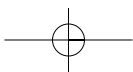
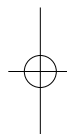
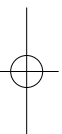
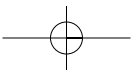
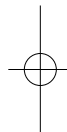
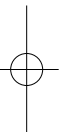
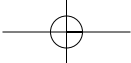


*Part 1*

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# Defining Public Relations





## Chapter 1

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# Introduction

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this chapter you will be able to:

- define public relations;
- explain how public relations techniques reduce hostility, prejudice, apathy and ignorance;
- contrast PR with public affairs, advertising and marketing;
- recognize the main factors involved in a PR campaign.

### The professionalization of the PR industry

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Public relations is often referred to as a new, young profession or business, but this is not really so. PR techniques have been used in different forms for centuries. Edward Bernays, considered to be the father of modern public relations and a nephew of psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, argues that the rulers of ancient Egypt, Sumeria, Babylonia, Assyria and Persia all used personal and political publicity (1952, p. 13). Bird and animal symbols on the sails of Phoenician and Viking ships could be regarded as early examples of corporate identity schemes. Over the centuries, the funnels of steamships, stagecoaches, trains, taxis and buses have been painted in identifying colours. Emblems on shields and the uniforms of armed and other uniformed services were similar forms of corporate identity. This kind of identification and distinction has grown up into systems of logotypes, typography, uniforms, dress and badges, colours and the liveries of transportation, of which the modern airline is a prime example. For instance, British Airways courted controversy during the Thatcher administration when it incorporated ethnic designs in place of its British Ribbons on its planes' tailfins to denote its 'glocal' approach (i.e. both global and local).

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Government and public services have been among the leading users of public relations techniques in the last century. Lloyd George, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, used public relations to explain the new old age pension scheme in 1912, and the first president of the IPR, Sir Stephen Tallents, used public relations to promote the Empire Marketing Board between 1926 and 1933. At the end of the century, the British Labour Party, under the direction of Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell, reorganized the campaigning department to align it with the concerns of voters, and to improve its press relations. Mandelson had argued during his tenure as director of campaigns in the 1980s that 'press and broadcasting contacts must be dramatically extended beyond the parliamentary press lobby' (Mandelson, 1988). Voter concerns were identified partly through the endeavours of Philip Gould, who conducted focus groups to assess the mood of voter groups in swing voting regions of the country (Gould, 1998). The results were fed into policy development and news management programmes. In the USA, political PR was already well established. To some extent, the British Labour Party's campaign approach was based on that of Clinton's US Democratic Party, where several Labour officials (including Gould and the party's general secretary, Margaret McDonough) had temporarily worked.

Globalization, the fall of communism as a competing ideology and business context, the increased competition that has accompanied deregulation in major markets, a greater understanding of the importance of consumers, particularly by consumer themselves, and the dual fragmentation/globalization of mass media have all affected public relations activity. The result is that it has become increasingly systematized and research-led over the last century, as has its business counterparts marketing, advertising and human resource management.

Public relations has developed very rapidly in recent years, partly because management of various commercial and non-commercial organizations have discovered a need for public relations activities. There has also been a considerable increase in the means by which public relations messages can be conveyed – for example, through satellite, cable and Internet media – as the mass media generally has paradoxically fragmented and globalized simultaneously. It may also be true that the terms 'public relations' and 'public affairs' themselves imply something unduly special, but organizations of all kinds have been communicating for centuries. Modern public relations has, however, refined the techniques, integrated the action and given it a name, so that it is now a distinct discipline. Public relations has been organized professionally by the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) in Britain and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) in the USA. By 2002, the IPR had around 7000 members and the PRSA had around 20 000 members.

The British public relations industry has seen an increase in demand for consultancy services over the last 20 years, although there has been

a downturn in business at the turn of the new millenium. Total billings declined in 2001, with some estimates indicating a drop in industry income of around 15 per cent (Anon., 2002a), probably as a result of the downturn in the telecommunication, media and technology sectors generally. PR has been used to promote new industries (e.g. the computer industry, medical imaging equipment), new services (e.g. Internet banking), new technologies (e.g. Sony's PlayStation), and new kinds of media (e.g. Internet and cable television). This upsurge in demand over this period created a need for more able and versatile staff. But professional training for PR professionals is still relatively underdeveloped. Realization that on-the-job training is insufficient for the healthy growth of the profession, and its ability to provide efficient, cost-effective services, has ensured the urgent attention of the professional bodies. The Institute of Public Relations succeeded in gaining control of the public relations side of the Communication, Advertising and Marketing Education Foundation (CAM) in the early nineties. The remaining organization has since become part of the Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM). Degree courses in PR continue to run at Bournemouth University Media School, Leeds Metropolitan University, Manchester Metropolitan University and Stirling University, for instance, among many others. The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) continues to develop interest in its public relations courses.

