation during the last 46 years. There is little contact with practitioners or educators in the rest of Africa, with the exception of the neighboring countries that are part of the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

The Republic of South Africa is considered the most advanced in sub-Saharan Africa with regard to public relations practice and education. Global standards are maintained, exemplified by two South Africans winning coveted public relations research awards in the United States in 2002. Ursula Ströh received attention for the best student paper for the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) for her doctoral research titled “An Experimental Study on the Impact of Change Communication Management on Relationships

with Employees.” Dr. Derina Holtzhausen (now living in the United States) won the Institute for Public Relations’ Pathfinder Award for innovative research.

South African professional associations and their office bearers also excel in the global village. In June of 2003, a public relations consultant and past president of the IABC Southern Africa Chapter, Stephanie Griffiths, became the first non-American to be elected chairman of the IABC worldwide. Margaret Moscardi, executive director of Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa (PRISA), is on the executive board of the Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communication Management Associations (GA), and PRISA has been appointed the official secretariat of the GA.

It is not a well-known fact that in 1980 South Africa was the first country to research and evolve a body of knowledge for public relations, or that PRISA was the first public relations association in the world to obtain certification from the International Standards Organization (ISO), or that the first reader/text book on strategic public relations was produced in South Africa.

PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Holtzhausen’s research has indicated that top management’s recognition of public relations as a strategic function is the most important change in public relations practice during the last decade. In another study, Benita Steyn found that chief executives expect the role of *strategist* from the most senior public relations practitioner, but the incumbent is not perceived to be performing that role.

The profound social and political changes in South Africa have forced practitioners to adapt to new realities, for example, more transparency, high levels of social responsibility, black empowerment, affirmative action, and cultural differences among publics. Learning how to balance First and Third World concerns, and adapting the Western model of public relations to African conditions are forcing practitioners to be more innovative.

A PRISA survey indicated that relations with employees and communities are now deemed more important by organizations compared with the previous emphasis on customers or the media. A greater emphasis on development and intercultural communication with previously ignored publics is also apparent. Technology is less of a factor in causing change in South Africa because key publics do not have access to technology.

There is increasing pressure from labor unions, the media, consumers, and society to be more socially responsible—a concept that, in the South Africa context, refers to the uplifting of previously disadvantaged communities. South Africa's King Report on corporate governance provides a unique opportunity for public relations practitioners to bring to top management's attention their expertise in building relationships with, and becoming more accountable to, organizational stakeholders and society.

GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION

As a priority of the South African government, communication is driven centrally from the presidency by the Government Communication Information System (GCIS). The head of the GCIS sits in Cabinet and holds post-Cabinet briefings to communicate government's decisions on policy matters. The GCIS works closely with communication directorates in national departments and the latter, in turn, with their provincial counterparts to ensure consistency of government communication. Also in government, a focus on strengthening the strategic management of communication is observed.

The government places a premium on unmediated communication to the public, that is, direct dialogue between the Cabinet and the general public. In order to bring about an open and positive communication environment with all citizens, the GCIS has developed Government Information Centres and Multipurpose Community Centres. The main thrust has been to reverse the perceived media theme of "no service delivery" and "increasing poverty" to "The tide has turned! Build a people's contract for a better South Africa."

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa

PRISA has been renamed the Institute of Public Relations and Communication Management. In terms of membership, PRISA is the third largest public relations institute in the world (after PRSA in the United States and IPR in Great Britain) and also one of the oldest. PRISA was formed in 1957 in Johannesburg and its official newsletter *Communica* launched in 1970. The first all-Africa public relations conference took place together with the Public Relations Society of Kenya and IPRA in 1975.

In 1980, student membership was introduced. A voluntary accreditation examination was introduced in 1987, with the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand recognizing PRISA accreditation status. PRISA was a founder member of the Global Alliance in 2000. By 2002, PRISA membership stood at 1,300 practitioners with an additional 3,430 student members as well as 53 members in the Consultants Chapter.

International Association of Business Communicators

The first South Africans joined the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) in 1967, and the Southern Africa chapter was formed in 1991 as part of the Europe/Africa Region. Pixie Malherbe, the first president, received the IABC Chairman's Award in 1994. The Sub-Saharan Africa Region, established in 2000/2001 as a developmental region, became the Africa Region in September 2003.

The majority of the 125 IABC members are in executive positions at large corporations. The Gauteng chapter has 95 members, the Western Cape 15, and the virtual chapter Ubuntu 15. Members forming part of Ubuntu are living in other African countries.

Other Communication Associations

South Africa Communication Association (SACOMM), founded in 1978, mainly serves the

academic fraternity. UNITECH is the association for public relations and marketing professionals employed by universities and technikons (technical universities) and IMPRO, the Institute of Municipal Public Relations Officers.

SOUTH AFRICAN CONSULTANCIES

The largest consultancy (and the only one listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange) is Simeka TWS, with an income of R 20,8 million (2001 figures). It also has the largest turnover, namely R 75,9 million. Other large consultancies (in order of income) are Meropa Communications, Sasani Communications, Arcay Communications, Gilliam Gamsy International, Bairds Communications, Fleischman Hillard, Manning Selvage & Lee, Tin Can Communications, and Integrated Communications.

During the last three years, there has been an increasing demand for more strategically devised initiatives from the large public relations consultancies. *Perception* and *reputation management* have become the new buzzwords, which has led to a bigger emphasis on research, both qualitative and quantitative. This is often undertaken by research houses, such as Markinor, Research Surveys, Research International, and AskAfrica, to name a few.

The strategic skills base in the industry is lacking, however—most consultants have a journalism background, without the necessary tertiary education to be taken seriously in the business environment. All large agencies are currently investing in training and development to address this shortfall.

Several advertising agencies are restructuring to offer a total marketing mix solution (including public relations) to make up for the losses in advertising spending. Increasing competition and encroachment is also evident from management consulting and auditing firms, as well as market research institutions.

A trend that has emerged over the last five years is the strong focus on development communication, with large donor organizations allocating huge budgets to social marketing and development communication. Another trend is that government and

corporate tenders now include very specific criteria with regard to black economic empowerment.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

South Africa has extensive educational opportunities in public relations that compare well with the United States, widely accepted as the pacesetter in the field.

Universities

In 1960, the Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (PU for CHE) launched the first *degree program* in journalism. Communication courses at South African universities followed in 1968.

At most South African universities (e.g., the Free State [UFS], Port Elizabeth [UPE], South Africa [UNISA], the Rand Afrikaans University [RAU], and PU for CHE), the subject field of public relations is positioned as part of the total communication training in the social sciences. It forms part of a degree in communication, journalism, media studies, communication management or business communication.

At PU for CHE, approximately 70 students graduate annually with a bachelor's degree in public relations. Since 2000, 15 students have obtained master's degrees and two students doctoral degrees in public relations. At UNISA (a distance education institution) around 500 receive bachelor's degrees each year. Since 2000, around six students have obtained master's degrees and three students doctoral degrees on public relations topics. In recent years, universities such as RAU, PU for CHE and UFS introduced structured (coursework) masters degrees in public relations.

The University of Pretoria (UP) specializes in Communication Management (Public Relations), taught as a separate management function within Economic and Management Sciences since 1993. Professor Gustav Puth (the "father of strategic communication" in South Africa) was responsible for this unique positioning, which resulted in an emphasis on the management and strategic perspective at UP, rather than the technician- or skills-oriented

perspective common to the field. UP introduced its structured master's in Communication Management in 1995, converting it to a Web-based degree in 2002.

At UP around 45 students graduate each year with a Bachelor of Commerce degree. In addition, there are around 350 management students (majoring in marketing, human resources, tourism, business management, etc.) who enroll for Communication Management as a final (third) year subject each year. In total, sixteen master's students have graduated since 2000 and current enrollment stands at 36 (13 master's students for theses and 23 for coursework). Three doctoral students have graduated since 2000, with 12 students currently enrolled.

Technikons

SA technikons (technical universities) specialize in vocational training, the emphasis being on outcomes-based education/training. Curricula are determined at national level, resulting in highly homogenized public relations training. Technikons teaching public relations are Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Cape, Port Elizabeth, and Vaal Triangle, as well as the Durban Institute of Technology.

In total, the technikons had 555 first-year students enrolled in 2002 for the National Diploma in Public Relations Management. Together, they also had an enrollment of 89 B Tech degree (equivalent of an honors program) students, 15 M Tech (master's) students, and 1 D Tech (doctoral) student. The Technikon SA, a distance-learning facility, had 813 first-year enrollments and 46 B Tech students in 2002.

PRISA Education and Training Centre

The PRISA Education and Training Centre (PETC) is the outgrowth of a comprehensive education and training program that was launched by PRISA in 1964. The late Anna-Mari Honiball, doyen of informal public relations training in South Africa, was appointed the first Head of Education in 1989. At this time, PRISA offered the Basic Principles of Public Relations course (also licensed to colleges), as well as the Advanced Principles of Public Relations course. The first Public Relations

Management Course was offered in 1992. This was also the year that PRISA presented its first Educator of the Year Award. The first student conference, now an annual event, was held in 1999.

The three-year public relations diploma was implemented in 1997, becoming the first qualification outside Great Britain to be recognized by the IPR. PRISA has a license agreement with several commercial colleges in South Africa and neighboring countries as well as a number of technikons to offer some of its courses.

South African Public Relations Textbooks

1965: First South African public relations textbook, *Public Relations Practice in South Africa* (J. P. Malan and J. A. L'Estrange)

1982: *Handbook of Public Relations* (Chris Skinner and Llew Von Essen), plus various revised editions up to the present

1994: *Public Relations in South Africa: A Management Reader* (edited by Berendien Lubbe and Gustav Puth)

1995: *Public Relations, Development and Social Investment: A Southern African Perspective* (Gary Mersham, Ronél Rensburg, and Chris Skinner)

2000: *Corporate Communication Strategy* (Benita Steyn and Gustav Puth); *Introduction to Public Relations and Advertising* (edited by Danie du Plessis)

2002: *Effective Public Relations for Sub-Saharan Africa* (Scott Cutlip, Allen Center, Glen Broom, and Danie du Plessis); *Public Relations: A South African Perspective* (edited by Ronél Rensburg and Mike Cant); *Strategic Organisational Communication: Paradigms and Paradoxes* (edited by Sonja Verwey and F du Plooy Cilliers)

2003: Ronél Rensburg, "Public Relations in South Africa: From Rhetoric to Reality," in *The Global Public Relations Handbook* (edited by Dejan Verčić and Krishnamurthy Sriramesh)

United States textbooks are often prescribed but have become prohibitively expensive in recent years because of the exchange rate.

The Status of Academic Research in Public Relations in South Africa

Research in public relations is increasingly being conducted, although it is still in the embryonic stage. At South Africa technikons, the approach is pragmatic. Therefore, most academic research is conducted by university lecturers and their post-graduate students. At some institutions, however, theses and dissertations lack a clear definition of the field of public relations and often confuse it with marketing. In such instances, the main purpose of public relations is seen as serving the marketing function—the so-called integrated marketing communication (IMC) approach.

A notable exception is the University of Pretoria (UP), where a research program in strategic public relations was initiated in 1997. The findings of the landmark IABC *Excellence Study* was used to conceptualize research aimed at finding solutions to public relations problems in the local context. Phase 1 was completed by Retha Groenewald in 1998, establishing communication management training as a synthesis of public relations as well as organizational, management, and business communication—forming the theoretical foundation of UP's undergraduate training up to the present. Her quantitative study on the knowledge base of the public relations manager determined management, strategic communication, and management communication skills as being most important.

Phase 2 focused on the shared expectations between top management and the public relations department. In the first study, Estelle de Beer found that the perception of public relations managers was that senior management expected them to make a strategic contribution to organizational decision making. In the second study in phase 2, Steyn conceptualized and empirically verified the role of the public relations strategist, manager, and technician, according to the role expectations (normative) and the perceptions of role performance (positive) of 103 South African chief executives.

With completion of the UP *Excellence* project, the emphasis has shifted to the African Body of

Knowledge (ABOK) project, currently being conducted by Gené van Heerden. Other focus areas are social responsibility, reputation, and change management.

The study field of communication management adheres to the proud tradition of UP as the leading research university in the country. For three consecutive years, PRISA has bestowed its Educator of the Year award on UP lecturers: Steyn in 1999 and 2001, and Ursula Ströh in 2000. Since 2000, lecturers at UP have produced 32 national and 16 international conference papers, as well as 15 articles in scholarly journals (14 national and 1 international).

Other public relations research that can hold its own internationally includes a doctoral dissertation by Professor Annelie Naudé from the PU for CHE in 2001. Her study addressed a void in public relations research by exploring the interactive use of the Internet, focusing specifically on its use by national government organizations (NGOs) in enhancing their development programs.

Expatriate Dr. Derina Holtzhausen conducted a study on the effects of political change on public relations practice in South Africa, as well as on public relations roles and models in the “new” South Africa—inter alia exploding the myth of the symmetrical/asymmetrical dichotomy in international settings.

Betsie Ferreira, a senior lecturer in public relations at Port Elizabeth Technikon, is currently completing her doctoral dissertation on vocationally oriented public relations education in globalized contexts in South African technikons.

Academic Journals Published in South Africa

In South Africa, academic communication journals are published by universities. *Communicare* (RAU) and *Communicatio* (UNISA) accept scholarly articles across the broad communication domain (e.g., public relations, organizational/development/marketing communication, and communication theory). *Equid Novi* (PU for CHE) focuses on journalism and *Communitas* (Free State) on community communication and information.

CONCLUSION

There is a vibrant public relations community at the southernmost tip of Africa, with regard to both practice and education. However, the field is still characterized by its search for identity, legitimacy, and professional recognition.

—Benita Steyn

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SPEAKERS BUREAUS

A speakers bureau is a public relations tactic that provides individuals representing an organization the opportunity to speak about the organization's interests to other groups. The speakers bureau is composed of a pool of internal speakers that may include executives, employees, or volunteers who are made available upon request to other organizations. The speakers typically are provided without charge to civic and service organizations, business

and professional organizations, and schools as a means of promoting the organization or its position on issues. Speakers bureaus are commonly operated by corporations, industry associations, health care organizations, and nonprofits.

Speakers bureaus have long been a standard tactic of community relations programs. Whereas some organizations have developed speakers bureaus primarily as a reactive response to help them more systematically handle frequent requests for speakers, other speakers bureau programs proactively seek out strategic opportunities to place organizational representatives in front of key constituencies or to position executives as “thought leaders” in high-profile fora.

As a form of direct communication, speakers bureaus offer a number of advantages over mass-mediated public relations tactics. Most important, the speakers bureau is a relationship-building tool. Knowledgeable, personable speakers help to put a human face on the organization and increase its credibility. The public speaking situation allows for interaction with the audience and immediate feedback, and allows the speaker to control the organization's message without filtering from the media. In addition, according to the 1980 publication *The Executive Speechmaker: A Systems Approach*, speakers bureaus demonstrate the organization's accessibility and desire to be a constructive participant in its community and industry.

A successful speakers bureau requires careful selection of participants. Although some organizations recruit participants simply by asking for volunteers, others invite specific individuals based on their credentials, relevant personal experiences, or known speaking skills. Because audiences prefer to hear firsthand accounts from those closest to a situation, the public relations representative may not always be the most appropriate choice for a speaker. CEOs who lack requisite speaking skills or personal warmth may not be good choices either.

A successful speakers bureau also requires adequate training and coaching of participants, research to identify desirable audiences and topics of interest to them, selection of key message points, and development of written scripts and speaking

aids, which may include full text of speeches, speech outlines, audiovisual aids, and handouts. A speakers bureau may have several prepared presentation topics and corresponding speakers available to the public at any one time. These might include issue-oriented presentations (e.g., a presentation to announce a new venture, plant, program, or goal), a presentation designed to solicit donations or volunteers, and presentations adapted to specific groups (e.g., children, homeowners, non-English speakers, or senior citizens). Some shared “stock” content, such as an overview of the organization’s mission, scope and operations, or references to an annual theme or slogan, may serve as unifying elements across the various types of speeches. Speakers bureaus can also be helpful in negatively charged situations to dispel misconceptions, explain organizational actions, gather support for a position, or bring legislative or regulatory roadblocks to light.

An obvious prerequisite for success is that external publics be made aware of the availability of a speakers bureau. The bureau should be promoted to appropriate groups and made accessible through the organization’s Web site. Scheduled presentations should be publicized in appropriate internal and external media. In addition to seeking media coverage of the speech, many organizations multiply the value of speaking opportunities by “repackaging” their executives’ speeches for use in op-ed pieces, internal publications, and Web sites. Finally, presentations should be evaluated through audience surveys or feedback from event organizers. Managing these tasks associated with large, proactive speakers bureaus may require full-time, professional-level staff.

It should be noted that the type of speakers bureau described here and considered to be a public relations tactic is distinct from for-profit talent agencies, which offer speakers for a fee, although some of these entities call themselves “speakers bureaus.”

—Katherine N. Kinnick

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SPEECHWRITING

Speechwriting in its simplest form is the process of preparing a speech. It involves analysis of the audience and speaking situation; identification of a topic; development of arguments, appeals, and supporting materials; and ordering those materials in a systematic manner. Speechwriting in most corporate settings is much more complex, however, because the speech is often a statement of the organization’s policy or position. Moreover, speeches remain one of the most important forms of communication employed by organizations. They are used to announce major policies and initiatives; restate positions; disseminate information; manage issues, image, and reputation; and persuade stakeholders to support the organization. Senior executives deliver speeches at annual meetings, to groups of employees, and to a wide variety of external stakeholders. Occasionally, CEOs take on celebrity status and may be called on to give speeches about social as well as general business issues to both domestic and international audiences.

The form of speeches prepared for executives vary from manuscripts to more general outlines or simple talking points. Although the nature of the speaking occasion will influence the formality of the speech, many executives favor manuscript speeches over outlines or talking points. Manuscripts allow for more precise language.

Corporate speechwriting usually involves a process of close collaboration of the executive speaker and a speechwriter or ghostwriter, and careful review of the speech by various aspects of departments of the organization. This process of

speechwriting and review helps ensure that the speech is a corporate product and that it is fully vetted. Executive speeches are often reviewed by the public relations department, the legal department, and any other major divisions or departments discussed in the speech. This review process, although useful in ensuring that all statements are accurate and appropriate, sometimes reduces the quality of the messages. Professional speechwriters, for example, often complain that reviews by legal departments translate stirring prose into meaningless legalese. Mike Morrison, former speechwriter for Lee Iacocca, noted that the committee-written speech increasingly tends to be the norm in major corporations. Moreover, committee-written speeches often lack distinctiveness. Speechwriters often recommend, therefore, that these reviews be kept to a minimum.

Speechwriters also recommend that the writer get to know the speaker. This includes understanding the speaker's views on various issues, patterns of language use, pronunciation, interests, and backgrounds so that they may write more effectively in the speaker's voice.

Using a professional writer to prepare a speech for an executive is usually justified on three grounds. First, senior executives often do not have the time to research and prepare a speech. This lack of time is compounded by the fact that executives may give dozens of major speeches each year. Finally, executives rarely have the training or background to prepare a variety of successful addressees, tailored to a wide array of diverse audiences, focusing on a range of different topics. In essence, using a speechwriter improves the probability that an executive speech will have the desired effect. Despite these justifications, speechwriting does raise several ethical questions about honesty and authorship.

—Matthew W. Seeger,
Timothy L. Sellnow, and Robert R. Ulmer

See also Ghostwriting

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SPIN

Public relations professionals have been called all kinds of names—sandbaggers, flacks, propaganda machines, spin doctors. Unfortunately, these labels connote a P. T. Barnum/Jerry McGuire approach to public relations management. Further, these negative names imply that the industry engages in promoting hype, puffery, and communication manipulation. These terms also suggest that press relations is the primary function for which public relations practitioners are responsible. And even more disturbing is the point that *spin doctor* has become a mainstream term used by the media to associate smoke-and-glass strategies with public relations professionals.

The reasons this black cloud of spin looms over the industry are as varied as the definitions used to describe public relations itself. Whereas some view public relations as a management function that promotes mutually beneficial relationships and encourages positive behavioral change, others advocate that their primary responsibility is to engage in image and reputation management. Still others believe that the public relations function is concerned mainly with media relations and publicity.

Why does this negative perception linger? An attempt to provide an exhaustive list of "how comes" would be an unproductive effort. The purpose of this entry is to provide an in-depth discussion that offers information from various viewpoints, enabling practitioners to make more clearly defined and educated decisions about how—and why—they plan to practice public relations.

ORIGINAL SPIN MODEL INTRODUCED

Today, when the term *spin doctor* is used in the same sentence with *public relations*, many professionals get chills up the spine. But the chills are

immediately followed by feelings of frustration. Many questions regarding the spin doctor paradigm are still left unanswered: (a) From where does this negative stereotype stem? (b) What has caused this misperception to continue? (c) What can the public relations profession do to diminish such inaccuracies? (d) Is this model really becoming acceptable as a mainstream way of doing business among public relations practitioners?

Sumpter and Tankard originally identified the *spin model* as an alternative approach to other models being practiced in the public relations industry. After providing a thorough overview of what this model entails, they concluded

The field of public relations needs to come to terms with the spin doctor phenomenon. A cursory review of some public textbooks suggests little discussion of the role, and, indeed, some rather drastic differences between spin doctoring and standard public relations activities. Do public relations practitioners want to distance themselves from the spin doctor phenomenon, as Bernays appears to be recommending? Do they want to claim the spin doctors as part of their field? Or do they want to select what is effective from the spin doctor repertoire and incorporate it into the traditional public relations model, while ignoring the rest? The spin doctor conception of truth, and ethics of spin doctors, would also seem to be topics of further discussion. (1994, p. 26)

Something of an ominous, conspiracy-like theory, the public relations spin model still prevails today—10 years after Sumpter and Tankard initially suggested that it existed. But now this model seems to be even more predominant than it did when the authors introduced it. Evidence lies not only in the profession but also in the plethora of literature written about spin.

Robert Dilenschneider, a well-known public relations practitioner, is an advocate of denouncing public relations' association with spin. "I think the time has come for public relations professionals to condemn spin and label spin doctors for what they are: purveyors of deception, manipulation, and misinformation. Spin is to public relations what pornography is to art" (1998).

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ITS HISTORICAL UNDERPINNINGS

During the early 20th century, public relations as a formal profession started with what James E. Grunig defined as the "press agency/publicity model." This was the era when the "public be damned" and "closed systems" philosophy was embraced. Today the profession seeks to actively engage in what Grunig defined as the "two-way symmetrical model," where professionals focus on mutual understanding, mutual cooperation/accommodation, and relationship-building programming and strategizing.

Negative Perceptions Based on Historical Activities

There appears to be some "bad karma" among practitioners schooled in journalism programs and among journalists who have been ill-treated by public relations practitioners. This negativity also stems from the history/nature of deceitful, manipulative public relations activities practiced during the early part of the 20th century. There is also a notion that public relations practitioners are vying for the same space to which journalists believe they are entitled.

Lack of Clarity Regarding What Public Relations Practitioners Do

Public relations activities are very diverse. Some practitioners engage in publicity and promotional activities, and they utilize varying propaganda-type techniques (bandwagon, glittering generalities, etc.) and persuasive methods. Although this capacity determines how many public relations professionals have been depicted on television, in the newspaper, and in movies, these are *not* the only kinds of activities in which practitioners are involved. Public relations professionals are responsible for much more, including strategic planning and counseling, fundraising, researching, and developing and maintaining relationships between an organization and its key publics. This is just a range—not a cumulative list by any means. And public relations is practiced

among a variety of disciplines, ranging from health care, government, entertainment, and travel/tourism to corporate, nonprofit, and financial institutions.

Lack of Consistent Viewpoints Across the Public Relations Profession

Some very successful public relations professionals promote themselves as prominent spin doctors and receive much publicity for it (e.g., Michael Sitrick, Howard Rubenstein, and John Scanlon). Other very successful public relations professionals publicly seek to deface spin doctor behavior and the term itself (e.g., Dilenschneider).

Lack of Consistent Viewpoints Regarding the Semantics of Spin

Spin has traditionally and historically been associated with political and governmental campaigns. In turn, these industries have been associated with the use of propaganda techniques. The term *propaganda* also has a negative connotation. So we should consider the way we engage in and discuss the concept of strategic persuasion. The term *motivation* has a much more positive connotation, and people seem more responsive to being *motivated* to do something than being *persuaded* to do so.

Varying Degrees of Ideologies Regarding Moral Judgment

There is also the issue of the varying viewpoints about moral judgments and individual ideologies. *Situationalists* reject moral rules and ask if the action (behavior) yields the best possible outcome in the given situation. *Subjectivists* reject moral rules and base moral judgments on personal feelings about the action (behavior) and the setting. *Absolutists* believe that actions (behaviors) are moral, provided they yield positive consequences through moral conformity to moral rules. *Exceptionists* believe that conformity to moral rules is desirable, but exceptions to these rules is often permissible. Therefore, a person's behavior depends on his or her individual ideologies about moral judgments.

Varying Degrees of Ideologies Regarding the First Amendment

Another factor that influences a person's behavior is based on his or her individual ideologies regarding the First Amendment. According to the *absolutist* view, the First Amendment means exactly what it says: "Congress shall make *no* law abridging the freedom of speech." As such, public relations practitioners can say whatever they want, providing it meets the criteria of the First Amendment. Conversely, the *balancing* approach sees the absolutist view as impractical and deems this categorical approach as artificial. Balancers believe that in every case the courts should weigh the individual's interest in free expression against the government's interest in restricting the speech in question. Thus, public relations practitioners need to think carefully about what they say, how they say it, and *who* it will affect.

Varying Ideologies Regarding Social Responsibility

A third factor that influences a person's behavior depends on his or her individual ideologies regarding social responsibility. Some practitioners believe that their primary responsibility is to their stockholders, who financially support the organization. Hence, these practitioners are interested foremost in supporting the "bottom line." Others believe that they are responsible to the greater community and society at large—not just their stockholders. Therefore, in some situations the bottom line is not the primary concern.

REASONS PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS ADVOCATE SPIN

- Every issue has two sides; hence, there are two viewpoints.
- Practitioners are responsible for advocating the viewpoint of the organization they represent, based on the fiduciary relationship/commitment between the organization and its stockholders.

- Truth is relative.
- Practitioners are merely utilizing framing and agenda-setting theories.
- Media positioning is one of the primary tasks of a public relations practitioner.
- Spinning has been around for centuries (e.g., J. E. Grunig's press agentry model, Edward Bernays's "engineering" of public opinion).
- It's really just the word that offends people—not the behavior per se.
- Society should be exposed to a "free marketplace of ideas."
- Spinning supports the absolutist view of the First Amendment.
- Spinning supports the absolutist view of moral judgment: Actions are moral provided they yield positive consequences through moral conformity to moral rules.
- Spinning supports socially responsible behavior.

REASONS PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS DENOUNCE SPIN

- Spinning is unethical because it misrepresents and distorts the truth.
- Spinning is a far cry from J. E. Grunig's two-way symmetrical model of public relations, which seeks to develop mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics.
- Spinning is a form of propaganda that, when used deceitfully and manipulatively, does not fairly represent the information.
- The spin model suggests that public relations professionals are nothing more than "journalists in-residence" and "press agents" whose main goal and obligations are to "earn ink."
- The word *spin* has a negative connotation, and "perception is reality"; hence, some may view this negative word and its association with the behavior it represents as representative of the behavior of *all* public relations practitioners.
- The spin model violates the PRSA Code of Ethics. Public relations practitioners are obligated to uphold this conduct. By practicing spin-oriented public relations, practitioners are violating the code of ethics.
- The spin paradigm does not support socially responsible behavior.

IMPLICATIONS: WHAT PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS CAN DO

The word *spin* will never go away. However, by keeping the word alive via use in our everyday dialogue, we perpetuate its existence and give it power to survive. We should strive to diminish its use as a commonplace term among the media. We should also be committed to practicing ethical public relations. Further, we should never deceitfully manipulate a message to communicate half-truths. And we should discourage professionals who tout that they practice spin as their "duty" as public relations practitioners.

Finally, we should continue to educate people whenever we can about what public relations really is. We need to remind people that although publicity and promotional strategies are viable components of the communication mix, they are not the sole functions of public relations. Furthermore, instead of advocating propaganda as the foundation for these activities, we should broaden our thinking to that of *motivating* particular behaviors and influencing positive changes in our society.

—Lisa T. Fall

See also Propaganda

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Prince Charles on a walkabout in Sheffield in 1998, with his Deputy Private Secretary Mark Bolland behind him (holding files). Described by the British newspapers as the prince's "spin doctor," Bolland left Charles's employ soon thereafter to set up his own public relations agency.

SOURCE: © Tim Graham/Corbis.

SPIRAL OF SILENCE THEORY

In a political election campaign, politicians are quick to criticize public opinion polls that show them to be trailing. They will argue that the poll is inaccurate, that the only poll that matters is on election day, or that they are picking up momentum in the race to gain votes. Although some have questioned why a politician would devote resources to proving that unfavorable polls were wrong rather than simply running a more effective campaign, "spiral of silence" theory offers some explanation of this phenomenon. This theory argues that any opinion that is perceived to be the opinion of a majority will hold disproportionate weight in influencing others. This effect happens, at least in part, because people who believe that their opinion is in the minority are less likely to express their opinion. The failure to express a minority point of view reinforces the unequal status of that opinion because there is no longer an advocate for it. This leads to a continuing spiral of silence. Politicians do not want people to think they are trailing in the polls because if that information were to become ingrained in the public mind, supporters of the trailing politician might quit

working as hard to bring about his or her election—thus ensuring the doom of that campaign. The spiral of silence is not limited to political campaigns, but to any issue where a person or group of people need others to support them or buy their product.

In 1965, Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann worked for the Allensbach Institute for Opinion Research in West Germany and had been monitoring public opinion about that fall's federal election. Several months before the election, she asked survey respondents two questions. First, she asked them to name the party for which they intended to vote in the upcoming election. Second, she asked them to name the party they believed would win the election. In early polling, the Christian Democrats and the Social Democrats (the two main parties in West Germany, and the

two leading parties in the united Germany today) were roughly equal in responses to both questions, and those results held for about six months. That is, the same number of people intended to vote for each party, and the same number of people believed that each party was likely to win the election.

As the election neared, Noelle-Neumann noticed an interesting phenomenon. While the number of people intending to vote for each party held steady, the response to the other question changed. Although people still intended to vote in similar numbers, two months prior to the election four of five voters expected that the Christian Democrats would win the election. In the two weeks prior to the election, public opinion began to diverge and the Christian Democrats gained 5 percent in the polls (as the party for which someone actually intended to vote) and the Social Democrats lost approximately 5 percent. Actual voting behavior followed the voting behavior perceived and predicted for others, and the Christian Democrats won that election with a 9 percent advantage.

This theory, according to Noelle-Neumann, makes five separate assumptions (1991, p. 260):

1. Society threatens deviant individuals with isolation.
2. Individuals experience fear of isolation continuously.
3. This fear of isolation causes individuals to try to assess the climate of public opinion at all times.
4. The results of this estimate affect behavior in public, especially the open expression or concealment of opinions.
5. This assumption connects the preceding four. Taken together, they are considered responsible for the formation, defense, and alteration of public opinion.

Certainly this theory is not meant to apply to all people at all times. There will always be individuals who violate social trends and who care little about the opinions of others. Taken as a whole, however, these assumptions point to some powerful phenomena about human behavior. The first assumption indicates that an individual who has an opinion or who takes an action different from that of others will no longer remain part of the “in crowd.” In the case of the German elections, people who supported the losing party would fit this profile. The second assumption indicates that most people want to be on the winning side or part of the popular group, and the third indicates that people continuously monitor those around them to gauge their opinions. In 1965, something happened in West Germany that caused people to start believing that the Christian Democrats were going to win the election. There are many possible explanations that would be very difficult to explore in retrospect—perhaps that party increased its advertising efforts, perhaps a Social Democratic candidate committed a gaffe, or perhaps Christian Democratic supporters became more vocal. It is important to note here that the actual change in public opinion was not real. Rather, people began to perceive that support in the election had changed.

Whatever the reason for the perceived shift in support, this led to the fourth assumption of the theory. When people began to believe that the Christian Democrats would win, those who supported them were emboldened to voice their support

publicly. Meanwhile, those who supported the Social Democrats began to tone down their public support. Although they did not initially change their actual voting intentions, they were less likely to speak up at parties, attend rallies, donate money, display signs, or partake in the myriad other activities necessary for a political campaign to be successful. The interconnection of these four assumptions led to the fifth. When people believed that the Social Democrats were losing, they quit publicly supporting them. This led people to perceive even less support for the party, which led to a cycle of decreasing support. Eventually, this led to the aforementioned nine-point shift in public opinion that ultimately decided the election.

Two points are important to make here. First, “spiral of silence” theory does not completely explain public behavior. Examples abound of products that have been marketed as the “rebel” or otherwise atypical choice and of candidates who have run successful campaigns as “underdogs.” However, the fact that the theory does not explain human behavior universally does not deny its value in cases where it does. Many studies have been conducted that demonstrate a shift in behaviors on some part of the public based on their perception of what the majority opinion was. Second, the spiral of silence applies well beyond the political realm. Although that classic example from Noelle-Neumann’s work has been used here for the sake of clarity, applicability of the theory has been shown in a wide variety of public information campaigns.

Although much support had been found for this theory, it is not without its critics. One line of criticism has argued that people are more capable of deviating from majority opinion than this theory gives them credit for. In particular, assertiveness, knowledge, and the amount of time one spends interacting with media might influence the degree to which they are swayed by public opinion. Additionally, the argument has been advanced that there is no such thing as a unified public opinion. Since many societies are experiencing more nearly equal gender, racial, and social roles, public opinion may fragment along those lines. Therefore, it might be harder to claim that someone’s behavior was the result of a dominant

opinion that does not exist. Those responding to this criticism have argued that public opinion can still exist in subgroups and that some questions still lend themselves to opinion polling. For example, there are only so many presidential candidates for which one can vote, and surveys can assess what percentage of the public intends to vote for each one.

Continuing research in this theory will likely further explore the question of how attitudes change over time and how this influences the willingness to speak publicly on any issue. With that said, present research has demonstrated the effects of the spiral of silence across a number of areas of public opinion. People generally wish to avoid being socially ostracized for opinions and actions that deviate from the social norm, so they monitor the opinions of others. In some cases, this may cause people to fail to express opinions that they perceive as being in the minority. This, in turn, leads to decreased support for the position and even more silence.

—*William Forrest Harlow*

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SPORTS PROMOTION

Sports promotion is an aspect of the public relations profession that relies heavily on publicity and promotion to foster the brand equity of teams, conferences, types of sports, and specific athletes. As professional, collegiate, and amateur sports functions assume an increasingly important role in society and culture, sports organizations and athletes face increasing scrutiny from media and society. A scan of the news on almost any day

reveals events from the sports pages that are now making the front page, the business page, and the top of the broadcast instead of being covered only on the sports page. Consider these examples.

NBA star Kobe Bryant was accused in July 2003 of assaulting a Colorado woman during his visit there to have knee surgery. In a press conference, Bryant tearfully admitted to adultery, but denied the charge of felony sexual assault.

Iowa State University Head Basketball Coach Larry Eustachy resigned from the university in May 2003 after it was revealed that he partied with college-age students in Columbia, Missouri, into the early-morning hours on January 22, 2003. Photographs taken by a University of Missouri student showed the coach at a party that night near the college campus.

The National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR), the fastest-growing segment of auto racing and one of the fastest growing segments of sports in general, endured months of media scrutiny and public criticism after superstar Dale Earnhardt died in the final lap of the 2001 Daytona 500, the Super Bowl of NASCAR racing. NASCAR, a relatively insular organization not used to intense criticism and media scrutiny, faced the crisis after having just fired its public relations firm.

Chicago Cubs power hitter Sammy Sosa apologized to fans in June 2003 after admitting he used a corked bat during a game with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays. Sosa said he was not aware that he was using a corked bat; he said he mistakenly picked up a corked bat that he sometimes used during batting practice. Sosa was immediately ejected from the game after umpire crew chief Tim McClelland, who was working the plate, spotted the cork when Sosa's bat shattered. Sosa's other bats were confiscated by security personnel and immediately turned over to Major League Baseball.

In early 2002, a jury convicted Thomas Junta of manslaughter when he beat another father to death. Jurors found Thomas Junta guilty of involuntary manslaughter in the beating death of Michael Costin, 40, after a youth hockey practice attended by the sons of the two men in Reading, Massachusetts, on July 5, 2000.

Despite all the wealth generated in sports, problems exist when the millionaire and billionaire athletes go on strike to demand higher compensation. It is also problematic when athletes, both professional and collegiate, misbehave, causing negative publicity for themselves, their universities, and their sports franchises. Fans and taxpayers, already disturbed with the off-court antics of athletes, must contend with sports franchise owners who hold cities hostage by threatening to move the team if the local government does not build luxurious stadiums at taxpayers' expense. All of this can generate unwanted, negative publicity for an industry that has grown as big and profitable as sports and is avidly watched by the media and the fans.

Turn on the television any given weekend and you are likely to see hundreds of thousands of people crammed into stadiums, arenas, and racetracks to watch the sport of their choice. Be it the NFL, the Final Four, or the Masters golf tournament, fans are paying increasingly higher ticket prices to watch the Kurt Warners and Jeff Gordons of the world slam dunk, pass, and race their way to victories and championships. Many of these athletes are millionaires several times over, and they play the role of heroes to the throngs of young and old people who pay premium prices to watch them compete.

In addition to the dollars spent to attend sporting events, there are also millions of dollars spent each year on sports memorabilia—clothing, hats, collectibles, and so forth. David M. Carter and Darren Rovell wrote that sports “has become a massive industry all its own, one estimated to generate spending approaching \$200 billion annually” (2003, p. xix).

Once considered a relaxing pastime, sports are now big business. Consider the following examples:

Anschutz Soccer, Inc., the Major League Soccer investor group, announced it will pay a reported \$40 to \$50 million for the United States broadcasting rights to the 2006 and 2010 men's World Cups and the 2003 women's World Cup.

Reebok signed an unprecedented lifetime endorsement contract with Philadelphia 76ers guard and NBA Most Valuable Player Allen Iverson. The

contract extended an existing 10-year, \$50 million deal for the remainder of Iverson's professional career.

Duke Blue Devils basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski agreed to a lifetime contract that will keep him with the school through at least 2011, extending a run that has produced three NCAA championships, six ACC titles, and more than 500 victories. It also gives Krzyzewski the title of special assistant to the president, a position he says he intends to hold after retiring.

A business with the power and reach of sports calls for the expertise of persons trained in public relations and crisis communication. Though the job of sports information director has existed at the collegiate level for many years, all types of sports organizations from amateur to Olympic to professional are finding they have a greater need than ever for experienced people to meet the media and plan and implement the strategies needed to publicize and promote athletes and organizations. This job requires a person who understands the world of professional and collegiate sports and who is trained in news and sports writing, public relations, media relations, crisis communication, and ethics.

Often referred to as sports marketing or sports communication, it has become clear in recent years that the expertise of a skilled public relations person is needed in this area.

The marriage of public relations and sports is a natural one when one considers that sports, like other businesses, demands the expertise of a person trained in media, communication, and public relations skills. Carter and Rovell stated, “The sports business has become an extremely involved industry that now includes the same elements and applies the same business principles seen throughout the rest of big business” (2003, p. xix). Sports organizations, whether professional, collegiate, or amateur, deal with the same challenges faced by organization and corporation public relations practitioners: media relations, getting key messages to the appropriate target publics, ethics, building alliances with stakeholder groups, image, and crisis management, to name only a few.

Melvin Helitzer, author of one of the most comprehensive texts on sports promotion and publicity, described sports promotion as “make money or else,” an objective at least as important as “win or else.” In a comprehensive description of sports promotion across all levels (high school to professional sports), Helitzer wrote,

A major sports team—college or professional—must be as successful at the bank as they are at the stadium. This has been a mind-boggling development. For over 150 years sports were hobbies. They promoted exercise, fun and, in athletic competition, amateur purity. But in the past 50 years, sports have turned from lily white to professional green. . . . One day, college athletes—like Olympians—may redefine the word *amateur*. (1999, p. 1)

Steven A. Lesnik and Howard Schacter described the sports public relations job as “one of the youngest and fastest growing segments of the PR industry” (1997, p. 405). They identified two public relations tactics as crucial for this area: (a) achieve the communications objectives of a sports-related company or organization and (b) support and enhance a sports marketing activity executed by a company or organization.

In 1997, Nicholas Neupauer noted the absence of college courses or programs in the area of sports information or sports communication. He noted that in the 1960s, college sports information professionals belonged to the American College Public Relations Association (ACPRA). After the realization that a split was needed between the sports promotion people and the college public relations administrators, the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) was founded in 1957. Today, CoSIDA is a vigorous membership association, and it is the premier organization for college sports information and communication professionals.

Neupauer argued that the public relations discipline is largely ignoring the emergence of sports information as a public relations specialization:

Token SID classes do pop up from time to time at institutions, appearing in the catalog as “special topics

courses.” But only a smattering of schools offer classes on a consistent basis. SID majors, minors, tracks, or concentrations are rare in undergraduate education. Even the PRSA ignored the field. In its “1987 Report of the Commission on Undergraduate Public Relations Education: A Design for Undergraduate Public Relations Education,” the PRSA described the importance of PR specializations in publicity and media relations, community relations, employee relations, consumer relations, financial/shareholder relations, public affairs, fundraising and international public relations. But it overlooked ‘sports information directing’ as a PR specialization worthy of attention in undergraduate education. (1997, p. 35)

This seems unusual considering the dramatic growth of collegiate as well as professional sports. Neupauer urged public relations organizations such as PRSA to include sports information and sports communication in its discipline.

—Becky McDonald

See also Crisis communication; Promotion; Publicity

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STAKEHOLDER THEORY

Stakeholder theory provides a theoretical grounding for public relations practitioners to expand their understanding of how individuals, groups, and external organizations impact their organization. Stakeholders are important to public relations

professionals because these groups are essentially the “public” in public relations. Stakeholders, in essence, are the audiences for organizational messages. Stakeholder theory is an outgrowth of general systems and resource dependence perspectives suggesting that organizations must forge links with stakeholders to acquire valuable resources or stakes and reduce uncertainty. One of the central tenets of stakeholder theory is that organizations should attend to the needs of a broader set of stakeholders that reaches beyond stockholders. From a public relations perspective, stakeholder theory seeks to identify and manage the diverse needs, values, and interests of various stakeholders and the potential communication tensions between these groups.

R. Edward Freeman (1984) was one of the first proponents of stakeholder management. He argued for considering stakeholders as part of the larger strategic planning process. In this case, organizations that develop strong instrumental links including communication channels with stakeholders are likely to hold a competitive advantage over organizations that do not. A key idea in his work is that organizations and stakeholders can and should mutually influence one another in an ongoing process of accommodation. Since organizations are dependent upon stakeholders for resources, these groups have the ability to withhold their resources if they disagree with the organization on important issues.

Much of the research on stakeholder theory discusses how narrowly or broadly organizations should define their stakeholders. Freeman defined *stakeholders* as any individual or group that impacts or is impacted by the actions of organizations. Researchers agree that stakeholders can be located both within and outside the organization. For instance, Robert L. Heath (1997) delineated activist publics, intra-industry players, inter-industry players, potential activist publics, customers, employees, legislators, regulators, judiciary, investors, neighbors, and the media as a loss of potential stakeholders. More recently some researchers have argued for non-human stakeholders, including wildlife and the environment. Certainly, after environmental disasters such as the Exxon *Valdez* and

Chernobyl, one can reasonably argue that these groups are impacted by organizations. However, organizations depending upon their industry or circumstances are going to have different potential stakeholders. For this reason, identifying stakeholders is a key issue for public relations practitioners.

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION

One of the difficulties associated with stakeholder theory is being able to identify stakeholders. Since organizations are such powerful forces in society, it is arguable that they have the ability to impact all of society. Public relations professionals are expected to narrow the potential stakeholder possibilities and prioritize key stakeholders for the organization. Ronald K. Mitchell, Bradley R. Agle, and Donna J. Wood (1997) suggested that stakeholder identification is a function of the stakeholder’s power to influence the organization, the urgency of their claim, and the legitimacy of the relationship with the organization.

Certainly, the context in which the organization operates impacts stakeholder identification. For example, Thierry C. Pauchant and Ian I. Mitroff (1992) suggested that during crisis situations the organization may have different stakeholders than in normal business conditions. In addition, the communication needs of those stakeholders may be different depending upon the organization’s situation. Once organizations identify key stakeholders, they should assess their relationship with each group and then work to build mutually beneficial relationships.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Stakeholder analysis is an expansive process that involves the organization examining its operations, structure, history, and role in society. From the perspective of stakeholder theory, organizations must assess the strengths and weaknesses of their key stakeholder relationships. In doing so, public relations personnel should identify issues concerning which stakeholders approve or disapprove of the organization’s activities and whether those issues are important to the stakeholder or not. These

communication specialists should then work to understand the underlying business trends in their environment and work to create mutually beneficial relationships with these stakeholder groups over time. Freeman and D. R. Gilbert (1987) suggested four tactics for stakeholder analysis: first, identifying new stakeholders; second, formulating strategies with these stakeholders; third, integrating multiple stakeholder concerns; and fourth, searching for new stakeholder issues and concerns. Although these tactics are useful for public relations professionals, it is important to acknowledge that organizations must often deal with many stakeholders with competing demands and varying levels of power over the organization.

Stakeholder theory suggests that public communication is not about persuasion but rather “diminishing the difference between what it does and what its stakeholders expect it to do” (Heath, 1997, p. 119). Public relations practitioners, then, must be able to negotiate with multiple stakeholders and work to reduce differences with stakeholders when possible. M. B. E. Clarkson (1995) suggested four strategies to deal with stakeholders: reaction, defense, accommodation, and pro-action. Proactive responses include anticipating stakeholders’ concerns and working to resolve issues in advance. Accommodation involves working to lessen the gap between the organization and stakeholders while still looking for concessions. Defense strategies involve the organization defending its own position and refusing to do more than is minimally required. Reaction strategies involve fighting against stakeholder issues or withdrawing and ignoring stakeholder issues. These strategies are often used to assess an organization’s level of corporate social responsibility. In these cases, researchers often argue for more proactive strategies to communicating with stakeholders.

In this vein, some research argues for not only negotiating with stakeholders in a proactive manner but also developing reservoirs of goodwill with stakeholders that may benefit the organization long term. Robert R. Ulmer (2001) explained that Malden Mills, a textile manufacturing company, invested in primary stakeholders over time. The

company benefited greatly from these investments after a 1995 fire almost destroyed the organization. This research suggests that organizations can benefit not only from seeking potential needs from stakeholders and resolving tensions between stakeholders, but also by investing in stakeholders that they believe are critical to their business ventures. These investments may not be immediately beneficial for the organization, but over time the organization may reap the rewards when it most needs them. Although stakeholders can be a source of rewards for organizations, they can also create tensions, particularly in terms of potential problems among stakeholder groups.

MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Because stakeholders can be a broad set of individuals or groups, it is important to realize that there can be great diversity in any particular organization’s stakeholder group. As a result, public relations professionals should consider potential conflicts between stakeholder groups. In these cases, organizations may have stakeholders that have competing or contradictory demands on the organization. Ulmer and Timothy L. Sellnow argued (2000) that organizations have the option to interject strategic ambiguity into their stakeholder communication in order to meet the competing demands of stakeholders. However, they contend that organizations should be careful to use strategic ambiguity ethically. They provide two criteria for evaluating the ethicality of strategically ambiguous stakeholder communication. First, they suggest that communication with stakeholders should not privilege some groups over others by introducing biased or incomplete information. Second, communication that emphasizes competing interpretations should be based on information that is available, reasonably complete, and unbiased.

Organizational stakeholders play a key role in any organization’s success. Public relations practitioners are instrumental in addressing stakeholder concerns. As boundary spanners, public relations professionals are often responsible for identifying stakeholders, seeking out potential stakeholder

issues, and managing potential tensions between stakeholder groups. Organizations that manage stakeholder issues effectively are likely to hold a competitive advantage over organizations that do not. As a result, public relations practitioners must take seriously the role of identifying and managing stakeholder issues, particularly given the competitive and dynamic business environment.

—Robert R. Ulmer, Matthew W. Seeger, and Timothy L. Sellnow

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STAKES

To sustain themselves, organizations “require a continuing provision of resources and continuing cycle of transactions with the environment from which these resources are derived” (Pfeffer, 1981, p. 101). The resources in these transactions can be characterized as the stakes in an ongoing negotiation process between an organization and its environment. Specifically, “a

stake is anything—tangible or intangible, material or immaterial—that one person or group has that is of value to another person or group” (Heath, 1997, p. 28). Exchanging or withholding such stakes provides a means of influence among organizations and their stakeholders.

Typically, the exchange of stakes is interpreted as a ratio. In other words, did both parties derive approximately equal benefits from the exchange, or did one party acquire a considerable advantage from the transaction? Ideally, stakes are exchanged in a harmonious and collaborative manner that is perceived as just and beneficial to all parties. This harmonious exchange allows for the ongoing mutual accommodation among organizations and their stakeholders.

From a public relations perspective, organizations engage in strategic issues monitoring and analysis to develop an awareness of essential stakes, their availability, and their possible manipulation by external audiences. In addition to identifying desirable or essential stakes and groups, organizational analysis includes consideration of

the willingness of stakeholders to grant or withhold their stakes. How willing are they to exchange them? What can be done to increase the chances they will be granted rather than withheld? What operations or policies increase favorable exchange? (Heath, 1997, p. 117)

The ability to control critical stakes reflects an organization’s power base. As long as an organization, whether for profit or nonprofit, is dependent on another organization or group to function or thrive, it is dependent on negotiating the exchange of stakes.

Although stakes take many forms, each stake cannot and should not “be equally involved in all processes and decisions” (Donaldson & Preston, 1995, p. 67) within an organization. The stakes held by organizations and their relevant environments are prioritized according to three general criteria: (a) the perceived value of a given stake, (b) the willingness or ability of groups to grant or withhold those stakes that are perceived to have value, and (c) the scarcity or availability of a resource from multiple sources.

Stakes, whether tangible or intangible, are held on a voluntary or involuntary basis. Tangible stakes that are held on a voluntary basis involve the strategic acquisition or inherent possession of a desirable resource. For example, purchasing stock in a company is a strategic acquisition of a stake in a company. Owning land that is appealing to others for development or mineral rights is an example of a voluntary and tangible stake with value to other groups or organizations that may rise or fall in various circumstances. Tangible and involuntary stakes emerge when the actions of one group or organization have the potential to infringe on the comfort, safety, or values of another group. For example, the construction of a nuclear power plant may be advantageous to a power company and some of its customers. At the same time, however, the plant may put thousands of residents at an increased risk of health problems or, in the case of catastrophic failure, diminish property values and complicate future development in the area.

Tangible stakes can also be exchanged voluntarily or involuntarily within an organization. Employees may voluntarily exchange wages for job security in situations where the organizations face bankruptcy. For example, on several occasions airline companies have received wage concessions from their employees in order to continue operating. Conversely, employees can involuntarily and unwittingly lose their stake in an organization that falls victim to incompetence or unethical management. For example, Enron left its employees with neither their jobs nor their retirement funds after the company collapsed due to illegal and unethical behavior by its executives.

Intangible stakes flow largely from social resources. Relationships with media reporters, state and federal regulators, legislators, local government, activist groups, and local citizens, to name a few, are often influential in the success or failure of an organizational venture. In such cases, the acceptance or success of a proposed action by an organization may depend on how that action is perceived by the public. Hence, each of these relationships influences the outcome.

Government agencies can serve as allies of social activist groups or a concerned public that has a stake

in an organization's activities. Public policy is a stake that can hinder or enhance an organization's viability. Therefore, if an organization fails to maintain credibility with an influential audience, the organization may eventually face policy changes that are detrimental to its future success. Policy stakes are of ongoing importance to organizations. Organizations that fail to monitor and participate consistently in policy issues may face diminished prosperity due to the emergence of an unfavorable public policy.

Reputation is also a determining factor in the exchange of stakes. Groups are most likely to exchange stakes willingly when they perceive a mutual interest between themselves and another relevant group or organization. From an instrumental perspective, if firms communicate on a "basis of mutual trust and cooperation, they will have a competitive advantage over firms that do not" (Jones & Wicks, 1999, p. 208).

Organizations face resistance from both industry competitors and special interest groups as they seek to acquire and exchange stakes. For example, activist groups often function as stake seekers, working to acquire stakes that are valued by targeted organizations in order to fortify their leverage for producing desired change or averting undesirable change. Simultaneously, industry competitors compete to acquire stakes that give them a competitive advantage. Thus, organizations must acquire and exchange stakes amidst a series of organizational relationships (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

In a fundamental way, stakes are a vital focus of public relations activities. Public relations specialists seek to influence stakes and the ways in which stakeholders perceive, exchange, or modify stakes and their availability.

—*Timothy L. Sellnow, Robert R. Ulmer, and Matthew W. Seeger*

See also Conflict resolution; Mutually beneficial relationships; Power resource management theory; Reputation management

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STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

When using quantitative data, a researcher collects information in the form of numbers. *Statistical analysis* is used to make meaning of those numbers. Statistical analysis can be divided into two broad categories: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics is used to summarize and simplify the data. Formative research frequently uses descriptive statistics to understand the current public relations situation by reporting what has been observed. Means, percentages, and frequencies (how many people responded a certain way) are commonly used in descriptive statistics. For instance, a survey can be used to collect data about the current community perceptions of the organization in terms of environmental responsibility, involvement in the community, and contributions to the community. The survey asks people to rate each of the three factors on a five-point scale using the options very unfavorable, unfavorable, neutral, favorable, and very favorable. Descriptive statistics would be used to identify how the community members perceive the organization. You could determine (a) what percentage of the community held a favorable, a neutral, or an unfavorable perception of

the organization on these three factors; (b) the mean score of the community perceptions for each of the three factors; or (c) how often people rated the organization as (1) unfavorable, (2) unfavorable, (3) neutral, (4) favorable, and (5) very favorable (frequencies) on each of the three factors. Public relations practitioners are much more likely to use descriptive statistics than inferential statistics.

Inferential statistics allows a researcher to examine possible relationships between two or more variables. Researchers look at analyses of differences and analyses of relationships with inferential statistics. Evaluative research makes use of inferential statistics. Analyses of difference seek to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between two or more sets of data. Statistically significance is the degree of confidence you have that your results can be found in the larger population and not just in your sample. You need to establish that your results are not a result of chance/accident but more likely a true difference between variables. An example would be an organization testing two versions of a message designed to promote a new product. Two separate groups are exposed to each message and their recall of the message assessed. Inferential statistics, such as “t-test” or “chi-square,” could be used to see if there is a significant difference between recall scores for the two messages. If one message scores significantly higher on recall, you would want to use that message. If the two messages scored the same, you could use either one or both of the messages. Correlation is used to uncover relationships between variables. A correlation indicates if two variables change together in a predictable manner. There is a positive correlation when the value of one variable increases as the value of the other variable increases; for example, ice cream sales tend to increase as the temperature rises. There is a negative correlation when the value of one variable increases while the value of the other variable decreases, and vice versa; for example, sales of new homes tend to drop as the lending interest rate rises. If an organization launches a reputation campaign, it expects a positive correlation between exposure to the reputation messages and stakeholders’ evaluations of the organization’s reputation. You could collect data to determine if there is a positive

correlation between exposure to a reputational message and favorable perceptions of the organization. Again, you would need to determine if the relationship is statistically significant.

—*W. Timothy Coombs*

See also Formative research; Quantitative research

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STEWARDSHIP OF LARGE ORGANIZATIONS

Stewardship is one of many finely honed principles that public relations practitioners and academics use to understand the quality of the relationships between an organization and its various stakeholders and stake seekers. All too often the justifiable criticism of public relations efforts is that organizations ask customers and others to commit to support the interests of the organization. Stewardship reverses that equation. It is a concept used to constantly assess the quality of relationships. It is a management tool for challenging executives to respond to and support the interests of the individuals and groups whose lives the organization affects.

In the oldest sense of the word, a *steward* is someone entrusted with managing the interests of others. The term often refers in practice and in law to one individual (a steward) being in charge of land and animals for someone else. The steward is expected to follow the golden rule: Manage the affairs at hand for someone else as the steward would want to have his or her affairs managed by someone else. In this sense, the obligation to be a steward can range from the legal implications of being a steward all the way to merely doing so because it is the ethical or right thing to do. It obligates one entity to treat another's interests as though the interests of the second party are very important

to the first party. The term has long stood for balancing self-interests so that instead of one interest exploiting another, the stronger or obligated interest serves the other interest. In addition to having implications for legal service, the term is often used in a religious context. In the simplest sense, this application advises that we should love and care for others as we would want to be loved and cared for. In an era where sustainability is a global ethic, stewardship asks that people look to the interests not only of people and resources living today but also those who will be living in the future. We have obligations today to wisely manage resources to ensure their abundance in the future. For this reason, stewardship opposes selfishness.

In 2001, Kathleen Kelly critiqued one of the enduring models of public relations programming, suggesting that it was inadequate because it did not include stewardship. This critique is relevant to existing relationships or emerging ones of various kinds. It extends the logic captured in the ROPE method of public relations. This acronym refers to stages in public relations programming: Research, Objective setting, Planning and implementing, Evaluation. Kelly reasoned that this model was insufficient because it assumed that new challenges were the constant focus of public relations strategists. In the context of fundraising and development, for instance, they were looking to new donors rather than necessarily working to ensure that the current pool of donors were satisfied by the quality of their relationship with the organization engaging in public relations. Kelly suggested that ROPE should become ROPES by adding stewardship as the last step in the process, which is not linear but circular. As Kelly concluded, "stewardship completes the process and furnishes an essential loop back to the beginning of managing relationships" (2001, p. 280).

The concept of stewardship adds positive dimensions to the theory and practice of public relations. One of the reasons that issues management arose in the 1970s as a key dimension of the practice was to reorient the thinking of senior managements from a reactive approach to publics and push them to be more proactive. Stewardship challenges management to think constantly about what can be done to

keep and foster existing goodwill rather than allow it to deteriorate to the point where corrective and restorative measures are needed.

As applied, this concept has helped organizations to rethink their approach to community relations. Instead of taking for granted the goodwill of residents where the company operates, the concept of stewardship challenges managements to ask themselves what they can do each day to ensure that if the community could vote, it would vote to keep the business operating in the community. Stewardship raises the standard of public relations ethics so that managements do not think only about how the community is benefited by the wages and taxes paid by the company. It suggests that instead of merely supporting little league teams for the value of having the company's name on the backs of the children at play, the company would want to ensure that the children also have a safe place to play and enjoy a wholesome experience. The challenge is to add value to the quality of life in the community.

Investor relations is constantly challenged to keep current investors while it seeks new investors willing to pay higher prices for the stocks. That keeps the stock value going in an upward rather than a downward trajectory. It also suggests that investors have a long-term reason to remain loyal to the company. Investor relations operates on the principle that investors loan money to privately traded companies. This money is traded for shares of stock, but the objective is to earn profits and dividends from the money loaned.

Stewardship has implications for planning. It asks managements to think about the elements that truly define and sustain relationships with their publics and customers (or donors) as being truly mutually beneficial. In fundraising, for instance, nonprofits ask that people contribute money to the organization so that the organization in turn can do something worthy for people in various states of need. The call could be to seek funding to cure childhood diseases or a specific disease such as breast cancer. The philanthropy might be not only to build a new wing on the museum to house special collections, but also to serve as an educational center to enrich the arts experience of children.

Stewardship has implications for communication. If standard elements of the communication relationship focus on understanding, agreement, and satisfaction, the organization can evaluate the extent to which these communication objectives are being achieved. Do people understand what we have to say? Do they agree with what we say? Are they satisfied by what they know and think about our organization, its mission, and contribution to the communities where it operates?

Stewardship has implications for public relations ethics. The most serious indictment against public relations ethics is the tendency to advance the interest of the organization at the expense of its publics. For instance, publicity can be a problem when the product or service publicized simply is not what it is touted to be. For instance, the public relation activities sells tickets and makes profits for the sponsors but does not leave customers feeling satisfied that they received good value for the money they paid. Companies that operate in communities in ways that degrade the quality of life in the community are not engaging in stewardship. If they appear at the edge of town (out of reach of the city taxation) and sell products at a price that runs local companies out of business, many critics reason that the company has not engaged in stewardship. Is the egg not lopsided if the money that would otherwise go to the community makes the shareholders of the company fabulously wealthy? Can that be evidence of stewardship?

Stewardship asks management to ask themselves what they can constantly do to earn the loyalty of publics and customers (donors). Stewardship rests on legal obligations as well as ethical standards that focus attention on the mutuality of interests the organization has with its publics. The challenge is not to ask, "What's in it for me?" but to ask, "What's in it for us?" As the organization works to foster its public relationships, it needs to learn to build from its base to expand and extend the quality of its relationships to position itself to be seen and known as committed to the interests of others. It is a steward of others' interests.

—Robert L. Heath and Kathleen S. Kelly

See also Community relations; Ethics of public relations; Goodwill; Investor relations; Issues management; Mutually beneficial relationships; Nonprofit organizations; Objectives; Philanthropy; Public relations research; Strategies

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STRAIGHT NEWS

News stories are carefully constructed to enlighten audiences and to uphold journalism's civic function as society's Fourth Estate or "watchdog." Generally, journalists choose one of three presentation forms when constructing news: straight (hard, spot) news, feature (soft) news, and editorial/opinion. Each category is distinctive in its purpose and process. Some reporters lament, however, that these traditional boundaries are evaporating in the wake of changing economics of the news business, new technologies, and growth of celebrity journalism.

Basically, straight news satisfies the public's "need to know" what happened or what was disclosed within the previous 24 hours. These are timely reports of local, national, and international events told with a sense of urgency. In a newspaper, the first page and front section generally run only straight news stories—issues in debate or events filled with conflict and action. In television news programs, the lead stories usually are straight news. Objectivity, fairness, and balance are hallmarks of straight news. It is intended simply to inform, whereas feature news entertains, and editorials and opinion columns offer analysis and point of view.

