Development of a Public Relations Slide Show

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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Thesis Director

[Signature]

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WANTED: Person with good writing skills, design, photography, lay-out, research, evaluation and goal and objective setting experience. Must be able to think on feet, be highly organized, be knowledgable on variety of subjects and like people. Long hours, little thanks given, but personal satisfaction and growth guaranteed.

This 'advertisement' is an apt description of a public relations job opportunity. It touches on the wide range of knowledge and skills necessary for a communicator to succeed, as well as shows the potential for great personal enjoyment gained from communicating effectively for and with other people. It is the description of a complex and intriguing art--the art of understanding, dealing with and/or changing public opinion.

As with all things, however, public relations practitioners are not blessed with extremely good fortune. In my short experience in the field of public relations, I have been incorrectly called a 'publicity writer,' politely called a 'brown-noser' and rudely referred to as an 'ass-wiper.' These situations have caused a lot of frustration and personal discomfort for me, but I have always defended my career choice and labeled the name-callers as those who are ignorant about the concept of public relations.
advertising agency, prompted me to search more intensely into the history of public communications. Recognizing the need to begin telling others about the depth involved in successful communications and wanting to dispel some myths about the concept, I developed a slide show script for use by Limited Edition to educate college students and professionals about public relations.

The following chapters use the four steps that are involved in the public relations process of handling effective communications. As this was the method I used to develop this show and two others for Limited Edition, it is also presented in the same manner.
I. Research

The first step any practitioner, student or professional, takes when faced with a project is to delve wholeheartedly into the nature of the problem. That is, a problem is identified (for example: no one understands what public relations encompasses), and means are developed to solve it in the best way possible. This is done by deciding what caused or causes the problem, why it continues to exist and why attempts to alleviate it have not been successful. By using such measures as taking surveys, talking to others in the field, reading books, checking files and thinking creatively, the problem will be properly understood and a solution or series of techniques can be developed to combat the difficulty.

For this particular problem, research constituted books about the public relations concepts, journals concerning the field and talks with practitioners and professors. Some information was very easy to obtain, such as theory statements and definitions of concepts. However, finding specific facts about public relations history or exactly what caused its bad image required more extensive searching. For example, most books dealt with the personal lives of famous practitioners, such as Edward L. Bernays, who is considered one of the founding fathers of PR, and John W. Hill, who is a founder of Hill and Knowlton, a very prestigious public relations agency. These books, while discussing the stigma against public relations, never really explained how it began.

One fact that did become evident from all my references is that some practitioners were dishonest—they were called "seekers of free
advertising" by newspaper journalists—and this name has stuck to present professionals like bad cologne. This idea is still held today—ask any reporter what he or she thinks of a public relations person. In fact, the students in the PR sequence at Ball State are regarded with a bit of disgust by some news-editorial sequence majors and professors. Their idea, too, is that we are all in search of free publicity.

The term 'public relations' did not come into more common usage until the 1900s, which was a time when what the public thought or wanted was not considered to any great degree. The goal of most businessmen was to make a fast buck. For this was the era of P.T. Barnum, who had a total disregard of goodwill to the public. The age of press agentry was alive, as free stunts that created immediate results without any regard for making favorable, lasting impressions became rampant. One author tells the story of a press agent who put an empty fish bowl in a restaurant window, along with a sign that read, "Only Invisible Brazilian Goldfish in Captivity" to entice diners to enter the shop.¹ However, the same author goes on to write, "no reputable public relations man could afford to have his name connected with anything so crude," calling to attention that there were good communicators around, too.²

Soon, however, the same businessmen who used dishonest stunts and empty slogans to make money began to realize the public no longer trusted them, bought their product or used their services. PR practitioners stepped in and offered to help them out with honesty. For example, in the 1920s, Ivy Lee, who is considered
to be the first PR man, aided the Pennsylvania Railroad in a public relations capacity. He opened the railroad's records for public inspection, reported any accidents involving Pennsylvania's trains and told the public what the railroad was doing to further technological advances. In short, Lee's plan was very simple—open the doors and tell the company's story—and it was just what the public wanted. It was a change, albeit a gradual one, from the idea, "The public be damned!" which was voiced by William Vanderbilt, to the more service-oriented question, "What can I do for you, the public?"

