

# What Is Public Relations?



## *After reading this chapter, you will be able to:*

Be familiar with the global scope of the public relations industry

Have a good definition of public relations

Understand that public relations is a process, not an event

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

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

## The Challenge of Public Relations

It is 9 A.M. and Anne-Marie, a senior account executive in a San Francisco public relations firm, is at her desk getting ready for a full day of busy activity. She takes a few minutes to answer some text messages, scan her e-mails, and Tweet a printing firm about the status of a brochure. She also quickly flips through the local daily and checks RSS feeds from client companies and various trade groups.

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

She then finishes a draft of a news release about a client's new tablet computer and e-mails it to the client for approval. She also attaches a note that an electronic news service can deliver it to newspapers across the country later in the day. Anne-Marie's next activity is a brainstorming session with other staff members in the conference room to generate creative ideas about creating a Facebook page for a yogurt company.

When she gets back to her office, she finds more text messages, Tweets, and voice-mails. A reporter for a trade publication needs background information on a story he is writing; a graphic designer has finished a rough draft of a client's new logo; a catering manager has called about final arrangements for a VIP reception at an art gallery; and a video producer asks whether Anne-Marie can preview a video news release (VNR) that will be uploaded to YouTube and distributed by satellite to television stations throughout the nation.

Lunch is with a client who wants her counsel on how to position the company as environmentally conscious and dedicated to sustainable development. After lunch, Anne-Marie walks back to the office while talking on her phone to a colleague in the New York office about an upcoming news conference to announce a new celebrity clothing line. She also calls an editor to "pitch" a story about a client's new product. He's interested, so she follows up by sending some background material via her BlackBerry. Back in the office, Anne-Marie touches base with other members of her team, who are working on a 12-city media tour by an Olympic champion representing Nike.

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

But the day isn't quite done. Anne-Marie is on her way to attend a chapter meeting of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), where the speaker will discuss trends in reputation management. It's her way of continuing her education since her graduation from college four years ago with a public relations major and a minor in marketing. After the meeting, she networks with several other members over a glass of wine and a quick dinner. It's a nice respite from the bulging briefcase, text messages, and e-mails that must be dealt with before she calls it a day.

As this scenario illustrates, the profession of public relations is multifaceted and quite challenging. A public relations professional must have skills in written and

interpersonal communication, media relations and social media, research, negotiation, creativity, logistics, facilitation, and problem solving.

Indeed, those who want a challenging career with plenty of variety often choose the field of public relations. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that the field already employs almost 300,000 people nationwide, and its 2010–2011 *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (OOH) projects a 24 percent growth rate through 2018. The handbook also gives an excellent description of a public relations specialist, which is highlighted in the Insights box below.

More good news: Public relations is somewhat recession-proof. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a national unemployment rate of 9.5 percent in June 2009, but an analysis by the professional recruiting firm Robert Half International found that the unemployment rate among public relations managers was less than half of 1 percent. Jim Rutherford, executive vice president (EVP) of private equity firm Veronis Suhler Stevenson (VSS), quipped to *PRWeek*, “The economy may have been in a downturn, but even companies in bankruptcy protection had to communicate to their stakeholders.”

## on the job

# INSIGHTS

### The Nature of Public Relations Work

**T**he *Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010–11*, published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics ([www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco)), describes various jobs. The following is the description for public relations specialists:

An organization’s reputation, profitability, and its continued existence can depend on the degree to which its targeted public supports its goals and policies. Public relations specialists—also referred to as *communication specialists* and *media specialists*, among other titles—serve as advocates for clients seeking to build and maintain positive relationships with the public. Their clients include businesses, nonprofit associations,

universities, hospitals, and other organizations, and build and maintain positive relationships with the public. As managers recognize the link between good public relations and the success of their organizations, they increasingly rely on public relations specialists for advice on the strategy and policy of their communications.

Public relations specialists handle organizational functions, such as media, community, consumer, industry, and governmental relations; political campaigns, interest-group representation; conflict mediation; and employee and investor relations. Public

relations specialists must understand the attitudes and concerns of community, consumer, employee, and public interest groups to establish and maintain cooperative

**The need for good public relations in an increasingly competitive business environment should spur demand for PR specialists in organizations of all types and sizes.**

—U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
(continued)

relationships between them and representatives from print and broadcast journalism.

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

Public relations specialists also arrange and conduct programs to maintain contact between organization representatives and the public. For example, public relations specialists set up speaking engagements and prepare speeches

for officials. These media specialists represent employers at community projects; make film, slide, and other visual presentations for meetings and school assemblies; and plan conventions.

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

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

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

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

## A Global Industry

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

**Global Expenditures on Public Relations** In terms of economics, the public relations field is most extensively developed in the United States. Private equity firm Veronis Suhler Stevenson (VSS), which has been tracking the communications industry for the past 15 years, reported that spending on public relations in the U.S. grew more than 4 percent in 2008 and nearly 3 percent in 2009 to \$3.7 billion. In addition, VSS also predicts that spending on public relations will top \$8 billion by 2013.

The projected spending, according to *PRWeek* reporter Chris Daniels, includes "...\$3 billion that will be spent on word-of-mouth marketing, which includes social media outreach as well as offline brand ambassador programs." The *Economist* adds,

“The rise of the Internet and social media has given PR a big boost. Many big firms have a presence on social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, overseen by PR staff. PR firms are increasingly called on to track what consumers are saying about their clients online and to respond directly to any negative commentary.”

The rise of the Internet and social media has given PR a big boost.

*The Economist*

The amount spent on public relations for the rest of the world is somewhat sketchy and not well documented. One major reason is that public relations can include a number of activities that overlap into such areas as marketing, promotion, direct mail, and even advertising. The 2008 president of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), Michael Cherenon, estimated that the industry was a \$6 billion global business. It's also been estimated that European spending on public relations is currently about \$3 billion annually, but continues to increase due to the expansion of the European Union (EU) and the developing market economies of Russia and the other nations of the former Soviet Union. There is also considerable growth in other regions of the world, particularly China, which will be discussed shortly.

Despite the billions spent on public relations around the world, it should be noted that it's still a cottage industry compared to advertising. The *Financial Times* reports that global spending on advertising was more than \$450 billion in 2009.

**An Estimated Three Million Practitioners** The Global Alliance ([www.globalalliancepr.org](http://www.globalalliancepr.org)), with about 60 national and regional public relations associations representing 160,000 members, estimates that some 3 million people worldwide practice public relations as their main professional activity. This includes the estimated 300,000 practitioners in the U.S., and also the estimated 50,000 located in the United Kingdom (UK). It's also estimated that there are between 7,000 and 10,000 public relations firms in the United States, and the directory *Hollis Europe 2009* lists almost 3,000 public relations firms (consultancies) in 40 European nations. Many of these firms are one-person operations, but also included are firms with several hundred employees. There are, of course, literally thousands of companies, governmental organizations, and nonprofits around the world that also have in-house public relations departments and staffs.

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

**An Explosion of Growth in China, Other Nations** Major growth is also occurring in Asia for several reasons. China is literally the “new frontier.” Since opening its economy to market capitalism 30 years ago, China today is the world's second largest economy after the United States. And the public relations industry is thriving. The China International Public Relations Association (CIPRA) reports that there are

more than 20,000 practitioners in the country and that every major global public relations firm has offices in the country. According to the *Economist*, an estimated \$1.8 billion was spent on public relations in China in 2010, second only to Japan in the region.

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

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

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

An estimated 600 American universities and colleges also offer a curriculum in public relations. There are also courses in departments of communication and schools of business, but most students are enrolled in departments or schools of journalism. In these units, the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications' (AEJMC) annual enrollment survey for 2007–2008 reported there were more than 30,000 students majoring in public relations.

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

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

## A Definition of Public Relations

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

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

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

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

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

A good definition for today’s modern practice is offered by Professors Lawrence W. Long and Vincent Hazelton, who describe public relations as “a communication function of management through which organizations adapt to, alter, or maintain their environment for the purpose of achieving organizational goals.” Their approach promotes the idea that public relations should also foster open, two-way communication and mutual understanding, with the idea that an organization—not just the target audience—changes its attitudes and behaviors in the process.