As for process, straight news is characteristically defined by universal journalistic conventions. First, the *inverted pyramid* style is the standard for straight news. This means that the first sentence of a newspaper straight news story is the most important part and the last sentence the least important. The inverted pyramid format is designed to help readers decide early on whether they have the time

or inclination to read all the way through to the end. A well-written straight news story enables a reader to stop reading at any time after the first paragraph and still come away with a story's main point.

This preconception influences a reporter's selection of details to include in a straight news story, how points are organized within the story's body, and the tone used to tell the story. Journalists are trained to use the inverted pyramid as a template for writing straight news—and do so automatically without even thinking about it. Editors may confidently cut stories from the bottom up to make room on a page for breaking news. Furthermore, copy editors know to write straightforward, subject-verb headlines using traditional, conservative fonts for straight news stories. Creative imagery and clever wordplay generally are reserved for feature story headlines.

Second, straight news also is distinguished by use of a summary lead (or lede)—the first, fact-packed sentence that identifies the five W's and H (who, what, when, where, why, and how). Journalism scholar James Carey has suggested that all too often news stories fall short when it comes to the "why" and "how" because these story components usually require deeper explanation than space or time—both expensive commodities in journalism—will allow. By contrast, features usually begin with a delayed (or blind) lead in order to pique readers' curiosity.

Based on one fact set, the following are examples of three varieties of leads.

Editorial/op-ed lead

It's no secret that Americans grow more cynical and politically disengaged with every passing generation. Another Flag Day has come and gone with little fanfare. Whatever happened to patriotism and citizenship?

Feature (soft) news with delayed (blind) lead

Perhaps Flag Day has become the Rodney Dangerfield of national celebrations. June 14, anniversary of the official adoption of The Stars and Stripes, seems to get no respect.

Straight (hard) news with summary lead

Fewer than 10 percent of Americans are aware that Flag Day is an official national celebration, according to results of a Florida State University poll released today.

Following the lead, a straight news story's body economically itemizes details and supporting information about an issue or event. Marginally relevant details rarely are included in a straight news story. Considered the extreme opposite of creative writing, straight news involves only hard-working words; the writing is mostly devoid of adjectives and adverbs. Such stories offer short paragraphs (or grafs) of one or two clear, concise sentences. In short, a straight news journalist must remember to explain complex ideas, to use words that average readers are familiar with, and to use simple sentence structure.

Other important straight news characteristics include presenting at least two sides of a story, using officials or authorities as sources, and incorporating direct quotes. Gaye Tuchman categorically classified these individually and collectively self-validating, intermeshed traits as a "web of facticity" (1978, p. 82). She explained that reporters gather facts to differentiate what is known and how it is known. In the process of incorporating direct quotes into straight news stories, reporters hope to underscore their impartiality, maintain credibility, and avoid libel lawsuits. Several cultural critics have pointed out, however, that journalistic conventions promote a limited, preferred take on the news by favoring authorities' worldview and by marginalizing working-class and minority voices.

Offering a longitudinal perspective on the news business, 30-year veteran journalist Jim Lehrer has opined that "the old rules" no longer apply since the boundaries separating straight news, feature news, and editorials have become blurred—negatively affecting journalism's credibility and increasing audience confusion. For example, known for their straight news reports during the week, celebrity journalists such as George Stephanopoulos and Cokie Roberts increasingly appear on weekend television news programs as commentators or

pundits and unabashedly unmask their opinions. Similarly, newsroom convergence with new technologies may mean a reduced number of news workers and may force those remaining to single-handedly manufacture all varieties of news products. Such trends threaten to discredit straight news reporters and their news organizations, as well as to increasingly confuse audiences.

Overall, straight news reporters

- Use the inverted pyramid style
- Write five-Ws-and-H summary leads
- Avoid injecting their opinions
- Minimize the number and complexity of words
- Explore both sides of a story
- Include direct quotes

—Donnalyn Pompper

See also Feature; Framing theory; News and news-worthy; News story; Pyramid style

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STRAIN

Strain refers to the feelings of some publics that a gap exists between what they believe exists and what they believe should exist. Awareness of such conditions can lead people to believe that problems exist. Strain was introduced into discussions of social movement and activism in 1963 by sociologist Neil Smelser to explain the motives that give individuals the incentive to engage in that kind of collective behavior. Strain, in this sense, results from a comparison of what is versus what should

be, a perceived impairment. If, for instance, people recognize that homelessness exists and believe that it should not, they are experiencing strain. Robert L. Heath called strain “a product of problem recognition and outrage” (1997, p. 169).

Strain can also be viewed as problem recognition. It presses public relations practitioners to ask whether publics recognize that some problem exists that they believe needs correction or solution. Problem recognition is a key variable in situational theory. Heath wrote, “[Any] given day, hundreds of people—a potential constituent audience of public—feel discomfort about various aspects of their lives” (1997, p. 165). Examples of such problems may be loss of a job, product defects, sexual harassment, chronic illness caused by toxic chemicals, or corporate accounting scandals. “Awareness of such conditions,” Heath noted, “can lead people to believe that problems exist” (1997, p. 165).

Interest in concepts such as strain increased during the 1960s in the United States, when social movements were pressing for change in every aspect of American life. That pressure led scholars and public relations practitioners to think more deeply about the dynamics that lead individuals to take collective action. Such collective action could change the power dynamics of society. It could lead to changes in public policy. These new forces against industrial autonomy led to the formation of issues management.

For public relations practitioners, awareness of activist organizations and the issues they address is necessary. A history of corporate and organization activity in the United States is sufficient to remind us that corporations have often suffered severe financial losses and challenges to their legitimacy when their boards were not responsive to or aware of the needs of stakeholder publics.

One of the leaders in understanding the dynamics of social movements, Hans Toch, (1965) defined a social movement as “an effort by a large number of people to solve collectively a problem they feel they have in common” (p. 5). Concern with the motives of change is the typical focal point addressed by students of social movement. They work to unlock the secret of the motivation people

need to foster and lead a social movement. In this vein, Smelser (1968) defined collective behavior as being purposive, not random. It is socially oriented activity. Together, people attempt to reconstitute their sociocultural environment.

One of the functions of the activist group or activist organization is to frame the issue or problem in a new way so it is perceived as urgent by key publics. Often this reframing process results in a sustained social movement that is able to form alliances with like-minded organizations and to garner the funds needed to achieve policy formation or change. Heath (1997) noted that an activist group “takes a vital step toward the establishment of strain once it creates a perspective that, like a new pair of glasses, allows a key public to see its world in a different way” (p. 168).

One incentive leaders of activist social movements have to frame issues is the realization that a legitimate gap exists between what an organization does and what key publics expect or prefer it to do.

What types of conditions or problems motivate groups of people to organize and take action about an issue or problem? What conditions motivate these groups of people to seek policy change from government or financial compensation from an organization? The following example helps augment the discussion of strain. Homelessness in the United States became a visible problem in the 1980s. According to statistics supplied by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the number of homeless people doubled from 1984 to 1987.

Data on food and shelter requests by the U.S. Conference of Mayors was first collected in 1986. Since then, the number of requests has increased every year despite the efforts of federal and state government to address them.

From Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Manchester, New Hampshire, the problems of the homeless are becoming more visible. Once confined to large cities, homeless populations now are expanding into less urban locations.

Illegal to Be Homeless: The Criminalization of Homelessness in the United States (2003) chronicles attempts made by the National Coalition for the

Homeless (NCH) and other activist groups to address the plight of the homeless. The report was published by the Civil Rights Work Group (CRWG) of the NCH and was based on survey data collected about homelessness and incarceration patterns and practices of local jurisdictions from 42 states. The NCH works with advocates for the homeless nationwide. According to the report, the NCH worked cooperatively with local and statewide coalitions, service providers, advocates, and homeless people to provide the data used in the report.

Smelser (1963, 1968) used a value-added approach to identify determinants of collective behavior. These are structural conduciveness, strain, the growth of a generalized belief, the need to mobilize people to action, and social control. Strain occurs when people compare their current situations or problems with what they believe should exist. Activist groups form to inform publics about the seriousness of the problem and to persuade legislative bodies and policymakers that action needs to be taken.

Strain is likely to be part of a larger sense of engagement by activists against some organization. Heath (1997) included strain as the first of five stages that describe the process of activism: strain (problem recognition), mobilization, confrontation, negotiation, and resolution.

Seeking social change, activists such as the NCH use communication strategies and channels to persuade other people to support their movement. Strategies used by NCH affiliates included challenges to laws and policies seeking to criminalize the homeless; grassroots efforts to raise public awareness of criminalization of the homeless; organizing efforts to challenge anti-homeless ordinances; voter registration drives for the homeless; educating and organizing homeless people to fight for their own civil rights; tracking data such as arrests, citations, fines, and harassment of homeless people; and efforts to establish liaisons with providers of housing and support services and members of the legal community.

Part of the challenge facing public relations practitioners is to monitor issues and perform situational analysis. This challenge requires them to assess the

growth in numbers, the depth of incentives to fight, and the increasing or decreasing strength of activism. Heath noted that strain can be measured “by the number and kind of people who belong to a support group or support the issues it promotes” (1997, p. 167).

Work by Heath and others has resulted in the following observations about strain:

1. Strain is an effective step to help activist groups achieve organizational legitimacy or public acceptance.
2. The level of strain demonstrated by activists can be strong, moderate, or weak.
3. Organizations can monitor the existence of strain through an effective and active issues management program.
4. Organizations can respond to claims of strain by managing issues, symbols, and rewards.
5. Strain can manifest in explosive fashion.
6. Strain is the energy source of activists.
7. Strain is easier to achieve when activist groups persuade publics to recognize and identify with the problem.
8. Strain can be communicated through the use of emotions, reasoning, logic, facts, and statistics.

—Becky McDonald

See also Issues management; Legitimacy and legitimacy gap; Situational theory of publics

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STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLANNING

Strategic business planning entails setting policies and procedures (and budgeting for them) to accomplish goals and objectives relevant to the mission and vision of a business, government agency, or nonprofit organization. Regardless of the type of organization, planning is needed to set the course of the organization and then decide the means by which that course will be accomplished. In that regard, public relations planning should be a valued part of the strategic business planning process. Senior practitioners should be engaged in public relations planning to support the strategic business planning of their organization.

In analyzing the development of strategic thought in the business context, George S. Day and Robin Wensley identified a chronological sequence in the development of strategy approaches encompassing three broad eras: the Long-Range Planning Era (corresponding roughly with the 1960s), the Strategic Planning Era (1970s), and the Strategic Management Era (1980s).

In examining the different types of planning systems adopted by organizations, Frederick Gluck, Steven Kaufman, and A. Steven Walleck suggested that relatively few organizations other than large, multinational, diversified manufacturing companies have developed full-fledged strategic management systems despite their obvious advantages. They suggested that, in reality, most organizations do not go much beyond long-range planning systems.

Although strategy has been conceptualized from a number of different perspectives, undoubtedly the most commonly adopted perspective is the linear-planning perspective of strategy. From this perspective, strategy formulation has normally equated with the process of strategic planning, which has generally been depicted as a logical rational process directed toward achieving pre-stated organizational goals, and using prescribed tools and techniques to achieve these goals. This model strategy formulation

is typified by the work of Kenneth R. Andrews, who defined strategy as

the pattern of decisions in a company that determines and reveals its objectives, purposes, or goals, produces the principal policies and plans for achieving those goals, and defines the range of business the company is to pursue, the kind of economic and human organization it intends to be, and the nature of the economic and non economic contribution it intends to make to its shareholder, employees, customers and communities. (1987, p. 51)

Andrews separated the task of strategic decision making (the formulation of strategy) from its implementation. For Andrews, the implementation of strategy is seen primarily as an administrative function: Once the purpose of the company has been determined, the company's resources can be mobilized to accomplish it.

Similarly, Thomas L. Wheelen and J. David Hunger suggested a four-step process of strategic management that comprises the following elements:

1. *Environmental scanning*: Both internal and external to the organization.
2. *Strategy formulation*: Comprising the development of long-term plans for the management of environmental opportunities and threats, in the light of organizational strengths and weaknesses. This incorporates the definition of the corporate mission, the specification of objectives and the development of strategies and policy guidelines.
3. *Strategy implementation*: Comprising the process by which strategies and policies are put into action through the development of programs, budgets, and procedures.
4. *Evaluation and control*: Performance is measured and evaluated against target in order to take any necessary corrective action and resolve problems.

This view of the separation of strategy formulation from implementation has been challenged by other strategy scholars such as Henry Mintzberg and Andrew Pettigrew, who argued in 1992 that the separation of these elements in the process are not

always so readily recognizable in practice. Moreover, formalized strategic planning models have come under increasing criticism on a number of grounds, not the least being the implied assumption of logical rational behavior on the part of those engaged in the planning process (e.g., Eisenhardt & Zabaracki, 1992). Perhaps one of the most persistent critics of the linear planning approach to strategy formation has been Henry Mintzberg, who labeled this approach the Design School model of strategy. Here Mintzberg draws the distinction between strategic planning and strategic thinking:

Strategic planning is not strategic thinking. Indeed, strategic planning often spoils strategic thinking, causing managers to confuse real vision with the manipulation of numbers. . . . Strategic planning, as it has been practiced, has really been strategic programming, the articulation and elaboration of strategies, or visions, that already exist. (1994a, p. 107)

Mintzberg went on to argue that the strategy-making process should be about synthesis—“capturing what the manager learns from all sources . . . and then synthesizing that learning into a vision of the direction that the business should pursue” (1994a, p. 107). Mintzberg distinguished this from the analytical role of planners, who he suggests should make their contribution around the strategy planning process and not inside it—supplying the formal analyses or hard data that strategic thinking requires.

Mintzberg and James A. Waters have also questioned whether strategy should be thought of only in terms of an entirely intentional pattern of actions preconceived by management. Rather, they suggested that strategies may sometimes emerge in the form of a pattern in a stream of decisions and actions without any preconceived plan. Thus, Mintzberg and Waters distinguished between deliberate and emergent strategies—the former involving the existence of intentions that are then realized; the latter being where patterns develop in the absence of intentions, or despite them. In practice, however, Mintzberg and Waters acknowledged that it may be unrealistic to expect to find examples of purely emergent or purely deliberate strategies;

rather, these two forms of strategy making should be viewed as two extremes along a continuum of “real-world” strategies. Hence, they acknowledge that, in practice, strategy making may exhibit a combination of deliberate and emergent strategy-making tendencies.

Mintzberg’s vociferous criticisms of the so-called Design School approach have been challenged by, among others, Igor Ansoff, who rebutted most of Mintzberg’s criticisms of the Design School perspective and, in turn, highlighted a number of fundamental flaws in Mintzberg’s own arguments, perhaps most notably claiming that Mintzberg’s criticisms of planning are based on an outdated view of how planning systems have evolved since the 1960s. Moreover, Ansoff suggested that Mintzberg’s own theories prescribe a world free of explicit strategy formulation and strategic managers. The debate between these two eminent scholars only serves to highlight the still contested nature of our understanding of strategy and strategic management processes.

In terms of public relations’ contribution to the business planning process, the main role for public relations is generally argued to be that of intelligence gathering and stakeholder management in terms of public relations’ boundary-spanning role. As Jon White and David M. Dozier suggested, “when organisations make decisions they do so based on a representation of both the organisation itself and the organisation’s environment (1992, p. 92). Thus, at least in principle, public relations does have a potentially useful role to play in the process of business planning, bringing different stakeholder perspectives to the attention of senior management and thereby helping to ensure that management have a balanced view on the likely impact of policy decisions before committing themselves to any particular course of action.

—Daniel A. Moss

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STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

See Communication management

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic partnerships are crafted through public relations to foster and promote mutually beneficial relationships. These partnerships occur, for instance, because a company wants to work on an issue that can best be approached through the formation of a strategic partnership with an issue-relevant, well-established, and resourceful nonprofit organization. For instance, if a company is trying hard to diversify its workforce, it might create a strategic partnership with a nonprofit organization, such as the Urban League, that seeks to promote job training and placement as part of its mission. In such partnerships, the company might provide funding for training—equipment and teachers. It might also encourage its skilled

employees to serve as instructors. It might provide on-the-job training, internships, and other means for desirable employees to make the transition into the workforce. Both organizations benefit, as does the community and key citizens, who can increase their income and self-esteem. That, some might say, is the essence of public relations.

The 1970s brought many changes to public relations. Out of the effort to manage issues, companies realized that strategic partnerships were a useful public relations tool. One of the leaders in the development of a systematic approach to strategic partnerships was Mary Ann Pires, who wrote,

Interestingly enough, the genesis of the business and interest-group factions is identical: the unique American political system. Among its hallmarks are the rejection of a powerful central state and the concept of individuals and voluntary organizations seeking to affect the political process. (1988, p. 185)

In this sense, strategic partnerships not only require a commitment to pro-activity, but also are one of the best ways to demonstrate that virtue. Strategic partnerships succeed if the various organizations can replace walls with bridges.

One tradition of activism is that it approaches targeted organizations with an agenda to change the organization. Pressures of that sort can lead to the building of walls to protect the organization against this kind of attack. Organizations don't like criticism. They often turn to public relations to meet (blunt) the challenge. An old saying of public relations practitioners is "When life deals you lemons, learn how to make lemonade." Strategic partnerships are lemonade.

Such partnerships can be sparked from either side of an issue but eventually must test both sides' patience. The two sides may approach a problem with different assumptions, tools, and resources. The search is for common ground, a meeting place of principle, and a joining of mission.

Going into strategic partnerships is not easy. Corporate management does not like to acknowledge that others can influence how they plan and operate. Special-interest organizations worry that attaching themselves to companies will lead to their being co-opted. Thus, the relationship has to build

beyond friction, difference, and division. To that end, Pires advised (1988, p. 187),

- Strive for long-term relationships.
- Start by listening to what the groups have to say—to their needs, issue concerns, and so forth.
- Don't overpromise.
- Be prepared to give as well as get.
- Treat people decently, respecting confidences.

Dialogue and collaboration are the standard communication relationship. Patience is required. Sharing is a pre-supposition.

As we think of strategic partnerships, we may realize the difficulty in creating and sustaining any such relationship between a business and a special-interest group. Public relations, however, does not operate in an environment of organization and a single special interest. Companies have many stakeholding publics that may very well not agree with one another and may not support any other strategic partnership. This tangle of relationships can become a daunting snarl of competing and conflicting interests. A multiple public environment poses gargantuan challenges.

Many approaches to strategic partnerships exist. Today, companies may invite key activists to serve on the board of directors or participate in special decision-making or guidance panels. They may work together to create legislative and regulatory agendas and issue positions. Classic stories exist where a business, such as a company that sells building products, works collaboratively with an environmental group. They work together to set standards of corporate responsibility, join in doing battle in the legislative and regulatory arenas, and monitor the issues together. The activist group may endorse the company as “environmentally friendly,” which may also have marketing and brand equity advantage. Such efforts can have a positive impact for both organizations and the community in which they have an interest. The company can reduce costs and increase profits. The interest group moves steadily toward its mission.

For either side in a strategic partnership, Pires offered sound advice forged on the anvil of experience (1988, pp. 193–197):

- Define your objectives.
- Know your issue.
- Build the alliance.
- Maintain flexibility.
- Treat people decently.
- Maintain your contacts.

Such advice may sound peculiar in the context of a discussion of public relations. This discipline and practice is often viewed as telling, even manipulating, rather than listening and cooperating. Creative strategic partnerships are in fact the essence of excellent public relations. They serve a mutual interest to the benefit of all parties.

However positive the presentation of strategic partnerships, one must not be a Pollyanna. They can fail. They can backfire. They can become dysfunctional. Good purpose and sound efforts can trip over personalities. Staging and posturing can offset every positive effort to work together.

Despite their liabilities, senior practitioners are likely to counsel clients on both sides to look for agreement and cooperation to each other's mutual benefit.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Activism; Collaborative decision making; Co-optation; Dialogue; Mission and vision statements; Mutually beneficial relationships; Nonprofit organizations

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STRATEGIES

The original meaning of the word *strategy* is derived from the Greek word *strategos*, which referred to a role, namely, that of a general in command of an army. It later came to mean the “art of

the general,” comprising the skills necessary to undertake that role.

Although the origins of strategy can be traced back through history, the application of the concept of strategy in a business context is arguably a comparatively recent phenomenon. Cynthia A. Montgomery and Michael E. Porter (1991), for example, regarded the pioneering work in this field as occurring in the 1960s. In their opinion, management thinking was, at that time, oriented toward discrete business functions such as marketing, finance, and production, and there was a pressing need for the development of a more holistic view. The development of a “strategic perspective” was seen as the tool to accomplish this goal.

There are, in fact, almost as many different definitions of strategy as there are writers on the subject. In 1983, Donald C. Hambrick suggested two main reasons for this lack of consensus: first, strategy is a multi-dimensional concept; and second, strategy is situational and will consequently tend to vary by industry.

Rather than striving to identify a single comprehensive definition of strategy, which seems likely to remain elusive, various scholars have sought to identify those areas of broad agreement about what constitutes the basic dimensions of strategy. In 1991, Henry Mintzberg, recognizing the multifaceted nature of strategy, suggested five alternative yet related definitions of strategy, which he termed the five P’s—strategy as a plan, a ploy, a pattern, a position, and a perspective. Examining each of these definitions of strategy leads to different implications for the content and the nature of the process of strategic decision making.

Strategy as a plan represents perhaps the most commonly accepted understanding of the term *strategy*. This definition implies that strategy represents “some sort of consciously intended course of action, a guideline (or set of guidelines) to deal with a situation” (Mintzberg, 1991, p.12). As a plan, strategy can be defined in general terms or can relate to a specific course of action. In the latter sense, Mintzberg suggested that strategy becomes a ploy—“a specific manoeuvre intended to outwit an opponent or competitor” (1991, p.13).

As a pattern, strategy encompasses not only the planning aspect of strategy, but also the resulting behavior, in terms of a stream of actions. Here, emphasis is placed on the fact that strategy is “consistency in behavior,” whether or not it is intended. In other words, strategy is inferred from consistency of the organization’s actions, which may or may not be consistent with a stated plan.

As a position, strategy is seen as a means of locating an organization in its environment. From this perspective, strategy “becomes the mediating force—or ‘match’—between organisation and environment, that is, between the internal and external context (of the organisation)” (Mintzberg, 1991, p. 16). Mintzberg also maintained that this definition of strategy can be compatible with either (or all) of the other definitions in that a position can be preselected and aspired to through a plan (or ploy) and/or it can be reached (perhaps even found) through a pattern of behavior.

If this previous definition sets strategy primarily in its external context, strategy as a perspective looks within the organization and, indeed, within the head of the individual strategist. Under this definition the content of strategy consists not just of a chosen position, but of an ingrained way of perceiving the world which is shared by the members of an organization, and is shown through their intentions and/or by their actions. This definition implies above all that strategy is a *concept*—an abstraction that exists only in the minds of the interested parties.

Mintzberg emphasized that these various definitions of strategy should be seen as complementary, with each contributing to an overall understanding of the concept of strategy. Strategy as a plan introduces the idea of intention, emphasizing the role of conscious leadership; strategy as a pattern focuses on action, introducing the notion that strategies can emerge; the idea of strategy as a position introduces context, rooting strategy in the situation that the organization finds itself in, encouraging the consideration of competition and cooperation; and perspective emphasizes that strategy may be nothing more than a concept, and focuses attention on the question of how intentions diffuse through a group

to become shared as norms and values and how patterns of behavior become deeply ingrained in the group.

A HIERARCHY OF STRATEGY PERSPECTIVES

A further useful distinction between differing forms of strategy and strategy making is offered by Ellen E. Chaffee, who in 1985 identified three distinct “clusters” of strategy definitions and approaches to strategy: (a) linear strategy, (b) adaptive strategy, and (c) interpretive strategy. Examining each of these three approaches or perspectives will reveal something of the contested nature of the current understanding of the concept of strategy.

The linear approach emphasizes the planning aspect of strategy. Strategy is seen as a form of methodical, directed, sequential planning that contributes to a rational decision-making process with the overall aim being the achievement of pre-stated goals. The adaptive approach, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of strategy as a means by which organizations seek to respond to the changing nature of their environment.

Like the adaptive approach, the interpretive approach emphasizes the relationship between the organization and its environment. However, the interpretive approach emphasizes the idea of management holding a cognitive map—a world-view that colors how managers interpret the changes facing the organization and the responses they adopt to them. Therefore, strategy in the interpretive model is perhaps best thought of in terms of a set of orienting frames of reference that inform the way organizational stakeholders understand the organization and its environment.

Chaffee (1985) postulated a hierarchy of strategy models, based on the level of sophistication of the different strategy perspectives. Chaffee suggested that, at the simplest level, firms begin with linear strategies, moving on to adaptive approaches, and then ultimately to more sophisticated interpretive approaches to strategy. It is important to integrate each lower-level model with models that represent more complex systems because organizations exhibit properties of all levels of complexity.

Adaptive and interpretive models that ignore less complex strategy models ignore the foundations on which they must be built if they are to reflect organizational reality. Furthermore, a comprehensive interpretive strategy probably requires some planning, as would fit with a linear strategy, and some organizational change, as would fit with an adaptive strategy; and a viable adaptive strategy may well require some linear planning (1985, p. 96).

Such arguments emphasize the fact that different approaches to strategy and the process of strategic management may not be as mutually exclusive in real-world conditions as some theorists imply. Indeed, a recurring theme in the strategy literature is the need for the greater consideration of how many of the concepts proposed by strategic theorists can be operationalized.

LEVELS OF STRATEGY

In addition to these distinctions between these broad perspectives of strategy, writers such as Gerry Johnson and Kevan Scholes (1999) have pointed to the distinction between different levels of strategy: corporate, business, and functional/operational. Corporate strategies focus on decisions about the broad scope and direction of an organization’s development. Business or competitive strategies focus on decisions about how best to compete in the markets in which an organization operates. Functional strategies are concerned with decisions about how each of the separate organizational functions (marketing, production, HRM, etc.) can in turn contribute to the achievement of higher-order strategies.

THE STRATEGIC POTENTIAL OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

As Jon White and David M. Dozier (1992) acknowledged, it is comparatively rare to find public relations included in the dominant coalition (the most senior level of decision making) and contribution to top management decision making. The main reason for this relative lack of representation at the most senior levels within organizations appears to be partly the lack of senior managerial experience and expertise

amongst practitioners, many of whom may have comparatively little experience of the sort of issues that top management decision makers frequently have to tackle. Second, senior management personnel will generally have had very little exposure to public relations and tend to see it as a largely tactical function.

Returning to the various perspectives of strategy, it's clear that there is limited acknowledgment of the existence of these different perspectives of strategy within the public relations literature. Indeed, the vast majority of public relations studies have, by inference, assumed a largely linear perspective of strategy making. This may not be bad in itself, but it limits the scope for public relations to be recognized as able to contribute to the more sophisticated adaptive and interpretive strategic decision-making developments.

—Daniel A. Moss

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STYLEBOOK

A stylebook is a handbook, or manual, used by professionals, academicians, and students, that

contains rules/guidelines for how to produce publishable manuscripts. For example, the Associated Press *Stylebook* provides guidelines on the use of words/phrases, punctuation, copyrighted material, captioning photographs, writing newspaper copy for sports and business, and an assortment of other publishing rules.

Many professions use manuals of style, including the print and broadcast industries, publishing, law, and psychology. Stylebooks provide structure to publications, providing continuity of writing style and consistent usage of words, grammar, and citations. They may even prescribe fonts and other features.

In professional public relations contexts, the Associated Press *Stylebook* is perhaps the most valuable text for a practitioner interested in correctly applying the conventions of print publishing. The bulk of the stylebook consists of hundreds of definitions of commonly used words/phrases and how the Associated Press uses the words in publications.

The *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law with Internet Guide and Glossary* points out that the Associated Press's text contains instructions for the use of commonly confused words such as *because* and *since*, instructing writers to “use *because* to denote a specific cause-effect relationship: *He went because he was told*. *Since* is acceptable in a casual sense. . . . *They went to the game, since they had been given the tickets*” (2000, p. 28, italics in original). The stylebook also explains the Associated Press's idiosyncratic use of words such as *doctor* (a term typically reserved for medical doctors and dentists, and *not* used to refer to professors), *e-mail* (lowercase, with a hyphen), and *World Wide Web* (three words, all capitalized).

For public relations practitioners who produce broadcast copy or prepare messages for radio or television sources, there exists an assortment of broadcast stylebooks, such as Robert A. Papper's *Broadcast News Writing Stylebook*. As is the case with the Associated Press *Stylebook*, public relations professionals use broadcast stylebooks to create effective broadcast copy.

Other stylebooks of note to academicians or those interested in publishing in academic journals include the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, *The MLA Style Manual*,

and *The Chicago Manual of Style*. All of these texts include lengthy sections on spelling and grammar, how to write well, how to organize manuscripts, proper citation of sources, and how to prepare manuscripts for publication in academic journals. Large agencies, corporations, and other organizations often craft their own stylebooks to increase uniformity of presentation, an important aspect of brand equity.

—Michael L. Kent

See also AP style

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SUBJECTIVE EXPECTED UTILITIES THEORY

Subjective expected utilities (SEU) theory is one of the oldest attempts to explain how people make decisions. The theory is based on the intuitively simple proposition that people make decisions to maximize positive outcomes and minimize negative ones. Persuasion theory pursues insights to understand how people make decisions. The assumption behind this line of inquiry is that once researchers and practitioners know how people make decisions, messages can be used to strategically influence the decisions people make. That premise, for instance, is the basic assumption underlying marketing communication, including promotion and publicity. It also has ethical implications that arise from the fear that practitioners can manipulate attitudes and behaviors.

SEU theory is closely connected to *learning theory* explanations of the process of persuasion. Learning theory reasons that people learn to make

rewarding decisions, which are preferred to those with negative consequences. To that end, people acquire information they use to form attitudes and develop motivations that lead toward positive outcomes and away from negative ones. Advocates of learning theory know that people acquire attitudes through learning experiences rather than responding to motives based on innate drives. The assumptions of this theory are essentially timeless. Philosophy, the predecessor of persuasion theorists, has long argued that people seek positive outcomes and avoid negative ones. The problem, at times, with philosophical analysis of these choices is that people make decisions that are too narrow or short-sighted. Thus, for instance, although a decision might appear to maximize rewards at the moment, it leads to negative consequences for the long run. Consequently, children would rather play than do homework. Play leads to enjoyment, a positive outcome. However, if children only learn to play and do not study and acquire knowledge, they may be cut off from a lifetime of increased enjoyment.

For reasons such as this, SEU theory is alluring in its simplicity but devilishly difficult to use to make predictions that are subjected to careful research and thoughtful applications of strategic communication. For instance, we know that even though television advertising purveys a wide array of appealing products with promises of a nice and enjoyable life, not every viewer buys all of the available products. Therefore, we know intuitively that the fundamental premise of SEU theory is both true and too much of a generalization. People simply don't opt for all that is presented as positive. They make more complex decisions.

The term *subjective* in the theory suggests that individuals make calculations based on available data of what choices are best. The theory assumes that two individuals may make substantially or marginally different choices based on their individual subjective calculations of outcomes. In this sense, we know that individuals make decisions that are perceived and predicted to be best for them. People like to hold useful attitudes, those that foster satisfying decisions. For this reason, they acquire information and fine-tune the decision they make. They can even try out the decision, such as purchase a

product or give to a charity, to see in their own judgment whether the choice is productive. We also know that people can differ substantially in what they find appealing. Some tastes, such as eating hot peppers, have to be acquired and cultivated. But, the underlying premise is that the choices, however cultivated, form attitudes that lead to motivations that have positive consequences.

Part of the *subjective expectation* implied by the theory to explain the formation decisions rests on the way people know and weigh the positive and negative elements of each decision. The assumption is that each individual acquires functional attitudes that sort decisions into relevance and priority. Thus, not all of the products or services that one sees in television advertising are relevant. Young people see products and services differently than their parents or grandparents do. Life insurance has little appeal to a child, whereas toys and amusement parks are appealing. SEU theory suggests that people sort decisions based on whether even making a decision is relevant because of the positive or negative consequences expected.

Just as *subjective* is a key term, so is *expected*. It is a calculated or estimated outcome. People learn attitudes and make judgments based on some amount of uncertainty. Consumers ask, "If I buy a cleaning product, will it really work?" One of the ethical (and even legal) challenges to product and service advertising focuses on the liability that can be incurred in asserting—often more by implication than by direct claim—that some product or service will lead to positive outcomes and have no negative consequences. First, we know that people often acquire and interpret data to lead to attitudes and motives they want to make. In many instances, it is not the acquisition and interpretation of data that lead to a choice, but, rather, the desire to make a choice motivates the information acquisition and analysis process. Humans are infinitely capable of rationalization where they calculate decisions they want to make rather than necessarily making the most "rational" ones. Regardless of the pathway to the decision, people do subjectively calculate how an attitude or a combination of attitudes will produce desirable outcomes.

One of the frustrating lines of analysis that SEU theory has tackled is understanding how people make decisions among relative positives or relative negatives. The fundamentals of the theory simplistically assume that people avoid the negative and prefer the positive. However, decisions often entail choosing among several positives. For instance, people are likely to encounter a plethora of automobile ads. When the time comes to buy a new automobile (or a used one), what drives that choice? First, we assume that individuals subjectively expect some to be more positive (based on various attitudes, such as cost, maintenance record, style, color, model, brand, or features) than others. Thus, even though people prefer positive outcomes, they calculate in idiosyncratic ways what is "best" for them at each decision point. To make such calculations, they often deal with substantial or quite shallow amounts of information. Their decision may reflect well-formed or poorly formed attitudes and reflect substantial or inadequate decision heuristics. Rather than being merely positive or negative, or most positive, the decision is likely to be much more complex or absolutely simple, such as buying by brand or copying a friend's choice. For instance, one person might study the choice for days, whereas another might make the choice on what seems to be a whim—even the pitch of a salesperson. Both believe the choice will lead to positives, but the complexity of the decision is often difficult to unlock through research and frustrating to persons who engage in marketing communication.

Another frustrating line of analysis is the reality that people often have to make decisions based not on variously positive choices but rather on which of several negative choices is least bad. That heuristic can be telling of the differences between some individuals' choices. People who engage in health communication often suggest that people undergo diagnosis and testing, which is uncomfortable, in order to reduce the likelihood of suffering a devastating medical outcome, such as severe surgery or death. In making such decisions, people again may turn to the considerations of time and relevance. Is the problem one that will happen far in the future, thus seeming to require no choice today? Is the problem one that will

happen to me? For instance, men and women are differentially prone to some cancers. The practice of medical treatment often requires helping individuals to understand and sort through various treatment options. All the options may have negative aspects. The choices leading to cure, one hopes, are subjectively calculated to be the most efficacious with the least negative consequences. First, making such decisions assumes an often complex weighing of relative negatives in terms of treatments—the means to an end. Second, the decisions also may vary by what individual patients see as preferable outcomes—least negative. Thus, SEU theory has sought to help explain how people sort means and outcomes, especially those that are fraught with a disproportion of negative aspects.

SEU has been a powerful and productive line of research and practice. Promotion, publicity, and advertising tend to call attention to the positive elements of products and services. Promises are made or implied that good outcomes will occur and negative ones will not. This is a compelling logic of applied persuasion that seeks to know and use insights into human decision making, attitude formation, and behavior. Many other theories, such as information integration and reasoned action, have been developed to refine this line of inquiry.

The assumptions of SEU theory have substantial ethical consequences for public relations academics and practitioners. The knowledge that decision processes can be used to design public relations campaigns leads to the argument that scientific persuasion is asymmetrical and inherently unethical. This ethical concern needs to be kept current in academic and practitioner discussions. However, the ability of any campaign to manipulate many, if any at all, and for a long time may be more daunting than imagined, as counter campaigns and the complexities mentioned above complicate the ability of academics and practitioners to solve the puzzle of all of the confounding factors that shape individuals' decisions.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Information integration theory; Learning theory; Persuasion theory; Promotion; Publicity

SURVEY

Surveys are instruments that are used to collect data on a wide range of behavioral, attitudinal, and cognitive issues, including respondent perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, values, purchasing practices, and other behavioral intentions. Surveys consist of a series of questions about an issue of interest to the practitioner. Practitioners may use surveys to gauge stakeholders' opinions on an issue relevant to an organization's practices, determine the effectiveness of a campaign, measure the community's perceptions of risks associated with a new production process, or assess an organization's reputation.

Surveys typically involve securing responses from a subset of the population of interest (called a *sample*) to which the practitioners hope to generalize. Surveys are the most popular research methodology in public relations due to their relative ease of construction, administration, tabulation, and analysis. However, practitioners must be careful when constructing survey questions and deciding who should complete the surveys (sampling) and how (e.g., self-administered or administered by a trained interviewer). Practitioners must also decide whether their research design is cross-sectional or longitudinal.

As in all research, reliability (providing consistent measures in similar situations) and validity (responses correspond to what they are intended to measure) are concerns. The goal is to have the questions and response options mean the same thing to all respondents. Practitioners need to be able to attribute differences in answers to differences in respondents rather than to possible extraneous factors such as educational level, technical expertise, or interviewer style, which introduce error. Threats to reliability and validity can produce inaccurate results. For this reason, careful attention should be devoted to the words used in the questions and response options and how these are phrased. Technical jargon, ill-defined terms, words with multiple meanings, and loaded ("red flag") words can create problems related to the interpretation of and response to questions and the selection of answer options. When the possibility for misunderstanding exists, precise definitions should be provided.

Other problems occur when questions are too complex and ask for several pieces of information in a single question. This often occurs when two issues contained in a question are connected by *and*. For example, if respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement “XYZ Corporation is an asset to the community and provides needed employment for the community,” they are being asked to respond to two issues (XYZ Corporation as an asset to community and as employer). Other problems arise when questions are leading and seem to suggest the desired response. For instance, the question “Is school violence the biggest problem facing our public schools today?” seems to suggest that yes is the desired response.

Finally, the method of survey administration may affect the reliability and validity of the results. There are two methods of survey administration. First, surveys may be self-administered through the use of a questionnaire that is mailed and returned, posted and returned via the Internet, or distributed to the desired sample in a particular setting and collected (e.g., distributed and collected at a town hall meeting, an information-giving session for employees, etc.). Respondents complete these surveys themselves. Error may arise from their failure to read questions thoroughly, their skimming through answer options, and their difficulty in recording responses. Additionally, there is no guarantee that the desired respondent completed the survey. Second, surveys may be administered by trained interviewers through face-to-face or telephone interviews. This method is more expensive due to the costs of training interviewers and compensating them for their work. However, training interviewers to be consistent in their behaviors increases the uniformity and accuracy of survey completion.

The survey instrument itself consists of a series of questions that may be closed-ended, open-ended, or a combination of both. Closed-ended questions ask respondents to select among the response alternatives provided. Closed questions necessitate anticipating all possible answer options in advance and including them on the instrument. The options must be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Closed-ended questions are useful because they offer

greater uniformity of responses and are more easily tabulated. The following is a closed-ended question: “How would you describe your political affiliation? Would you say you are a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?” Additionally, questions using the popular Likert-type scale response options, which range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree,” are closed-ended questions.

Open-ended questions allow more freedom for the participants to respond. However, the responses are much more difficult to interpret. The following is an open-ended question: “What do you feel is the most important issue facing our community today?” The respondent (in the case of a self-administered survey) or interviewer must write down the response to this question. Answers may vary in length from single-word responses to rather lengthy descriptions of numerous issues. Once the data are collected, the responses must be coded (i.e., interpreted and categorized by the researcher) before they can be analyzed. This introduces an extra step and may create error when the researcher interprets the responses differently from what the participants intended, the respondents are not adept at expressing themselves, or the handwriting is illegible.

—Sherry J. Holladay

See also Reliability; Sampling; Validity

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SWEDEN, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

The communication business in Sweden has grown rapidly during the last decade, though the growth has declined in the early 21st century due to a period of recession. Since 1995, the Swedish Public Relations Association has more than doubled its number of members to 4,500, making it the second largest association in Europe and, per capita, one of

the largest associations in the world (the population of Sweden is 9 million people) (see Table 1).

The incentive to engage in public relations in Sweden is driven primarily, perhaps even exclusively, by the desire to add positively to the organizations' bottom line. They seem less motivated to view and use public relations as a means for building relationships. No evidence whatsoever shows that Swedish enterprises or public bodies have professional communication unless it affects the businesses. It has become more and more obvious to every professional communicator that you either work in-house or as a consultant.

Almost every second year since 1982, the Swedish Public Relations Association has conducted a member survey, of which the 2003 survey is the latest. The data show clear tendencies: internal communication and media relations are the two areas that will grow most during the coming years. Changing processes and ethics are other issues of great importance to association members, as are corporate branding and strategic planning. The intense debate regarding trust and confidence within the business community has further strengthened the focus on information and communication.

The position of the communication departments is strong in Sweden. In listed companies, 73 percent of the directors of the corporate communication are part of the CEO groups, whereas in public authorities the figure rises to 77 percent. This means that professional communication is part of the business decisions, and that the competence and skills of leading professional communicators must include business administration, production management, political science, behavior science, and management in general.

In the years 1998 to 2003, the Swedish Public Relations Association has arranged a management program called the Communication Executives Program for top senior professional communicators. Organized in tandem with the Stockholm School of Economics to fulfill the requirements heard from many CEOs both in the private and the public sector, this management program provides all the areas described above to give the professional communicator a better platform to have a seat in the CEO team.

In a telephone survey of 800 Swedish public relations executives by Research International 2000, 99 percent of respondents in the private and public sectors declared that they considered effective, professional communication a winning concept. The following areas were also considered of importance:

- Creating good relations with stakeholders and publics (88 percent)
- Advising executives (88 percent)
- Developing communication strategies (87 percent)
- Establishing credibility among stakeholders (84 percent)
- Image creation (83 percent)
- Crisis management (77 percent)

This study was the first of its kind in Sweden. The purpose was to obtain a clear picture of the values and attitudes toward professional communication held by the dominant coalitions.

Since 1995 the Swedish Public Relations Association has been a driving force and participant in the monitoring, measuring, and reporting of intangibles/intellectual capital. In 1996 the association published *Return on Communications* and has since been involved in different projects concerning the issue within the European Union, OECD, and Nordic Industrial Fund.

A PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATOR CANNOT ABDICATE FROM CORPORATE BRANDING

For many years branding questions have been part of the work of the marketing people. Today the corporate brand is a matter of the board of directors. The value of the corporate brand is a main factor in considering merchants and acquisitions and must be maintained as well as other assets or intangibles. It also means that the head of corporate communication should be in charge of this area. A professional communicator cannot abdicate from his or her responsibility. The assignment of a communicator includes maintaining and developing the company's image and reputation. This means having a broad knowledge about the company business and its

products and services, as well as an understanding of the business and product processes.

The need for integrated communication has increased as all companies or other organizations have realized that they must take into consideration all the stakeholders, such as the employee, the customers, the society, and the owners/shareholders. This work is neither new nor hocus-pocus. It is all about professional communication work.

SCRAP THE CODE OF ATHENS?

Ethics has become more and more important, and a committee within the Swedish Public Relations Association is working with professional ethical codes. It is about time to scrap the Code of Athens since professional communicators cannot use the code as a guideline to the daily work. The Code of Athens was written in the 1960s and is not applicable to the communication work of today or tomorrow. A member survey shows that members think it is important that the same code be used by both in-house communicators and consultants.

Public Relations Consultancies in Sweden (PRECIS) has developed a new standard, the Stockholm Charter, which has also become the standard of the International Communications Consultancy Organisation (ICCO).

Norms shall create identity and shall be able to communicate. They shall be consistent, reliable, guiding, and inspiring to a professional communicator. The norms shall guide and advise a communicator in different situations that can arise in his or her daily work. This issue is one of the priorities for the Swedish Public Relations Association during 2004.

PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION ENABLING BUSINESS CREATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The professional area of communication is represented by professional communicators, many of whom are members of the Swedish Public Relations Association. For a number of years, this area has developed its own discourse with academic support from scholars such as Sven Windahl. The

knowledge and the theories in use have, however, to a great extent been developed by and for the practitioners themselves. As a result, professional communication is rather poorly represented in the academic context, particularly in the educational management programs. It can be assumed that this knowledge accumulation has mainly been following the path of the traditional perspective of the public relations discourse. This may have resulted in managerial measures focused on defensive actions with the objective to preserve and defend present values, in particular the organizational trust capital. This in itself is not negative but may result in decreasing effectiveness of professional communication measures as far as the pro-active creation of businesses and influencing organizational change are concerned.

With today's rapidly changing network community, organizations must keep a fast, steady pace in the development of structures, processes, and businesses. All managerial measures must take active part in this, regardless of whether the organization is business oriented. Research has shown that development of organizations tend to be path dependent. Development follows limited perspectives with the effect of unevenly allocating resources. As a result, organizations run a considerable risk of neglecting certain potential areas for development. This may later have negative consequences. This is true for the technology-driven development that dominated the organizational life up to the 1970s, as well as the stock market-driven development of today. Through short-sighted obedience to demands from the stock market, many companies have put themselves in situations where they have aroused unrealistic expectations and thereby jeopardized sustainable growth. It can therefore be assumed that there is a need for knowledge development in order to create the prerequisites for organizational development processes from an optimal system perspective.

Professional communication is not presently used to its full potential as far as participation in the development of businesses and organizations is concerned. It may certainly be advocated that the present focus of most communication measures on preservation of trust capital constitutes a foundation

for further development. There are, however, reasons to believe that many organizations need to refine the trust capital further, rather than just preserving it. Professional communication has great potential for use in organizational and business development.

This program is intended to substantially contribute to the development of knowledge about how communication processes can be managed to enable effective participation in creating business and organizational change.

In cooperation with the Swedish Public Relations Association, Stockholm School of Economics has during the last five years conducted an executive educational program called the Communication Executives Program. This program has established a dialogue between the school and professional communication executives.

PURPOSE

The general purpose of this project, as stated above, can be divided into the following subpurposes:

To make an inventory of communication knowledge as it is manifest in the discourse of the practitioners and relate this to the knowledge present in the academic discourse, in particular, organizational theory, social cognition, and sociology.

To publish suggestions for theories and methodologies that can be applied to the role of communication processes in organizational change and business creation. Results will be published in academic as well as practitioners' contexts.

To initiate self-reinforcing research and knowledge development processes in this field by participating in the establishment of educational programs, and thereby making the area interesting and available for doctoral students, and creating the prerequisites for a professorship at the Stockholm School of Economics.

PROCESS

In order to meet the overall purpose of generating and establishing new knowledge in this field, a certain duration is required for a research program of this nature. There is, however, also a need to develop knowledge in the short term. The program will therefore have a duration of five years. All three subpurposes are expected to be fulfilled within this time frame.

Year 1: In the first year the program will conduct a large number of interviews and participant observations with professional communicators in order to create an empirical base for extraction of methodologies applied and theories in use in the discourse of practitioners, and relate that knowledge to the academic discourse. Publication of preliminary results will start after six months through the publication channels of the Swedish Public Relations Association. Research results will be published quarterly thereafter.

Year 2: During the second year the academic publishing of results will commence and educational programs in professional communication at graduate level will be established.

Year 3: In the third year the knowledge development will open up opportunities for doctoral students to enter the field.

Years 4 and 5: At the end of the program the accumulated knowledge will have reached the advanced stage of prerequisites for a professorship in this field at the Stockholm School of Economics. Furthermore, the accumulated knowledge will be synthesized into a final publication. Thereby the field will be established in the academic setting.

RESOURCES

During the whole length of the program one qualified research capability will be allocated full-time. The position will be held by Sven Hamrefors,

Table 1 Some Facts About the Swedish Public Relations Association

Number of members	4500 (70% women and 30% men)
<i>The members represent:</i>	
Private companies	35% (16% are listed companies)
Public sector	27% (of which, 7% are municipality, 4% are County Council, and 16% are National Government)
Consultants	16%
Organizations	7%
Students	6%
Others	9%
SPRA turnover:	SEK 12 millions (Euro 1.2 millions)
Secretarial staff	6 persons
Accounting:	2 persons

SOURCE: Swedish Public Relations Association. Reprinted with permission.

assistant professor at Stockholm School of Economics, who is also the program director for the Communication Executives Program and has been since the start of that program. The total estimated cost for the program is SEK 6 million (Euro 600,000).

—Margaretha Sjöberg

See also Brand equity and branding; Codes of ethics; Counseling; Ethics of public relations; Internal communication

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM THEORY

Symbolic interactionism theory offers to public relations students and practitioners a way in which to view communication as a social process, and also a research method framework to investigate that process. The theory is based on the assumption that people behave in certain ways because of their meaning making—interpretive—actions. The mind, self, and society work together to influence how people make meaning. With historical foundations in the social sciences, symbolic interactionism theory

makes three assumptions about the communication process. The theory assumes communication occurs when people share meanings for symbols, such as words or pictures. Social interactionists, or those who study social interactionism theory, hold that people are created through communication. And there is an assumption that social or collective action can occur when communicators understand and negotiate the meanings of other people.

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

The interdisciplinary development of symbolic interaction has changed the way individuals, groups, and society are analyzed. No longer is it exclusively believed that people can be reduced to being studied as objects or animals. Social interaction theorists assume people communicate through socially created and used symbols, including language. People assume roles based on symbols interpreted in their group(s) and interact through these roles. By way of roles, people create ideas of self and mind, and through interaction, society forms.

The beginnings of interactionism theory development are found in the works of the Scottish moral philosophers during the 1800s. Although these men

disagreed on the fundamentals of the human mind, especially important to the emergence of symbolic interaction was their conviction that it is not possible to study individuals without considering human interaction. Their emphasis on communication and on the emotion of sympathy was the foundation for interactionists' view of society and the origin of self.

The ideas of the moral philosophers can be found in the works of William James and John Dewey, who influenced philosopher George Herbert Mead, often referred to as the most influential scholar of symbolic interactionism theory. The theories of Mead and Dewey are founded in an understanding of the individual within society. Charles Horton Cooley furthered the concept by considering the self from a sociological perspective. He used a critical framework of a group and underscored the role societies play in shaping an individual's motivation. Cooley conceptualized society as existing in the minds of the people within a social unit, making it real to those people. He argued that there are any number of different minds that exist through a melding and sharing of histories, expectations, and experiences.

The works and class notes of philosopher George Herbert Mead provided his students at the University of Chicago with enough material to posthumously publish three influential books in the 1930s. Of these three books, *Mind, Self, and Society* is most relevant to the public relations community. Mead's arguments coincide with those of other pragmatists of the time, but his work was the foundation for symbolic interaction, a unique form of interpretive research.

At the core of Mead's intersubjective thoughts lies his notion of mind. Mead's mind is symbolic. It emerges and develops through interaction with others. According to Mead, our thoughts and identity are in response to and develop as part of a social process. The self is an object that develops through awareness; it is determined through the roles other people take, and by interaction with others through symbols, including language. As humans we are able to think, and according to Mead, thinking is a reflective process that develops through our interactions with others and through our recognition of

ourselves from the viewpoint of others. Our reflective self is rooted in society, or in a "generalised other" (Prus, 1996, p. 53). This generalized other—a society, a community, a workplace—are people interacting with each other in a manner made possible through shared symbolic representations.

A student of Mead, Herbert Blumer, coined the term *symbolic interaction* in 1937. Elaborating on Cooley's method of sympathetic introspection, Blumer's main argument was that researchers must have intimate familiarity with the study's participants, and that the only way to achieve intimate familiarity with human group life is to interact with it while it is happening. Equally important to Blumer was the notion that all individual analysis must be examined as reflective and/or interactive units within a human group. In brief, Blumer contended that: (a) humans act based on the meanings held within themselves; (b) those meanings are a product of human interaction; and (c) the meanings are modified through an interpretive process. His theories provided the framework for ethnographic research for students in all social sciences.

Interpretive researchers study people as part of a group. People are investigated as active participants in interaction. The most common research methods are participant observation, observation, and open-ended interviews. Life is studied as it happens. Intersubjectivity is analyzed. Researchers question the meanings people attach to their situations and look at the ways people construct their interactions with others.

While interpretive research is regaining popularity after experiencing unpopularity in the academic community from the 1960s to the 1980s, it retains some of its original pitfalls. The research is time consuming and labor and emotionally intensive, making it an expensive research method. The data can be ambiguous, much more so than the data produced from a simple survey. It is also difficult to condense and present the data collected. Interpretive studies are neither as readily supported by funding agencies, nor as widely accepted within organizations, as are quantitative research projects. However, for those who want to address the *how* and *why* of communication efforts, symbolic

interactionism theory provides a framework for investigative measures that take into account a more holistic view of an organization and its publics.

USING SYMBOLIC INTERACTION THEORY

Understanding symbolic interaction theory is useful in any communication scenario and at any stage of communication planning. Indeed, understanding the basic tenets of the theory can assist any communicator who wants to send a message, or anyone who is receiving one.

The theory is based on three premises: (a) people act toward things on the basis of the meanings they have for them; (b) the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, social interaction; and (c) the meaning is negotiated through an interpretative process.

In contemporary public relations practices, a common goal is to communicate effectively with various people or groups of people. Symbolic interaction theory suggests that any one of these people or peoples make meaning through a process that is shaped by other people's meanings and meaning-making processes. That is, people respond to messages differently depending on their life histories, social circumstances, and knowledge, which are informed by other people and society (including the workplace). Important to the public relations scholar and practitioner is the acknowledgement that the sender of messages is an integral participant in the communication process. The messages or signs might be in the form of words, objects, or actions. According to this theory, whatever their form, people will make meaning through interpreting the signs and reacting according to the meanings they have created for those signs.

As an example, assume that an organization's internal communications professional wants to communicate to employees that the organization values its employees. Without investigating what "value" means to the employees, the communicator uses his own definition of value, which means an increase in salary. The communicator convinces the organizational leader to make increases to all employee salaries and announces the increase through a

monthly newsletter. Because the communicator neither talked with the employees nor researched what "valuing employees" means to them and assumed that they would all share the same meaning, the communicator can expect that the employees will react in different, and possibly even negative, ways. At a minimum, employees will evaluate the signs (the increase in salary and the announcement in the newsletter). They will do this using their own meaning of "value," which will include all of their experiences and history within the organization and outside it. How the employees react will reflect the meanings they have attached to other such signs from within the organization, or even at a different workplace.

Continuing the example, assume that the employees do not agree that salary equals value. Instead, valuing employees means a simple thank-you for a job well done from the job supervisor. Without having investigated this meaning, the communicator would not know that his own meaning of value is different from that held by those with whom he wants to communicate.

Symbolic interactionism theory suggests that working to negotiate shared meanings is a process of clarification. Signs can be modified to further negotiate meanings. If there is not an opportunity to do this through dialogue or through other investigative methods, the communicator can attempt to assume the positions of those with whom he or she wants to communicate. By assuming social positions of others, communicators can better imagine and hence negotiate meaning. The process allows one to identify that one's own assumptions might not be similar to the intended receivers'.

—DeNel Rehberg Sedo

See also Measuring/measures

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SYMMETRY

The concept of symmetry in public relations was first explored by James E. Grunig in an attempt to relate Lee Thayer's (1968) concepts of synchronic and diachronic communication to the discipline. Grunig extended these concepts into four models of public relations and published a textbook explicating these models (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The models are (a) press agency/publicity, (b) public information, (c) two-way asymmetrical, and (d) two-way symmetrical. Symmetry is the concept upon which the two-way symmetrical model is based.

In public relations, symmetry means balance and implies a perfectly equal division. This division is conceptualized as that between an organization and a public, and the division can be thought of in terms of relationship-influencing factors, such as locus of control, power, and authority. In a symmetrical relationship, these factors are evenly held by the organization and its public or publics. Symmetry induces a symbiotic relationship between organization and public; the two are equal partners, interdependently sharing information in order to arrive at mutual understanding, which is the balance implied in the term.

However, symmetry is not static—it is a sliding scale in which the balance adjusts and readjusts toward equilibrium. These adjustments and counter-adjustments are made when an organization and its public vary approaches along a continuum from accommodation to competition, depending on how strongly each feels about the issue under discussion. Using negotiation tactics, an organization or public might give up some of what it wants in order to get more of what it wants on another issue or in the future. Symmetry is characterized by collaboration and compromise, as well as by using dialogue to understand all sides of the issue and arrive at enduring, long-term solutions.

Although this depiction of symmetry is theoretical, symmetry also occurs in the actual practice of public relations. The two-way symmetrical model is based on using social scientific research to understand the values, attitudes, and beliefs of publics. It is a two-way model because the communication is dialogical. The two-way asymmetrical model is also based on using social scientific research to understand publics. Here the models diverge as follows: The symmetrical model uses research for the purpose of understanding publics, adapting to their ideas when necessary; and the asymmetrical model uses research to understand how the beliefs of publics can be altered to favor the organization, without the organization actually changing. In the asymmetrical model, the balance is in favor of the organization conducting the research—publics can be persuaded to change their beliefs, but the organization does not do anything to change itself. In the symmetrical model, the balance is maintained through dialogue and mutual willingness to adapt to the other side; both publics and organization are willing to discuss, educate, collaborate, and incorporate meritorious ideas of the other into their own approach. Symmetrical and asymmetrical models of public relations can be used by any organization, including activist groups and publics outside an organization. However, using a symmetrical approach does not imply that an organization must accommodate whatever a public wishes or vice versa, but that each must work to understand the merits of the other view. J. E. Grunig explained, “The concept of symmetry directly implies a balance of the organization's and public's interests. Total accommodation of the public's interests would be as asymmetrical as unbridled advocacy of the organization's interests” (2001, p. 15). There are four primary benefits to using a symmetrical approach to the public relations function, as discussed next.

SYMMETRY AS RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE

Using a two-way symmetrical approach, as opposed to any of the other three models of public relations, results in the building, strengthening, and maintenance of relationships with publics. As one-way

models, neither press agency nor public information incorporates the ideas of publics. The asymmetrical model researches the attitudes of publics, so that the organization can better persuade them to adopt the beliefs that are advantageous to it. Symmetry is actually a long-term, dialogical process that seeks to create and maintain relationships with publics. Through mutual understanding and collaboration, trust and credibility can be built between an organization and publics. Sometimes the publics can persuade the organization on an issue, and sometimes the organization will persuade publics on an issue. This give-and-take is the crux of symmetry.

Establishing symmetrical, pre-need relationships with strategic publics helps the organization in times of decision making and crisis. Publics are less likely to jump to hasty conclusions when they have a symmetrical relationship with the organization. Symmetrical relationships are more enduring than asymmetrical ones, in which one side will always feel as if it “lost” the issue and will become frustrated, often dissolving the relationship. Furthermore, activist groups are more likely to target organizations that do not discuss the issue of concern with them than organizations that show a willingness to listen, understand, and to varying extents incorporate their ideas. Even when little common ground can be found initially, a symmetrical relationship allows the possibility of continued dialogue and inventing options for mutual gain.

SYMMETRY AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Although it is an idealistic and normative model, the symmetrical approach results *in practice* in satisfactory and beneficial relationships with publics. Building effective relationships with publics (such as government regulators, activist groups, investors, community publics, and so forth) is crucial to the long-term survival and profitability of an organization. J. E. Grunig wrote, “With the two-way symmetrical model, practitioners use research and dialogue to bring about symbiotic changes in the ideas, attitudes, and behaviors of both their

organization and publics” (2001, p. 12). These pro-active, symbiotic changes can often save the organization enormous sums of money that would have been spent on legal settlements, regulatory compliance, or damage control if a symmetrical model had not been employed.

A second major way that symmetry contributes to organizational effectiveness is by enhancing the organizational culture in a way that allows open communication inside the company. Simply stated, authoritarian systems operate on an asymmetrical worldview, whereas participative cultures operate on a symmetrical presupposition. Research has found that authoritarian cultures use one-way models of communication (press agency and public information) and two-way asymmetrical communication to persuade employees along the lines that management desires.

A symmetrical worldview supports two-way communication inside the organization as well as with external publics. The presuppositions characteristic of the symmetrical worldview are interdependence, an open system, moving equilibrium, equality, autonomy, innovation, decentralization, responsibility, innovation, conflict resolution, and interest group liberalism. Dialogue is the basis of the symmetrical worldview and the symmetrical model of public relations, and facilitating a participative culture and information sharing inside the organization. Symmetrical internal communication helps to make an organization effective by increasing the satisfaction of employees and allowing long-term relationships with employee publics to be maintained.

SYMMETRY ENHANCES THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Every organization has a core of decision makers, including the CEO and top officers, who determine organizational strategy. This group of five to eight influentials is termed the *dominant coalition*. The ideal situation is for the head of public relations to be a member of the dominant coalition so that the views of publics can be incorporated in strategic planning. However, when public relations is seen as

a technical function, limited to communicating the will of management rather than having input into the decision making process, its input is often excluded from the dominant coalition. The use of a symmetrical approach is vital to public relations gaining a seat in the dominant coalition.

Through symmetrical relationships, the public relations function performs a boundary-spanning role. Public relations thereby holds the knowledge of publics outside the organization that other departments do not, and this information is of great value in strategic decision making. Public relations counsel can convey the attitudes, values, and beliefs of a given public to management for consideration in strategic planning. In this manner, the public's ideas can be incorporated into organizational policy, or the organization can be aware that it should pro-actively prepare for dissent from that public. The organization has taken the public into account and planned for contingencies, avoiding surprises that can cost the organization in litigation, negative press, and loss of credibility. Information gained through symmetrical dialogue is valuable in strategic planning. This information can earn public relations access to the dominant coalition and increase the responsibility of the communication function in the organization.

SYMMETRY IS INHERENTLY ETHICAL

Scholars such as Jürgen Habermas (1984) and Ron Pearson (1989) asserted that organizations have a moral obligation to engage in dialogue with publics. J. E. and Larissa A. Grunig used symmetry as a way of satisfying that obligation. They espoused the idea that “public relations will be inherently ethical if it follows the principles of the two-way symmetrical model” (1996, p. 40). Symmetry is based on dialogue and is therefore an ethical form of communication.

