

Strategic Planning for Public Relations

The sixth edition of *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* offers an innovative and clear approach for students wanting to learn how to develop public relations campaigns.

Ron Smith shows how to implement research-driven strategic campaigns, drawing on his experience as a professional in the industry and his teaching in the classroom. He turns complex problem-solving and decision-making processes in strategic communication and public relations into easy-to-follow steps, flexible enough to apply to various situations and organizations in the real world. This new edition includes real-world, diverse examples of cases and current events, along with classic cases that stand the test of time. It includes new research on opinions and practices, covers award-winning public relations campaigns, and significantly increases information on social media, with a reformatting of the Tactics section to highlight internet-based and social media.

As a leader in teaching public relations strategy, this text is ideal for students in upper division undergraduate and graduate courses in public relations strategy and campaigns.

Complementing the book are online resources for both students and instructors. For students: chapter overviews, useful links to professional organizations and resources, and an overview of careers in public relations. For instructors: an instructors' manual, lecture slides, and sample course materials. Please visit www.routledge.com/cw/smith.

Ronald D. Smith was Professor Emeritus of Public Communication and former Chair of the Communication Department at Buffalo State (SUNY). He was an accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America.

“Strategic Planning for Public Relations is a crucial text for students entering the industry and seeking a future in managing the relationship between organizations and the public. Through valuable case studies, Smith guides the reader through the steps of the planning process and provides helpful tips and tools to become a master practitioner. This book should be mandatory reading for every student and early-career practitioner.” – Alison N. Novak, Assistant Professor, Rowan University

“Professor Smith’s Strategic Planning for Public Relations has been one of my go-to textbooks when I teach the public relations campaigns course [...] This book equips students and practitioners with essential knowledge and tools to counsel their organizations or clients on managing changes and conducting effective strategic communications.” – Yan Jin, Professor of Public Relations, University of Georgia

Strategic Planning for Public Relations

6th Edition

Ronald D. Smith

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Preface

Strategic Planning for Public Relations offers students and practitioners a new way to deepen their understanding of public relations and other kinds of strategic communication.

It is intended for people serious about entering a profession that is rapidly changing—a profession that is shedding a past that often involved merely performing tasks managed by others and taking on a newer, more mature role in the management of organizations based on research-driven strategic planning, ethical principles, and programmatic evaluation.

This book provides an in-depth approach to public relations planning, more comprehensive than can be found anywhere else. It is built on a step-by-step unfolding of the planning process most often used in public relations, with explanations, examples, and exercises that combine to guide readers toward a contemporary understanding of the profession. This book is written in a reader-friendly style designed to appeal both to students and practitioners.

The approach used in *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* is rooted in my belief and observation—from more than 25 years of teaching—that students learn best through a threefold pattern of being exposed to an idea, seeing it in use, and then applying it themselves. This is the rhythm of this book—its cadence, if you will.

This is the design that takes a complex problem-solving and decision-making process and turns it into a series of easy-to-follow steps. These nine steps provide enough flexibility to make the process applicable to all kinds of situations and to organizations with different missions, diverse sizes, varying resources and differing skill levels among the staff.

New to This Sixth Edition

Textbooks are kept current by regularly updating information, accomplished by adding new material and publishing new editions.

Like previous editions of *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*, the sixth edition is studded with real-world examples, with more focusing on global or minority cases, along with some classic cases that stand the test of time.

In particular, this updating includes many examples involving social media and other developments in digital technology. To that end, this edition uses the PESO model of paid, earned, shared, and owned media as a framework for public relations activity.

It also highlights the results of many new research studies on opinions and practices within the discipline. Additionally, this edition updates overviews of several award-winning public relations campaigns from around the world. This edition also updates and expands a series of appendices.

Note to Students

If you are using this book in a public relations class, it is because your instructor finds it valuable for you.

Thank you for allowing me to share my ideas and insights into a profession that I have found to be both challenging and rewarding. I wish you much success as you proceed toward a career that I hope you, too, will discover to be exhilarating.

I stumbled into public relations somewhat by accident, at least not by my own conscious design. I began my career as a newspaper reporter, and later as an editor, with some side trips into television writing and producing, freelance magazine writing, and newsletter editing. I then made the transition into public relations—at first building on a familiar base of media relations and publicity, and only later navigating into issues management, crisis response, integrated communication, and a host of related areas.

Along the way I incorporated the new technological developments (particularly social media) and now wonder how we once managed without these tools.

Frankly, I wish there had been a book like this to guide me toward doing the work of public relations, especially the research and planning parts. So I'm pleased to be able to share with you some of the insights I've picked up along the way.

With this book and the practical exercises that go with it, you are proceeding along the road to professional success. I wish you the best of luck. You should be aware that this book is intended for group development and class activities. While you certainly can use it alone, you will find that it comes more fully alive as a text to guide group projects. Even if you are not a student in a traditional classroom, try to use this book in the context of your own project task force or professional work team.

Note to Public Relations Practitioners

I am proud to note that the Public Relations Society of America has found *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* to be relevant for practitioners. PRSA selected the book for its short list of endorsed readings for candidates of the APR professional accrediting exam.

I've heard from many public relations practitioners who have used this book and are looking forward to this new edition. Some find it useful in their day-to-day work, particularly those who are working in public relations without the benefit of an educational background in the discipline. I myself entered the profession with a background in journalism, so I understand the pros and cons of learning public relations on the job. I'm pleased that this book has been helpful to many of my professional colleagues.

The book also has spurred others who have written to me with issues and comments from their vantage as leaders within the field of public relations. It has been particularly rewarding to hear not only from the PRSA and various U.S. chapters, but also from our counterpart, the Canadian Public Relations Society, as well as other public relations groups around the world. I also hear from practitioners, students, and teachers around the world, in places as disparate

as Azerbaijan, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Kenya, Nigeria, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and other countries.

Note to Instructors

Thank you for choosing this textbook for your students. Thanks especially for the opportunity to share with them some of my thoughts and observations on an exciting profession. I trust that you will find the information contained in this book to be well within the framework of contemporary professional practice and academic principles.

Strategic Planning for Public Relations grew out of my observation that students seem to learn best when they understand concepts, have patterns to follow and adapt, and have the opportunity to work both individually and in groups on tasks that gradually unfold to reveal the bigger picture. This is my intention with this book—to provide a structure, yet to give you much flexibility in leading your students through the planning process.

I also can share with you that your colleagues have found this book useful in introductory courses as well as in courses focusing on campaigns and case studies. Personally, I have used the book for an intensive introductory course, supplemented with some online information on history and other foundational elements such as my academic and professional website—ron-smith.com—which you are free to use if you find it helpful.

I also have used the book in a senior-level campaign course as the basis for students developing their own campaign proposals. Additionally, the book serves as a basis for the campaigns that are developed by graduate students.

Who Uses This Book?

I am pleased by the international acceptance of this book since it was first published in 2002 and subsequently updated in 2005, 2009, 2013, and 2017.

As the author, I am humbled by the confidence that so many educators have placed in this book, and I am quite aware of my responsibility to their students to provide the best teaching resource that I can.

Course Adoptions

To date, at least 313 colleges and universities in the U.S. and Canada, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East, have adopted this text for public relations classes at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. These courses include principles or foundations of public relations, advanced practice, campaigns, strategy, planning, research, advocacy, public relations administration/management, case studies, corporate communications, integrated communication, and issues/problems in public relations.

Nearly half of schools associated with the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications use this text.

Libraries

More than 2,900 academic libraries in North America, Asia, Africa, Australia, Latin America, the Middle East, and both Western and Eastern Europe have acquired it for their collections.

Professional Endorsements

I also am pleased with the acceptance of this book by my professional colleagues. The Public Relations Society of America includes this book on a short list of texts recommended for people preparing for the Universal Accreditation Exam. It has been similarly endorsed by the Canadian Public Relations Society, the Public Relations Council of India, and several other national groups affiliated with the International Public Relations Association.

The book is listed by the professional resource centers of several PRSA chapters and by practitioner groups in the U.S. and around the world from Iran to Sweden. It is a recommended reading by Six Sigma Strategy Training of Sussex, England. It also has been recommended by several bloggers in North America and around the world who specialize in public relations and marketing or strategic communication.

Book Citations

Likewise, many of my fellow educators have shown confidence in this book by citing it in their own writing, more than 862 academic citations to date.

Strategic Planning for Public Relations has been cited in many recent books, including *Corporate Diversity Communication Strategy* (Maiorescue-Murphy, 2020), *Public Relations Theory: Application and Understanding* (Brunner, 2019), *Public Relations Campaigns: An Integrated Approach* (Luttrell & Capizzo, 2017), *Social Media Communication Matrix* (Plowman & Winchel, 2016), *Handbook of Communication and Corporate Reputation* (Carroll, 2015), *Health Research and Policymaking in the Social Media Sphere* (Smith & Smith, 2015), *Corporate Blogging and Microblogging* (King, 2015), *International Political Economy of Communication* (Vivares & Martens, 2014), *Cases in Public Relations Management* (Swann, 2014), *The Strategic Context for Political Communication* (Kioussis and Strömbäck, 2014), *Business Essentials for Strategic Communicators* (Ragas & Culp, 2014), *Political Reputation Management* (Schnee, 2014), *The AMA Handbook of Public Relations* (Boynton, 2014), *Digital Disconnect: How Capitalism Is Turning the Internet Against Democracy* (McChesney, 2013), *Farewell to Journalism* (McChesney, 2012), *Relentless Pursuit of Excellence: Lessons from a Transformational Leader* (Sagor & Rickey, 2012), *Handbook of Communication and Corporate Social Responsibility* (Bartlett, May & Bronn, 2011), *Corporate Reputation* (Burke, Cooper & Martin, 2011), *Strategies and Communications for Innovation* (Hulsmann & Pfefferman, 2011), *PR Evaluation* (Siewert, 2011), *Public Relations Writing: Form & Style* (Newsom & Haynes, 2008), *Strategic Response: An Introduction to Non-Profit Communications* (Dimitrov, 2008), *Strategic Sport Communication* (Pedersen, Miloch & Laucella, 2007), *Evaluating Public Relations* (Watson & Noble, 2007), *Function of Media and Function of Public Relations at International Crisis Situations* (Gorpe & Celik, 2007), *The Future of Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* (Grunig, Grunig & Toth, 2007), *Managing Consumers' Online Complaints* (Lee, 2006), *Strategic Sport Marketing* (Shilbury, Quick & Westerbeek, 2003).