Although current definitions of public relations have long emphasized the building of mutually beneficial relationships between the organization and its various publics, a more assertive approach has emerged over the past decade. Professor Glen Cameron, at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, defines public relations as the “strategic management of competition and conflict for the benefit of one’s own organization—and when possible—also for the mutual benefit of the organization and its various stakeholders or publics.”

Public relations is the management of communication between an organization and its publics.

*James E. Grunig and Todd Hunt,  
Managing Public Relations*

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

- **Deliberate.** Public relations activity is intentional. It is designed to influence, gain understanding, provide information, and obtain feedback from those affected by the activity.
- **Planned.** Public relations activity is organized. Solutions to problems are discovered and logistics are thought out, with the activity taking place over a period of time. It is systematic, requiring research and analysis.
- **Performance.** Effective public relations is based on actual policies and performance. No amount of public relations will generate goodwill and support if the organization has poor policies and is unresponsive to public concerns.
- **Public interest.** Public relations activity should be mutually beneficial to the organization and the public; it is the alignment of the organization's self-interests with the public's concerns and interests.
- **Two-way communication.** Public relations is not just disseminating information but also the art of listening and engaging in a conversation with various publics.
- **Management function.** Public relations is most effective when it is a strategic and integral part of decision making by top management. Public relations involves counseling, problem solving, and the management of competition and conflict.

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

## Other Popular Names

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

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

A number of corporations also use combination titles to describe the public relations function within the organization. IBM, for example, has a senior vice president (SVP) of marketing and communications. At Facebook, the public relations executive is in charge of *communications and public policy*. Johnson & Johnson goes with *public affairs and corporate communications*, while L'Oreal USA uses *corporate communications and external affairs*. Other companies think in more global terms. The public relations executive at Coca-Cola, for example, is in charge of *worldwide public affairs and communications*, and FedEx uses *worldwide communications and investor relations*.

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



company, including advertising, marketing communications, public affairs, community relations, and employee communications. Others believe that such terms as *corporate communications* sound more impressive and get away from some of the negative stereotypes about “public relations,” which will be discussed shortly.

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

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

Like departments, individuals specialize in subcategories of public relations. A person who deals exclusively with placement of stories in the media is, to be precise, a *publicist*. A *press agent* is also a specialist, operating within the subcategory of public relations that concentrates on finding unusual news angles and planning events or “happenings” that attract media attention—a stunt by an aspiring Hollywood actress, for example, or an attempt to be listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* by baking the world’s largest apple pie. *Publicist* is an honorable term in the entertainment and celebrity business, but is somewhat frowned on by the mainstream public relations industry. Chapter 18 discusses the work of New York and Hollywood publicists.

## Stereotypes and Less Flattering Terms

Unfortunately, the public often has a much different image of public relations. A common stereotype is that public relations is a glamorous field because public relations practitioners meet exciting and interesting people, go to parties, and generally spend the day doing a lot of schmoozing. On the more sinister side, many people think public relations is a synonym for propaganda, manipulation, and even lying on behalf of special interests such as corporations and politicians.

Many people gain their perceptions from television programs such as *Sex and the City*, which is now in reruns and even became two movies. Ellen Tashie Frisna, a professor at Hofstra University, writes in *Tactics*, “Samantha Jones (Kim Cattrall), the sexiest of the show’s characters, owns a PR agency. And she is—shall we say—experienced. She talks about her career as a way to meet men. (Her conquests include clients and temps.) Sorry, kids—the real world of public relations isn’t like that.”

Of course, other television programs and movies also give somewhat negative stereotypes about public relations. ABC’s *Spin City*, for example, featured Michael J. Fox as the deputy mayor of New York, who protected his bumbling boss from the media and public. More recently, Bravo launched a reality show, *Kell on Earth*, that the *New York Times* described as “a reality show that follows a publicist, Kelly Cutrone, as she bullies and cajoles her

### Public Relations Hollywood Style

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



way through the underbelly of the New York fashion world.” *Mad Men*, a series about an advertising firm in the 1960s, has also portrayed public relations as a somewhat dubious activity.

The movies *Phone Booth*, *The Sweet Smell of Success*, and even *The Devil Wears Prada* also add to the portrayals of sleazy publicists who have virtually no personal or professional moral compass. Some films are satires, but still project a negative image of public relations. *Thank You for Smoking*, a movie adapted from the book by Christopher Buckley, is a particularly good satire about a public relations person defending the tobacco industry. *Wag the Dog*, starring Dustin Hoffman and Robert DeNiro, is also a satire focusing on how an embattled president creates a fake war with the help of public relations pros to improve his image. A more recent film, *Bruno*, with leading actor Sacha Baron Cohen, played up the “dumb blonde” syndrome. At one point in the film, Sacha’s fictional character asks two sisters who run a public relations firm in Los Angeles, “What charities are hot now?” They replied, “Darfur.” He then asked them where Darfur is, and they didn’t have a clue.

Other negative stereotypes are perpetuated by journalists who use terms such as “PR gimmick” or “PR fluff.” One journalist once described public relations as “the art of saying nothing.” Frank Rich, an influential columnist for the *New York Times*, has used a number of adjectives over the years to describe public relations. They include “marketing,” “sales,” “sloganeering,” “propaganda,” and “lacking in principles and substance.” Gene Weingarten, a columnist for the *Washington Post*, seems to agree, once calling public relations people “pathetic, desperate dillweeds.” Joe Nocera, a business columnist for the *New York Times*, used less colorful language to describe his frustration

### Public Relations as “Image Building”

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



with Apple public relations reps. He wrote, “This is another Apple innovation: the robotic spokesman who says only what he’s programmed to say.”

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

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

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

## on the job

### ETHICS

**T**he Canadian province of Alberta launched an image campaign to somewhat offset the controversy over oil extraction in Alberta’s wetlands. The campaign artwork included a photo of two children playing on a seaside beach with the slogan, “Alberta: Freedom to Create. Spirit to Achieve.”

The only problem was that Alberta has no coastline and is 800 kilometers from the nearest body of water, the Pacific Ocean. A sailing enthusiast tracked down the actual site of the

photo, which was Beadnell Bay on the north coast of England, 8,000 kilometers away from landlocked Alberta.

Martin Wainwright, a reporter for the *Guardian Weekly*, asked Canadian officials about using the photo. The head of media relations for the Canadian prime minister told him that the photograph merely symbolized the fact that “Albertans are a worldly people. There’s no attempt to mislead here. The picture used just fitted the mood and tone of what we were trying to do.” And the Alberta public

relations bureau, who was managing the public relations campaign, issued the statement, “This represents Albertans’ concern for the future of the world. There’s no attempt to make people think that the place pictured is Alberta.” The PR firm Calder Bateman, which devised the campaign, issued a “no comment.”

What do you think of the rationale given for using the photo? Do you think the use of such a picture was misleading, unethical, or OK?

### Canada Outed for Scenery Theft

The term has a mixed history. According to Wes Pedersen, a former director of communications for the Public Affairs Council, the term *flack* originated in 1939 in *Variety*, the show business publication. It began using *flack* as a synonym for *press agent*, he says, “in tribute to the skills of Gene Flack in publicizing motion pictures.” Others say the word *flak* was used during World War I to describe heavy ground fire aimed at aircraft. At times, journalists consider the barrage of daily news releases they receive a form of flak that interferes with their mission of informing the public.

Within the public relations community, feeling also exists that *PR* is a slang term that carries a somewhat denigrating connotation. The late Sam Black, a public relations consultant in the United Kingdom and author of several books on public relations, said, “The use of ‘PR’ probably originated as a nickname for ‘press relations,’” the primary activity of public relations in its early years (see Chapter 2).