Symmetrical public relations provides a means through which publics and organizations can debate the merits of issues and determine the best course of action through discussion, negotiation, and collaboration. When public relations is based on a symmetrical worldview, it performs an idealistic social role. Public relations acts as the grease on the

wheels of society, developing mutual understanding through dialogue and informed debate.

—Shannon A. Bowen

See also Ethics of public relations; Excellence theory

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SYSTEMS THEORY

Systems theory was developed to understand the dynamics of natural and human phenomena. The system is a basic unit of analysis. Theory addresses the nature of each system as part of its environment that consists of other systems. The key concern of proponents of systems theory is to understand how well or poorly each system

functions within its dynamic relationship with other systems.

Most definitions of public relations imply that communication plays a strong role in the interdependence of the public relations practitioner, the organization, and its stakeholders. This interdependence is equated to Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn's *open system* rather than a *closed-system* perspective. Presented in 1966, the open system stems from the 1940s and 1950s and is based on the biological approach of Ludwig von Bertalanffy, who emphasized the interconnectedness of all the parts of a body. Each human or social system, like each physical organism, is surrounded by permeable boundaries. Organizations in open systems are dependent on other organizations or groups in their environment. They cannot depend only on internal processes and interaction as in a closed system. Organizations also must interact with other groups in their environments.

In 1986, Gerald Goldhaber described a systems loop, the loop being input from the environment, throughput, and output with feedback coming back on the loop to be reinput into the organization. This feedback represents the effects of other organizations or groups of the organization and leads it to adapt or change to coexist better with its environment. Organizations representative of closed systems believe they are independent of environmental influences. To succeed and survive, however, in an increasingly turbulent environment that cannot be ignored, organizations are dependent on or have to cope with factors in their environment. Public relations is one of the primary links in sustaining this interdependence, both internally and externally, to the organization.

Factors in the environment that affect an organization also result in decisions that have inescapable consequences for the relationships the organization has with its stakeholders. Relationships exist whether acknowledged or not. That is where public relations contributes to an organization's existence.

The strategic skill used by public relations practitioners to manage these relationships between an organization and its stakeholders is *boundary spanning*. This is the process by which the practitioner

scans stakeholders in the organization's environment useful for it to adapt to that environment. Boundary spanners are individuals within the organization who frequently interact with the organization's environment and who gather, select, and relay information from the environment to decision makers of an organization. That interaction with the environment can be on a formal or informal basis. These stakeholders serve in a microsystem with public relations that could be referred to as a *public relations system*.

Many scholars in public relations purport that research and theorizing in public relations is strongly influenced by systems theory and that systems theory could be considered a meta-theory for public relations. Systems theory tenets are evident in many studies of public relations and implied in others. It was in 1976 when both Bell and Bell and separately James E. Grunig first incorporated systems theory in public relations. Probably the most extensive development of systems theory in public relations was Larissa A. Grunig's (a.k.a. "Schneider") doctoral dissertation of 1985. She concluded in the structural-functionalist tradition that structure and organizational constraints control the flow of information from within the organization and from it to its external stakeholders. However, functionalism alone is insufficient to justify systems theory as a meta-theory in public relations.

CRITIQUES AND RESPONSES

Other scholars in public relations also have addressed perceived weaknesses in the extent and possible consequences of systems theory. In his discussion of the pluralist paradigm in public relations, Timothy Coombs said in 1993 that for the pluralist paradigm, where power is equalized in the policy-making process, systems theory failed to address power advantages of corporations. This power advantage is particularly acute in considering public relations assisting an organization to achieve its goals by aligning itself with others in the environment. Public relations remains an advocate for an organization. This viewpoint will be addressed later in the discussion of organizations pursuing their own *self-interests*.

Others also have criticized systems theory when discussing organizational power. Pamela Creedon agreed with L. A. Grunig in that the functionalist perspective implied by systems theory inhibits the examination of the “foundation of institutional values or norms that determine an organization’s response changes in its environment” (1993, p. 160). In essence the systems approach emphasizes the need of the organization over the needs of the entire system structure and that there is a sought-after degree of control. Organizational advocacy does not necessarily include mutual understanding, dialogue, or reaching consensus with stakeholders.

These critiques and possible responses essentially can be distilled into the Jürgen Habermas’s school of interpersonal or intersubjective common interests among interdependent systems, and Niklas Luhmann’s school of independent social systems where there is no difference between public and private interests. Habermas’s objective is the social integration of society, the breakdown of system boundaries, whereas Luhmann’s objective is for inner-systemic integration and the maintenance of system boundaries. The Habermas school of thought could be equated somewhat to the critical and ethical perspectives in public relations. In 1990, Ron Pearson examined systems theory and public relations with an ethical view to take functionalism one step further. Functionalism maintains a balance of a system as a whole, to maintain homeostasis with other elements of its environment. Pearson put forward the concept of interdependencies as a way of ethically balancing the connections among stakeholders. This focus on interdependencies ultimately leads to ethical and power-balanced relationships as the organization attempts to continually maintain and adapt to its environment. It is within this interdependence where both strategic and ethical considerations are present. The major difference in functionalism and systems theory, according to Pearson, is that functionalism usually emphasizes structure, output, and performance in contrast to systems theory, which emphasizes input, throughput, and output. With input, systems theory lends itself more to the interdependence, ethical side of the argument. This type of input should be that

which supports change on both sides of the equation, that of the organization and that of the stakeholder(s) in a symmetrical manner. According to Habermas’s theories, it is unethical to enter a system representing particular interests or self-interests. Luhmann’s theories promote just the opposite view since no perspective for society, as a whole system, exists in actuality.

INTERESTS AND SELF-INTERESTS

Common interests and *self-interests* have been referred to but not specifically addressed yet. Interests from the conflict resolution literature can be defined as those underlying, broader, and more abstract values that individuals and organizations may have in common. Self-interests, from the public relations literature, are not selfish interests but those interests that have intrinsic value for the survival of an entity (e.g., quality of life, needs of family and friends, and even economic well-being). These self-interests motivate individuals and organizations to act and to change behavior. Taken one step further, *enlightened self-interests* in the long-term assist relationships to be mutually satisfactory. Enlightened self-interests meld the intersubjective and social ends of systems theory thought because positive relationships in the long term means adapting, adjusting, and changing to other stakeholders in the environment. There are inevitable effects in a public relations system of one stakeholder on another. This is inherently ethical because stakeholders have a constraining effect; they have consequences for each other. One of the tenets of the social systems perspective is that organizations and systems fundamentally differ and tend toward independence, yet political and economic system restraints and the self-governing restraints of a system’s interconnectedness lead to a system becoming interdependent. The basic survival of an organization in the long term depends on the relationship of self-interests and enlightened self-interests between it and its stakeholders.

Self-interests are just that—values owned exclusively by an individual organization. Thus, there can never be total consensus among individuals or

organizations. It is not so much a matter of finding consensus or common ground or complete resolution of any conflict. It is a matter of settling issues in overlapping areas of self-interests. This is enlightened self-interest. Individual or public trust is not an issue because in the regulated systems of modern society, organizations cannot avoid dealing with other stakeholders. There is a pattern of interdependence, pursuing self-interests of both parties so that both do well. This also relates to mixed motives in public relations where situations and issues are not resolved at the extremes in a pure asymmetrical or symmetrical manner, but there are trade-offs, compromises, and so forth that lead to both parties being mutually satisfied in their self-interests—those self-interests not being identical.

J. E. Grunig's *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* in 1992 advocated two-way symmetrical communication as an ethical but interpersonal and strategic form of communication. The practice, however, of strategic communication in systems theory would be deemed unethical in Habermasian thought. But strategic communications would be judged highly ethical according to Luhmann where self-interests can overlap; the system self-enforces ethical or reciprocal behavior to coexist in the same system. It allows autonomy and interaction to exist side by side in a complementary manner.

Stakeholder relations or public relations practice in systems theory then becomes a question of conflicts among different stakeholders or systems by means of regulation, law, economics, and self-interests. The objective is sustainability through mutual self-regulation, self-restriction, and adjustment in a society of continuous conflicts and disagreements. This is inevitable because systems, organizations, on down to individuals are separate entities biologically, but also in frames of reference or perspective—again self-interests. The public relations manager acts as a system's representative in a

particular self-interest or enlightened self-interest. Mutual understanding in symmetrical communications becomes a type of awareness where stakeholders understand the self-interests of each other in the relationship—not the type that totally reconciles the different stakeholders, but the type that allows them to complement one another in a sustainable relationship.

—Kenneth D. Plowman

See also Publics; Relationship management theory; Stakeholder theory; Symmetry; Two-way and one-way communication

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TACTICS

Tactics are the tools that practitioners use to perform strategies that are formulated by managers, including public relations managers. Usually the most comprehensive part of a communications plan, tactics are the tools of implementation. While objectives, goals, and strategies outline what practitioners wish to accomplish with their public relations endeavors, tactics are what implement it. Addressing the application aspect of public relations, tactics allow you to customize your plan to address specific target publics and markets. They are selected to achieve specific objectives. Most often plotted out in outline form in a communications plan, tactics provide a tool kit with which to carry out the plan and achieve the intended goals. A good analogy is to view tactics as the engineers in the field who carry out the research and planning done by the scientists in their laboratories. Thus, after a solid foundation of research, planning, and identifying goals and objectives, public relations practitioners can then enter the execution stage with the implementation of tactics.

In sum, tactics are what practitioners do and strategies are how they think. As is true of every profession, public relations requires an understanding and application of a variety of unique tools. Tactics are the tools by which strategic public relations programs

and plans as well as other planning options are implemented.

Tactics are part of a hierarchy of elements that define the public relations profession. One can argue that at the top of the pyramid of strategic elements of the profession are the ethical choices, management philosophies, public relations program, and strategic business planning options that drive public relations counseling. No savvy organization that engages in strategic communication, issues management, and public relations positioning does so by accident or whim. This level of analysis requires careful assessment of the strains and challenges that must be addressed as any organization seeks to build, maintain, and repair mutually beneficial relationships with its stakeholders or stake seekers. These may be publics interested in issue positions or customers, donors, or beneficiaries of the organization.

Whether an organization is large or small, it is likely to engage in some or many public relations functions. Functions are the broad headings that group types of activities use to address specific public relations needs. The list of functions is comparatively shorter than a list of tactics and includes employee relations, customer relations, investor relations, student relations, government relations, donor relations, member relations, and such. In large sophisticated organizations one or more

persons may be in charge of one or two specific functions. In smaller organizations, several specific functions may be grouped together more tightly.

Strategic business and public relations plans are executed through functions that require the use of various strategic options. Strategies are the choices practitioners make regarding how to accomplish the ends specified in the strategic plan and enacted through functions. Strategies often also focus on outcomes to be achieved. One strategy is to attract attention, another is to inform. A third is to persuade, which could entail seeking to create favorable opinions, changing opinions, or adapting to the opinions that prevail on some matter. Persuasion can include efforts designed toward motivation. Strategies are employed during crisis response. Strategies are the essence of communication. They typically are independent variables leading to desirable dependent variables that are necessary to create, maintain, and repair mutually beneficial relationships.

The following list of tactics suggests the many tools practitioners use to reach out to and work with their customers, audiences, and publics:

- Media releases
- Lobbying
- Media kits
- News alerts
- Press conferences
- Product (service) releases and stories
- Feature releases and stories
- Employee newsletters and other forms of employee communication
- Customer hotlines
- How-to releases and events
- Expert columns (such as those in newspapers that promote real estate, fashion, cooking, and automobiles)
- Events
- Road shows/media tours/trade shows/product shows
- Videos, books, booklets, catalogs, and pamphlets
- Briefings and backgrounders
- Samples and coupons
- Web sites
- Intranet sites

- Position papers
- Placed and commissioned articles
- Sponsored books and editorials
- Negotiation and collaborative decision making
- Newsletters
- Executive comments
- Speakers bureaus

This long list is more illustrative than definitive. It demonstrates many of the tools that can be used by practitioners as they perform their practice. Practitioners are expected to be expert in the use of these tools based on strategies to be accomplished and functions to be performed in support of public relations programs.

There are several things to consider in choosing your tactics, such as the development of media materials, media distribution lists, and plans for media relations, as well as consideration of internal audiences, event coordination, collateral, partnership opportunities, sponsorship possibilities, and, in some cases, even advertising support when available.

Media materials may include news releases, fact sheets, biographies, visuals, and story angle lists. If media kits are to be used, these materials are the ones most commonly included in them. Good supplemental tools include B-roll (preferably on Beta video format), PSA (public service announcement) scripts, pitch letters, media advisories, trend alerts, and media drops.

In developing media lists, the identification of intended targets is essential. Generally, separate lists will be customized for trade and consumer audiences. Broadcast and print media must all be considered for maximizing message dissemination, whether to reach an international, national, regional, or local market.

Media relations tactics should then include initial distribution of materials, editorial calendar development, comprehensive follow-up, and media monitoring. Follow-up will include fielding media inquiries that may include expert or spokesperson interviews, providing additional information, editorial contribution to existing articles, feature coverage, op-ed pieces, bylined articles, case studies, and press conferences. Proactive strategies to consider are media

tours, backgrounding sessions, executive interviews, and analyst relations. Currently, interactive opportunities also must be considered that include Web sites (as both targets and sources of information about your initiative), blast e-mails, online press-rooms, cyber events, and listservs. Community relations often take a grassroots approach with local speaking opportunities, sponsorships, lobbying, activist groups, and public service announcements.

For events, both interior and exterior audiences must be considered. Events for interior audiences may include incentive events, retreats, quarterly meetings, internal galas, press conferences, product launches, and holiday parties. Exterior event possibilities include trade shows, launch parties, grand openings, ribbon cuttings, shareholder meetings, road shows, guerilla marketing, press conferences, IPOs (initial public offerings of stock), community events, CEO roundtables, educational seminars, and free service giveaways.

Collateral may include marketing or sales pieces, such as brochures, product information sheets, capabilities kits, product displays, video loops, point-of-sale materials, product shots, direct mail pieces, newsletters, annual reports, electronic business cards, interactive CD-ROMs, invitations, event signage, high-resolution logos, trade show throw-away materials, booth graphics, and giveaways. Although usually included under media materials development, items such as press kit folders or containers, media drop materials, and video or audio samples are sometimes listed under collateral items, depending upon whose role it is to conceptualize and develop.

If advertising tactics are to be considered in a communications plan, it is often in the context of how these placements run in tandem with or can supplement the public relations efforts. Possible advertising outlets include print, radio, television, outdoor, Internet, transit, on-site, Yellow Pages, and on-hold telephone recordings.

With so many possibilities to keep track of, timelines are essential in assigning goals for implementing the tactics. You can see how the goals, objectives, strategies, targets, and reach all come into play in real terms with tactics, as they are the approach and tools by which you achieve the rest.

Scholars and senior practitioners who discuss the activities that define the practice often distinguish between the managerial activities of practitioners and their tactics or technician activities. According to this analysis, persons who are new to the profession tend to spend most of their time engaging in what are called “tactician activities” rather than managerial decision making. Some persons prefer to remain primarily in the role of tactician, whereas others aspire to move into more managerial activities.

The division between strategy and tactics guided, at least somewhat, the editorial design of the two professional publications of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). One, *The Public Relations Strategist*, features articles that discuss general policy and planning content. An issue might center on the strategies of activists and the challenges they pose to public relations practitioners. Articles in the *Strategist* might present the thoughts on business, the economy, public policy, or public relations planning by leaders in those fields. The journal might look at trends such as the challenges and advances facing practitioners in specific countries, for instance Russia as it developed more of a financial-commercial business model in place of the old state-control economy.

The other publication, called *Public Relations Tactics*, addresses best practices in the design and use of tactics. One long-running feature of *Tactics* was the column by Bill Adams, who invited practitioners to “Ask the Professor” questions about specific tactics. This might include the best way to capture the news interest of local reporters. It might feature the best approach for addressing employee concerns during a crisis. An issue might note the characteristics and techniques of effective public relations writing. It could offer advice on events or ways to be assertive during a television show interview. A feature in *Tactics* might single out the advantages and challenges of achieving Accredited Public Relations (APR) status. The advice in *Tactics* is practical, that is, something practitioners could do each day to strengthen their professional skills.

Further evidence of the strata of skills and challenges of public relations practitioners is the discussion presented in *Public Relations Career*

Guide, published by the PRSA Foundation in 1993. This publication addressed the typical activities of public relations executives, directors, managers, supervisors, and technicians. All levels perform tactical duties, but the proportion of a day devoted to such duties declined as a person ascended the ladder toward management. The proportion of each day's activities devoted to technical and craft skills declined as the practitioner matured, but at no level of the practice was the individual unlikely to need proficiency in these vital skills of the profession. Tactics define the profession. They are the tools of the trade.

—Lisa K. Merkl and Robert L. Heath

See also APR; Functions of public relations; Public Relations Society of America; Stakeholder theory; Strategies

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TAG

A tag or tagline is a short descriptive phrase used in public relations, advertising, and marketing to convey a key message. *Tagline* and *slogan* are terms that are often used interchangeably. Taglines are clever words, phrases, or sentences that appear at the end of an advertisement or other communication tool to summarize the message in a highly memorable way. If the tagline is repeated from advertisement to advertisement, it is generally called a slogan. The word *slogan* comes from the Gaelic expression for “battle cry,” and slogans and taglines are the battle cry for a company, nonprofit organization, and brand. Therefore, taglines can be attached to a profit-making institution, a nonprofit organization, or a particular brand that is produced by an organization.

In the case of a particular brand, taglines play an important part in branding strategies and become a unifying theme in a campaign, which is a series of ads or collateral under some kind of thematic

umbrella. A tagline summarizes the promise of the brand or how the brand wants to be positioned in the marketplace. In the case of a tagline for an organization, it becomes incorporated into a corporate identification system, which consists of a tagline, a logo, and an organization's name. In either case, taglines sum up the theme for an organization's unique positioning in the market or a brand's benefits in a short, easily remembered message.

Effective taglines are short, simple, and memorable and differentiate the company or product from its competitors. They are designed to be repeated, provide quick and easy identification of the organization or product, create a lasting impression, and ensure continuity. Frequently, taglines appear at the end of an ad as the final phrase, but they are usually incorporated throughout the materials produced by the organization or brand.

To write an effective tagline, a clear understanding of the organization's or brand's mission, unique characteristics, and competitive differences is needed. Some well-known taglines include “Microsoft: Where do you want to go today?”; “Visa: It's everywhere you want to be”; “L'Oreal: Because I'm worth it”; “AT&T: Reach out and touch someone”; “Nike: Just do it”; “Bounty: The quicker picker-upper”; and “Yellow Pages: Let your fingers do the walking.”

—Emma Daugherty Phillingane

See also Advertising; Graphics; Logo

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TARGET

The term *target* is used both as a noun and as a verb. As a noun, a target consists of specific individuals or groups that an organization wants to reach with its messages. Used that way, it would be appropriate to

say that adult, 25-year-and-older, female customers of middle income would be a target for an integrated communication message about a specific product or service. As a verb, *target* means to set sights on that group or individual the organization wants to reach. Used as a verb, it would be appropriate for a political campaign advisor to say, “We will target young voters with college educations with X message.”

The term target is widely used in marketing, advertising, and public relations. It draws on a military, recreation, or hunting context where a shooter aims at a target. The goal is to strategically hit the intended mark. As a preliminary step to some other outcome, an organization might work to get a specific message to a target. A nonprofit organization might do that by using carefully selected channels to reach potential donors or volunteers who are sympathetic to the mission and cause of the organization.

Target is generally defined by goals and objectives, with various tactics used to reach the intended target audiences. Practitioners should always strategically choose their targets to achieve their desired results, keeping in mind that reaching target audiences is also a way to measure someone’s goals and objectives. Some ways to evaluate the level of success in a campaign or communications initiative is to measure both quantitative outcomes, such as garnering media coverage or generating inquiries, as well as more qualitative gauges, such as increasing business, selling products, receiving service requests, changing audience behaviors, and altering perceptions of intended target groups.

The most basic communication model features a source, message, channel, and receiver. Typically, the source has no reason to reach everyone in a population. For instance, in a marketing scenario, there is no reason to try to get a product presentation before people who are unlikely or never customers. Thus, targeting is one way of increasing communication efficiency: putting the right message in front of the right market at the right time. Thus, the source designs a message that is crafted to appeal to the target audience. Then the source works to get that message through one or more channels that increase the likelihood that the target will see, read, view, and respond to the message.

Targets are defined in some way. Definitions may feature demographics such as age, gender, marital status, income, or religious affiliation. Targets may feature psychographics that depend on values, beliefs, lifestyles, and attitudes. A target may also be defined by featuring sociographics such as employment, identifications, affiliations, and cause relatedness.

Targets are determined in a marketing communication context based on the return on investment that appears to be achievable by getting a specific message to a particular, definable market—group or groups of customers—at a particular time. For instance, if a computer manufacturer had a specific product aimed at college students, those students, as well as the parents of those students, could constitute a target market. The company might advertise and use promotions in campus newspapers and magazines to reach students. They might link to Web sites that are popular with students. They might target reporters whose messages can feature promotional activities and materials in magazines, newspapers, radio, and television that are frequently used by college students. The company also might target administrators on college campuses. Thus, we can think of student customers as primary targets, which are targets that can receive a message directly through media channels, and as secondary targets, which are targets that can be reached through other targeted audiences. These targeted audiences might buy a computer for a student or they might pass the message to the student that a specific brand of computer was for sale at a special price for college students.

Targets can be defined through public relations and marketing research. Sampling techniques can be used to segment larger populations into subpopulations based on some demographic, sociographic, or psychographic profile.

Broadcasting messages to targeted audiences works on the mass dissemination of information into media outlets where the target market or public may encounter the message. If the target population is 5 percent of a larger audience, the message might be designed and featured so that it could attract the targeted market’s attention among many other

messages. One of the challenges of public relations is to get messages to targets, often by passing them through other audiences and communication vehicles, and hence relating to the old maxim of reaching media that influence the intended target audiences in which the attempt is made to elicit some behavioral change or action. In a magazine, for instance, among the stories that many readers of the magazine might encounter, the organization would target placement and message appeal to increase the likelihood that the individuals in the intended market would stop to read the news item about the product or service; likewise for that target to listen to or watch a broadcast news segment.

A broadcast occurs when many channels are used or the channel reaches many audiences, most of which are not targeted. In contrast, a narrow cast results when a channel reaches only the intended or targeted audience. An employee newsletter is a narrowcast channel intended to reach employees of targets of messages especially designed for them. So, too, would be the annual financial report of a publicly traded company when it reaches intended or current shareholders of the company's stock.

Much of what has been said previously focuses on markets and audiences targeted with messages designed to sell products and services. Obviously, employees would be a public, but not a market. Activists would be a public. A company might target a message on some issue of concern to be received by the activists. So, too, the company might target persons and groups who are likely to agree with the company and take its side on an issue. During a crisis, one of the challenges is to prepare clear, informative, and credible messages that are targeted to a wide array of audiences. The crisis is the central theme, but the target audience may vary and the message must be tailored to each audience.

Ultimately, both an intended audience whose behavior you wish to somehow influence and media must be thoroughly considered when reviewing the checklist of who to target. Decisions on who to target stem from what must be accomplished and why, which are key considerations in determining how to approach a target. For instance, goals to increase

awareness of a product, service, or situation, driving traffic to a corporation or entity, increasing business or sales, educating various publics about important topics or services, and reinforcing brand image are likely the most common goals and objectives. A typical outline of who to target might then read: current and potential customers, third parties who guide those primary customers, employees who double as influencers but who are also customers, potential partner organizations, and the ever-present and crucial media that influence the above.

This last component of securing coverage in targeted media to publicize the cause, initiative, or campaign is critical and where careful selection of media distribution lists becomes key. As previously noted, most public relations plans, after listing the intended targets, include the seemingly generic phrase of "media that influence the above" to complete a campaign's list of targets. This is actually a crucial ingredient in any communications plan that helps define the types of media targets likely to be reached with the coverage of the targeted media outlets—print or electronic.

The identification of intended targets is a key determinant in developing media lists. Generally, separate lists will be customized for trade and consumer audiences, with broadcast, print, and electronic media all being considered for maximizing message dissemination. Although trade outlets (usually publications and Web sites) deal with specific industries, consumer media are mainstream in nature, providing messages appropriate for the "common man." Keeping this in mind, news releases must also be customized to reach these various targets. For instance, although the introduction of a new motor oil would require a media release to garner mainstream coverage (outside of only paid advertising) to get the public to buy it, a more strategic approach would be to first target trade audiences through automotive publications, for example, to reach the technicians and mechanics who can influence or recommend what brand their customers should use. Similarly, a hospital system may want to tailor various releases to highlight certain information that would be pertinent to targets that patronize particular facilities, taking into

account demographics such as socioeconomic status and ethnicity that likely will vary depending upon the location of the different hospitals. A third example presents itself with community relations, targeting different editions or zones of a major metropolitan newspaper or calling attention to members of a neighborhood or area of town who fall within a community newspaper's delivery area.

All the possible options and variations of a target audience should be considered, because media are also broken down by such demographics as ethnicity, age, and socioeconomic status. This line of thought should be continued when trying to determine market scope as well. Location of target audience base will factor in when deciding among international, national, regional, or local markets. It will probably be a combination of more than just one, with some international targets even being found locally. For example, several large urban areas, such as Houston, Los Angeles, and New York City, have myriad subcultures that follow news outlets apart from the major television networks and dominant daily newspapers. Most experienced public relations professionals have a collection of media lists that range from the obvious mainstream news desks to Hispanic, African American, and Asian programming and publications, as well as society lists, parent and child publications, newsletters for the elderly, women's magazines, and medical target media.

In considering targets, it also is important to consider the types of mediums that most likely appeal to specific groups. Again, age, socioeconomic status, and cultural mores often help determine whether a particular target audience would be more prone to respond to television, radio, newspapers, magazines, or electronic outlets.

So, while public relations practitioners initially identify desired target audiences, they most often reach those targets by procuring placement in the media. And, ultimately, measuring impressions and reach help to evaluate the success of a campaign in not just reaching but also influencing those target audiences to act in a certain way that helps achieve an organization's goals and objectives.

—Robert L. Heath and Lisa K. Merkl

See also Advertising; Goals; Impressions; Investor relations; Marketing; Narrowcasting/broadcasting; Objectives; Promotion; Publicity; Reach; Strategies; Tactics

THEORY OF REASONED ACTION

Theory of reasoned action contributes to the understanding of persuasion theory and human motivation by explaining how actions are the product of behavioral intentions to act in one way rather than some other. Persuasion theory is a broad approach to explain the cognitive and behavioral aspects of human choice and behavior. That body of academic thought features the choices people make as voluntary actions that reflect in various ways behavioral intention. The logic of this aspect of persuasion theory is that persons, through self-persuasion or the influence of others, make choices and act as a reflection of their behavioral intentions.

Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen are credited with the theory of reasoned action as an extension of their information integration theory, which builds upon principles and predictions of subjective expected utilities theory. This body of persuasion theory features human behavior and choice as voluntary. Accordingly, behavior is neither the product of drives nor independent of individual volition. As such, this body of theory and research approaches human actions as the product of reasoning where many factors impinge on choices. As such, the theory of reasoned action sees human behavior as multifaceted, and therefore not easily manipulated by any single influence. It focuses on people as decision makers and wants to understand the dynamics of such decisions.

The theory of reasoned action postulates that behavioral intention to act one way or another is the result of two factors. The first is an individual's attitude toward the behavior. The second is based on the perception of what the targeted individual thinks important others would want him or her to do. Thus, persons consider what opinion leaders, of various kinds, think is the preferred behavior.

As explained by information integration theory, an attitude toward a behavior is the sum of all of any person's beliefs about the behavior and the evaluations (positive or negative) of the behavior. For instance, a person might believe that brushing one's teeth (a) reduces the likelihood of dental decay, (b) brightens one's smile, and (c) cleans one's breath. Thus, the attitude toward the behavior is the product of three beliefs. Next, the theory would ask whether the person sees these beliefs as having a positive or negative evaluation. Advertisers and dentists would like to assume that all three beliefs carry positive evaluations. Thus, if they looked at the intention of one person, they can conclude that he or she has a positive attitude toward the behavior of brushing teeth. Marketers of toothpaste and toothbrushes would see this attitude as positive toward their campaign objectives. Also, dentists who want to reduce damage to teeth as part of a constructive program of dental hygiene will also see this attitude toward behavior as supporting their efforts.

The second part of the theory rests on each individual's perceptions of what important others would prefer that person to do. This means simply that people consider what others think is good or bad behavior as part of their efforts to form intentions to act one way or another. People, through social connections, think about what others think is best, right, or proper. They take such considerations into count when deciding what to do. What's more, not everyone's opinions count the same amount to the person making the decision. Parents quickly realize the impact their children's friends have on decisions. Adolescent claims that "everyone has X or is doing Y" is important to their children's decision. "What will people think if I X" suggests the conversational importance of others' preferences as part of various decisions. People want to please, or at least not displease, certain people more than others by what they do. Thoughts of this kind influence the choices they make. These thoughts of what others think, expect, and prefer are called subjective norms. In conversation and through other means of forming intentions, people learn and refine the subjective norms they use to make choices.

Theorists note that behavioral intentions are a product of seeking positives and avoiding negatives. A negative outcome, based on the example above, would be to have tooth decay. Most people, one assumes, do not think of that as a positive health outcome. A positive outcome would be brighter teeth or fresher breath. One imagines that yellowed teeth and stale breath are not viewed positively.

In terms of subjective norms, adolescents are likely to view peers as important others. What mom or dad thinks about brushing teeth has less to do with their children's perception of being seen as acceptable than do friends. Moreover, fresh breath and whiter teeth are likely to be more salient beliefs than is tooth decay for dating-age individuals. In contrast, business colleagues may see these as positives but not for romantic but business and career reasons.

Thus, this theory helps communicators and marketers to understand what behavioral incentives people hold central to their decisions. If people think positively of fresh breath, dental hygiene, and white teeth, is it manipulative to feature toothpaste and toothbrushes as being able to deliver these positive outcomes? At least it seems ethical if the products will actually deliver on the marketers' product feature claims. As such, this theory is an extension of its distant ancestor, learning theory, which postulates that people learn attitudes and behaviors as ways of solving problems needed to seek rewards and avoid negative outcomes.

Publicity and promotion campaigns often draw on the principles of this theory in support of marketing and advertising efforts. Fundraising, for instance, can invite people to support the symphony or feed needy children. If someone does not have a positive attitude toward either charitable outcome, the fundraiser is going to be unsuccessful. Their efforts might be enhanced if they tell the targeted person that some influential opinion leader supports the benefits. For this reason, fundraising may enlist the visible participation of a celebrity. But if the person who is targeted wants to spend that part of his or her budget on a trip with friends, the campaign is likely to be unsuccessful. For this reason, the theory offers predictions that are more likely to help segment markets than to offer ways to effect

easy and dramatic changes in attitude, belief, and behavior.

Nevertheless, changes in behavioral intentions can and do occur, as explained by the theory. Three options are possible to account for these changes. One is the formation of a positive attitude toward the behavior where previously there was a neutral or negative attitude toward the behavior. One can imagine how a series of messages relevant to needy children might, over time, lead to the formation of an attitude supportive of charitable giving to that cause for persons who did not originally have that attitude. They might also become aware of subjective norms they had not known or attended to previously. Also, they may reorient the weights and influences of various important persons to form a new subjective norm. For instance, if many friends voice commitment to supporting needy children, the targeted person might well adopt a similar norm. And the person can redefine the complex of relationships between norms, attitudes, and influencers.

This theory is maturing to a new level called the *theory of planned behavior*. It reasons that one more concept must be added to increase the predictability of the theory. To this end, the theory of planned behavior adds the concept of perceived behavioral control. Simply, this variable is a measure of individuals' perception of the ease or difficulty of performing the target behavior. Similar to the work of other researchers and theorists, this theory postulates that individuals' intentions are coupled to their perceived self-efficacy in accomplishing the action. It is easy to imagine, for instance, someone writing a check for a contribution to serve needy children. Such action does not, in and of itself, require much of a sense of self-efficacy. A more complex but predictive use of this variable is to imagine that the targeted individual will likely estimate how much efficacy his or her contribution will have in conjunction with those of others. Simply stated, the theory analyzes how much efficacy the person perceives is necessary to take meaningful action. Can the charitable action be accomplished and will it do any good? For this reason, one can imagine, that fundraisers include in promotional presentations

evidence that shows how charitable contributions accomplish a collective goal, such as helping needy children.

The theory of reasoned action offers many options for practitioners and theorists who want to help explain the dynamics of human volition, the choices people make that can be influenced by public relations.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Advertising; Fundraising; Information integration theory; Marketing; Persuasion theory; Subjective expected utilities theory

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THEORY-BASED PRACTICE

Theory-based practice is public relations practice guided by theoretic generalizations that shed light on the situation at hand; it is thought to be more effective than public relations conducted by intuition or habit, as in the “we do it this way because we have always done it this way” approach. Theory can be defined as any symbolic generalization culled from empirical evidence that is interpreted and is used to describe, explain, understand, predict, and control phenomena under study or consideration. Theory lends a perspective, or way of looking at a situation, that helps determine understanding and the best course of action to address the situation. Different interpretations of a symbolic generalization are likely to stimulate a proliferation of additional theories. Also, different members of a community—such as

the public relations profession—are likely to formulate and employ different but possibly related theories. There is no one theory that belongs to a particular community, just as there is no one shared worldview from which theory derives, although similar language pertaining to theory might be shared. Theories are seldom static; on the contrary, theories tend to be dynamic, growing entities that cannot be fully understood if they are divorced from the dynamics of their development.

In traditional science, predictions in the form of hypotheses are derived from theory and can be tested. Theory is flexible, and different methodologies and units of analysis can be used to test it. Such testing of hypotheses may result in the identification of relevant variables or attributes and the development of models of relationships between or among these variables. A common result of testing a theory is a revised or new theory that determines refined or new applications for practice. According to Stephen Littlejohn (2002), theory development is a continual process of formulating and testing sets of concepts believed to explain how things operate.

Generalizations—or theories—useful to public relations can come from many different fields and bodies of knowledge, most often in the social sciences, such as psychology, sociology, and communication, including rhetoric and persuasion. Some critics of public relations have questioned whether the field is worthy of scholarship and theory-building efforts, and other critics charge that public relations merely applied theories developed in and by other disciplines. Some supporters of public relations counter that productive theory development is essential for public relations research—or, for that matter, any academic discipline—to be called a science.

M. A. Ferguson (1984) wrote that working from the assumption that theory is not an explanation based on supposition or conjecture but that theory is a way to understand events and to predict research findings supporting the theory, it can be argued that practitioners who question the value of theory in practice have two choices: they can make decisions in their practice of public relations based on intuition or conjecture—essentially, “flying by

the seat of their pants”; or they can make their decisions based on generalizations culled from empirical evidence in a scientific approach to practice.

An example of a predominant theory of public relations is “excellence theory.” Proposed by James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt in their 1984 book *Managing Public Relations*, the theory basically suggests that there are four types or models of public relations—press agency or publicity, public information, one-way asymmetric persuasion, and two-way symmetric communication—and that public relations practitioners who practice the two-way symmetric model for the organization they are representing are more likely to practice “excellent” public relations. This theory has proven to be very heuristic, in that it has spawned considerable additional research, both by the theory’s original authors as well as by dozens of other public relations scholars. Another example is “contingency theory,” which, according to Amanda Cancel, Glen Cameron, Lynne Sallot, and Henry Mitook (1997), suggests that public relations practitioners decide their courses of action depending on the widely varying attributes of each situation in public relations practice, and that the situations range on a continuum from total advocacy on behalf of the organization being represented, at one end, to accommodation of the organization’s publics, at the other end.

A good theory goes beyond description to explain the interrelationships of variables and to predict likely effects and outcomes. In general, theories are broader conceptualizations than models that delineate or map connections between variables in a theory. For example, the RACE acronym—research, action planning, communication, evaluation—popularly thought to summarize the process of public relations practice, is considered by scholars to be a model rather than a theory. There are also types of theories; “normative” theory is often described as the ideal that may be aspired to in practice, while “positive” theory may be prescribed for practical application, and “grounded” theory may explain common, everyday occurrences. Paradigms are a system or setup of theoretical beliefs.

Scholars in communication-related disciplines such as public relations have been encouraged to build theories of the “middle range” that would yield hypotheses about a limited range of phenomena that could be rigorously tested. These middle-range theories were thought to be superior to speculative “grand” theories and to limited, isolated empirical generalizations, such as those concerning effects of fear appeals on attitude change. Likewise, according to R. T. Craig (1993), isolated empirical generalizations or “sets of laws” were thought to be inferior to conceptually integrated middle-range theories because they lack organizing and heuristic advantages. However, according to Thomas Kuhn (1970) and Fred Suppe (1977), given that an individual’s personal background—including knowledge, beliefs, intellectual capacity, training, and experience—can be relevant in interpreting a theory, the idea that a group of scholars must share a worldview, as traditionally required by science, is being challenged. It seems more likely that groups of scientists in a particular community share the same or similar language about a theory rather than share identical interpretations about a theory. Additionally, as Craig wrote, because of increasing interdisciplinary discourse, such as that stimulated by postmodernism, deconstruction, critical/cultural, and other influences, it has been argued that theory can be better conceived as practical, historically situated discourse rather than the more traditional scientific view of theory-as-knowledge.

Mark McElreath and John Blamphin (1994) wrote that, in the 1980s and 1990s, a series of Delphi studies were conducted involving dozens of leading public relations scholars and practitioners to identify contemporary priority research questions in public relations with the result that gaps in the Public Relations Society of America’s Body of Knowledge were identified. The studies concluded that more sophisticated theories are available to understand the managing of public relations and should be used, including development of more systems-based contingency and situational theories; symbolic interaction theories; theories regarding legal and public policy issues, feminist concepts of equity and nurturing, ethics, and conflict resolution;

and multicultural general systems theories among increasingly differentiated publics.

In a recent investigation of the status of theory building by public relations scholars Lynne Sallot, Lisa Lyon, Carolina Acosta-Alzuru, and Karyn Jones (2003), nearly 750 abstracts or articles published in *Public Relations Review*, *Journal of Public Relations Research*, and its predecessor, *Public Relations Research Annual*, since their inceptions through the year 2000, were subjected to content analysis. According to M. A. Ferguson (1984), nearly 20 percent of articles analyzed were found to have contributed to theory development in public relations compared to only 4 percent of abstracts studied in an earlier analysis of *Public Relations Review* from its inception to 1984. From her analysis, Ferguson concluded that there were three overall foci of research conducted in public relations from 1975 to 1984 that lent themselves to productive theory development: *social responsibility and ethics*, *social issues and issues management*, and *public relationships*. She predicted that the area of public relationships offered the best opportunity for theory development in public relations.

However, the more recent study by Sallot, Lyon, Acosta-Alzuru, and Jones (2003) found that no dominant theoretical paradigms per se have yet emerged in public relations. Excellence theory is arguably the closest public relations comes, at this time, to having a paradigm, but only accounted for 13 percent of articles that developed theory. Theory building about public relationships was next most prevalent, followed by ethics and social responsibility, crisis response, critical-cultural, feminism and diversity, and international topics. Such growth in theory development in the academic publishing about public relations is thought to reflect increased application of theory in public relations practice. Joep Cornelissen, after considering how practitioners interpret, reframe, and adapt theories to practice, suggested in 2000 a “translation model” of theory application based on the premise that scientific knowledge is seldom used in unaltered form in practice. This and other interdisciplinary influences are expected to continue to contribute to ever more theory building in public relations, as evidenced in

part by the range of topics covered in Robert L. Heath's (2001) *Handbook of Public Relations* and in this *Encyclopedia of Public Relations*.

—Lynne M. Sallot

See also Best practices

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THIRD-PARTY ENDORSEMENT

For more than a half-century, public relations practitioners have touted *implied third-party endorsements* effects as a rationale for obtaining exposure for clients in the news and entertainment portions of mass media.

Conventional wisdom in the field argued that media organizations implicitly expressed their approval of organizations, products, services, candidates, or causes whenever they devoted coverage to them. Importantly, no specific recommendation or explicitly positive comments were required. The mere fact that the media covered a particular topic was sufficient justification to suggest an endorsement effect.

Two kinds of implied endorsements are particularly important for public relations professionals: publicity endorsements and product placement endorsements.

PUBLICITY ENDORSEMENTS.

Claims about third-party endorsement effects were first invoked most frequently when practitioners and clients compared the relative benefits of publicity (coverage in the editorial portions of the press) to paid advertising. Mass media researchers during the middle of the 20th century generally agreed the news media were a powerful force that could confer status, legitimacy and credibility on the topics they covered. In the same vein, research had consistently shown that people distrusted advertising and avoided, resisted or counter-argued with claims that appeared as advertising.

Research in 1980s and 1990s challenged claims about publicity's third-party endorsement effects and the superiority of news versus advertising. More than a dozen experimental tests were published where identical messages were either labeled as news or advertising, or presented in editorial versus advertising formats.

Studies directly comparing groups exposed to one format versus the other suggested a clear preference among participants for information presented in editorial formats. But the results were not consistent when commonly used experimental measures of message impact were analyzed: topic recognition or recall, message learning, attitude change or behavioral intent.

Kirk Hallahan contended that the differences previously attributed to third-party endorsements effects could be explained by (1) people's strong

dislike for advertising compared with news, and (2) different cognitive processing rules that are invoked based on the content class (news versus advertising) in which a message appears.

Because news values stress the importance of impartiality and balance in coverage, media audiences expect the language and tone of news to avoid excessively laudatory claims, which is why people might be more accepting of messages presented as news versus advertising. Journalists are expected to be impartial—to *tell*, not to *sell*. However, if the language used in news is excessively laudatory, the credibility of the source can be compromised. When it sounds like a journalist is a confederate of a product promoter, any advantage associated with publicity versus advertising is diminished dramatically.

Similarly, when a person is highly involved in a topic, Hallahan found that content class made little difference. Indeed, people who are actively seeking information were open to obtaining information from a wide range of sources. Although people understand that the purpose of ads is to show products in a highly favorable light, individuals who are highly involved in seeking information or in making a judgment will disregard the source and will pay attention to ads. Audiences know that advertisers are knowledgeable—they must simply be wary about misrepresentations or omitted facts. Some evidence also suggests that today's young people are more open to obtaining information from many sources, and might not be as predisposed to news as prior generations.

PRODUCT PLACEMENT ENDORSEMENTS

Product placements represent a separate form of implied media endorsement that has gained popularity as organizations seek exposure in the entertainment media.

Product placements involve the conspicuous use of a company's product, facility, or name in television shows, motion pictures, or other entertainment fare. The client's product, logo, or sign is often incidental to the action being depicted. So branded products are used as props in natural ways that call little attention to themselves.

One benefit derived from product placements involves additional exposure for the brand or idea. Evidence is inconclusive about whether audiences believe any endorsement is implied. To be most effective, products must be an integral part of the action, such as E.T.'s penchant for "Reese's Pieces" in the 1982 movie blockbuster *E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial*.

For many years, automobile companies maintained offices in Hollywood to provide cars free of charge for use in movies and TV productions. Scenes of a star behind the wheel suggested that the featured model of car was exciting and glamorous. However, it is doubtful that viewers actually thought the actor drove the same car in real life. Today client organizations continue to seek product placement opportunities and employ agents in Hollywood to routinely screen scripts for possible promotional opportunities and other product tie-ins.

In the same way, many destination resorts, theme parks, and cruise ship lines encourage production companies to use their sites as settings for movies and TV shows. Many states and larger municipalities also court movie and TV production companies to shoot on location—for both the benefits derived by the local economy and for the potential worldwide exposure. Other organizations—ranging from the U.S. military to various special interest groups—maintain offices in Hollywood that work with producers of entertainment fare so their activities or issues can be incorporated in entertainment shows and will be presented in a favorable light.

Such placements are important forms of implied media endorsement even though no direct recommendation or promotional message appears. Although many consumers have become aware of commercialization of product placements, many others have not—or simply forget later that a commercial "plug" is involved. Meanwhile, vestiges of these powerful images can linger in the audience's memory.

—Kirk Hallahan

See also Advertising; Endorsement; Involvement; Publicity

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TRADE ASSOCIATIONS (AND HILL & KNOWLTON'S ROLE IN)

Trade associations have played a major role in the history and practice of public relations because they offer to their sponsoring corporate members an opportunity to pool financial and intellectual resources to work together to set industry standards, to engage in research and policy formation, and to set intra-industry standards of performance without violating antitrust guidelines.

Trade associations are formal organizations constituted by members of a specific industry, such as the chemical manufacturers, or industrial function, such as the National Association of Manufacturers. These formal associations can create a joint stone-wall of opposition against all threats experienced by the members. Or, in a more ethical and proactive mode, these associations help the member organizations to set operating standards, lobby public policy issues, develop and communicate issue positions, implement standards of corporate responsibility, and cooperate on behalf of the public interest. Such associations must not set prices or otherwise create a monopoly that would breach antitrust and fair practices legislation. Thus, the focus of trade associations is more on public policy and reputational matters than on marketing strategies and pricing.

Trade associations grew in popularity and power as similar industries matured to realize that although they had to maintain competition, they were faced with similar challenges such as strikes, regulation, legislation, and public criticism. Leaders in the trade association movement realized the virtue of setting standards of ethical performance and holding members to these standards to reduce

the likelihood that their actions would lead to a legitimacy gap. Mutual interests led to mutual aid, but such initiatives could not be seen as dominating the public policy forum. One primary virtue of a sound trade association is its ability to speak for an industry or function with a single voice. Another is to set high, self-imposed, and self-policed standards of operation.

Under the leadership of John Hill, Hill & Knowlton became one of the major agencies working for an impressive array of trade associations. Hill & Knowlton believed it could serve an industry best by counseling it in its entirety instead of merely serving one member. On many occasions, Hill & Knowlton served an individual client's needs and interests by also working for the industry. No clearer case of this practice exists than its long-term counseling and communication activity for the steel industry through the American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI).

Hill did not innovate the concept of a trade association, but he and his agency leaders raised the art of public relations service to industries to a high level. Ivy Lee was one of the pioneers in this regard, working for the Anthracite Coal Operators during a hotly contested labor strike. On Lee's advice, the American Petroleum Institute (API) was formed in 1919. API's influence continues nearly a century later as petroleum policy continues to evolve. Pendleton Dudley provided professional service to the American Meatpackers Association, which was formed (1906) to deal with issues raised by muckrakers such as Upton Sinclair in *The Jungle*. Carl Byoir served the interest of the Eastern Railroads against Pennsylvania truckers, which in turn had the professional services of David Charnay's Allied Public Relations Associates. Lee & Ross, the firm of Ivy Lee (sustained after his death) and Tommy Ross worked for the Copper and Brass Research Association (42 major copper companies) and the Cotton Textile Institute.

However influential these agencies were, none was more central to the U. S. economy than was Hill & Knowlton. The cornerstone account of Hill & Knowlton's trade association business was the iron and steel industry (AISI). That gave Hill the

incentive, during the Great Depression, to open an office in New York City that became the center of his agency as it eventually achieved national and international status. Hill believed that industry needed a voice. He was a conservative on economic matters, believing that basic big industries were the foundation of the American economy. In Hill's opinion, the relationship between these industries and the markets and publics they affected, however, was not one sided. He believed that industry could not operate without the permission and support of its constituencies. This support, he realized and counseled, must be earned; it could not be assumed or taken for granted. Communication was vital to the relationship in order to foster support and understanding. Counseling could position each industry so that it operated in the public interest. It had to earn its right to operate by serving society, which in turn had the right to understand and approve of the industry's actions and policies.

The AISI was formed in 1908 as an evolution from a long-term loose association of iron masters originating in 1855. Five principal purposes formed the rationale for the Institute. It was designed to promote the interest of the industry, a purpose that was obvious. To do so, it was intended to gather statistics and monitor issues. The institute engaged in investigations and research. Based on this information, it created a forum for information exchange and discussion on matters that affected the industry. It promoted the use of iron and steel. As it matured, in some part due to counseling by Hill & Knowlton, the Institute sought to increase understanding of the role that steel, iron, and profits played in the economy. It fought socialization and nationalization and lauded the fact that steelworkers were the best paid laborers, a fact used during strike talks. The institute applauded its workplace safety record. It worked to make the steel industry a good neighbor, a vital part of each community where it operated. Finally, it championed its technological innovation to make America the steel and iron capital of the world. Policy battles, such as environmentalism, would demonstrate that some of its claims were overstated by the changing standards of time, but each era brings new challenges

to industry trade associations and their public relations practitioners.

In addition to counseling, Hill & Knowlton assisted with the industry's corporate image advertising campaign. This effort featured the positive role steel played in the American economy. Hill & Knowlton drafted, obtained executive approval, and issued press releases for the industry at key moments. It worked for expansion of the industry's *and* individual companies' community relations programs. It prepared and published *Steel Bulletins and Steelways*, which was a trade publication that reached 100,000 readers. Hill & Knowlton provided monitoring efforts to scan, identify, analyze, and track issues, such as efforts to nationalize the industry, the effects of inflation on pricing, and the relationship between the industry and its labor unions. Hill & Knowlton received and interpreted clippings that were useful in its media relations program for the industry. It supported the industry's lobbying efforts by assisting in the development of issue position, monitoring opinion, and working with key legislators.

In addition to steel and iron, Hill & Knowlton served as the agency of record for the Licensed Beverage Industries, Aerospace Industries Association of America, Aircraft Industries Association, American Petroleum Institute, Newsprint Information Committee, Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, The Savings Banks Association of the State of New York, Tobacco Industry Research Committee, Tobacco Institute, Natural Gas and Oil Resources Committee, American Forest Products Industries, Manufacturing Chemists' Association, Can Manufacturers Institute, Copper and Brass Research Association, National Association of Manufacturers, Glassware Institute of America, American Bakers Association, American Butter Institute, Anthracite Institute, Association of General and Surety Companies, National Fertilizer Association, National Air Council, National Machine Tool Builders Association, National Retail Dry Goods Association, Outdoor Advertising Association, Shipbuilders Council of America, Association of Soap and Glycerine Producers, Sunglass Institute, and Wine Institute. This list is offered to suggest the abundance of trade associations, these being but a

few. Of more importance, these trade associations suggest the influential position in the economy of the United States held by Hill & Knowlton during John Hill's days of the 1940s to 1960s.

One of the standing rules of Hill's practice was that he would not allow his firm to represent front groups, those whose names and identities do not give publics the opportunity to know the true identity and motives of the client. Thus, for instance, if his firm were representing the steel, tobacco, chemical, or aviation industry interests, Hill believed that any reporter or member of a public had a right to know the identity of the client.

Often trade associations bring together a variety of interests, some of which may have various conflicts. For instance, the composition of the Licensed Beverage Industries (LBI) included distillers, rectifiers, importers, wholesalers, package stores, and taverns. Among the issues addressed by the association were bootlegging, import tariffs and fees, state-owned package stores, monopoly package stores, and uniform product quality. Key publics included schools and ministers, as well as state and federal legislators looking for opportunities to raise "sin taxes." Product advertising using romantic circumstances and alluring images were topics for corporate responsibility. The industry joined forces with law officials to fight bootlegging not only because of the tax issue (favored by the states) but also on the basis of product safety (an industry issue). In these ways, the association found ways of operating in the public interest while fostering the interest of the industry.

That equation was vitally important for Hill's agency. Hill's leadership was evident in the culture of Hill & Knowlton. He was an economic conservative. He believed in the free enterprise system, but argued in his books and to his clients that the public interest must guide the positioning and communication policies of each industry. Each side must never assume that they deserve the goodwill of key publics. They must earn that goodwill, the opportunity for public relations counseling. They must communicate to achieve mutual understanding with their key publics, the opportunity for public relations communication in all of its forms.

One of the problems of representing trade associations is managing the delicate balance between the industries' needs and preferences against those of its markets and key publics. The LBI is an excellent example of how the tax issue could not be carried to an extreme without endangering the public interest on another measure. Legislators could look to the industry as a source of tax revenue. But as the cost of legal alcohol rose, so did the incentive to buy from bootleggers. Thus, the taxing authorities as well as the industry could lose revenue and the public could be motivated to engage in illegal behavior that could also cause health problems from the consumption of unsafe alcohol. Alcohol abuse was a potent aspect of the work of the industry. In the 1950s, the industry was concerned about the public policy implications of alcoholism, sales to minors, and drunk driving. Hill & Knowlton worked to help the industry adopt a responsible drinking mentality and to get its side of these issues out to key publics, especially opinion makers.

Tobacco became one of Hill & Knowlton's most longtime clients as well as perhaps its most controversial. Some of that controversy continues to date on the assumption that the scientific rebuttal campaign style initiated by Hill & Knowlton and the industry in the 1950s kept people from fully knowing what health hazards might be associated with cigarettes especially. Hill & Knowlton was brought into client relationship with the industry in late 1953. The objective was to get balanced media coverage to combat what the industry believed were irresponsible and unscientific claims about the health hazards of the use of its products. For more than 15 years, Hill & Knowlton worked with the industry, in part to change its positioning on matters such as responsible use of the product, as well as on the battle for sound science in policy making regarding restrictions on cigarette advertising such as warning labels.

Hill & Knowlton was frequently at odds with labor, large and small. For instance, it worked for the steel and the shipbuilders industries against laborers' claims. Such issues were never clear-cut. What is a fair wage, especially given the profitability of an

industry and its role in the national economy? Hill & Knowlton recognized the potential voice of labor in newspapers and other venues. One of the assumptions Hill & Knowlton made was that the public needed to be aware of the wages of labor and the profits of the industry. Fair wages is not a given. It is contestable. Hill & Knowlton served its industrial clients to help give their view visibility so the public could decide where to throw its weight and support.

No matter how lofty the client, Hill and his agency never lost sight of the fact that public relations must appeal to the public. Hill never doubted that the public was the sovereign entity in society. A client's case was only as good as its ability to convince a public that deserved the truth supplied through open communication. If the case could not be made, then the public had spoken. Industry must constantly reposition and redefine itself to keep pace with changes in public preferences and expectations. These fundamental principles were championed by John Hill and made known to Hill & Knowlton clients as a condition of contract. Never would John Hill or his senior colleagues at Hill & Knowlton believe they could engineer consent. Consent was a challenge to be earned by sound policies and effective communication.

Business was the business of America. That principle was firmly embossed on the mind of senior management of Hill & Knowlton from the 1940s to 1960s when Hill's role with the agency ended. But Hill reminded his colleagues that good business was right and deserved the strongest public relations. He knew that public relations was more than communication. It was relationship building. He recognized that without the proper relationships, even the strongest and most powerful industry could fail or at least suffer from public rebuke.

These points are evident in his agency's work for the Manufacturing Chemists' Association in the 1950s. The industry had relationship problems. Without reducing those problems, its lobbying efforts would be hampered. It had to address problems, some of which persist to this date: air and water pollution, tariffs, community relationships, safety, need for recognition for the role the industry plays in the economy and the American lifestyle,

the industry as an attractive place to work, and the understanding of the industry's contribution to a stronger economy, public health, and better living.

Hill knew that industries needed to meet the expectations of the persons whom they touched and served. He advocated continual communication to get the point across from the industry's point of view. He learned by long experience that industry must listen to its critics and make strategic and honest changes. Operating with a pro-industry bias a mile wide, Hill worked to foster the innovation and dynamic changes of trade associations that could reposition an industry and give it a single voice. The client list amassed by his agency during his maturing years demonstrates from only one practitioner's agency the centrality of public relations to trade association relationship building for the good of the public interest and private enterprise.

Hill was explicit and succinct in his counsel to corporations and trade associations.

A corporation or an industry may find itself faced by unfavorable public opinion because people are unaware of the facts. The way is then open for the corporation to attempt to change the public attitude and to win people to its point of view. On the other hand it may be wise to change an unpopular policy, making a frank acknowledgement of need for change. Such declaration of honest intent will usually meet with public approval. (1958, p. 39)

—Robert L. Heath

See also Byoir, Carl; Hill, John Wiley; Lee, Ivy; Legitimacy and legitimacy gap

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TRANSTHEORETICAL MODEL OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

One of the more ambitious and useful models for promoting social and individual change comes from

the work of James Prochaska, Carlo DiClemente, and their colleagues (1983, 1984, 1992, 1997). Through their review of some 200 theoretical approaches and paradigms, Prochaska and others have identified a set of principles and concepts common or integral to most change efforts. The resulting “transtheoretical” model therefore is an interdisciplinary amalgamation of many theories and philosophies of change, a distillation of best practices derived from disparate schools of thought and tested in a variety of settings and topics.

Undergirding this model is a set of assumptions. First, change does not occur in a single step, but rather through a series of (often nonlinear) stages that range from an initial state of lack of awareness to an eventual state of compliance. According to the model, individuals move through these stages while engaging in (or being subjected to) one or more processes of change. Transition from one stage to the next occurs as a result of shifts in an individual’s “decisional balance,” which can be, and often is, influenced by communication. As a result, this model is highly relevant to public relations professionals engaged in efforts to influence individuals’ cognitions and attitudes and behaviors in a variety of contexts.

STAGES OF CHANGE

The transtheoretical model, sometimes referred to as the “stages of change” model, is best known for describing the transition process that individuals undergo when engaging in behavioral change. Through a series of questions in a standard protocol, researchers develop segments that correspond to the various stages in the change process. In the *precontemplation* stage, individuals do not recognize a need to change and often lack awareness of the problem or issue that may be adversely affecting them. Occasionally, individuals in this initial stage are aware of the problem but are unwilling to discuss it. Denial, rationalization, and fear of admitting failure are common characteristics of individuals in this stage.

In the next stage, *contemplation*, individuals recognize the existence of a problem, but are often

waiting for a “magic moment” or simply engaging in wishful thinking. In this stage, which can last for days or years, individuals often think, discuss, and seek information about the problem and its various remedies.

At a certain point, contemplators become increasingly confident about the prospects of change and begin to focus their information search on the best course of action to take. In what is called a *preparation* stage, individuals may set a timetable for change, start turning away from old behaviors, and prepare for the inevitable adjustment that awaits once they commit to change.

The briefest stage, ironically, is the actual *action* stage, which occurs when an individual actually modifies her or his life by sacrificing old ways of thinking and behaving in favor of new ones.

Once the individual has actually attempted change, one of two things can occur (and often both do). First, the individual may engage in *maintenance* of the new behavior, which involves both an internal commitment as well as a resistance to external pressures in the form of peers and family members and unexpected situations that tend to trigger old behaviors. Alternatively, the individual may engage in *recycling* and relapse into those old behaviors. Sometimes this happens from the inherent difficulty in the proposed change, or perhaps from the realization that the costs of change (time, money, friends, and prestige) are simply too high.

Each stage can be characterized by differences in an individual’s decisional balance, that is, the relative importance placed on the *pros* (perceived advantages) and *cons* (perceived disadvantages) of change, and in self-efficacy, that is, an individual’s degree of confidence that she or he possesses the requisite skill, knowledge, and perseverance to change. In terms of decisional balance, “cons” inevitably exceed “pros” in the precontemplation stage, as the need for changing comfortable behavioral patterns may not even be recognized; cons and pros are fairly equivalent in contemplation; and pros must exceed cons for an individual to reach preparation. In terms of self-efficacy, confidence tends to be low in early stages of change, but must be very high if an individual is to reach the

maintenance stage and remain committed to some new behavior.

APPLICATIONS

The transtheoretical model has numerous applications to public relations campaigns. First, most individuals are in the precontemplation stage for many issues and social problems, and yet many campaigns are designed for individuals in later stages (such as preparation). At best, this discontinuity can result in inefficient and wasted communication; at worst, it can result in boomerang effects and resentment from individuals who are not psychologically prepared for, or predisposed to, change but are being prodded to do so. Campaigns targeting precontemplators should raise awareness of a problem, trigger some initial consideration of pros and cons of change, and provide testimonials from others who have undergone change. Contemplators, on the other hand, typically are not suffering from an awareness deficit but rather lack of motivation. Communication efforts targeting these individuals should use emotional appeals and tip the decisional balance toward the advantages of change. For individuals in the preparation stage, the most useful information focuses on specific actions to be taken, that is, specific strategies for coping with the imminent change. Boosting individuals' self-efficacy is particularly important, as confidence is needed to take the next step of action. Once the new behavior is attempted, campaign messages targeting the segment of those who have changed should reinforce the new behavior and educate about ways of preventing recycling. If recycling does occur, campaign messages should focus on ways of restoring self-confidence and motivation, something that often requires interpersonal channels to have an impact.

The various mechanisms for conveying the previous campaign messages and achieving the previous effects are described by Prochaska and colleagues as *processes of change*. In the parlance of public relations, these processes constitute strategies for moving individuals from one stage to the next. In general, these processes involve changing

the way individuals think or feel about an issue or problem or altering actual behaviors in an attempt to move individuals from one stage to the next. For example, campaign planners can design messages to increase awareness of an issue or problem among precontemplators ("consciousness raising") or to arouse emotions and motivate individuals to change ("dramatic relief"). Alternatively, campaign planners can alter physical environments in attempts to promote new patterns of behavior ("stimulus control") or offer new behavioral practices to replace old ones ("counter conditioning").

The transtheoretical model has attracted a great deal of attention from academics and professionals alike, many of whom have applied and tested it in different countries, with different issues and social problems, and with different population segments. It offers many new avenues for research and program planning to public relations professionals.

—Charles T. Salmon and Aileen Webb

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TRAVEL AND TOURISM PUBLIC RELATIONS

With travel and tourism continuing among the top three global economic engines, the need for and opportunities in public relations in the travel and tourism industry continue to grow. Despite grim forecasts about the effects on tourism of faltering economies, terrorism, political instabilities, crime, and disease, in 2002 almost 715 million

international tourist arrivals were registered, according to the United Nations–affiliated World Tourism Organization (WTO). This represents an increase of 22 million compared with 2001 and marks the first time that the number of international tourist arrivals has exceeded 700 million. By comparison, in 1956, when WTO first published statistics, there were 50 million worldwide international arrivals. Taking into account additional economic contributions of domestic travel, tourism in general continues to withstand tremendous challenges and remains robust overall in many nations' economies. The growth of travel and tourism public relations parallels the industry.