Journal Citations

Google Scholar also lists references for *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* in articles published in numerous academic and professional periodicals, including the following:

Asia Pacific Public Relations Journal
Asian Pacific Business Review
Baltic Journal of Management
Communication Theory
Computers in Human Behavior
Comunicación y Sociedad
Engineering Economics
Environmental Communication
Florida Communication Journal
Global Media Journal
Indian Journal of Research
International Journal of Business
International Journal of Communication
International Journal of Marketing/Communication/New Media
International Journal of Scientific Research
International Journal of Sport Communication
International Journal of Strategic Communication
International Public Relations Perspectives
Journal of Administrative Research
Journal of Advertising
Journal of Agricultural Education
Journal of Asian and African Studies
Journal of Business Ethics
Journal of Communication and Religion
Journal of Communication Management
Journal of Disaster Relief Studies
Journal of Educational Advancement and Marketing
Journal of Global Responsibility
Journal of Health and Human Services Administration
Journal of Health Communication
Journal of Hospitality and Leisure Marketing
Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management
Journal of Media and Religion
Journal of Professional Communication
Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory
Journal of Public Administration Research
Journal of Public Affairs
Journal of Relationship Marketing
Journal of Vacation Marketing
Middle East Journal of Management
Portuguese Journal of Social Science
PRism Online PR Journal
Public Relations Inquiry
Public Relations Journal
Public Relations Review
Public Relations Tactics

Review of Journalism and Mass Communication
Romanian Journal of Marketing
Social Science Journal
Strategies and Communications for Innovations
Tourism Management
Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences

Acknowledgments

John Donne was right that no one is an island. Neither does an author write alone, instead reflecting in some way the insight of others in the field who write, teach, critique, and engage in the practice.

Strategic Planning for Public Relations enjoys the input of many people. As the author of this textbook, I'll take personal responsibility for any errors or omissions, but I'm confident these are fewer because of the advice and assistance of many knowledgeable people who helped along the way.

Collectively, my students have been major contributors to this book. It is in the classroom that I have tested and refined the ideas contained herein. My students have prodded me to articulate my ideas and to bolster them with plenty of real-world examples.

My academic colleagues at SUNY Buffalo State (with its flagship communication department in the State University of New York) emphasize practical, applied communication, and I have benefited from ongoing professional conversations with them. My professional colleagues within the Public Relations Society of America consistently have helped me with insight and constructive criticism.

The publishing team at Routledge/Taylor & Francis is superb. Felisa Salvago-Keyes and her always helpful staff have guided me through the conceptual development of this book, steering it to its final form.

Authors appreciate the comments and criticism of their peers, and I am particularly grateful to instructors who have taken time from their busy teaching schedules to offer comments and suggestions. Likewise, I have appreciated the comments and suggestions I have received not only from my PRSA colleagues but also from people associated with the Canadian Public Relations Society and with public relations and strategic communication professionals around the world.

I also appreciate the comments of students who use this book. You are the ultimate experts on whether this is an effective aid to your professional education. Whether I've taught you directly, or only indirectly through this book, I'm grateful for your questions and suggestions.

Personal Dedication

Like the entirety of my life, *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* is dedicated to my family. Though they don't realize it, my three sons have been an inspiration as I worked on this book.

As he progressed through college in Buffalo and eventually earned a doctorate at Osaka University, my son Josh has challenged me to explain public relations every time I suggested that he consider the insights of the discipline on his own multifaceted work as a sociologist and ethnomusicologist, as a concert performer on the shakuhachi (Japanese bamboo flute),

an iaido black belt, as a restaurateur and certified sake expert, and as a university professor teaching communication research.

My son Aaron graduated with a degree in public relations, having had the dubious experience of having me as instructor for two undergraduate courses. After starting his own career in the field of public relations and marketing, Aaron took his communication and strategic planning talents to the Army, where he has proudly served in Qatar, South Korea, and Okinawa.

My youngest son Matt is advancing in his career in horticulture, while pursuing an active avocation in music. His writing talent and artistic sense have served him well in his career in landscape design.

Whether by their presence or Skype-facilitated association with me, my daughters-in-law Satomi, Jen, and Jessica provide me with the love and encouragement any writer needs to be successful. My granddaughters Miana, Mariella, and Emalyn and my grandsons Kazutaka/Hawk, Leif, and Wesley provide excellent reasons to step away from my writing from time to time and dream of the wonders their lives will bring.

My greatest appreciation goes to my wife, Dawn Minier Smith. During the evolution of this book from conception to this new edition, Dawn has been my sounding board. A writing teacher herself, she has lent her ear as I tested ideas, tried out new ways to present lessons, and attempted to make sense of theories, cases, and observations. She reminds me when to use “whom,” and we agree to disagree on using the Oxford comma (alas, I acquiesced to use it for this textbook).

Since she doesn’t see any domestic value in a wife fawning over her husband, Dawn’s constructive criticism has been always trustworthy and thus most valuable. I always take her suggestions seriously. Sometimes I’ve even had the good sense to follow them.

An Invitation

This book is the result of much dialogue with others, particularly feedback from my students. But reader reaction inevitably is useful.

I invite all readers—students, teachers, and practitioners—to use my website, where I have included a number of pages and links related to public relations and other aspects of strategic communication.

I invite you to take advantage of the excellent online resources that my publisher has created for instructors and students using this book. You can access this at www.routledge/cw/smith.

About the Author

Top 5 Values: Intellectual honesty. Diversity. Body–mind–spirit balance. Kindness. Creativity.

Top 5 Likes: Sashimi. Ambiguity. Nuns. Italian reds. Liberal politics.

Top 5 Dislikes: Traffic. Crowds. Unexplored certitude. Intolerance masking as virtue. Country music.

Top 5 Aspirations: Challenging/caring/creative professor. Non-pedantic writer. Safe haven for young people in crisis. Faithful colleague. Pragmatic public relations practitioner/consultant.

Top 5 Interesting Facts: Wife of 45 years with incredible tolerance, three sons, six grandchildren. Navy journalist in Vietnam war, with conscientious objector discharge. Zen-leaning Catholic who has meditated with Buddhist monks on Mount Koya in Japan. Amateur singer who once sang solo at St. Peter's in Vatican City. Among ancestors: a Scottish POW banished to England's penal colony of Massachusetts, an Irish immigrant recruited to help build the Erie canal but killed for his paycheck, the last woman in Connecticut hanged as a witch, American Indians on Long Island and Southwest New England, as well as colonial immigrants from France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Britain.

Ronald D. Smith APR was an emeritus professor of public communication at SUNY Buffalo State, the largest college within the State University of New York and the first public institution in New York State accredited by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

He taught public relations planning, writing, research, and related courses to undergraduate and graduate students. For eight years, he served as chair of the 850-student Communication Department at Buffalo State, during which time his department gained ACEJMC accreditation. He served more than two years as associate dean of the School of Arts and Humanities before returning to teaching and working with students in the Communication Department.

As time permitted, he also was active as a consultant in public relations and strategic communication, assisting businesses and nonprofit organizations with planning, research, communication management, crisis communication, and media training.

In this book, Smith draws on considerable professional experience. In addition to more than 27 years as an educator, he worked for ten years as a public relations director and eight years as a newspaper reporter and editor. He also was a Navy journalist aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Ranger*, twice deployed to Vietnam, for which the Pentagon granted him a discharge as a conscientious objector.

Smith held a bachelor's degree in English education from Lock Haven (Pa.) University and a master's degree in public relations from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. He has presented numerous workshops and seminars and has published research on public relations and persuasive communication.

He is the author of *Becoming a Public Relations Writer* (6th edition, 2020) and *Public Relations: The Basics* (2014), and coauthor with W. Richard Whitaker and Janet E. Ramsey of *Media Writing* (5th edition, 2017), all published by Routledge/Taylor & Francis.

Smith has written two chapters—"Objectives" and "Strategic Inaction"—in *The Sage Encyclopedia of Corporate Reputation*, edited by Craig Carroll (Sage, 2016) and the chapter "Campaign Design and Management" in *21st Century Communication: A Reference Handbook*, edited by William F. Eadie (Sage, 2009). He also wrote *Introduction to Language and Communication: A Primer on Human and Media Communication* (United Arab Emirates University, 2004).

Smith was the founding director of the American Indian Policy and Media Initiative at Buffalo State. He was coeditor of *Shoot the Indian: Media, Misperception and Native Truth* (AIPMI, 2007). He conducted and published research on topics such as the media coverage of the Cherokee citizenship vote and media coverage in New York State on Indian treaty, sovereignty, and taxation issues.

He assisted in strategic planning with the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and the National Congress of American Indians and worked with research and strategic planning with several individual tribes. He presented original research on Native Americans and media at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications.

Smith was an accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America and served as president of the PRSA's Buffalo/Niagara chapter and as chair of PRSA's Northeast District. The chapter named him Practitioner of the Year in 1998 and gave him its first distinguished service medal in 2010, in addition to numerous other awards and citations. He also has twice been nominated as PRSA Educator of the Year.