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

## Public Relations as a Process

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

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

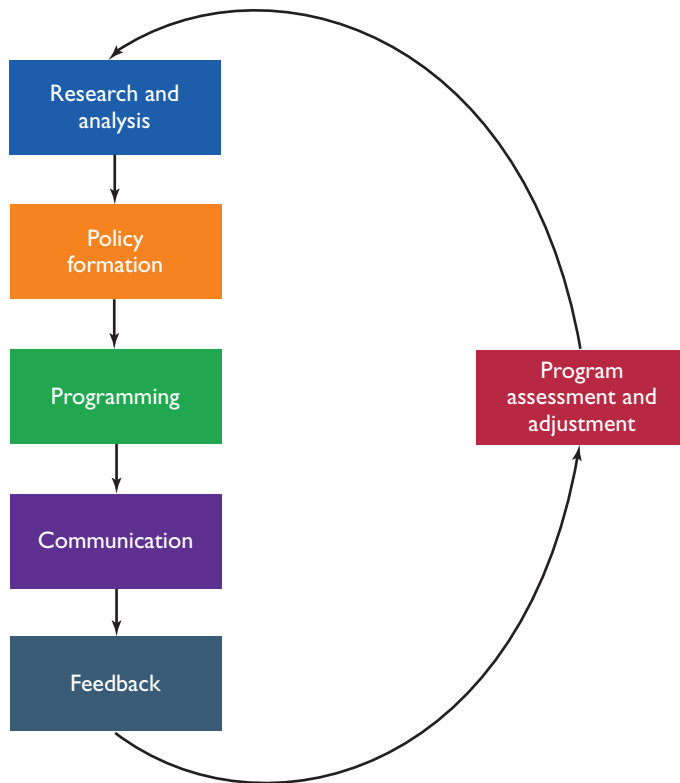
Part Two of this text (Chapters 5–8) discusses this key four-step process.

Another approach is to think of the process as a never-ending cycle in which six components are links in a chain. Figure 1.1 shows the process.

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

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

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



**Figure 1.1** The Public Relations Process

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

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

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

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

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

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

*Public Relations Society of America, defining the role of public relations in today's society*

## The Diversity of Public Relations Work

The basic process of public relations, just described, is manifested in a variety of ways. The PRSA Foundation lists the various aspects of public relations activity that are done by individuals working in the field.

- **Counseling.** Providing advice to management concerning policies, relationships, and communications.
- **Research.** Determining attitudes and behaviors of publics in order to plan public relations strategies. Such research can be used to (1) generate mutual understanding or (2) influence and persuade publics.
- **Media relations.** Working with journalists and bloggers in seeking publicity or responding to their interests in the organization.
- **Publicity.** Disseminating planned messages through selected media, including social media, to further the organization's interests. See the Insights box on page 15 for a job posting for a publicity assistant for Animal Planet.
- **Employee/member relations.** Responding to concerns, informing, and motivating an organization's employees or members.
- **Community relations.** Planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organization and the community.
- **Public affairs.** Developing effective involvement in public policy and helping an organization adapt to public expectations. The term is also used by government agencies to describe their public relations activities and by many corporations as an umbrella term to describe multiple public relations activities.
- **Government affairs.** Relating directly with legislatures and regulatory agencies on behalf of the organization. Lobbying can be part of a government affairs program.
- **Issues management.** Identifying and addressing issues of public concern that affect the organization.
- **Financial relations.** Creating and maintaining investor confidence and building good relationships with the financial community. Also known as investor relations or shareholder relations.
- **Industry relations.** Relating with other firms in the industry of an organization and with trade associations.
- **Development/fund-raising.** Demonstrating the need for and encouraging the public to support an organization, primarily through financial contributions.
- **Multicultural relations/workplace diversity.** Relating with individuals and groups in various cultural groups. A good example is the Bank of America's outreach to the Hispanic community on page 16.
- **Special events.** Stimulating an interest in a person, product, or organization by means of a well-planned event; also, activities designed to interact with publics and listen to them.
- **Marketing communications.** Combination of activities designed to sell a product, service, or idea, including advertising, collateral materials, publicity, promotion, direct mail, trade shows, and special events.

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

## on the job

# INSIGHTS

Entry-level jobs in public relations often focus on media relations and logistics. A good example is a job posting for a publicity assistant by Discovery Communications, a media company that owns multiple cable channels such as the Discovery Channel and Animal Planet.

The following job description was posted on *prnewsonline.com*:

### Position Summary

Support communications activities for *Animal Planet*. The Publicity Assistant position reports to the manager of publicity or director, communications (pending location) and supports team managers on various projects. Discovery Communications is the number-one nonfiction media company reaching more than 1.5 billion subscribers in over 170 countries.

### Responsibilities

- Provide administrative support and project support on projects in a timely and efficient manner.
- Press lists and database development and maintenance.
- Distribution and formatting of news releases and press materials

### Wanted: A Publicity Assistant for Animal Planet

(via e-mail lists, PR Newswire, PressWeb, and new online distribution methods.

- Tracking of press coverage and preparation of press research reports and analyses.
- Managing publicity stills on PressWeb and Virtual Library.
- Compiling, writing, editing, and distributing monthly program highlights.
- Submitting event photos/captions to the press.
- Drafting of executive personnel announcements and bios.
- Other press release writing, editing, and pitching.
- Special events support.
- Talent management and staffing.
- Manage upkeep of press website and materials including boilerplates and fast facts, network overview, and executive bios and photos.
- Maintain long lead and seasonal programming documents.
- Maintain editorial and PR calendars, which include upcoming special reports in key trade and business publications.

- Execute multiple press campaigns.
- Perform other duties as required.

### Job Requirements

- One-year of hands-on communications and media relations work experience and appropriate number of internships in the field.
- Demonstrated ability to work under pressure, meet tight deadlines, and work on multiple projects simultaneously.
- Superb written, verbal, and interpersonal skills.
- Ability to juggle a myriad of tasks simultaneously.
- Must be independent, strategic thinker who is a strong team player (no job is too small or too large) and willing to take on additional responsibilities if necessary.
- Ability to cultivate and sustain strong relationships with members of the media and with coworkers.
- Strong computer skills, including proficiency in social networking skills.

## on the job

## A MULTICULTURAL WORLD

## Bank of America Reaches Out to the Hispanic Community

**M**ore than half of the Hispanics living in the United States regularly send money to loved ones in their home countries. At the same time, 70 percent of them use wire transfer services that charge relatively high fees.

The Bank of America (BoFA), realizing the potential market of the 25 million Latin Americans living in the United States, had a better idea. The bank launched a program called SafeSend, which allowed Hispanics to send remittances free if they opened a BoFA checking account.

Fleishman-Hillard public relations was engaged to generate awareness among the Hispanic community about the SafeSend program. The kickoff focused on Mexican Mother's Day because that traditionally was the time of year when remittances were the highest. A national news release, a radio news release, and a video news release (VNR) were distributed to major Spanish-language media outlets, as well as the general press.

In addition, the bank began hosting Fiesta Fridays in its various facilities and provided materials in Spanish so



## A Better Way to Send Money

A 10-foot-high Mexican piggy bank symbolized the Bank of America's SafeSend program at an event in Los Angeles.

that potential customers could become better acquainted with its products and services. Other events also were used. At a Los Angeles event, for example, a 10-foot-high Mexican piggy bank was used to symbolize the savings that SafeSend could offer. Piggy banks were also used at regional Cinco de Mayo festivals in California and Texas.

As a result, the SafeSend program received considerable coverage in the Hispanic press. More important, BoFA opened 3,295 new direct-deposit accounts with SafeSend in the initial weeks. Before this campaign, the bank had already been the first one to introduce Spanish-language ATMs, bilingual customer service, and a Spanish-language website.

## Public Relations vs. Journalism

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



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

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

**Objectives** Journalists gather and select information for the primary purpose of providing the public with news and information. Public relations personnel also gather facts and information for the purpose of informing the public, but the objective is not only to inform but also to change people’s attitudes and behaviors in order to further an organization’s goals and objectives. Harold Burson, chairman of Burson-Marsteller, makes the point: “To be effective and credible, public relations messages must be based on facts. Nevertheless, we are advocates, and we need to remember that. We are advocates of a particular point of view—our client’s or our employer’s point of view. And while we recognize that serving the public interest best serves our client’s interest, we are not journalists. That’s not our job.”