Eric Cohen (1972) wrote that, historically, it appears the words *tourist* and *tourism* were derived as a subcategory of traveler, historically separate from categories of travelers such as warriors, crusaders, or pilgrims. Linked to travels of English gentlemen on tour as part of their education and entertainment, the word *tourist* first appeared in English, with the *Oxford English Dictionary* dating the word *tourist* from 1800 and the word *tourism* from 1811. The word appeared as *touriste* in the French Robert dictionary in 1816 and *tourisme* in 1841, both derived from English.

A multilayered, overlapping, and interlocking distribution system of sellers and buyers of travel products makes travel and tourism big business for public relations. Travel suppliers—which include destination tourism-and-convention entities; hotels, resorts, and others providing accommodations; transportation conveyors, such as cruise lines and ships, airlines, trains, and motor coach operators; sightseeing tour operators and other ground infrastructures such as local car rental agencies, taxis, attractions, restaurants, duty-free shops, and souvenir retailers—are all travel sellers. At the other end of the travel selling-buying continuum is the traveling public, the ultimate buyers and consumers of travel products. In between are travel wholesalers and consolidators, who buy and package travel products from suppliers and then sell travel packages to retail travel agents or direct to ultimate consumer travelers, and retail travel agents, who buy travel products either directly from suppliers or from travel

wholesalers or consolidators and then sell the travel products to ultimate consumer travelers.

Public relations practitioners may represent and act on behalf of any of the travel sellers—suppliers, wholesalers, or travel agents—with the purpose of building relationships with any of the travel buyers—wholesalers, travel agents, or consumers—in a bid to generate awareness, disseminate information, and attract brand preference and loyalty for the travel products represented.

Travel sellers may have public relations representation “in house” or may contract for representation with an independent firm specializing in travel and tourism public relations; it is not uncommon for travel sellers to have both in-house and external independent public relations counsel simultaneously.

Media relations with the travel industry press as well as with the consumer travel press constitute an essential element of travel and tourism public relations. Numerous publications, such as the industry newspaper *Travel Weekly* and industry magazines *Travel Agent, Meetings and Conventions*, and *Conference & Incentive Travel*, are widely read by travel sellers and must be serviced regularly with information about travel clients; typically such information is supplied by public relations practitioners. Similarly, the consumer travel media widely read by the traveling public, such as *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Travel & Leisure*, travel sections of major consumer newspapers such as the *New York Times* and specialty publications such as *Diversion*, the magazine for physicians who travel often for pleasure, are “motivated” by public relations practitioners to “cover” their clients.

A traditional tool used by practitioners in travel and tourism public relations in conducting media relations is the working press trip or “junket” whereby travel journalists either individually or in groups experience the sellers' travel product as a consumer tourist would but at free or reduced costs arranged by the practitioner. In recent years, many media outlets have sharply restricted journalists' acceptance of free travel and other gifts, to some degree curtailing the effectiveness of press trips in exposing journalists firsthand to travel products. However, many freelance travel writers and travel

industry journalists still participate in press trips. Practitioners are well advised to follow the guidelines for media relations issued by the Society of American Travel Writers (SATW) and may join SATW as associate members to maximize their media relations efforts.

In addition, there are countless industry associations of benefit to travel sellers, such as the American Society of Retail Travel Agents, the Travel Industry Association, the Meeting Planners Association, the American Hotel Association, the International Air Transport Association, the Caribbean Tourism Organization, and the Caribbean Hotel Association, to name only a few. Travel suppliers such as resorts, hotels, and airlines may offer free or discounted travel to retail travel agents and meeting planners in familiarization or “fam” trips, for which public relations practitioners provide publicity in industry media and other support. Some travel industry associations have annual conferences and trade shows for travel sellers and buyers, including consumers, such as the International Adventure Travel & Outdoor Sport Show, for which practitioners may produce and provide support communications ranging from brochures to promotional giveaways. Destination entities, such as the Canadian Tourism Commission and the British Tourist Authority, may sponsor traveling seminars and receptions for retail travel agents, for which practitioners may produce and provide support communications ranging from publicity to newsletters and brochures, travel posters, films, and videos.

Other public relations activities may involve assisting with management of wide-ranging issues affecting tourism, such as conservation of natural resources and sociopolitical impacts of tourism; government relations, such as influencing pertinent legislation pending with local and foreign governments; and community relations, such as convincing residents of a local community that tourism revenues can benefit them. In addition to traditional marketing communications activities directed at targeted travel buyers on behalf of travel seller clients, public relations practitioners may be engaged in the internal communications projects to build relationships with a travel-seller’s own employees.

Besides generating publicity in the media, public relations techniques include direct communication tactics such as brochures, newsletters, Web sites, e-mail, and other Internet-based communications, as well as sales promotional items and giveaways; interpersonal and group communication tactics, such as personalized pitches, press trips, fam tours, and trade shows; photography, film and video production; and special events. Often, travel and tourism special events are designed to commemorate a new travel product, such as a celebrity tennis tournament held in conjunction with the opening of a resort, or are meant to increase tourism during a traditionally “low” or “shoulder” season, such as the annual Ernest Hemingway Look-Alike contest designed to boost tourism to Key West, Florida, in the summer, or the annual Pirates Week to increase tourism to the Cayman Islands each October.

Crisis management is also a critical responsibility in conjunction with travel and tourism public relations and involves managing communications associated with crises ranging from viral infections infecting cruise ship passengers to airplane crashes and hijackings and terrorists bombing resorts or any other crises conceivably affecting the tourism and travel organization represented.

—Lynne M. Sallot

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TRAVERSE-HEALY, TIM

The end of World War II signaled the beginning of modern-day public relations practice, not only in the United States but also around the world. In the

United Kingdom, Professor Tim Traverse-Healy, OBE, has earned his place as one of the modern-day architects of that global practice, beginning in the United Kingdom and extending to six continents and dozens of countries. Throughout his distinguished career as a practitioner and educator, Traverse-Healy shared his vision and insights into public relations as a profession, stressing philosophy over tactics.

Born in 1923, Traverse-Healy first studied medicine before earning his diploma in communications from London University. Traverse-Healy said his introduction to public relations arrived as an air-dropped package behind the German enemy lines in France during World War II, where he served as a Royal Marine Commando in Special Forces. Among other things in the package was a book by the Christopher Fathers listing public relations as a career. Traverse-Healy put the practice of public relations together with his Jesuit school training and parental influences to form his own personal mission of “honoring God by serving man” (personal interview, July 1998).

Back in London after the war ended, Traverse-Healy set up shop with his partner, Denis Lyons, in 1947, establishing the first recognized postwar public relations consultancy. His military training served him well as he developed his practice around the strategy (the “thinking”) rather than the tactics (the “doing”) of public relations. The new focus on intelligence, research, and strategy garnered Traverse-Healy myriad corporate, global clients including Conrad Hilton, National Westminster Bank, plc., AT&T, Airbus Industrie, Cadburys, Ford Motor Company, Unilever, and the U.S. Department of Commerce. Ever expanding his understanding of the developing public relations practice around the world, he traveled to and interacted with the leading practitioners from all types of organizations, studying their best practices while refining his philosophy of what practice should be. “The 1950s was a time to invest the craft of public relations with social values and social force and rebuild the world after the catastrophe of the war,” Traverse-Healy said (personal interview, July 1998).

Traverse-Healy’s influence has also been felt in the development of modern-day public relations

education. He has been a professor at the University of Stirling in its fledgling days as the first public relations master’s degree in the United Kingdom, and as a visiting professor and consultant to the University of Wales; the University of Westminster; the Faculty European Aviation Industry Management School in Toulouse, France; and Ball State and Baylor universities in the United States. In addition, Traverse-Healy has served on a wide range of educational commissions and boards, including secretary of the UK Public Relations Research Network, chairman of the UK Public Relations Education Trust, president of the International Public Relations Research and Education Foundation, and president of the International Foundation for Public Relations Studies. As in business, his emphasis in education was on the philosophy, strategy, and thinking involved in socially responsible practice. Traverse-Healy described this emphasis as “the difference between a profession and a craft” (personal interview, July 1998). Establishing his practice and sharing his expertise with education soon thrust Traverse-Healy onto the professional development stage. Underlying his business success was his growing reputation in questioning and nurturing the professional standards of public relations practice over the commercial practices and success of the field. He was a founding member of the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) in 1948, earned Fellow designation in 1956, and served as president in 1967–1968. He held offices in the European Public Relations Federation, the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) where he served as the founding secretary in 1950 to 1961, and twice was elected president of the World Public Relations Congress in 1970 and 1973. From 1952 to 1998, Traverse-Healy made more than 100 speeches on the social responsibilities of public relations practitioners to consider the public good as well as the organization’s welfare to groups ranging from the Arthur Page Society in the United States to his 2003 keynote address to the World Public Relations Festival in Rome. His emphasis on codes of conduct and ethical behavior became the basis for the Code of Ethics & Professional Charter in the United Kingdom,

adopted by the Public Relations Consultants Association in 1990 and the Institute of Public Relations in 1991. He also drafted the European Code of Conduct for the International Consultants Association and the European Consultants Association, adopted in 1991.

Numerous awards document and support Traverse-Healy's contributions, including the prestigious Order of the British Empire (OBE), the Tallents Gold Medal, the International Public Relations Association Presidential Gold Medal, and a place in the U.S. Arthur W. Page Society's Hall of Fame.

Since he put out his nameplate more than 50 years ago, Traverse-Healy's emphasis on ethical standards remains his key theme. In his 2003 address in Rome he summed up his concerns: "But on . . . our societal value and social values I am deeply concerned as to our record of behaviour as a group over the setting, monitoring, and policing of our profession's moral, cultural, and civic obligations" (personal correspondence, June 2003).

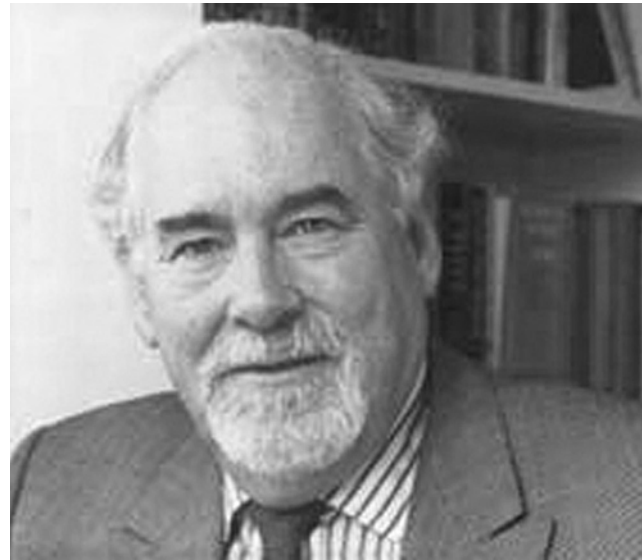
In 2000 Traverse-Healy donated his vast collection of books, manuscripts, articles, and speeches to the School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University, where he holds an honorary professorship and advised the school on a new master's degree in International Public Relations. In honor of Traverse-Healy's 80th birthday, Professor Shirley Harrison of Leeds Metropolitan University in the United Kingdom edited more than 50 years of his papers and posted them to the Web site <http://www.pr-50years.co.uk>.

—Barbara DeSanto

See also Europe, practice of public relations in

TRUST

It was in *The Philosophy of Money* that Georg Simmel had written the sentence that could be said to be a necessary starting point for every contemporary investigation of the phenomenon of trust: "Without the general trust that people have in each other, society itself would disintegrate, for very few



Tim Traverse-Healy

SOURCE: Professional in Public Relations: 50 Years of Principles and Practice, <http://www.pr-50years.co.uk>. Reprinted with permission.

relationships are based entirely upon what is known with certainty about another person, and very few relationships would endure if trust were not as strong as, or stronger than, rational proof or personal observation" (1978, pp. 178–179). Harold Garfinkel, in his experiments with trust, elaborated that "'trust' as a condition of stable concerted actions" (1963, p. 187) can be transformed into "attitude of daily life" (1963, p. 210).

Originally, trust (*fiducia*) was a personal phenomenon that, at least since Peter Lombard (1100–1160), denoted the volitional aspect (*facultas voluntatis*) of medieval Christian faith (*fides*). In medieval Christianity,

every act of religious faith shows two sides or aspects—a cognitive and volitional. It is at once an affirmation of truth and a surrender to the truth affirmed. Apart from the first, it would be blind; apart from the second, without any practical significance. The fact that the emphasis is sometimes placed on the one and sometimes on the other leads to two relatively distinct notions of faith. When the volitional aspect is emphasised, we have the notion commonly denoted by the word "trust" . . . ; when the cognitive, that denoted by the word "belief." (Morgan 1921, p. 689)

For Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), who accepted Lombard's phrase that man is endowed with both volitional and rational capacities, *facultas voluntatis et rationis*, it is the will that guides reason in the human search for the final meaning of life in acceptance and love of God.

In his work *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, originally published in 1877 with a subtitle "A Treatise on Communism and Socialism as Empirical Forms of Culture," which in the second edition, in 1902, was changed to "Basic Concepts of Pure Sociology," a German sociologist, Ferdinand Toennies, secularized the notion of will and placed it on a societal level: "The scope of social will is the whole of the environmental conditioning of social interaction" (1971, p. 94). This way trust also lost its personal character and became the foundation and property of social order. The French sociologist Emile Durkheim adopted this redefinition of trust from a personal to a social fact that "is to be recognised by the power of external coercion which it exercises or is capable of exercising over individuals" (1972, p. 58). This notion, that the underlying reality of trust is "irreducibly sociological" (Lewis & Weigert, 1985, p. 456), is still present in contemporary sociological approaches to trust.

In the second half of the 20th century, it was recognized in economics that trust as a form of social control has an economic value. Economic activities, as well as having "production costs," also have "transaction costs" (Williamson, 1985, pp. 18–19), which are the costs of running economic activities and correspond to the notion of friction in physics. Trust serves as a lubricant that smoothes transactions and is therefore a cost-saving device. As we can monetarize transaction costs, so we can monetarize savings we get from applying trust—instead of personally investing in monitoring and control. Trust thus becomes a commodity itself and we can draw its utility function: trust and transaction costs are inversely related. Instead of transaction costs, E. L. Khalil wrote of "organisational costs" as "the cost of distrust and the cost to minimize it" (1994, p. 392). Although the economic notion of trust as a cost-saving device stands on the sociological notion of trust as a social control that limits the permissible and available repertoire of human behavior, Francis

Fukuyama applied the economic notion of trust to sociological theory in 1995, paralleling economic (transaction or organisational) costs with social costs: trust in a society is inversely related to the costs associated with monitoring and controlling its members (police, courts, etc.).

In psychology, trust had often been used as a personality variable. Some people are said to be more trusting and trustworthy than others, who are said to be suspicious and untrustworthy. When Erik Erikson published his theory of "eight ages of man" (1950/1955, p. 223) that a person goes through from infancy to maturity, he wrote that children at the age of around one or two live through the first developmental stage in which they develop a basic sense of trust or mistrust toward the world around them and toward themselves. This assumption of introjection and projection regulating trust-mistrust polarity and through it managing human tensions and anxieties had led others to associate trust with prosocial and mistrust with antisocial personality traits: a trusting person evaluates others positively, "as essentially 'good' until proved otherwise" (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950, p. 411), and a mistrusting person evaluates them negatively, as dangerous and hostile. The subconscious, primarily affective evaluative meaning of trust had been copied from psychology into sociology. Talcott Parsons wrote of trust as "affectively motivated" (1978, p. 59) and Anthony Giddens incorporated it into his theory of structuration as "basic trust" (1984, pp. 51–60), a defining property of human ontological security, on which three other forms of trust depend: elementary or interpersonal, abstract or impersonal, and active trust—with each having its own evaluative mechanism that differentiates between "good" and "bad" objects of trust (elementary trust through kinship—the in-group is good, abstract trust through expert systems—experts are good, and active trust through "a process of mutual narrative and emotional disclosure"—"opening out" is good).

In public relations, trust is an important concept in both the United States mainstream relational and in European views. In *Guidelines for Measuring Relationships in Public Relations*. James E. Grunig

and Linda Childers Hon defined trust as “one party’s level of confidence in and willingness to open oneself to the other party” and composed of “integrity, the belief that an organization is fair and just,” “dependability, the belief that an organization will do what it says it will do,” and “competence, the belief that an organization has the ability to do what it says it will do” (1999, p. 19). According to Günter Bentele (2003), in Europe, the notion of trust more often operates on a societal level as public trust.

—Dejan Verčič

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TWO-STEP FLOW THEORY

To public relations practitioners, the two-step flow theory of communication highlights the importance of identifying and targeting opinion leaders when disseminating messages to audiences through mass media.

In 1944, sociologists Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard R. Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet published a paper titled *The People’s Choice*, which analyzed voter decision making during President Franklin Roosevelt’s 1940 reelection campaign. Study findings suggested that messages did not flow directly from mass media to target audiences, as previously assumed. Rather, media information first reached opinion leaders, who evaluated the information and formed opinions that were then conveyed to others in their social circles through interpersonal channels. Only 5 percent of voters were swayed by direct exposure to media messages, the study found.

Based on the 1940 election campaign study, Lazarsfeld and fellow scholar Elihu Katz developed the two-step flow theory of communication, published in the book *Personal Influence* in 1955. Research by Katz and Lazarsfeld confirmed that face-to-face interactions with opinion leaders were more influential in shaping others’ views than mass media. Herbert Menzel, a pioneer in scientific communication, suggested that target audiences were confused by the flood of information transmitted by media on a daily basis, leading people to turn to knowledgeable peers for assistance in sifting through and interpreting media content. The notion that media messages had minimal direct influence on opinion formation became known as the “limited effects paradigm.”

Sociologists typically distinguish between two types of opinion leaders: those with formal authority, such as corporate executives and government officials, and those with informal influence over others in their sphere. A 1949 study by American sociologist Robert K. Merton showed that opinion leaders came from various social, economic, and educational backgrounds but shared the common characteristic of specialized interest and expertise on the topic under discussion. Lazarsfeld and colleagues also found that opinion leaders had greater access to sources of information outside their immediate circles, a disproportionate amount coming from mass media. Thus, opinion leaders did not replace media but rather functioned as discussion guides and interpreters of media content.

Early work by Lazarsfeld and associates suggested several reasons why personal conversations with opinion leaders exert greater influence over opinion formation than mass media. The informal nature of face-to-face communications, as well as the ability to judge the expertise and trustworthiness of the communicator, can contribute to greater openness on the part of the recipient of communications. At the same time, personal contact provides opinion leaders with the opportunity to adjust to the receiver's personality, counter any resistance, and employ friendly persuasion to achieve the desired response.

Two-step flow studies conducted in the 1940s have provided the basis for several recent theoretical developments. Communication scholars Hans-Bernd Brosius and Gabriel Weimann (1996) explained the setting of public agendas as a two-step flow, with influential individuals facilitating the flow of information between mass media and the public. Everett Rogers's (2003) theory of diffusion is also derived in part from the two-step flow concept, with the innovation behavior of near-peers influencing adoption of new ideas by other members of a social system.

Although the two-step flow theory was rapidly adopted and continues to be highly influential, critics have noted several shortcomings. According to Weimann (1991, 1994), observing the flow of communications in real-world settings is difficult, as is identifying the many factors that qualify a person as

an opinion leader on a particular issue. Individuals can be opinion leaders on some topics but not on others, as Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard pointed out.

Otis Baskin, Craig Aronoff, and Dan Lattimore (1997) also criticized the two-step flow theory for being overly simplistic, in that it assumes that the flow of information is unidirectional, linear, and limited to two levels: opinion leaders and followers. In fact, Lazarsfeld and his colleagues envisioned a multiple-step flow, with opinion leaders sharing media information with other influentials, who in turn disseminated the information to attentive followers. Some members of other, less attentive publics may become aware of and interested in the issue as well. Later research confirmed that the delivery of messages from mass media to the public involved a varying number of stages.

In applying the two-step flow theory to campaign planning, the challenge for public relations practitioners becomes to identify the individuals who are acting as opinion leaders on specific issues and to develop targeted messages to reach them, to stimulate the person-to-person communication that will influence target audiences.

—Cindy T. Christen

See also Agenda-setting theory; Diffusion of innovations theory; Media effects; Public opinion and opinion leaders

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TWO-WAY AND ONE-WAY COMMUNICATION

Two-way and one-way communication represent two basic methods or “styles” of communication and also serve as two key concepts for categorizing James E. Grunig and Todd T. Hunt’s (1984) “Four Models of Public Relations.” Grunig and Hunt created the four models to show not only that different organizational settings require different means of evaluating their success, but also to show different stages in the history of public relations. For them, the major difference between two-way and one-way models is feedback. There is no explicit feedback component from communication receivers in the one-way models.

For Grunig and Hunt, one-way communication includes two models: press agency or publicity, and public information. Using the press agency or publicity model, practitioners believe that telling the whole truth is not essential. Sources release information with the idea of changing the receivers’ behavior or beliefs. The information is often incomplete, distorted, or consists of half-truths. For the public information model, telling the complete truth is of the utmost importance. The public information model is used simply to inform, not persuade the receiver.

Grunig and Hunt worried about the paradigm of public relations often associated with the early practitioners: The role of practitioners was to

inform and convince publics and markets of the rightness of the sponsoring organization’s position on key matters. The use of one-way communication flatly rejects the possibility that the organization could be wrong in its stance, policies, and activities.

From Grunig and Hunt’s perspective, two models feature two-way communication: two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric. While both of the two-way models include feedback, asymmetric and symmetric models rest on the question of intent. In an asymmetric model, feedback is important to the shaping of the message. Feedback from the receiver will be used by the source to better tailor the message, maximizing results and providing an outcome that is beneficial to the message source. The symmetric model allows for the possibility that, through feedback, both the source and the receiver may change. There is one thing unique to the two-way symmetric model: It is the only one of the four models that is actually a dialogue—which also makes it the most ethical.

Along with the explicit four-model paradigm, there is an implied moral or ethical issue that practitioners are challenged to consider. What is acceptable (ethically honest and moral) behavior for public relations practitioners? Grunig and Hunt maintain that a genuine dialogue must happen for effective public relations to occur; to be specific, a two-way symmetric setting. They are not alone (Scott Cutlip and Allen Center are another example) in suggesting that good communication occurs when “good” people are the ones communicating.

Most people agree with the concept that it is best to be forthright and ethical (honest and moral) in the practice of public relations. Accomplishment of that goal, at least in part, requires two-way communication. Cutlip and Center offered the following definition of public relations: “Public relations is the planned effort to influence opinion through good character and responsible performance, based upon mutually satisfactory two-way communication” (1978, p. 16). This definition, emphasizing good character and two-way communication, preceded (and probably inspired) J. E. Grunig and Hunt’s models.

When public relations is looked at in an ethical sense, symmetry and asymmetry cloud, rather than

clarify, the issue. To work from Cutlip and Center's definition, if the communication is genuinely two-way, an ethical public relations attempt can be made. Symmetry and asymmetry simply become two variables of one-way communication. Two-way asymmetrical behavior simply becomes an unethical subterfuge, belonging in the same category with press agency or publicity.

To further complicate matters, there is the question of public relations being defined as a process or a culture. Cutlip and Center noted that "public relations is often used interchangeably with propaganda, information, communications, public affairs, advertising, or persuasion" (1978, p. 4).

Discussion of what distinguishes two-way from one-way communication must precede a more current analysis of how public relations can foster, and engage in, dialogue. If openness is a major

factor in improving organizational effectiveness, then the organization must engage in two-way communication. It must listen to and use research to gain insights, alerting the organization to problems and matters of contention. This prospect also requires strategic tactics beyond publicity, promotion, and the simple provisions of public information.

—*Michael Nagy*

See also Dialogue; Press agency; Publicity; Symmetry

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UNCERTAINTY REDUCTION THEORY

The concept of uncertainty reduction suggests that individuals are motivated to seek information to reduce uncertainty. The concept has implications for exploring communication as a means for resolving incompatibilities and inconsistencies in human relationships as well as experiences and behaviors in various settings. Through communication, individuals reduce uncertainty that emerges when experiences do not correspond to expectations or when relationships change. This concept can also be applied to public relations, which is primarily concerned with public relationships.

In 1986, Richard L. Daft and Robert H. Lengel posited that message ambiguity is a critical concept and that people will select a mode of communication that assists with clarification of ambiguity (i.e., how people seek information about one another in interpersonal communication). Further, James J. Bradac indicated, in 2001, that a major assumption of uncertainty reduction theory is the human motivation to reduce uncertainty about oneself and others in initial interactions. *Uncertainty* refers to a person's subjective framework of the number of alternative predictions available when thinking about another person's future behavior. A greater

number of perceived alternatives produce a greater sense of uncertainty and a stronger drive for uncertainty reduction. Gaining individual knowledge, about human nature and the surrounding world, is aligned with this process but, ultimately, the person is moving in the direction of increasing simplicity so that assessed alternatives will be reduced.

From the uncertainty reduction perspective, a high level of uncertainty is a stimulus for seeking information as well as an inhibitor of attraction. The theory predicts that lack of knowledge about other people leads to attempts to reduce uncertainty through information seeking. Attraction for others (consistencies in organizational relationships, friendships, romantic interests) is suspended until knowledge about the individual is gained. In the course of human affairs, total uncertainty reduction is impossible because past experiences do not always accurately predict future behaviors. However, each person has a threshold in terms of how much uncertainty one is willing to accept in a relationship. This threshold will vary, depending on assessments of the behaviors of others, past experiences, and general tolerance for risk.

Generally, the most widely held uncertainty reduction principle is that increased information seeking corresponds with decreased levels of uncertainty. Intuitively, this seems to make sense, but

according to Kathy Kellermann and Rodney A. Reynolds (1990), there is some inconsistency in the research results. The authors indicate, however, that both uncertainty reduction and question asking jointly decrease as the number of conversations increase.

In terms of organizations and public relationships, the concept of environmental uncertainty is often reviewed. Environmental uncertainty can be viewed in two ways, externally and internally. External uncertainty is primarily concerned with perceptions about the nature of changes in the external environment (i.e., market situations, competitor reviews, regulatory constraints) as well as informational quality. Internal uncertainty, according to J. D. Jorgensen and J. L. Petelle, refers to daily operations and interactions within an organization. This type of uncertainty involves items such as employee behavior, information load, and job security. The authors argue that the notion of relational uncertainty is critically important in these organizational relationships. For example, the reduction of uncertainty in dyads merits attention, because it may be linked to openness within these relationships. These relationships could be among team members, between a supervisor and his/her subordinate, or between a public relations account executive and a client representative.

Avoiding costs while maximizing benefits is a motive that competes with uncertainty reduction. For example, limited time and energy may prevent information seeking. A person may want to gather information about a particular subject, but he or she may be facing a barrage of committee work and e-mail messages. Impression management may also play a role. Maintaining a positive image with other employees and the supervisor may be compared with the costs of asking another "dumb" question. The request might suggest that the employee is incompetent. Other employees might have this perception but impression management may be rooted in that person's insecurities.

The landscape of public relations is not always stable, due to changing conditions in organizational relationships. Priscilla Murphy (2000) argued that organizational/public relationships are, essentially, complex adaptive systems. Many employees interact both locally and globally in their efforts to adapt

to various situations. These adaptations form large-scale patterns that affect society. She posits that outcomes are unpredictable because the effects of actions leading to them are nonlinear. In other words, there is not necessarily a proportional relationship between a decision and its eventual outcome. Thus, uncertainty reduction is constantly challenged. Furthermore, coevolution complicates the process. According to Murphy, individual interactions coevolve; they are shaped by a number of variables such as personal history, norms, and resources. Each interaction is open-ended and persons need to adjust to continuous, reflexive states. Thus, total reduction of uncertainty is impossible.

Even though total reduction is impossible to achieve, uncertainty in organizational/public relationships can be managed. Robert L. Heath and Christine Diana Gay reviewed the area of risk communication in 1997, which corresponds to how much risk people are willing to assume in their interactions with others. Using the concept of environmental scanning, highly involved persons are more strategic in their choice of information sources. Employees may use mediated (e.g., Internet) and interpersonal sources as part of this scanning process to manage risk and uncertainty. According to Heath and Gay, persons who strongly espouse or oppose a source of risk demonstrate high levels of involvement. If individuals perceive that their self-interest is affected, they prefer authoritative sources (account executives, supervisors) and interpersonal contact to determine what they should know in order to hold appropriate opinions on a risk topic (i.e., crisis/issue situations). The risk and uncertainty concepts are necessarily intertwined. Heath and Gay note that key publics' information seeking is motivated by the desire to reduce uncertainty and limit risks.

According to a 1998 piece by Nicholas DiFonzo and Prashant Bordia, uncertainty can be managed by engaging in collective planning. Management can clarify the values and commitments behind change decisions (rather than preparing vague memos that leave much room for interpretation), the people who will make these decisions, and the timeline on which these decisions will be implemented. Managers can also involve staff members in the process of finding

solutions for change issues (e.g., a committee to review revised accreditation procedures for the business). This policy can divert the anxiety that feeds the rumor mill and channel this agitated uncertainty into productive work, thus planning for change.

Open discussions in staff meetings can also provide an opportunity for the collective resources of the group to solve potential organizational dilemmas. Thus, internal public relations can be strengthened through such uncertainty management tactics. Even though these suggestions are designed for internal employees of an organization, how the organization handles change will be projected to the external environment. Stakeholders, such as the media, community groups, and clients, will learn through various sources (e.g., the media, spokespersons, employees) and will adapt their actions accordingly.

As a final note on uncertainty reduction in both external and internal situations, DiFonzo and Bordia (1998) provided the following communication strategies:

1. Announce changes as early as possible for all stakeholders who may be affected.
2. Establish an information timeline.
3. Comment on the inability to provide further information (this is especially important in crisis situations).
4. Try to clarify all decisions and the protocol for such decisions.
5. Engage in actions that facilitate trust (e.g., informing employees first).

—Brian C. Sowa

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UNITED KINGDOM, PRACTICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS IN

The emergence of professional public relations in the United Kingdom is the outcome of a centuries-old process engaged in previously by the monarchy, the Church, and the state, encompassing propaganda, intelligence, and censorship. Pageantry, special events, pronouncements, and the publication of tracts and pamphlets were the weaponry of those past days.

Following the Reformation, the powers to persuade previously held by the Crown and the Church shifted to the Parliament. The Post Office, which in earlier times had been employed to spy, became the means of circulation, externally of official policies and internally of reporting on public sentiment and response.

Concerned over the years primarily with domestic matters, governmental action was also influenced by international affairs. An early instance of crisis management, for instance, occurred when the establishment took steps to counter the propaganda promulgated in England by the Revolutionaries during the American Revolution in an attempt to harness public opinion. Later, the establishment acted to counter the philosophical and theoretical basis of the French Revolution, fearing its effect on the British populace. During the American Civil War,

when both of the warring parties undertook propaganda programs in Britain and in Europe in an attempt to gain popular support, the British government of the day moved to circulate its views.

In the years prior to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, there was in evidence a number of campaigns mounted by various movements of a social or political nature—for example, the suffragettes and the pro-temperance interests.

On an international level, the authorities were forced to take propagandist action to counter antagonistic programs. Witness the anti-British campaign mounted in Europe as a result of the inhumane treatment of the old, infirm, women, and children, and the burning of homesteads and invention of concentration camps.

During the late 1800s, the British Civil Service underwent an extensive process of reform that resulted in the strengthening of its nonpartisan nature. At the same time, it had also undergone considerable expansion to take account of developing social programs such as health, education, and benefits. A number of departments created embryonic information units that adhered to the principle of political impartiality. They were staffed invariably by public servants, and as early as 1906, a central committee was formed to oversee and coordinate the publication and distribution of official reports and the like.

But, as later occurred in the United States, the outbreak of World War I brought about significant changes in this area. A Home Office Press Bureau and a Foreign Office News Department were created, followed shortly by a Neutral Press Committee and a secret unit targeting foreign opinion. Meanwhile, various departments of government were strengthening their in-house information and publicity teams, increasingly employing outsiders from the fields of journalism and advertising to augment the efforts of the career officials.

In 1917, three years into the war, Prime Minister Lloyd George ordered the foundation of the Department of Information, which was promoted to a full ministry a year later. At the same time, a separate Department of Enemy Propaganda was also created. (It is worth noting that when the Americans

entered the war in 1917, they set up their propaganda organization, the Committee of Public Information, under the leadership of George Creel, a journalist. He described his activities as “a plain publicity proposition . . . the world’s greatest adventure in advertising” [Creel, 1920, p. 4]).

In Britain, immediately following the Armistice in 1918, although the central ministry was disbanded, the various individual departments reshaped their information units (which nevertheless remained reactive rather than proactive in nature).

One of the phenomena of the interwar years (1918–1939) was the emergence of the Special Expert Committee. The Cabinet had decided that whereas advertising should be centralized, publicity should remain at the departmental level.

One such committee dealt with government advertising and included representatives of both media owners and agents. Such involvement, however, resulted in a number of the senior advertising figures becoming familiar with the full range of publicity activities, particularly press agencies. One outcome was that a few of the bigger advertising agencies—London Press Exchange, Crawfords, Highams, and Barkers, for instance—formed editorial publicity departments. During the same period, some of the commercial companies appointed individuals or created small departments to handle publicity and external relationships generally—steel, coal, shipping, chemicals, and railways, for example. Meanwhile, a small handful of independent consultants went into business, notably Freddie Lyons, who handled Unilever, and Sir Basil Clark, an ex-government official who set up Editorial Services Limited with a wide range of clients. Also expanding very visibly were the activities of the utilities—gas, electricity, and public services, such as the London Underground.

But of greater significance in the development of the information and publicity function during the interwar period were the programs activated by the Board of Education and the ministries of Housing, Health, and Agriculture, campaigns aimed at promoting the consumption of milk, care of teeth, infant health, and diphtheria inoculation. To these

were added the very visible efforts and considerable success of the publicity activities of the Empire Marketing Board, dedicated to promoting British products overseas under the leadership of a career civil servant, Sir Stephen Tallents.

By the outbreak of World War II, in 1939, a number of experienced executives from industry and commerce were serving on the advisory committees of the various government ministries, departments, and agencies, and the titles *public relations officer* and *press officer* were in common usage.

With the onset of hostilities, the Ministry of Information was reinstated to cover matters and, as might be expected of a nation committed to total war, branches concerned with enemy and neutral propaganda commenced operations. The public relations departments of the various government offices blossomed, as did the units of the various governments in exile.

The professional effect was that, after the war, there existed a network of trained individuals, many of whom knew each other. Although the Ministry of Information was disbanded, the government departments were retained and even expanded, and a Central Office of Information was created to service them.

Demobilized practitioners began to offer their services, some as independent consultants, and others who had previously been in advertising returned to their agencies, determined to open departments or create subsidiary companies.

Industry and commerce began to pay increased attention to press relations and public relations matters. A considerable spur to this process was the policy practices of the political party in power—the Socialists—who implemented considerable state controls over business and announced their intention of either nationalizing or referring to the Monopoly Authority a whole raft of industries and individual companies. Those industries slated were the Economic League and Aims of Industry, involving companies in the coal, steel, railway, sugar, insurance, and even the undertaking businesses. Companies under threat included the chemical and pharmaceutical companies, suppliers of industrial gases, the fishing industry, and the leading birth-control concern.

Cooperative action apart, leading corporations realized that they also had to consider their public stance and harness public sentiment, with the result that the hitherto predominantly reactive press departments were transformed gradually into proactive, full-fledged public relations units, often taking in the publicity and general advertising activities of the concern in the process. By 1947, it was estimated that, including national and local government officials, some 200 professionals were active in the field, broken down roughly equally between the public and private sectors. Public and parliamentary affairs specialists began to emerge, and several members of Parliament joined consultancies, becoming directors of corporations. By 1948, there was a call for a body to be formed to represent publicly the whole area of practice. Believing themselves to be threatened by postwar economies, the most active proponents were the local government public relations practitioners, who took on the heavy administrative load involved in forming an association. At the outset, there existed a degree of dissension between officials and private-sector executives, between so-called independent consultants and those working for advertising agencies, between those who saw themselves as senior and experienced, and those they viewed as junior (but who saw themselves as the “new wave”).

Tallents, the man considered the pioneer of professional public relations in the United Kingdom, became the first president of the fledgling Institute for Public Relations in 1947, after being persuaded that there was indeed a genuine call for such an organization. In the years immediately following, presidents of accepted note were elected: Roger Wimbush in local government, Alan Hess with the motor industry, Lex Hornsby with the Ministry of Labour, and two independent consultants—Alan Campbell-Johnson, sometimes advisor to Lord Mountbatten, and Maurice Buckmaster, head of the French section of the Special Operations Executive in wartime. In 1958, added to this group was Sir Tom Fife Clark, former director general of the Central Office of Information. As might have been anticipated, the half-dozen agency-connected

units dominated the early years of consultancy expansion, with about five independent consultancies of note also operating. In-house, the leadership came from the aviation, automotive, energy, and airline sectors, with their international approach and expertise setting industry standards of performance.

Editorial publicity and special events figured prominently in the various programs, and home economists, nutritionists, designers, and other specialists were soon brought into play. In the late 1950s and 1960s, it became popular for various sectors to mount cooperative campaigns. Notable among these industries were wool, cotton, steel, glass, cement, retail fashion, man-made fibers, fish, hats, and hairdressing.

In the 1970s and 1980s, with the economic changes that had taken place and the increased competition in the marketplace, cooperative campaigns became less in vogue, with major corporate players preferring to mount their own distinctive programs via either consultancies or strengthened in-house departments. Toward the end of this period and into the 1990s, two developments occurred. First, within the craft sector, specialists began to emerge, covering such areas as high technology and information technology, health care, and pharmaceuticals. Second, functional specialists began to be appointed to cover such areas as public relations and crisis and issue management.

Although the international consultancies—mostly American—such as Hill & Knowlton and Burson-Marsteller, had by the mid-1970s opened for business in London, the scene was still dominated by local concerns, only a few of which had gone international, such as Shandwick. The last two decades witnessed two trends. First, the ownership of the major consultancies has come into the hands of the major international advertising groups, dominated by the Americans. Second is the breaking down of the field into a large grouping of individuals and concerns who consider themselves communications practitioners, and a minority who consider themselves to be corporate affairs professionals concerned with social responsibility programs and community reportage.

Currently, the professional membership of the British Institute of Public Relations stands at 7,500, and 126 firms are members of its Public Relations Consultants Association.

PR Week, the profession's newspaper, estimates that there are upwards of 50,000 individual practitioners and 300 consultancy firms active in the field. *PR Week* also puts the annual fee income at 500 million pounds sterling, with the top 10 consultancies billing about half of that figure.

Additionally, the craft now supports a thriving infrastructure of specialist suppliers covering such areas as research, special events, printing, audio and video production, content analysis and evaluation, mailing and distribution, training, and recruitment. In-house and consultancy appointments seem to have peaked; the new areas of growth include health and education, local government, the social services and voluntary section, the arts, entertainment, and sports.

Presently, a fierce public debate is raging that threatens to embroil the whole industry. In essence, the Blair Labour Administration is being accused of putting spin before substance. Central to the affair is the political decision to insert a comparatively large number of so-called special advisors on short-term contracts into the administrative apparatus between the ministers and the permanent civil service. The tasks of these political appointees are twofold: first, to monitor that the various departments deliver according to the set political objectives, and second, to ensure that policies are understood and performance recognized by the electorate. The result has been to put at risk the delicate balance between official impartiality and partisanship.

—Tim Traverse-Healy

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UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL (UPI)

See News services

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Although seldom straightforwardly identified as such, public relations activities are deeply ingrained in the fabric of government at all levels. In fact, the public relations industry has developed concomitantly with the practice of public relations by government. As government has grown, so has the use of public relations specialists to inform and persuade a diverse and sometimes fractured populace about the work of government.

Government public relations also includes the flow of information and persuasive messages from diverse stakeholders back to government agencies. Whether it is the corporate sector, the nonprofit sector, or foreign entities, the need to communicate to government decision makers has created a thriving public relations industry in Washington, DC, and across the nation. This two-way flow of information from the government to the governed and back again provides a useful, if somewhat oversimplified, heuristic for understanding this highly specialized field of public relations.

EVOLUTION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS

The use by government of public relations is hardly a recent invention; indeed, as William Rivers wrote in 1970, it has been an integral arm of government since the earliest days of the republic. The early efforts in the American colonies to stir up resentment against England, win popular support for the independence movement, and mobilize citizens to action were among the most sophisticated and successful public relations efforts in American history. Historians offer varied accounts of this first public relations campaign. The small band of Revolutionaries instigating unrest in the colonies was adept at

building public support for its cause, causing the British authorities to respond that the revolution was simply an elite conspiracy. The Revolutionaries kept the populace informed by using tactics such as widely distributed printed materials authored by Samuel Adams, staging events such as the Boston Tea Party, or giving impassioned speeches in various colonial assemblies.

The history of the development of the public relations field itself is intertwined with the use of public relations by the government. President Andrew Jackson was the first chief executive to hire a former journalist to help explain his administration to the population.

The first federal government press bureau was established in 1905 by the U.S. Forest Service, a subsidiary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). It was, perhaps, the creation of this office that led the U.S. Congress to pass an amendment regulating the use of public relations experts in the 1913 Appropriations Act for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This amendment was the beginning of a tug-of-war between Congress and the executive branch about the appropriate use of public relations in federal policy formation.

The amendment was in response to a Civil Service Commission help-wanted advertisement for a “publicity man” for the Bureau of Public Roads, then part of the USDA. The amendment stated that appropriated funds could not be used to pay a publicity expert, unless specifically appropriated for that purpose. Known as the Gillett Amendment (38, U.S.C. 3107), this little-known codicil continues to govern the use of public relations in the federal government today. Although the provision does not prohibit government public relations, it has been used to limit some activities and has certainly slowed the use of the term *public relations* in federal government parlance. It may also explain why many government agencies today use such titles as information officers, press officers, public affairs experts, communications specialists, and press secretaries.

A second federal law restricting public relations was passed in 1919. It was designed to limit executive branch lobbying of members of Congress (18, U.S.C. 1913). In 1973, Congress reaffirmed the

anti-lobbying rule in Public Law 92-351. This federal law prohibits the use of any appropriation for publicity designed to influence members of Congress in their attitude toward legislation or appropriations.

These restrictions notwithstanding, public relations in government has a long and storied tradition. The early 20th century was a watershed of sorts for the successful practice of public relations by the government. Although the history of public relations in government is best known for its role in building support for war, it has also been used as a tool for social welfare. In 1912, the U.S. Children's Bureau undertook a 10-year communications campaign to improve child and maternal health. This effort resulted in the successful passage of a key piece of social welfare legislation.

Shortly after the start of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson created the Committee on Public Information. George Creel, the primary architect of public will campaigns before and during World War I, was recruited to co-chair the committee and to mobilize public opinion in support of the war, particularly in persuading Americans to buy war bonds and enlist. Subsequent presidents made equally extensive use of public relations to sell the New Deal; tax cuts (as well as tax increases); international military incursions in Germany, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Grenada, and Kuwait (to name only a few); domestic wars on poverty, drugs, and AIDS (also to name only a few); impassioned defenses against charges of impropriety (e.g., Watergate and "Clintongate"); and a host of other domestic and international communications initiatives.

Today, the U. S. government has one of the largest public relations operations in the world, with the U.S. Office of Personnel Management reporting nearly 15,000 public relations-related jobs. The National Association of Government Communicators estimates that across all levels of government, 40,000 professionals work as communicators. This total represents more than half of the total number of people that the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports as working in the field.

Much of the day-to-day work in government public relations involves the routine dissemination

of information collected by the government. For example, the government Web site FedStats (www.fedstats.gov) provides easy access to statistics and information produced by more than 100 government agencies. In 1966, a public relations program was started to assist citizens in getting information about the government. Christened the Federal Information Center, this program has been funded for over 30 years and now includes a Web site (www.FirstGov.gov). In 2001, the Federal Information Center reported approximately 30 million contacts between its Web site and its national call center (GSA, 2002, p. 317, as reported in Lee, 1999).

At the federal level, government communicators are both political appointees and career civil service employees. Political appointees at the federal level generally stay in their positions for approximately 18 months and are often perceived as "political hacks" or dilettantes by the career staff. Career staff, on the other hand, are often perceived as intransigent bureaucrats by the political staff. These relationships effectively form the first barrier to the creation and implementation of effective public relations strategies.

At the USDA, for example, some 150 employees report to the director of communications, a politically appointed position hired by, and reporting directly to, the Secretary of Agriculture. Each of the agencies of the USDA has its own communications staff, reporting to the agency administrator. In general, a typical communications office of a federal agency houses a press office, a community relations office, and an internal communications function.

Another example is the U.S. State Department, which, according to a recent Government Accounting Office (GAO) report, spends \$1 billion a year on what is called *public diplomacy*, or public relations efforts designed to inform and educate people outside of the United States. The armed forces have the largest public relations staff in the federal government; their staff is also charged with recruiting functions, in addition to more typical public relations activities. Recent research has examined the use of public relations by the armed

forces as an essential component of the 2003 war in Iraq. The Pentagon, according to Ray Hiebert, comprehensively planned for a war waged in the media, introducing the innovation of reporters embedded with troops during the actual fighting.

The legislative and judicial branches of government also have public relations professionals as part of their operational staffs. The office of a typical member of Congress includes a director of communications and a press secretary, as well as junior-level staff members. Members of Congress use a wide range of public relations tools to promote their own bills and to win reelection; these tools include the traditional ones of staged events and public speaking.

At the state level, the structure of public relations is generally the same, with a combination of political appointees in management jobs staffed by a group of civil servants at the executive level. State agencies also maintain public relations staffs, as do the offices of state legislators. In the state legislative setting, these offices often consist of a single person.

In large cities, the office of the mayor (as chief executive) will most likely be staffed by a press secretary or a director of communications, positions that are generally filled by the executive. City agencies, on the other hand, are most likely staffed by career public relations people, mirroring the state and federal systems.

A useful description of government public relations—at all levels—comes from one of the most prolific researchers on the topic, Mordecai Lee, who identified the following broad functions in 1973:

1. The implementation of public policy
2. Assisting the news media in the coverage of government
3. Reporting to the citizens on agency activities
4. Increasing the internal cohesion of the agency
5. Increasing the agency's sensitivity to its public
6. Mobilization of support for the agency itself

PUBLIC RELATIONS TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT

The second major strand of government public relations activities deals with efforts to influence the trajectory and outcome of various social, political, and economic issues in various decision-making arenas. One of the first public relations firms was started in the nation's capital in 1902 as a reaction to the progressive policies of the United States government. What started as a two-person firm over 100 years ago has burgeoned into several hundred public relations firms and a legion of lobbyists some 50,000 strong. In 1912, one of the founding practitioners of public relations, Ivy Lee, mounted a campaign on behalf of the private railroad companies to win a rate increase from the Interstate Commerce Commission. Today, the government itself contracts with a large number of public relations firms to conduct a wide range of communications activities.

Although lobbyists specialize by issue, some functions remain constant across the field. These include mining government data for important information; interpreting government actions or plans of action; explaining corporate actions to the government; advocating positions to benefit a company or issue group; using Washington, DC-based news media for organizational publicity; and the facilitation of selling products to the government. The rules governing lobbying were written in 1947 and incorporated into the federal Lobbying Act, which, among other things, requires the registration of lobbyists. Informing and educating members of Congress and the executive branch, however, is an activity undertaken by all manner of special interest groups.

Grassroots lobbying is a tactic used by many groups to influence the government. From Common Cause to the Sierra Club to the National Rifle Association, these nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) motivate their members to contact members of Congress and the executive branch on issues important to their constituencies. Grassroots lobbying, although as diverse as the interest groups themselves, uses tactics such as organizing fly-ins for their members to spend a day on Capitol Hill; catalyzing letters, phone calls, and e-mails to

members of Congress; and placing stories in the news media. More aggressive influence efforts, often conducted by groups seeking more substantial degrees of political change, can involve rallies and demonstrations, marches, sit-ins and other dramatic special events designed to capture media attention.

It is clear that the public relations function—both to and from government—is increasing in both scope and size. In the future, some researchers believe that additional skills will be needed by public managers to do their work. Expected competencies include more traditional public relations activities and encompass the role of a policy entrepreneur. Additionally, public managers will need to prepare for the new media realities of life in the Internet age and a refocusing on public reporting.

—Aileen Webb and Charles T. Salmon

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U.S. NEWSWIRE

See News services

USES AND GRATIFICATIONS THEORY

As radio, film, and television became mainstream items in 20th-century American life, researchers found new topics to study, particularly the way these new media devices and genres fit into the structure or routines of daily life. This outgrowth of the functional paradigm stressed that nature incorporates new parts into existing systems in ways that adjust to and maintain the equilibrium of the systems through repetitive, patterned actions. In essence, the theory argues that viewers, listeners, and readers select and use various media options and programming to gratify their needs. This view of media theory reasons that audiences are active and attentive when media content serves some function they believe to be valuable.

Soon after radio became a standard fixture in American homes, Paul Lazarsfeld's Office of Radio Research sponsored a series of studies to see what radio meant in listeners' lives. The core studies, conducted by Herta Herzog, involved researching who listened to radio soap operas and for what reasons (satisfactions). The studies identified three main gratifications: (1) emotional release, (2) wishful thinking, and (3) advice regarding listeners' own lives. From these self-revealed satisfactions, the term *uses and gratifications* was coined.

This extensive, innovative study of a new media technology and its role as a part of society languished somewhat in research circles until 1959. Then sociologist Elihu Katz, Lazarsfeld's colleague in the 1940s Erie County election studies, again suggested that examination of how the new media were incorporated into the routine of life might begin at the end of the media chain. The new focus was on the users of media forms and technologies, rather than beginning with the technologies and forms being introduced into the system and seeking users. In other words, the suggestion was that end users make choices about (uses of) the media and content to satisfy their social and psychological needs (gratifications). He made his observations from 1959 to the 1970s. Katz further explored the uses and gratifications perspective with his

colleagues Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch. The threesome's collaborative research resulted in one of the first books about the perspective, *The Use of Mass Communication: Current Perspectives on Gratifications Research*, published in 1974. The authors summarized the book's main premise: "Studies have shown that audience gratifications can be derived from at least three distinct sources: media content, exposure to the media per se, and social context that typifies the situation of exposure to different media" (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974, p. 24).

Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch's book outlined their original five basic assumptions about the uses and gratifications perspective. First, the audience is an active component of the process rather than a passive recipient. This tenet is based on the idea that individuals have reasons to incorporate media as tools to achieve certain goals. Second, individuals must take the initiative to select and incorporate media into their lives—in other words, exert effort, which demonstrates that individuals are inviting that influence into their lives and therefore are determining what they will and will not allow. Third, media are in competition with other sources of gratification for individuals' attention; therefore, individuals place a high enough value on media to include them while excluding or limiting other sources of gratification, such as face-to-face communication. Fourth, the data showed that individuals "are very aware of their motives and choices and are able to explain them" (Katz et al., 1974, p. 17). This reinforces the idea that people are well aware of their part in creating and maintaining media as part of their system. Fifth, the three theorists believed that to fully understand the effects of media, the motives of the audiences (users) must be explored to discover the values the users place on the media and the content. Only through asking media users can the real value be discovered.

These five major tenets of the original research underlying the uses and gratifications perspective are based on the premise that people have free will to see numerous ways in which media may satisfy their needs and so make conscious choices to expose themselves to these influences. Whether

they use the media for news, entertainment, background noise, or social status is secondary to the fact that the choice is theirs. The value in this approach is that through individual choice users can control the influence media have on their lives and the amount of influence the media might have in their lives. This approach is a direct contradiction of earlier theories such as the magic bullet, which emphasized that the media have a direct, uncontrollable, and often powerful effect on its audience members.

Subsequent studies involving the uses and gratifications theory focused on different genres of media technology, particularly television and the Internet, and identification of specific social and cultural variables that influence people's media use. Jennings Bryant and Dolf Zillmann studied the effect of individuals' moods on media choice; Denis McQuail, Jay G. Blumler, and J. R. Brown explored the gratifications of TV quiz shows; McQuail developed a typology of common reasons for media use; James Lull constructed a typology of the social uses of television; and Richard Kilborn enumerated reasons for watching television soap operas.

The uses and gratifications perspective has spawned its own set of criticisms. Patrick Barwise and Andrew Ehrenberg concluded that media use is often not the totally conscious, selective choice that uses and gratifications theory originally suggested it was. Their conclusion was that media use is often habit bound and set in ritual, such as turning on the television upon walking in the room or listening to the radio while in the automobile. They further posited that selectivity was also ritualistic, in that individuals often did not consciously select what was on radio or television, but kept it on because it had become a habit.

McQuail suggested that in addition to the availability of media and individuals' access to media channels, personal circumstances and psychological makeup could also be factors that play a part in individuals' media choices and use. David Morley continued this line of thought by exploring the idea that subcultural socioeconomic influences play a role in how individuals use media, particularly in the way that people relate their experiences with

those of television characters. This expands the narrow focus of uses and gratifications to include the perspective that people use media to identify with characters and scenarios in their surroundings and incorporate those values via cultural codes. This suggests that the media channels and content are not the only powerful elements in users' choices; the individuals' surroundings can also be a powerful influence affecting the media's power. The challenge here is isolating these variables to measure the true strength of the media effects versus environmental influences.

The general nature of the uses and gratifications perspective has led some researchers to dispute that uses and gratifications is a theory at all, and to contend it is more of an umbrella term for further study to develop specific theories with identifiable variables.

Working with colleague Karl Rosengren, Philip Palmgreen used his work in attitude orientation to develop the expectancy-value theory, which posits that individuals have a group of beliefs and evaluations (attitudes). The beliefs determine what an individual thinks he or she will get from a medium, and evaluations determine whether that medium provided the gratification sought. For example, if an individual watches a television program because he or she wants to be entertained, he or she will evaluate whether the time spent was worthwhile and make future decisions about more or less viewing, creating what Stephen Littlejohn calls a cycle of viewing/judging. Palmgreen developed this line of thought into the expectancy-value model of gratifications, demonstrating that uses and gratifications is not a simple linear process, as was first thought, but a complex cycle and network of effects.

Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur used the basic assumption of uses and gratifications to explore just how powerful the effects of this approach were. The result was the creation of dependency theory, which posits that users will become more dependent on media that seem to meet more of their needs and less dependent on media that meet fewer of their needs. A critical factor here is what importance the user places on different information in his or her life; for example,

die-hard sports fans will probably spend more time with ESPN than with the *CBS Evening News*. Another consideration is social circumstances, such as when outside events intrude in an individual's world and create an unstable situation—for example, the 9/11 destruction of the Twin Towers. The rabid sports fan will then most likely find his or her attention drawn away from ESPN to some type of news coverage. Depending on the severity of the social change, the resulting effect can be the creation of a new dependency, which may or may not create a permanent shift in media use and focus.

Leo Jeffers concluded that future study in uses and gratifications will focus on moving to higher research and theoretical levels, particularly in the area of “linking changes in patterns of uses and gratifications sought with changes in media content patterns and shifts in media organizations” (Jeffers, 1994, p. 260). This commentary sums up the focus of uses and gratifications research: The emphasis will be on the discovering patterns in relationship to the changing media scene while incorporating the social-psychological-environmental influences on individuals.

—Barbara J. DeSanto

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UTILITARIANISM

Advocates of greater professionalism in public relations have long emphasized the practice's value to the public interest. The most recent code of ethics adopted by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) includes values associated with public service: advocacy, honesty, expertise, independence, loyalty, and fairness. Indeed, code provisions advocate the free flow of information, competition, and disclosure; safeguarding confidences; eschewing conflicts of interest; and enhancing the profession. Inherent in the concept of professionalism is a moral obligation to serve the public interest. Public relations serves the public when it provides information people need to make decisions, encourages commerce, and discloses financial and business dealings affecting stockholders and the public. Working on behalf of the common good is consistent with utilitarianism, a theory of morality based on improving the general welfare of humanity.

Among the best-known proponents of utilitarianism are John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) and Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832). In his 1863 book *Utilitarianism*, Mill identified happiness as the ultimate goal of human existence.

The creed, which accepts utility, or the greatest happiness principle, as the foundation of morality, holds that actions are right in proportion to their tendency to promote happiness, and wrong in proportion to their tendency to promote the reverse of happiness (Mill, 2002, p. 239).

Mill defined happiness as pleasure or the absence of pain. The rightness of an action is based on the amount of pleasure produced for society by the action. Unlike deontological theories, the focus of utilitarian ethics is on the outcome of one's action, not the act itself. An act is judged right if it produces more good than evil or more pleasure than

pain. In this sense, the theory combines the two main concepts of ethics—right and good. The good is defined independently from the right, and the right is defined as that which maximizes the good.

Because happiness is the goal of human existence, producing the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people serves as the moral obligation for humanity. Utilitarianism falls into a larger category of teleology in which maximizing the good is the goal of human action. On face value alone, wrote philosopher John Rawls (a critic of utilitarianism), teleological theories have merit.

Teleological theories have a deep intuitive appeal because they seem to embody the idea of rationality. It is natural to think that rationality is maximizing something and that in morality it must be maximizing the good. Indeed, it is tempting to suppose that it is self-evident that things should be arranged to lead to the most good (Rawls, 1971, pp. 24–25).

As the leader of England's philosophical radicals, a group of social reformers, Jeremy Bentham sought to reform England's legal system. He advocated a theory of justice in which right was measured by the effects of an action on the public welfare. He saw far too many judges basing punishment on the rule violated rather than on the crime's impact on society. For him, the level of punishment should be equivalent to the harm caused by the crime. Bentham even used a mathematical equation to determine which actions produced the most utility. His *hedonic calculus* determined right action by estimating the units of pleasure and pain produced by an action. If one action produced 10 units of pleasure (+10) as opposed to seven units of pain (−7) and another action produced five units of pleasure (+5) and three units of pain (−3), the first action with three overall units of pleasure would be considered more right than the latter action producing two units of pleasure (Munro, 1999, pp. 97–104).

Among the philosophical radicals adopting Bentham's utilitarianism was James Mill, whose son would reform Bentham's theories and give them relevance and vitality (Schneewind, 1999, p. 658). At age 3, John Stuart Mill began reading

Greek and in his late teens contributed articles to scholarly journals, including Bentham's *Westminster Review*. In his 1863 book, *Utilitarianism*, Mill dismisses Immanuel Kant's rule-based system of ethics, arguing that deducing moral duties from rules, without accounting for contradictions, is a logical impossibility. "All he shows is that the *consequences* of their universal adoption would be such as no one would choose to incur" (Mill, 2002, p. 236).

What Kant lacked, according to Mill, is proof that the rules were right in and of themselves. For Mill, that proof came only from the good produced by adhering to those rules. The medical art is good because it leads to health, and the art of music is good because it produces pleasure. The proof lies in the effect of the medical care and the music played.

Mills differed from Bentham in that he placed a greater value on higher mental pleasures than bodily pleasures. The quality of pleasures was just as important as the quantity of pleasures.

A being of higher faculties requires more to make him happy, is capable probably of more acute suffering, and is certainly accessible to it at more points, than one of an inferior type; but in spite of these liabilities, he can never really wish to sink into what he feels to be a lower grade of existence (Mill, 2002, p. 242).

In other words, cultivating the higher faculties opens the door to frustration and discontent—indeed, to recognition of one's imperfections. "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied" (Mill, 2002, p. 242). Mill does not mean that happiness requires someone to become a philosopher or scholar, but it does demand an interest in the world, nature, history, poetry, and the future. The utilitarian would resist isolation from the community and the world. To withdraw inside the gates of one's organization and work solely for personal gain would run counter to happiness. "When people who are tolerably fortunate in their outward lot do not find in life sufficient enjoyment to make it valuable to them, the cause generally is, caring for nobody but themselves" (Mill, 2002, p. 246).

One's obligation to the general welfare increases in proportion to the benefits one reaps from society.

The demands of utility would differ depending on the size and scope of the organization. Major corporations, enjoying the benefits of special laws, are obligated to do more for the greater good than smaller firms. Each, as a part of society, has an obligation to give back. Utilitarianism would place a heavy moral burden on multinational corporations, expecting them to benefit all living species. One's moral obligation would extend to animal life and the environment.

For Mill, the key to utility was benefiting society according to one's capabilities. He explained,

The multiplication of happiness is, according to the utilitarian ethics, the object of virtue: the occasions on which any person (except one in a thousand) has it in his power to do this on an extended scale, in other words, to be a public benefactor, are but exceptional; and on these occasions alone is he called on to consider public utility; in every other case, private utility, the interest or happiness of some few persons, is all he has to attend to. (Mill, 2002, p. 252)

Contemporary utilitarianism provides two options when faced with a moral decision. One may adopt an act utilitarian approach or apply rule utilitarianism. The act utilitarian analyzes each situation and chooses the course of action that will likely bring about the best consequences. Act utilitarians "are to moralists as radar is to the storm-tossed airline pilot, furnishing general indicators but not a detailed and specific description of forces impinging on his aircraft" (Lambeth, 1986, pp. 15–16). Act utilitarianism appeals to industries that have no hard and fast rules of ethical conduct.

Rule utilitarians make decisions based on moral rules that have been shown over time to produce the greatest good. Unlike deontology, these rules are not based on the right action but on the consequences of right action. A good example of rule utilitarianism is ethics codes. They often represent what the profession or discipline has determined to have historically produced the best results. Honesty is the best policy because it increases trust and improves the quality of communication.

For most public relations practitioners, utilitarianism has an intuitive appeal. It advocates a responsibility to society without forfeiting one's responsibility

to client organizations. Indeed, the organization is a part of society and, therefore, promoting its success would serve the greater good because society depends on healthy competition. If the organization acts contrary to the public welfare, then one's obligation would be to reconcile by coming clean and righting the wrongs caused by organizational behavior. Indeed, serving the greater good of one's organization would mean, for Mill, serving the greater good of society. If a conflict between the two occurs, one would have to rely on one's moral character and experience to choose which action would promote the greatest happiness.