World War I was another milestone for public relations, in more ways than one. The United States government formed the first Committee on Public Information, with George Creel at its head, causing communication techniques to improve as practitioners became more skilled in dealing with the public. Efforts also shifted from publicity to propaganda, which literally means communicators began to sustain public favor instead of trying to obtain it.

As the bad memories of what had happened to businesses during the muckraking journalism era was still strong in their minds, practitioners turned to offensive techniques to prevent the mistakes that had previously been made. They did not want a return of those bad times as they had learned the importance of public opinion.

Soon after this, however, the U.S. entered the Depression and the term 'public relations' became tarnished again as a widespread distrust and dislike of Big Business became apparent and the small
number of practitioners were helpless to offset it. Also, during World War II, the term 'propaganda' received a sinister connotation and began to mean a "special pleading of an untrue nature from a disguised source," as Hitler used propaganda to promote his evil theories. This dealt an additional blow to PR as it had always been associated with the term 'propaganda.' Practitioners since then have faced a challenge to promote the integrity of the field, for, while advances were being made and communicators were gaining skills, the public and businessmen were turning away from the techniques public relations had to offer because of these stigmas.

Today, the profession has basically overcome its poor image by hard, honest work of communicators and it has grown to encompass many organizations, agencies and institutions. Continuous use of honest communication techniques by practitioners with integrity has led the field to be accepted by many persons in top management positions. Public relations' reputation has changed from qualified rejection to qualified acceptance. Public relations people now also have their own professional organization, a step made in direct response to the disreputable events of the past. A need to have the public believe in the validity of PR work has prompted practitioners to develop the Public Relations Society of America, as well as accreditation of worthy practitioners and a code of ethics to which reputable public relations men and women ascribe.

Practitioners have never needed a license to perform communications work, and this has always allowed 'unsavory' types to hang a shingle—but there have been poor attorneys and physicians, who are licensed, known to exist also.
Besides its ups and downs in the trends of changing times, public relations also has suffered from misunderstandings about the term itself. For example, practitioners have been given a variety of names, including publicists, propagandists, press agents, public relations counsels, and not-so-nice names like space grabbers, glad-handers and deadheaders (those who give gifts to reporters in exchange for publicity). Also, an act of Congress in 1913 forbade all federal government offices to use the term 'public relations.' Add to this the fact that many people, even practitioners, use the term when they only mean 'publicity,' and it is understandable why anyone would be confused about the true meaning of the concept.

Another fact that compounds the problem is the number of public relations definitions, as many writers have attempted to convey all nuances of the job into a few sentences. For example, consider the following descriptions:

"Public relations is the attempt, by information, persuasion and adjustment, to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement or institution." Edward Bernays

"Public relations is the fine art of shaping public opinion." Shepard Henkin, author

"Public relations can be defined as the controlling of news about an individual or organization by planned and organized effort through informing and cultivating the press and through encouraging
the corporation itself to alter its policies in accordance with perceived public desires."\(^{15}\)

Richard Tedlow, historian

And there are many more definitions for the term. There is, however, a single fact that does hold true for all the definitions and that is the idea that public relations is an overall strategy for effective communications, while publicity is just one phase of the plan in operation.