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

**Channels** Most journalists, by nature of their employment, reach audiences through one channel—the medium that publishes or broadcasts their work. On the other hand, public relations professionals use a variety of channels to reach the audiences previously described. The channels employed may be a combination of mass media outlets—newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. Or they may include direct mail, brochures, posters, newsletters, trade journals, special events, podcasts, blogs, websites, and even video postings on YouTube.

## Public Relations vs. Advertising

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

Although publicity and advertising both utilize mass media for dissemination of messages, the format and context each uses are different. Publicity—information about an event, an individual or group, or a product—appears as a news item or feature story in the mass media or online. Material is prepared by public relations personnel and submitted to the news department for consideration. Editors, known as gatekeepers, determine whether the material will be used or simply thrown away.

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

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

Advertising, in contrast, is paid space and broadcast time. Organizations and individuals typically contract with the advertising department of a mass media outlet for a full-page ad or a one-minute commercial. An organization writes the advertisement, decides the type and graphics, and controls where and when the advertisement will be run. In other words, advertising is simply renting space in a mass medium. The lion's share of revenue for traditional media and even Google comes from the selling of advertising space.

Other differences between public relations activities and advertising include:

- Advertising works almost exclusively through mass media outlets; public relations relies on a number of communication tools—brochures, slide presentations, special events, speeches, news releases, feature stories, and so forth.
- Advertising is primarily directed to consumers of goods and services; public relations presents its message to specialized external audiences (stockholders, vendors, community leaders, environmental groups, and so on) and internal publics (employees).
- Advertising is readily identified as a specialized communication function; public relations is broader in scope, dealing with the policies and performance of the entire organization, from the morale of employees to the amount of money given to local community organizations.
- Advertising is often used as a communication tool in public relations, and public relations activity often supports advertising campaigns. Advertising's primary function is to sell goods and services; public relations' function is to create an environment in which the organization can thrive. The latter calls for dealing with economic, social, and political factors that can affect the organization.

The major disadvantage of advertising, of course, is the cost. A full-page ad in the national edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, for example, costs \$164,000 for black and white and \$220,000 for full color. Advertising campaigns on network television, of course, can run into the millions of dollars. For example, advertisers paid \$2.5 to \$3 million for a 30-second Super Bowl ad in 2010. Consequently, companies often use a tool of public relations—product publicity—that is more cost effective and often more credible because the message appears in a news context. One poll by Opinion Research Corporation, for example, found that online articles about a product or service were more persuasive than banner ads, pop-up ads, e-mail offers, and sponsored links.

## Public Relations vs. Marketing

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

**Objectives** The purpose of marketing is to sell goods and services through attractive packaging, competitive pricing, retail and online promotions, and efficient distribution

systems. The purpose of public relations is to build relationships with a variety of publics that can enhance the organization's reputation and establish trust in its policies, products, and services.

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

**Competition vs. Opposition** Marketing professionals tend to rely exclusively on competitive solutions, whereas public relations professionals often perceive the problem as effectively dealing with opposition. When meeting opposition to a product, marketing often thinks the solution is lower pricing or better packaging. However, public relations professionals realize that pricing doesn't make any difference if a consumer group is opposed to the product because they think it is unsafe. See the PR Casebook in Chapter 4 about the Toyota product recall.

**Role in Management** Marketing is a distinct function primarily dealing with product positioning and sales. Public relations, however, deals with all departments of the organization to advance overall business goals and objectives. An organization, to be successful in the marketplace, must pay constant attention to its reputation and have policies that enhance trust and credibility among its multiple publics. Public relations, in its ideal form, directly deals with upper management to shape and promote the organization's core values.

## How Public Relations Supports Marketing

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

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

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

1. Developing new prospects for new markets, such as people who inquire after seeing or hearing a product release in the news media
2. Providing third-party endorsements—via newspapers, magazines, radio, and television—through news releases about a company's products or services, community involvement, inventions, and new plans
3. Generating sales leads, usually through articles in the trade press about new products and services

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

*Dave Imre, an executive at Imre Communications, Baltimore*

4. Paving the way for sales calls
5. Stretching the organization's advertising and promotional dollars through timely and supportive releases about it and its products
6. Providing inexpensive sales literature, because articles about the company and its products can be reprinted as informative pieces for prospective customers
7. Establishing the corporation as an authoritative source of information on a given product
8. Helping to sell minor products that don't have large advertising budgets

## Toward an Integrated Perspective

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

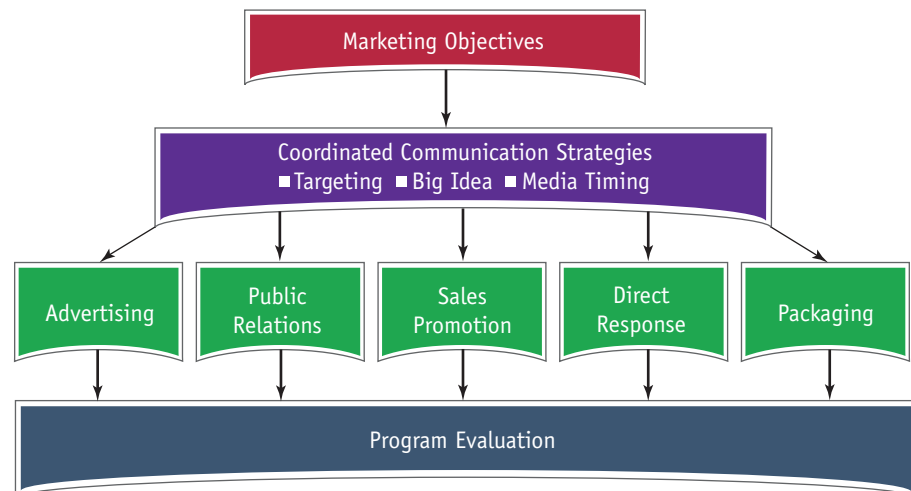
This understanding has given rise to such terms as *integrated marketing communications (IMC)*, *convergent communications*, and *integrated communications*. Don Schultz, Stanley Tannenbaum, and Robert Lauterborn, authors of *Integrated Marketing Communications*, explain the title of their book as follows:

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

Several factors have fueled the trend toward IMC. (See the IMC model in Figure 1.2.) First is the downsizing of organizations. Many of them have consolidated departments and have also reduced staff dedicated to various communication disciplines. As a result, one department, with fewer employees, is expected to do a greater variety of communication tasks.

**Figure 1.2** The IMC Model

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A good example of an integrated marketing campaign is a back-to-school program by Sears. The campaign featured *High School Musical* star Vanessa Hudgens, who was used across different channels, primarily social networks where many of her fans are located. Hudgens took part in another Sears campaign that also used celebrities LL Cool J and Ty Pennington in advertising, in-store promotions, and online Web videos. A public relations component had the celebrities participate in satellite media tours (SMTs) and radio media tours (RMTs), which are discussed in Chapter 15.

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

Andrea Morgan,  
EVP of consumer brands for Euro RSCG

## A Career in Public Relations

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

The Commission on Public Relations Education, which includes public relations educators and representatives from all of the major professional organizations, has set the standard by specifying a minimum of five courses that should be required in a public relations major. They are:

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

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

Public relations, at least in the United States, has traditionally been taught in departments and schools of journalism. Consequently, a number of journalism graduates also consider employment in public relations, as job opportunities on newspapers and other traditional media continue to decline. Lindsey Miller, in a *Ragan.com* article, writes, “As curricula

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

*Fred Cook, president of Golin Harris public relations*

## on the job

### INSIGHTS

#### Networking: The Key to Career Success

By Robin Carr

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

Even while you’re still in school, take the time to go to various mixers and events and meet people. IABC (International Association of Business Communicators) and PRSA (Public Relations Society of America) have open events and

you don’t have to be a member. While in school, get actively involved and with your PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) chapter. Often times, your area PRSA chapter will host PRSSA students and create professional



**Robin Carr**

partner programs. This is an excellent way to not only network, but find a mentor or two.