If the PRSA Member Code of Ethics were a utilitarian standard, then the public relations practitioner would adhere to it because it has been shown to produce the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people. In a free market society, businesses require advocates to help their voices be heard. By advocating the organization's cause, one serves the greater good. If the cause were unjust, however, its advocacy would also be unjust. Honesty would serve as a rule to guide action unless a situation arises in which withholding information might be in the best interests of society. Once the moral justification for withholding the information no longer applies, utilitarianism obligates full disclosure—not only of the information, but the reason for withholding the information in the first place. If the public agreed with the decision, one might feel justified in having withheld the information, but public disapproval and condemnation would expose one's mistake and lead to its correction when a similar situation arises in the future.

Expertise and independence would have utility as long as they were used to benefit the greater good. One could never justify their use for selfish reasons. Loyalty would serve the greater good because

loyalty is critical to a family, organization, and society; but if loyalty required immoral action, it would no longer serve the greater good. Fairness fits with the utilitarian goal of justice, and it would require practitioners not to use their power in such a way as to create inequity in society. While utilitarianism appears to emphasize the needs of the majority, it has never been in the majority's interest to oppress a minority.

The practicality of utilitarianism is that it allows public relations to promote the interests of the few and the many. It allows practitioners to serve as a moral conscience for the organization while advocating the organization's self-interests. One could feel comfortable serving the interests of those within one's company, knowing that doing good work for local interests benefits global interests. As one's position and influence increases, one's obligation to the public interest would proportionally increase. For utilitarians, where much is given, much is required.

—Kevin Stoker

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VAIL, THEODORE NEWTON

Theodore Newton Vail (July 16, 1845–April 16, 1920) was a senior executive with the company now known as AT&T at two of the most critical moments in its history:

- From 1878 to 1887, when the telephone began its voyage from fledgling invention to ubiquitous home and office appliance
- From 1907 to 1919, when the company, beset by competitors and despised by its customers, moved from the brink of financial ruin to a de facto monopoly affectionately known as “Ma Bell”

Vail was hired for his experience in managing complex operations, but his real success stemmed from his view of public relations as a critical component of business strategy.

Vail was born in Ohio and raised in Morristown, New Jersey, where his father supervised an uncle’s ironworks. His cousin, Alfred Vail, was a close associate of Samuel F. B. Morse and helped develop the telegraph at the ironworks, devising the dot-and-dash alphabet of Morse code. So it’s not surprising that Theodore Vail was interested in telegraphy as a young man and took a job as a telegraph operator for Western Union in New York City when he was 19. In 1866, his father purchased a farm in Iowa, and young Vail moved with the

family. After two years of farming and teaching, he became a night telegraph operator for the Union Pacific Railroad at a supply station in Wyoming territory as the railroad pushed its way west. The following year, he married a cousin from Newark, New Jersey, and they moved to Omaha, Nebraska, where he landed a job as a clerk with the Railway Mail Service. Vail devised a system for presorting mail on railroad cars and attracted the attention of the Railway Mail Superintendent in Washington, DC, who made him his special assistant in 1873. Vail applied his new system to rail routes across the country, and in 1876 he was promoted to Railway Mail Superintendent himself, becoming the youngest officer in the Railway Mail Service.

That same year, Congress established a commission to devise a better system for paying railroads to transport mail. Vail worked closely with the commission’s chairman, Gardiner Greene Hubbard, who happened to be Alexander Graham Bell’s father-in-law and one of his original backers. Hubbard was impressed with the young postal executive’s energy and creativity. For his part, Vail was fascinated by the telephone, which had just been invented. In February 1878, Hubbard hired Vail as the Bell Telephone Company General Manager. At that point, the Bell Telephone Company was less than one year old and controlled by a small group of Boston-based investors. It was assigning franchises

in major cities, renting telephone sets to the local operators, and taking an ownership position in their companies. But it was low on cash; its principal assets were the four basic patents Bell had filed less than two years earlier, and it was suing the powerful Western Union Company for infringing them.

Bell and Western Union settled their suit in 1879, basically agreeing to stay out of each other's business. With a patent position that would not expire for 17 years, the company reorganized itself into the American Bell Telephone Company, with Vail as its chief operating officer. By then, the company managed 133,000 telephones, including 55,000 turned over to it by Western Union, and it had a capitalization of over \$7 million.

Vail applied the same management skills to the telephone business that he had to the post office, including a strong sense of public service. His 1883 letter to the presidents of the Bell operating companies demonstrates a focus on customer relations uncharacteristic of the times. He asked them to assess "the tendency of the relationship between the public and the local companies for the past year. . . . Is telephone service as it is now being furnished satisfactory to the public? . . . Where there has been any conflict between the local Exchange and the public, what has been the cause?"

Vail also brought with him a conviction that a single company was the surest way to ensure reliable and ubiquitous service. He began building the Bell System with regional companies providing local service, a long-distance company interconnecting them, and a captive supplier manufacturing all the necessary equipment. In 1885, AT&T was incorporated as American Bell's long-distance subsidiary with Vail as president. Vail reasoned that Bell could maintain a virtual monopoly after the expiration of its patents by limiting access to AT&T's long-distance network to its licensed companies, isolating the independent telephone companies.

But American Bell's Boston investors were impatient to see a return on their capital and refused to fund further expansion. When they passed over Vail and named someone else president, as documented by J. Edward Hyde, Vail resigned. In an

unusual parting shot, he wrote, "We have a duty to the public at large to make our service as good as possible and as universal as possible, and [our] earnings should be used not only to reward investors for their investment but also to accomplish these objectives" (Hyde, 1976, p. 23).

In the following years, American Bell milked the business Vail had built, raising rates and allowing service quality to slip. When the Bell patents expired in 1894, its disaffected customers couldn't wait to give their business to competitors. In 1899, the company's long-distance arm, AT&T, acquired the assets of its parent, American Bell, and became the parent company of the Bell System.

By 1907, AT&T was in sorry financial condition. Financier J. P. Morgan, who had acquired a major stake in the company, asked Vail to return as the company's president. Vail was 62 years old, his wife and only son had recently died, and he had made a fortune in South American transit development. No one would have blamed him if he had chosen to stay on his farm in Lyndonville, Vermont. But some of the original American Bell directors, now quite elderly themselves, took the train to Lyndonville and convinced Vail that the pieces were in place to realize his dream of a single, nationwide telephone system. But they needed him to pull it together and make it work.

Vail accepted the job and bought independent companies by the dozens, folding them into the Bell regional companies. And within two years, he even bought control of Bell's old rival, Western Union.

But Vail knew that the public, still reeling from the era of the "robber barons," mistrusted big business and was particularly skeptical about monopolies. He believed good public relations were based on understanding public opinion and helping to educate and shape it. So, according to AT&T's 1908 Annual Report, he undertook a systematic program of public education, working from the principle that "if we don't tell the public the truth about ourselves, somebody else will."

Thus began an unusual series of advertisements designed to sell not products or services but the company itself. The first of these ads, prepared by the N. W. Ayer advertising agency of Philadelphia,

appeared in the summer of 1908 and set forth the campaign's objective in its subhead: "A perfect understanding by the public of the management and full scope of the Bell Telephone System can have but one effect, and that a most desirable one—a marked betterment of the services."

On a trip to Denver, Vail discovered that the town's business leaders were well acquainted with their local phone company, but knew little of AT&T and its Bell System. Vail ordered a logo prepared to spell it all out and signed every ad with it. Thus was the Bell seal born.

One of the first ads to appear with the new logo ran in the fall of 1908 under the headline "One Policy. One System. Universal Service." When one of the agency people worried that the ad's monopoly overtones might get the company embroiled in the national elections then under way, Vail asked if the ad was truthful. According to a 1936 unpublished memoir of James Drummond Ellsworth, AT&T's first publicist, Vail said, "Then print it and beat [the politicians] to it" (p. 68).

By promoting the customer benefits of "universal service," Vail had hit on a way to make a telephone monopoly acceptable to a wary public. He recast the company's vast reach—its very bigness—as a virtue, giving every Bell telephone user a connection to the wider world. Vail used every available technique, including publicity, pamphlets, speakers bureaus, and even the relatively new medium of moving pictures to tell the Bell System story. In 1912, when most companies preferred to operate in secrecy, Vail established what was probably the first corporate "Public Relations Bureau" to centralize information about the company and to track public opinion. "Take the public into your confidence," Vail was quoted as saying in Albert Bigelow Paine's *In One Man's Life*, "and you win the confidence of the public" (1921, p. 238.)

Business philosophy had come a long way since William Vanderbilt's oft-quoted answer when he was asked if he worked for the public or his shareholders—"The public be damned."

In January 1913 the U.S. Department of Justice notified AT&T that its string of acquisitions had put it in danger of violating the Sherman Antitrust Act.

Since the Interstate Commerce Commission had been investigating its acquisitions for three years, Vail could see the handwriting on the wall. Further, although the company operated in only a third of the country, it serviced 83 percent of American telephones. So in a daring move, Vail sued for peace. He promised to stop buying independent companies without government approval, offered to sell the company's 30 percent interest in Western Union, and agreed to allow the independent telephone companies to interconnect with AT&T's long-distance network at reasonable fees. In return, the government closed its investigations and accepted AT&T as a limited national monopoly.

Vail retired as president of AT&T in June 1919 at the age of 74. He died less than a year later. But the business system he built survived for another 65 years, becoming the richest company in the world by the time of its centennial in 1976. The Bell System was dismantled in an antitrust agreement in 1984, but the principles by which Vail conducted business—openness, candor, and customer service—survive in the DNA of numerous companies it spawned.

—Dick Martin

See also Block, Ed; Ellsworth, James Drummond; Laurie, Marilyn; Page, Arthur W.

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Theodore Newton Vail

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VALIDITY

In general, validity refers to the accuracy of a quantitative research project. Validity is a concern in public relation research any time a survey instrument or sample is used. Use of a survey instrument raises questions about internal validity, as the accuracy of a research project is influenced by the planning, design, and execution of the project. A number of factors influence internal validity that are controlled through the experimental design. Few public relations research projects are true experiments, so this entry concentrates on the measurement aspect (i.e., surveys) of internal validity. The validity of a survey centers on whether or not you are actually measuring the concept you intended to measure.

An example will help to clarify the ideas related to validity. As part of a revision of an organization's employee communication system, suppose you decide to assess "communication satisfaction" with

the various communication vehicles. A survey can be used to measure a variable such as communication satisfaction. But how do you know you are actually measuring the desired variable, in this case communication satisfaction? This is an issue related to internal validity. One check is called face validity. You, as an expert, carefully examine the survey to see if it captures the variable—that the survey reflects how you have defined the variable. A second check is content validity, where a group of experts on the topic review the survey. You could have experts on employee communication review the survey to determine if they think it captures communication satisfaction. A third check is criterion-related validity, in which your survey is proven to be related as anticipated to other established measures. You compare the results of your survey with the results of previously validated scales to see if they are related as predicted. The idea is to determine if the scores on your survey are consistent with the other scales. For instance, communication satisfaction should be positively related to job satisfaction, a variable that has validated measures. You would assess whether the communication satisfaction scores are positively correlated with job satisfaction scores. When two surveys correlate as predicted and correlate positively, this is known as convergence. You can also select a measure for a variable that you believe should correlate negatively with your survey, and this is called divergence. Although time consuming, testing validity is important when you create a new survey that is crucial to your public relations effort. It is better to invest the time and money in validating the scale than using inaccurate data—collected data that do not truly measure the intended variable.

External validity is the ability to generalize results from your sample to a larger population. Samples are used frequently in public relations research. For instance, you survey a small number of your customers, not all of them, to assess their knowledge of or attitudes toward an organization. External validity requires proper sampling techniques. The key is to use a sampling strategy that helps to ensure a representative sample—that is, the characteristics of your sample are the same as

those of the population from which it was drawn. Your sample of customers should be representative of your customer population. If your primary customers are women from 20 to 35 years of age and your sample is mostly men 40 to 50 years of age, the sample is not representative. Refer to the "Sampling" entry for a discussion of proper sampling strategies for external validity.

—*W. Timothy Coombs*

See also Experiment/experimental methods; Quantitative research; Scales; Survey

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VOTER AND CONSTITUENT RELATIONS

Elected officers in the United States, from the city council to the presidency, communicate with their constituents. There are two phases to this relationship: the campaign and post-election. Yet for the candidate who is elected, these two phases may overlap: Voters become constituents, who are potentially voters again for the next election. This circular process has resulted in some observers categorizing constituent communication efforts as part of "the permanent campaign," "the continuous campaign," or "the invisible campaign." Once a candidate is put in office, the distinctions between a "voter" and a "constituent" blur. Since elected officers are provided some budget for communicating with constituents, the advantage for the incumbent grows exponentially: Not only are the communication efforts with constituents rewarded in the polling booth at the next election, but such efforts are subsidized by taxpayers themselves.

For a challenger facing an incumbent officeholder or for a candidate in an open race (where

neither candidate is the current officeholder), the only phase of communication that matters is the election campaign itself. If the candidate does not establish and maintain satisfying relationships with voters at this stage, the opportunity to establish an effective constituent relations program will not exist.

VOTER RELATIONS

A political campaign is a communications event with important and enduring public policy consequences. How do candidates establish relationships with potential voters? In the 21st century the answer is equally divided between advanced technology and old-fashioned grass roots; it is concurrently accomplished through expensive advertising campaigns and heavy reliance on free news coverage and personal voter contact programs.

Since 1998 there has been a proliferation of the use of Web sites and e-mail contacts with potential voters in campaigns from the mayor's office to the Senate. Although these applications vary in sophistication and are used by voters who are typically highly involved in campaigns, they are becoming increasingly important.

At the same time that technology is facilitating voter relations, old-fashioned grassroots activities are resurfacing, also at all levels of office. Grassroots activities include all types of direct contact with voters: cookouts, door-to-door canvassing, and meetings. They typically rely on personal contact and communication between potential voters and the candidate or his or her surrogate. It is generally believed that the most persuasive grassroots activity provides personal contact with the actual candidate; surrogates who are directly linked to the candidate (spouse, family member) are the next tier; and anonymous volunteer surrogates follow. All personal contact via grassroots activities is highly regarded as an important element in electoral victory. One Republican political consultant, in an interview following the 2002 U.S. House of Representatives elections, indicated that a primary reason the Republicans did so well is that they've finally learned the grassroots techniques Democrats

have practiced for years, and they're using them more effectively.

Political advertising appears across all broadcast and print media, as well as in outdoor, personal apparel and pre-recorded telephone messages. The amount and style of political advertisements are generally determined by the campaign budget combined with the availability and coverage of a particular medium. Although many Americans maintain that they dislike most political advertising, such ads on television are an important source of information for a majority of voters.

Obtaining free news coverage is an important element in most campaigns. Yet due to its unreliability in carrying a desired message to potential voters, it is considered a risky strategy to rely on extensively. Underfunded campaigns are more likely to seek free media than well-funded ones.

CONSTITUENT RELATIONS

Once elected, an officeholder has a continuing obligation to communicate with the people he or she is serving. Constituent relations are mutually beneficial to all involved parties. Constituents benefit from information they receive about various issues of governance and public policies, as well as occasional personal assistance from the officeholder. Officeholders benefit from the build-up of goodwill established through ongoing constituent communications efforts.

Staples among the tools of constituent relations may be categorized as (1) those conducted within the home district, state, or locale; and (2) those conducted within the office itself, often located geographically distant from the constituents. Within the home district or locale, many constituent relations functions are handled by a local office with a staff that operates independently (yet under the direction) of the elected officer. This local office provides much personal attention to local constituents and serves as the "home base" for the representative when he or she is in town. For U.S. congressmen and senators these local offices are often the point of first contact for a constituent

seeking assistance from the representative. One of the most important elements of constituent relations is the personal visit to the district, state, or locale by the elected representative; town meetings, drop-in visits, and events that attract constituents to meet with their represented official are often planned during such visits. One newly elected congressman in Georgia rides with a UPS delivery truck one day a month and visits every business stop on the route. Such creative tactics facilitate communication between the elected representative and constituents and are mutually beneficial to the corporation, the politician, and the citizenry. Many "within home area" activities carry the additional benefit of becoming subject matter for news media attention.

Much constituent relations activity occurs when the elected person is geographically distant from the home area. Central to effective communications handled by the primary office staff, these tools include newsletters, Web sites and e-mail, telephone contacts, and on-site visits from constituents.

Many public relations personnel are increasingly occupying central staff positions at all levels of public offices as managers of the voter and constituent relations functions.

—Ruthann Weaver Lariscy

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WARFARE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

When nations go to war, their citizens go with them. Modern warfare requires the commitment of a nation's resources and the sacrifice and support of its population. Democratic nations, in particular, must win the support of their citizens before committing armed forces to battle, and maintain that support for the duration of hostilities and beyond. Even in peacetime, the government and industries responsible for military preparedness must justify continued investment in weapons and forces. For these reasons, public relations strategies and tactics have long been associated with the waging of war. Historically, wartime has fostered pivotal developments in public relations strategies and tactics, as well as the careers of notable public relations figures. As warfare has changed, so too has the way in which these strategies and tactics have been used. However, the field's connection to warfare has raised ethical questions about the means and ends of public relations in pursuit of war.

Historically, the call to arms has helped develop the careers of notable public relations practitioners and, more important, the understanding of the use and effects of various strategies and tactics. Although some trace the connection between public relations and warfare to ancient Rome or the American Revolution, the rise of the modern public relations practice

in the early 20th century is intimately connected to warfare.

President Woodrow Wilson formed the Committee on Public Information (CPI) during World War I. More commonly known as the Creel Committee—after its chair, newspaper editor George Creel—the CPI comprised leading newspaper editors, advertising writers, and several figures in the nascent public relations field, including Edward Bernays and Carl Byoir, who was the CPI's associate chair.

The Creel Committee is noteworthy for several reasons. First, it clearly established the three purposes to which governments put communication efforts in wartime: to build domestic public support for the war; to communicate U.S. intentions to foreign nations, with the aim of building support among allies and acquiescence among enemies; and to censor, or control the flow of, information reaching the media and, by extension, the public. Second, the CPI used a comprehensive range of communication tactics to achieve its aims, from personal appearances and staged events to the mass media of the day. This marked one of the first times that a public relations campaign used such a wide range of tactics, from newspaper articles, editorials, and advertisements warning against enemy spies to the "Four Minute Men," a corps of trained public speakers who blanketed the country with propaganda in support of the



President Woodrow Wilson (left) and George Creel, Committee on Public Information (more commonly known as the Creel Committee), leave the Royal Train at a station in the Alps on January 2, 1919, for exercise. Wilson formed the committee during World War I, made up of leading newspaper editors, advertising writers, and members of the public relations field as a means of spreading propaganda.

SOURCE: © Bettmann/CORBIS

war. Finally, the CPI nurtured the careers of Bernays and Byoir. Bernays, who played a relatively small role in the CPI's division, found some of his ideas about mass influence and the engineering of consent reinforced by the success of the CPI's campaign. Byoir staged a number of events designed to build support for the war among European immigrants. The events included a July 4, 1918, celebration in Philadelphia for the newly independent Czechoslovakia. What was truly impressive about the Creel Committee, in addition to its winning widespread financial and emotional support for the war, was the fact that its messages reached nearly every corner of the country despite the lack of a national mass media or universal literacy.

During World War II, the United States again called upon public relations and media professionals to galvanize support for the war effort. This time, the effort was directed by the Office of War Information (OWI), which served functions similar to the Creel Committee. The OWI had more media tools with which to work, including feature length motion pictures, newsreels, and radio broadcasts.

For example, director Frank Capra's "Why We Fight" films were designed to explain to the American public the aims of the war and events leading up to America's involvement. In addition to the OWI, public relations practitioners played significant roles in communicating U.S. policy. Former AT&T public relations chief Arthur W. Page drafted President Harry Truman's announcement of the first use of atomic weapons.

After World War II, the U.S. military's public relations activities were centralized in the newly renamed Department of Defense. With each branch of the service developing its own public information officers, the military no longer relied on ad hoc committees composed of civilians and military personnel. These ad hoc committees had essentially acted as public relations consultancies to the military effort; however, the history of both the CPI and the OWI was marked by infighting among the various military branches and the civilian experts. Centralizing the military's public relations operation was meant to reduce the rancor. This reflected a trend in corporate public relations during the same period in which an increasing number of large corporations sought to establish their own internal public relations departments. Public relations agencies still thrived, but this was an era of rapid growth in internal public relations operations. Although centralizing the public information function reaped some benefits for the military, such as a more unified message and streamlined operation, it also meant that news media professionals were no longer a formal part of the government's war efforts. The media were now outsiders and, spearheaded by the rise of a more critical generation of journalists, were more likely to investigate and criticize the military.

By the 1960s, the U.S. Defense Department employed more public information specialists than any other organization in the world. Over 1,000 members of the armed forces were assigned public information or public affairs duties. However, the Vietnam War was largely seen as both a military and a public relations failure. The United States' involvement in the war developed slowly, beginning in the late 1950s, and its aims were more difficult to explain. Further, the media, now working outside the official

government public relations apparatuses, were covering the war from the front lines. In previous wars, the military was able to censor newsreel film footage showing American casualties and the horrors of war. In Vietnam, such footage was shown on evening newscasts. In addition to media coverage of the war, the antiwar movement also received extensive coverage and legitimacy. Every war from the American Revolution onward has had its opponents. The opponents often use public relations strategies and tactics to gain recognition and influence opinion. During the Vietnam War, the antiwar movement was able to leverage media coverage and direct influence tactics to turn opinion against the war.

It was widely believed among military professionals that if public opinion had not turned against the war, the United States might have prevailed. Although it is impossible to ascertain the veracity of this judgment, the perception that media coverage of battle adversely affected public opinion was to influence military public relations policy from that point forward. For example, in the United States' invasion of Grenada and the 1991 Persian Gulf War, the military strictly controlled media access to the battlefields. Much of the information about the war was gleaned from press briefings conducted by the Defense Department, which included military-edited videotape of successful U.S. attacks. Although reporters dutifully covered these press conferences, they also chafed at the restrictions and tacit censorship.

Both corporate and military public relations efforts are influenced by trends. Businesses are affected by sociological, cultural, economic, and technological changes. Similarly, the connection between public relations and warfare has been influenced by changes in the nature of warfare and media technology. These changes, in turn, have influenced both the strategies and tactics employed by the military to meet their goals.

Three trends in the nature of warfare have influenced the public relations strategies of combatants. The first trend is a shift in the kind of wars that nations—or, more frequently, populations—fight. Traditional wars fought between nations or groups of nations have given way to civil wars that pit one ethnic, religious, economic, or racial group against

another in the same country or region. After the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, the geopolitical magnetism that aligned nations East and West against each other dissolved, giving way to a number of conflicts in the Balkans, Africa, and Asia. From the perspective of public relations strategy, the impact has been twofold. First, factions that can control the media in a region can influence local opinion about the war and rally one faction to take up arms against another. Thus Bosnian President Slobodan Milosevic used the state-controlled media to rally his armed forces and the local civilian population to engage in ethnic cleansing against Albanians. Second, the factions in these conflicts attempt to appeal to international media to bring international pressure to bear on their opponents or to bring an end to the conflict. Occasionally, nongovernmental organizations, especially relief or refugee groups, try to draw world attention to a war by drawing media attention to the plight of its victims. With the spread of global media outlets such as the BBC and CNN, the opportunities to gain media attention for civil wars have increased. This trend prompted one veteran journalist to warn others to “beware of thugs, warlords, and P. R. agents” (Gjelten, 2001).

A second trend in public relations and warfare has been the increasing need for nations to make their case in the world court of opinion. Combatants often require the support of other nations, and thus they seek to influence governments through international media. In some respects, this is a continuation of the ongoing propaganda many countries use to project a national image. Such examples include Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the service that broadcasts pro-U.S. views into the former Soviet Union. In the prelude to wars, however, nations seek to justify the use of force and to elicit the support of other nations. In some cases, nations have hired public relations firms to influence government officials' opinions. For example, the government of Kuwait employed the services of Hill & Knowlton to help make the case that the United States should come to Kuwait's aide after Iraq invaded in 1990. Some have labeled the effort to explain a country's foreign policy *public diplomacy*.

Periods of relative peace between major nations have given rise to the need to justify the existence

and continued investment in a large military. Thus, the third influence on public relations strategy is the need to position the military and those industries that support it as necessary in both peace and wartime. During the 1980s, for example, military contractor General Dynamics ran a series of image advertisements that celebrated the values of freedom and community involvement. The ads were meant not to sell weapons systems per se, but rather to position the organization as a valuable contributor to a peacetime economy. The switch to all-volunteer armed forces required the military to position itself as an attractive employment alternative to suitable recruits. Thus, in addition to the “Be All That You Can Be” advertising campaign, the military engaged in media relations programs that identified the armed forces as a source of jobs and support for further education.

Although wars have impelled nations to create more efficient and effective weapons technology, they have also been proving grounds for new tools of communication. For example, the telegraph became an essential tool for disseminating American Civil War news, and the case for the Spanish-American War was made largely in Hearst-owned newspapers. The technological innovations that have changed the way in which the media cover the news have also resulted in tactical opportunities and challenges for military public information specialists. On the one hand, global communication has given nations a global reach with their messages. From public diplomacy efforts to after-battle press briefings that are beamed around the world, the military has developed sophisticated techniques to broadcast its message. On the other hand, mobile technology and the spread of the Internet have made it nearly impossible for the military to censor news from the front lines. The United States’ invasion of Iraq in 2003 illustrated the military’s adaptation to these new technological realities. Rather than attempting to control media access to troops in action, the military actually “embedded” journalists with combat units. Dramatic images of the battle demonstrated the ferocity of war, U.S. firepower, and troops at work. However, foreign media outlets beamed news reports of the battle that represented views contrary to the U.S. media’s view. Satellite broadcasting resulted in a wider range of

viewpoints, including those of countries that opposed the war or were sympathetic to the Iraqi cause. The result was one of the most comprehensively covered wars in history, which required military public affairs officers to monitor and respond to a greater range of media queries.

The public relations field’s connection to warfare raises critical ethical questions. The dual role of military public relations is to justify military action to the domestic and international publics as well as to control information that might undermine that cause. The Creel Committee, for example, was charged with influencing public opinion and censoring reports about the war. Both of these aims can be viewed as ethically muddled. War is serious business, and everyone from philosophers and theologians to public officials have debated the morality of warfare. To the extent that one views war as immoral, public relations’ involvement in promoting war becomes ethically questionable. These concerns are exacerbated when it is believed that the justifications for war are based on misleading or false information. The line between public relations and propaganda is thin in these instances. For example, before voting to authorize U.S. military action in the 1991 Gulf War, senators heard testimony from a supposed Kuwaiti eyewitness who claimed she saw Iraqi troops commit atrocities during the invasion, including dumping babies from hospital incubators. After the war, it was discovered that the testimony was stage-managed by Hill & Knowlton, acting on behalf of Citizens for a Free Kuwait, an organization supported by the Kuwaiti royal family. The “eyewitness” was not in the country during the invasion, and no evidence of vandalized hospitals or dumped babies was found.

Related to this concern is the fact that the military seeks to influence the content of media reports or to shape the official statements issued during a conflict. Free and open access to government information by the media has always been a contentious issue. During times of war, the government generally enjoys greater freedom to restrict information to which the media—and, by extension, the public—has access. The military can restrict information on the basis of national security, operational secrecy, and the safety of the personnel involved. However,

the media contend that sometimes information that is unfavorable or embarrassing to the military and its government is hidden.

—*Michael F. Smith*

See also Bernays, Edward; Byoir, Carl; Davis, Elmer, and the Office of War Information; Propaganda; United States government and public relations

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WEB SITE

A Web site is a computer-generated document designed for graphic computer interfaces. The graphic interface used by the Internet is called the World Wide Web. Web sites can contain combinations of text, images, color, sound, and video. The basic logic of the Web is to enable individuals and organizations to easily create universally accessible visual and auditory documents using a discrete set of formatting commands.

In its purest form (i.e., using universally accepted formatting commands), Web sites can be read by any computer platform. As Elizabeth Castro (2000) explained, “Universality means that because HTML documents are saved as ASCII or Text Only files, virtually any computer can read a Web page. It doesn't matter if your visitors have Macintosh or

Windows machines . . . a Unix box or even a hand-held device like a Palm Pilot” (Castro, 2000, p. 12). Occasionally, however, Web sites do not load properly. Typically, errors occur because the site creator (usually called the Web Master) has used nonstandard or nonuniversal coding commands.

The basic programming language for the Web is called *HyperText Markup Language* or, more commonly, HTML. HyperText refers to the ability to create documents that connect to other documents by means of *links*. Links can be placed on either text or images. Links direct users who click on them with their mouse to jump to other parts of the same Web page or frame, to open a document in a new window or frame, or to direct the visitor to a new Web page. A frame refers to a portion of a larger window.

Documents created using HTML may contain tables, numbered and bulleted lists, forms, and sub-routines called *applets* and *scripts* that allow a Web Master to add special effects such as page counters, contingent logic (if . . . then), and special graphic effects (onMouseOver . . . , onclick . . .).

Other programming protocols, such as image maps, allow Web Masters to create an assortment of visual effects (pop-up windows, expanding menus, and enhanced document navigation). *Cascading style sheets* are another, more recent HTML feature and give Web Masters greater control over how Web pages are displayed. Cascading style sheets direct Web browsers to load pages using fonts that have been designated by the Web Master who created the page, rather than the generic fonts the browser might use by default.

Web pages are accessed via an electronic addressing system called a *Uniform Resource Locator*, or URL. A typical URL, such as the Public Relations Society of America's, might be *http://www.PRSA.org* (or *http://www.prsa.org*—most browsers are not case sensitive). The first part of the URL, called the *protocol*, tells the browser what sort of document to go looking for. In the case above, the protocol *http://* is HyperText (or HyperText transfer protocol). Other protocols include *https*, or *secure HyperText transfer protocol*, and *ftp*, or *file transfer protocol*.

The second part of the URL is the name of the server or the *domain name*. In the above example

the domain name is *www.prsa.org*. The *www* in a domain name refers to the World Wide Web. Domain names may be registered for a fee and are essentially rented each subsequent year for an additional fee. There are several types of suffixes attached to domain names that identify the type of organization and country of origin. Common suffixes include *.com* (company), *.edu* (educational), *.org* (organization), and *.gov* (government).

Most countries, except for the United States, utilize country suffixes as part of their URLs and have their own designations for each type of Web site. For example, a Web site in the United Kingdom might be *http://www.[DomainName].co.uk*—other designations include *.fr* for France and *.nl* for the Netherlands.

The final parts of a URL, everything that follows the protocol and the server name, are file names and the path(s) to a specific file. For example, the membership page for PRSA's site might be *www.prsa.org/membership.html*. Alternatively, a particular file or page might be located within another directory (or folder). For example, PRSA's membership page might be found in a directory named *services* and look like this: *www.prsa.org/services/membership.html*. The *html* at the end of the file name refers to the type of page being displayed—*html* for HyperText Markup Language, *doc* for a text file, *pdf* for Portable Document Format file, and so on.

Recent Internet research suggests that there are now more than one billion discrete Web pages and millions of Web sites. Virtually all organizations now have Web presences. Because of the ubiquity of organizational Web sites, public relations and organizational professionals need to be aware of their importance and how to use them effectively.

—Michael L. Kent

See also Home page.

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WHITAKER, CLEM

See Baxter, Leone, and Whitaker, Clem

WIRE SERVICE

Wire services are often called news-gathering agencies, a term that describes well the function of these agencies, which disseminate news that is generated and shared by subscriber or owner media. The Associated Press (AP) and United Press International (UPI) are two United States-based wire services; the former is member owned and far larger than the latter. Reuters, which is headquartered in Great Britain and which bills itself as the world's largest international multimedia news agency—with 2,400 editorial staff, journalists, photographers, and camera operators in 197 bureaus serving 130 countries—is one of several major wire services that evolved elsewhere in the world. Bureaus of these wire services send news stories and photographs to their subscribers, and wire services may offer specialized coverage (e.g., sports, financial, and feature services). Their broadcast wires offer news in a form appropriate for those media. Supplemental wire service syndicates are also formed by the major metropolitan newspapers, which may offer these services nationwide.

A public relations practitioner is indeed fortunate when a story she has placed in a local medium is “picked up” by a wire service, which disseminates

it to other media regionally or nationally. Of course, public relations practitioners can also send releases directly to wire service bureaus.

In addition to these wire services, the public relations practitioner may elect to pay specialized public relations wire services to send news releases to news media. Such news wires available to public relations clients have the advantage of offering simultaneous transmission of news releases to regional and national news media. The public relations practitioner is charged for this service, but public relations news wires operate much as other wire service news bureaus do. They provide journalists with news releases as well as other information that public relations practitioners want sent to media (e.g., photos, graphics, spreadsheets, and audio and video, as well as advisories and invitations to news conferences). Many public relations wire services also supply basic news data banks for storing releases and published stories, which can give a news story a longer shelf life. The public relations news wire services also track media use, for example, as does a clipping service that provides clients with tear sheets of print media coverage.

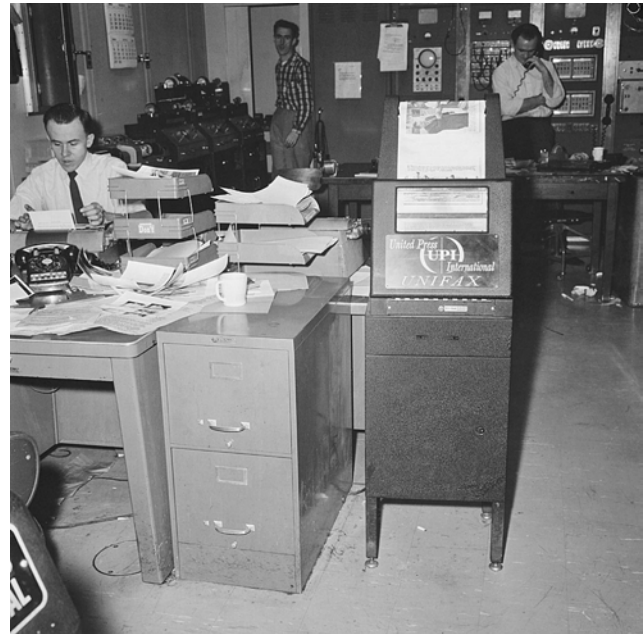
Public relations wire services have increased credibility compared with news releases sent by public relations practitioners because news release copy is again checked by the public relations wire services, which value their reputation for reliability among the media they serve. Further, many large-circulation newspapers have public relations news wire computer feeds, and this electronic link to a newsroom can be an advantage over mailed news releases, which reporters and editors may never even open and which are vulnerable to weekend and holiday delays. Thus, many public relations practitioners consider the expense of public relations news wires to be worth the price when broad coverage and convenience are important.

—Marina Vujnovic and Dean Kruckeberg

See also News and newsworthy; News services; News story

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A United Press International (UPI) Unifax machine was an early type of fax machine that used early photocopier technology, enabling the sending of picture data over phone lines and turning UPI into a “wire service.”

SOURCE: © Bettmann/CORBIS

Newsom, D., Turk, J. V., & Kruckeberg, D. (2004). *This is PR: The realities of public relations* (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson/Wadsworth.

WOMEN IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Historically, men were the majority in public relations, but since the 1980s, women have been entering the profession in droves and currently make up over 70 percent of the field. Over 90 percent of undergraduate students majoring in public relations are female. This influx of women in the field is called the feminization of public relations.

The feminization of public relations has sparked serious debate about what the dramatic changes will be in public relations, both in the profession and in research. On one hand, feminization has lowered professional reputation. Its main effects have included a decline in salaries and status, an increased likelihood of encroachment from other professional

fields, the exclusion of public relations from primary decision making in organizations, and the denial of feminine characteristics as valuable to the field. On the other hand, feminization has increased the possibilities for alternative perspectives on public relations, symmetrical management, and an ethical worldview. Women know both the dominant male reality and their own reality; this “dual consciousness” may encourage women to be more sensitive to the perspectives of different organizational publics and, therefore, be more ethical in their practice of public relations. The push for relationship building with publics can be seen as a direct result of feminization—it is argued that women are socialized to be naturally inclined towards sensitivity, collaboration, and, hence, relationship building.

Current understanding about women in public relations and the impact of feminization has derived from a body of research that began in 1986 with the release of the first comprehensive gender study in public relations, *The Velvet Ghetto*, authored by Carolyn Cline, Elizabeth L. Toth, Judy Vanslyke Turk, Lynne Masel Walters, Nancy Johnson, and Hank Smith. An edited follow-up volume titled *Beyond the Velvet Ghetto* was published in 1989. Along with a few other articles published in the late 1980s, these two landmark publications encouraged several researchers to begin examining how women in public relations experience their work and life. A few of the authors who have significantly contributed to the field’s understanding of women in public relations include Pam Creedon, Larissa A. Grunig, Linda Hon, Marilyn Kern-Foxworth, and E. L. Toth. A compilation of research on women in public relations can be found in the 2001 book by Larissa A. Grunig, E. L. Toth, and Linda C. Hon, *Women in Public Relations: How Gender Influences Practice*, and in Linda Aldoory’s 2003 article in *Communication Yearbook*.

Most of the research on women in public relations has described women’s status, roles, and perceptions of public relations. In particular, the following issues have been addressed: leadership, roles, job satisfaction, salaries, promotion, hiring, sexual harassment, women of color in the profession, historical contributions of women, and

public relations education. For example, dozens of studies have shown that there are main differences between men and women concerning technical and managerial roles. For years, the term *glass ceiling* has been used to describe the invisible barriers women face when seeking promotions. Although women comprise most of the jobs in public relations, they do not comprise a comparable percentage of higher positions in public relations. To assess perceptions of gender and promotion, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) funded research in 1990, 1995, and most recently, 2000. In all three studies, women agreed, more strongly than did men, that men were promoted more quickly in their organizations. Women believed this to be the case throughout public relations. Men disagreed that they were promoted more quickly in their organizations, but they were uncertain about the field itself. In addition, women considered it more difficult for them to reach the top, in their organizations and throughout public relations. Men agreed, more than women did, that they had a fair shot at promotion in their organization. Studies examining salary have also found a significant difference in the mean and median salaries between men and women, with men earning more than women. Women were still paid less when years of experience, age, job interruptions, and level of education were taken into consideration. Men were more satisfied with their incomes as public relations practitioners than women were.

In the late 1990s, studies began searching for explanations for the discrepancies between men and women with regard to roles, salaries, promotions, and other professional characteristics. One pivotal study in this area was L. C. Hon’s, published in 1995 in the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, on the factors explaining discrimination against women in public relations. Through qualitative research, Hon found that women in public relations experienced several obstacles to job satisfaction and promotion. These included the marginalization of the public relations function, a male-dominated work environment that led to women’s exclusion from men’s networks, women’s lack of self-esteem, too few female role models, outmoded attitudes of senior men, conflicting messages for women, women’s

balancing career and family, gender stereotypes, sexual harassment, and ageism. Following Hon's study, other research indicated that women perceived themselves as insecure decision makers, which caused difficulty for them in moving up to management. Women were less inclined to stay late at work, due to family commitments. Women who were still the major caregivers of their family also had lower salaries. Some authors have argued that women tended to cluster in technician roles because of their interests in the creative arts, but others have claimed that women were as interested in status-related careers as men were and expressed a desire not to perform technician roles. Another factor was that men were offered more money for recruitment and retention purposes. Finally, historical disparity was difficult to remove and, therefore, might contribute to lower salaries for women. In other words, if women started out making lower salaries in the past—when there was overt sex discrimination—then they would continue to make lower salaries as they changed jobs or moved up to management. In general, women's inability to reach top management positions and gain equal salaries has been explained by socialization, women's lack of skills and knowledge about male-defined rules for advancement, and discrimination based on gender alone.

While empirical research throughout the 1990s was directed at understanding the role of women in public relations, authors were also writing feminist critiques that positioned the feminization of the field within larger organizational and societal perspectives. In writings by Pam Creedon, L. A. Grunig, Lana Rakow, and E. L. Toth, it has been argued that the discourse, theory, and research in public relations actually helped to sustain gender stereotypes and women's devaluation. For example, by dichotomizing the field into only two roles, those of manager and technician, and by emphasizing the managerial role as the one that the profession should strive for, women's main role—technician—was minimalized and devalued. The connection between the devaluing of the profession and the growth of the number of women in the field is in itself a discriminating practice governed by societal and organizational norms. Due to the fear of lower status and salaries

across the profession, critics had begun proposing as a solution the push for more male students in public relations and more male practitioners. However, feminist scholars have asserted that this push for more men only increased the devaluation of women's contributions to public relations. Scholars questioned whether the call for gender balance was an argument for the maintenance of the status quo and an attempt to maintain personal positions of power by men. Some writers encouraged organizations to structurally adapt to help nurture women's careers (e.g., implementing flextime policies, formal mentoring programs, and maternity leave). Organizations were also called on to have equitable numbers of female practitioners in management roles.

There has been minimal work in public relations examining the particular experiences of women of color in the field. In her research, published in 1989 in *Public Relations Review*, M. Kern-Foxworth found that African American males are paid more than African American females, but, overall, people of color have not attained the same status and salary level as their white counterparts. She found a gap between the roles that her research participants assigned themselves—middle-level management—and the one they actually fulfilled—technician. She argued that larger organizations did not allow minorities the opportunities to advance in their careers: the larger the organization, the lower the salaries and the less chance of becoming managers there is for people of color. In a follow-up study five years later, Kern-Foxworth, Oscar Gandy, Barbara Hines, and Debra A. Miller reported in *Journal of Black Studies* that about one-half of the African American female public relations practitioners they surveyed spent time giving advice and counsel. The authors of this study stressed that their findings supported the idea that black women may not share the same experiences as others who work in the profession, and, therefore, research samples should be segmented between white and black women. Although the topic of women of color in public relations has been subject to study more recently, there is a paucity of published research in mainstream public relations that examines the experiences of women of color.

Similarly, very little has been done to uncover the history of women in public relations and the contributions that female figures have historically made to the field. In textbooks, female historical figures are scarce. Few women or women's issues are depicted in public relations textbooks, and the available information can be less than accurate. What is known about women in public relations is based on the historical work conducted by Susan Henry, Karen Miller, and Karla Gower. Henry's series of articles about Doris Fleischman Bernays, published in the *Journal of Public Relations Research*, has been the most prolific historical work on women in public relations. Bernays was the wife and partner of Edward Bernays for 58 years and made great contributions to public relations as well as to Edward's business, and yet she went unnoticed. Jane Stewart, another profiled historical figure, served as vice president and then president of Group Attitudes Corporation, an independent consulting firm that became a subsidiary of Hill & Knowlton of New York. In Gower's piece, published in *Journalism History* in 2001, women in public relations were examined through their images in *Public Relations Journal* from 1945 through 1972. Women were established and active in PRSA, and were shown as such in the *Journal*. However, in the late 1950s, when societal expectations of women included staying home with children, the number of women represented in the magazine decreased. This gave the impression that the field of public relations was a male profession. The positive representations and the numbers of women increased again in the late 1960s.

An important issue for women in public relations has been the future of the profession and the future professionals, who are predominantly women. The number of undergraduate students majoring in public relations has increased, and the majority of these students are female. Published studies in this area span a decade, and have consistently shown little difference in how serious minded and management oriented female students were compared with male students. There was also no difference in salary expectations for first jobs, but there were significant differences in salary expectations after five years in the profession: male students expected to

be making more than the female students. Male students were also more confident than female students. Female students expected slower promotions than did male students and believed they would have to postpone raising a family so that they could be promoted.

Research in the 21st century reflects the accomplishments of women in public relations. More women are in management and executive positions, more women teach and study public relations, and more professionals and scholars are aware of potential discrimination by gender and by race and ethnicity. Given the enduring feminization of the field, the experiences of women in public relations will continue to be a critical part of the discourse of the field.

—Linda Aldoory

See also Bernays, Edward; Fleischman, Doris Elsa; Public Relations Society of America

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WRITING

Among the many tasks performed by public relations practitioners, writing most certainly tops the list. Practitioners develop various written pieces—media releases, brochures, promotional materials, business correspondence, and proposals—to communicate information to people inside and outside of the organization. Public relations writing should educate, persuade, or motivate. To accomplish these goals, writers must be functional and write with a purpose, while maintaining a creative flair.

Because of the wide variety of writing formats, versatility is an essential skill for public relations writers. They must know which format is the most appropriate for a project and the best way to construct a message so that the audience will understand it.

USING APPROPRIATE FORMATS

The most common writing formats in public relations are those used in publicity, marketing, advocacy, organizational communication, and business correspondence. Each has a certain style and purpose. To determine the best format to use, three things should be considered before beginning a writing project:

- What is the purpose of the piece?
- Who is the audience?
- What is the message?

The Purpose

Before they start writing, public relations practitioners must decide whether the purpose of the piece is to educate, persuade, or motivate. What is the desired result of the piece? To create awareness, gain support for an issue, or prompt behavior?

Writing that seeks to educate usually consists of straightforward information, whereas writing that aims to persuade or motivate takes on a more emotional tone. For example, the purpose of an article that lets employees know about a new benefit would be educational; however, a piece that tries to

convince legislators why they should support a bill would require persuasive tactics.

The Audience

The purpose of the piece will determine who should receive it, which in turn will determine how it should be written. In most cases, a reporter doesn't want to receive a brochure and a customer doesn't want to receive a media release. Media formats (e.g., media releases, media advisories, pitch letters) should be used in writing for the media. Use creative brochures when marketing to customers, internal newsletters for informing employees, and business-like memos when communicating with management.

The Message

More than anything else, the message will determine the most appropriate writing format to use. Does the message need to be straightforward or is there creative license? Customers will want to read information that reinforces their decision to patronize an organization. This requires the use of persuasive tactics. Such tactics, however, would not be appropriate for a media release, which should contain factual, objective information.

Is the message brief or lengthy? How much space will be needed to adequately deliver the message? How will it reach the target public? Detailed information aimed at persuading a specific audience is better suited for a brochure or position paper than a one-page flyer. A flyer, on the other hand, might be more appropriate for announcing the date and time of a special event.

BEING UNDERSTOOD

Public relations practitioners who don't write in a way that their audience can understand are wasting their time. If readers find a piece too complicated, they will stop reading and will not receive the intended message. To increase the chances that the piece will be understood, write simply; use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling; and adopt an appropriate style.

Simplicity

Readers can get confused by lengthy sentences and multisyllabic words. Using short words, sentences, and paragraphs will help focus the writer on writing concisely, which will enhance the simplicity of a piece. Jargon or clichés not familiar to an audience should be avoided.

There are several formulas that can be used to determine the simplicity of a written piece. These readability studies, such as the Flesch Formula, the Gunning Fog Index, and the Fry Formula, usually involve calculating word syllables and sentence length to determine the grade level at which the piece is written.

Grammar and Spelling

Using improper grammar and misspelling words reflects negatively on a writer. The credibility of the writer may be questioned, as well as the credibility of the information being presented. In addition, poor grammar and punctuation affect how a sentence is structured, and poor sentence structure leads to difficult reading and confusion. Writers should ensure that their writing is easy to read. Some common grammatical errors include the following:

- Using inconsistent nouns and pronouns
- Using inconsistent subjects and verbs
- Using faulty parallel structure
- Confusing *that*, *which*, and *who*
- Using run-on sentences or sentence fragments
- Overusing commas
- Misusing colons and semicolons

Carefully proofread your writing to avoid errors in grammar and punctuation, as well as spelling.

Although a spell checker is a wonderful computer tool, it should never be used as the final check. Nothing can take the place of a dictionary.

Style

The format of a written piece will determine its style. Media releases focus on facts written in pyramid style whereas marketing pieces feature more colorful language and creative structure. How the reader is addressed (in personal terms or as a neutral third party) is another style consideration.

The writing style used by the Associated Press (AP) has long been followed in the journalism and public relations fields. The *AP Stylebook* provides information on the standard use of such things as capitalization and abbreviations. Public relations practitioners who follow these guidelines, especially when writing for the media, enhance their credibility and make it easier for the media to edit public relations-generated copy.

—Ann R. Carden

See also AP style; Persuasion theory; Stylebook

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ZONES OF MEANING

Zones of meaning are the fibers in the fabric of public opinion—the collective opinions of many markets and publics that make up a society. One of the problems perplexing activists, public relations practitioners, and scholars is understanding the nature of public opinion. Early in the 20th century the term *public opinion* was formalized as a research concept. It was coined to describe broadly what is on the mind of members of a society. What do they know, believe, prefer, dislike, like, aspire toward, value, and use as motives?

Further thinking and empirical investigations of public opinion revealed that a single “public” does not exist, and what we think of as “the public” certainly is not of one mind. For instance, poll data reveal that some people like any president of the United States, and others don’t. Some people like baseball, and others don’t. Some people support activist constraints on business practices, and some don’t.

A zone of meaning is the shared knowledge, experience, preferences, motives, opinions held in the mind of some people in society, which may be quite unique to them. One of the ways to think about zones is as the result of experience. People who have lived their life in a dense, hot, and humid jungle share a zone of meaning quite different from people whose experience consists only of the vast

regions near the Arctic Circle. Generations differ from one another because they have different zones of meaning, because their experiences are different. The same can be true for gender, race, and religion, to use a very short list. Labor shares a different zone of meaning from management.

Nevertheless, labor and management may share some zones. For instance, labor and management in the aircraft construction industry have a different zone of meaning than would exist for labor and management in the segment of the electricity-generating industry that uses nuclear fuel to generate power.

People in any society may like or dislike sports, in general or of various kinds. People who like basketball will share a zone of meaning quite different from that of those who enjoy baseball. Players’ names and team histories are part of each unique zone. The rules of the game differ from other games. The dynamics of league play and championship differ. Also, some sports are a part of certain people’s lifestyle, and not part of other people’s.

Surveys of communities reveal that some people within the community know or believe something quite different from the knowledge or beliefs of people who don’t live in that community. People who live in a community with a heavy concentration of chemical manufacturing and refining facilities may understand the sirens that alert them to a safety danger. They may know when and how

to shelter-in-place in the event such an emergency occurs. People who don't live in that community have less reason and opportunity to share this zone of meaning.

Likewise, in such communities, people who work in the industry are taught shelter-in-place procedures that are to be followed in a work site in the event an emergency occurs. Visitors to this site are required to learn those measures (come to share a zone of meaning) before they can enter. Plant managers have routine drills and training to ensure that workers and visitors know what the warning siren is and what actions must be taken in the event the siren sounds.

Citizens in the community also need such information, but they are likely to learn it through means other than company training. Industry may use an animal, such as a turtle, to attract attention to the shelter-in-place procedures. When in danger, turtles "shelter in place"; they go inside their shell. Such tools appeal to children. Thus, if a survey is done, it may well reveal that mothers and children know—share the zone—the meaning of the turtle and what to do, even if they don't know the term *shelter-in-place*. Plant personnel may know *shelter-in-place* but not know about the turtle and its recommendations. Both zones can lead to safety measures, but each is a different zone.

Differences of opinions, knowledge, experience, motives, and such are a fact of life. Not everyone knows all of the same "stuff." But society can not function without shared meanings. Thus, zones are like veins of ore (a zone of meaning) in a rock

formation throughout which various threads of ore and other materials can be identified. Similar knowledge can help practitioners to understand where agreement or disagreement occurs and people whose ideas, knowledge, and experience differs from others'.

Faculty members sitting around a lunch table share zones of meaning about students' behavior. Despite being from different disciplines, they can share stories about academic excellence and about cheating. They share that zone. However, they may not share much of the zone of meaning that constitutes their respective academic disciplines. Historians undoubtedly know less biology than a distinguished biologist does. These faculty members share views on students, academic procedures, and administration. That allows them to work together in doing their jobs. When they go back to their offices, they enter quite a different zone of meaning.

The term *zone of meaning* can help academics and practitioners to understand the threads of opinions of key publics and markets. This insight can help practitioners to understand where agreement and disagreement exist, and perhaps why. Gaining such insights into the fabric of public opinion gives practitioners the perspectives they need to work with people based on their unique zones of meaning, zones that may create unity and friction, those that become part of the dialogue that can lead to agreement and the co-creation of meaning.

—Robert L. Heath

See also Marketing; Publics

Appendix 1

The Public Relations Society of America Code of Ethics



The primary obligation of membership in the Public Relations Society of America is the ethical practice of Public Relations.

The PRSA Member Code of Ethics is the way each member of our Society can daily reaffirm a commitment to ethical professional activities and decisions.

- The Code sets forth the principles and standards that guide our decisions and actions.
- The Code solidly connects our values and our ideals to the work each of us does every day.
- The Code is about what we should do, and why we should do it.

The Code is also meant to be a living, growing body of knowledge, precedent, and experience. It should stimulate our thinking and encourage us to seek guidance and clarification when we have questions about principles, practices, and standards of conduct.

Every member's involvement in preserving and enhancing ethical standards is essential to building and maintaining the respect and credibility of our profession. Using our values, principles, standards of conduct, and commitment as a foundation, and continuing to work together on ethical issues, we ensure that the Public Relations Society of America fulfills its obligation to build and maintain the framework for public dialogue that deserves the public's trust and support.

The Members of the 2000 Board of Ethics and Professional Standards

Robert D. Frause, APR, Fellow PRSA
Chairman BEPS
Seattle, Washington

James R. Frankowiak, APR
Tampa, Florida

Jeffrey P. Julin, APR
Denver, Colorado

James E. Lukaszewski, APR, Fellow PRSA
White Plains, New York

Kathy R. Fitzpatrick, APR
Gainesville, Florida

PRSA Member Code of Ethics 2000

Linda Welter Cohen, APR
Tucson, Arizona

Patricia Grey, APR
Columbus, Ohio

Ralph Thomas Kam, APR
Kaneohe, Hawaii

Roger D. Buehrer, APR
Fellow PRSA
Las Vegas, Nevada

W. Thomas Duke, APR, Fellow PRSA
Greenville, South Carolina

PRSA MEMBER STATEMENT OF PROFESSIONAL VALUES

This statement presents the core values of PRSA members and, more broadly, of the public relations profession. These values provide the foundation for the Member Code of Ethics and set the industry standard for the professional practice of public relations. These values are the fundamental beliefs that guide our behaviors and decision-making process. We believe our professional values are vital to the integrity of the profession as a whole.

ADVOCACY

- We serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for those we represent.
- We provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate.

HONESTY

- We adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those we represent and in communicating with the public.

EXPERTISE

- We acquire and responsibly use specialized knowledge and experience.
- We advance the profession through continued professional development, research, and education.
- We build mutual understanding, credibility, and relationships among a wide array of institutions and audiences.

INDEPENDENCE

- We provide objective counsel to those we represent.
- We are accountable for our actions.

LOYALTY

- We are faithful to those we represent, while honoring our obligation to serve the public interest.

FAIRNESS

- We deal fairly with clients, employers, competitors, peers, vendors, the media, and the general public.
- We respect all opinions and support the right of free expression.

PRSA CODE PROVISIONS

FREE FLOW OF INFORMATION

Core Principle

Protecting and advancing the free flow of accurate and truthful information is essential to serving the public interest and contributing to informed decision making in a democratic society.

Intent

- To maintain the integrity of relationships with the media, government officials, and the public.
- To aid informed decision making.

Guidelines

A member shall:

- Preserve the integrity of the process of communication.
- Be honest and accurate in all communications.
- Act promptly to correct erroneous communications for which the practitioner is responsible.
- Preserve the free flow of unprejudiced information when giving or receiving gifts by ensuring that gifts are nominal, legal, and infrequent.

Examples of Improper Conduct Under this Provision:

- A member representing a ski manufacturer gives a pair of expensive racing skis to a sports magazine columnist, to influence the columnist to write favorable articles about the product.

- A member entertains a government official beyond legal limits and/or in violation of government reporting requirements.

COMPETITION

Core Principle

Promoting healthy and fair competition among professionals preserves an ethical climate while fostering a robust business environment.

Intent

- To promote respect and fair competition among public relations professionals.
- To serve the public interest by providing the widest choice of practitioner options.

Guidelines

A member shall:

- Follow ethical hiring practices designed to respect free and open competition without deliberately undermining a competitor.
- Preserve intellectual property rights in the marketplace.

Examples of Improper Conduct Under This Provision

- A member employed by a client organization shares helpful information with a counseling firm that is competing with others for the organization's business.
- A member spreads malicious and unfounded rumors about a competitor in order to alienate the competitor's clients and employees in a ploy to recruit people and business.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Core Principle

Open communication fosters informed decision making in a democratic society.

Intent

- To build trust with the public by revealing all information needed for responsible decision making.

Guidelines

A member shall:

- Be honest and accurate in all communications.
- Act promptly to correct erroneous communications for which the member is responsible.
- Investigate the truthfulness and accuracy of information released on behalf of those represented.
- Reveal the sponsors for causes and interests represented.
- Disclose financial interest (such as stock ownership) in a client's organization.
- Avoid deceptive practices.

Examples of Improper Conduct Under this Provision:

- Front groups: A member implements "grass roots" campaigns or letter-writing campaigns to legislators on behalf of undisclosed interest groups.
- Lying by omission: A practitioner for a corporation knowingly fails to release financial information, giving a misleading impression of the corporation's performance.
- A member discovers inaccurate information disseminated via a web site or media kit and does not correct the information.
- A member deceives the public by employing people to pose as volunteers to speak at public hearings and participate in "grass roots" campaigns.

SAFEGUARDING CONFIDENCES

Core Principle

Client trust requires appropriate protection of confidential and private information.

Intent

- To protect the privacy rights of clients, organizations, and individuals by safeguarding confidential information.

Guidelines

A member shall:

- Safeguard the confidences and privacy rights of present, former, and prospective clients and employees.

- Protect privileged, confidential, or insider information gained from a client or organization.
- Immediately advise an appropriate authority if a member discovers that confidential information is being divulged by an employee of a client company or organization.

Examples of Improper Conduct Under This Provision:

- A member changes jobs, takes confidential information, and uses that information in the new position to the detriment of the former employer.
- A member intentionally leaks proprietary information to the detriment of some other party.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Core Principle

Avoiding real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest builds the trust of clients, employers, and the publics.

Intent

- To earn trust and mutual respect with clients or employers.
- To build trust with the public by avoiding or ending situations that put one's personal or professional interests in conflict with society's interests.

Guidelines

A member shall:

- Act in the best interests of the client or employer, even subordinating the member's personal interests.
- Avoid actions and circumstances that may appear to compromise good business judgment or create a conflict between personal and professional interests.
- Disclose promptly any existing or potential conflict of interest to affected clients or organizations.
- Encourage clients and customers to determine if a conflict exists after notifying all affected parties.

Examples of Improper Conduct Under This Provision

- The member fails to disclose that he or she has a strong financial interest in a client's chief competitor.

- The member represents a "competitor company" or a "conflicting interest" without informing a prospective client.

ENHANCING THE PROFESSION

Core Principle

Public relations professionals work constantly to strengthen the public's trust in the profession.

Intent

- To build respect and credibility with the public for the profession of public relations.
- To improve, adapt, and expand professional practices.

Guidelines

A member shall:

- Acknowledge that there is an obligation to protect and enhance the profession.
- Keep informed and educated about practices in the profession to ensure ethical conduct.
- Actively pursue personal professional development.
- Decline representation of clients or organizations that urge or require actions contrary to this Code.
- Accurately define what public relations activities can accomplish.
- Counsel subordinates in proper ethical decision making.
- Require that subordinates adhere to the ethical requirements of the Code.
- Report ethical violations, whether committed by PRSA members or not, to the appropriate authority.

Examples of Improper Conduct Under This Provision:

- A PRSA member declares publicly that a product the client sells is safe, without disclosing evidence to the contrary.
- A member initially assigns some questionable client work to a non-member practitioner to avoid the ethical obligation of PRSA membership.

RESOURCES

Rules and Guidelines

The following PRSA documents, available online at www.prsa.org provide detailed rules and

guidelines to help guide your professional behavior. If, after reviewing them, you still have a question or issue, contact PRSA headquarters as noted below.

- PRSA Bylaws
- PRSA Administrative Rules
- Member Code of Ethics

QUESTIONS

The PRSA is here to help. Whether you have a serious concern or simply need clarification, you can contact us confidentially at:

Chairman
 Board of Ethics and Professional Standards
 Public Relations Society of America
 33 Irving Place, Floor 3
 New York, NY 10003
 212-460-1414
 212-995-0757 Fax
 or
AskBEPS@prsa.org

PRSA MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS PLEDGE

I pledge:

To conduct myself professionally, with truth, accuracy, fairness, and responsibility to the public;

To improve my individual competence and advance the knowledge and proficiency of the profession through continuing research and education;

And to adhere to the articles of the Member *Code of Ethics 2000* for the practice of public relations as adopted by the governing Assembly of the Public Relations Society of America.

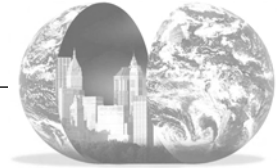
I understand and accept that there is a consequence for misconduct, up to and including membership revocation.

And, I understand that those who have been or are sanctioned by a government agency or convicted in a court of law of an action that is in violation of this Code may be barred from membership or expelled from the Society.

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Appendix 2

International Association of Business Communicators Code of Ethics



PREFACE

Because hundreds of thousands of business communicators worldwide engage in activities that affect the lives of millions of people, and because this power carries with it significant social responsibilities, the International Association of Business Communicators developed the Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators.

The Code is based on three different yet interrelated principles of professional communication that apply throughout the world.

These principles assume that just societies are governed by a profound respect for human rights and the rule of law; that ethics, the criteria for determining what is right and wrong, can be agreed upon by members of an organization; and, that understanding matters of taste requires sensitivity to cultural norms.

These principles are essential:

- Professional communication is legal.
- Professional communication is ethical.
- Professional communication is in good taste.

Recognizing these principles, members of IABC will:

- engage in communication that is not only legal but also ethical and sensitive to cultural values and beliefs;

- engage in truthful, accurate and fair communication that facilitates respect and mutual understanding; and,
- adhere to the following articles of the IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators.

Because conditions in the world are constantly changing, members of IABC will work to improve their individual competence and to increase the body of knowledge in the field with research and education.

Articles

1. Professional communicators uphold the credibility and dignity of their profession by practicing honest, candid and timely communication and by fostering the free flow of essential information in accord with the public interest.
2. Professional communicators disseminate accurate information and promptly correct any erroneous communication for which they may be responsible.
3. Professional communicators understand and support the principles of free speech, freedom of assembly, and access to an open marketplace of ideas; and, act accordingly.
4. Professional communicators are sensitive to cultural values and beliefs and engage in fair and balanced communication activities that foster and encourage mutual understanding.