In 2015, Smith was named to the editorial board of the *Romanian Journal of Marketing*.

Publisher's Note: Ron Smith sadly passed away during the final stages of production of this edition. We at Routledge will greatly miss his professionalism, good humor, expertise, and particularly his earnest commitment to the education of future public relations professionals. This edition is dedicated to his memory and to all who have benefited from his teaching.

Cases and Examples

Following is an index of actual cases, persons, organizations, and events cited in *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* as examples of various principles, strategies, tactics, and techniques.

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Introduction

Why write a book on strategic planning for public relations? For one thing, effective and creative planning is at the heart of all public relations, marketing communications, and related activity.

Public relations is crucial to all organizations, as reflected in a comment often attributed to Bill Gates: “If I was down to my last dollar, I’d spend it on public relations.” Whether he actually said that, it’s nice to think that the richest person in the world appreciates public relations.

So what is this thing called “public relations”? Understanding it is a bit like considering the parable from ancient India of the blind men and the elephant. Six men each felt a different part of the elephant. One touched the tusk and proclaimed that it was a spear. Another felt the trunk and thought it was a snake. And so on: the tail a rope, the ear a fan, the knee a tree trunk, the side a wall. They failed to understand the bigger whole.

That’s often the problem when people think about public relations. They see only one part of it: special events, speeches, lobbying, media relations, promotions, crisis communication. Because they don’t see the big picture, sometimes what people think they know about public relations isn’t accurate. Consider the reality behind eight common fallacies.

- 1 Public relations is not about hype or exaggeration, much less about lying. Instead, it requires truth as its foundation, along with verifiable performance, accuracy, information in context.
- 2 Public relations isn’t secretive. It works best transparently in the light of day, often working with journalists and others to present its messages.
- 3 Public relations doesn’t manipulate people. It flourishes in a democracy, helping organizations and clients join the debate of many voices in the marketplace of ideas.
- 4 Public relations isn’t about spin or deception. You can put perfume on a skunk, but it’s still going to stink. Public relations helps people see the good things about an organization, which is possible only when the organization actually is doing good things. Often public relations drives an organization’s decisions to adapt and operate more for the public benefit.
- 5 Public relations isn’t only about publicity shoring up sagging newspaper readership. Publicity is only a small part of public relations, and today it often is achieved through social media.
- 6 Public relations isn’t the cartoon character with a shovel following the elephants in a circus parade. While it sometimes is asked to clean up a mess, effective public relations helps management avoid the mess in the first place.
- 7 Public relations isn’t only a tool of big business. It is used by every kind of organization: schools, hospitals, churches, advocacy groups, government, unions, sports, the military, charities, the arts, and every kind of business from large multinationals to local startups. Even newspapers and TV stations have their own public relations people.

- 8 Public relations isn't simply a feel-good endeavor. Rather, it is a strategic process relying on research, rooted in goals, implemented through a variety of tactics, and evaluated on its outcomes.

This takes us back to the opening question: Why write a book on strategic planning for public relations?

Because public relations is changing. No longer is it enough merely to know *how* to do things. Now the effective communicator needs to know *what* to do, *why* to do it, and *how to evaluate* the effectiveness of the chosen approach. The call is now for strategic communicators, and this is the heart of *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*.

Let's look at two categories of public relations practitioners: technicians and managers.

Communication Technician

Public relations professionals sometimes are called upon for tasks—always important—such as writing news releases, drafting speeches, producing videos, editing newsletters, organizing displays, posting tweets, and so on. These are roles of a **communication technician**, *a specialist in public relations and marketing communication who typically performs these tasks at the direction of others*.

Often these tasks are associated with entry-level jobs. They are a place to begin your career, something to build on, though some practitioners prefer to specialize and become masters in a particular skill, such as speechwriting or posting on social media.

Communication Manager

Beyond the work of a communication technician, the profession increasingly demands competency in directing research, making decisions, planning projects and campaigns, and solving problems. This is the work of a **manager**, specifically a **communication manager**. Two types of communication managers have complementary roles within organizations. Consider the work of both of these types of communication managers, tactical and strategic.

A **tactical manager** *makes day-to-day decisions on many practical and specific issues*.

Should they post a news release or hold a news conference? Are they better off with a brochure or a web page? Should they develop a mall exhibit, or would it be more effective to create a computer presentation? Do they need another advocacy ad, and if so, for which publication or station, and with what message using which strategy? Should they use Facebook, Twitter, and/or YouTube?

A **strategic manager** *is concerned with management, trends, issues, policies, and corporate structure*.

What problems are likely to face the organization over the next several years and how might they be addressed? What is the crisis readiness of the organization? Should senior personnel be offered an advanced level of media training? What should the policies be for tweeting by employees?

In the workplace, public relations practitioners often find themselves functioning in both the technician and the managerial roles, but the balance is shifting. Today's environment—and more important, tomorrow's—calls for greater skill on the management side of communication.

Old, Yet Ever New

The ancient and enduring wisdom that nothing is new under the sun applies even to contemporary communication.

Building credibility, maintaining trust, repairing misunderstandings, and promoting ideas are part of the natural human impulse. Today's public relations practitioner deals with the same kind of problems that faced our predecessors last year, last decade, last century, last millennium.

Nothing is new but the timing, the tools, and perhaps our developing insight into the problem-solving process.

The roots of public relations trace back nearly 40 centuries to ancient Mesopotamia and later to the classical Egyptian, Greek, and Roman emphasis on rhetoric and aspects of persuasive communication. Governments in Europe, Africa, and Asia throughout recorded history have practiced rudiments of public relations.

It developed through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, often employed for religious purposes—Buddhist, Christian, Islamic, Jewish. Public relations played a major role in the European age of discovery and exploration and in the French, American, Russian, and Communist revolutions. It has been used as an instrument of both war and peace-making.

Looking back, it is evident that public relations is a natural, essential, and enduring element of human social interaction.

For a more detailed overview of the role of public relations throughout history, you are invited to the author's website: ron-smith.com in the "About PR" section.

The manager's job of strategic communication planning calls for four particular skills:

- 1 Understanding research and planning.
- 2 Making strategic choices.
- 3 Selecting from an expanding inventory of tactical choices.
- 4 Completing the process by evaluating program effectiveness.

Structure of This Book

A premise underlying this book is that public relations and marketing communication are becoming more strategic, more scientific—and thus, more managerial. It is this strategic perspective that will differentiate the effective practitioner from the one who simply performs tasks and provides basic services under the direction of others.

Strategic Planning for Public Relations is about making such decisions—not by hunches or instinct, but by solid and informed reasoning that draws on the science of communication as well as its various art forms.

This book tries to make the complex process of strategic communication easily understandable by taking you through the process step by step. You'll find nine steps in this planning process, each presented with the following three basic elements:

- 1 Explanations that are clear and understandable, drawn from classic and contemporary theory.
- 2 Examples that help you see the concept in action, drawn from both nonprofit and for-profit organizations.
- 3 Hands-on exercises in both short form and expanded versions that help you apply the process in your own situation.

Note also that key terms, printed in boldface roman type, are collected into a glossary at the end of the book.

Experience shows that this hybrid format—part textbook, part workbook—can make it easier to learn about the planning process because it helps you think, see, and do. *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* gives you a solid, proven process that works.

It doesn't offer any secrets of the trade, because there really are no secrets. Effective managers in public relations and marketing communication use these kinds of processes every day, and that's not much of a secret. What this book does is make field-tested procedures available to you in an understandable way so you can apply them yourself.

Organizational Process

Through contemporary eyes, public relations is seen as a central and essential aspect of organizational management.

In their influential book *Managing Public Relations*, James Grunig and Todd Hunt (1984) identified four now-famous evolutionary models of public relations:

- Press agency.
- Public information.
- Asymmetrical.
- Symmetrical.

The first two—exemplified by press agency and public information—rely on one-way dissemination of information. The latter models—an asymmetrical approach associated with persuasion and advocacy, and a symmetrical model dealing with dialogue and relationship-building—feature two-way communication for both dissemination and research/feedback.

A close look at this evolution shows a practice becoming a profession. It reveals a useful skill becoming an essential element of organizational management and the process of nurturing relationships between organizations and their publics.

The Public Relations Society of America (prsa.org) has long used an official statement positioning public relations as a process within organizations that encompasses activities such as opinion tracking and analysis, relationship building, research, planning, objective

setting, and evaluation. For three decades, PRSA called this role a “management function,” though a newer definition finds that term misleading because it connotes top-down control using one-way communication. Instead, PRSA’s new definition focuses on “process,” which implies a more open two-way model.

In *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management*, Grunig (1992) used the earlier definition he devised with Hunt (1984). This defines public relations as “management of communication between an organization and its publics” (p. 6).

Meanwhile, for the last 30 years or so, textbooks have identified public relations as a management function. For example, Scott Cutlip, Allen Center and Glen Broom’s *Effective Public Relations* (2012) define public relations as “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.” All serious textbooks in the field emphasize public relations as an element of organizational management.

At the same time, scholarly research has helped pave the way for seating public relations at the management table. Stephen Bruning is a leading researcher in the role of a relationship-management approach to public relations. He has identified relationship management as “a paradigm for public relations scholarship and practice” (Ledingham and Bruning, 2001, p. xiii). The model is rooted in the relationship between organizational and public interests, and it builds in both theory and practice on a foundation that includes research and evaluation.

Each of the four models that Grunig and Hunt observed in the evolution of public relations—press agency, public information, persuasion/advocacy, and dialogue/relationship-building—is evident today, often used by the same organization. While the latter two models that build from two-way communication generally find more favor among theorists, none of the approaches is necessarily “the best.” Each model has its purpose, and each can be effective in achieving particular organizational objectives.