And while social media sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter are great tools to network and learn, there's nothing like getting out and meeting people face to face. Go to monthly luncheons, mixers and attend business conferences with interesting speakers and panels.

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

Collect business cards, follow up with an email or LinkedIn invitation, and your network will grow.

After graduation, I worked at a PR agency for one year to get general experience in the work world. Agencies are very good places for PR graduates to start. There are a variety of clients and you can learn and discover what your interests are and, of course, network. There are many agencies that have different specialties: technology, hospitality, consumer products and youth “buzz” marketing, to name a few.

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

before moving on to Nike and EA Sports.

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

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

*Robin Carr has worked almost 20 years in the sports industry, including stints at the San Francisco Giants, Nike, and EA Sports. She also has experience at the Gap as manager of its Product Red program and at Kaiser Permanente as director of national public relations. She is a graduate of the public relations degree program at San Jose State University and lives in San Francisco with her husband, Thomas Bonk, a Los Angeles Times sports columnist.*

diversify and career options widen, many J-school grads are seeing the more stable and better-paying corporate communications field as fertile ground for their skills. They're armed not only with the ability to write a good article, but they can also tell a good story on a range of platforms, using a variety of media.”

Such skills, of course, are important in public relations work, but there's some debate whether journalism majors have the training and temperament that lead to successful careers in public relations. Richard Mintz, managing director of the Harbour Group in Washington, D.C., told an *Atlantic* magazine blogger, “Journalists, by their

nature, don't make great advocates or public relations people, because they're trained to be objective rather than take sides. They also tend to work alone, and they have no business experience." Michele Horaney, a former journalist and now a communications director for a nonprofit organization, disagrees. She told *Ragan.com*, "PR people with news coverage background have a leg up over folks ... who have never written a news story. Being able to write and do research from 'in the news' and 'in the public's interest' perspective is invaluable."

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

There's also some thought that public relations courses should be in a school of business instead of a journalism department or school. The argument is that today's public relations is no longer exclusively a journalistic-type activity that involves working with the media. James Lukaszewski, a well-known consultant and speaker in the public relations field, is quite blunt. He wrote in *The Strategist*, "At minimum, PR programs belong in marketing sequences rather than journalism sequences. The sooner we can reflect a more managementlike perspective, the more quickly we'll find ourselves called in for our advice and counsel."

Indeed, many European universities offer a public relations curriculum in other academic areas. At the University of Belgrade in Serbia, for example, public relations is located in the Faculty of Economics. And in Latvia, the strongest public relations program in the country is taught at the Turiba School of Business Administration. Management schools in India also offer the most courses in public relations and corporate communications. In the United States, however, the vast majority of public relations programs continue to be part of J-schools.

## Essential Career Skills

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

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

2. **Research ability.** Arguments for causes must have factual support instead of generalities. A person must have the persistence and ability to gather information from a variety of sources, as well as to conduct original research by designing and implementing opinion polls or audits. Too many public relations programs fail because the organization does not assess audience needs and perceptions. Skillful use of the Internet and computer databases is an important element of research work. Reading current newspapers and magazines also is important.



## on the job

## INSIGHTS

This checklist, based on careful evaluation, can measure the effectiveness of your personality in terms of the public relations profession.

Rate each item “yes” or “no.” Each “yes” counts for 4 points. A “no” does not count. Anything below 60 is a poor score. A score between 60 and 80 suggests you should analyze your weak areas and take steps to correct them. Scores above 80 indicate an effective public relations personality.

- Good sense of humor
- Positive and optimistic
- Friendly, meet people easily
- Can keep a conversation going with anybody

## Personality Quiz: Do You Have the “Right Stuff”?

- Take frustration and rejection in stride
- Able to persuade others easily
- Well-groomed, businesslike appearance
- Flair for showmanship
- Strong creative urge
- Considerate and tactful
- Adept in use of words
- Able to gain management’s confidence
- Enjoy being with people
- Enjoy listening
- Enjoy helping other people resolve problems
- Curious about many things
- Enjoy reading in diverse areas
- Determined to complete projects
- High energy level
- Can cope with sudden emergencies
- See mistakes as learning experiences
- Factual and objective
- Respect other people’s viewpoints
- Perceptive and sensitive
- Quickly absorb and retain information

Source: PRSSA Forum.

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

4. **Problem-solving ability.** Innovative ideas and fresh approaches are needed to solve complex problems or to make a public relations program unique and memorable. Increased salaries and promotions go to people who show top management how to solve problems creatively. Two examples of creative public relations campaigns are given in the PR Casebook on page 26.

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

# PRCasebook

## The Wonderful World of Public Relations

Public relations is an exciting field that offers variety, creativity, and opportunity to work on any number of projects. The following are two programs that received “campaign of the year” awards by judges in *PRWeek’s* 2009 competition:

### Go Red for Women

Heart disease claims one woman’s life per minute, but only one in five women view it as a significant health threat. The American Heart Association and its public relations firm, Edelman Worldwide, decided to do something about this by creating a website, *GoRedForWomen.org*, that would use testimonials from “women like me” who had been affected by heart disease.

Edelman also created forums, both online and offline, where women could share their stories of heart disease to motivate others to donate funds and get a heart checkup. Research had shown that women are most likely to believe and act on information that is delivered by peers. Media cov-

erage for Go Red for Women was generated by having Sigourney Weaver serve as the host of “Rhapsody in Red,” Go Red’s signature event to honor its supporters and draw attention to the lifestyle implications of women’s heart disease.

The result was an increase of 75,000 visitors per month to the website, and more than 220,000 new women signed up to support *GoRedForWomen.org* and its fund-raising efforts. Almost \$125 million was raised for education, scientific outreach, and medical research. Another measurement of the campaign’s success was a survey that showed 65 percent of women were now aware that heart disease is the major killer of women, as opposed to only 57 percent before the campaign.

### Papa John’s Pizza Only a Text Away

Papa John’s led the industry in 2007 by introducing text message ordering, but it raised the question of whether texting was quicker and more effective than phone ordering. The pizza chain, working with its public relations firm Fleishman-Hillard (F-H), decided to raise public awareness about its texting capability by having a contest staged at the Mall of America in Minneapolis. It pitted the *Guinness Book of World Records’* fastest talker and fastest texter against each other in a pizza-ordering challenge.

The pizza challenge was a device for generating media coverage, but the more important objective was to generate more business by encouraging pizza lovers to register on [www.papajohns.com](http://www.papajohns.com) and save their favorite orders, payment information, and delivery instructions. Fleishman-Hillard got an exclusive story in the *Wall Street Journal*, but was also able to get stories distributed by the Associated Press (AP) and many other print outlets. In addition, F-H reached out to influential bloggers, offering a flash video on the pizza chain’s website and giving a tutorial on how to text-message an order.

The campaign result was more than 600 media placements in print publications and broadcast outlets. A YouTube video of the contest at the Mall of America was also viewed by 75,000 people. The most important result, however, was that almost 120,000 people registered their mobile numbers with Papa John’s.

Sigourney Weaver



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

**6. Expertise in social media.** Employers still value expertise in mainstream media relations, but it's now just as important to have social media savvy. A survey of employers by online MarketingVOX found 80 percent of the respondents agreed that knowledge of social networks is either important or very important. The three most important skills for job applicants are social networking, blogging, and tweeting. Employers also prefer job applicants who know about podcasting, search engine optimization (SEO), e-mail outreach, Web content management, and social bookmarking. According to MarketingVox, "These social media skills will likely increase in importance as PR professionals continue to take the lead in managing most organizations' social media communications channels."

The future belongs to those who not only know public relations, but also know business—and who can think strategically and write.