5. Professional communicators refrain from taking part in any undertaking which the communicator considers to be unethical.
6. Professional communicators obey laws and public policies governing their professional activities and are sensitive to the spirit of all laws and regulations and, should any law or public policy be violated, for whatever reason, act promptly to correct the situation.
7. Professional communicators give credit for unique expressions borrowed from others and identify the sources and purposes of all information disseminated to the public.
8. Professional communicators protect confidential information and, at the same time, comply with all legal requirements for the disclosure of information affecting the welfare of others.
9. Professional communicators do not use confidential information gained as a result of professional activities for personal benefit and do not represent conflicting or competing interests without written consent of those involved.
10. Professional communicators do not accept undisclosed gifts or payments for professional services from anyone other than a client or employer.
11. Professional communicators do not guarantee results that are beyond the power of the practitioner to deliver.
12. Professional communicators are honest not only with others but also, and most importantly, with themselves as individuals; for a professional communicator seeks the truth and speaks that truth first to the self.

Enforcement and Communication of the IABC Code for Professional Communicators

IABC fosters compliance with its Code by engaging in global communication campaigns rather than through negative sanctions. However, in keeping with the sixth article of the IABC Code, members of IABC who are found guilty by an appropriate governmental agency or judicial body of violating laws and public policies governing their professional activities may have their membership terminated by the IABC executive board following procedures set forth in the association's bylaws.

IABC encourages the widest possible communication about its Code.

The IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators is published in several languages and is freely available to all: Permission is hereby granted to any individual or organization wishing to copy and incorporate all or part of the IABC Code into personal and corporate codes, with the understanding that appropriate credit be given to IABC in any publication of such codes.

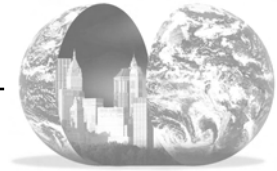
The IABC Code is published in the association's annual directory, *The World Book of IABC Communicators*. The association's monthly magazine, *Communication World*, publishes periodic articles dealing with ethical issues. At least one session at the association's annual conference is devoted to ethics. The international headquarters of IABC, through its professional development activities, encourages and supports efforts by IABC student chapters, professional chapters, and districts/regions to conduct meetings and workshops devoted to the topic of ethics and the IABC Code. New and renewing members of IABC sign the following statement as part of their application: "I have reviewed and understand the IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators."

As a service to communicators worldwide, inquiries about ethics and questions or comments about the IABC Code may be addressed to members of the IABC Ethics Committee. The IABC Ethics Committee is composed of at least three accredited members of IABC who serve staggered three-year terms. Other IABC members may serve on the committee with the approval of the IABC executive committee. The functions of the Ethics Committee are to assist with professional development activities dealing with ethics and to offer advice and assistance to individual communicators regarding specific ethical situations.

While discretion will be used in handling all inquiries about ethics, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Those wishing more information about the IABC Code or specific advice about ethics are encouraged to contact IABC World Headquarters (One Hallidie Plaza, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94102 USA; phone, 415-544-4700; fax, 415-544-4747).

Appendix 3

Milestones in the History of Public Relations



MILESTONES IN THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC RELATIONS (TIMELINE)

Because public relations did not just begin at any point in history, scholars and practitioners have chronicled some of the most important and identifiable moments in the history that led up to the start of public relations by that name. As indicated in the entry entitled “Antecedents of modern public relations,” the practice as we know it today is part of a living legacy. The key moments indicate those communicative events that preceded and fostered today’s public relations. This history indicates the enduring efforts of some person or organization to communicate with others. At times, the efforts of public relations are geared to serve the larger interest of the community. At other times they are narrowly applied to serve the interest of some leader or organization. The following list is illustrative. No one should think that it is exhaustive. Nevertheless, it demonstrates how public relations, for better or worse, is a vital part of the enduring fabric of human society in its many facets.

Many of the moments mentioned in the timeline below are either featured entries in this encyclopedia or important parts of such entries. This timeline should encourage the reader to learn more about

these moments and think of them as stepping-stones in the stream that is the history of public relations.

1800 B.C.—In Sumeria, a farm bulletin telling farmers how to grow crops is one of the earliest examples of mass distribution of educational materials.

100 B.C.—A signal of the rise in importance of public opinion, the Romans coin the phrase *Vox populi; vox Dei*, “the voice of the people is the voice of God.”

52 B.C.—Julius Caesar sends reports, including “Caesar’s Gallic Wars,” to the Romans in preparation for his crossing the Rubicon River to invade Italy in 49 B.C.

A.D. 1215—Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, mobilizes a disgruntled group of barons who confront King John with ultimatums that eventually mature into the Magna Carta.

A.D. 1315—John Wycliffe calls for reforms by the Catholic Church, including the publication of the Bible into the vernacular.

1500s—In the wake of the invention of printing with movable type by Johann Gutenberg in 1446, handbills and broadsides are used to promote various causes.

1517—Martin Luther starts the Reformation when he nails 95 theses proclaiming wrongdoings of the Roman Catholic Church to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, Germany.

1622—Pope Gregory XV creates the Congregatio de Propaganda Fide (College for Propagating the Faith), an effort by the Roman Catholic Church to retain followers and solicit converts in the aftermath of the Reformation. This was the origin of the term *propaganda*.

1641—Harvard College launches first systematic fundraising effort in the United States, sending students door-to-door to raise money.

1748—The first news release to solicit press coverage is sent by King's College (now Columbia University) in New York.

1773—Sixty colonists dressed as Mohawk Indians demonstrate rising dissatisfaction with British tax policies by staging the Boston Tea Party, dumping 342 chests of tea valued at 10,000 pounds into Boston Harbor.

1787—The Federalist Papers, a series of 85 pamphlets that were also reprinted as articles in newspapers, were produced to generate support for the formal creation of the United States and passage of its Constitution.

1807—Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States, combined *public* with *relations* in a statement about the obligation of government to the governed.

1829—Amos Kendall serves as the first presidential press secretary as a member of Andrew Jackson's "kitchen cabinet." In 1829 he was appointed fourth auditor of the Treasury, in addition to writing speeches, state papers, and news releases, conducting opinion polls, and developing the administration's own newspaper.

1840s—P. T. Barnum becomes the first press agent, promoting local appearances by his touring circus.

1850s—American railroads use publicity, advertising, and printed materials to attract tourists and settlers to the American West.

1882—Attorney Dorman Eaton first uses the term *public relations*, referring to an organization's role

in service to the public welfare, in an address to Yale Law School graduates on "The Public Relations and Duties of the Legal Profession."

1888—Mutual Life Insurance Company creates a "species of literary bureau" to coordinate advertising and publicity.

1889—The first corporate public relations department is established by Westinghouse. Westinghouse ultimately prevailed in the ensuing "battle of the currents" to promote the benefits of alternating current (AC) versus the direct current (DC) invented earlier by Thomas Edison and the General Electric Company.

1895—Ford Motor Company pioneers press product previews for product promotion.

1896—The use of modern publicity in political campaigns begins with the presidential election between William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan when both candidates establish campaign headquarters in Chicago.

1897—General Electric creates a publicity department.

1900—The first public relations firm, Publicity Bureau of Boston, is established by George Michaelis, Herbert Small, and Thomas O. Marvin.

1902—H. S. Adams's article, "What Is Publicity?" is published in the *American Review*. It is believed to be the first magazine article about public relations.

1903—Ford Motor Company uses auto races for product promotion; Chicago Edison, under the direction of President Samuel Insull, does the same via an external magazine.

1906—Ivy Ledbetter Lee is hired to represent the coal industry in the anthracite coal miners' strike. Lee issues his "Declaration of Principles," considered the birth of modern public relations counseling.

1909—Chicago Edison uses films for product promotion; Pendleton Dudley opens his public relations agency on Wall Street, a firm (Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy) that was sold to Ogilvy & Mather in 1983.

1912—Chicago Edison uses stuffers inserted in customer bills for promotional purposes.

1914—The "Ludlow (Colorado) Massacre." State militia kill 20 people—striking Colorado Fuel and

Iron Company miners, along with their wives and children—a tragedy that helped establish the value of corporate public relations. Ivy Lee represented Colorado Fuel and Iron owner J. D. Rockefeller's interests. No perpetrators are convicted, but many miners and union leaders are fired and blackballed.

1917—The Committee on Public Information, a government agency headed by George Creel (and also known as the Creel Committee), promotes public support of American involvement in World War I; Former Atlanta journalist Edward Clarke and ex-madam Bessie Tyler form the Southern Publicity Association to promote World War I fund drives. After the war, they built up membership in the Ku Klux Klan by offering a \$10 induction fee to Klansmen for every new member they signed up.

1923—Edward L. Bernays publishes *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, the first book on professional public relations, and teaches the first public relations course at New York University.

1927—Arthur W. Page is named vice president of public relations at AT&T, accepting the job on the condition that he be allowed to be involved in policy making. Page would distinguish himself as the leading corporate practitioner of the century by emphasizing the importance of cooperation with the public and of disclosure about corporate activities; John W. Hill founds Hill & Knowlton.

1929—Edward Bernays stages two major public relations events as marches: the “Torches of Freedom” March in New York to promote smoking for women, and the “Golden Jubilee of Light” in Dearborn, Michigan, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the invention of the electric light bulb.

1931—Paul Garrett becomes the first public relations director at General Motors, inspiring other large corporations to make similar appointments.

1933—Campaigns, Inc., the first political campaign firm, is founded by husband and wife Clem Whitaker and Leone Baxter in California; President Franklin Delano Roosevelt uses his famous “fireside chats” to instill confidence in the American people; Edward Bernays develops the “Green Ball” campaign for Lucky Strike cigarettes, urging women to (1) wear green clothing as a fashion statement and (2) smoke Lucky Strikes, as the green packaging would mesh with their outfit.

1936—The first widespread use of public opinion polling, with companies conducting selected consumer interviews. Small-sample Crossley, Gallup, and Elmo Roper polls predict Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidential victory over Alf Landon, while the 2 million-ballot *Literary Digest* poll predicts a Landon victory, proving that proper sampling is more important than sample size.

1939—Rex Harlow of Stanford University becomes the first full-time public relations educator.

1941—The first noncommercial opinion research agency, The National Opinion Research Center, is established.

1942—The Office of War Information, headed by Elmer Davis, promotes public support of and involvement in World War II.

1945—The Advertising Council (formerly the War Advertising Council) is reorganized to create information campaigns on behalf of various social causes; the United States government announces via press release that an American plane dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima.

1948—The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) is founded.

1950—The PRSA Code of Professional Standards is adopted.

1953—The United States Information Agency (USIA) is created by President Dwight Eisenhower to disseminate news and cultural information abroad.

1955—The International Public Relations Association (IPRA) is founded.

1957—Anne Williams Wheaton is appointed associate press secretary to President Eisenhower, the first time a woman has held that position.

1960—In opposition to his earlier pro-smoking campaigns, Edward Bernays leads an effort to inform the public about the dangers of smoking.

1963—John Marston's four-step management process for public relations, RACE—research, action, communication, evaluation—is published in his book *The Nature of Public Relations*.

1965—PRSA accreditation is established.

1970—The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) is founded.

1973—Carl Byoir and Associates becomes the first of several large public relations firms to become a subsidiary of an advertising company (Hill & Knowlton).

1980—Inez Kaiser becomes the first African American female to open a national public relations firm, Inez Kaiser & Associates.

1982—Six people in a Chicago suburb die of cyanide poisoning from Tylenol capsules they ingested, causing a public relations crisis for McNeil Laboratories and Johnson & Johnson

1989—The *Exxon Valdez* grounds at Bligh Reef, rupturing 8 of its 11 cargo tanks and spewing some 10.8 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound. Although the spill is ranked 34th on a list of the world's largest oil spills over the previous two decades, the environmental damage makes the accident one of the largest public relations crises in United States history.

1993—A Seattle television station reports that a local couple found a syringe in a can of Diet Pepsi, inspiring a host of similar reports across the United

States. Pepsi responds by working closely with the Food and Drug Administration to rule out product tampering as the cause. Throwing open their doors to the press, they demonstrate the impossibility of placing an object in a can, and the nationwide “scare” is determined to be a hoax.

1998—The Council of Public Relations Firms is founded.

1999—Anheuser-Busch unveils a public-service campaign against driving under the influence of alcohol.

2000—The PRSA Code of Ethics is revised as a list of “inspirational guidelines.”

2002—The PRSA promulgates Universal Accreditation as the standard for practice.

SOURCE: Adapted from *A Short Timeline of Key People and Events in Public Relations History*, <http://lamar.colostate.edu/~hallahan/hprhist.htm>; PRHistory.com, <http://www.camdencc.edu/breve/teachlc/archive/humanities/prhistory/timeline/second.htm>; Institute of Public Relations, <http://www.instituteforpr.com/pdf/HistoryofPublic%20Relation—Institute.pdf>; Pioneers In Public Relations, <http://facstaff.buffalostate.edu/smithrd/PR/pioneers.htm>

Appendix 4

Public Relations Education for the 21st Century: A Port of Entry



INTRODUCTION

Why a “Port of Entry” Report?

Public relations has come of age, and with that has come a critical need for broadly-based education that is relevant and connected to the practice.

The changes in public relations practice since the 1987 Commission on Public Relations Education Report are numerous and profound. At root, these changes reflect nothing less than the way the world has changed and continues to change, seemingly spinning ever faster and veering in new directions. But, happily, the changes also reflect a broad acceptance of the validity of modern public relations practice to a global society that is increasingly interdependent, increasingly interconnected.

By any measure, the growth of the public relations profession over the past decade has been astonishing. Public relations firms not only proliferate but also reach a size and scope undreamed of in the 1980s. Membership in established and new professional societies and trade associations spirals upward. And, most important, virtually every kind

of institution, for-profit and not-for-profit alike, recognizes the need for dialogue with the groups of people who can and will influence its future.

This growth, evolution and maturation of public relations is sure to continue. Elements are in place for impressive incremental growth and change in the next century: the spread of democratic institutions around the world; the growing importance of communicating with internal as well as external publics; the veritable explosion of one-to-one communication and the technology to implement it; and the steady advance of the public relations body of knowledge, especially analysis of public awareness and change in attitudes and behavior.

PUBLIC RELATIONS’ NEXT CRISIS?

The future is indeed bright for the field of public relations. But there is one major qualification—having enough trained people to meet the expanding demand for public relations services and counsel. In fact, one expert observer of the field has called this “public relations’ next crisis.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: *Public Relations Education for the 21st Century: A Port of Entry* is the work product of the 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education, 47 educators and practitioners for use by “academic programs and faculty to evaluate and develop their curricula; by practitioners who hire graduates of public relations programs; and by academic and professional associations which set standards for academic program certification and accreditation and for the chartering of student public relations organizations.” The final report, below, was introduced at the October, 1999 International Conference of the Public Relations Society of America in Anaheim, CA.

Hyperbole aside, there is no doubt that providing qualified practitioners will be a serious problem. Law and medicine have methods, admittedly long-term, to deal with the supply and demand for their professionals. Public relations doesn't. In fact, public relations is a long way from what Dr. Clark Kerr, former chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley, has articulated as a model for such a flow: "Some new professions are being born; others are becoming more professional, for example, business administration and social work. The university becomes the chief port of entry for these professions. In fact, a profession gains its identity by making the university the port of entry." (Clark Kerr, *The Uses of the University*, 4th edition, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA/London, 1995.)

It is not the Commission's purpose here to rekindle the ever-smoldering embers of the debate as to whether public relations is a profession. The Commission cites Dr. Kerr only to identify the "use of the university" as one important potential solution to the problem of having enough trained public relations practitioners in the next century.

Other sources of public relations talent, mined successfully for some time, are, indeed, still productive. Former journalists, once a primary candidate cohort, offer valuable skills but, perhaps, limited conceptual understanding of the scope of public relations. Professionals from law, medicine, government, management consulting and other parallel fields often offer relevant attributes but are frequently most valuable in narrowly focused areas of public relations practice.

And therein lies the opportunity, at the entry level and higher, for well-prepared graduates of the public relations academy. Grounded in the liberal arts and sciences. Well-prepared in public relations theory and practice. Tested not only in the classroom but in the field. Understanding the inherent connection between public relations and management, sociology and the many other pillars of modern society. But also with the necessary skills—writing, analyzing, thinking—sharpened and ready for use.

This is the kind of public relations education the Commission has attempted to design. Its recommendations have their roots in earlier Commission reports and in the public relations curricula that in

recent years have been producing an increasing number of successful practitioners. But the Commission has gone beyond the present to suggest what public relations education in the future can and must look like if it is to meet the needs of the profession as the new century begins.

The Commission hopes its report will be used by academic programs and faculty to evaluate and develop their curricula; by practitioners who hire graduates of public relations programs; and by academic and professional associations which set standards for academic program certification and accreditation and for the chartering of student public relations organizations.

A final word: this "Port of Entry" report embraces not only the education appropriate for that literal first entry into public relations but, by extension, re-entry or continued service in public relations through graduate study or continuing education.

In short, the public relations education of the next century envisioned by the Commission, like public relations itself, is a matter of continuous professional growth and development. The Commission invites students and potential students, faculty and other academic leaders, certification and accreditation bodies and public relations practitioners to buy into and profit from the greatly improved "Port of Entry" education this report describes.

1. SUMMARY OF THE REPORT—PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE 1999 COMMISSION

The Commission saw its purpose as determining curricular guidelines and recommendations that, if followed, will prepare public relations students of all ages and levels of ability for the professional challenges of the 21st century as public relations practitioners carry out their fundamental responsibility of building understanding, credibility and trust between organizations and their publics.

The Commission's goals were to determine the knowledge and skills needed by practitioners in a technological, multicultural and global society, and then to recommend learning outcomes—what students should know and be able to do—for undergraduate, graduate and continuing education. The Commission also sought to address appropriate teaching methods,

faculty credentials and resources to deliver these learning outcomes. Finally, the Commission sought to suggest methods appropriate for evaluating both student learning and the quality of the academic programs in which public relations is taught.

The Commission based its deliberations and recommendations in large part upon what it learned from an omnibus survey of public relations practitioners and educators co-sponsored by the National Communication Association in connection with its 1998 “Summer Conference on Public Relations Education.”

Recommendations for Undergraduate Education

The Commission recommends that students graduating with undergraduate degrees possess both knowledge (what graduates should know and understand) and skills (areas of competence necessary to enter the profession).

Necessary knowledge includes:

- communication and persuasion concepts and strategies
- communication and public relations theories
- relationships and relationship building
- societal trends
- ethical issues
- legal requirements and issues
- marketing and finance
- public relations history
- uses of research and forecasting
- multicultural and global issues
- organizational change and development
- management concepts and theories

Necessary skills include:

- Research Methods and Analysis
- Management of Information
- Mastery of Language in Written and Oral Communication
- Problem Solving and Negotiation
- Management of Communication
- Strategic Planning
- Issues Management
- Audience Segmentation
- Informative and Persuasive Writing

- Community Relations, Consumer Relations, Employee Relations, other Practice Areas
- Technological and Visual Literacy
- Managing People, Programs and Resources
- Sensitive Interpersonal Communication
- Fluency in a Foreign Language
- Ethical Decision-Making
- Participation in the Professional Public Relations Community
- Message Production
- Working with a Current Issue
- Public Speaking and Presentation
- Applying Cross-Cultural and Cross-Gender Sensitivity

The Commission recommends that the undergraduate public relations curriculum be grounded in a strong traditional liberal arts and social science education. A minimum of five courses should be required in the major. Coursework in public relations should comprise 25 to 40 percent of all credit hours, with at least half of these courses clearly identified as public relations courses—the remaining 60 to 75 percent in liberal arts, social sciences, business and language courses.

The Commission strongly encourages a minor or double major in the liberal arts, social sciences or business.

The ideal undergraduate major in public relations would include these courses:

- Introduction to Public Relations
- Case Studies in Public Relations
- Public Relations Research, Measurement and Evaluation
- Public Relations Writing and Production
- Public Relations Planning and Management
- Public Relations Campaigns
- Supervised Work Experience in Public Relations (internship)
- Directed electives

Realizing that many if not most academic programs would find it difficult to offer seven courses devoted entirely to public relations, the Commission concludes that the topics of the courses listed above are the essence of a quality public relations education. The Commission acknowledges that two or more of these topics might be combined into one

course or that they might be taught in courses that also address other topics.

If public relations is offered as an undergraduate emphasis or focus rather than as a full major, the Commission recommends these courses:

- Introduction to Public Relations
- Public Relations Research, Measurement and Evaluation
- Public Relations Writing and Production
- Supervised Work Experience in Public Relations (internship)

Recommendations for Graduate Education

The Commission recommends that students studying for master's degrees in public relations learn and appreciate the role of public relations as part of the management team, and learn relevant management and communications competencies and the skills needed to build effective relationships between organizations and their publics. Master's degree students should, says the Commission, gain advanced knowledge and understanding of the body of knowledge in public relations as well as theory, research, communication processes, planning, production and advanced communications management abilities.

The Commission recommends that the curriculum for a master's degree in public relations be a program of 30 to 36 credit hours. Students should master these content areas at a level beyond that expected of undergraduates:

- Public Relations Theory
- Public Relations Law
- Public Relations Research Methods
- Public Relations Management
- Public Relations Programming and Production
- Communication Processes
- Management Sciences
- Behavioral Sciences
- Public Relations Ethics
- A Public Relations Specialty
- An Internship or Practicum Experience and/or Comprehensive Examinations
- A Thesis with Comprehensive Examination and/or a Capstone Project

The Commission suggests these content areas in one sample 36-hour master's program:

- Public Relations Theory
- Public Relations Research
- Public Relations Management
- Public Relations Law
- Integrated Communications
- Accounting
- Finance
- Marketing
- Strategic Planning

The Commission suggests these content areas in a second sample 30-hour program:

- Research Methods in Communication
- Research Design in Public Relations
- Theories of Mass Communication
- Seminar on Public Relations Management
- Seminar on Public Relations Publics
- Seminar on Ethics and Philosophy in Public Relations
- Two electives
- A thesis

The Commission, noting that a doctoral degree is a theory and research degree, concludes that doctoral education should foster an awareness of not only the body of knowledge in public relations, but also the relationship of that body of knowledge to those of other communication-related bodies of knowledge. Doctoral students also should be expected to demonstrate awareness of the breadth and depth of disciplines that influence, and are influenced by, public relations and to be able to integrate that in their teaching and research. Finally, doctoral students should be prepared to develop and contribute to the public relations body of knowledge through formal quantitative and qualitative research, and to foster the development of competing paradigms of public relations based on differing theoretical and philosophical foundations.

The Commission recommends that the core curriculum of a doctoral program, either one focusing exclusively on public relations or the more common variant that includes public relations as part of a broader mass communication or communication doctorate, include courses in:

- Communication Theory
- Philosophy of Science
- Research Methods

- Statistical and Qualitative Research Tools
- Specialized Seminars in Public Relations
- Specialized Seminars in Related Social, Behavioral and Business Sciences
- Dissertation Research

The Commission also recommends that doctoral programs prepare their students to teach by involving them in the classroom and developing their teaching skills.

Recommendations for Continuing Education

Acknowledging that many professional organizations and private vendors offer workshops and seminars that are legitimate continuing education opportunities, the Commission focused its discussion of continuing education, however, on continuing education offered for academic credit or as part of a certificate program.

Continuing education courses pegged to students at a level of ability similar to that of an undergraduate (such as an individual with little or no public relations training or experience) might do well to follow its recommendations for undergraduate education, the Commission suggests. Similarly, graduate-level continuing education might adopt the Commission's recommendations for graduate education.

Continuing education lends itself especially well to distance education (any instruction that takes place with the instructor and student physically separated from each other). For that reason, the Commission notes that a greater variety of teaching methods and technologies may be appropriate in continuing education courses. The resources needed to offer distance education and the special training and preparation demanded of instructors also are special considerations for those offering continuing education courses.

Recommendations for Teaching Methods

The Commission enumerates more than a dozen different ways in which instructors can deliver instruction to students, ranging from traditional lectures to simulations, games and the use of small-group projects.

The Commission also identifies a number of instructional media, assignments and in-class

activities that can create a bridge between theory and practice.

Recommendations for Evaluation

The Commission identifies normative, formative and summative assessment tools and techniques that can be used to determine whether students have learned what their academic program intended. Techniques range from required entrance or exit examinations to internship performance to capstone courses to portfolio review.

The Commission notes that all academic programs should practice self-assessment of their effectiveness by means such as examining student evaluations, faculty-student ratios, placement and graduate school admission rates, alumni and employer satisfaction and input of advisory boards.

In addition, the Commission recommends that public relations programs seek external review from one of three available sources: the certification program of the Public Relations Society of America (available to all public relations programs), the National Communication Association (available to public relations programs in communications colleges, schools or departments) and the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (available to public relations programs in journalism and mass communications colleges, schools or departments).

Recommendations for Faculty Qualifications

The Commission suggests that both academic and professional credentials and experience are important qualifications for public relations faculty. While the ideal full-time faculty member is an individual with both the academic credential of a terminal degree (usually a Ph.D.) and the professional credential of significant work experience in public relations, the Commission concludes that it is more realistic for programs to have among their full-time public relations faculty a balance of those with terminal degrees and those without terminal degrees whose professional experience is significant and substantial.

Adjunct faculty should have at least an undergraduate degree and professional public relations experience, the Commission notes, and suggests

that accreditation or certification of adjuncts is highly desirable.

The Commission recommends that both full-time and part-time faculty be active participants in professional and/or academic associations and that both be contributing to the public relations body of knowledge through scholarship and professional or creative activity.

The Commission repeats a recommendation from the 1987 Commission report: "Public relations courses should not be taught by people who have little or no experience and interest in the field and have no academic preparation in public relations."

Recommendations for Resources to Support Public Relations Programs

The Commission urged that public relations students have the same access to both faculty and resources as students in other academic programs in the academic unit where public relations is taught.

Workloads of public relations faculty, the Commission recommends, should reflect the full range of responsibilities assigned to them: teaching, advising, research, service, administrative assignments and the supervision or advising of students organizations such as the Public Relations Student Society of America.

The Commission notes specifically that public relations education requires these administrative and financial resources:

- personnel: faculty, both full-time and part-time, paid commensurably
- staff support
- equipment and facilities in classrooms, labs and faculty offices
- travel and professional development funding
- operating support, such as telephone, FAX and photocopying capability
- library materials to inform both teaching and research

Identification of Global Implications

The Commission identifies seven factors that, regardless of nation or culture, can be considered to have an impact on public relations education. The

impact will, of course, differ from culture to culture. The factors are:

- cultural values and beliefs
- laws and public policies
- external groups, organizations and associations
- organizational factors
- small group factors within an institution
- interpersonal factors within an institution
- intrapersonal factors within individuals

The Commission's Call to Action

The Commission concludes with a series of seven recommendations for interaction between public relations education and the professional practice of public relations:

1. Public relations practitioners should take a new look at the "products" of today's public relations education, for they are likely to be impressed with the breadth and depth of knowledge and skill students bring to internships and entry-level employment.
2. There is a great need for significantly increased support from practitioners for accreditation/certification of public relations programs, particularly through attaining additional representation of public relations organizations on the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.
3. The practice should establish additional endowed chairs in public relations at academic institutions with outstanding public relations programs.
4. Successful individual public relations professionals should consider making significant contributions to public relations programs.
5. Public relations educators and professionals can advance the appreciation of the field among influentials and the general public by jointly developing and participating in projects of topical and long-term social significance.
6. Joint research projects, administered by educators and funded by the practice, can not only advance the educator-practitioner relationship but also expand the public relations body of knowledge.
7. "Traditional" support programs for public relations educators, their students and their programs—scholarships, paid internships, support of PRSSA and faculty enrichment programs—must be redoubled.

2. BACKGROUND

The Practice

While its roots can be traced to ancient civilizations, the emergence of public relations as a profession is essentially a twentieth century phenomenon. Immediately following World War II, pent-up demand for consumer goods and services exploded in the United States, triggering a parallel demand for public relations, primarily in the form of publicist support for sales and marketing efforts.

Few practitioners in the late '40s and '50s had studied this evolving practice. Since only a handful of colleges and universities offered formal courses in public relations, the industry reached out to men and women experienced in writing for newspapers and magazines, most having studied journalism. These professionals turned their skills toward a kind of "in-house journalism" for corporations or toward roles as publicists and promoters for clients. By 1950, an estimated 17,000 men and 2,000 women were employed in these endeavors.

Responding to the needs of their employers and clients, public relations practitioners began to expand their activity into such areas as financial relations (annual reports, shareholder meetings and presentations to the financial community) and internal communications (publications, special events and awards programs) to support efforts to enhance employee productivity and commitment.

During the 1960s, social issues and problems forced government, business, labor and other powerful organizations to act and react, creating new public relations emphases on community relations, consumer relations, social responsibility programs and research and analysis to identify issues which could affect the progress and survival of an organization. In this changing, confrontational and contentious era, public relations practitioners were expected to plan for, and manage, crises. Public relations communication itself evolved from one-way message delivery into a two-way exchange involving listening to publics; assessing their needs, expectations and demands; resolving conflicts between groups, and affecting public opinion and behavior.

In recent years, public relations professionals have moved toward an emphasis on building and maintaining relationships and on becoming skilled, active counselors at management's decision-making table. Driving this latest evolutionary movement are influential societal trends: global business operations; mergers, acquisitions and consolidations; the empowerment of public opinion within the global village; segmented, fragmented audiences; the information explosion that has led to uncontrolled, gateless dissemination of messages; increasing government regulation and oversight; issues of diversity and multiculturalism in the workplace, marketplace and town hall, and the introduction of technology, including automation and computerization.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that public relations is one of the fastest growing professional fields in the country, and that growth trend is mirrored in other countries as well.

Formal Study in Public Relations

Recognizing a lively and promising career market for their students, colleges and universities began to offer formal education for public relations. In the early 1950s, about a dozen schools offered public relations programs. In 1969 the Public Relations Society of America began to charter student chapters at colleges and universities; initially there were 14, all agreeing to offer at least two courses in public relations.

In 1975, the first Commission on Public Relations Education, comprised of eight educators and practitioners, was formed by PRSA to develop guidelines for public relations education. One of the Commission's primary recommendations was that programs offer at least 12 semester hours, the equivalent of four courses, in public relations at the undergraduate level. Thus, four courses became the new requirement for chartering chapters of the burgeoning Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA).

The 1987 Commission on Undergraduate Public Relations Education deliberated three years before issuing updated guidelines. Its 25 members

represented such communications organizations as PRSA and its Educators Section (now the Educators Academy); the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC); the American Management Association; the American Marketing Association; the Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education (now the Institute for Public Relations); the International Communication Association (ICA); the Speech Communication Association (now the National Communication Association, NCA), and the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC).

One of the primary recommendations of this 1987 Commission was a sequence of 15 semester hours, the equivalent of five courses, in formal public relations study for undergraduates. This also became the requirement for PRSSA chapters. Today there are 214 PRSSA chapters at colleges and universities.

Graduate curricula recommendations were addressed by PRSA commissions in 1990 and 1995 as more schools added advanced programs to their offerings. Today approximately 70 schools offer master's degrees or a graduate emphasis in public relations. Four universities offer doctoral programs specifically in public relations, with the majority of their graduates seeking careers in teaching and academic research.

The 1999 Commission and Its Process

The 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education was comprised of 47 educators and practitioners representing a consortium of eight allied communications organizations: PRSA and its Educators Academy; the Institute for Public Relations; NCA; AEJMC; the Association for Women in Communication (formerly Women in Communication, Inc.); IABC; the International Communications Association; and the International Public Relations Association (IPRA). PRSA served as the coordinating organization and a staff member served as an ex officio member of the Commission. (Members are listed in Appendix A.)

While many academic programs in public relations are housed in departments or schools of journalism and mass communication, an increasing number—almost half—are now in departments or schools of

communication, a discipline which has its roots in rhetoric, interpersonal communication and persuasion. As a result, NCA, the leading U.S. academic society in communication, played a pivotal role in the Commission's work. In 1998, NCA sponsored a summer conference on public relations education, which drew, in part, on an extensive, jointly-sponsored survey of educators and practitioners seeking their views on public relations education. Deliberations and discussions at that NCA conference helped guide the final recommendations of the Commission.

The Commission conducted its work through called meetings, through conferences such as this NCA event; through open discussion sessions during annual meetings of its allied groups and through correspondence, conference calls and exchange of information over the Internet.

The Commission's final report was introduced at the October 1999 International Conference of PRSA in Anaheim, CA. The report also has been presented to all other organizations represented on the Commission and is being widely distributed to schools, educators and practitioners in the United States and around the world.

3. VISION AND PURPOSE

In the future, public relations professionals will not only be skilled communicators but leaders who will help their organizations build and maintain relationships with strategic publics. They will fulfill dual roles of managing communication and counseling top management. Excellent public relations education will be the foundation for preparing new professionals for this dual responsibility.

Therefore, it is important that public relations education grow in sophistication throughout the 21st Century. Public relations as an academic discipline should be equal in status to professionally-oriented academic programs in journalism, marketing, advertising, law and medicine. Academic programs at the graduate level may become comparable in length, complexity and intensity as MBA programs. Faculties for public relations programs may be increasingly interdisciplinary, representing not only a diversity of communications backgrounds but also

diversity in academic degrees. Public relations programs may require greater structural and decision-making autonomy.

From the outset, the 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education saw its purpose as determining curricular guidelines and recommendations that will prepare students at all levels of education—undergraduate, graduate and continuing—for the professional challenges of the 21st century. Throughout its two years of study and planning, the Commission diligently sought to fulfill that purpose. Its work reflected the commitment of both educators and practitioners alike to the fundamental responsibility of public relations to build understanding, credibility and trust between organizations and their publics in democratic societies that now are linked globally.

4. MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of the 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education was to provide guidelines, recommendations and standards for public relations education—undergraduate, graduate and continuing—for the early 21st century. Specific concerns of the Commission were desired student outcomes (what students should know or be able to do as a result of their public relations education), curriculum, pedagogy (teaching methods) and assessment of both student learning and academic programs in public relations.

The Commission set six goals.

- Goal 1 Determine needs for public relations education in a technological, multicultural and global society.
- Goal 2 Recommend outcomes for public relations education at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Goal 3 Recommend curricula for undergraduate and graduate education.
- Goal 4 Recommend characteristics of appropriate academic “homes” for public relations education.
- Goal 5 Recommend required faculty credentials for public relations educators at the pre-professional level and in continuing education, and provide criteria for evaluating faculty.
- Goal 6 Identify minimal and desired resources for public relations education, and provide criteria for evaluating resources.

5. THE COMMISSION’S ASSUMPTIONS

The 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education was guided by 12 assumptions on which its members reached consensus.

1. The ethical practice of public relations is the context in which and for which education must occur.
2. Public relations helps organizations and publics adapt to each other.
3. Public relations education requires an interdisciplinary foundation that includes liberal arts, languages, social sciences and management.
4. Public relations communication is a two-way process influencing attitudes, behavior and relationships.
5. Graduates of public relations programs should be passionate about the profession, responsible self-managers, flexible in attitude, team participants and ethical leaders appreciative of cultural diversity and the global society.
6. Students must be prepared to operate in a multicultural environment.
7. Public relations education is a continuum that goes beyond undergraduate education to include graduate studies, professional development and continuing education.
8. Public relations educators have an obligation to seek professional refresher experience, and practitioners have a responsibility to support and provide opportunities for educators to retool.
9. Practitioners have a significant responsibility to support and participate in undergraduate and graduate public relations education.
10. In the coming years, the teaching of public relations will be significantly affected by new technologies and methods such as “distance learning.”
11. Effective preparation of public relations practitioners will not be accomplished by curriculum content alone, but only when content is provided by competent instructors, when it is supplemented by hands-on experience and when it is subject to evaluation.
12. Public relations practitioners and educators should be leaders in building understanding that

public relations has a fundamental responsibility to society and adds value to society.

6. RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY THE COMMISSION

The 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education relied heavily on the findings of the largest and most comprehensive survey ever undertaken on public relations education. The study was co-sponsored by the Commission and the National Communication Association as part of NCA's 1998 "Summer Conference on Public Relations Education." Funding was contributed by PRSA and the University of Miami's School of Communication.

The three goals of the study were to: a) report what skills, knowledge and concepts practitioners and educators think are currently being taught in public relations curricula; b) compare these with what educators and practitioners think should be taught; and c) document the level of agreement between practitioners and academics as to what is taught and what should be taught. More than 100 academics and practitioners used the results of this study in the four-day NCA conference as the basis for making recommendations for public relations curricula in four types of academic programs: a) undergraduate programs based in journalism/mass communication units, b) undergraduate programs based in communication/rhetoric units, c) professional master's programs, and d) theory-based master's and doctoral programs. Those recommendations weighed heavily in the Commission's work.

Questionnaires were mailed to a stratified random sample of 564 educators and 748 practitioners, yielding a sample of 1312. Questions addressed both existing and desired student outcomes (skills and knowledge of graduates), curriculum (course content), pedagogy (teaching methods), and assessment (measuring what has been learned). The response rate ranged from 30 percent for academics to 12 percent for practitioners. While low, the overall response rate of 20 percent is within expected parameters for a questionnaire of this type and length when using a national random sample composed largely of practitioners.

The most significant conclusions of the study were:

Outcomes

Practitioners and educators strongly agree that current public relations education is on track. Students are learning what they should and what they need.

Consistent with those generally positive feelings about public relations education, only 19.8 percent of educators and 14.4 percent of practitioners disagree or strongly disagree that "PR education is keeping up with current trends in the profession."

Practitioners also value public relations graduates, with only 18.1 percent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that "Most PR practitioners have very positive attitudes toward PR college graduates." One in five educators (20.8 percent) disagreed with the statement.

Practitioners and academics generally agreed on 24 desirable skills/attitudes for entry level employees. The most highly desired skill was writing news releases (practitioner mean = 6.47, educator mean = 6.77, with 7 being "highly desired.") Second most desired skill was being a self starter (practitioner M = 6.33, educator M = 6.60), and the third most desired skill was critical thinking and problem solving (practitioner M = 6.49, educator M = 6.63).

It is significant that educators saw 18 of the desirable 24 skills/attitudes with a rating of 6 or greater as even more desirable than did practitioners.

On the whole, practitioners and academics also agree that they are not satisfied that desirable skills/knowledge are actually found in graduates, with only three—good attitude, word processing/E-mail, and typing skill—scoring above 5 on the 7-point scale. Although the data is by no means definitive, survey results indicate public relations educators may be focusing too much on mechanical skills (e.g., typing and word processing) and not enough on the half dozen entry level skills that are more important in the eyes of practitioners: being a self starter (M = 6.61), writing news releases (M = 6.53), critical thinking and problem solving skills (M = 6.49), and flexibility (M = 6.44).

The six most highly valued content areas that can be taught in a public relations curriculum, with their overall mean score on the 7 point scale, were: planning, writing, producing and delivering print communication to audiences ($M = 6.51$), setting goals/objectives/strategic planning ($M = 6.49$), ethical and legal credibility ($M = 6.42$), audience segmentation ($M = 6.37$), publicity and media relations ($M = 6.35$), and problem/opportunity analysis ($M = 6.33$).

Practitioners and educators were in noticeably close agreement on conceptual content of public relations education, with no differences exceeding one-half point on the 1–7 scale. Only one item of the 89 communication theory/concepts/models items had a difference of 0.50 or more between practitioners ($M = 5.62$) and educators ($M = 6.12$), with both valuing the area, but educators valuing it more. Another nine items had a difference of 0.40 between practitioners and educators, with the three most valued—audience segmentation, public opinion polls and surveys, and research design/process/techniques—being valued by both, with educators again valuing them more.

Practitioners and educators share far more working experience than most think. Practitioner respondents averaged 17.42 years of experience, while those teaching public relations averaged 10.35 years of professional experience and 7.79 years in their present teaching position.

PRSA's accreditation program is accepted and credible among educators more so than among practitioners; only 27.7 percent of practitioner respondents held the APR, while 36 percent of educator respondents are APR.

Assessment

Both educators and practitioners were in general agreement that assessment of student learning was important, that it should be done systematically and that it should include measures other than classroom forms of assessment. Educators placed more emphasis on systematic evaluation, informal assessment techniques and specific outcome assessment than did practitioners; practitioners placed more emphasis on portfolio assessment, inclusion of area

professionals in the process and annual student assessment.

Only internships as an assessment technique were rated 6.00 or higher among the 19 assessment techniques listed.

Educators were asked to report on their program assessment plans; fewer than half reported having assessment plans in place for their programs and even fewer (30 percent) reported having student assessment programs in place.

While more than three-quarters of the practitioners reported they participated in hiring decisions, fewer than a quarter had actually been asked to participate in the assessment of undergraduate or graduate public relations programs or students.

Curriculum

Educators and practitioners were in general agreement with how the public relations curriculum should look. Respondents organized the public relations curriculum around these areas: evaluation/measurement, specialty areas, photography/film-making, persuasion and propaganda, departments/firms/careers, research, political public relations, ethics, general social sciences, publicity, information technology, mass communication, special events, and principles of public relations.

Educators and practitioners differed on only 5 of 90 items, with practitioners seeing courses in journalism, radio/TV/film, and filmmaking as more essential than educators and educators seeing courses in communication theory/models and graphic design more essential than practitioners.

When asked what the purpose of an undergraduate major and minor in public relations should be, the majority of respondents said the major prepared the student for an entry-level job in public relations; the minor laid a foundation of public relations skills for students in other majors who might work in the field. The master's degree was seen in two ways, first as a way for practitioners to move into management and second as a way to better understand theory and research as applied to the profession. The doctorate in public relations was seen basically as providing entry to teaching

public relations and as a means of advancing the theoretical base of the profession.

Teaching and Pedagogy

Respondents who taught either full or part time reported access to most teaching resources, with the exception of on-line research services (e.g., Lexis/Nexis), satellite links, access time to cable TV and specialized tutors (e.g., research, statistics, writing).

Two-thirds of the respondents reported using the Web or Internet for class use, primarily as supplemental resource links or for class assignments. Nevertheless, data suggested that public relations educators, while having access to both rudimentary and advanced media, still rely primarily on rudimentary media: videotapes, handouts and use of whiteboards or chalkboards.

Almost half of the respondents reported teaching "introduction to public relations," followed closely by writing/techniques classes (14.6 percent) and campaigns classes (12.8 percent). Most often classes were small (20–25 students).

When specific instructional techniques were compared between educators and practitioners who taught part time, only five differences emerged: practitioners reported greater use of lectures, guest lecturers, individual presentations/speeches, case studies and running complete campaigns than full-time educators.

Demographics

The sample was balanced by sex (Males = 51.4 percent; Female = 48.1 percent). Respondents' average age was 48.04 (median = 48; mode = 50). The vast majority were Caucasian (84.5 percent) and held graduate degrees (77.4 percent, a function of the educator subsample). Most had majored in a communication-related major; only 3.3 percent were business majors.

In terms of current position, half of the educators were assistant, associate or full professors, the other half lecturers or instructors. Practitioners reported being senior management (CEO, owner, partner, 19.4 percent), directors/managers (middle-level

management, 19.4 percent), and "other" (technicians, account executives, etc., 61.2 percent).

Most of the practitioners reported never having taught part time. Almost two-thirds, however, reported lecturing to a public relations class. Over half reported supervising an intern over the last five years.

The full study is available on the National Communication Association's home page (www.natcom.org) and a condensed version was printed in the Spring 1999 issue of *Public Relations Review*.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Purpose of an Undergraduate Degree

The purpose of an undergraduate degree in public relations is to prepare students for an entry-level position in public relations and to assume a leadership role over the course of their careers in advancing the profession and professionally representing their employers. Students must be educated broadly in the liberal arts and sciences, and specifically in public relations, so that they are fully employable upon graduation.

Desired Outcomes

Specific educational outcomes are categorized as knowledge and skills. Knowledge outcomes identify what graduates should know and understand; skill outcomes address the areas of skill and competence necessary to enter the profession.

Like any other advanced professional field, public relations needs as its practitioners individuals with high ethical standards and a passion for their profession. Graduates should be responsible, flexible and professionally oriented self-managers. They should be curious, conceptual thinkers and appreciative of cultural and gender diversity and of global cultures. They must be trustworthy team participants and leaders, and good communicators.

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of public relations and the realities of its practice in society, it is important for graduates to be grounded in disciplines beyond journalism, communications and

public relations. For that reason, the best preparation for the profession would include a minor or double major in a related area. It is expected that graduating students would be able to integrate the preceding professional attributes and demonstrate familiarity and comfort with the knowledge and skills that follow.

Knowledge

Undergraduate majors should master the following knowledge:

- Communication and persuasion concepts and strategies including mass media, organizational, small group and interpersonal channels of communication
- Communication and public relations theory, including public relations' role in society and in an organization
- Relationships and relationship building
- Societal trends
- Ethical issues
- Legal requirements and issues
- Marketing and finance
- Public relations history
- Uses of research and forecasting
- Multicultural and global issues
- Organizational change and development
- Management concepts and theories

Skills

Undergraduates should be competent in the following skills:

- Research, including methods, analysis, recommendations, reporting, environmental and social assessment and statistics
- Management of information including its role in the public relations process and assessment of message credibility
- Mastery of language in written and oral communication
- Problem solving and negotiation
- Management of communication
- Strategic planning
- Issues management, including environmental scanning, issue anticipation, risk analysis and change methodology

- Audience segmentation
- Informative and persuasive writing for various audiences
- Area emphases such as community relations, consumer relations, investor relations, employee relations, government relations, and media relations
- Technology and visual literacy (including the Internet and desktop publishing), and development of new media/message strategies and the design and layout of messages
- Managing people, programs and resources
- Sensitive interpersonal communication
- Fluency in a second language
- Ethical decision-making
- Participation in the professional public relations community
- Writing and production of specific communication messages
- Working within a current issue environment
- Public speaking and presentation
- Applying cross-cultural and cross-gender sensitivity

Curriculum

Because educational institutions are so diverse in their structures and organization, the Commission felt it more appropriate to address the content of curriculum rather than to prescribe specific courses. The content may be contained in various courses both internal and external to public relations programs and their curricula.

Sample curriculum configurations, to be used as guidelines only, follow these content recommendations.

In any case, a strong traditional liberal arts and social science education is a necessary foundation for public relations education. It also is requisite that a multicultural and global perspective pervades the curriculum, and that public relations be taught within the framework of ethical issues and behavior.

Coursework in a public relations major should comprise 25 to 40 percent of all undergraduate credit hours. Of those, at least half should be clearly identified as public relations courses.

Five clearly identifiable public relations courses should be the minimum, and programs should move to include more than five if at all possible.

A student's program of study should be comprised 60 to 75 percent of liberal arts, social science, business and language courses.

The student's program of study should include a minor or double major in another discipline. Especially suggested are business and the behavioral sciences.

Content

The following topics are all deemed essential to a strong undergraduate education in public relations, regardless of the course(s) in which they may be taught:

- **Theory, Origin, Principles and Professional Practice of Public Relations:** Content in this area specifically pertains to the nature and role of public relations, the history of public relations, the societal forces affecting the profession and its practice and theories of public relations. Also included are practitioner qualifications (including education and training), responsibilities and duties, functioning of public relations departments and counseling firms, and career-long professional development. Addressed here as well are specializations in public relations such as community relations, employee relations, consumer relations, financial and investor relations, governmental relations, public affairs and lobbying, fund raising and membership development, international public relations, and publicity and media relations.
- **Public Relations Ethics and Law:** Content here includes codes of ethics and practice in public relations and in other professions; specific legal issues such as privacy, defamation, copyright, product liability, and financial disclosure; legal and regulatory compliance, and credibility.
- **Public Relations Research, Measurement and Performance Evaluation:** Content should address both quantitative and qualitative research designs, processes and techniques including public opinion polling and survey research; experimental design and research; fact-finding and applied research; observation and performance measurement; social, communication and employee audits; issue tracking; focus groups and interviews; use of external research services and consultants; media and clipping analysis, and historical research. It should also focus on results-based decision making, measuring program effectiveness, measuring staff and counselor performance, developing criteria for performance, tools and methods for measurement and evaluation and reporting on results of public relations efforts.
- **Public Relations Planning and Management:** Content of the curriculum in planning and management should be theory, techniques and models related to setting long- and short-term goals and objectives, designing strategies and tactics, segmenting audiences, analyzing problems and opportunities, communicating with top management, developing budgets, contingency planning for crises and disasters, managing issues, developing timetables and calendars and assigning authority and responsibility. This content area also requires inclusion of the philosophy and culture of organizations, and knowledge of business or corporate culture including finance, theory, practice and terminology.
- **Public Relations Writing and Production:** Public relations writing is an essential, discrete skill not addressed in journalistic writing, composition or creative writing. Content here should address communication theory; concepts and models for both mass, interpersonal, employee and internal communication; organizational communication and dynamics; persuasion and propaganda; controlled versus uncontrolled communication, and feedback systems. It must include development of competency in such skills as layout and graphics, speech-writing and delivery, spokesperson training, speakers bureaus, corporate identity, photography, filmmaking and working with outside suppliers. It requires a solid understanding of media, media channels and the societal role of media. It includes message strategy and delivery (i.e., planning, writing, producing and delivering print communication to audiences; and planning, writing, producing and delivering audiovisual, electronic, videotape and multimedia communication to audiences). It also is essential that content address new public relations tools and techniques, especially current and emerging technology and its application in the practice of public relations.
- **Public Relations Action and Implementation:** This area of content includes actual implementation of campaigns; continuing programs (product publicity, safety, etc.); crises and isolated incidents; individual activities of practitioners and firms, clients or employers; meetings and workshops, and special events.
- **Supervised Work Experience in Public Relations:** It is imperative that public relations students have the opportunity to apply the skills and principles they learn to the professional arena. These practical experiences

must be supervised by faculty and practitioners who cooperate to provide professional experience directed by learning objectives and assessed throughout to assure a quality practical educational experience.

- **Disciplines Related to Public Relations:** Supporting disciplines appropriate to public relations programs include political communication, organizational communication, interpersonal communication, rhetorical communication, small group communication, psychology, sociology, marketing, management and organizational behavior, finance, journalism, radio and television production, advertising, mass communication law, photography, filmmaking, art, design and graphics, information technology, hypertext and Web design.

- **Directed Electives:** Certain content in other disciplines should be considered essential for the development and preparation of public relations professionals. It is recommended that such content be recommended or directed as elective courses to supplement the core public relations and communication courses. Recommended directed electives include: business management and marketing, accounting, finance, economics, consumer behavior, political science and the political system, public administration, social psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology, English and English writing, political science, including government and political campaigns, and international business and communication.

Sample Content Configuration

As the practice of public relations becomes increasingly sophisticated, more institutions of higher learning will begin to define majors, rather than just sequences or emphases of study, in public relations. Given this projection, the Commission identified a sample curriculum following the above content recommendations for a bachelor's degree in public relations. Following is a recommendation for a minimum acceptable array of courses for a major in public relations with supplementary courses within the broader major and minor.

Ideally, an undergraduate degree in public relations would include these courses:

- Introduction to Public Relations (including theory, origin and principles)
- Case Studies in Public Relations that review the professional practice

- Public Relations Research, Measurement and Evaluation
- Public Relations Law and Ethics
- Public Relations Writing and Production
- Public Relations Planning and Management
- Public Relations Campaigns
- Supervised Work Experience in Public Relations
- Directed Electives

In a program where public relations is an emphasis or focus, integrated with related disciplines such as communication or journalism to form a major, some of this content may be included in courses with content that is broader than public relations alone. In these instances, the Commission recommends, as a minimum, that the public relations emphasis or focus include these courses:

- 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
- At least one additional public relations course in law and ethics, public relations planning and management case studies or campaigns

Programs that offer minors should make it clear that a minor in public relations is not sufficient to prepare a student for the professional practice of public relations. However, programs may offer minors in public relations to enhance the understanding of students majoring in professional disciplines that use or cooperate with public relations. A minor in public relations should specifically address the knowledge outcomes previously stated rather than just the skill outcomes.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GRADUATE EDUCATION

Purpose of a Master's Degree

The purpose of a master's degree is to enable students to acquire advanced skills and knowledge in research, management, problem solving and issues, and to obtain management level expertise.

For some students, the master's degree also is preparation for doctoral level education.

The master's degree program thus prepares individuals for public relations management leadership, career development and on-going contributions to the profession and to society in a global context. It guides the individual in knowing and appreciating the role of public relations as part of the management team, in gaining relevant management and communications competencies and in building effective relationships between organizations and their publics.

Desired Outcomes of a Master's Degree

Master's students should gain advanced knowledge and understanding of the body of knowledge in public relations, including theory, research, communication processes, planning, production and advanced communications management abilities.

Students should be taught within an environment in which they learn to provide leadership through use of communication, social and behavioral science theory and research techniques to help organizations analyze and solve problems and take advantage of opportunities that have public relations consequences.

To enter a master's degree program, individuals should hold an undergraduate degree in public relations or its equivalent: i.e., a combination of an undergraduate communications degree and public relations experience. Individuals with undergraduate degrees in other fields without public relations knowledge and competencies should be required to demonstrate proficiencies such as those listed in the undergraduate section of this report. Options could be provided to prepare new students for advanced study and/or to build upon their current competencies to the point they are ready for graduate-level study of public relations.

The Master's Degree Curriculum

The curriculum for the master's level graduate student must have a great deal of flexibility. It should be tailored to graduate student career objectives and personal interests. While many students will choose a master's degree as their final degree,

the master's curriculum should be able to prepare students who so desire to enter doctoral programs (e.g., by choosing a specific set of courses and/or completing a thesis).

The basic curriculum of the master's degree in public relations should be a program of study requiring between 30 to 36 credit hours of graduate coursework.

The Curriculum Composition

The following content areas should provide advanced, intensive focus upon the primary area of interest: public relations. All that has come before, through general education and public relations studies, will be here. The expectation is that students will develop further abilities to critically analyze and synthesize the body of knowledge in public relations management by producing critical essays and original research projects, and will enhance their professional performance through the application of theory and research.

The student should master the following content areas beyond the undergraduate competencies.

- **Public Relations Theory:** This area should familiarize students with the leading theories of public relations scholarship, including social science, rhetorical and communication theories (i.e., models of public relations, public relations roles theories, theories of publics, theories of public relationships), public relations history, and public relations issues (encroachment, feminization of the field, paradigm struggle, impact of social, political, and economic environments).
- **Public Relations Law:** This area should address regulatory, constitutional and statutory laws of public relations, risks of free expression and communications law related to public relations.
- **Public Relations Research Methods:** This area should include the application of social science research methods to the planning, implementation and evaluation issues of public relations practice. Quantitative and qualitative methods, an understanding of experimental design, sampling, use of standard statistical packages, report writing and research ethics should be taught.
- **Public Relations Management:** This area should include public relations strategic management

principles and issues (e.g., planning, organizing, evaluating, staffing, counseling, leadership, budgeting principles and such advanced subjects as reputation management), concepts of organizational effectiveness (strategy, size, technology, environment and the dominant coalition), public relations as a political process and how it is related to other functions such as integrated communications and to the mission of the organization, rhetorical-critical approaches; culture and globalization; building relationships with internal and external audiences; issues and crisis management; activism, mediation, negotiation, and conflict resolution.

- Public Relations Programming and Production: This area should include advanced programming and production principles, particularly related to new technology, the Internet and telecommunications as well as the practices and theories of message preparation, visual communications principles, and other communications techniques. Students should apply research and evaluation models to this practical side of public relations.
- Communication Processes: Here students should learn theories and practices of communication (organization, interpersonal, small group, mass, persuasion, rhetorical, conflict resolution).
- Management Sciences: This area should include accounting, finance, marketing and integrated marketing/advertising communication applicable to both for-profit and non-profit organizations.
- Behavioral Sciences: This area should acquaint students with social psychology, cultural anthropology, sociology and political science. It should also include courses that build an understanding of group behavior, global trends, evolving global codes of conduct, organizational culture, behavioral change and knowledge of local, state, national and international political systems.
- Public Relations Ethics: Some of the ethical issues that merit attention are philosophical principles, international ethical issues, concealment vs. disclosure, divided loyalties, social responsibility, accountability, professionalism, codes of ethics, whistle-blowing, confidentiality, ethical dealing with the media, solicitation of new business, ethics of research, logical arguments and multicultural and gender diversity.
- Public Relations Specialty Options
- Internship or Practicum Experience and/or Comprehensive Examination

- Thesis and/or Comprehensive Exam and/or Capstone Project

The graduate student should be required to conduct some original research in her/his particular area of interest, resulting in a thesis or graduate capstone project of acceptable quality. If a thesis is optional, the student should be required to take a comprehensive examination. It is recommended that no credit hours be awarded for comprehensive examinations.

One Sample Master's Program Content Outline (36 credit hours)

Public Relations Content:

- Public Relations Theory
- Public Relations Research
- Public Relations Management
- Public Relations Law
- Integrated Communications

Management Science Area Content:

- Accounting
- Finance
- Marketing
- Strategic Planning

When the Master's Degree is Terminal:

- Leadership Studies (New Technologies, Conflict Resolution, International Relations)
- Capstone Project

When the Master's Degree is Preparation for the Doctorate:

- Thesis

An Alternative Sample Master's Program Content Outline (30 credit hours)

- Research Methods in Communication
- Research Design in Public Relations
- Theories of Mass Communication
- Seminar on Public Relations Management
- Seminar on Public Relations Publics
- Seminar on Ethics and Philosophy in Public Relations

- Seminar on Global Public Relations
- Two Electives
- Master's Thesis (6 credits)

The Purpose of a Doctoral Degree

A doctoral degree in public relations is a theory and research degree. The purpose of the Ph.D. program is to help students develop the theoretical and research skills they will need to add to the body of public relations knowledge.

A doctoral degree should prepare graduates for academic positions in universities and for advanced management and applied research positions in major public relations departments, opinion research companies and other organizations.

Historically, the doctoral curriculum in public relations has been a specialized option within a broader Ph.D. program, usually titled "mass communication" or "communication."

But communications Ph.D. programs have not produced a sufficient supply of graduates with a public relations specialty, primarily because few educators with an interest in researching public relations problems have been involved in those Ph.D. programs. The result has been a shortage of public relations researchers. The addition of public relations researchers to university faculties would render the existing framework of most Ph.D. programs adequate for a public relations specialty.

Desired Outcomes of a Doctoral Degree

Students completing a doctoral program should be:

- prepared for roles as senior managers and as future college faculty who can deliver course content and evaluate student work effectively.
- aware of not only the body of knowledge in public relations, but the relationship of that body of knowledge to those of other communication-related (e.g., interpersonal, rhetorical, organizational and small group) bodies of knowledge as well. In addition, students should demonstrate awareness of the breadth and depth of disciplines that influence, or are influenced by, public relations and ability to integrate that knowledge in their teaching and research.
- prepared to develop and contribute to the body of knowledge through formal quantitative and qualitative research and to develop the ability to disseminate that information to the academic and practitioner communities in a clear, usable fashion through conferences and professional publications.
- prepared to develop competing paradigms of public relations based on differing metatheoretical and philosophical foundations in response to the maturation of the field.

Because doctoral programs are generally an array of courses tailored to the academic and professional backgrounds of individual students, it is expected that appropriate attention will be given in these individualized programs to ensuring a foundation in public relations concepts, theories and professional practices.

Curriculum

The core curriculum of most Ph.D. programs in communication or mass communication stresses research and theory building through courses in communication theory, philosophy of science, research methods and statistical and qualitative research tools.

A public relations Ph.D. candidate should also take the bulk of his or her coursework in these core areas of research skills. It is essential that the instructors of these core courses understand public relations, encourage new research on public relations problems and encourage the building of public relations theories. This has seldom been the case in current Ph.D. programs.

In addition, the Ph.D. program should offer several specialized seminars in public relations on topics such as public relations management and its appropriate place in the organizational structure; behavior of publics; public relations roles, law, history and operations; and global perspectives on public relations.

Public relations Ph.D. students should be encouraged to take research seminars in related social, behavioral and business sciences that are particularly relevant to public relations in order to learn the theories and methods of those related disciplines. These courses, for example, could include

the sociology of organization, organizational communication, operations research and management science, political behavior, sociology of collective behavior, public opinion, language usage and communication and social psychology.

Finally, the public relations Ph.D. candidate should conduct dissertation research in which he or she studies theory applicable to the solution of important public relations problems and in specific topic areas in public relations such as investor relations, crisis management, issues management, social responsibility, marketing public relations and integrated communications.

However, a doctoral program also has the obligation to prepare students to teach by involving students in the classroom and developing their teaching skills because many, if not most, graduates will accept positions as public relations faculty.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Purpose of Continuing Education

Continuing education has been an important aspect of professional education throughout the evolution of public relations in the 20th century. In the historical sense, continuing education has meant education for the adult learner outside the traditional degree programs of a college or universities. Continuing education in public relations might well be identified as “lifelong learning” because it seeks to add to or refresh the knowledge or skills of those familiar with and/or already working in the practice of public relations. The purpose of this instruction should be to provide for the ongoing professional development and advancement of public relations professionals, from entry-level beginners through senior executives. It is important that continuing education courses, faculty and resources be of comparable quality with those of degree-granting public relations programs, as described elsewhere in this report.

Desired Outcomes of Continuing Education

Sometimes continuing education is provided on a college or university campus, although often it is not. Sometimes it is provided by traditional modes

of instruction, although increasingly it is being provided by “distance education” or “distance learning” that the Commission defines as any instruction that takes place with the instructor and student physically separated from each other. Sometimes it is a one-hour workshop or a half-day seminar, sometimes carrying CEUs (continuing education units).

Increasingly important in continuing education is the growing number of certificate programs; while not degree programs per se, they group a number of courses together into a logical program of study. The Commission suggests that academic criteria in certificate programs should be no different from those in degree programs, especially when the courses used in certificate programs are the same courses that traditional students might use to meet undergraduate or graduate degree requirements.

