

PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

WEEK 1

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the lesson, the students will be exposed;

- To the public relations definition
- To familiarise them with the public relations activities
- To make student aware on the history of public relations and its evolution that shape today's public relations practices

Definition

“Public relations is the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.” - British Institute Of Public Relations

Public Relations As A Process

- Public relations is a process – that is, a series of actions, changes, or functions that bring about a result.
- PR activity consists of four key elements:
 - a) research: What is the problem or situation?
 - b) action (programme planning): What is going to be done about it?
 - c) communication (execution): How will the public be told?
 - d) evaluation: Was the audience reached and what was the effect?

The Components Of Public Relations

1. Counselling

Providing advice to management concerning policies, relationships and communications.

2. Research

Determining attitudes and behaviours of publics in order to plan public relations strategies. Such research can be used to generate mutual understanding or influence and persuade publics.

3. Media relations

Working with mass media is seeking or responding to their interests in the organization.

4. Publicity

Disseminating planned messages through selected media to further the organization's interest.

5. Employee / member relations

Responding to concerns, informing and motivating an organization's employees or members

6. Community relations

Planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organization and the community.

7. Public affairs

Developing effective involvement in public policy and helping an organization adapt to public expectations. The term is also used by government agencies to describe their PR activities and by many corporations as an umbrella term to describe multiple PR activities.

8. Government affairs

Relating directly with legislatures and regulators and regulatory agencies on behalf of the organization. Lobbying can be part of a government affairs program.

9. Issues management

Identifying and addressing issues of public concern that affect the organization.

10. Financial relations

Creating and maintaining investor confidence and building good relationships with the financial community.

11. Industry relations

Relating with other firms in the industry of an organization and with trade associations.

12. Fund-raising

Demonstrating the need for and encouraging the public to support an organization, primarily through financial contributions.

13. Special events

Stimulating and interest in a person, product, or organization by means of a focused 'happening', also activities designed to interact with the publics and listen to them.

History of Public Relations

America

- Development of PR related with American Revolution; PR techniques were used widely to transmit liberal ideas among dis-revolutioners. It was considered as a positive factor. Another factor seen again when it was connected with fund raising and with efforts of the US to use PR techniques during the 1st and 2nd World Wars.

- Negative factors were associated with mud racking, circus publicity, Broadway shows and with events of manipulation.
- Introduced as academic discipline when the courses were offered in several universities.
- Edward L. Bernays: one of the first practitioners that taught PR as a course in a NY university. His famous book entitled “Crystallising Public Opinion” was published in 1923.

United Kingdom

- The growth of PR was associated with information especially in WWI as information was termed as propaganda.
- The British used PR in WWI and WWII as propaganda to stop enemy advances and also to promote national war strategies.
- War Propaganda Bureau established in 1914 to prepare materials for dissemination abroad specifically to opinion leaders in neutral countries (Ward, 1989).
- PR and propaganda began to differentiate themselves after WWII when British Colonial offices found it was practical to establish PR offices in the colonies to disseminate information as well as to achieve their objectives.

Malaysia

- Early development of PR was heavily influenced by British PR. Information Department under Peet then Department of Information and Publicity under Dr. Victor Purcell in pre-Japanese attack.
- The agenda were replicated from British ideas to waging propaganda war against the Germans and the Japanese.
- Establishment of Malayan Union formed a Department of PR with Mubin Sheppard was the 1st Director of PR.
- PR activities in Malaysia was affiliated with information; setting up department of information in pre-WWII, and strengthening of the department post-WWII, during Emergency in preparing Malaya to accept independence, persuasion of unification of Sabah and Sarawak with Malaya, period of Confrontation, etc.

- Founding members of IPR of Britain and Malaysia were government personnel; local authorities in Britain and Information Department in Malaya.
- PR value and information activities recognition from government sector to win heart and minds of the people.
- Department of PR (1946) → Information Services in Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak → Ministry of Information.
- May, 13, 1969 incident due to the lack of information.

- Tun Abdul Razak recommended establishment of PR officers and press liaison officers in the ministries, government departments and semi-government departments.
- Private sector was slightly behind in PR. Changes have occurred in public opinion as more people are educated and know their rights, pressure groups championing issues that affect almost everybody.
- Business organisations establish PR units to serve their interests and it functions more as press agents.
- Eric White Associates, 1965 was the 1st PR consultant agencies established; PR consultancies grow rapidly in Malaysia with at least 40 agencies act as consultants.