PR personnel have also raised their importance within their organizations as PR roles, and particularly that of the press officer, have gained increasing acceptance. Management is now much more likely to recognize the need to be involved in communications and PR directors are now much more likely to have a seat on the board. Modern public relations calls for people with a holistic view of business, who can act as advisers to management on a great variety of issues. Recruits to the industry are frequently second- or third-time career people, although there is now an increasing number of younger entrants, with university, CAM, LCCI or IPR qualifications or their counterparts in other countries.

Broadly, the public relations practitioner needs to possess the following personality traits and attributes:

- Ability to communicate.
- Ability to organize.
- Ability to get on with people.
- Personal integrity.
- Imagination.
- Willingness to learn.

Integrity is particularly important, since PROs are 'rated... below politicians and journalists in terms of public trust' (Haywood, 2002),

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mainly due to the bad name given to the function by 'spin doctors'. The latter are government and political communication specialists seasoned in defining media-friendly perspectives on events or programmes, which tie in with their own organizational objectives.

Public relations practitioners need to have some knowledge of many ancillary subjects. For example, these can include:

- Media, both existing mass and created private.
- Printing.
- Photography, video, CD-ROM, DVD and other audio-visual, and visual, aids.
- Exhibitions.
- Marketing research.
- Sponsorships.

In addition, the ability to plan, budget and direct programmes is also fundamental (see Chapters 5–11). So, public relations practitioners need more than the ability to prepare press releases and entertain journalists, especially when many journalists and editors argue that very few practitioners are capable of writing a publishable news release! An adversarial situation between the media and public relations practitioners has developed as a result. PROs don't always help this situation by sending unsolicited press releases by fax and e-mail of little possible editorial value in the hopes of gaining column inches or news air time. Editors usually welcome the faxing of urgent material that they have invited, but the general distribution of releases by e-mail and fax has become an abuse of the privilege. The solution is to carefully cultivate a network of journalists and editors, to develop strong mutually trustworthy relationships with them, and to discuss possible press releases with one or two trusted sources before general release. If an event or communication is regarded by them to be a story, it can then be sent out to everyone else in the network, the next day. This kind of strategy, however, can sometimes alienate those journalists who are provided with the information later. After all, journalists are interested in getting a story first because it establishes their reputations and sells papers or stimulates advertising. Writing press and feature articles is covered in further detail in Chapters 14 and 15.

### Public relations defined

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The purpose of professional public relations is to create *understanding*. It is unlike advertising, whose main aim is to generate awareness and sales, or propaganda, whose aim is to suggest (in the true meaning of the word) what individuals should believe. Some commentators confuse public relations with these two very different forms of communication.

In many parts of the developing world, public relations techniques have been adopted because of the urgent need to educate people about new public services, and in order to introduce new lifestyles. It is important at this stage to establish a clear understanding of what public relations is all about. The IPR define public relations as: *'the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics'* (cited in Jefkins, 1994).

PR's importance lies in emphasizing the need for *planning, sustained effort* and *mutual understanding*. A lot of public relations is ineffective, and not cost-effective, precisely because it is haphazard and unplanned. Thus, management skills become fundamental. Sometimes, PR is criticized as being intangible and a waste of money. Of course, it can be if it is not planned and conducted properly, with clear objectives and assessable outcomes. Unlike advertising, which may have short-term campaigns, public relations activity should be sustained to be effective. Finally, there should be *mutual* understanding.

Most PR commentators would agree that public relations should aim to achieve consensus between an organization and its publics, but Holtzhausen (2000) argues that a PRO should strive to identify the tensions between the organization and internal and external publics. Through the identification of tensions, practitioners will promote and create situations in which new meaning is produced through difference and opposition. One could argue that Benetton used just such an approach in its advertising campaigns during the 1990s.