The 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education focused solely on continuing education offered as for-credit instruction, acknowledging that many professional associations and private vendors also offer workshops and seminars not linked to academic credit that are legitimate continuing education opportunities.

As a result of their participation in for-credit continuing education courses or programs, public relations practitioners should add to their knowledge of the concepts, theories and practices of the profession.

Curriculum

In continuing education, just as in traditional degree programs, curriculum models differ from institution to institution. No one model can serve all.

For undergraduate-level continuing education offerings, the guidelines presented by the Commission certainly are appropriate. Likewise, when the continuing education offerings are at an advanced level and offered to practitioners who already have undergraduate degrees, the master’s degree guidelines suggested by the Commission are relevant.

Continuing education is offered using perhaps a greater variety of teaching methods than traditional undergraduate or graduate courses. Typically, continuing education has led the way in pioneering new teaching methodologies, particularly distance

education methods. Active learning often is enhanced through student involvement with new technologies such as the Web.

In addition to traditional teaching techniques, continuing education often utilizes Internet transmission of course material by either asynchronous or synchronous course delivery; video-assisted instruction; a combination of Web and television instruction; satellite or broadcast instruction; delivery by compressed video, or other technology-based modes of delivery. Often traditional and distance education modes are combined in one course: a week-long face-to-face introduction to the course might be followed with additional meetings on-line or through E-mail interaction.

Continuing education courses in public relations often have been provided by public relations faculty who teach them on an overload basis, as “extra” assignments for which they receive extra compensation. An exception has been at some land-grant institutions whose mission is heavily outreach-oriented; some of these schools have made continuing education instruction part or all of a full-time faculty member’s regular responsibilities.

When continuing education is offered by distance education technologies, the model of faculty overload doesn’t always work well. It takes considerable effort to teach Web-based or television-delivered courses, and incentives beyond a bit more salary need to be developed to encourage faculty to develop and teach these courses.

Because continuing education is likely to be offered increasingly through new technologies, state-of-the-art hardware and software are essential for those institutions offering continuing education courses and for those students enrolling in them.

Professional societies and associations, such as PRSA and IABC, would do well to partner with colleges and universities to ensure that appropriate continuing education modules are developed and offered. These associations and public relations foundations, notably the Institute for Public Relations and the PRSA Foundation, are encouraged to provide seed money for the development of continuing education courses and certificate programs to ensure that public relations learning is, indeed, lifelong.

10. TEACHING METHODS

The teaching of public relations at all levels should emphasize active learning. Given the fact that much public relations work is done by teams of practitioners, team-based and service learning also should be encouraged.

Teaching involves the delivery of instruction; the creation of student assignments and learning activities; and the application of instructional media to the classroom, laboratory and distance learning environment.

The 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education presents these recommendations on teaching methods because it believes it is not only important to address curriculum content but also to address how that content can best be transmitted.

Delivery of Instruction

Lectures are a delivery technique familiar to students, especially helpful in introducing and examining a broad range of material, particularly abstract concepts. The best lecturers will incorporate a lively and informative style, and encourage interactivity with students through discussion, dialogue and questioning.

Guest lecturers and speakers add fresh voices to the classroom, which increases student interest. Practitioners can bring the practice of public relations into the classroom and provide a bridge between student and professional associations. The pool of available guest lecturers for most programs is typically large, and professionals usually are enthusiastic about assisting in this way.

Simulations and role-playing also are very effective teaching methods for selected topics. Both encourage student involvement (affective learning) and aid in student retention of material. The teacher can control the simulation in ways he or she could not if students were working with an actual client or situation.

Games are useful ways to simplify abstract concepts and are particularly useful for teaching remedial skills and history or for review sessions, such as those that might be held to help students prepare for an examination.

Small group discussion and in-class exercises provide essential learning opportunities in the area of team building and group dynamics. This teaching method also helps develop brainstorming and analytical skills as students learn to give and receive critiques.

Having students make oral presentations in class provides them with practice in a skill that will be vital to them as practitioners, making client presentations and defending their ideas in meetings. Oral presentations offer a good opportunity for peer or practitioner evaluation of student work, and also for interaction and networking with both peers and practitioners. They also can be useful in helping students learn to create and use computer-aided presentations and visual aids.

Teaching writing and design or production skills in a computer classroom or lab gives students an opportunity to build their skills and their computer literacy.

The use of field trips is another teaching method that provides an opportunity for interactive learning as students see the practice of public relations in process and interact with practitioners.

Instruction is increasingly being delivered through distance education, as described in Part 9 of this report, using a variety of techniques: on-line Internet delivery of lectures and readings, chat rooms and E-mail interaction between student and professor, combinations of video-Web-television instruction and delivery of entire courses by broadcast media or satellite.

Assignments and Activities

Case studies, an excellent bridge between theory and application, can be used at all class levels to promote learning. Regardless of the model, case studies teach analytical and critical thinking skills.

Incorporating the planning (and sometimes even the implementation) of campaigns into public relations courses adds depth and detail, and provides opportunities for students to translate theory into practice. Carrying a plan through to implementation adds the dimension of learning about client relationships and, when the client is “real,” provides another opportunity for professional networking.

Instructional Media

Audio and video recordings are useful not only because they present important material in an interesting way, but because by listening or viewing, students also learn to recognize production quality.

The Internet (and when available an intranet) has many applications in public relations teaching: as the source of case studies and research data, as a means of contact with practitioners and as an interactive communication channel between faculty and students. Its potential for interactivity makes it especially appealing in distance education settings.

11. EVALUATION

Both academic programs and the students enrolled in them should be evaluated. In the case of students, the objective is to ascertain whether students learned what the curriculum and their faculty intended. In the case of programs, the objective of the evaluation is to ascertain and ensure quality of the curriculum, how it is taught, the quality of that instruction and the resources provided to support the educational effort.

Evaluation of Students

Student evaluation may be normative, formative and/or summative.

Normative assessment is usually undertaken to determine which students are eligible to enter or to advance within the public relations program. Normative assessment tools might include:

- required entrance exams
- assessment of the extent to which the student possesses the attitudes and behaviors of professionals
- screening through standardized test scores and placement tests in subjects such as English, spelling and math
- high school and projected college GPA
- performance in pre-requisite classes
- writing and speaking apprehension
- internship performance as a screen for subsequent internships
- Formative assessment is evaluation that provides continuing feedback throughout a student’s

degree program. Formative assessment tools might include: faculty evaluation and grading of assignments

- tests that screen for skill proficiency
- capstone courses to measure ability to conceptualize and apply knowledge
- case study analysis to measure critical thinking
- oral and computer-aided presentations to measure presentation skills
- evaluation of internships by both faculty and site supervisors
- review of a portfolio of student work
- examination of career objectives, expectations, knowledge, preparation and future plans
- measurement of sensitivity to multicultural environments and diversity, perhaps using a standardized test such as that used by the U.S. Navy to test for multicultural sensitivity
- Summative assessment is conducted at the time a student completes a degree program. Appropriate tools might include review of a portfolio of student work to assess writing and presentation skills, research skills, analytical ability and ability to complete projects or campaigns
- faculty assessment of strengths and weaknesses, either in writing or as an exit interview
- administration of an organizational simulation of a public relations work environment
- review of professional experience gained through course assignments, internships or other work experience

Evaluation of Programs

Program evaluation can be accomplished through self-assessment and external review.

1. Self-Assessment

Public relations programs should continually measure their effectiveness in delivering instruction in both degree-oriented and continuing education courses by utilizing the following self-assessment tools:

- Teacher-course evaluations by students, peers and administrators
- Faculty-student ratios
- Job placement rates

- Percent of public relations graduates working in the field
- Graduate school admissions
- Exit interviews and surveys
- Alumni satisfaction surveys
- Employer satisfaction surveys
- Professional accreditation of alumni
- Input of advisory boards

Programs also are advised to monitor such quality indicators as instructional innovations, particularly integration of new technologies; student access to courses in related disciplines (e.g., business); vitality of student organizations; involvement of professionals; and equitable distribution of resources. Finally, programs should periodically compare the content of the courses they offer to the Commission's recommendations.

2. External Review

Three organizations currently provide external review of academic programs in public relations education: PRSA, NCA and the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC). PRSA's Certification of Education in Public Relations (CEPR) provides professional association certification for programs housed in any academic discipline, including communication, journalism and business. NCA's Program Review, on the other hand, provides educator assessment for programs housed in communication colleges, schools or departments. Similarly, ACEJMC examines programs housed in journalism and mass communication units. ACEJMC is the only one of the three authorized by the U.S. Department of Education to grant professional accreditation. Review by any of the three organizations is at the invitation of the program unit.

PRSA's certification process is coordinated by its Educational Affairs Committee, which consists of both educators and practitioners. After receipt of a required self-study, the committee assigns a visiting team of two or three members who examine the public relations program on site over three to four days. Criteria for evaluation are based on the most recent guidelines of the Commission on Public

Relations Education. Among program elements reviewed are curriculum, faculty/student ratio, resources, internships, student counseling, job placement and involvement and support of professionals. Team members visit classes, check records and interview faculty, administrators, students, alumni and practitioners. At the conclusion of the on-site review, the team makes a preliminary report of its findings, including strengths and weaknesses of the program, to the program's coordinator. A written report with the team's recommendation is submitted to the Educational Affairs Committee, which decides whether or not to grant certification. The committee's decision is then forwarded to PRSA's Board of Directors for approval.

In ACEJMC accreditation, the entire academic unit—college, school or department—is evaluated through a review of all programs in the unit, which might include advertising, broadcasting, newspaper journalism, magazine journalism and public relations. The process begins with a self-study based on 12 standards. A three-day site visit is conducted by a team of three to six educators and practitioners who represent the unit's various disciplines. When the unit has a public relations component, an effort is made to include a public relations educator or practitioner on the team.

During its campus visit, the ACEJMC team examines the unit's compliance with the 12 standards, which deal with governance/administration, budget, curriculum, student records/advising, instruction/evaluation, faculty credentials and qualifications, internships and work experience, faculty scholarship/research/professional activities, public service, graduates/alumni, and minority and female representation, respectively. As in the PRSA process, team members monitor classes, check records and interview faculty, students and representatives of other relevant groups. The team prepares a written draft report of its findings before leaving campus and presents copies of the report to the unit administrator and the institution's president. Responses from the unit and institution are considered before the report is finalized and submitted to ACEJMC's Accrediting Committee, which recommends full accreditation, provisional accreditation (meaning the unit must

correct specified deficiencies in one year) or denial of accreditation. The committee then forwards its recommendation to ACEJMC's Accrediting Council for a final decision. Institutional representatives are invited to the meetings of both groups. Units must be reaccredited every six years.

Of the 24 professional, practitioner organizations which are dues-paying members of ACEJMC, only one—PRSA—represents the profession of public relations. Thus the profession has only one voice and one vote on decisions made by ACEJMC's Accrediting Council. In contrast, other disciplines are represented by multiple professional organizations, each with one or more votes. For example, advertising is represented by two organizations (American Academy of Advertising and American Advertising Federation), broadcasting by four (Broadcast Education Association, National Association of Broadcasters, National Association of TV Program Executives and Radio-Television News Directors Association) and newspaper journalism by eight (American Society of Newspaper Editors, Associated Press Managing Editors, National Conference of Editorial Writers, National Newspaper Foundation, Newspaper Association of America, Society of Professional Journalists, Southern Newspaper Publishers Association and the Inland Press Association).

Only a minority of academic programs in public relations are certified by PRSA or accredited by ACEJMC. As noted earlier in this report, approximately one half of all public relations programs are housed in communication units, which are not eligible for ACEJMC accreditation. Such programs are eligible for PRSA certification; however, relatively few programs have sought CEPR status to date. Furthermore, of the hundreds of journalism and mass communication units that teach public relations, only 109 currently are accredited by ACEJMC.

The NCA process bridges the gap between self-assessment and external review. The association provides the Communication Programs Rationale and Review Kit (1997), which presents questions to guide self-assessment (for example, "Has our department kept pace with the discipline?"), lists

NCA resources and services to aid evaluation (for example, contact information for nationally recognized communication specialists in teaching, research and service), and offers the association's Program Review Service. More collegial than the processes of PRSA and ACEJMC, NCA's on-site Program Review brings "consultants" to campus rather than "evaluators." The service allows the host unit to determine the number of consultants, choose their specialization and geographic location, and even select named individuals (NCA also will recommend team members if a host unit desires). The consultants' report goes to the unit requesting the review, not to NCA.

All of these program evaluation processes would be more valuable if:

- More public relations programs sought accreditation and/or certification.
- Additional public relations organizations, such as the Arthur W. Page Society, IABC, Council of Public Relations Firms, Institute for Public Relations, PRSA Foundation, and International Public Relations Association (IPRA), obtained membership in ACEJMC. Representation should also be solicited from educator associations with large public relations memberships, such as NCA and ICA.
- ACEJMC teams better reflected the composition of the student body of the unit reviewed, particularly those in which public relations is a major component.

12. FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS

Both academic and professional credentials and experience are important qualifications for public relations faculty. It also is critical that public relations faculty share the understanding that public relations is practiced in an interdisciplinary, multi-cultural and global context.

Programs may use both full-time and part-time faculty to teach public relations courses. It is important, however, that the majority of public relations instruction be provided by full-time faculty.

Perhaps the ideal full-time faculty member is an individual with both the academic credential of a

terminal degree, usually the Ph.D., and the professional credential of significant work experience in the field of public relations. And to the extent that they exist—they do, but in relatively small number—academic programs would do well to hire individuals with both sets of credentials.

What is perhaps more realistic is for academic programs to have among their full-time public relations faculty a balance of those with terminal degrees and those who may not have terminal degrees but whose professional experience is significant and substantial. Particularly in programs that offer graduate degrees, it is critical that there be full-time faculty with Ph.D.s capable of teaching public relations theory and research and qualified to direct graduate thesis and dissertations in public relations. When no graduate faculty who specialize in public relations research are available to guide and mentor graduate students, they may be diverted into a thesis or dissertation that does not encourage an interest in public relations.

Adjunct (part-time) and temporary full-time faculty should, in every case, have at least an undergraduate degree and relevant professional public relations experience. It is highly desirable that they be personally accredited or certified by a professional public relations organization, especially when their college degree is in a field other than public relations.

Most adjunct faculty will be drawn from the ranks of those currently working in public relations, so their professional expertise is being updated and refined on a daily basis. Because they are often not experienced teachers, it is essential that adjuncts be provided with appropriate training for the classroom.

Full-time faculty must create their own opportunities—one would hope with the enthusiastic leadership of practitioners and professional organizations—to keep up with current public relations practices through "professor in residence" programs, faculty-professional exchanges, participation in professional development programs and sabbaticals.

All faculty, both full-time and adjunct, should be members of and participate in professional and/or academic associations and conferences.

And all faculty, both full-time and adjunct, should be contributing to the public relations body of knowledge through scholarship and professional or creative activity. The form that contribution may take will, of course, vary depending on whether the faculty member has primarily academic or professional credentials.

The Commission repeats a recommendation from the 1987 Commission report: "Public relations courses should not be taught by people who have little or no experience and interest in the field and have no academic preparation in public relations."

13. RESOURCES NEEDED FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMS

Public relations faculty and students should have resources comparable to those available to faculty and students in other academic programs in the academic unit where public relations is taught.

It also is important that faculty in public relations programs have responsibility for those matters and decisions that directly affect public relations faculty, students and the units of which they are a part.

Workloads of public relations faculty should reflect the full range of responsibilities assigned to them: teaching, advising, research, service, administrative assignments and the supervision or advising of student organizations such as PRSSA or student public relations agencies.

Administrative and financial resources necessary to support public relations education include:

- personnel: faculty, both full-time and part-time, who are paid commensurate with faculty in other programs in the academic unit
- staff support: secretarial and technical support personnel
- equipment and facilities in classrooms, labs and faculty offices: computer hardware, software and peripherals; classrooms specially equipped for presentations; research facilities, particularly a telephone bank for surveys and space suitable for simulating or conducting focus groups, and space for student organizations
- travel and professional development support; funding for travel to academic and professional

conferences, for payment of professional association dues, for participation in workshops or other professional development programs

- operating support: telephone, books and other materials used in teaching, postage, photocopying, faxes
- library: materials to inform both teaching and research

Faculty-student ratios should conform to those recommended by national accrediting bodies (such as the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications) and those that certify programs (such as Public Relations Society of America). There should be qualified full-time faculty members teaching public relations when it is offered as a major, emphasis or focus, the number of those faculty dependent on student enrollment. Full-time public relations faculty should teach the majority of required courses.

Scholarships and financial aid should be available to students. This is particularly critical in graduate programs where funding is perhaps the deciding factor as programs compete for the best students for assistantship and fellowship awards.

While most administrative and operating expenses are the responsibility of academic units, there are other resources that must be provided by the profession. Among these are providing internship and professional residency programs for students and faculty, supporting and serving on advisory boards, endowing chairs and faculty positions in public relations and providing examples and samples of public relations work, especially audio-visual materials, for classroom use.

14. GLOBAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

A major assumption of the Commission was that its report would focus primarily on higher education in the United States. The Commission's members were principally associated with USA-based institutions, and, given the range of factors that can affect higher education in public relations, the Commission did not want to presume to make recommendations for other nations and cultures.

However, the Commission did want to enable educators and practitioners in other countries to adapt or adopt its recommendations if they so choose. To that end, the Commission identified the following factors that affect public relations higher education, to a greater or lesser extent, in all societies and cultures.

The following list is not exhaustive. The factors are presented in the hopes that others may find them helpful in explaining and guiding public relations higher education not only in the USA but also elsewhere in the world.

Cultural Values and Beliefs

- Importance within society of truth-telling, fairness, justice and the concept of doing no harm to the innocent.
- Degree of comfort with uncertainty within society as seen in the collective attitudes toward centralized or decentralized control.
- Attitudes toward men and women.
- Degree of acceptance (or not) of class differences and assumptions about an individual's duties and responsibilities to others in society.

Laws and Public Policies

- Structure of and support for higher education, including the degree of politicization of higher education within society.
- Public support for technological infrastructure within the economy.
- Freedom of press and individual rights to free speech and related issues.
- Policies regarding free markets and "transparent" economic exchanges, especially in the areas of corporate disclosure.

External Groups, Organizations and Associations

- Employer demand for university graduates who have majored or specialized in public relations.
- Number of professional associations in the field and their support for higher education.
- Number of organizations in region, including activist publics, that emphasize and appreciate public information, public relations, and public affairs.
- Number of competing institutions of higher education.

Organizational Factors

- Size, complexity and sources of resources for the institution, be it a university or college.
- The historic, legal mandate or stated function of the institution.
- Technological infrastructure of the institution.

Small Group Factors Within Institutions

- Qualifications of the faculty and how they relate to students—for example, the degree of power differentiation or egalitarianism experienced in the classroom.
- Qualifications of faculty and staff and how they relate to each other—for example, the "natural tension" often experienced between journalism and public relations faculty.
- Worldview of the institution's dominant coalition: do senior administrators at the university encourage change and innovation, or not.

Interpersonal Factors Within Institutions

- Role expectations between individual administrators and faculty members.
- Role expectations between an individual faculty member and a student.
- Role expectations outside the university between clients and practitioners—for example, is the practitioner expected by the client to be a technician or a problem solver?

Intrapersonal Factors and Traits Within Individuals

- Intelligence of the students, faculty members, practitioners.
- Sex/gender—physical traits and internalized sex roles.
- Maturity (not the same as age).
- Eagerness and willingness to learn.

In sum, public relations both as a professional practice and as an academic discipline may be considered protean—readily assuming various roles and structures depending on its internal and external environments. The wide variety of social environments and public relations practices around the world means that inevitably there are, and will continue to be, a variety of models of public relations higher education.

15. A CALL TO ACTION: PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION AND THE PRACTICE

Symbiosis is not too strong a descriptor of the relationship between public relations education and the professional practice of public relations. Yet there is much to do to realize the full potential of this mutually-beneficial relationship.

The key to progress here, the Commission suggests, is to base future cooperative efforts on a simple, practical statement of respective needs: Public relations educators need additional resources and recognition; the practice needs a steady flow of graduates who are prepared to enter, or re-enter, the profession and, as the saying goes, “hit the ground running.”

So what is to be done?

The 1999 Commission on Public Relations Education recommends a seven-point interactive program:

1. Public relations practitioners should take a new look at the “products” of today’s public relations education. Those who have, are impressed with the breadth and depth of knowledge and skill students bring to internships and entry-level employment. Those who haven’t, are missing what is quite often a good hiring “bet.”

2. There is a great need for significantly increased support from practitioners for accreditation/certification of public relations programs. In the year 2000, three to five additional public relations seats on The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) should be sponsored by the practice. This will generate added practitioner participation on campus accreditation site visit teams as well as in the final decisions on which programs are to be accredited.

3. The practice should establish additional endowed chairs in public relations at academic institutions with outstanding public relations programs. A chair is costly and may require the pooling of financial assistance from several organizations and their clients, but chairs represent prestige externally and clout internally.

4. Successful individual public relations professionals, especially those who have benefited handsomely from public relations practice, should consider making significant contributions to the public relations programs

of their choice. Such philanthropy, common in other professional fields, would mark public relations as a field in which one generation of practitioners is tied to succeeding generations by commitment to the development of the profession.

5. Public relations educators and professionals can advance the appreciation of the field among influentials and the general public by jointly developing and participating in projects of topical and long-term social significance. Educators bring intellectual legitimacy and credibility to such projects; practitioners—individually and through organizations such as PRSA, The Arthur Page Society, the newly formed Council of Public Relations Firms and the various public relations institutes and foundations—can add strategic input and needed resources. The “outside world” must be engaged on hot macro issues: for example, ethical communications conduct in the age of global interdependence. Structures for such activities already exist. They include the PRSA/CPRF Socratic Dialogues (in April, 1999 such a dialogue was held at The Annenberg School). Partnering organizations have included the Ethics Officers Association and several national trade associations.

6. Joint research projects, administered by educators and funded by the practice, can not only advance the educator-practitioner relationship but also expand the public relations body of knowledge. Moreover, when the research subjects are of topical interests—say, on employee behavioral response to key messages—they provide an opportunity for positive exposure of the true gravitas of the profession. And if adequately funded (\$50,000–\$500,000 or more), the research can impress academic influentials.

7. Finally, “traditional” support programs for public relations educators, their students and their programs must be re-doubled. This means more practitioner-funded scholarships, more paid internships, more support of PRSSA to benefit students, and more faculty enrichment programs including inter-term employment and other imaginative cooperative efforts.

Other kinds of such professional support also must be considered, such as the valuable expenditure of professionals’ time on campus to strengthen public relations programs. Both individual practitioners and professional associations can be invaluable in providing advice and feedback to programs and their faculties. Advisory boards also can provide financial and other resources that enhance program quality.

These programs, and others like them, will further enhance the likelihood that public relations education, through its own growth and development, will produce more successful public relations practitioners and leaders and advance the profession's contribution to society.

APPENDIX A: THE 1999 COMMISSION ON PUBLIC RELATIONS EDUCATION

Dean Kruckeberg, Ph.D., APR, Fellow PRSA
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Co-Chair of the Commission
Represented PRSA

John L. Paluszek, APR, Fellow PRSA
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Co-Chair of the Commission
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Bill C. Adams, APR, Fellow PRSA
Florida International University
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David K. Allred, APR
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Gail Baker, Ph.D., APR
University of Florida
Represented PRSA

John R. Beardsley, APR
Padilla Speer Beardsley Inc.
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Represented NCA

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Corbett Associates, Inc.
Represented PRSA

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Represented Institute for Public Relations

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Larissa A. Grunig, Ph.D.
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Represented AEJMC

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Dan Pyle Millar, Ph.D., APR
Indiana State University
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Debra A. Miller, Ed.D., APR
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Valparaiso University
Represented WICI

Douglas Ann Newsom, Ph.D., APR,
Fellow PRSA
Texas Christian University
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Coral M. Ohl, Ph.D., APR
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Jackson, Jackson & Wagner
Represented PRSA

Judith Turner Phair, APR, Fellow PRSA
University of Maryland/Biotechnology Institute
Represented PRSA

Betsy Plank, APR, Fellow PRSA
Betsy Plank Public Relations
Represented PRSA

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Frank W. Wylie, APR, Fellow PRSA
California State University, Long Beach
Represented IPRA

Elaine Averick
Commission Staff Liaison
PRSA

APPENDIX B: RESEARCH AND REPORTS USED BY THE 1999 COMMISSION

Research and Reports

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- Sallot, L. M. (ed.). (1998). *Learning to teach: What you need to know to develop a successful career as a public relations educator* (2nd ed.). New York: Public Relations Society of America.
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GLOSSARY OF ORGANIZATIONS CITED IN THE REPORT

- Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC)
- American Management Association
- American Marketing Association
- Arthur Page Society
- Council of Public Relations Firms (CPRF)
- Institute for Public Relations (formerly the Institute for Public Relations Research and Education)
- International Association of Business Communicators (IABC)
- International Communication Association (ICA)
- International Public Relations Association (IPRA)

National Communication Association (NCA)
Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)
Public Relations Student Society of America
(PRSSA)

Hilton Hotels Corporation
Northwest Airlines
Southwest Airlines
National Communication Association
Public Relations Society of America
University of Miami
Institute for Public Relations (formerly the Institute
for Public Relations Research and Education)

BENEFACTORS

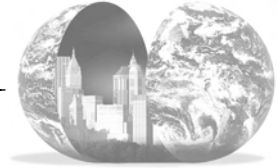
The Commission on Public Relations Education gratefully acknowledges the following organizations, which provided valuable support for the Commission's work:

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Appendix 5

The Corporate Annual Report

An Evolution



THE CORPORATE ANNUAL REPORT: AN EVOLUTION

At its essence, the corporate annual report is the financial statement issued yearly by a publicly owned corporation, showing assets, liabilities, revenues, expenses and earnings.

Over time, the annual report has emerged as an art form, a visual, colorful expression of a public

company's fiscal year, its products and its workers. On the pages that follow, the evolution of the corporate annual report is shown through the juxtaposition of the entire 11-page 1881 American Bell Telephone Company Annual Report and excerpts from the 92-page 2002 AT&T Annual Report.

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REPORT
OF THE DIRECTORS
OF THE
American Bell Telephone Co.

TO THE STOCKHOLDERS,

MARCH 29, 1881.

BOSTON:
ALFRED MUDGE & SON, PRINTERS,
34 SCHOOL STREET.
1881.

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The total number of cities and towns for which licenses to build exchanges have been issued, is 1,523; and there is no reason to doubt that, in most of these points of any importance, the system will within a few months be put in operation.

With the exception of Camden, New Jersey, which is still in process of settlement, there is no exchange in the United States now being operated or built under any license except that of this company.

The business of connecting cities and towns by telephone wires has been taken up in the past year with some vigor, and the prospect is good for a large increase in these lines. Boston, for example, is now in communication with seventy-five cities and towns, including Providence, Worcester, Springfield, Lawrence, Lowell, and other important places.

It will take some time yet to get first-rate service in a large network of towns, as the practical difficulties at least equal those which were met in giving prompt connection within the limits of one city, but nothing but experience and tests of various methods are needed to enable such groups of exchanges to reach satisfactory results. Thirty-two contracts have been given to other companies for this class of work, and the reports to date show 1,398 miles of wire and 731 miles of pole line in use.

The connection of exchanges with the telegraph lines has been begun in a small way all over the country, and although it will take time to accustom people to the use of the telephone for the sending of telegraph messages, the commission from this source will undoubtedly grow and become of substantial value.

The company has now a stock interest in the companies in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco, Elmira, New Haven and Canada, amounting, in the aggregate, at par, to \$1,300,300, and owns the whole of the Boston Exchange, which has cost, with the Edison Exchange bought from the opposition, \$130,358.97.

The business of all these companies is now upon a paying

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basis, although the requirements for new construction and for the cost of putting together two systems in New York, Chicago and Boston, have thus far absorbed all net earnings in these places, while in consequence of these changes the service in these cities is not yet fully satisfactory.

In New York and Chicago the local companies will probably at once make provision for their new construction outside of their net earnings, and put themselves in a position to pay dividends upon their capital.

In Boston some \$15,000 will be required from the treasury for construction, after which it is expected that the business will be sufficient to provide for its own further growth.

The business of the New York company already promised handsome results, when, on the 21st of January, a sleet storm, more severe than any known since the telegraph came into general use, prostrated the wires and many poles in all parts of the city, and inflicted severe direct and indirect loss upon the company.

The executive committee of that company, however, feel every confidence that its business will prove of very great value, and that beyond certain important questions of construction, which are somewhat difficult of solution in that city, we have no serious obstacles to a great success.

In settling with the Western Union Company it was necessary, in order that the competing interests should be harmonized, that all their exchange systems should be bought, and it was estimated at the time of the settlement that we might have to sustain a loss of some \$50,000 in completing these arrangements.

With one unimportant exception, that of Camden, N. J., before mentioned, we have settled all of these cases and have either bought and resold to or procured to be bought by our licensees, fifty-five exchanges, costing	\$325,160 06
of which we have kept Boston, costing	\$26,000 00
and have recovered upon the remaining fifty-four	267,187 98
leaving a loss of	\$31,972 08

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This may be considered a satisfactory settlement, as there was much waste and bad building on the part of the opposition exchanges for which our licensees were unwilling to pay, and yet it was of the greatest importance to get the whole country settled, and under one system.

It is hoped that before the next annual meeting a valuable business will be developed in Canada. It seemed to the directors of importance to control the license of instruments in the Dominion, in order to prevent the smuggling of telephones across the border. Two companies have been formed in that country; one to hold the patents and issue licenses, and the other to develop the business. Our company holds and should continue to hold a majority of the capital stock of the former; and as considerable delay occurred in settling the competition between the Bell and the Gold and Stock licensees in the Dominion, it was found necessary to advance enough money to the second company to get the contest ended, the plant of both parties under one control, and the business under some headway. All this has been done, and the development of exchanges is proceeding with much enterprise; and it is probable that the Bell Telephone Company of Canada will, ere long, be in such a position that we can readily sell such part of the stock which we have received for our investment there as it may not be thought best to keep. It is, however, as yet too early to give any exact report upon the business in Canada, but we are advised that 4,496 telephones are in use, and 2,082 subscribers are connected with the various exchanges, and the managers of the company feel entirely confident of success.

In regard to claims for telephone patents advanced by other parties, the directors are advised by Messrs. Chauncey Smith and James J. Storrow, the counsel of the company, as follows:—

“MARCH 23, 1881.

“W. H. FORBES, Esq., *President American Bell Telephone Co.* :

“*Dear Sir,*—The condition of the patent controversies which the company is concerned in in relation to the Bell patents is as follows:—

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“ These patents cover every apparatus capable of transmitting articulate speech by electricity which has yet been devised, and the more carefully the subject is examined the more certain it appears that no instrument can do it except by copying the method invented by Mr. Bell and patented to him by his patent of March 7, 1876. For eighteen months after the grant of that patent no one publicly, at least, disputed his claims to originality. After his telephones had gone into general use, the Western Union Telegraph Company set up three claimants, and pushed these claims in the Patent Office and in the courts. But after the facts of the case had been fully brought out in evidence, the acute and sagacious counsel of the Western Union Telegraph Company were satisfied that Mr. Bell would prevail.

“ This particular question, though the most important part of the controversy with the Western Union, was only a part of it, and the contract of Nov. 10, 1879, settled the whole controversy. The settlement was based upon the assumption and concession that the Bell patent was valid, and that it covered all the apparatus known, and upon the recognition of the advantage to the Telephone Company of the exclusive right to use certain subordinate inventions owned by your opponents, and upon the commercial advantages likely to arise from other provisions of the contract in the then condition of your company.

“ It was necessary that the controversies thus originated in the Patent Office should be proceeded with, but there is no doubt whatever about the result. Moreover, the American Bell Telephone Company own the exclusive right to use those inventions of your opponents.

“ W. L. Voelker, of Philadelphia, has since been added to those who claimed the great invention, but his evidence has been taken and his dates are too late to leave him any ground for contest.

“ Recently a new claimant has appeared. The People's Telephone Company, formed in the summer of 1880, acquired the right to prosecute a claim for Daniel Drawbaugh, who alleges that he preceded Mr. Bell by six or seven years. But we consider them to be absolutely without chance of success. This claim was not heard of until the summer of 1880. Every one remembers the attention which Mr. Bell's discovery at once attracted, and it is absurd to suppose that practical telephones existed in the suburbs of Harrisburg for ten years before anybody published the fact.

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“It is the common fortune of important patents, after they have developed great commercial value, to be the subject of similar claims, but such tardy attacks on such valuable patents have invariably failed. It always turns out that such claimants have done something, but have stopped short of the successful result which the patentee had reached.

“We are satisfied, as we have already advised you verbally, that the People’s Company have nothing to sell which is worth buying.

“The Drawbaugh applications now stand rejected in the Patent Office.

“In October last we obtained a preliminary injunction against the People’s Company after a contest. The suit has been pushed, our evidence taken, and case only waits such proof as the defendants may have to offer.

“We have also obtained three other injunctions on the Bell patents in New York, one in Boston, and one in Chicago.

“There are other interference controversies on some minor features of the Bell patents, but they give us no anxiety, because the evidence taken shows the strength of Mr. Bell’s case, and because, if we fail in any of them, you will obtain the patents of the other parties at a moderate cost.

“The company is concerned in other patent controversies, but in view of the evidence which has been taken in all the important ones, we perceive no cause for alarm in any of them.

“Yours truly,

“ (Signed) CHAUNCEY SMITH.

“ (Signed) JAMES J. STORROW.”

A large amount of work has been done in the electrical and experimental department, both in examining new inventions and testing telephones and apparatus, and in studying the question of overhead and underground cables, and the improvement of telephones and lines, for both short and long distance service. This work is expensive, but it is of the first importance to our company, and must be continued.

The report of the General Inspector upon this department shows that we own or control, either by purchase or by inventions made by our own electricians, 124 patents, and have applications in the Patent Office for 77 more. Among these a considerable number are of great value as a

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protection to our business, and from them a substantial revenue has already been received by royalties from our licensees. This source of income will be materially increased, and should eventually more than cover our experimental and electrical expenses.

Immediately after the settlement with the Western Union Company the policy of making only five-year contracts was adopted, in order that our company could have time to learn the best permanent basis for the relations between the company and its licensees, and to see which of them would prove satisfactory as associates. Many applications are now being made for permanent licenses, and we have begun to give such permanent contracts in places where the business is being prosecuted with energy and success, in exchange for a substantial interest in the stock of the local companies. By pursuing this plan, the company will gradually acquire a large permanent interest in the telephone business throughout the country, so that you will not be dependent upon royalties for a revenue when the patents shall have expired.

The treasurer's report shows that the total receipts, including sales of stock and loans, for the year ending Feb. 28, 1881, have been	\$2,058,184 08
And the total expenditures, including construction account	1,957,430 97
	<hr/>
Balance on hand	\$100,753 11

The capital or construction accounts include settlements with the Western Union and Gold and Stock Telegraph Companies for instruments and exchange plant, purchase of new telephones, purchase of exchange interests, patents, plant in Canada, and sundry smaller items, and amount to

	\$1,537,456 93
The earnings of all kinds for the same period have been	605,184 01
Expenses of operating, including royalty to Western Union and associates	339,425 44
Dividend, Jan. 1, 1881	178,500 00

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The increase in earnings has been steady from \$28,151.54 per month, in March, 1880, to \$61,244.93 in February, 1881. And the net earnings for these twelve months show an increase of \$193,037.44 over those of the previous year.

Much of the electrical and legal work of these first years of the company, and indeed some of our expenses incurred in studying and classifying the business, are substantially for the establishment of the property, and might be charged to construction and capitalized, but the directors have preferred the more conservative policy of charging everything to operating which could reasonably be put there, although the result upon the books appears less favorable, in consequence, than the business prospects might warrant us in exhibiting.

If this course is continued, when the suits in progress become settled, and the rush to secure patents for all the early inventions is over, our operating expenses in the legal and electrical departments can be much lessened, and a business of far greater volume than that of the past year can be done with no increase in our expense account.

No reason is now apparent for any increase of consequence in the construction account, beyond the limit provided for by the \$500,000 loan negotiated last October, and the directors do not foresee any occasion for raising any further amounts of money.

The treasurer's accounts show that the company is earning something more than a three per cent dividend for the current six months, and if the net increase of telephones producing rental continues at over 4,000 per month, the latter half of the year will give a still better result.

After two years passed in a struggle for existence, and a third largely devoted to the settlement of disputes inherited from that contest, the owners of the telephone patents, at the beginning of their fourth year, for the first time find themselves free from all serious complications, with nothing to prevent the company from directing its whole working force

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to the development of the business, and with a defined policy for its future operations, which seems to be working well in all parts of the country.

In conclusion, the directors wish to express their appreciation of the ability, fidelity, and zeal with which the general manager and his assistants have grappled with the unusually perplexing difficulties encountered in systematizing our affairs.

The statement of the treasurer for the year ending Feb. 28, 1881, and the report of the auditing committee, are appended.

For the directors,

W. H. FORBES,
President.

Statement of the American Bell Telephone Company for Year ending Feb. 28, 1881.

EARNINGS AND OPERATING EXPENSES.

EARNINGS.

Rental	\$535,754 84	
Sales of instruments and supplies	29,379 51	
Royalties from manufacturers	20,353 45	
Exchange dividends	11,200 00	
Miscellaneous	8,496 21	
		\$605,184 01

EXPENDITURES.

Expenses of management	\$130,672 66	
Legal expenses	44,283 58	
Interest and taxes	34,486 73	
Royalty on switches, etc.	12,097 58	
Commission (chiefly royalty to W. U. Telegraph Co. <i>et als.</i> , contract of Nov. 10, 1879)	94,406 11	
Depreciation	23,478 78	
Dividend	178,500 00	
		\$517,925 44

NOTE. — The word *exchange* means *telephonic exchange system*.

The words *exchange interests* mean *interests in local companies operating such systems*.

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CASH STATEMENT.

RECEIPTS.

Cash balance March 1, 1880	\$130,500 46
Sales of stock	850,000 00
Loan of 1880	296,100 00
Temporary loans	137,660 42
Rental	402,794 18
Sales of instruments and supplies	45,040 35
Royalties	21,603 90
Exchange dividends	11,200 00
Extra territorial lines and telegraph commissions	3,472 60
Transfer of Western Union exchanges	112,658 37
Exchange interests	24,425 24
Loans paid	11,330 25
Miscellaneous	11,398 31

EXPENDITURES.

Operating expenses—

General (including salaries, office, travelling, electrical and experi- mental)	\$126,660 73	
Legal expenses	46,284 89	
Interest and taxes	20,805 51	
Commission and royalty (includes royalty to the Western Union Telegraph Company, <i>et als.</i> , con- tracts of November 10, 1879)	35,114 30	
	<hr/>	\$228,865 43
Instruments purchased and manufac- tured	305,651 19	
Transfer of exchanges	188,715 57	
Patents	123,371 32	
Exchange interests	441,363 30	
Office furniture and library	4,859 31	
Loans paid	477,110 87	
Loaned	10,000 00	
Dividend	173,595 00	
Miscellaneous	3,898 98	
Cash on hand	100,753 11	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$2,058,184 08	\$2,058,184 08
	<hr/>	<hr/>

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SUMMARY.

RECEIPTS.

Cash balance March 1, 1880	\$130,500 46
Capital accounts	1,432,424 28
Current accounts	495,259 31

EXPENDITURES.

Capital accounts	\$1,537,456 93
Current accounts	419,974 04
Cash balance Feb. 28, 1881	100,753 11
	<hr/>
	\$2,058,184 08
	<hr/>
	\$2,058,184 08
	<hr/>

Boston, March 28, 1881.

To the Directors of the American Bell Telephone Co.:

Gentlemen,—Your committee, appointed to audit the accounts of the treasurer, with authority to employ an expert, has attended to that duty, and herewith presents the report of Mr. C. T. Plimpton, the expert employed for that purpose.

Very respectfully submitted,

CHARLES P BOWDITCH, *Committee.*

Boston, March 21, 1881.

I hereby certify that I have audited the books and accounts of the Treasurer of the National Bell Telephone Company, from March 1, 1880, and of the books and accounts of the American Bell Telephone Company from their commencement in May, 1880, to March 1, 1881, as follows:—

The cash books, their debits and credits, journalizings, postings, stock ledger, bank accounts, trial balances and cash on hand.

In my investigations have found everything in connection with the above correct, and that all disbursements as entered in cash books are sustained by approved vouchers, and that the books are kept with accuracy.

CHARLES T. PLIMPTON, *Auditor.*



Networking
Makes
Our Customers
Strong

Customers
Make
Us Strong

AT&T:
The World's
Networking
Company



Networking Makes Our Customers Strong

Our customers continue to benefit from our leadership role in networking.

- Continuing to outperform the industry in customer satisfaction and innovation
- Ongoing investment to meet the needs of enterprises and individuals who place a high value on communications
- Offering unmatched capabilities in managing end-to-end mission critical business applications
- Growing in our role as the industry-leading Internet protocol (IP) provider
- Continuing to be recognized as a critical partner and a preeminent provider of high-quality services
- Applying AT&T Labs expertise to networking solutions of tomorrow while meeting customer needs today
- Delivering to customers a real return on their communications investment through more than 36,000 networking experts
- Delivering international direct-dial service to more than 250 countries and territories, and in-bound calling services for travelers in 200 countries through AT&T Direct Service
- Offering real competitive choice in local, long distance and Internet services

Customers Make Us Strong

AT&T continues to benefit by satisfying the needs of its customers.

- Managing nearly 50 million consumer relationships and 4 million business customers
- Creating one of the strongest financial structures and best balance sheets in the industry
- Realizing annual revenue of more than \$37 billion
- Leading the industry in customer satisfaction
- Forming a unified communications services company with approximately 71,000 employees in 56 countries
- Ranking as one of the largest online billers with more than 1 million residential customers billed online
- Serving as the official provider of personal telecommunications services to military personnel serving at 529 military bases and camps worldwide and on more than 200 U.S. Navy ships
- Serving more than 2.4 million households, with residential AT&T Local Service in California, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Texas as of December 2002, with more states to follow

AT&T: The World's Networking Company

AT&T continues to operate the most sophisticated and reliable global network.

- Having one of the most experienced leadership teams in the industry
- Carrying more than 310 million long distance calls on an average business day, with more than 99.99 percent completed on the first try
- Handling approximately 2,700 trillion bytes (terabytes) of data on an average business day
- Leading in long distance backbone optical fiber, with more than 50,000 route miles, plus more than 19,600 route miles of local metro fiber
- Leading the industry in IP traffic growth
- Operating 18 Internet data centers on three continents
- Having approximately 2,900 points of presence in 850 cities across 60 nations
- Operating with 95 intelligent optical switches online
- Providing, first ever, 10-gigabit-per-second service (OC-192) coast-to-coast
- Leading in Dense Wave Division Multiplexing with 1,600 systems deployed, including Ultravailable Networks for enterprise customers

- With significant financial strength and leverage, a world-class network and one of the most qualified management teams focused on transforming the business, AT&T is committed and poised to meet the needs of its customers better than anyone in the industry.



To my fellow shareowners: AT&T launched a new era in 2002 – an era marked by more than just a change in the chairman's office. We spun off our broadband operations. We completed our restructuring plan. And we introduced a new management team focused on serving customers and building shareowner value.

At the same time, we accelerated our efforts to transform AT&T from a primarily voice-services business to the largest provider of data services globally. We reached out to expand our relationships with clients around the world. And we realigned to focus less on individual products and more on integrated customer solutions.

In short, we rededicated ourselves to AT&T's 118-year legacy of service, quality, reliability and innovation. And we committed to fulfilling our mission as "the world's networking company."

While we focused on meeting our goals and seeking new market opportunities, waves of uncertainty crashed around us. The world braced for terror and war. The global economy stumbled. And the telecom industry suffered bankruptcies and accounting scandals that dragged down some of our major competitors.

Those telecom schemes conjured up phony market economics and phantom prices that no competitor could fairly match. The companies involved saw their reputations rightly ravaged.

AT&T, on the other hand, rose above the fray. We remained focused on our customers. And we met our financial commitments during every quarter of 2002, performing with both vigor and integrity. Today, we stand tall – proud to be one of the world's strongest telecommunications providers.

Our strength stems from our values, a set of principles we call "Our Common Bond." Formally adopted in 1992, the values of "Our Common Bond" have been hallmarks of the AT&T culture for more than 100 years: respect for individuals, dedication to helping customers, highest standards of integrity, innovation and teamwork. Our commitment to these principles cannot be compromised.

Nor can our commitment to our shareowners. That's why we diligently overhauled our balance sheet. Our restructuring effort reduced AT&T's net debt* from \$56.2 billion entering 2001 to \$12.9 billion at year-end 2002. We now enjoy the lowest overall net debt level among the major players in our industry. *In 2001, net debt of \$56.2 billion was net of \$0.1 billion of cash and \$8.7 billion of monetizations. In 2002, net debt of \$12.9 billion was net of \$8.5 billion of cash, \$0.5 billion of monetizations and \$0.7 billion of fluctuations in foreign debt value.

To maintain and magnify our financial strength, we're taking a disciplined approach to our ongoing cost and capital structure. Our network investments are largely behind us. We spent \$3.9 billion in capital expenditures in 2002, roughly half the 1999 level, and we'll continue to moderate our spending going forward.

- With a focus on innovation and quality, AT&T Consumer is expanding its portfolio of services, including offering local service (with long distance) in more and more states. AT&T Consumer extended local service from two states in 2001 to eight states in 2002.



We expect the majority of our 2003 capital expenditures to be demand-driven and success-based.

The primary focus for the remaining capital expenditures will be enhancing our products and processes to improve service and customer satisfaction. So while our distressed competitors struggle to keep the lights on, we'll continue to pump up productivity and make it easier for customers to do business with AT&T.

Our business customers are already seeing results from the \$500 million we invested in process improvements in 2002. We slashed cycle times an average of 30 percent last year. That means we cut days – and in some cases weeks – off the interval between a customer's order and activation of their services. The result: We're setting new standards for sales, provisioning, billing, and service that our competitors simply can't match.

Our world-class standards and services are attracting new business customers, and winning back others concerned about our competitors' well-publicized troubles. We continue to gain market share as companies increasingly value the reliability, sustainability, integrity and quality behind the AT&T brand. And we will continue to promote these advantages as we target new customers and take additional market share in 2003.

Maintaining our scale and broad customer base will be critical as we face ongoing declines in both consumer and business long distance voice revenue. Several trends are driving these declines:

- Customers are relying increasingly on wireless and Internet communications.
- As the regional Bell operating companies (RBOCs) enter long distance, competition and price pressures mount.
- Our success in attracting quality wholesale customers has shifted the proportions of retail and reduced-priced wholesale minutes that run on our network.
- Consumers are taking advantage of lower-priced products, such as prepaid cards and optional calling plans.

We are managing through these declines by scaling our growth investments. In 2002, we outperformed the industry and gained share in all the key growth areas of our business – business local, data, Internet protocol (IP) and managed services. These services represent our future; their growth helps offset erosion in long distance voice.

These services are also at the heart of the AT&T Business portfolio, which will be the primary driver of our future revenue. A leading global provider of enterprise communications solutions, AT&T Business delivered nearly \$27 billion to our top line in 2002.

- Meeting the communications needs of businesses worldwide, AT&T Business delivers the most reliable and secure enterprise networking solutions with local-to-global reach, end-to-end network management and world-class professional expertise.



For more than 4 million customers throughout the world, AT&T Business serves as a strategic partner. For large enterprise customers, we design, deploy, manage and enhance networks, ensuring industry-leading levels of continuity and security. Our services help these customers unlock the full value of their applications while managing complexity, improving productivity, and generating a return on their communications investments.

We are the undisputed industry leader in IP traffic, after being in sixth place only two years ago. Our IP traffic is growing at a rate three times faster than the rest of the industry. The AT&T network now carries one petabyte of IP traffic per day. To print that amount of data on paper, you'd need about 50 million trees – or a forest about the size of New Orleans. And you'd need to re-grow that forest every day.

The growth of AT&T Business will be fueled, in part, by AT&T Consumer, which contributed nearly \$12 billion in 2002 revenue. AT&T Consumer manages nearly 50 million customer relationships with consumers, who count on us for long distance, local, Internet and transactional services such as prepaid cards and collect calling. If it were a standalone business, AT&T Consumer would rank among the Fortune 200.

We continue to expand our consumer-service portfolio. A key growth area is our local and long distance bundle for consumers and small businesses. We offer these combined services via the unbundled network elements platform, or UNE-P. That platform allows AT&T and other carriers to lease from the RBOCs the network elements needed to deliver services along the "last mile," which connects directly to the customer.

By the end of 2002, more than 2.4 million AT&T residential customers were enjoying the features and price benefits that result from UNE-P-based competition. As of this writing, our residential local customer base has grown to more than 2.7 million. We also have more than 500,000 access lines serving small businesses through UNE-P.

More consumers and small businesses will enjoy the benefits of competition thanks to a Federal Communications Commission decision announced in February 2003. The RBOCs lobbied furiously to eliminate UNE-P and reduce competitive choice. But the Commission voted to allow the states to decide what works and what doesn't, rather than impose a national "one-size-fits all" mandate. Now we will take our case to the states, and we will enter markets where the economic conditions allow us to make a reasonable return using UNE-P.

Our initial results prove that customers want choice and will support a competitive offer. We have earned mid single-digit market share or higher in our first eight markets. We doubled our number of all-distance customers in 2002. In the fourth quarter alone, the number grew more than 25 percent from the previous quarter.

- With a shared commitment to Our Common Bond, values that bind the people of AT&T, we are dedicated to satisfying customer needs and building value for shareowners.



This pattern suggests strong opportunities for growth in new markets as well. We are confident that we will be offering all-distance service in a total of 14-17 markets by the end of 2003, with more markets to follow in 2004.

But getting there won't be easy. In the months ahead, the challenges facing our industry will continue. Current market signals point to ongoing economic weakness and lower information technology (IT) spending.

We recognize, however, that this downturn won't last forever. The economy will eventually rebound, IT spending will resume, and telecom's trials will end. We're preparing today for that turnaround by channeling our resources to keep our company strong and to position AT&T as one of the primary beneficiaries of an economic upswing.

We are the only long distance carrier upgrading its network and service portfolio. We are the only carrier enhancing its customer-facing processes and increasing its sales presence. And we are among the few carriers operating from a position of unquestioned financial flexibility and strength. So when the market recovers, our scale, scope and stability will make AT&T the company to beat.

That's why, despite the challenges, I feel so proud and privileged to be leading this company. While our competitors are still getting organized, we've already assembled all the ingredients for success – solid financials, a world-class global network, an intense customer focus and unshakable values.

Our people are passionate about satisfying customers and building shareowner value. We are working as one company, one network and one team to deliver a level of excellence that others must strive mightily to attain.

Outstanding innovation, enduring integrity, and a flawless customer experience... our customers, employees and you – our shareowners – should expect nothing less from the world's networking company.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Dorman".

David Dorman
 Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

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AT&T CORP. AND SUBSIDIARIES

SEVEN-YEAR SUMMARY OF SELECTED FINANCIAL DATA⁽¹⁾

	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996
				(Unaudited)			
	(Dollars in millions, except per share amounts)						
RESULTS OF OPERATIONS AND EARNINGS PER SHARE							
Revenue	\$ 37,827	\$ 42,197	\$ 46,850	\$ 49,609	\$ 47,287	\$ 46,226	\$ 45,716
Operating income	4,361	7,832	12,793	12,544	7,632	6,835	8,341
Income (loss) from continuing operations	963	(2,640)	9,532	6,019	4,915	4,088	5,064
INCOME FROM CONTINUING OPERATIONS							
AT&T Common Stock Group: ⁽²⁾							
Income	963	71	8,044	8,041	4,915	4,088	5,064
Earnings (loss) per basic share	1.29	(0.91)	11.54	13.04	9.18	7.65	9.60
Earnings (loss) per diluted share	1.26	(0.91)	11.01	12.61	9.10	7.65	9.60
Cash dividends declared per share	0.75	0.75	3.4875	4.40	4.40	4.40	4.40
Liberty Media Group: ⁽²⁾							
(Loss) income	—	(2,711)	1,488	(2,022)	—	—	—
(Loss) earnings per basic and diluted share	—	(1.05)	0.58	(0.80)	—	—	—
ASSETS AND CAPITAL							
Property, plant and equipment, net	\$ 25,604	\$ 26,803	\$ 26,083	\$ 25,587	\$ 21,780	\$ 19,177	\$ 16,871
Total assets — continuing operations	55,272	62,329	90,293	89,554	40,134	41,029	38,229
Total assets	55,272	165,481	242,802	169,499	59,550	67,690	63,669
Long-term debt	18,812	24,025	13,572	13,543	5,555	7,840	8,861
Total debt	22,574	34,159	42,338	25,091	6,638	11,895	11,334
Shareowners' equity	12,312	51,680	103,198	78,927	25,522	23,678	21,092
Debt ratio ⁽³⁾	64.7%	86.3%	122.1%	83.7%	36.7%	57.2%	61.6%
OTHER INFORMATION							
Employees — continuing operations ⁽⁴⁾	71,000	77,700	84,800	96,500	94,500	116,800	117,100
AT&T year-end stock price per share	\$ 26.11	\$ 37.19	\$ 27.57	\$ 80.81	\$ 79.88	\$ 65.02	\$ 43.91

⁽¹⁾ Prior period amounts have been restated to reflect the spin-off of AT&T Broadband and the 1-for-5 reverse stock split, as applicable, both of which occurred on November 18, 2002.

⁽²⁾ In connection with the March 9, 1999 merger with Tele-Communications, Inc., AT&T issued separate tracking stock for Liberty Media Group (LMG). LMG was accounted for as an equity investment prior to its split-off from AT&T on August 10, 2001. There were no dividends declared for LMG tracking stock. AT&T Common Stock Group results exclude LMG.

⁽³⁾ Debt ratio reflects debt from continuing operations as a percent of total capital, excluding discontinued operations and LMG, (debt plus equity, excluding LMG and discontinued operations).

⁽⁴⁾ Data provided excludes LMG.

AT&T CORP. AND SUBSIDIARIES
CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS

	<u>At December 31,</u>	
	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>
	<u>Dollars in millions</u>	
ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 8,014	\$ 10,680
Accounts receivable, less allowances of \$669 and \$754	5,286	7,153
Other receivables	173	1,431
Deferred income taxes	910	1,192
Other current assets	1,520	622
Current assets of discontinued operations	—	1,649
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	<u>15,903</u>	<u>22,727</u>
Property, plant and equipment, net	25,604	26,803
Goodwill, net of accumulated amortization in 2001 of \$564	4,626	5,314
Other purchased intangible assets, net of accumulated amortization of \$244 and \$190	556	661
Prepaid pension costs	3,596	3,329
Other assets	4,987	5,144
Non-current assets of discontinued operations	—	101,503
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 55,272</u>	<u>\$165,481</u>
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable	\$ 3,819	\$ 4,156
Payroll and benefit-related liabilities	1,519	1,606
Debt maturing within one year	3,762	10,134
Other current liabilities	2,924	3,929
Current liabilities of discontinued operations	—	5,801
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>12,024</u>	<u>25,626</u>
Long-term debt	18,812	24,025
Long-term benefit-related liabilities	4,001	3,459
Deferred income taxes	4,739	2,438
Other long-term liabilities and deferred credits	3,384	7,159
Non-current liabilities of discontinued operations	—	43,071
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>42,960</u>	<u>105,778</u>
Minority Interest of Discontinued Operations	—	3,303
Company-Obligated Convertible Quarterly Income Preferred Securities of Subsidiary Trust Holding Solely Subordinated Debt Securities of AT&T of Discontinued Operations	—	4,720
SHAREOWNERS' EQUITY		
AT&T Common Stock, \$1 par value, authorized 6,000,000,000 shares; issued and outstanding 783,037,580 shares (net of 171,801,716 treasury shares) at December 31, 2002 and 708,481,149 shares (net of 170,349,286 treasury shares) at December 31, 2001	783	708
Additional paid-in capital	28,163	54,798
Accumulated deficit	(16,566)	(3,484)
Accumulated other comprehensive loss	(68)	(342)
TOTAL SHAREOWNERS' EQUITY	<u>12,312</u>	<u>51,680</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SHAREOWNERS' EQUITY	<u>\$ 55,272</u>	<u>\$165,481</u>

The notes are an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

AT&T CORP. AND SUBSIDIARIES
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN SHAREOWNERS' EQUITY

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2002	2001	2000
	Dollars in millions		
AT&T Common Stock			
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 708	\$ 752	\$ 639
Shares issued (acquired), net:			
Under employee plans	6	3	1
For acquisitions	—	9	121
Settlement of put option	—	31	—
For exchange of AT&T Wireless tracking stock	—	(74)	—
For funding AT&T Canada obligation	46	—	—
Redemption of TCI Pacific preferred stock	10	—	—
Other	13	(13)	(9)
Balance at end of year	<u>783</u>	<u>708</u>	<u>752</u>
AT&T Wireless Group Common Stock			
Balance at beginning of year	—	362	—
Shares issued:			
For stock offering	—	—	360
Under employee plans	—	2	2
For exchange of AT&T Wireless tracking stock	—	438	—
Conversion of preferred stock	—	406	—
AT&T Wireless Group split-off	—	(1,208)	—
Balance at end of year	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>362</u>
Liberty Media Group Class A Common Stock			
Balance at beginning of year	—	2,364	2,314
Shares issued (acquired), net:			
For acquisitions	—	—	62
Other	—	14	(12)
Liberty Media Group split-off	—	(2,378)	—
Balance at end of year	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>2,364</u>
Liberty Media Group Class B Common Stock			
Balance at beginning of year	—	206	217
Shares issued (acquired), net	—	6	(11)
Liberty Media Group split-off	—	(212)	—
Other	—	—	—
Balance at end of year	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>206</u>
Additional Paid-In Capital			
Balance at beginning of year	54,798	93,504	62,083
Shares issued (acquired), net:			
Under employee plans	328	291	100
For acquisitions	—	862	23,583
Settlement of put option	—	3,361	—
For funding AT&T Canada obligation	2,485	—	—
Redemption of TCI Pacific preferred stock	2,087	—	—
Other*	31	(1,054)	(2,804)
Proceeds in excess of par value from issuance of AT&T Wireless common stock	—	—	9,915
Gain on issuance of common stock by affiliates	—	20	530
Conversion of preferred stock	—	9,631	—
AT&T Wireless Group split-off	—	(20,955)	—
Liberty Media Group split-off	—	(30,768)	—

(continued on next page)

AT&T CORP. AND SUBSIDIARIES**CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN SHAREOWNERS' EQUITY (Continued)**

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2002	2001	2000
	Dollars in millions		
AT&T Broadband spin-off	(31,032)	—	—
Exchange of AT&T Wireless tracking stock	—	(284)	—
Beneficial conversion value of preferred stock	—	295	—
Dividends declared — AT&T Common Stock Group	(569)	(265)	—
Other	35	160	97
Balance at end of year	<u>28,163</u>	<u>54,798</u>	<u>93,504</u>
Guaranteed ESOP Obligation			
Balance at beginning of year	—	—	(17)
Amortization	—	—	17
Balance at end of year	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>
(Accumulated Deficit)/Retained Earnings			
Balance at beginning of year	(3,484)	7,408	6,712
Net (loss) income	(13,082)	7,715	4,669
Dividends declared — AT&T Common Stock Group	—	(275)	(2,485)
Dividends accrued — preferred stock	—	(652)	—
Premium on exchange of AT&T Wireless tracking stock	—	(80)	—
Treasury shares issued at less than cost	—	(7)	(1,488)
AT&T Wireless Group split-off	—	(17,593)	—
Balance at end of year	<u>(16,566)</u>	<u>(3,484)</u>	<u>7,408</u>
Accumulated Other Comprehensive (Loss)			
Balance at beginning of year	(342)	(1,398)	6,979
Other comprehensive income (loss)	266	1,742	(8,377)
AT&T Wireless Group split-off	—	72	—
Liberty Media Group split-off	—	(758)	—
AT&T Broadband spin-off	8	—	—
Balance at end of year	<u>(68)</u>	<u>(342)</u>	<u>(1,398)</u>
Total Shareowners' Equity	<u>\$ 12,312</u>	<u>\$ 51,680</u>	<u>\$103,198</u>
Summary of Total Comprehensive (Loss) Income:			
(Loss) income before cumulative effect of accounting changes	\$(12,226)	\$ 6,811	\$ 4,669
Cumulative effect of accounting changes	(856)	904	—
Net (loss) income	(13,082)	7,715	4,669
Other comprehensive income (loss) [net of income taxes of \$(169), \$(1,119), and \$5,348]	266	1,742	(8,377)
Comprehensive (Loss) Income	<u>\$(12,816)</u>	<u>\$ 9,457</u>	<u>\$ (3,708)</u>

AT&T accounts for treasury stock as retired stock.

We have 100 million authorized shares of preferred stock at \$1 par value.

* Other activity in 2001 and 2000 represents AT&T common stock received in exchange for entities owning certain cable systems.