An interesting tug-of-war exists between the persuasion and relationship models. In subsequent research, Grunig (1992) himself noted that many organizations still primarily practice the persuasion model. With only anecdotal evidence, it seems safe to suggest that most of today’s public relations agencies are hired to engage in persuasion on behalf of their clients, who believe their problems can be solved if only they can gain the support of their publics.

Definition of Public Relations

The formal practice of what is now called “public relations” dates to the early 20th century. Since then, the definition of public relations has been evolving as the practice of public relations has changed. The early definitions emphasized press agency and publicity, while newer definitions focus on engagement and relationship building.

Public Relations Society of America

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

Canadian Public Relations Society

Public relations is the strategic management of relationships between an organization and its diverse publics, through the use of communication, to achieve mutual understanding, realize organizational goals, and serve the public interest.

Public Relations Institute of Australia

Public relations is the deliberate, planned, and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization (or individual) and its (or their) publics. It's the key to effective communication in all sectors of business, government, academic, and not-for-profit.

Public Relations Institute of South Africa

Public relations is the management, through communication, of perceptions and strategic relationships between an organization and its internal and external stakeholders.

Chartered Institute of Public Relations, United Kingdom

Public relations is the discipline that looks after reputation, with the aim of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behavior. It is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and understanding between an organization and its publics.

Public Relations Institute of Ireland

The dissemination of purposefully planned and executed messages to selected media and publics to enable an organization (or person) to establish and build relationships founded on trust, and to enhance and safeguard its reputation.

Middle East Public Relations Association

Public relations practice is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics.

International Public Relations Association

Public relations is defined as the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its public, such development being for the benefit of the practice of public relations in commerce; industry; central and local government; nationalized undertakings; professional, trade, and voluntary organizations; and all practitioners and others concerned in or with public relations.

World Assembly of Public Relations Associations

Public relations is the art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organizations' leaders, and implementing planning programs of action which will serve both the organization and the public interest.

Strategic Communication

Ask executives in business and nonprofit organizations what kind of employee they value, and they'll probably tell you it's someone who can effectively and creatively solve problems and make the most of opportunities.

An effective practitioner understands a problem and manages it to its successful conclusion. How do we manage problems? Sometimes by making them go away. Sometimes just by helping them run their course with the least harm to the organization.

Public relations practitioners face all kinds of problems: low visibility, lack of public understanding, opposition from critics, and insufficient support from funding sources. Marketing communicators face similar problems: unfamiliarity of companies or products, apathy among consumers, and product recalls and other liabilities. Both may deal with indifference among workers and misunderstanding by regulators.

Practitioners also deal with opportunities, such as promoting new products and services or enhancing already effective programs. In most organizations, it is this positive communication that accounts for most of the time practitioners spend on the job.

Forward-looking practitioners try to transform obstacles into opportunities for their organizations and clients. Such planned communication campaigns embody the discipline of **strategic communication**, *intentional communication undertaken by a business or nonprofit organization, sometimes by a less-structured group*.

It has a purpose and a plan, in which alternatives are considered and decisions are justified. Invariably, strategic communication is based on research and is subject to eventual evaluation. It operates within a particular environment, which involves both the organization and groups of people who affect it in some way.

Strategic communication is either informational or persuasive. Its common purpose is to build understanding and support for ideas and causes, services, and products.

Where do we find examples of strategic communication? They're all around us. Public relations is the most common embodiment of strategic communication, so much so that this book uses the two terms interchangeably.

Actually, however, strategic communication is the concept and public relations is its primary example. In earlier days, much public relations activity was haphazard and reactive. But the more contemporary approach to public relations is strategic, and most practitioners see themselves as strategic communicators.

However, not all strategic communicators practice public relations in a narrow sense. Marketing communication also embodies the concept of strategic communication. Here are some other specific examples involving strategic communication:

- Public health and social marketing campaigns.
- Diplomacy and international relations.
- Constituent relations.
- Political campaigns.
- Ecumenical and interreligious affairs.
- Many types of lobbying and negotiation.
- International relations and diplomacy.

In this final category, note that international relations deals with relationships among governments, and diplomacy involves the management of these relationships. Some analysts see a difference between diplomacy (which is discrete, formal, and official) and public diplomacy (which involves direct and open communication among governments and foreign publics). The latter is more akin to the practice of public relations.

Moreover, public relations itself is sometimes known by alternative names, often linked to subsidiary areas such as media relations or employee communication. Nevertheless, a research-based strategic planning process is necessary for effective management of all the various aspects of public relations regardless of their names, including community relations, special events planning and promotion, membership development, political campaigns, nonprofit events, and fundraising and development (Austin and Pinkleton, 2006).

To that list we can add other elements of strategic public relations: issues management, crisis communication, risk management, public information, public affairs, consumer and customer relations, lobbying, investor relations, and so on.

Additionally, there are some new players on the field: litigation public relations, risk communication, and reputation management.

Regardless of the label, we look to public relations for leadership and insight in the practice of strategic communication, because most of the related fields and specialties have adopted the set of skills and approaches that public relations has developed over the last 75 years or so (Botan, 1997; Botan and Soto, 1998).

Meanwhile, public relations is beginning to more consciously borrow some of the techniques and approaches developed by other fields, particularly marketing and its primary communication tool, advertising.

At the same time, the emerging field of social media is offering new tools that can be used to support the public relations missions of all kinds of organizations.

Attributes of Strategic Communication

An effective communication program includes the following attributes, which apply equally to corporations and nonprofit organizations, as well as to large and small endeavors.

Spurred both by regulation and customer demand, organizations must be **accountable** to their publics. Most publics increasingly expect **quality performance** and **open communication**. Long-term success comes to organizations with high performance, delivering quality products and services. All organizations operate in a **competitive environment**. Publics besought by rivals will remain loyal to organizations that earn loyalty consistently and continuously.

Effective communication involves **cooperation** and **integration** between public relations and marketing. Just as each knight was an equal participant at the round table in King Arthur's court, so too should both disciplines have effective and equal voices at the boardroom table.

The consumer philosophy has taken hold of all aspects of society, and organizations must answer with a **customer-driven response**, focusing on benefits for their publics. People support organizations that serve their interests and needs.

Organizations, in turn, must be open to **adaptation** to new environments and changing needs of their publics and markets.

Organizational communication adheres to high **ethical standards** of honesty, accuracy, decency, truth, public interest, and mutual good. Growing numbers of organizations have developed clear credos, values statements, or codes of ethics.

Mergers, downsizing, and restructuring have led both businesses and nonprofits to seek ways to operate with **lean resources**, and the duplication and counterproductive actions that exist when marketing is isolated from public relations is too great a price for organizations to pay.

Strategic communication is part of an organization's **management role** and **decision-making process**. It is rooted in the organization's mission as lived out through its bottom line. This bottom line goes beyond money earned or raised; it focuses on the organization's fundamental purpose or mission. Strategists plot courses, set objectives, and measure results.

Many **media changes** affect the way organizations communicate. The "mass media" have fragmented to the point that none rules supreme any more. Lines have blurred between news and entertainment. Social media have become a major communication platform for most organizations. Meanwhile, increasing advertising costs and tighter promotional budgets have led organizations to look for more cost-effective communication and promotional tools from the public relations side of the house.

Strategic communication uses **multiple tools**, drawing from all communication-related disciplines to talk with various groups of people. New technologies make it easier to supplement general media with more personal and interactive targeted communication vehicles.

The strategy of choice in a competitive environment is **proactive, two-way communication** in which organizations plan for and initiate relationships with the people important to their success. This approach emphasizes dialogue over monologue.

Organizations are successful to the extent they enjoy a strong **reputation**, which results from neither luck nor accident. Strategic planning can identify and evaluate an organization's visibility and reputation. No organization can afford to be a best-kept secret among a relatively small number of supporters.

All kinds of organizations are more keenly realizing the need for long-term, mutually beneficial **relationships** between the organization and its various publics and market segments. Public relations practitioners long have recognized this, and marketing more recently has been discussing the need for relationship marketing.

Integrated Communication

Public relations and marketing are distinct yet overlapping fields. Each has its own focus and its own particular tools, and each discipline fulfills different purposes within an organization. More and more, it is evident that the coordination of public relations and marketing communication can increase an organization's efficiency and effectiveness.

Let's look first at the common distinctions between public relations and marketing communication and then at how they complement each other.

Public Relations

Public relations is a management function that classically focuses on long-term patterns of interaction between an organization and all of its various publics, both supportive and nonsupportive.

In contemporary understanding and application, public relations seeks to enhance these relationships, thus generating mutual understanding, goodwill, and support, while focusing on a wide range of audiences and publics.

Public relations measures mutually beneficial relations between an organization and its key publics. It also deals with reputation management and crisis communication.

Marketing Communications

Marketing communications is part of the management function of marketing, thus having the purpose of fostering the sale of goods satisfying consumers, and promoting the sales goals of an organization.

Whereas public relations generally takes a long-range approach, marketing communication focuses more immediately on products and services that respond to the wants and needs of consumers.

And whereas public relations considers the wide range of publics, marketing communication focuses mainly on consumers, seeking to foster an economic exchange between the organization and its consumers. Additionally, since marketing relies heavily on advertising, it is significantly more expensive than public relations.

Merging Communication Functions

Both public relations and marketing communication deserve a seat at the management table. Both disciplines identify wants, interests, needs, and expectations of key groups of people, and both structure ways to interact and communicate with them.

Both disciplines rely on research, and both are rooted in the organization's mission and directed toward its bottom line.