Having finally made the history of public relations and its definitions clear in my mind, I also checked into other generalities about practitioners. I found that most came to public relations from the field of journalism, where they were reporters and editors who were wooed away by large salaries or were interested in effective communications for businesses. Also, a particularly irksome fact emerged that women were only involved in public relations if their husbands were practitioners, as in the case of Edward Bernays and his wife Doris Fleischmann. Even today, over 75 percent of practitioners are men.\(^{16}\) But a recent survey of records for the Public Relations Student Society of America, the college-level organization of PRSA, showed three out of four members were women.\(^{17}\) Men, however, still make more money than women—their salaries usually average $2,000 more than those of their female counterparts—but this, too, has narrowed in recent years.\(^{18}\)

In another survey, data revealed "a trend away from journalism's omnipresence in public relations sequences and courses,
and toward stronger and more expansive programs.\textsuperscript{19} Public relations students are still strongly tied to journalism, however, as nearly two-thirds are studying in this area, with one-quarter in business areas.\textsuperscript{20}

As for what practitioners do every day, skills are greatly varied and many not be the same from one day to the next. The following is a list of public relations activities and how much time communicators, polled from across the nation, listed they spent in each capacity:\textsuperscript{21}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>media relations</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public relations management</td>
<td>60.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>publicity</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community relations</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public relations counseling</td>
<td>40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>publication editor</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employee relations</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>government relations</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>investor relations</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consumer affairs</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public relations teaching</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advertising/sales promotion</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These facts provided a firm foundation for producing the slide show script. Step one of the process was complete.
II. Planning

Planning is the most essential step in the four-step process of public relations counseling. This step requires the most creativity, the most careful considerations of time and money, and the most realistic of outlooks. In essence, a person must be both an idealist and realist at the same moment in order to come up with creative public relations techniques and also carry them out successfully.

How to produce the show once it was written became the first segment of planning to be conducted. I obtained much of my information about slide show production from Mr. Daniel Lutz, of Ball State's Educational Resources Department. He informed me there are many decisions to be made regarding slide shows, depending on what a person wants to accomplish with each show. In actuality, the practitioner's goals are what dictate how a show will look upon completion.

My first consideration was film, and I chose Kodak Extachrome for its superiority in producing slide pictures. Using the formula below, we figured the number of slides that would be used in the show and then multiplied by 10 to arrive at how many rolls of film were needed. The number 10 was used because, on the average, only one shot in 10 will be used in a slide show.
Formula: 22

1. Divide the number of topic ideas into 10 minutes to get the number of minutes screen time per idea.
   example: the topics in this show are history, education, skills and careers to equal four ideas.  $10 \div 4 = 2.5$
   Also, 10 minutes is considered to be the optimum time for a show to last, taking into account audience interest, concentration and level of boredom.

2. Multiply idea screen time by six, which is considered to be the minimum number of slides per idea, to equal the total number of slides per idea.
   example: $2.5 \times 6 = 15$

3. Multiply the number of ideas by the number of slides needed per idea to get the number of slides for the main body of the show.
   example: $4 \times 15 = 60$

4. Add title slides, subtitle slides and credit slides to the number of slides in the main body of the show to arrive at the minimum number of slides in the entire show.
   example: $60 + 1 + 4 + 2 = 67$

   The next decision concerned the script—if it would be taped or simply typed into a script form for a narrator to read aloud, and if the slides would be manually forwarded or done automatically. Deciding a taped narration with automatic forwarding of slides would most benefit my goals, simply by its professional look, I then obtained names of possible narrators who would work for a nominal
fee. I also was told that a simple machine will do the rest for me by way of installing inaudible beeps into the script's tape to forward the slides automatically.

Another question that will only be answered after the script is written is the inclusion of music during the show. If music is to be used, then the style, such as pastoral, march or classical, has to be chosen. Also, if the compositions are under the protection of a copyright, then permission has to be granted from the authors or publishers before the music can be taped. This is done to avoid any legal difficulties. If music is used, a master tape that has two tracks will be used—one track for narration, the other for background music.

I also learned how to make title slides by drawing a graph or printing words on a cardboard backing, then making a PMT or Velox print of them, which is a picture that has no gray tones in it, and the colors are either all black or all white. The PMT is then photographed on slide film to produce a clean-looking title slide.

Also, a solution called Kodalith can be used when developing slides to turn specific words or segments of a graph into whatever color is desired. The exact scientific procedure of how and why this occurs is unknown to me, but Kodalith can be purchased from any camera supply shop and, according to Mr. Lutz, is very simple to use.