*Jeff Conley, partner in Stratacomm, Washington, D.C., quoted in PR Tactics*

## on the job

### INSIGHTS

The following is a list of skills you need to succeed in public relations, which has been distilled from a variety of sources:

- Be a media junkie. Absorb large quantities of information and track trend lines, issues that will impact your industry, employer, or clients.
- Stand up for transparency. Make transparency a core value for you and your organization.
- Join the social media bandwagon. Today's public relations requires expert knowledge of social media and the art of engaging in a conversation with multiple audiences.
- Avoid a technician mentality. Hone your ability to be a strategic thinker and do creative problem solving.
- Get on management's wavelength. Be knowledgeable about business, economics, and the triple bottom line: profits, the environment, and sustainability.
- Never forget the basics. Excellent writing and presentation skills are still fundamental.
- Develop global cultural literacy. Remember that there are no kangaroos in Austria.
- Learn for life. Make continuing education through reading, seminars, and short courses a prerequisite for being a professional.
- Give something back. Mentor young professionals; be a vocal advocate for advancing public relations ethics and professionalism.
- Master the media universe. Be aware of the symbiotic relationship between traditional media and the "new" media and how they reinforce each other.
- Do your homework. Have an in-depth knowledge of research and evaluation strategies as an integral part of campaign planning.
- Cut the B.S. Be authentic, real, and ethical in all your communications.

### How to Succeed in Public Relations

It should be noted, of course, that all jobs in public relations don't require all these essential skills in equal proportion. It often depends on your specific job responsibilities and assignments. Other skills required for today's practitioner are in the Insights box on page 27. You may also want to take the personality quiz on page 25.

Internship programs can be much more than a means to get young, inexpensive talent. Designed properly, they can offer a significant return on investment for agencies.

*Mark Hand, reporter for PRWeek*

## The Value of Internships

Internships are extremely popular in the communications industry, and a student whose résumé includes practical work experience along with a good academic record has an important advantage. The Commission on Public Relations Education believes the internship is so important that it is one of the five basic courses it recommends for any quality college or university public relations curriculum.

An internship is a win-win situation for both the student and the organization. The student, in most cases, not only receives academic credit, but also gets firsthand knowledge of work in the professional world. This gives the student an advantage in getting that all-important first job after graduation. In many cases, recent graduates are hired by their former internship employers because they have already proved themselves.

Indeed, *PRWeek* reporter Sara Calabro says:

Agencies and corporate communications departments are beginning to see interns as the future of their companies, not merely as gophers that they can pass the grunt work off to. While a few years ago, it was typical for an intern to work for nothing, it is almost unheard of for an internship to be unpaid these days. Examples of the essential work now entrusted to interns include tasks such as media monitoring, writing press releases, financial estimating, and compiling status reports. In many cases, interns are being included in all team and client meetings, as well as brainstorming sessions.

Many major public relations firms have formal internship programs. At Edelman Worldwide, for example, students enroll in "Edel-U," an internal training program that exposes them to all aspects of agency work. The summer internship program at Weber Shandick in Boston is called "Weber University." Calabro cites Jane Dolan, a senior account executive, who says that upper management is always incredibly impressed with the work that interns do for their final projects. "It is amazing to see them go from zero to 100 in a matter of months," says Dolan.

Hill & Knowlton also has an extensive internship training program in its New York office, taking about 40 interns a year. In its view, the internship program is "the cheapest and most effective recruiting tool available." Ketchum also gets about 800 résumés each year for 12 to 14 summer positions, which pay a weekly stipend. According to Scott Proper, SVP at Ketchum, "You can walk the halls any day and find former interns in pretty senior positions."

It's not always possible, of course, for a student to do an internship in Chicago or New York. However, many opportunities are available at local public relations firms, businesses, and nonprofit agencies. It is important, however, that the organization have at least one experienced public relations professional who can mentor a student and ensure that he or she gets an opportunity to do a variety of tasks to maximize the learning experience.

Most national and international firms pay interns. This often is not the case at the local level. Many smaller companies and nonprofits claim that they cannot afford to pay,

## on the job

## INSIGHTS

**E**mployers use a variety of techniques to select students for internships. In addition to personal interviews, they also test students on their knowledge of basic public relations concepts and ask for samples of their writing ability. Another approach is to have an applicant write a case study.

The following is a case study assignment used by Deveney Communication ([www.deveney.com](http://www.deveney.com)) for college students applying for its summer program. Applicants were judged on their creativity, research, writing, critical thinking, and knowledge of basic public relations tactics for an internship with the firm in its New Orleans headquarters.

### Louisiana Office of Tourism (LOT)

#### Overview

The Louisiana Office of Tourism is a state agency responsible for

## Want an Internship?: Can You Do This Assignment?

supporting tourism, one of the state's largest industries. The public relations objective is to promote the state as a travel destination to specific audiences, including families, African Americans, young adults 18–24, and the gay and lesbian (GLBT) market.

### Assignment

#### Research Component

Review media coverage of Louisiana and answer the following questions: (1) what key messages regarding travel to the state are already in the media?; (2) what challenges do you think LOT faces today in attracting visitors?; and (3) what messages should LOT use to address issues that detract visitors?

#### Strategy

Based on your review of the media coverage, develop a public relations plan to attract visitors \*to the state.

**Intended Audiences:** Who are your primary and secondary audience? What demographics and characteristics do they represent?

**Goals and Objectives:** What broad goal should this plan accomplish for the client? What measurable objectives should this plan accomplish for LOT?

**Tactics:** What will you do and how will you do it? What is your rationale? How does the plan showcase a creative solution? What are the key messages? What is the proposed budget?

**Measurement of Success:** How would you measure your results, and how do these measurements relate back to your goals and objectives?

**Creativity:** Choose one tactic from your plan (news release, public service announcement, webpage, etc.) and write or produce it to show your writing ability.

or that the opportunity to gain training and experience should be more than adequate compensation. Dave DeVries, a senior public relations manager for the PCS Division of Sprint, disagrees. He wrote in PRSA's *Tactics*, "Unpaid internships severely limit the field of potential candidates" because, as he points out, the best and brightest students will always gravitate to employers who pay.

Paid internships, however, are very competitive and a student has to demonstrate his or her abilities in order to be selected. Deveney Communications in New Orleans, for example, requires submission of a case study (see the Insights box above). Many employers also use writing and current event tests to screen internship applicants.

## Salaries in the Field

Public relations work pays relatively well compared to other communications professions. Many practitioners say they like the income and opportunities for steady advancement. They also enjoy the variety and fast pace that the field provides. Blogger Todd Defren of *pr.squared.com* writes, “PR is hard work, strategic work, under promoted and infinitely interesting work—hard to describe or appreciate until you’re in the trenches.”

Several surveys have attempted to pinpoint the national median annual salary for recent graduates in their first full-time jobs in the public relations field. Probably the most definitive survey is the one conducted by Lee Becker and his associates at the University of Georgia. They work with journalism and mass communications programs throughout the nation to compile a list of recent graduates, who are then surveyed ([www.grady.uga.edu/annualsurveys/](http://www.grady.uga.edu/annualsurveys/)).

## on the job

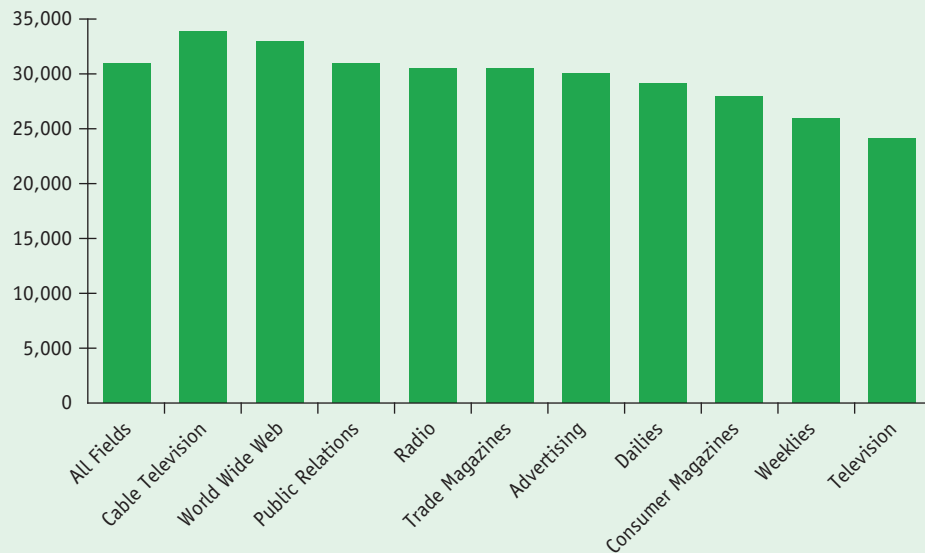
# INSIGHTS

### Entry-Level Salaries in the Communications Field

A national survey of 2008 graduates from 86 departments and schools of journalism and mass communications found that recent public relations graduates earned a median annual salary of \$31,000.