In public relations, organizations receive as well as transmit information. They must listen as well as speak.

In this regard, one definition of public relations emphasizes the role of research in the design of PR programmes. This is known as the Mexican Statement because it resulted from an international conference of public relations organizations held in Mexico City in 1978. It is a more comprehensive definition than those discussed previously:

Public relations practice is the art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organization leaders, and implementing planned programmes of action that will serve both the organization's and the public interest.

(cited in Jefkins, 1994)

The statement spells out the full role, nature and responsibilities of the public relations function. The statement outlines five important considerations in the PR process. These include:

- *Analysis of trends.* Before we can begin the planning emphasized in the IPR definition, it is necessary to investigate the current situation that the company finds itself in and its relations with its publics.

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Questions that need to be considered include: What opinions or attitudes exist? What is the extent and accuracy of awareness? Is there understanding or misunderstanding? Does a good, bad or false image exist? Those publics concerned may consist of the community, employees, suppliers, distributors, consumers, financial institutions, politicians, civil servants, academics and a whole host of influential opinion leaders. A PR campaign needs to be planned with a full understanding of the trends that will influence the organization's future. Once communication problems and needs have been ascertained, the PRO can plan appropriate communication solutions. Much public relations work is about effecting change (see Chapter 25, on internal PR). PR department managers or consultants cannot recommend a programme and expect money to be funded for its execution unless a clear need for it, based on the organization's situation, has been conveyed. Sometimes, PR practitioners (in-house and within consultancies) present management with a distorted concept of the situation, which might be no more than an optimistic belief of the organization. This kind of wishful thinking is commonly known as *'the mirror image'*. It can lead to an ineffective PR campaign.

- *Predicting the consequences.* Once the situation has been studied, the consequences can be predicted. Generally referred to as the process of 'issues management', the PRO's task in this regard is to identify how publics will react to particular events. For example, in the European airline industry, the trend has been towards decreasing ticket prices for short-haul travel and increasing competition as airline alliances develop. The 11 September 2001 attacks exacerbated this overcapacity, as demand plummeted in the months after the attacks. The role of the PRO in this context is to explain why redundancies are fundamental and necessary, both to the survival of the company and the survival of existing employees.
- *Counselling leaders.* The advisory role of public relations is important. There are two aspects of public relations management. One is management of the in-house department or the consultancy, and client services, and the other is working with top management of the organization. Giving advice to leaders can range from personal advice on a day-to-day basis to attending committees consisting of managers or board directors. In many of our most successful companies there is a one-to-one relationship between the chief executive officer and the public relations director, the most prominent example of which has been the relationship between British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and his press secretary, Alastair Campbell. Equally, US President Bill Clinton's relationship with his press secretary, Mike McCurry, was fundamental

to his continuing popularity during his second term. Having conducted the research and assessed the findings, the PR practitioner's task is to advise management on what needs to be done. The campaign plan requires diligent attention to the planning of the workload in terms of hours and use of materials, resources and expenses.

- *Implementing planned programmes of action.* Implementation of the planned programme, including opportunities to report progress, and to be flexible if circumstances change, are fundamental to the effective PR plan. The programme should have strategic, measurable, actionable, realistic and timely objectives (see Chapter 7). The extent to which these objectives are eventually achieved should be either obvious or measurable.
- *Serving the public interest.* The programme should also serve the public interest. In other words, it should be socially responsible and ethical. It should not exploit or corrupt the integrity of the media. If the practitioner is a member of his or her professional body (e.g. the IPR or PRSA), he or she will be expected to uphold a code of professional conduct. As a manager this relates not only to external relations but also to a refusal to accept instructions to behave unethically. Some employers and clients take it for granted that the public relations practitioner can be used to manipulate the media. Armed with the code of conduct, the professional PR practitioner should refuse to accept such abuses.