A final consideration was directing the show toward a particular group or groups of people. Audience selection is a very
important part of developing successful communications. For any kind of communication, there are certain types of people who will be more receptive, interested and suited to the messages emitted by each different organization. For example, this PR slide show's goals are to teach people the proper concepts of communication and inform them about what practitioners are skilled to do. The audiences selected for this are college students and professionals who deal with practitioners, because these are people within easy access to Limited Edition and these people will probably need to know about communications or require public relations services some day. Also, the climate of a college classroom facilitates memory retention—as, perhaps, a civic group's club room would not.

Audiences are differentiated by such things as age, sex, race, socioeconomic status and values. Depending on the message to be relayed, groups can be very large and include many separate characteristics or be divided into groups of small, specific qualities. In either case, by identifying the characteristics of the audience they wish to appeal to, practitioners can direct their messages to those groups by using techniques the people will notice. For in this world of mass communication, people only notice those statements which interest them.

After considering all these objectives, I presented the following recommendations and plans to the Limited Edition directors and advisers. Note the inclusion of a timetable, goals, objectives, target audiences, and a contingency plan. All are essential for
future success. To provide the reader with a variety of examples to peruse, I also have included the outlines of two other Limited Edition slide show scripts which, under my direction, are being produced for the agency.
Slide Show Presentation

Agenda

I. Content of shows
   A. Public relations
   B. Limited Edition
   C. Graphic design

II. Costs

III. Deadlines

IV. Contingency timetable
IA. Public Relations Slide Show

objectives: create understanding of what PR is and entails by the people who utilize PR skills, journalism students and professionals who need and deal with PR
explain evolution of public relations and dispel myths
show diversity of skills needed and utilized by practitioners
show quality of decision-making necessary to make PR work

audiences: PR and journalism students, other students, clients and professionals

Topics:
I. Definitions and history
   A. Dictionary definitions
   B. Three aspects—relationships, tools, quality of relationship
   C. Different titles
   D. Began before press agentry
   E. Founders
II. Education of practitioners
   A. College degree
   B. Newspaper background
   C. Liberal arts background
   D. Best education equals experience
   E. Students helped by professionals
III. Skills utilized
   A. Basic skills
   B. Four-step process
   C. Use of charts, timetables
   D. Examples of work

IV. Career fields
   A. Job possibilities
   B. How to get in
   C. Professional organizations
   D. Differences in jobs/titles
   E. Place in business structure
   F. Salary ranges
IB. Limited Edition Slide Show

objectives: to acquaint people with the agency
          to answer all questions about how the agency works,
          how to get involved, what jobs students perform

audiences: clients (present and potential), journalism students,
         high school students interested in journalism, other
         journalism students at other universities and colleges,
         professionals

Topic sections:
I. History
   A. How the agency got started
   B. Clients and the things students have done
   C. Why it is "limited"

II. Structure
   A. How to get involved
   B. Chain of command
   C. Different positions available

III. What students do
   A. Client/student relationships
   B. Examples of work
   C. Responsibilities
IV. Outside
   A. PRaxis
   B. Campus
   C. Gains
   D. Jobs
IC. Graphic Design Slide Show

objective: to show in basic detail the process of putting together any form of printed communication

audiences: Limited Edition members, future staff members, journalism classes

Topics:
I. Stating purpose of a published article
   A. Basic ideas of publication, brainstorming, making a rough
   B. State objective, time elements
   C. Look at already published material for ideas

II. Formation
   A. Have rough ready, stories and details
   B. Typesetting stories
      1. Importance of experience on terminals
      2. Copyfitting
      3. Using disc, files
      4. Type sizes
      5. Considering size of headlines, type and space

III. Editing and its importance

IV. Before printing
   A. Time elements
   B. PMTs

V. Lay-out
   A. Basic tools
1. Lay-out paper
2. Light table
3. Blue pencil
4. Waxer, rubber cement
5. Exacto knives

B. Column inches, picas

C. Laying out publications with more than one side

VI. Cutting copy and placement
   A. Importance of cleanliness
   B. Knowing correct dimensions
   C. Leaving space for folds, columns