The lines between marketing and public relations have never been neat and clean. Laypersons and the media use the terms more or less interchangeably, and distinctions have been built more on stereotypes than on a reality.

Consider, for example, stale notions that advertising is solely a marketing tool or that public relations is only about publicity. In truth, public relations traditionally has engaged in public service advertising, and it is a public relations perspective that drives image, branding, advocacy, and political advertising.

Marketing, meanwhile, has used media relations, publicity, and special events to launch new or modified products. Many marketing concepts and techniques have proven useful to public relations practitioners in nonprofit organizations attempting to recruit volunteers or participants, lobby regulators, and raise funds.

Distinguishing the relationship between public relations and marketing communications often depends on which side of the table you are sitting. People rooted in public relations see

their profession as a parallel function to marketing; that's the approach of this text. However, marketing people sometimes assert that theirs is the umbrella under which public relations falls. Sometimes we just have to agree to disagree.

Controversy about Integrated Communication

Strategic communication feeds into the policy-making function of an organization. To emphasize the blending of various communication activities, the term sometimes used is **integrated communication**, *making all aspects of communication work together toward common goals, increasing impact at minimal cost.*

Some organizations combine the concepts and the tools of public relations and marketing communication, though not always smoothly.

Purists argue against diluting the disciplines, often fearing that integration will demote public relations to just another piece of the marketing mix or subsume public relations under the advertising tent. Others accept integration in principle but dread lopsided implementation, such as the “full-service” marketing agency that claims to offer integrated communication while allocating most of the client’s budget to advertising.

Whereas corporate and nonprofit practitioners have been comfortable about integrating various aspects of strategic communication, conflicting advice sometimes has come from the academic community.

When the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication suggested integrating public relations and advertising into a shared curriculum to reflect new practices in the field, the PRSA Educational Affairs Committee reacted quickly to oppose such a blending. Yet in the past dozen or so years, many educators have taken a second look at the benefits of integration, as practitioners seem to be embracing the opportunities that such blending can bring.

What to Call It?

Controversy exists even on naming rights. Some people want to call the blending “integrated marketing communication.” Others dub it “integrated communications,” “corporate communications,” “marketing public relations,” or “total communications.” Some bulky terms being kicked around are “marketing-based public relations” and “integrated communications (advertising and public relations).”

In this textbook, we’ll stick with the terms “integrated communication” and “strategic communication”—used more or less interchangeably—to designate the comprehensive professional environment in which public relations practitioners and educators find themselves.

Whatever the label, the key is to respect the complementary roles of marketing and public relations while maximizing the potential of cooperation and coordination. Leaders in the area of integrated communication include CEOs who direct their marketing and public relations teams to collaborate in new-product campaigns, and university presidents who enjoin their media relations people to be attentive to recruiting and fundraising needs.

Their ranks also involve professors and other educators who blend public relations and marketing/advertising within a single academic program. The survey *Where Shall I Go to Study Advertising and Public Relations?* (Ross and Richards, 2017, aaoa.wildapricot.org)

page-1557252) identifies 74 freestanding public relations programs, 57 advertising programs, and 32 combined advertising/public relations programs, the latter often called strategic communication.

A Global Phenomenon

Communication integration seems to be happening globally. The concept is gaining momentum not only in the U.S. but also in the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Australia, and India.

The integrated model has been adopted by corporations such as Xerox, Motorola, HP, Apple, Starbucks, Porsche, Red Bull, Coca-Cola, American Express, Snickers, and Federal Express, among many others. Such companies use integrated communication on three levels: externally with a focus on customers, internally for vertical communication between senior management and front-line workers, and internally with horizontal communication across departments and other boundaries.

Some folks say the concept of integrated communication is wrapped in the history of public relations itself. After all, public relations' founding father Edward Bernays engineered the debutante march in New York City's Easter parade in 1929 to make smoking fashionable among women, enabling Lucky Strike to sell more cigarettes. Contemporary medical and ethical implications aside, it was a brilliant and cost-free strategy.

The late Thomas L. Harris was a leading proponent of integrated communication, which he called an outside-in process that begins with understanding consumer publics, particularly their wants, interests, needs, and lifestyles. Harris (2000) points out that public relations is particularly effective in building brand equity, which is based on the organization's reputation.

Persuasion and Dialogue

Persuasion isn't bad. The same principles and techniques that persuade people to buy this app or that perfume can be deployed on behalf of responsible sexual behavior, nutritional literacy, volunteerism, or other social virtues. Public relations students are exposed to this persuasion-based model through case studies and campaigns courses, through practicums and senior seminars, and especially through professional internships.

Here's an idea: Perhaps we need to envision public relations anew. Let's see it as serving the persuasive needs of client organizations as well as fostering more productive and beneficial relationships between organizations and their various publics. Public relations practitioners should be prepared to help organizations engage their publics in both word and deed.

This is the vision that guides *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*. The planning process this book presents can be used for persuasion or dialogue, because each is a strategic activity and each helps practitioners influence behavior and generate consensus. The planning process also can help organizations both overcome obstacles and capitalize on opportunities.

Additionally, the process works equally well for businesses and nonprofits, whether they be large or small, local or international, grassroots or well organized, richly endowed or impoverished.

Public Relations for Good

Case Study: Suicide Prevention

Raising awareness of suicide was the goal of Project 84's "Campaign Against Living Miserably" (TheCalmZone.net). In 2018, CALM commissioned 84 sculptures atop a London skyscraper, each representing one of 84 men who take their own life every week in the UK, where suicide is the leading cause of death among men under 45.

Partnering with Harry's Razors and W Communications, CALM generated an earned media reach of 2.1 billion, as well as three days of live daytime TV coverage. These resulted in a 34 percent increase in phone calls to CALM from men seeking help. The organization was credited with preventing 675 suicides in 2018.

CALM also sponsored a petition garnering 400,000 signatures asking Britain's government to do more to prevent suicide. Six months after the campaign was launched, a new position of UK minister for suicide prevention was created.

The campaign earned seven awards at the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity.

Case Study: Human Trafficking.1

About 17,000 people are brought into the United States each year against their will. Some are kidnapped, others tricked or coerced. Most end up in prostitution or sweatshops.

During the Obama administration, Health and Human Services created "Restore and Rescue" to address this. Ketchum Public Relations conducted research and found that programs directed toward victims don't work because victims have little access to the outside world.

HHS planners built a coalition of law enforcement, social workers, religious personnel, medical staff, women's organizations, and labor groups. They launched an information website and a multi-language hotline. They distributed 625,000 pieces of print materials. The campaign created 70 million media impressions, attracting 60,000 visitors in its trafficking website.

The first-year pilot project referred more than 1,000 victims to social workers. The Trump administration abandoned the federal program, but it has been adopted by many cities and states.

Case Study: Human Trafficking.2

"When spider webs unite," says an Ethiopian proverb, "they can tie up a lion."

That is the hope of Talitha Kun, an international group of Catholic nuns, street artists, and their supporters fighting human trafficking.

The organization, represented in 92 countries, is associated with the Vatican and the heads of religious congregations. The Pope became the first donor to the Patreon.com/SuperNuns fundraising website that combines sisters, artists, and anti-trafficking experts. It was opened on the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, herself a victim of slavery and trafficking.

The term for the group's fundraising, "Super Nuns," comes from images of Superman and Superwomen, with the connotation of fearless sisters joined by thousands of supporters around the world.

Talitha Kun enjoys the support of the Galileo Foundation, which works with the Vatican to fight trafficking and slavery. The project uses social media and draws on street artists to help spread its message.

The head of the Galileo Foundation also had worked with Edelman Public Relations, and he suggested that Edelman take up the cause of the sisters fighting trafficking.

Case Study: Community Development

In many TV ads for pizza delivery, something goes amiss and the pizza is upended. Domino's capitalized on the link between pizza delivery and good roads by adopting a corporate social responsibility approach. Its 2018 "Paving for Pizza" campaign gave \$5,000 to a city in each state, enough to fix 30–50 potholes.

The PavingForPizza.com website shows state-by-state results and a user-friendly pothole impact meter. The campaign generated user comments on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Results? The corporation reaped positive publicity and built goodwill across the country with a \$250,000 investment. Several mayors encouraged their citizens to support Domino's, and supporters and critics alike used the program to call for better funding for roads.

Case Study: Blood Donation

In South Africa, less than 1 percent of people donate blood. The South African National Blood Service wanted to improve the stat, launching a "New Blood" campaign for Human Rights Day 2018. The organization collected 6,700 units of blood from people who had not donated before—50 percent above the goal.

The blood service also targeted young people during Youth Month to increase their rate of donations. And in a "Missing Types" campaign, the service asked companies to eliminate from their logos the letters A, B, and O to illustrate the importance of the blood types. Previously the blood service has partnered with university rugby teams to highlight the need for blood donations.

The results of such low-cost campaigns are better awareness of the value of blood donation and increasing donations among South Africans.

Strategic Public Relations

We've seen too many corruptions of ethical public relations: anonymously funded politicians who lie about their opponents; corporations that misrepresent environmental, consumer safety, and financial information; schools, hospitals, churches, and youth organizations that hide information about abuse.

Likewise, we've seen mistreatment and unlawful killings within law-enforcement agencies, lying by government officials and business executives, and business leaders more interested in profits than customer service and safety.

All of these are problems for society. The fault is not in public relations but rather in its corruption by a few organizational voices more interested in privacy than transparency, expediency instead of ethics, and greed rather than customer service.

The tools of public relations can be used for good by organizations and advocates for social justice, education, minority rights, environmental safety, and so on. Government, nonprofit organizations, and businesses all can use public relations for the betterment of society. Usually they do, but our professional reputation is tarnished by the bad apples in the barrel.