The notes are an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

AT&T CORP. AND SUBSIDIARIES
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS

	For the Years Ended December 31,		
	2002	2001	2000
Dollars in millions			
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Net (loss) income	\$(13,082)	\$ 7,715	\$ 4,669
Deduct:			
Loss from discontinued operations	(14,513)	(4,052)	(4,863)
Gain on disposition of discontinued operations	1,324	13,503	—
Cumulative effect of accounting changes — net of income taxes	(856)	904	—
Income (loss) from continuing operations	963	(2,640)	9,532
Adjustments to reconcile income (loss) from continuing operations to net cash provided by operating activities of continuing operations:			
Net gains on sales of businesses and investments	(30)	(1,231)	(734)
Cost investment impairment charges	146	531	7
Net restructuring and other charges	1,418	973	577
Depreciation and amortization	4,888	4,559	4,538
Provision for uncollectible receivables	1,058	884	925
Deferred income taxes	2,631	(1,338)	1,005
Net revaluation of certain financial instruments	8	(150)	—
Minority interest income	(114)	(131)	(41)
Equity losses (earnings) from Liberty Media Group	—	2,711	(1,488)
Net losses related to other equity investments	512	7,783	51
Decrease (increase) in receivables	707	888	(2,382)
Decrease in accounts payable	(175)	(508)	(585)
Net change in other operating assets and liabilities	(1,400)	(2,126)	(148)
Other adjustments, net	(129)	(200)	(616)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES OF CONTINUING OPERATIONS	10,483	10,005	10,641
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Capital expenditures and other additions	(3,878)	(5,767)	(7,025)
Proceeds from sale or disposal of property, plant and equipment	468	73	555
Increase in other receivables	—	—	(981)
Investment distributions and sales	10	1,585	414
Investment contributions and purchases	(2)	(101)	(1,787)
Net dispositions (acquisitions) of businesses, net of cash disposed/acquired	(18)	15	(23,742)
Decrease in AT&T Canada obligation	(3,449)	—	—
Proceeds from AT&T Broadband	5,849	—	—
Increase in restricted cash	(442)	—	—
Other investing activities, net	33	(100)	(112)
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES OF CONTINUING OPERATIONS	(1,429)	(4,295)	(32,678)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Proceeds from long-term debt issuances, net of issuance costs	79	11,392	739
Retirement of long-term debt	(1,091)	(725)	(688)
(Decrease) increase in short-term borrowings, net	(7,157)	(17,168)	16,973
Repayment of borrowings from AT&T Wireless	—	(5,803)	—
Issuance of convertible preferred securities and warrants	—	9,811	—
Issuance of AT&T common shares	2,684	224	99
Issuance of AT&T Wireless Group common shares	—	54	10,314
Net issuance (acquisition) of treasury shares	—	24	(581)
Dividends paid on common stock	(555)	(549)	(3,047)
Other financing activities, net	(1)	(38)	(64)
NET CASH (USED IN) PROVIDED BY FINANCING ACTIVITIES OF CONTINUING OPERATIONS	(6,041)	(2,778)	23,745
Net cash (used in) provided by discontinued operations	(5,679)	7,683	(2,746)
Net (decrease) increase in cash and cash equivalents	(2,666)	10,615	(1,038)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	10,680	65	1,103
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	\$ 8,014	\$ 10,680	\$ 65

The notes are an integral part of the consolidated financial statements.

○ AT&T Board of Directors

David W. Dorman, 49
Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer since November 2002. Elected to the Board in 2002.

Kenneth T. Derr, 66
Retired Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Chevron Corporation, an international oil company. Director since 1995. 2, 3

M. Kathryn Eickhoff, 64
President of Eickhoff Economics, Inc., an economic consulting firm. Director since 1987. 1, 3

Frank C. Herringer, 60
Chairman of the Board and former Chief Executive Officer of Transamerica Corporation, a financial services company, which was acquired in 1999 by Aegon N.V., an international insurance organization. Elected to the Board in 2002. 1, 2

Amos B. Hostetter, Jr., 66
Chairman of Pilot House Associates, LLC, a family investment company. Director since 1999. 1, 2

Shirley Ann Jackson, Ph.D., 56
President of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Elected to the Board in 2001. 2, 3

Jon C. Madonna, 59
Retired Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of KPMG, an international accounting and consulting firm. Director since 2002. 1

Donald F. McHenry, 66
Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, and President of IRC Group LLC, international relations consultants. Director since 1986. 1, 3

Tony L. White, 56
Chairman of the Board, President, and Chief Executive Officer of Applera Corporation, a life sciences company. Elected to the Board in 2002. 2, 3

1. Audit Committee
2. Compensation and Employee Benefits Committee
3. Governance and Nominating Committee

Ages are as of April 17, 2003.

Senior Leadership Team

David W. Dorman
Chairman of the Board and
Chief Executive Officer

Betsy J. Bernard
President

James W. Cicconi
General Counsel and Executive
Vice President
Law and Government Affairs

Hossein Eslambolchi
President of AT&T Labs,
Chief Technology Officer and
AT&T Business Chief
Information Officer

Mirian Graddick-Weir
Executive Vice President
Human Resources

Thomas W. Horton
Senior Executive Vice President,
Chief Financial Officer

Frank Ianna
President
AT&T Network Services

John C. Petrillo
Executive Vice President
Corporate Strategy and
Business Development

John Polumbo
President and Chief Executive
Officer
AT&T Consumer

Kenneth E. Sichau
President
AT&T Business Sales

Constance K. Weaver
Executive Vice President
Public Relations, Brand &
Business Marketing

Other Corporate Officers

Nicholas S. Cyprus
Vice President and Controller

Edward M. Dwyer
Vice President and Treasurer

Robert S. Feit
Vice President, Law
and Corporate Secretary

Richard E. Sullivan, Jr.
Investor Relations Vice President



David Dorman, Betsy Bernard,
Tom Horton



John Petrillo, Mirian Graddick-
Weir, John Polumbo



Jim Cicconi, Connie Weaver,
Frank Ianna



Hossein Eslambolchi,
Ken Sichau

○ Corporate Information

Corporate Headquarters
One AT&T Way
Bedminster, NJ 07921-0752

Business
AT&T Business has relationships with about 4 million business customers worldwide who depend on AT&T for voice, data, Internet and managed solutions. For more information about AT&T Business and our products and services, visit our Web site at www.att.com/business. Small/medium business customers can find the right communications solution with the convenience of on-line sales and service by visiting www.att.com/businesscenter/smbushome.html. Large/global business customers can access our expansive set of local to global business solutions by visiting www.att.com/businesscenter/lgbushome.html. Government customers can locate our suite of integrated technology solutions with professional service expertise by visiting www.att.com/gov.

Consumer
AT&T Consumer has nearly 50 million customer relationships and offers services as diverse as long distance and local services, domestic and international calling plans, prepaid and subscriber calling cards, and dial-up and broadband Internet access. AT&T Consumer also offers customers the convenience of online billing, ordering and customer service. To order a consumer service, visit our Web site at www.consumer.att.com.

AT&T on the World Wide Web
The AT&T Internet home page – www.att.com – is your entry point to a vast array of services and information. One of the most visited sites on the Internet, att.com gives you access to the latest AT&T products for your home, along with the convenience and security of online ordering and billing. The site connects business customers to the services and innovation that give their companies a competitive advantage. In addition, you can navigate to current company news, connections to investor and corporate information and the latest advances from AT&T Labs.

AT&T Giving
For more than 100 years, AT&T has built a tradition of investing in local communities through our ongoing support for education, civic and community service, the environment and the arts. In 2002, the AT&T Foundation contributed nearly \$40 million to nonprofit organizations in local communities throughout the United States and many other countries. Also in 2002, AT&T employees volunteered nearly 750,000 hours of community service through the AT&T CARES program. For more information on the AT&T Foundation and AT&T CARES, visit our Web site at www.att.com/foundation.

Environment, Health & Safety
AT&T is dedicated to creating a safe and healthy workplace for AT&T employees and strives to maintain our reputation as one of the top corporate environmental champions. More information about AT&T's environment, health and safety initiatives may be found at our Web site: www.att.com/ehs/.

TelecomPioneers
Since 1911, AT&T has been a sponsor of TelecomPioneers (formerly Telephone Pioneers of America), the world's largest, industry-based volunteer organization. AT&T employees and retirees comprise more than 57,000 of its members. In 2002, TelecomPioneers awarded the AT&T Pioneers its first President's Innovation Award. For more information on the AT&T Pioneers, visit our Web site at www.attpioneers.org.

Supplier Diversity Initiative
As part of AT&T's Supplier Diversity initiative, approximately \$870 million of AT&T's total purchases in 2002 were made from minority-, women- and service-disabled veteran-owned business enterprises. More information is available at our Web site: www.att.com/supplier_diversity/.

AT&T Communications Action Network (CAN)
On February 20, the FCC announced its Triennial Review decision, approving new rules to give states more authority over the \$125 billion U.S. local-telephone market. Jim Cicconi, AT&T Corp. General Counsel and Executive Vice President, Law and Government Affairs, said, "the result is that consumers will see lower prices and more choices in the marketplace, and the economy will experience more investment and greater innovation." To learn more about this and other important AT&T public policy issues, visit the CAN Web site at www.attcan.org. While you're there, sign up and join our Communications Action Network!

○ Shareowner Information

Shareowner Services

You can get up-to-the-minute information about your AT&T investment 24 hours a day by visiting www.att.com/ir – the AT&T Investor Relations Web site – where you will find current stock quotes, historical stock prices, financial results, tax basis information, investor news and online access to your AT&T shareowner account. Get fast information about how to arrange for the direct deposit of dividends, change your address, reinvest your dividends or transfer ownership of your shares. If you need more information, send an e-mail to att@equiserve.com, or contact us by phone at 1-800-348-8288. Our interactive voice-response system can answer most of your questions 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Representatives are available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Eastern), to assist you. Shareowners outside the United States may call 1-816-843-4282. Shareowners using a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call 1-800-822-2794. Our fax number is 1-781-575-3261, and our mailing address is: AT&T Shareowner Services, c/o EquiServe, P.O. Box 43007, Providence, RI 02940-3007.

Electronic Access to Proxy Materials

In an effort to reduce the printing and mailing costs associated with the distribution of the AT&T Annual Report and Proxy Statement, AT&T registered shareowners can electronically access, view and download the AT&T Annual Report and Proxy Statement and other materials at the AT&T Investor Relations Web site at www.att.com/ir. AT&T shareowners can choose this option by marking the "Electronic Access" box on the proxy card or by following the instructions provided when voting by telephone or the Internet. If you choose this option prior to each shareowner meeting, you will receive your proxy card, which provides a notice of meeting and a business-reply envelope. Beneficial owners can request the electronic-access option by contacting their broker or financial institution.

Dividend Reinvestment Plan

Participating in the AT&T Shareowner Dividend Reinvestment and Stock Purchase Plan (DRP) is a convenient, systematic way to build your investment. Under Dividend Reinvestment, all or a portion of your dividends are automatically reinvested to purchase additional shares of AT&T common stock. Participants receive periodic account statements tracking reinvestment transactions and account balances. Additional shares of AT&T common stock can be purchased with cash or automatic monthly investments from your bank account. Fees may apply to certain transactions. To obtain a Plan prospectus, contact EquiServe at 1-800-348-8288.

Direct Registration of AT&T Shares

AT&T shareowners are finding it convenient to have shares held in the Direct Registration System, which gives you full ownership of your shares. With Direct Registration, AT&T's transfer agent (EquiServe) holds the shares in your name. You retain full ownership and continue to receive all AT&T dividends, shareowner communications, annual reports and proxy-voting material. You can easily get your account balance or sell your shares by phone or via the Internet. It's safe and convenient. For more information on this service, contact EquiServe at 1-800-348-8288.

Stock Information

AT&T (ticker symbol "T") is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, as well as the Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Pacific and Philadelphia exchanges in the United States; and the Euronext-Paris, and the London and Geneva stock exchanges. As of December 31, 2002, AT&T had approximately 783 million shares outstanding, held by more than 3.3 million shareowners.

Additional Financial Information

A copy of AT&T's Annual Report on Form 10-K, filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, may be obtained free of charge by sending a request to:

One AT&T Way
Bedminster, NJ 07921
Attention: Investor Relations
or may be accessed electronically at www.att.com/ir/.

○ Our Common Bond

We commit to these values to guide our decisions and behavior:

Respect for Individuals

We treat each other with respect and dignity, valuing individual and cultural differences. We communicate frequently and with candor, listening to each other regardless of level or position. Recognizing that exceptional quality begins with people, we give individuals the authority to use their capabilities to the fullest to satisfy their customers. Our environment supports personal growth and continuous learning for all AT&T people.

Dedication to Helping Customers

We truly care for each customer. We build enduring relationships by understanding and anticipating our customers' needs and by serv-

ing them better each time than the time before. AT&T customers can count on us to consistently deliver superior products and services that help them achieve their personal or business goals.

Highest Standards of Integrity

We are honest and ethical in all our business dealings, starting with how we treat each other. We keep our promises and admit our mistakes. Our personal conduct ensures that AT&T's name is always worthy of trust.

Innovation

We believe innovation is the engine that will keep us vital and growing. Our culture embraces creativity, seeks different perspectives and risks pursuing new opportunities. We create and rapidly convert technology into products and services, constantly searching for new ways to make technology more useful to customers.

Teamwork

We encourage and reward both individual and team achievements. We freely join with colleagues across organizational boundaries to advance the interests of customers and shareowners. Our team spirit extends to being responsible and caring partners in the communities where we live and work.

By living these values, AT&T aspires to set a standard of excellence worldwide that will reward our shareowners, our customers, and all AT&T people.



Appendix 6

Public Relations Society of America Local Chapters



LOCAL CHAPTERS: PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF AMERICA

For updated contact information, consult the Public Relations Society of America's Web site, www.prsa.org

ALABAMA

Base: Birmingham
HOME PAGE: www.alabamaprsa.org

ALASKA

Base: Anchorage
HOME PAGE: www.prsaalaska.org

ARIZONA

Southern Arizona

Base: Tucson
HOME PAGE: www.prsatucson.com

Phoenix

HOME PAGE: www.phxprsa.org
HOTLINE: 602-258-7772

ARKANSAS

Base: Little Rock
HOME PAGE: www.arkprsa.org

Northwest Arkansas

Base: Fayetteville
HOME PAGE: www.nwaprsa.org

CALIFORNIA

California Capital

Base: Sacramento
HOME PAGE: www.prsa-sacramento.org
FAX-ON-DEMAND: 800-776-3290

California Inland Empire

Base: Riverside
HOME PAGE: www.prsainlandempire.org

Central California

Base: Fresno Valley
HOME PAGE: www.prsacentralcal.org

Los Angeles

HOME PAGE: www.prsa-la.org

Oakland-East Bay

Base: Oakland
HOME PAGE: www.prsa-eastbay.org

Orange County

Base: Santa Ana
HOME PAGE: www.ocprsa.org

San Diego County

Base: San Diego
HOME PAGE: www.prsasandiego.org
HOTLINE: 619-680-3990
FAX-ON-DEMAND: 800-776-3290

San Francisco

Base: San Francisco
HOME PAGE: www.prsasf.org
FAX-ON-DEMAND: 800-776-3290

Silicon Valley

HOME PAGE: www.siliconprsa.org

COLORADO

Denver

HOME PAGE: www.prsacolorado.org

Pikes Peak

Base: Colorado Springs
HOME PAGE: www.prsacoloradosprings.org

CONNECTICUT

Base: New Haven
HOME PAGE: None

Connecticut Valley

Base: Hartford
HOME PAGE: www.prsa-cvc.org

Westchester/Fairfield

Base: Westchester/Fairfield
HOME PAGE: www.prsa-wf.org

DELAWARE

Base: Wilmington
HOME PAGE: www.prsadelaware.org

FLORIDA

Gulfcoast

Base: Naples
HOME PAGE: None

Gulfstream

PO Box 677
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33302
HOME PAGE: www.prsagulfstream.org

North Florida

Base: Jacksonville
HOME PAGE: www.jax-prsa.org

Miami

HOME PAGE: www.prsamiami.org

Orlando Regional

PO Box 1212
Orlando, FL 32802-1212
HOME PAGE: www.prsaorlando.org

Palm Beach

PO Box 1212
Orlando, FL 32802-1212
HOME PAGE: www.prsapalmbeach.org

Tampa Bay

HOME PAGE: www.tampa.prsa.org

GEORGIA

Atlanta

HOME PAGE: www.prsageorgia.org

South Georgia

Base: Savannah
HOME PAGE: None

HAWAII

Base: Honolulu
HOME PAGE: www.prsahawaii.org

ILLINOIS

Central Illinois

Base: Bloomington
HOME PAGE: www.geocities.com/prsa_ci

Chicago

HOME PAGE: www.prsachicago.com

Suburban Chicago

HOME PAGE: www.prsasuburbanchicagoland.org

INDIANA

Base: Indianapolis

HOME PAGE: www.hoosierprsa.org

HOTLINE: 317-265-4887

IOWA*Cedar Valley*

Base: Cedar Rapids/Waterloo

HOME PAGE: www.cvprsa.org

Central Iowa

Base: Des Moines

HOME PAGE: www.prsaciowa.org

Greater Dubuque

HOME PAGE: None

Quad Cities

Base: Eastern IA/Western IL

HOME PAGE: None

KANSAS

Base: Wichita

HOME PAGE: www.prsakansas.org

KENTUCKY*Bluegrass*

Base: Louisville

HOME PAGE: www.bluegrassprsa.org

Thoroughbred

Base: Lexington

HOME PAGE: www.kyprsa.com

LOUISIANA*Baton Rouge*

HOME PAGE: None

New Orleans

HOME PAGE: www.prsaneworleans.org

INFOLINE: 504-558-0034

North Louisiana

Base: Shreveport

HOME PAGE: None

MAINE*Yankee*

Base: Concord, NH

HOME PAGE: www.yankeeprsa.org

MARYLAND*Annapolis/Anne Arundel*

Base: Annapolis/St. Mary's

HOME PAGE: www.annapolisprsa.org

Chesapeake Bay

HOME PAGE: None

Maryland

Base: Baltimore

HOME PAGE: www.prsamd.org

MD residents only: 800-929-7680

National Capital

Base: Washington, D.C.

HOME PAGE: www.PRSA-ncc.org/

MASSACHUSETTS*Boston*

HOME PAGE: www.prsaboston.org

MICHIGAN*Central Michigan*

Base: Lansing

HOME PAGE: www.cmprsa.org

Detroit

HOME PAGE: www.prsadetroit.org

West Michigan

Base: Grand Rapids
HOME PAGE: www.wmprsa.org

White Pine

Base: Bay City/Saginaw
HOME PAGE: www.ecd.prsa.org

MINNESOTA

Base: Minneapolis
HOME PAGE: www.mnprsa.com

MISSOURI

Greater Kansas City

Base: Kansas City
HOME PAGE: www.kansascity-prsa.org

Mid-Missouri

Base: Columbia/Jefferson City
HOME PAGE: www.midmoprsa.org

St. Louis

HOME PAGE: www.prsastlouis.org

MONTANA

Base: Statewide
HOME PAGE: www.montanaprsa.org

NEBRASKA

Base: Omaha
HOME PAGE: www.nebraskaprsa.org

Siouxland

HOME PAGE: None

NEVADA

Las Vegas Valley

Base: Las Vegas
HOME PAGE: www.prsalasegas.com

Sierra Nevada

Base: Reno
HOME PAGE: www.prsareno.org

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Yankee

Base: Concord, NH
HOME PAGE: www.yankeeprsa.org

NEW JERSEY

Base: Statewide
HOME PAGE: www.prsanj.org

NEW MEXICO

Base: Albuquerque
HOME PAGE: www.nmprsa.com

NEW YORK

Buffalo/Niagara

Base: Buffalo
HOME PAGE: www.prsabuffaloniagara.org

Capital Region

Base: Albany
HOME PAGE: [www.timesunion.com/
communities/prsa](http://www.timesunion.com/communities/prsa)

Central New York

Base: Syracuse
HOME PAGE: www.prsa-cny.org

Finger Lakes

Base: Corning/Elmira
HOME PAGE: None

New York

Base: New York City
HOME PAGE: www.prsany.org

Rochester

HOME PAGE: www.prsarochester.org

Westchester/Fairfield

HOME PAGE: www.prsa-wf.org

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte

HOME PAGE: www.prsacharlotte.org

HOTLINE: 704-3351-8874

North Carolina

Base: Raleigh-Durham

HOME PAGE: www.northcarolina.prsa.org

Tar Heel

Base: Greensboro

HOME PAGE: www.prsatarheel.org

OHIO

Akron Area

Base: Akron

HOME PAGE: www.prsaaa.org

Cincinnati

HOME PAGE: www.cincinnati.prsa.org

Central Ohio

Base: Columbus

HOME PAGE: www.centralohioprsa.org

HOTLINE: 614-470-2875

Dayton/Miami Valley

HOME PAGE: www.prsadayton.org

Greater Cleveland

Base: Cleveland

HOME PAGE: www.prsacleveland.org

Northwest Ohio

Base: Bowling Green/Toledo

HOME PAGE: www.ecd.prsa.org

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City

HOME PAGE: www.prsaokc.com

Tulsa

HOME PAGE: None

OREGON

Greater Oregon

Base: Eugene

HOME PAGE: None

Oregon Capital

Base: Salem

HOME PAGE: www.oregoncapitalprsa.org

Portland Metro

Base: Portland

HOME PAGE: www.prsa-portland.org

HOTLINE: 503-221-6202

PENNSYLVANIA

Central Pennsylvania

Base: Hershey/Harrisburg

HOME PAGE: <http://cpaprsa.tripod.com>

Philadelphia

HOME PAGE: www.prsa.philly.org

Pittsburgh

HOME PAGE: www.prsa-pgh.org

RHODE ISLAND

Southeastern New England

Base: Providence, RI

HOME PAGE: www.prsasene.org

HOTLINE: (401) 737-7772

SOUTH CAROLINA

Base: Columbia
HOME PAGE: www.scprsa.org

SOUTH DAKOTA

Siouxland
HOME PAGE: None

TENNESSEE

Memphis
Base: Memphis
HOME PAGE: www.prsamemphis.org

Lookout
Base: Chattanooga
HOME PAGE: www.lookoutprsa.org

Nashville
HOME PAGE: www.prsanashville.com
RESERVATION LINE: 615-963-1335

Tri-Cities
Base: Tri-Cities TN/VA
HOME PAGE: None

Volunteer
Base: Knoxville
HOME PAGE: www.volunteerprsa.org

TEXAS

Austin
Chapter Address
P.O. Box 684036
Austin, TX 78768
HOME PAGE: <http://prsa.austin.org>

Greater Fort Worth
HOME PAGE: www.prsa.austin.org

Central Texas
Base: Waco
HOME PAGE: None

Houston
HOME PAGE: www.prsahouston.org

Laredo-Gateway
Base: Laredo
HOME PAGE: None

Dallas
HOME PAGE: www.prsadallas.org

Rio Grande
Base: El Paso
HOME PAGE: None

San Antonio
HOME PAGE: www.prsanantonio.com
HOTLINE: 210-302-1000

UTAH

Greater Salt Lake
Base: Salt Lake City
HOME PAGE: www.slcrsa.org

Utah Valley
Base: Provo
HOME PAGE: None

VERMONT

Yankee
Base: Concord, NH
HOME PAGE: www.yankeeprsa.org

VIRGINIA

Blue Ridge

Base: Roanoke
HOME PAGE: www.prsa-blueridge.org/

Hampton Roads

Base: Hampton/Norfolk
HOME PAGE: www.prsahr.org

Richmond

HOME PAGE: www.prsarichmond.org

WASHINGTON

Greater Spokane

Base: Spokane
HOME PAGE: www.spokanepur.org

Puget Sound

Base: Seattle
HOME PAGE: www.prsapugetsound.org
FAX-ON-DEMAND: 800-776-3290

WEST VIRGINIA

Base: Statewide
HOME PAGE: www.prsawv.org

WISCONSIN

Madison

HOME PAGE: www.prsamadison.org

Northeast Wisconsin

Base: Neenah/Oshkosh
HOME PAGE: www.prsanewis.org

Southeastern Wisconsin

Base: Milwaukee
HOME PAGE: www.prsawis.org

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Appendix 7

Public Relations Online Resources



American Society of Association Executives

World's leading membership organization for the association management profession.

www.asaenet.org

Canadian Public Relations Society

Professional organization with 1,700 members across Canada.

www.cprs.ca

Communications Roundtable

Association of public relations, marketing, graphics, advertising, training, information technology, and other communications organizations.

www.roundtable.org

Council of Public Relations Firms

Information source for members regarding the public relations industry.

www.prfirms.org

Holmes Report

Source of news, knowledge, and career information for public relations professionals.

www.holmesreport.com/

The Institute for PR

Promotes and encourages academic and professional excellence.

www.instituteforpr.com

The Institute of Public Relations

The largest public relations professional membership association in Europe.

www.ipr.org.uk

International Association of Business Communicators

Products, services, activities, and networking opportunities to help people and organizations achieve excellence in public relations, employee communication, marketing communication, public affairs, and other forms of communication.

www.iabc.com

International Public Relations Association

Provides professional development and personal networking opportunities for worldwide membership.

www.ipra.org

I-PR Discussion List

An online community of public relations professionals.

www.marketingwonk.com/lists/ipr/

National Investor Relations Institute

Advances the practice of investor relations and the professional competency and stature of its members.

www.niri.org

The PR Academy

An online course for prospective public relations practitioners.

www.learnpr.com

PR Bytes

A moderated forum for public relations professionals to discuss public relations/communications issues as they relate to the Internet.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/prbytes>

PR Week

The first weekly magazine to offer worldwide coverage of the public relations business.

www.prweek.com

Public Relations Consultants Association

Information about public relations consultants in the United Kingdom.

www.prca.org.uk/sites/prca.nsf/homepages/homepage

*Public Relations Division,
Association for Education in
Journalism and Mass Communication*

Web site for association of public relations educators in the United States and abroad.

<http://lamar.colostate.edu/~aejmcpr/>

Public Relations Institute of New Zealand

The national organization created to promote public relations in New Zealand and serve the best interests of the people who practice it.

www.prinz.org.nz

Public Relations Links

Links compiled by Kirk Hallahan, Fellow PRSA, at Colorado State University.

<http://lamar.colostate.edu/~hallahan/j13pr.htm>

Public Relations Society of America

The world's largest professional organization for public relations practitioners.

www.prsa.org

Public Relations Student Society of America

Cultivates mutually advantageous relationships between students and professional public relations practitioners.

www.prssa.org

Technology Events Information

List of important and influential technology-related gatherings worldwide.

www.catchpole.com/internetpr/events.cfm

Young PR Pros

An online forum for those new to the public relations field.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/youngprpros>

Westcoastprjobs.com

Job site for jobs in Arizona, California, and the Pacific Northwest.

www.westcoastprjobs.com

Workinpr.com

Recruiting and career site specifically for the public relations industry, offering credible industry research, career resources, and public relations tools.

www.workinpr.com

Writing That Works

Monthly how-to newsletter exclusively on practical business writing, editing, and communications.
www.apexawards.com/wtw.htm

Yearbook.com

Experts and sources on thousands of topics.
www.yearbook.com

Appendix 8

Where to Study Public Relations



The following **245** colleges and universities offer substantial programs of public relations at the undergraduate level. Each has met the criteria established by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) for chartering a chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA). The purpose of PRSSA is to cultivate a mutually advantageous relationship between students and the professional practice. Named here are the PRSSA Faculty Advisors who can provide further information about public relations study at their respective schools. Please contact Liesel Enke at liesel.enke@prsa.org or by phone at 212/460-1474 if you have any questions or updates regarding this list. The schools listed here are chartered by PRSA for PRSSA chapters as of **February 2004**.

ALABAMA (3)

University of Alabama

Dept. of Communication Studies
Birmingham, AL 35294
Dr. John Wittig, APR
Phone: (205) 934-8917
wittig1939@hotmail.com

University of Alabama

Dept. of Advertising/PR
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
Prof. Karla K. Gower
Phone: (205) 348-0132
gower@apr.ua.edu

Samford University

Dept. of Journalism & Mass Comm.
Birmingham, Alabama 35229
Dr. David Shipley, APR
Phone: (205) 726-2586
dsshiple@samford.edu

ALASKA (1)

University of Alaska

Dept. of Journalism/Public Comm.
Anchorage, AK 99508
Prof. Vivian Hamilton
Phone: (907) 694-0400
hamiltonpr@gci.net

ARKANSAS (4)

University of Arkansas

Dept. of Journalism
Fayetteville, AR 72701
Dr. Phyllis Miller
Phone: (479) 575-5213
pmiller@comp.uark.edu

University of Arkansas

Dept. of Journalism
Little Rock, AR 72204
Prof. Jamie Byrne
Phone: (501) 569-3392

Arkansas State University
College of Communications
State University, AR 72467
Prof. Lisa Moskal
Phone: (870) 972-3075
lmoskal@astate.edu

Harding University
Communication Department
Searcy, AR 72149
Prof. Jack Shock
Phone: (501) 279-4196
communication@harding.edu

ARIZONA (2)

Arizona State University
School of Journalism
Tempe, AZ 85282-1305
Prof. Renea D. Nichols
Phone: (480) 965-8799
reaneanichols@asu.edu

Northern Arizona University
Dept. of Journalism,
Box 5619
Flagstaff, AZ 86011
Dr. Manny Romero
Phone: (520) 523-2507
manny.romero@nau.edu

CALIFORNIA (17)

Biola University
Department of Communications
13800 Biola Ave.
La Mirada, CA 90639
Todd V. Lewis
Phone: (562) 944-0351
todd_lewis@peter.biola.edu

California Polytechnic University
Dept. of Communication Arts
Pomona, CA 91768
Prof. John Kaufman
Phone: (909) 869-3534
jakaufman@csupomona.edu

California Polytechnic University
Journalism Department
Cal Poly
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
Mark Hucklebridge
Phone: (805) 756-1196
mhuckleb@calpoly.edu

California State University, Bakersfield
Dept. of Communications
Bakersfield, CA 93311-1099
Dr. Andy O. Alali
Phone: (805) 664-2152
aalai@csub.edu

California State University, Dominguez Hills
Dept. of Communications
Carson, CA 90747
Prof. Donn E. Silvis
Phone: (310) 243-3682
dsilvis@csudh.edu

California State University, Fresno
Dept. of Mass Communications
Fresno, CA 93740-8029
Betsy Martinusen
Phone: (559) 278-6154
betsy_martinusen@csufresno.edu

California State University, Fullerton
Dept. of Communications
Fullerton, CA 92634
Joseph Massey
Phone: (714) 278-4609
jmassey@fullerton.edu

California State University, Hayward
25800 Carlos Bee Boulevard
Hayward, CA 94542
Dr. Valer Sue
Phone: (510) 885-3292

California State University, Long Beach
Dept. of Journalism
Long Beach, CA 90840

Prof. Mathew Cabot
Phone: (562) 985-7939
mcabot@csulb.edu

California State University, Northridge

Journalism Department
Northridge, CA 91330-8311
Prof. Scott Berman
Phone: (818) 677-3135
scott.j.berman@csun.edu

California State University, San Bernardino

5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, CA 92407-2397
Donna Eileen Simmons
Phone: (909) 880-7379
dsimmons@csub.edu

Chapman University

Dept. of Communications
Orange, CA 92866
Prof. Janell Shearer, APR
Phone: (714) 997-6647
shearer@chapman.edu

University of the Pacific

Dept. of Communication
Stockton, CA 95211
Dr. Carol Ann Hackley, APR
Phone: (209) 946-2505
tchackley@aol.com

Pepperdine University

Communication Division
Malibu, CA 90265
Dr. Louella Benson-Garcia
Phone: (310) 506-4593
louella.benson@pepperdine.edu

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Appendix 9

Dictionary of Public Relations Measurement



A

Alpha Level (α) The amount of error or chance allowed in sampling or inferential testing

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) An inferential statistical test of significance for continuous-measurement dependent variables against a number of groups as independent variables

Attitude A predisposition to act or behave toward some object; a motivating factor in public relations composed of three dimensions: affective (emotional evaluation), cognitive (knowledge evaluation), and connotative (behavioral evaluation)

Attitude Research The measuring and interpreting of a full range of views, sentiments, feelings, opinions, and beliefs that segments of the public may hold toward a client or product

Attitude Scale A measure that targets respondent attitudes or beliefs toward some object; typically interval-level data, and requires that an arbitrary or absolute midpoint (“neutral” or “neither agree nor disagree”) be provided to the respondent; also known as Likert or semantic differential measures

Audience A specified group from within a defined public targeted for influence

B

Baseline An initial measurement against which all subsequent measures are compared

Behavioral Objective (1) An objective that specifies the expected public relations campaign or program outcome in terms of specific behaviors; (2) a measure that is actionable in that it is the behavior requested of a target audience

Belief A long-held evaluation of some object, usually determined on the basis of its occurrence; clusters of beliefs yield attitudes

Benchmarking (Benchmark Study) A measurement technique that involves having an organization learn something about its own practices and the practices of selected others, and then compare these practices

Bivariate Analysis A statistical examination of the relationship between two variables

BRAD British Rate and Data measure, providing circulation and advertising cost data

C

Campaign (Program) The planning, execution, and evaluation of a public relations plan of action aimed at solving a problem

Case Study Methodology An informal research methodology that gathers data on a specific individual, company, or product with the analysis focused on understanding its unique qualities; not generalizable to other cases or populations

Categorical Data Measurement data that are defined by their association with groups and are expressed in terms of frequencies, percentages, and proportions (*see* Nominal data, Ordinal data)

Category In content analysis, the part of the system where the units of analysis are placed; also referred to as *subjects* or *buckets*

Causal Relationship A relationship between variables in which a change in one variable forces, produces, or brings about a change in another variable

Census Collection of data from *every* person or object in a population

Central Tendency A statistic that describes the typical or average case in the distribution of a variable (*see* Mean, Median, Mode, Range, Standard deviation, Standardized score, Variance, Z-score)

Characters A manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting of individuals or roles (e.g., occupations, roles, race)

Chi-Square (X^2) An inferential statistical test of significance for categorical data (nominal or ordinal)

Circulation Number of copies of a publication as distributed (as opposed to read)

Closed-Ended Question A question that requires participants to supply selected and predetermined

responses (e.g., “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neither agree nor disagree,” “disagree,” “strongly disagree”)

Clustered Sample A type of probability sample that involves first breaking the population into heterogeneous subsets (or clusters) and then selecting the potential sample at random from the individual clusters

Coefficient Alpha (α) A statistical test for a measurement’s reliability for interval and ratio data; also known as Cronbach’s coefficient alpha

Cohort Survey A type of longitudinal survey in which some specific group is studied over time according to some criterion that stays the same (e.g., age = 21) while the samples may differ

Column Inches Total length of an article if it were all in one column, measured in inches (or centimeters); determines the total “share of ink” that a company or brand has achieved

Communication(s) Audit A systematic review and analysis of how effectively an organization communicates with all of its major internal and external audiences by identifying these audiences, by identifying the communication programs and their communication products utilized for each audience, by determining the effectiveness of these programs and their products, and by identifying gaps in the overall existing communication program; uses accepted research techniques and methodologies (*see* the following methodologies: Case study, Content analysis, Experimental, Focus group, Formal, Historical, In-depth interview, Informal, Secondary, Survey, Participant-observation)

Community Case Study An informal methodology whereby the researcher takes an in-depth look at one or several communities—subsections of communities—in which an organization has an interest by impartial, trained researchers using a mix of informal research methodologies (i.e., participant-observation, role-playing, secondary analysis, content analysis, interviewing, focus groups)

Confidence Interval In survey methodology based on a random sampling technique, the range of

values or measurement within which a population parameter is estimated to fall (e.g., for a large population we might expect answers to a question to be within ± 3 percent of the true population answer; if 55 percent responded positively, the confidence interval would be from 52 to 58 percent); sometimes called *measurement error*

Confidence Level In survey methodology based on a random sampling technique, the amount of confidence we can place on our confidence interval (typically set at 95 percent, or 95 out of 100 cases truly representing the population under study, with *no more than 5* cases out of 100 misrepresenting that population); sometimes called *sampling error*

Construct Validity A statistically tested form of measurement validity that seeks to establish the dimensionality of a measure

Content Analysis (1) An informal research methodology (and measurement tool) that systematically tracks messages (written, spoken, broadcast) and translates them into quantifiable form using a systematic approach to defining message categories via specified units of analysis; (2) the action of breaking down message content into predetermined components (categories) to form a judgment capable of being measured

Content Validity A form of measurement validity that is based on other researchers' or experts' evaluations of the measurement items contained in a measure

Contingency Question A survey question that is to be asked only to some respondents, determined by their responses to some other questions; sometimes called a *funnel question*

Contingency Table A statistical table for displaying the relationship between variables in terms of frequencies and percentages; sometimes called a *cross-tabulation table* or *cross tab*

Continuous Data Data measured on a continuum, usually as interval data

Convenience Sample A non-probability sample where the respondents or objects are chosen because of availability (e.g., "man on the street"); a

type of non-probability sample in which whoever happens to be available at a given point in time is included in the sample; sometimes called a "haphazard" or "accidental" sample

Correlation (r) A statistical test that examines the relationships between variables (either categorical or continuous)

Correlation Coefficient A measure of association that describes the direction and strength of a linear relationship between two variables; usually measured at the interval or ratio data level (e.g., Pearson Product Moment Coefficient, r) but can be measured at the nominal or ordinal level (e.g., Spearman-Rho)

Cost per Thousand (CPM) Cost of advertising for each 1,000 homes reached by the media

Covariation A criterion for causation whereby the dependent variable takes on different values depending on the independent variable

Criterion Variable The variable the research wants to predict

Criterion-Related Validity A form of validity that compares one measure against others known to have specified relationships with what is being measured; the highest form of measurement validity

Crossbreak Analysis A categorical analysis that compares the frequency of responses in individual cells

Cross-Sectional Survey A survey based on observations representing a single point in time (*see* Snapshot survey)

Cumulative Scale (Guttman Scale/Scalogram) A measurement scale that assumes that when you agree with a scale item you will also agree with items that are less extreme

Cyber Image Analysis (1) The measurement of Internet content via chat rooms or discussion groups in cyberspace regarding a client or product or topic; (2) the measurement of a client's image everywhere on the Internet

D

Data The observations or measurements taken in evaluating a public relations campaign or program (*see* Interval data, Nominal data, Ordinal data, Ratio data)

Deduction A philosophical logic in which specific expectations or hypotheses are developed or derived on the basis of general principles

Delphi Technique A research methodology (usually survey or interview) where the researcher tries to forecast the future based on successive waves of interviews or surveys with a panel of experts in a given field as a means of building a “consensus” of expert opinion and thought relating to particular topics or issues

Demographic Analysis Analysis of a population in terms of special social, political, economic, and geographic subgroups (e.g., age, sex, income level, race, educational level, place of residence, occupation)

Demographic Data Data that differentiate between groups of people or things (e.g., by sex, race, or income)

Dependent Variable The variable that is measured or collected as the outcome of changes in the independent variable

Depth Interview An extensive, probing, open-ended, largely unstructured interview, usually conducted in person or by telephone, in which respondents are encouraged to talk freely and in great detail about given subjects; also known as an *in-depth interview*

Descriptive Research A form of research that gathers information in such a way as to paint a picture of what people think or do

Descriptive Statistics The reduction and simplification of the numbers representing research, to ease interpretation of the results

Descriptive Survey A type of survey that collects in quantitative form basic opinions or facts about a specified population or sample; also known as a *public opinion poll*

Double-Barreled Question A question that attempts to measure two things at the same time; a source of measurement error

E

Environmental Scanning A research technique for tracking new developments in any area or field by carrying out a systematic review of what appears in professional, trade, or government publications

Equal Appearing Interval Scale A measurement scale with predefined values associated with each statement; also known as a *Thurstone Scale*

Equivalent Advertising Value (AVE) Equivalent cost of buying space devoted to editorial content

Ethnographic Research An informal research methodology that relies on the tools and techniques of cultural anthropologists and sociologists to obtain a better understanding of how individuals and groups function in their natural settings (*see also* Participant-observation)

Evaluation Research A form of research that determines the relative effectiveness of a public relations campaign or program by measuring program outcomes (changes in the levels of awareness, understanding, attitudes, opinions, and/or behaviors of a targeted audience or public) against a predetermined set of objectives that initially established the level or degree of change desired

Events A community affairs or sponsorship output

Experimental Methodology A formal research methodology that imposes *strict* artificial limits or boundaries on the research in order to establish some causal relationship between variables of interest; is not generalizable to a larger population

Explanatory Research A form of research that seeks to explain why people say, think, feel, and act the way they do; concerned primarily with the development of public relations theory about relationships and processes; is typically deductive

Exploratory Research A form of research that seeks to establish basic attitudes, opinions, and

behavior patterns or facts about a specific population or sample; is typically inductive and involves extensive probing of the population, sample, or data

F

Face Validity A form of measurement validity that is based on the researcher's knowledge of the concept being measured; the lowest form of measurement validity

Facilitator An individual who leads a focus group; also known as a moderator

Factor Analysis A statistical tool that allows researchers to test the dimensionality of their measures; used to assess a measure's construct validity

Field Study Methodology A formal research methodology that imposes fewer restrictions, limits, or boundaries on the research in order to test some causal relationships found in experimental research and generalize them to a larger population

Filter Question A question used to move a respondent from one question to another; a question that is used to remove a respondent from a survey or interview; also known as a *funnel question*

Focus Group Methodology An informal research methodology that uses a group approach to gain an in-depth understanding of a client, object, or product; is not generalizable to other focus groups or populations

Formal Methodology (1) A set of research methodologies that allow the researcher to generalize to a larger audience but often fail to gain in-depth understanding of the client, object, or product; (2) a set of methodologies that follow the scientific or social scientific method; (3) a set of methodologies that are deductive in nature

Frequency A descriptive statistic that represents the number of objects being counted (e.g., number of advertisements, number of people who attend an event, number of media release pickups)

F-Test An inferential test of significance associated with Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Funnel Question A question used in a questionnaire or schedule that moves an interviewer or respondent from one part of a survey to another (e.g., "Are you a registered voter?" If the respondent says yes, certain questions are asked; if not, then other questions are asked)

G

Goal (Objective) The explicit statement of intentions that supports a communication strategy and includes an intended audience/receiver, a proposed measurable outcome (or desired level of change in that audience), and a specific time frame for that change to occur

Gross Rating Points (GRP) Measures of weight, readership, or audience equivalent to audience exposure among 1 percent of the population (*see also* Targeted Gross Rating Points [TGRP])

Guttman Scale (Cumulative Scale/Scalogram) A measurement scale that assumes (1) unidimensionality and (2) that people, when faced with a choice, will also choose items less intense than the one chosen

H

Historical Methodology An informal research methodology that examines the causes and effects of past events

Hypothesis An expectation about the nature of things derived from theory; a prediction of how an independent variable changes a dependent variable; formally stated as a predication (e.g., "males will purchase more of X than females") but tested via the null hypothesis ("males and females will not differ in their purchases of X")

Hypothesis Testing Determining whether the expectations that a hypothesis represents are indeed found in the real world

I

Image Research A research program or campaign that systematically studies people's perceptions toward an organization, individual, product, or service; sometimes referred to as a *reputation study*

Impressions The number of people who might have had the opportunity to be exposed to a story that has appeared in the media; also known as *opportunity to see*, usually refers to the total audited circulation of a publication or the audience reach of a broadcast vehicle

Incidence The frequency with which a condition or event occurs in a given time and population or sample

Independent t-Test An inferential statistical test of significance that compares two levels of an independent variable against a continuous measured dependent variable

Independent Variable The variable against which the dependent variable is tested

In-Depth Interview Methodology An informal research methodology in which an individual interviews another in a one-on-one situation (*see* Depth interview)

Induction A philosophical logic in which general principles are developed from specific observations

Inferential Research Statistical analyses that test if the results observed for a sample are indicative of the population; the presentation of information that allows us to make judgments about whether the research results observed in a sample generalize to the population from which the sample was drawn

Inferential Statistics Statistical tests that allow a researcher to say within a certain degree of confidence whether variables or groups truly differ in their response to a public relations message (*see* Analysis of Variance [ANOVA], Bivariate Analysis, Chi-Square [X^2], Correlation [r], Regression [REGR], t-Test)

Informal Methodology A research methodology that does not allow the researcher to generalize to a larger audience but leads to in-depth understanding of the client, object, or product

Informational Objective An objective that establishes what information a target audience should know or the degree of change in knowledge levels after the conclusion of a public relations campaign or program

Inputs The research information and data from both internal and external sources applied in the conception, approval, and design phases of the input stage of the communication production process

Inquiry Research A formal or informal research methodology that systematically employs content analysis, survey methodology, and/or interviewing techniques to study the range and types of unsolicited inquiries that an organization may receive from customers, prospective customers, or other target audience groups

Instrumental Error In measurement, error that occurs because the measuring instrument was poorly written

Interval Data Measurement data that are defined on a continuum and assumed to have equal spacing between data points (*see* Ratio data); examples include temperature scales and standardized intelligence test scores

Interview Schedule A guideline for asking questions in person or over the telephone

Issues Research A formal or informal research methodology that systematically studies public policy questions of the day, with the chief focus on those public policy matters whose definition and contending positions are still evolving

Item A manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting of an entire message (e.g., an advertisement, story, or press release)

J

Judgmental Sample A type of non-probability sample in which individuals are deliberately selected for inclusion in the sample by the researcher because they have special knowledge, positions, or characteristics or represent other relevant dimensions of the

population that are deemed important to study; also known as a *purposive sample*

K

Key Performance (Performance Result) The desired end effect or impact of a program of campaign performance

Known Group t-Test An inferential statistical test of significance that compares the results for a sampled group on some continuous-measurement dependent variable against a known value

KR-20 A reliability statistic for nominal- or ordinal-level measurement; also known as *Kuder-Richardson Formula 20*

L

Latent Content From content analysis, an analysis of the underlying idea, thesis, or theme of content; the deeper meanings that are intended or perceived in a message

Likert Scale An interval-level measurement scale that requires people to respond to statements on a set of predetermined reactions, usually “strongly agree,” “agree,” “neither agree nor disagree,” “disagree,” “strongly disagree”; must possess an odd number of reaction words or phrases; also called *summated ratings method* because the scale requires at least two, if not three, statements per measurement dimension

Longitudinal Survey A type of survey involving *different* individuals or objects that are observed or measured over time (e.g., multiple snapshot samples)

M

Mail Survey A survey technique whereby a questionnaire is sent to a respondent via the mail (or Internet) and the respondent self-administers the questionnaire and then sends it back

Mall Intercept Research A special type of person-to-person surveying in which in-person interviewing is conducted by approaching prospective participants as they stroll through shopping centers or malls; a non-probability form of sampling

Manifest Content From content analysis, an analysis of the actual content of a message exactly as it appears as opposed to latent content that must be inferred from messages

Market Research Any systematic study of buying or selling behavior

Mean (1) A descriptive statistic of central tendency that describes the “average” of a set of numbers on a continuum, also called *average*; (2) the process of applying a precise number or metric, which is both valid and reliable, to the evaluation of some performance

Measurement A way of giving an activity a precise dimension, generally by comparison to some standard; usually done in a quantifiable or numerical manner

Measurement Error For surveys, *see* Confidence interval

Measurement Reliability The extent to which a measurement scale measures the same thing over time (*see* Coefficient alpha [α], Split-half reliability, Test-retest reliability)

Measurement Validity The extent to which a measurement scale actually measures what it is believed to measure (*see* Construct validity, Content validity, Criterion-related validity, Face validity)

Media Includes newspapers, business and consumer magazines and other publications, radio and television, the Internet; company reports, news wires, government reports and brochures; Internet Web sites and discussion groups

Media Evaluations The systematic appraisal of a company’s reputation, products, or services, or those of its competitors, as measured by their presence in the media

Median A descriptive statistic of central tendency indicating the midpoint in a series of data, the point above and below which 50 percent of the data values fall

Mention Prominence An indication of how prominently a company, product, or issue is mentioned in the media, typically measured in terms of percentage of article and position within the output (e.g., headline, above the fold, first three minutes)

Mentions Counts of incidence of company, product, or person appearances in the media; one mention constitutes a media placement

Message Content (1) The verbal, visual, and audio elements of a message; (2) the material from which content analyses are conducted; (3) a trend analysis factor that measures what, if any, planned messages are actually contained in the media (*see also* Message content analysis)

Message Content Analysis Analysis of media coverage of messages regarding a client, product, or topic on key issues

Message Strength A trend analysis factor that measures how strongly a message about a client or product or topic was communicated

Mode A descriptive statistic of central tendency indicating the most frequently occurring, or the most typical, value in a data series

Moderator An individual who leads a focus group; also known as a *facilitator*

Motivational Objective An objective that establishes the desired level of change in a target audience's specific attitudes or beliefs after a public relations campaign

Multivariate Analysis An inferential or descriptive statistic that examines the relationship among three or more variables

N

Network Analysis A formal or informal research method that examines how individuals or units or actors relate to each other in some systematic way

Neutral Point In attitude measurement scales, a point midway between extremes; in Likert-type scales usually defined as "neutral" or "neither agree nor disagree"

Nominal Data Measurement data that are simple categories in which items differ in name only and do not possess any ordering; data that are mutually exhaustive and exclusive; the simplest or lowest of all data; categorical data; example: male or female, where neither is seen as better or larger than the other

Nonparametric Statistics Inferential and descriptive statistics based on categorical data

Non-Probability Sample A sample drawn from a population wherein respondents or objects do not have an equal chance of being selected for observation or measurement

Nonverbal Communication That aspect of communication that deals with messages that are *not* a part of a natural language system (e.g., visual, spoken [as opposed to verbal], environmental)

Normal Curve Measurement data reflecting the hypothetical distribution of data points or cases based on interval- or ratio-level data that are "normally distributed" and error free; every continuous or parametric data set has its own normally distributed data that fall under its specific normal curve

Null Hypothesis The hypothesis of no difference that is formally tested in a research campaign or program; its rejection is the test of the theory

O

Objective (1) A measurable outcome in one of three forms: informational (cognitive), motivational (attitudinal/belief), or behavioral (actionable); (2) an explicit statement of intentions that supports a communication strategy and, to be measurable, includes an intended audience/public, a proposed change in a communication effect, a precise indication of the amount or level of change, and a specific time frame for the change to occur

Omnibus Survey An "all-purpose" national consumer poll usually conducted on a regular schedule (once a week or every other week) by major market research firms; also called *piggyback* or *shared-cost* survey

Opinion A verbalized or written evaluation of some object

Opportunities to See (OTS) The number of times a particular audience has the potential to view a message, subject, or issue; also known as *impressions*

Ordinal Data Measurement data that are categories in which items are different in name and possess an ordering of some sort; data that are mutually exhaustive and exclusive and ordered; categorical data; example: income as the categories of under \$25K, \$26K–\$50K, \$51K–\$75K, \$76K–\$100K, over \$100K

Outcomes (1) Quantifiable changes in awareness, knowledge, attitude, opinion, and behavior levels that occur as a result of a public relations program or campaign; (2) an effect, consequence, or impact of a set or program of communication activities or products, that may be either short term (immediate) or long term

Outgrowth The cumulative effect of all communication programs and products on the positioning of an organization in the minds of its stakeholders or publics

Outtake (1) Measurement of what audiences have understood and/or heeded or responded to with regard to a communication product's call to seek further information from public relations messages prior to measuring an outcome; (2) audience reaction to the receipt of a communication product, including favorability of the product, recall and retention of the message embedded in the product, and whether the audience heeded or responded to a call for information or action within the message

P

Paired t-Test An inferential statistical test of significance that compares data that are collected twice on the same sample

Panel Survey (1) A type of survey that consists of the *same* individuals or objects that are observed or measured over time; (2) a type of survey in which a

group of individuals are deliberately recruited by a research firm because of their special demographic characteristics for the express purpose of being interviewed more than once over a period of time for various clients on a broad array of different topics or subjects

Parameter In sampling, a characteristic of a population that is of interest

Parametric Statistics Inferential and descriptive statistics based on continuous data

Participant-Observation An informal research methodology where the researcher takes an active role in the life of an organization or community, observes and records interactions, and then analyzes those interactions

Percent of Change A measure of increase or decrease of media coverage

Percentage A descriptive statistic based on categorical data; defined as the frequency count for a particular category divided by the total frequency count; example: 10 males out of 100 people = 10%

Percentage Point The number by which a percentage is increased or decreased

Performance The act of carrying out, doing, executing, or putting into effect; a deed, task, action, or activity is a unit of a program of performance

Performance Indicator A sign or parameter that, if tracked over time, provides information about the ongoing results of a particular program of performance or campaign

Performance Measure A number that shows the exact extent to which a result was achieved

Performance Result (Key Performance) The desired end effect or impact of a program of campaign performance

Performance Target A time-bounded and measurable commitment toward achieving a desired result

Periodicity A bias found in sampling due to the way in which the items or respondents are chosen; example: newspapers may differ by being daily, weekly, weekday only, and so forth

Poll (1) A form of survey research that focuses more on immediate behavior than on attitudes; (2) a very short survey-like method whose questionnaire asks only very brief and closed-ended questions

Position Papers Print output

Positioning Trend analysis factor that measures how a client, product, or topic was positioned in the media (e.g., leader, follower)

Probability Sample A sample drawn at random from a population such that all possible respondents or objects have an equal chance of being selected for observation or measurement

Probe Question A question used in a questionnaire or schedule that requires the participant to explain an earlier response, often in the form of “why do you think this?”

Product (Communication Product) The end result of the communication product process resulting in the production and dissemination of a brochure, media release, video news release, Web site, speech, and so forth

Program (Campaign) The planning, execution, and evaluation of a public relations plan of action aimed at solving a problem

Prominence of Mention Trend analysis factor that measures how prominently a client or product or topic was mentioned and where that mention occurred (e.g., headline, top of the fold, certain part of a broadcast)

Proportion A descriptive statistic based on categorical data, defined as the fraction out of 1; example: 10 males out of 100 people represent 10 hundredths (.10) of the sample

Psychographic Research Research focusing on a population or sample’s nondemographic traits and characteristics, such as personality type, lifestyle, social roles, values, attitudes, and beliefs

Public Opinion Poll A type of survey that collects basic opinions or facts about a specified population or sample; also known as a *descriptive survey*

Purposive Sample A non-probability sample in which individuals are deliberately selected for

inclusion based on their special knowledge, position, characteristics, or relevant dimensions of the population

Push Poll A survey technique in which an interviewer begins by acting as if the telephone call represents a general survey but then asks the respondent a question implying questionable behaviors or outcomes of a person or product

Q

Q-Sort A measurement instrument that focuses on respondent beliefs by asking the respondent to sort through opinion statements and sort them into piles on an 11-point continuum usually bounded by “most like me” and “most unlike me”

Qualitative Research Usually refers to studies that are somewhat to totally subjective, but nevertheless in-depth, using a probing, open-ended response format or reflecting an ethnomethodological orientation

Quantitative Research Usually refers to studies that are highly objective and projectable, using closed-ended, forced-choice questionnaires; research that relies heavily on statistics and numerical measures

Question A statement or phrase used in a questionnaire or schedule that elicits either an open- or closed-ended response from a research participant (*see also* Funnel question, Probe question)

Questionnaire A measurement instrument that contains exact questions and measures that an interviewer or survey researcher uses to survey through the mail, Internet, in person, or via the telephone; may be closed ended or open ended, but typically employs more closed-ended questions

Quota Sample A type of non-probability sample that draws its sample based on a percentage or quota from the population and stops sampling when that quota is met; a non-probability sample that *attempts* to have the same general distribution of population characteristics as the sample

R

Range A descriptive central tendency statistic that expresses the difference between the highest and lowest scores in the data set; example: responses to a question on a 1-to-5 Likert-type scale where all reaction categories were used would yield a range of 4 (5 minus 1)

Ratio Data Measurement data that are defined on a continuum and possess an absolute zero point; examples: number of children, a bank account, absolute lack of heat (0° Kelvin = -459.67° F or -273.15° C)

Reach Refers to the scope or range of distribution and thus coverage that a given communication product has in a targeted audience group; in broadcasting, the net unduplicated (also called “duplicated”) radio or TV audience for programs or commercials as measured for a specific time period

Readership The number of people who actually read each issue of a publication, on average

Regression (REGR) An inferential statistical test of significance that predicts dependent variable (measured) outcomes for independent variables that may be either categorical (e.g., bivariate) or continuous (interval) in nature

Reliability In general, the extent to which results would be consistent, or replicable, if the research were conducted a number of times (*see also* Measurement reliability)

Research The systematic effort before (formative research) or during and/or after (summative or evaluative research) a communication activity aimed at discovering and collecting the facts or opinions pertaining to an identified issue, need, or question; may be formal or informal

Response Rate In survey methodology, the number of respondents who actually completed an interview

S

Sample A group of people or objects chosen from a larger population (*see* Convenience sample, Longitudinal survey, Non-probability sample, Panel survey, Probability sample, Snapshot survey)

Sampling Error For surveys, *see* Confidence level

Scale A measurement instrument consisting of attitude or belief items that reflect an underlying structure toward some attitude or belief object

Scalogram (Guttman Scale/Cumulative Scale) A measurement scale that assumes (a) unidimensionality and (b) that people, when faced with a choice, will also choose items less intense than the one chosen

Scattergram A descriptive statistic based on continuous data that graphically demonstrates how data are distributed between two variables; also known as a *scatter diagram* or *scatterplot*

Schedule (1) The timeline on which a public relations program or campaign is conducted; (2) a list of questions, usually open ended, used in focus group and in-depth interviews to gather data

Screening Question One of several questions usually asked at the beginning of an interview or survey to determine if the potential respondent is eligible to participate in the study (*see also* Funnel question)

Secondary Methodology An informal research methodology that examines extant data in order to draw conclusions; a systematic re-analysis of a vast array of existing data; often used in benchmarking and benchmark studies

Semantic Differential An attitude measure that asks respondents to evaluate an attitude object based on bipolar adjectives or phrases separated by a continuum represented as consisting of an odd number of intervals; developed by Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum

Semantic Space The idea that people can evaluate an attitude object along some spatial continuum

Share of Ink (SOI) Measurement of the total press/magazine coverage found in articles or mentions devoted to a particular industry or topic as analyzed to determine what percent of outputs or opportunities to see (OTS) is devoted to a client or product

Share of Voice (SOV) Measurement of total coverage devoted to radio/television coverage to a particular industry or topic as analyzed to determine what percent of outputs or opportunities to see (OTS) is devoted to a client or product; also known as *share of coverage*

Simple Random Sample A type of probability sample in which numbers are assigned to each member of a population, a random set of numbers is generated, and then only those members having the random numbers are included in the sample

Situation Analysis An impartial, often third-party assessment of the public relations and/or public affairs problems, or opportunities, that an organization may be facing at a given time

Skip Interval The distance between people selected from a population based on systematic sampling; usually defined as the total population divided by the number of people to be sampled (e.g., for a sample of 100 people to be drawn from a population of 10,000 people, the skip interval would be $100/10,000 = 100$ individuals skipped between selected participants)

Snapshot Survey A type of survey that consists of individuals or objects that are observed or measured once (*see also* Cross-sectional survey)

Snowball Sample A type of non-probability sample in which individuals who are interviewed are asked to suggest other individuals for further interviewing

Sources Mentioned Trend analysis factor that measures who was quoted in media coverage; also known as *quoted*s

Speaking Engagements Print or broadcast or Internet communication product output

Split-Half Reliability A test for a measure's reliability where a sample is randomly split and one

segment receives a part of the measure and the second segment receives the rest

Standard Deviation (σ) A descriptive statistic of central tendency that indexes the variability of a distribution; the range from the mean within which approximately 34 percent of the cases fall, provided the values are distributed along a normal curve

Standardized Score (Z-Score) A descriptive statistic based on continuous data that expresses individual scores based on their standard deviations from the group mean; the range of scores is usually -3.00 to $+3.00$

Statistical Significance Refers to the degree to which relationships observed in a sample can be attributed to sampling error or measurement error alone; expressed in terms of confidence that the relationships are due to error X percent of the time (e.g., 5 percent) or expressed in terms of the confidence that we have that the results are due to what was measured X percent of the time (e.g., 95 percent confident)

Stratified Sample A type of probability sample that involves first breaking the total population into homogeneous subsets (or strata) and then selecting the potential sample at random from the individual strata; example: stratifying on race would require breaking the population into racial strata and then randomly sampling within each strata

Survey Methodology A formal research methodology that seeks to gather data and analyze a population's or sample's attitudes, beliefs, and opinions (*see* Cohort survey, Longitudinal survey, Panel survey, Snapshot survey); data are gathered in-person or by telephone (face-to-face), or the survey is self-administered via the mail, e-mail, or fax

Symbols/Words A manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting of specific words (e.g., pronouns, client name, logotypes) that are counted

Systematic Sample A type of probability sample in which units in a population are selected from an available list at a fixed interval after a random start

T

Target Audience A very specific audience differentiated from “audience” by some measurable characteristic or attribute (e.g., sports fishermen)

Targeted Gross Rating Points (TGRP) Gross Rating Points (GRP) targeted to a particular group or target audience

Test-Retest Reliability A test of a measure’s reliability carried out by testing the same sample with the same measure over time

Themes A latent unit of analysis used in content analysis that measures an underlying theme or thesis (e.g., sexuality, violence, credibility)

Throughputs The development, creative, and production activities (writing, editing, creative design, printing, fabrication, etc.) as part of the throughput stage of a communication product production process

Time/Space Measures A manifest unit of analysis used in content analysis consisting of physically measurable units (e.g., column inches, size of photographs, broadcast time for a story)

Tone Trend and content analysis factor that measures how a target audience feels about the client or product or topic; typically defined as positive, neutral/balanced, or negative

Trend Analysis Tracking of performance over the course of a public relations campaign or program; a survey method whereby a topic or subject is examined over a period of time through repeated surveys of independently selected samples (snapshot or cross-sectional survey)

t-Test An inferential statistical test of significance for continuous-measurement dependent variables against a bivariate independent variable; used when the total number of observations is less than 100 (*see* Independent t-test, Known group t-test, Paired t-test)

Type of Article (1) Categories of a publication such as “product review,” “bylined article,” “editorial,” “advertorial,” “feature story”; (2) trend analysis

factor that measures the nature of client, product, or topic coverage (e.g., column inches, broadcast time)

U

Unit of Analysis The specification of what is to be counted in content analysis methodology; consists of symbols/words, time/space measures, characters, themes, and items; may be *manifest* (observable) or *latent* (attitudinal)

Univariate Analysis The examination of only one variable at a time

V

Validity In general, the extent to which a research project actually measures what it is intended or purports to measure (*see also* Measurement validity)

Value An underlying cultural expectation; usually directs an individual’s beliefs

Variance (σ^2) A descriptive statistic of central tendency that measures the extent to which individual scores in a data set differ from each other; the sum of the squared standard deviations from the mean (σ)

W

Word/Symbol In content analysis, a unit of analysis

Z

Z-Score (Standardized Score) A descriptive statistic of central tendency that takes data from different types of scales and standardizes them as areas under the normal curve for comparison purposes

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