VII. Achieving balance
   A. Importance of best optical spots for articles
   B. Certain parts of copy included in every publication
   C. Easy readability and flow
   D. Using lines to set off or balance art and copy

VIII. Lay-out principles
   A. Cutting copy and arranging copy
   B. Editing
   C. Straightness of copy

IX. Going to printer
   A. Markings
   B. Let printer know everything you want
   C. Cost comparisons and deadlines
II. Costs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film 15 rolls</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>developing</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maxell tape for narration</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator's fee</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodalith</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carousels for slides</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$180 to $200 per show
III. Deadlines

March 8: scripts and storyboards done; quality control
March 15: start photography; send for music permissions
March 22: Limited Edition show pictures developed; tape script
March 29: PR show pictures sent off
April 2: Limited Edition show completed
April 5: Graphics show pictures sent off
April 30: all shows completed

IV. Contingency

In case of emergencies, unforeseen catastrophe and any other problems, a contingency timetable also was developed. In fact, this timetable, perhaps because it is more realistic, is the one being followed today.

May 22: Limited Edition show completed
September: Take PR show pictures; develop them
October: Begin graphics show pictures; tape PR script
November: PR show done by end of quarter
December: Tape graphics show script
January: Graphics show completed
III. Action

After the previous two steps, action may seem to be the simplest of all. Yet this part, too, involves many hours of deliberation in developing a finished product. For this slide show, much time was involved in writing the script and many more hours will be spent taking photographs, taping narration, producing title slides and timing the forwarding of slides.

Producing a script with a storyboard of pictures is the first action in developing slide shows. This prevents unnecessary waste of film and time as picture content can be decided upon beforehand, and when it is time to take the photos, a number of the same type of shots can be taken at the same time. Failure to use a storyboard will result in a huge loss of revenue and the most precious element--time--because of extreme disorganization.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>slide</th>
<th>narration</th>
<th>storyboard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The public--it includes you, your family, friends and strangers in every town in the world.</td>
<td>The Power of Public Relations (title slide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>And there are hundreds of thousands of businesses, organizations and government agencies that want you, the public, to hear what they have to say.</td>
<td>crowd shot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>These organizations use public relations communication techniques to make sure their messages reach your ears and eyes.</td>
<td>many business signs on busy street (ex.: McGalliard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>And they hire public relations practitioners to identify and research the publics they must reach--and then design effective communication programs to reach them.</td>
<td>one person by sign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What kind of professionals are involved in communicating these messages? How do they know who to reach and what to say? Is PR necessary for success?</td>
<td>same person working on PR tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>These questions can be answered in part by understanding just what PR is.</td>
<td>close-up of slide 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>For example, one dictionary describes public relations as the promotion of goodwill,</td>
<td>pub/lik ri/la/shenz (title slide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>while another stresses the activities used by a person to reach the public. Both are incomplete answers.</td>
<td>two people shaking hands (exaggerated)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The solution also cannot be found in any certain PR job description because each practitioner has different duties in different organizations.</td>
<td>same two people looking at ad/brochure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>publicist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>release writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>media consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>advertiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>graphics designer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In fact, practitioners must combine all kinds of skills and tools to be prepared for any situation.

To accurately define public relations, the term must be carefully examined in order to be understood.

The first aspect of public relations is the relationship with those who make up an organization's publics.

That is, for each organization, there are specific groups of people who want or need what the organization offers—and these people must be identified in order to be effectively served.

For example, audiences of messages are differentiated by age, sex, race, values, levels of education and income.

The next aspect is the means used to achieve a favorable relationship with these publics. For example, openness and honest communication are necessary for good relations between the organization and the people it serves.

The third aspect is the quality of the relationship.

If the target audience distrusts the integrity of the organization, the organization will not be in business very long.