Here are eight ways by which organizations as well as society at large benefit from effective and ethical public relations.

- 1 **Financial Health.** Companies and nonprofit organizations can shore up their financial base with programs that increase productivity, retain customers, enhance support by donors and stockholders, and influence legislation. They can generate new customers and attract interest in products and services.
- 2 **Safety.** Public relations helps save lives by advocating behaviors related to seat-belt use, organ donations, domestic violence, child abduction, school bullying, and many other causes.
- 3 **Health.** Public relations can encourage healthy lifestyles through education and advocacy programs dealing with nutrition, obesity, fitness, and detection and prevention of diseases, as well as awareness and treatment for alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, and other aspects of healthy living.
- 4 **Recreation.** Sports and entertainment public relations help people enjoy their leisure time. Recreational facilities, travel destinations, athletic teams, and entertainment venues use public relations to engage fans, publicize events, and promote offerings.
- 5 **Civic Awareness.** Government agencies and lawmakers promote programs and services to their constituents. Military units use public relations to recruit, foster public support, and report their progress to members, families, and legislators.
- 6 **Community Service.** Nonprofit organizations such as charities, schools, and religious groups share their expertise and promote their services. Medical organizations promote health literacy and help people make healthful choices.
- 7 **Reputation.** Public relations helps organizations minimize opposition and gain support by generating favorable publicity, encouraging alliances with like-minded organizations, and developing programs that serve the public good.
- 8 **Survival.** Public relations helps organizations reverse negative opinions, weather crises, and survive lawsuits.

Here's a historic example of the value of a strong reputation and good public relations. In the 1992 Los Angeles riots, the 30 McDonald's restaurants in the riot area were untouched while more than 2,000 other buildings were destroyed. Observers said that was because McDonald's had long been involved and visible in the community. A recent parallel was seen in 2015, when black-owned businesses in Baltimore generally escaped the wrath of rioters protesting the death of a black man while in police custody.

Public Relations in the Public Interest

Public relations is an ally of marketing and an organizational function focused on the corporate **bottom line**, a term that identifies an organization's mission or fundamental goal.

For some organizations, the bottom line is about more than selling products, raising money, winning votes, increasing membership, or building a customer base. Sometimes public relations is about things that matter in more personal and societal ways, such as finding an abducted child, reforming criminal justice practices, or freeing a political prisoner.

There is a long history of public relations involvement (often in a leadership role) in reform movements: women's voting rights, safety standards for food, immigration reform, LGBTQ rights, education reform, gun control, education for girls, animal rights, humane treatment of the mentally ill, prisoner rights, racial reconciliation, and the issues of pro-peace/anti-war and pro-choice/anti-abortion.

This history also involves awareness campaigns against negative practices such as child labor, smoking, drug use, alcohol misuse, pornography, gambling, and other social vices.

KASKY VS NIKE

The integrated link between public relations and marketing is a fact of life, often assumed by people and forces outside the profession more readily than it may be recognized from within.

Outsiders often link public relations and marketing, or publicity and advertising. Laypersons may ask, for example, how much it costs to get a news release published, or they may talk about sending an ad to a newspaper when they actually mean a news release.

Here's an example that is more ominous, because some external entities are forcing an unwanted link between public relations and marketing. This was the problem in play in the legal case of *Kasky v. Nike*.

Consumer activist Marc Kasky sued Nike under false advertising provisions over its public defense against charges of using child sweatshop labor. Nike claimed its statements were free speech protected by the First Amendment.

A local court sided with Nike, but a chill was caused when the California Supreme Court upheld Kasky's claim that Nike had engaged in **commercial speech**, a legal term denoting advertising messages.

But Nike had done no advertising. Rather, it defended itself through traditional public relations venues: news releases, its website, speeches, and letters to the editor.

The court based its ruling on the premise that a commercial speaker (the Nike corporation) was communicating with a commercial audience (customers) and therefore any such communication was commercial speech. Never mind that previous rulings by the federal Supreme Court had anchored the concept of commercial speech to an advertising format, explicit reference to a product, and economic motivation (*Bolger v. Youngs Drug Products Corp.*, 1983), and specifically "expression related solely to the economic interests of the speaker and its audience" (*Central Hudson Gas & Electric Co. v. Public Service Commission*, 1980).

Kasky v. Nike posed a legal question that remains unanswered. An out-of-court settlement in 2003 ended the five-year legal battle, but it didn't settle the legal question of where public relations ends and marketing begins, or whether businesses can rely on the First Amendment.

For specific campaigns of public relations in the public interest, check the archives of programs of these professional organizations:

- Excellence Awards, Chartered Institute for Public Relations. ciprinside.co.uk/cipr-excellence-awards
- National Awards of Excellence, Canadian Public Relations Association. cprs.ca/Awards/Awards-of-Excellence/Previous-Winners
- Golden Target Awards, Public Relations Institute of Australia. vivacommunications.com.au/awards
- Golden World Awards of Excellence, International Public Relations Association. ipra.org/golden-world-awards/winners
- PRINZ Awards, Public Relations Institute of New Zealand. prinz.org.nz/PRINZ-Awards
- Silver Anvil Awards, Public Relations Society of America. Overview available online but text locked to nonmembers.

Advertising

From the perspective of integrated communication, advertising can be seen as a tool for both public relations and marketing. **Advertising** is *persuasive communication through purchased media to promote a product, service, or idea on behalf of an identified organization or sponsor*.

Sometimes enlightened organizational leaders see the big picture, recognizing the value of a coordinated and strategic approach to communication. Some of the most successful corporations integrate their communication, blending the traditional disciplines of public relations, publicity, and advertising to creatively present a clear and consistent message to their various publics.

Often public relations leads the way. Here are some examples in which advertising came following the buzz created by public relations.

- Walmart became the world's largest retailer with little initial advertising.
- Starbucks spent less than \$10 million in advertising during its first ten years.
- Spanish fashion retailer Zara relies on its reputation, not consumer advertising.
- Sriracha hot sauce doesn't advertise, yet it has been named "ingredient of the year." The brand began by giving samples to Asian chefs, which soon became influencers.
- With no advertising, Costco became the second largest retailer in the U.S. when the rest of the country was climbing out of recession in 2015. Instead of advertising, Costco puts money into employee salaries (averaging more than \$20 an hour), resulting in low turnover and better customer service.
- The Harry Potter book series soared to previously unheard-of sales without any appreciable advertising, making British author J. K. Rowling literally richer than the queen of England.

- Using only media relations, special events, and social media—but no advertising—Hyundai launched its zero-emissions hydrogen fuel-cell automobile that sold out before it hit dealer showrooms. Advertising came later, much of it focused on social media.
- Pfizer used publicity alone to sell \$250 million worth of Viagra and gain a 90 percent market share before any consumer advertising began.
- When Krispy Kreme Doughnuts announced plans to open a store in several cities, the publicity created such a huge expectation among prospective customers that extra police had to be hired for opening day to handle the traffic jams.

The integrated approach also has been used by nonprofit organizations such as the American Cancer Society in its campaign for sun block, and has been adopted by more loosely organized social campaigns dealing with bicycle safety, teen smoking, animal rights, birth control, utility deregulation, and AIDS research.

As a practical matter, an integrated approach to strategic communication often begins with publicity, followed by advertising. Al Ries and Laura Ries note this in *The Fall of Advertising and the Rise of PR*:

The purpose of advertising is not to build a brand, but to defend a brand once the brand has been built by other means, primarily public relations or third-party endorsements ... Advertising cannot start a fire. It can only fan a fire after it has been started.

(2004, p. xx)

Ries and Ries present both an opinion (public relations is more creative than advertising) and a fact (public relations is more credible). The father–daughter writers also note some of the differences between public relations (or publicity) and advertising:

- Advertising uses a “big bang”; public relations uses a slow build-up.
- Advertising is visual; public relations is verbal.
- Advertising reaches for a mass audience; public relations reaches a targeted audience.
- Advertising favors news lines and extensions of existing brands; public relations favors new brands.
- Advertising likes old names; public relations likes new names.

PESO (Paid, Earned, Shared, and Owned Media)

Public relations once was thought of as primarily related to news. It was seen through the lens of media relations. It’s not wrong to link public relations and news, but that’s not the only way to see it.

Like the Indian parable of the blind men and the elephant in the anecdote at the beginning of this Introduction, we need to adopt an up-to-date understanding of media. Even the news media are changing. Consider these examples:

- Most newspapers have online versions, including *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Arizona Republic*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *London Sun*, *London Guardian*, and most other daily newspapers.



Exhibit Intro.1 PESO model for public relations and marketing communications

- Some newspapers are published only online, such as *All Nova Scotia*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, UK's *Independent*, and the *Arabian Post*.
- Many bloggers are online journalists.
- Some news organizations such as Politico disseminate news through website, print publications, television, radio, and podcasts.
- News aggregators such as Google News, SmartNews, and Feedly curate news from various publications and sites.
- Some news organizations such as the Daily Beast provide their own news and commentaries as well as links to articles in other publications and news sites.
- Axios has online newsletters to complement its daily online reporting.

Once public relations and marketing communications existed separately. Public relations dealt with news media, communication strategies, and crisis situations. It never paid to get

its messages out. Marketing paid for messages and creative content to be placed before various market segments.

But boundaries have been penetrated. The media environment expanded with the internet and its subsequent organizational websites, social blogs, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and related media opportunities.

Public relations blogger Gini Dietrich (spinsucks.com) offered an integrated model of media venues in her 2014 book *Spin Sucks: Communication and Reputation Management in the Digital Age*. She called it the PESO model, an acronym that stands for paid, earned, shared, and owned media.

Paid Media

Paid media involves *communication channels that are purchased by an organization*.