The survey, conducted by Professor Lee Becker and his associates at the University of Georgia, also found that public relations graduates differed in a key way from other majors in journalism and mass communications. They didn’t necessarily seek and find jobs in traditional areas such as public relations departments and firms.

Professor Becker concludes, “The evidence is that public relations



students are more entrepreneurial, less tied to traditional definitions of what is communications work, and more flexible about what kinds of work they actually do. They did better in the job market in 2008, and that may say a lot about the future of

employment for graduates of the nation’s journalism and mass communications programs.”

Source: L. B. Becker, T., Vlad, & D. Olin. (2009, November). Annual survey of journalism & mass communication graduates. *AJMC News*, 1, 4–8.

The latest data available, published in 2009, show that the median entry-level salary for all recent graduates working in the communications field was \$31,000. Public relations graduates, as the chart on page 30 indicates, also made this amount. It, however, was considerably more than the salaries of graduates working in television (\$24,000) and those working for weekly newspapers (\$26,000), which is probably one reason why journalism grads begin to think about public relations as a career option. On the other hand, recent graduates working in cable television or at sites on the Web make slightly more than public relations graduates.

Another survey, conducted by *PRWeek*, places a more optimistic figure on starting salaries in public relations. Its 2010 survey of salaries, for example, found that median salaries for professionals with less than two years' experience was \$37,000.

Key findings of *PRWeek's* 2010 salary survey are listed in the Insights box below, which shows the progression of income with years of experience. Practitioners with 3–4 years of experience have median incomes of \$52,000 and those with 5 to 6 years of

Although employment is projected to grow much faster than average, keen competition is expected for entry-level jobs.

*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010–11 edition*

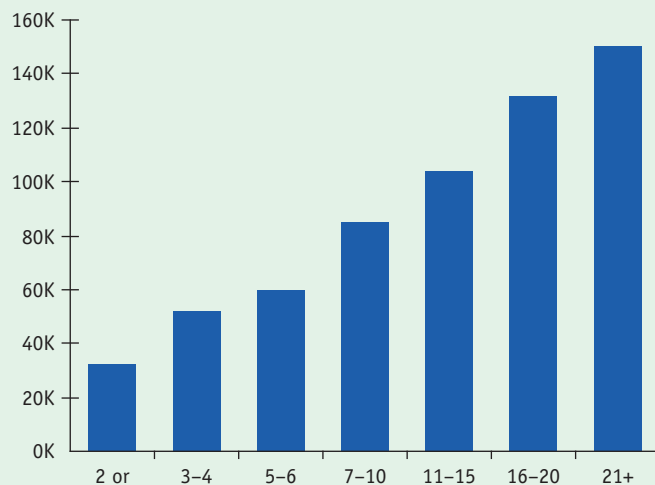
## on the job

# INSIGHTS

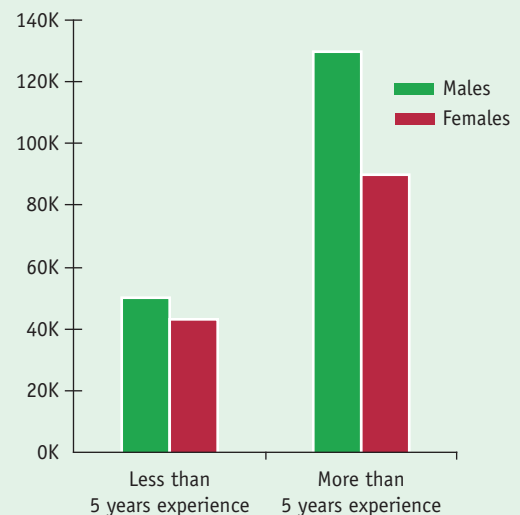
### An Overview of Salaries in the Public Relations Field

**P***RWeek* conducts an annual survey of salaries. The following charts are excerpted from the 2010 survey, which polled 1,000 practitioners in the field.

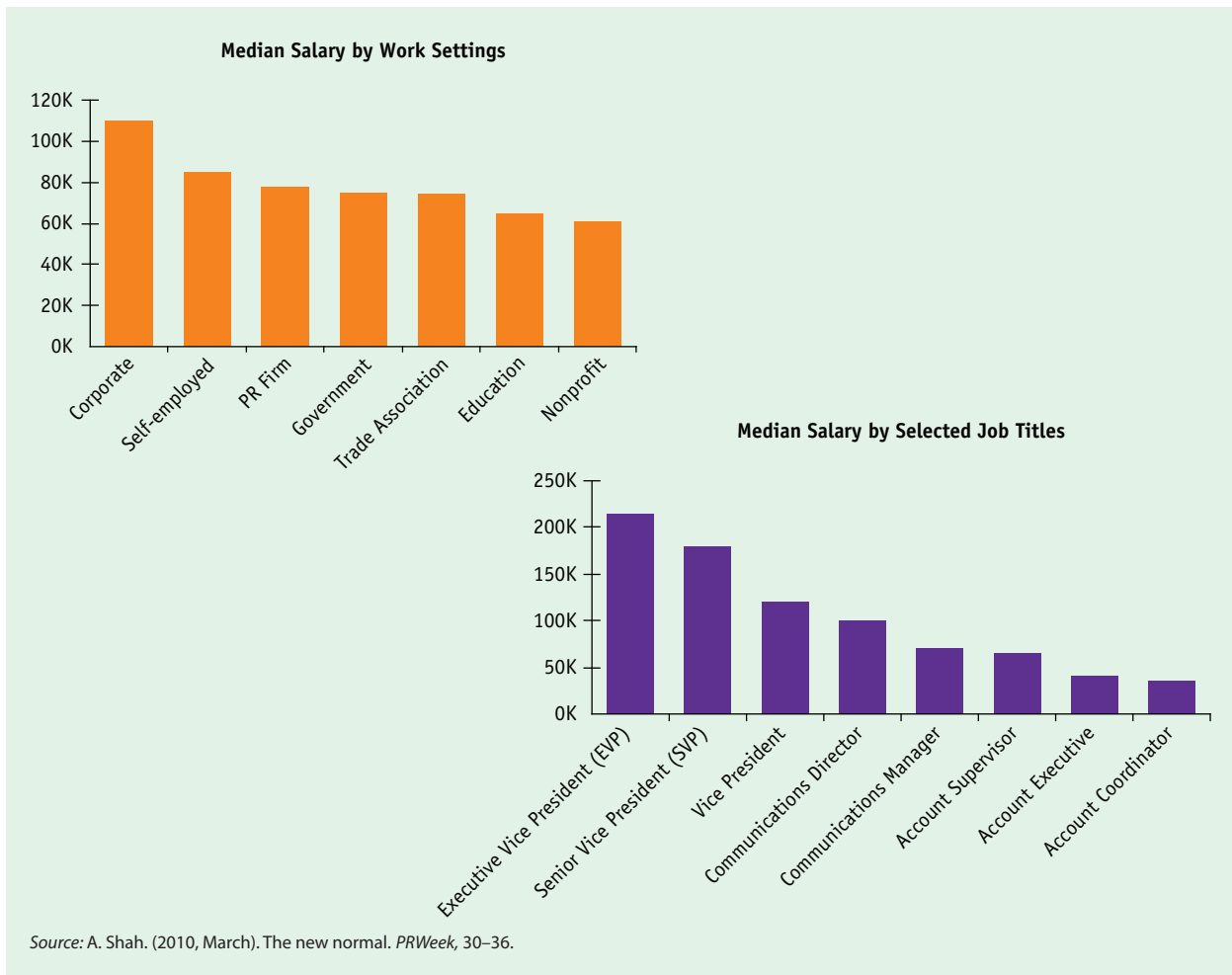
Median Salary by Years of Experience



Median Salary by Gender and Years of Experience



(continued)



experience earn \$60,000. The most experienced individuals (21 years or more) have a median salary of \$150,000.