Whilst the ineffective PR practitioner is responsible for the conflict involved in the adversarial relationship with journalists, it is also true that journalists can often create false ideas of, and expectations, for PR initiatives. Press dislike for public relations is exemplified, for instance, when a politician visits a disaster area, where even a sincere action might be mocked and subsequently is unfavourably reported. A visit by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, and the hapless transport secretary, Stephen Byers, to the site of the Potters Bar train crash in 2002 was absolutely fundamental. The media had been increasingly reporting stories of mismanagement in the rail industry and government failings on safety issues. Conversely, the New York Mayor, Rudolph Guiliani, galvanized the press during his visit to Ground Zero, the site of the World Trade Center, after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. These initial and subsequent visits to the site ensured continued support for the victims in the immediate aftermath of the attack from around the world. Of course, the PR function does not only deal with crisis management problems. As it seeks to generate understanding amongst the media, it uses photo-opportunities and soundbites for other purposes also. These are often mocked by the press, particularly in the political PR context. Interestingly,

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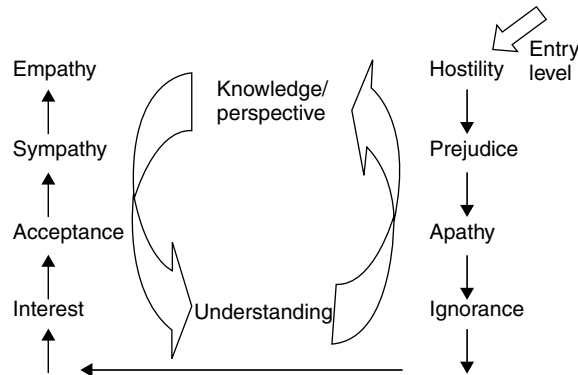
the media find themselves increasingly using this material as political parties become more experienced at news management.

The comparison of public relations with advertising and propaganda is often confused. Public relations works best when it is perceived to be unbiased. It should deal in facts, not fancies. To succeed, both advertising and propaganda attempt to create positive associations amongst their audiences with their messages. While advertising puffs up 'truth' through self-enhancement and exaggerated claims, propaganda vehemently denies the credence of other perspectives despite the dubiousness of its own claims. In contrast, public relations techniques are often used to reduce negative associations as well as to create positive ones. This is done by attempting to create understanding. This does not deny the role of persuasion, or rhetoric, in modern public relations, it simply outlines that PR has to be believed to be effective, mainly because its messages are often then conveyed as fact by third-parties.

### The primary objective of public relations

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The object of public relations is frequently thought to be the achievement of a favourable image, a favourable climate of opinion, or a favourable mention by the media. That is a misunderstanding. Organizations are never able to please all of the people all of the time. But they can achieve *understanding*, amongst their major publics, which is very different from approval. Good examples of organizations that seek to generate such understanding include those in the nuclear (e.g. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd.) and oil and gas industries (e.g. Shell, Esso/Exxon). Some organizations have very good relations with the press. Virgin, Richard Branson's group of companies, generally enjoys very favourable relations with the British press, projected, as his company often is, as the champion of consumer values. The model outlined in Figure 1.1 illustrates the stages of public mood that a public relations programme may deal with. The task is to move public opinion from downright hostility through prejudice, apathy and ignorance towards interest, acceptance, sympathy and ultimately empathy. In order to move up through these stages, the PRO must help publics become more knowledgeable about the company and its perspective. This helps to generate understanding amongst publics and drives the transfer process. The process is circular, as successive publics influence each other. PROs frequently enter the public mood at the stage of hostility, although they could enter at subsequent stages, mainly because publics are usually suspicious of an organization's motives, until they are clarified, and because of an innate fear of change. Each of these stages of public mood is considered further in isolation.



**Figure 1.1** The public relations transfer process.

Source: adapted from Jenkins (1994)

## Hostility

What is the extent of the nature of hostility towards the organization, its people, activities, products or services? In the case of the Union Carbide/Bhopal crisis in 1984 – detailed in Chapter 26 – hostility amongst the Indian media was substantial. The hostility may be irrational, based on fear, misunderstanding or false information. In this case, although there were numerous reasons for the release of noxious substances in the air, Union Carbide were seen to be partly to blame for not implementing adequate safety procedures, as was the Indian government for allowing the development of slums around the factory.

The public may feel threatened by an organization or by what it does, yet no genuine threat may exist. It may be that dislike remains but it is possible to achieve an attitude of tolerance. In recent times, many ideas which were once hated have now won sympathy if not support. In developing countries, new lifestyles have been adopted which were once resisted, while in the industrialized world new technologies have won, or are winning, approval.