This definition is like a complete circle—from the organization to the public and back again—with the practitioner being where the rubber meets the road.
This is because PR utilizes a two-way communications process, where messages are sent and received and where both the public and practitioner are communicating with each other.

Public relations is not an entirely new concept. The theory has been around a long time.

The concept dates back to the times of ancient Greece when philosophers wrote about the importance of public goodwill.

Early Romans compared the voice of the people to the voice of God.

In the 18th century, the word 'propaganda' was coined by the Catholic Church when it formed a committee to promote its beliefs.

PR is strongly related to change and the struggle of groups to gain the public's acceptance of new technology and ideas.

Probably the first United States public relations campaign was the effort to gain support for the American Revolution.

This was the first time the general public had been asked to participate in decision-making--

and the people liked it very much.

PR's image later became stained, however, when press agents like P.T. Barnum used outlandish publicity stunts that lacked in honesty.

To defend themselves against the bad publicity this produced, businessmen changed their attitudes from "The public be damned!" to "What can we do for you?" in order to stay financially solvent.
A poor image of public relations still exists, but today it is because of a lack of understanding and an unawareness of the changes PR has been through. For example, men like Edward Bernays have spent their lives telling people of PR's importance.

Bernays and Ivy Lee, the father of present-day public relations, were among the first to show that PR strategies operate in the open, with no secrecy.

PR is more important than ever today because of technological, economic crises, and heightened consumer interests.

Communication information can be used to help the public understand how businesses are dealing with these problems.

In this ever-changing society, it is essential for businesses to open their doors to the public. Secrecy builds hostility among the public--and good PR strategies prevent this.

Although everything is still not perfectly open and honest, the importance of public opinion is usually recognized and understood.

In order to communicate with publics effectively, practitioners need to know what is appropriate for every situation. To learn this, they receive their education from many areas.

Most communicators now get their PR education from college programs where communications, business and advertising are emphasized.

Nearly two-thirds of PR students are from journalism departments, with more than a fourth from business departments.
Classes in the social and political sciences, liberal arts and specialized subject areas are designed to provide the PR student with a wide range of knowledge as a basic educational foundation. This liberal education prepares students for the wide range of communication techniques they will perform as practitioners. Writing skills also are stressed because they are the backbone of almost any communication. In college, classroom skills lead to practical experience, which opens the door to good public relations jobs. By handling public relations tasks for community or social organizations, and obtaining an internship or practicum, a student in public relations can have a bulging portfolio to show prospective employers. Students also gain experience by joining college-level chapters of professional groups. The Public Relations Student Society of America and the International Association of Business Communicators both offer advice, programs, and contact with practitioners in all areas of public relations. These organizations also allow students to spend a day with a professional, which reinforces what the students have learned in the classroom.
Student-run public relations agencies, such as this one at Ball State University, also can be set up to offer professional experience, and give students a taste of what PR is like in the 'real world.'

Experience gained through college classes and activities is preparation for the transition from student to practitioner. After receiving an education, the practitioner is skilled in many areas.

In fact, he or she wears many different hats, including that of writer, photographer, researcher, planner, advertiser, editor, management adviser and marketing expert. That is why a broad liberal education is necessary for students in public relations.

It prepares them for the wide variety of tasks they face every day.

For each kind of task the practitioner does, a four-step process is used to develop a correct communications strategy.

Step one is researching the organization and project to see what was done before and if it was successful. This can include using surveys or just talking to others to get their ideas.

The next step is planning. Goals and objectives for the project are set down to the last detail.
Step three is action. Implementing the plans thought out in step two is vital to successful PR programs.

The final step is evaluation, a necessary process that tells a practitioner how well he or she met their goals. This can be done by taking surveys or keeping records of all publicity the project promoted and linking them to measurable results, if possible.

The four-step process shows that public relations is a combination of organization and creativity. One step in the process is not more important than the others. All must be used.

If any part of the formula is left out, the practitioner is left with a zero in communications.

It is this combination that makes the practitioner a specialist in communications techniques.