Salaries, of course, depend on a number of factors, including geographic location, job title, the industry, and even gender. Major metropolitan areas, for example, generally have higher salaries, but there are some regional differences. Practitioners based on the West Coast and those in the northeastern states tend to earn more than those who are in the Midwest and the southern states. Such differences, to a degree, somewhat coincide with the cost of living in these areas.

Job title also means a lot. An executive vice president (EVP) receives a median salary of \$215,000, while a director of communications for a company receives \$100,000. In public relations firms, account supervisors receive \$65,000, but the lowly account coordinator (usually the entry-level position for recent graduates) gets a median salary of \$35,000. In terms of work setting, corporate median salaries are \$110,000 and salaries at nonprofits/charities are at the bottom of the list, with \$61,000. Surprisingly, self-employed consultants report good incomes in *PRWeek*'s 2010 survey, with median incomes of \$85,000.

The Arthur W. Page Society, a group of senior communication executives representing many of America's *Fortune* 500 corporations, also conducts an annual survey of its



members regarding budgets and executive compensation. In general, compensation for the top communications officer in a large corporation ranges from \$269,000 to \$500,000+. There are, of course, other forms of compensation. Former Edelman Worldwide vice chairman Leslie Dach is reported to have received \$3 million in Wal-Mart shares for taking the EVP post at the retail giant, according to Jack O'Dwyer's newsletter.

Gender also makes a difference. National statistics show that females earn only 80 percent of what men earn for full-time work, and this disparity is also reflected in the public relations field. *PRWeek's* survey, for example, found that men with less than five years' experience earn \$50,000, compared to women's median salary of \$43,000. The gap becomes even greater with five-plus years of experience, \$130,000 versus \$90,000. Despite the salary differences, there continues to be an influx of women into the field, which is discussed in Chapter 2.

A good source for checking current salaries for public relations in major cities throughout the United States and around the world is [www.workinpr.com](http://www.workinpr.com), which posts current openings and also provides the salary ranges for various job classifications.

## The Value of Public Relations

This chapter has outlined the size and global scope of public relations, provided some definitions, discussed the various activities of public relations, and explored how it differs from and is similar to journalism, advertising, and marketing. The case for an organization integrating all of its communications for maximum effectiveness has also been made. Careers in public relations, the qualities needed in public relations professionals, and the salaries that can be earned in the field of public relations have also been discussed.

Today more than ever, the world needs not more information but sensitive communicators and facilitators who can explain the goals and aspirations of individuals, organizations, and governments to others in a socially responsive manner. Experts in communication and public opinion must provide their employers and clients with knowledge of what others are thinking to guide them in setting their policies for the common good.

Indeed, in this era of heightened environmental concern, accountability, and transparency, no organization exists solely for its own purposes; it must also serve society as a whole. Another way of expressing this point is the idea that no organization can exist without the express permission of the government and society at large.

Tom Glover, writing in *Profile*, the magazine of the Institute of Public Relations in the United Kingdom, believes "clear and consistent communication helps organizations achieve their goals, employees to work to their potential, customers to make informed choices, investors to make an accurate assessment of an organization, and society to form fair judgments of industries, organizations, and issues."

Public relations provides businesses and society with a vital service. On a practical level, Laurence Moskowitz, chairman and CEO of Medialink, says that public relations is "...informative. It's part of the news, the program, the article, the stuff readers and viewers want..." Indeed, the Harris Interactive/PRSA survey previously mentioned also found that 71 percent of its respondents agreed with the statement that public relations professionals can "help raise awareness about important issues that the public might not know about."

The late Patrick Jackson, a former president of the PRSA and publisher of *PR Reporter*, said it best:

As soon as there was Eve with Adam, there were relationships, and in every society, no matter how small or primitive, public communication needs and problems inevitably emerge and must be resolved. Public relations is devoted to the essential function of building and improving human relationships.

## Summary

### The Challenge of Public Relations

- Public relations is well established in the United States and throughout the world. Growth is strong in Europe and Asia, particularly China.
- Common terms in most definitions of public relations are *deliberate, planned, performance, public interest, two-way communication, and strategic management function*.
- Organizations use a variety of terms to describe the public relations function, calling it *corporate communications, public affairs, communication, and even external affairs*. Less flattering terms used in the media include *flack* and *spin doctor*.

### Public Relations as a Process

- The public relations process can be described with the RACE acronym: **R**esearch, **A**ction, **C**ommunication, and **E**valuation. The process is a constant cycle; feedback and program adjustment are integral components of the overall process.
- Public relations work includes the following specializations: counseling, media relations, publicity, community relations, governmental affairs, employee relations, investor relations, development/fund-raising, special events, and marketing communications.
- Public relations is a distinct discipline separate from journalism, advertising, and marketing. Although the disciplines share some basic concepts of effective communication, public relations is much broader in

scope and works to build relationships with multiple publics.

- An organization's goals and objectives are best achieved by integrating the activities of advertising, marketing, and public relations to create a consistent message. Integration requires teamwork and the recognition that each field has strengths that complement and reinforce one another.

### A Career in Public Relations

- The recommended path to a career in public relations is to major or take courses in the subject. Journalism majors and communication majors, however, are also attracted to the field. Students, in addition to having excellent writing skills, should also take courses in management, marketing, and economics.
- Those who plan careers in public relations should be competent in the following areas: writing, research, planning, problem solving, business/economics, and social media.
- Students should participate in internships throughout college as part of their preprofessional training in public relations. Paid internships are the most desirable.
- Entry-level salaries are higher in public relations than in many other communications fields. An entry-level person can earn a salary in the \$30,000 to \$40,000 range. A more experienced professional can earn a salary in the six figures.

## Case Activity Bubble Wrap Celebrates Its 50th Anniversary

People have walked to the altar dressed in it, artists have made exhibits using it, and companies around the world have used it to ship their products. The product is Bubble Wrap, which has been manufactured by Sealed Air Corporation for the past 50 years.

The product has become somewhat of a pop icon loved by many who, for whatever reason, like the feel and sound when they destroy it, piece by piece, popping all the little bubbles. In fact, enthusiasts have even created more than 250 Facebook pages devoted to Bubble Wrap.

The company would like to celebrate its 50th anniversary by organizing various activities and events that will generate publicity in the mainstream media and on the Web. Your public relations firm has been retained to do some creative brainstorming about how the Sealed Air Corporation can generate more public awareness about a product that's been on the market for a half-century. Attracting media coverage, however, will be a challenge; Bubble Wrap is a fairly mundane product and there's nothing new or "sexy" about it. What would you recommend?

## Questions For Review and Discussion

1. How many people are estimated to work in public relations around the world?
2. Is public relations growing as a field in terms of employees and revenues?
3. What key words and phrases are found in most definitions of public relations?
4. What does the acronym RACE stand for?
5. Public relations is described as a loop process. What makes it a loop rather than a linear process?
6. Review the description for a public relations specialist on page 3. Did it change your initial perception of public relations as a field?
7. What are the components of basic public relations practice? Which one sounds the most interesting to you as a possible career specialty?
8. What other terms are used by organizations to describe the public relations function? Do you have preference for any of them? Explain.
9. Do you think portrayals of public relations people in films and on television are negative or positive?
10. How does public relations differ from the fields of journalism, advertising, and marketing?
11. Some experts say that public relations can launch a new product or service better than advertising can. Do you agree or disagree?
12. Public relations people work for a variety of organizations. What type of organization would you prefer if you want to work in public relations?
13. The text mentions six essential qualities for working in public relations. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate yourself on each ability?
14. Discuss entry-level salaries in public relations. Are they about what you expected? What about the salaries for experienced professionals?
15. After reading this chapter, do you think you would enjoy a career in public relations? Why or why not?

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