## Prejudice

This word literally means to prejudge, to form an opinion or attitude without considering available information. Can we convert prejudice into acceptance? BT is a good example of this. It has been blamed for the late development of broadband services in the UK. Yet whilst the government demanded that it open up its network for broadband use, it was prohibited by government from offering entertainment products

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on its telecommunication networks until 2002. Many potential users regard BT as overpriced, yet they have no understanding of its need to adhere to government pricing regulations.

The task of converting prejudice is not a simple one. Such attitudes can endure for a long time. For instance, success and affluence seldom change working class people's attitudes, as we usually see in election voting patterns. Prejudices can survive lifetimes, as we can see in disputes all over the world. The IRA believed until well into the 1990s that the British government wanted to maintain rule over Northern Ireland. It was not until secret meetings took place between John Major's security service representatives and IRA operatives that this misunderstanding was cleared up; namely, that the British interest was self-determination for the province.

From a business perspective, such prejudice is frequently illustrated in the travel business. Travellers are now taking holidays in countries towards which they were once deeply prejudiced (e.g. Russia, China and Japan). The French authorities maintained a ban on British beef, after it was linked to several deaths, even though the EU had removed its own ban. The continuing French ban was subsequently declared illegal by the European Union. However, a more cynical observer might well say that the French continued the ban not because they were prejudiced against the safety of British beef products, but because the French wanted to ensure that they supplied the domestic market for beef, a £250 million market for British beef at 1996 volumes (Baines and Harris, 2000).

### Apathy

Hallahan (2000) argues that inactive publics (for the PR definition of publics, see Chapter 8) are usually ignored and forgotten by PROs. He argues that PR strategies should aim to enhance motivation and ability to process information. To do this, it might well have to create opportunities to communicate. With non-publics, PROs either should ignore them, or create a reason why they should involve themselves and communicate this. Once they become aroused, he argues that PROs supply information that addresses concerns and clarifies misunderstandings.

People are, however, naturally conservative. They have a self-protective resistance to change. If public relations activity is to achieve understanding, it has to break down this unwillingness to want to know. Apathy may deter a person from considering taking a holiday, for example, to India. Whilst advertising might generate the initial awareness of the opportunity to holiday in India, the public may feel that India's relations with Pakistan, and possible nuclear confrontation over Kashmir,

make it too dangerous a place for holiday-making. The role of public relations would be to convince potential holiday-makers that it was not too dangerous and that, indeed, the risk was minimal.

### Ignorance

Inevitably, sometimes people are ignorant about a subject. For instance, in high-technology markets, this is frequently the norm, where consumers and other publics have limited understanding of what the organization is trying to do. An example might include outlining the benefits of a new on-line trading system for small businesses. Such situations require the use of public relations to educate the market, before the advertising and direct mail campaigns can begin.

At the beginning of a new product or service launch, most people are ignorant of what any organization offers, so it's important to prepare the market to ensure it is more likely to respond to subsequent advertising. Such a process may occupy 18 months to two years work, depending on the complexity of the product or service, before advertising starts. Many products and services have failed because market education activities were not undertaken.

### Interest

PROs are often particularly good at generating media interest in causes and new product/service launches. Such interest may be sparked by writing newsworthy press releases in such a way as to present the new idea as novel or unusual, or in a novel or unusual way. Alternatively, interest may be generated directly with particular publics through exhibitions, house journals, sales or distributor bulletins, through broadcast news reports or through industry seminars. A co-ordinated marketing communications campaign incorporating PR and supportive advertising may be key to stimulating initial interest.

### Acceptance

Although publics generally might not agree, or might be unsure, of a company's actions, this type of campaign is designed to bring about a public's acceptance of a particular problem, often as a precursor to their agreement. Employee relations disputes might well bring about this type of campaign after a recent recession or crisis has occurred.

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The PRO's role might be to explain that the company had few other choices but to lay off staff and that, in doing so, this ensured a large number of other employees' jobs. The union might not agree with the actions undertaken, but hopefully they will accept that action was necessary.

### Sympathy

This stage requires the PRO to move public opinion into a broadly supportive mood. Whilst sympathy is generally a supportive attribute, it also constitutes a level of emotional detachment. A PR programme might need to effect attitude changes or at least a greater understanding of the salience of issues in public opinion. Charitable organizations frequently attempt to move public opinion in this direction for their particular causes (e.g. the NSPCC's Full Stop child abuse prevention campaign or the National Heart Foundation's Save a Life campaign).