This includes print and broadcast advertising, social media advertising, online ads, pay-per-click search ads, sponsored content, and traditional nonmedia promotional techniques such as sponsorships, point-of-sale displays, banner advertising, and direct mail.

The premise of paid media is simple: The more you spend, the more people you reach. That's why paid media is the most expensive category of media.

Because of this, most organizations look first to the three other less-costly categories, which research also shows to be more effective than paid media. As noted previously, there are many examples in which advertising is used to sustain a product only after it was launched through earned media.

Earned Media

Earned media are *journalism-based communication channels that provide opportunities for the credible presentation of organizational messages to large audiences through the news media*.

These allow organizations to present messages, extend visibility, enhance credibility, and promote ideas and ideals. News coverage and positive public opinion that can result from it must be earned through solid and accessible information. Earned media's alternative name is free media because it cannot be owned or purchased.

Public relations and marketing communications people earn publicity by giving reporters, columnists, bloggers, and other journalists newsworthy information or access to information sources.

Earned media is gained through interviews and background info, news releases and op-ed pieces, and other assistance to help journalists prepare their reports and commentaries.

It also is earned by the creative use of special events.

Sometimes earned media comes from mentions of an organization or client by bloggers and columnists, online reviews and ratings, testimonials, references in letters to the editor and online comments, and other word-of-mouth, which is mention of an organization by customers and other publics.

Studies consistently report that consumers trust earned media significantly more than paid or owned media. They especially trust word-of-mouth. One study reported a 90 percent trust level for word-of-mouth recommendations from friends, 70 percent from online consumer opinion postings, and 69 percent from newspaper articles.

Associated with earned media is the concept of **information subsidy** through which *public relations people proactively give reporters information through news releases, FAQs, and story idea memos.*

It also may be provided in response to journalists' requests for information or by arranging interviews they may request. This information thus subsidizes media reporting, especially in a time of decreasing staffs with most news organizations.

Shared Media

Shared media are *communication channels, not controlled by the organization, providing user-generated messages that are shared on a social media network, usually for free.*

This is an evolving part of social media. Examples of shared media include an organization's Facebook and Twitter messages, video postings on YouTube, Pinterest and Instagram postings, likes and retweets, comments, and search engine optimization.

User-generated content, sometimes called UGC, has the advantage of creating authenticity and building trust. That's why reviews and recommendations are so important to organizations and brands. For example, the crowd-sources review platform Yelp led the way in offering widely used ratings for restaurants, an approach soon adopted by other service establishments.

Meanwhile, Netflix uses UGC to highlight fan posts on shows and movies. Starbucks offers elaborate gifts in a photo contest among coffee drinkers. BMW lets owners show off their cars in interesting settings.

Owned Media

Owned media are *communication channels that are published or produced by the organization, which controls the message content as well as its timing, packaging, distribution, and audience access.*

These include websites and webinars, online newsrooms, blogs, email, and newsletters. This category involves nonmedia promotional elements such as employee uniforms and logos on company vehicles.

Owned media draws on an information-on-demand model. Interested members of an organization's publics often seek out info. This, in turn, suggests their predisposition to trusting what they learn through the organization's owned media.

Blending Categories

Boundaries are fluid among paid, earned, shared, and owned media. They are not distinct classes of media but rather opportunities to collaborate and to exploit the many possibilities for communicating messages to your publics.

Here are some few examples of how practitioners can amplify and broaden the reach of their messages with the PESO model.

- A news release (earned media) can be placed on the organization's website (owned media).
- A newspaper might tweet to subscribers a link (shared media) to an article in today's edition (earned media).

- An organization may tweet a link (shared media) to an article in a newspaper (earned media).
- A blog (owned media) can be promoted through Facebook and Twitter (shared media), perhaps even with a sponsored ad (paid media) through a search engine.
- Print advertisements or TV commercials (paid media) can show up as links in blogs and websites (owned media) or on YouTube and Instagram (shared media).
- Op-ed articles (earned media) may be posted at the organization's website (owned media) or perhaps recycled as an advertisement (paid media).
- The video of an important speech, a form of face-to-face communication not included in the PESO model, can be posted at an organization's website (owned media) and incorporated into a news release (earned media), with a note posted on Facebook and Twitter (shared media) with links back to the website.

State of the Profession

The Chartered Institute for Public Relations in 2019 published its State of the Profession survey. Though the survey was done in the United Kingdom, there is no reason to believe it does not reflect the profession as a whole. Here are ten significant findings:

- 1 The workforce is fairly evenly divided among four areas: in-house in private sector, in-house in public sector, in-house in nonprofit/NGO, and agency. About 13 percent of the workforce is independent practitioners.
- 2 Salaries for full-time professionals with 10–12 years in practice is £53,055, about \$68,125.
- 3 A gender gap for salaries still exists, though it is shrinking. The CIPR report found that women earn about 83 percent of what men earn. In the UK, as in many other countries, public relations is a predominantly female profession (67 percent female versus 33 percent male), which translates into lower wages.
- 4 With professionalism comes higher salaries. CIPR members (and by extension, members of other public relations organizations) earn more than practitioners without professional credentials.
- 5 A skills gap exists between what employers want and what employees have to offer. This is especially in terms of strategic planning, research, and management skills.
- 6 The most common professional activities involve (in descending order) 57 percent for copywriting/editing, 50 percent media relations, 47 percent campaign development, 42 percent crisis/issues management, 38 percent strategic planning, 37 percent internal communication, 35 percent community

relations, 31 percent events/conferences, and 28 percent social media relations.

- 7 Only 59 percent of senior practitioners say they influence organizational policy, and 37 percent say they have no influence at all.
- 8 The biggest challenge is the changing landscape, including social media. Other significant challenges are lack of representation at the board level, lack of diversity, expanding skills expectations, unethical public relations practices, the emergence of fake news, and interestingly, a collective lack of self-belief and confidence.
- 9 Respondents reported an average 6.7 on a 1–10 scale for on-the-job stress. This ran across all job levels from assistant to director. It also ran across all organization types for an average stress level of 66 percent, though people working in nonprofits/NGOs reported less stress (59 percent) and those in agencies significantly more (73 percent); independent practitioners reported a stress level of 44 percent.
- 10 CIPR found a “mental health challenge” in the profession, 21 percent reporting a diagnosis of a mental health condition associated with anxiety, stress, and depression. These were largely attributed to unmanageable workload, unrealistic deadlines, and grueling always-on-call working hours, lack of clarity about tasks, underutilization of skills, and poor supervision.

Step-by-Step Planning

Most textbooks dealing with public relations encourage a four- or five-phase process. Several authors have developed acronyms around the process. Here are a few:

- RACE: Research, action, communication evaluation (Marston, 1963).
- ROPE: Research, objectives, programming, evaluation (Hendrix and Hayes, 2012).
- RAISE: Research, adaption, implementation strategy, evaluation (Kendall (1997).
- ROPES: Research, objectives, program, evaluation, stewardship (Kelly, 2001).
- ROSIE: Research, objectives, strategy, implementation, evaluation (Crifasi, 2000).

However, most comprehensive public relations textbooks—including this one—simply refer to a four-stage process without constraining it to an acronym. While acronyms can be useful mnemonic devices, they often are too confining.

Marketing communication books also present a step-by-step process, but with less consistency about the number of steps involved. Often, they revolve around four general stages: analysis of the environment, identification of audiences and objectives, development of a strategic approach, and development of the implementation plan.

Strategic Planning for Public Relations offers a model that is meant to be both logical and easy to follow. The steps are grouped into four phases:

- 1 Formative research.
- 2 Strategy.
- 3 Tactics.
- 4 Evaluative Research.

These are both descriptive and accurate, but their names don't lend themselves to an acronym. So without a great deal of fanfare, this model is called, simply, the Nine Steps of Strategic Public Relations.

The process of these steps is deliberate, and they must be taken in sequence. After identifying a problem, our tendency too often is to skip ahead to seeking solutions, leaping over research and analysis. This can result in unwarranted assumptions that later prove to be costly, counterproductive, and embarrassing.

Careful planning leads to programs that are proactive and preventive rather than to activities that are reactive and remedial. Yet these nine steps are flexible enough to allow for constant monitoring, testing, and adjusting as needed.

Experienced communication managers don't necessarily articulate their planning specifically along the lines of these nine steps. But talk with them about their work and you are likely to find that they go through a process pretty much like the one being presented here, whether they identify steps or not.

A few practitioners may admit (with a certain amount of guilt) that they don't do much planning. If they are being honest, they'll tell you they know they've been lucky so far with their hunches. Perhaps they don't do formal planning because they don't have the time or because the environment is so unstable that all they can do is react.

But often they draw on prior research and analysis. Some practitioners may tell you their bosses and clients want action rather than planning, though such short-sighted bosses and clients often don't remain in business very long.

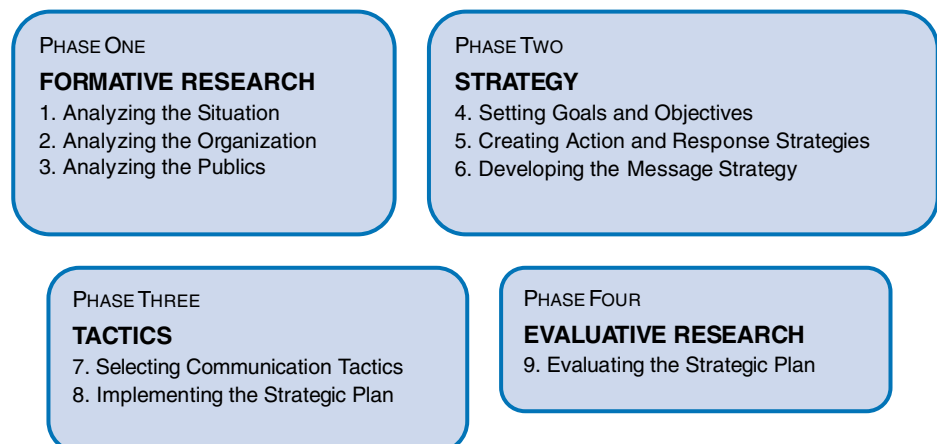


Exhibit Intro.2 Nine steps of strategic planning

If you could observe how professionals work, however, you'd probably find that effective communication managers do plan, and plan well. The good ones have learned how to build the research and planning components into their work, embedding them in their service to clients and bosses. Increasingly, public relations organizations are using their websites to set the stage for such a four-stage planning process.