Since people in public relations use such a variety of skills, career possibilities involve a wide range of choices, too.

Types of organizations, such as non-profit, corporate, government, agency and teaching, all offer job opportunities.

Practitioners can go into business for themselves or become part of a staff in an organization--of any type or size.

Salaries vary, but the average is $23,000 to $35,000, depending on the type of job, experience and sex of the practitioner. And entry-level fees average between $11,000 and $15,000.
While men compose 75 percent of the PR work force, in the classrooms, women now outnumber men two to one.

Jobs differ so much practitioners can be called anything, from director of communications to vice president in charge of public affairs, depending on where they work.

Public relations can be an independent department or part of a department, like personnel. The best spot for public relations counsel, however, is right next to the chief executive officer—where he or she can be in on decision-making.

Public relations is important. It is more than publicity or writing. It involves organization, creativity and hard work.

Everyone uses public relations techniques to some extent, from promoting the good features of an individual to letting the public know the good things a corporation does for its clientele.

It combines information, openness and creativity with writing, design and publicity skills.

Public relations is vital to any organization which deals with the public. Public relations is the force that guides public opinion.
IV. Evaluation

Evaluation is an important and often forgotten step in the public relations four-step process. After any kind of campaign or use of publicity tools, it is necessary to summarize what steps were taken, how the target audience responded and what caused or did not cause success.

To be able to do all this, records must be kept of everything that pertains to the task being evaluated. Names, dates and deadlines need to be evaluated, as well as the effectiveness of the event.

An evaluation's purpose is to allow the practitioner to learn from what has been done. Only if the evaluator is honest, objective and forthright will this occur. Being honest means reporting everything, so the pat on the back for the winning tactic as well as the kick in the pants for a flop must all be recorded. With the clarity of ink on paper will come an understanding of how to better utilize time and money. Evaluations aid growth and experience for the future.

Public relations is not just the continual practice of sending out message after message. Effective communications involves receiving feedback on a technique's successfulness. Evaluation fulfills that vital step. For, without good two-way communication, no true communication really takes place. And that is what differentiates public relations from publicity, press agentry and other one-way communications techniques.
This slide show has not been seen by any target audiences because it has not been produced yet. Thus, its success or failure cannot be guessed at—everyone knows that even a sure bet sometimes falls through.

Evaluations can take many forms, such as formal or informal surveys, sales records and newspaper clippings. Without feedback, practitioners would never know how well a tactic worked and thus could not hone their skills. For this reason, after the slide show has been shown for a period of time, surveys could be sent out or people could be telephoned to see if they understood the concept of public relations.

My only hope would be that the show will enlighten some people—those who will someday work with practitioners, either as fellow journalists or management peers. Of course, the show is only one tiny step to further public relation's image, but someone, somewhere, has to take it. Perhaps all the tiny steps taken by others in the field will amount to a huge leap, and the term 'public relations' will not be misunderstood any longer, and qualified practitioners with integrity will be in more abundance than dishonest communicators.

Like those in any other profession, public relations contains people who are not totally bad—there are many shades of gray involved. Public relations serves a purpose and is a necessity, however, because of changing social climates and the enormous number of businesses, organizations and agencies which must reach out to specific groups of people in order to survive. Because of
this, public relations becomes a necessary link between public opinion and public organizations.
1MacDougall, p. 487.
2Ibid., p. 486.
3MacDougall, p. 483.
4Tedlow, p. 2.
5MacDougall, p. 483.
6Ibid.
7MacDougall, p. 486.
8Irion, p. 9.
9Tedlow, p. 187.
10Ibid., p. 160.
11Tedlow, p. 7.
12Lesly, p. 234.
13Bernays, The Engineering of Consent, p. 3.
14Henkin, p. 11.
15Tedlow, p. xviii.
16Morrissey, p. 27.
17Teahan, p. 12.
18Ibid.
19Dyer, p. 19.
20Ibid.
22Courtesy, Charlotte Hatfield, Ball State University journalism assistant professor.


