

Study Unit 2: Origins of Public Relations

Introduction

Organisations today are encountering numerous issues that 50 years ago would have been considered unthinkable. Companies are not just concerned with making money, but they must also learn to navigate the land mines set by social justice warriors, activities, conservationist and other human rights organisations. Furthermore, it is important to note that crisis will arise sometime in the lifetime of any organization and it is the job of the PR person to be prepared and ready to respond to this issues as they arise.

It is therefore imperative that students of Public Relations must be given a background of the histories and definitions of PR.

This study unit will begin by explaining the origins of PR, then proceed to the need for PR, then functions, components and tools of PR. You will also be informed about when do we need to engage a PR expert.

Learning Outcomes of Study Unit 2

Upon completion of this study unit, you should be able to

- 2.1 Understand the origins of PR
- 2.2 Need, function, components, and tools of PR
- 2.3 When we need PR

2.1 Origins of PR

Thomas Jefferson (1807) used the phrase "Public relations" in the place of "State of thought" while writing his seventh address to the US Congress. In India, Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company Limited (GIP Railways) carried on publicity in Public Relations campaign in England for promote tourism to India through mass media and pamphlets. During the time of First World War a central publicity board was set up at Bombay (now Mumbai) for disseminating war news to the public and press. After Second World War the Public Relations activity gained importance both privates as well as Government started Public Relations campaigns.

2.2 Need, Functions, Elements, Components and tools of PR

1. Need for PR

Investing on Public relations will help the organisation to achieve its objective effectively and smoothly. Public Relations is not creating good image for a bad team.

Since false image cannot be sustained for a long time. Though the organization product or services are good it need an effective Public Relations campaign for attracting, motivating the public to the product or service or towards the purpose of the programme. It is not only encourage the involvement from the public and also resulting in better image.

An effective Public Relations can create and build up the image of an individual or an organisation or a nation. At the time of adverse publicity or when the organisation is under crisis an effective Public Relations can remove the "misunderstanding" and can create mutual understanding between the organisation and the public.

2. Functions of PR

- Public Relations is establishing the relationship among the two groups (organisation and public).
- Art or Science of developing reciprocal understanding and goodwill.
- It analyses the public perception & attitude, identifies the organisation policy with public interest and then executes the programmes for communication with the public.

3. Elements of PR

- A planned effort or management function.
- The relationship between an organisation and its publics
- Evaluation of public attitudes and opinions.
- An organisation's policies, procedures and actions as they relate to said organisation's publics.
- Steps taken to ensure that said policies, procedures and actions are in the public interest and socially responsible.
- Execution of an action and or communication programme.
- Development of rapport, goodwill, understanding and acceptance as the chief end result sought by public relations activities.

4. Components and tools of PR

"Public"

A group of similar individuals; an assortment of persons having the same interests, problems, circumstances, goals; it is from such persons that opinion emanates. Public is a

varied creature; it comes in many forms and sizes. Public has a multitude of wants and desires; it has its likes and dislikes, some times, strong likes and strong dislikes.

Employers make for a public and employees another public; the government is a public and citizens constitute another public, and so on, each of these groups is a public of the sort, tries to attract a different audience with its own tools and techniques.

"Relations"

Human wants to create the need to establish relations with one another. The representative wants of the individuals will profoundly affect their relationship. To understand any relationship, therefore, one must understand the wants of those involved.

'Relationships are of all possible types. We have relationship by rank-superior to inferior, inferior to superior, and equal to equal. We have relationship by sentiment-benevolent, Friendly, suspicious, jealous, hostile. A relationship may be active, or it may be passive it may be good or it may be bad, or it may be neutral. At any rate, the relationship is there to be accepted, ignored or altered, as desired.

Propaganda:

Propaganda is the manipulation of symbols to transmit accepted attitudes and skills. It describes political application of publicity and advertising, also on a large scale, to the end of selling an idea cause or candidate or all three.

Campaigns:

These consist of concerted, single-purpose publicity programme, usually on a more or less elaborate scale, employing coordinated publicity through a variety of media, aimed, at a number of targets, but focussed on specific objectives. A campaign objective may be the election of a candidate, the promotion of political cause or issue,

the reaching of a sales goal, or the raising of a quota of funds.

Lobbying:

It entails the exertion of influence, smooth and measured pressure on other, exercise of persuasion cum-pressure. In essence, it means a group putting its points of view forward in an attempt to win the other groups support.

2.3 When do we need PR

Promotional Opportunity:

To inform the new service / policy which call for Public Relations to make wider publicity.

Competitive:

To overcome the resistance (pre-set mind condition).

Controversy:

To eliminate the contradictory conditions in between the organisation and the public.

Adverse publicity:

To inform the truth or correct issues and thereby removing the misunderstanding.

Catastrophe:

Announcement of any unfavourable issues.

Crisis:

Whenever threats arises.

Summary of the study unit 2

In this study unit 2, you have learned the following:

1. The origins of PR
2. Functions, components and tools of PR
3. When we need to carry out PR activities

Self-Review Question (SRQs) for study unit 2

Now that you have completed this unit, you can measure how well you achieved its learning outcomes by answering the following questions. You can check your answers with the Notes on Self-Review Questions at the end of this study unit

- 1) Give 3 reason why PR is necessary
- 2) List and explain 2 functions of PR
- 3) List and explain 3 components of PR