Phase One: Formative Research

During the first of four phases, the focus is on the preliminary work of communication planning. This is the need to gather information and analyze the situation. In three steps, the planner draws on existing information available to the organization and, at the same time, creates a research program for gaining additional information needed to drive the decisions that will come later in the planning process.

Step 1: Analyzing the Situation

Your analysis of the situation is the crucial beginning to the process. It is imperative that all involved—planner, clients, supervisors, key colleagues, and the ultimate decision makers—are in solid agreement about the nature of the opportunity or obstacle to be addressed in this program. It's also important to learn what researchers have discovered about the relevant issue and to note best practices and pertinent case studies.

Step 2: Analyzing the Organization

This step involves a careful and candid look at three aspects of the organization:

- Internal environment (mission, performance, and resources).
- Visibility and public perception (reputation).
- External environment (competitors and opponents, as well as supporters).

Step 3: Analyzing the Publics

In this step, you identify and analyze your key publics—the various groups of people who interact with your organization on the issue at hand. *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* provides an objective technique for setting priorities among the various publics, helping you select those most important on the particular issue being dealt with. This step includes an analysis of each public in terms of its wants, needs, interests, and expectations about the issue; its relationship to the organization; its involvement in communication and with various media; and a variety of social, economic, political, cultural, and technological trends that may affect it.

Phase Two: Strategy

The second phase of the planning process deals with the heart of planning—making decisions dealing with the expected impact of the communication, as well as the nature of the communication itself.

Step 4: Setting Goals and Objectives

Step 4 focuses on the ultimate position sought for the organization and for the product or service. This step helps you develop clear, specific, and measurable objectives that identify the organization's hoped-for impact on the awareness, acceptance, and action of each key public. A good deal of attention is given to objectives dealing with acceptance of the message, because this is the most crucial area for public relations and marketing communication strategists.

Step 5: Creating Action and Response Strategies

A range of possible actions is available to the organization, and in this step you consider what you might do in various situations. This section includes typologies of public relations initiatives (proactive) and responses (reactive). No strategic campaign would include every possible option, but a well-planned campaign would consider each in light of its goals and objectives.

Step 6: Developing the Message Strategy

This step deals with various decisions about the message, such as the person or entity who will present the message to the key publics, content of the message, its tone and style, verbal and nonverbal cues, and related issues. Lessons from research about persuasive communication and dialogue will be applied for the ultimate purpose of designing a message that reflects the information gained through Step 3 focusing on key publics.

Phase Three: Tactics

During the third phase, various communication tools are considered and the visible elements of the communication plan are created.

Step 7: Selecting Communication Tactics

This inventory deals with the various communication options. Specifically, the planner considers five categories based on face-to-face communication and opportunities for personal involvement, followed by the four elements of the PESO mode—paid, earned, shared, and owned media.

Step 8: Implementing the Strategic Plan

This step turns the raw ingredients identified in the previous step into a recipe for successful public relations and marketing communication. In Step 8, planners package the tactics identified in the menu review of the previous step into a cohesive communication program. Here planners also develop budgets, set schedules, and otherwise prepare to implement the communication program.

Phase Four: Evaluative Research

The final phase of strategic planning deals with evaluation and assessment. It enables you to determine the degree to which the stated objectives have been met and thus to modify or continue the communication activities.

Step 9: Evaluating the Strategic Plan

This is the final planning element, indicating specific methods for measuring the effectiveness of each recommended tactic in meeting the stated objectives.

Jargon of Strategic Public Relations

Consider the following terms that distinguish among various types of public relations activities and review the examples associated with the “Public Relations for Good” box.

Project

A **project** is a single and usually short-lived public relations activity designed to meet an objective.

Examples of projects include a news release, a Facebook page, a coordinated series of tweets, or a few related tactics for an open house. In the CALM example of the suicide-prevention activity in the UK, the petition drive for government action is a project within a wider campaign.

Program

A **program** is an ongoing public relations activity dealing with several objectives associated with a goal.

Programs have a continuing commission within the organization and focus on its relationship with a particular public. Examples include an organization’s program in community relations or employee relations, or its social media program involving coordinated tools and venues. In the “Public Relations for Good” scenarios, the ongoing human trafficking program created by Health and Human Services exemplifies a public relations program.

Campaign

A **campaign** is a systematic set of public relations activities, each with a specific and finite purpose, sustained over a length of time and dealing with objectives associated with a particular issue.

Examples of campaigns include ongoing efforts to reduce accidents associated with drunk driving, or an internal campaign to improve employee morale and productivity, or the Blood Collection campaign of the South African National Blood Service outlined in “Public Relations for Good.”

Effective Creativity

Before we begin putting a plan together, a word about creativity. Most communications professionals are creative people. They are visual or verbal artists who bring imaginative ideas to the task at hand.

But mere novelty doesn't guarantee success. We all have seen people whose creative ideas seem to flop around without any sense of direction, artists who can't seem to apply their artistic concept.

Creativity often is associated with the arts and entertainment, though increasingly it is seen as a problem-solving tool in the commercial world. Creativity goes hand in hand with innovation, and often the two terms are used interchangeably. But there is a difference.

- Creativity is the ability to imagine new, going beyond traditional concepts and patterns to produce new forms and relevant alternatives.
- Innovation is the ability to apply creative thinking for practical applications.

For creativity to be effective, it must have relevance. Groundbreaking ideas need to serve a purpose. Too many campaigns never get off the ground because they are built more on novelty than on effectiveness. Some are just too cute for words; others are downright bizarre.

An inside joke in the advertising industry is that sometimes agencies win creative awards but lose the account. Their innovative programs didn't sell the product, or their imaginative approach failed to achieve the desired results for the client. Not a very funny joke, is it?

TV commercials featuring puppies and horses are popular with Super Bowl fans, but Budweiser has to be concerned with more than popularity.

"We've done the puppy commercials on the Super Bowl for the last three years and everybody loves them," said Jorn Socquet, vice president of U.S. marketing for Anheuser-Busch. "They have zero impact on beer sales. Those ads I wouldn't air again because they don't sell beer."

In the not-so-distant past, some practitioners worried that strategic planning might interfere with their creativity. That's changing. In a crowded field of competitors all courting the same audiences, communication professionals have turned to greater use of research as a complement to the creative approach. Practitioners who once flew by the seat of their pants have found that planning can raise an organization's messages above the commotion of everyday life.

One thing has become clear: It is counterproductive to separate creative and research people, because each can help the other. They share the common purpose of helping their client or their organization solve a problem.

Research nurtures creative inspiration, helps develop ideas, keeps things on target, and evaluates the effectiveness of the creative endeavors. Creativity can take the facts and data generated through research and give them pizzazz to produce a Wow! factor that can make a public relations campaign soar.

Strategic Planning for Public Relations is built on two notions that can help make you creatively effective.

- A step-by-step system of planning is essential to learning how to develop an effective communication program.
- Effective creativity is more likely to result from careful and insightful planning than from a lightning bolt of inspiration.

Roadmap to Success

This book is for people who appreciate roadmaps. A map doesn't tell you where you must go. Rather, it helps you explore possibilities. You consider options, make choices, select alternatives, and develop contingencies. In other words, you plan. Then you implement the plan by getting behind the wheel and beginning the road trip.

So it is with *Strategic Planning for Public Relations*. This book won't tell you what has to be done in developing your communication program, but it will lead you through various decision points and options.

The resulting program will be as unique as each individual student or practitioner and as tailored as each organization needs it to be. It will be a comprehensive, carefully thought-out program that is both deliberate and creative.

Every person can be both deliberate and creative, each to a greater or lesser degree. *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* tries to help you cultivate both qualities. It helps creative people become more organized in their planning, and it helps methodical people bring more creative energy to their work.

This book gives you a model—one to be considered, adapted to fit your particular circumstances, and used to the extent that it helps you be both effective and creative in your communication planning. Use *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* to nurture your creativity and channel it to make your work more effective.

Creativity and Structure

Most people consider themselves at either side of a coin. Some are creative people. Some are analytical types. *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* is geared to both.

Are you easily creative?

This book will help transform your artistry, insight, and spontaneity into something more than mere novelty. It will lead you to consider every aspect of a strategic communication plan, helping you be creative within an effective framework. Everybody is creative, somewhere between a tree stump and an inspired virtuoso such as Prince, Madonna, Stephen Spielberg, Albert Einstein, Leonardo da Vinci (pick your favorite genius).

Are you analytical and well organized?

This book will enhance your innate sense of organization and structure, freeing your creativity to enhance your program effectiveness. Everybody can be analytical. You just need to train yourself to look for patterns, puzzles, and applications.

The reality is that we are seldom one or the other—creative or structured. Don't use the either-or visual metaphor of a coin with two sides.

Rather, think of a pole with two ends. Then focus not on the ends but on the continuum in between. Regardless of where you place yourself on this continuum, *Strategic Planning for Public Relations* can help you work through your strengths and at the same time shore up less-dominant aspects of your work style.

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