### Empathy

This stage is rarely totally achieved. It denotes when public opinion is almost or perfectly congruent with that of the management of the organization. Attitudes and opinions of the public are in line with those of the management of the firm. Recently, in the market research industry, there has been focus on customer empathy, a practice of determining not only whether or not customers are satisfied, but how they feel at the same time. In times of crisis, empathizing with public opinion is imperative if the company wishes to emerge from the crisis in a positive light. Empathy is a stage beyond sympathy, connoting total involvement with what an organization is trying to do. The Harley Davidson organization would probably argue that it has managed to develop customer empathy through its super customer engagement programme. Whenever Harley Davidson organizes an event, people come flocking to them from all over the world. Sometimes, political organizations, religious orders, sports clubs and pop bands achieve this kind of support, often through skilful event management designed to reinforce customer identification with the cause, product or service. Clearly, in such cases, one could argue that a cult has developed.

From these comments on the four negative states of hostility, prejudice, apathy and ignorance, and the four positive states of interest, acceptance, sympathy and empathy, it should be clear that before planning, budgeting and recommending a public relations programme, it is essential to research public opinion. Some or all of these states may

exist. Equally, there may be acclaim rather than hostility, tolerance rather than prejudice, enthusiasm instead of apathy and wisdom instead of ignorance. Such an ideal situation is unlikely. Public relations is concerned with the development of *understanding* by the provision of information and perspective.

### Is understanding really the primary purpose of public relations?

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There are those who insist that public relations is, and should be, a form of advertising; that it is a cheap substitute for advertising (earned or free media, as it is sometimes called in the US). The media often tend to regard public relations stories as advertisements. Unfortunately, too many of them actually are!

It is true that most public relations people work in-house, and not in consultancies (the opposite of advertising practice), and it is also true that the greater part of public relations activity is conducted outside the commercial world. Public relations has an enlarged role to play in not-for-profit organizations, principally because of the increased accountability placed on managers in such organizations by their publics. Example organizations include central and local government, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), political parties, trade unions, professional institutes, voluntary bodies and trade associations, the police, the armed forces, the fire and ambulance brigades, the health and social services, charities, special interest societies, and clubs, sports clubs and societies.

A PRO might be trying to create understanding of a hospital's work in heart transplant surgery, or the achievements of police working in multiracial regions, or the tenets of Islam (rather than the militant version propagated by fundamentalists). Equally, they may be involved in generating publicity for a new car product launch. Either way, they are concerned with disseminating information and perspective to their publics, in order to create understanding of what their organization is trying to achieve. This is the primary objective of public relations. Understanding is best achieved when:

1. Top management understands PR practice and knows exactly what it needs to communicate. The chief executive is literally the organization's chief PRO.
2. PROs are answerable to their chief executives, and may be board directors or consultants who serve an appreciative top management.
3. Good media relationships are developed based on mutual frankness and respect. Practitioners understand how, when and why editors

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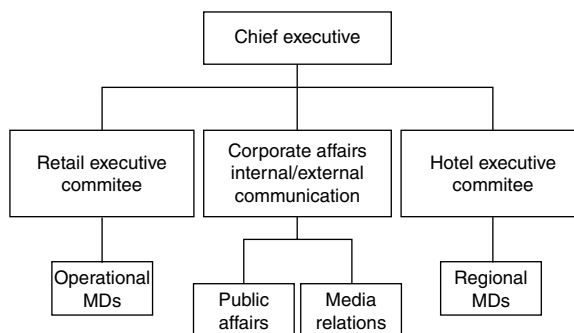
need material, and editors know who they can rely on to supply what they want, when, and how they want it.

### Comparing and contrasting PR with its sister functions

Understanding how public relations contributes to the work of an organization is frequently best understood by considering what it does not do, or how it differs from other functions. These include public affairs, marketing and advertising. Many organizational charts do not show the PRO in an independent role. Sometimes, the PRO comes under the marketing services manager or may be a part of the job specification of particular directors, managers and executives. Figure 1.2 outlines the organization chart for Bass, the brewer (Wilson, 2001). The full-time PRO occupies a senior role in the corporate affairs department, and has line management authority over both the media relations and public affairs functions. The PRO services all functions of the organization but reports directly to the chief executive.

### Public relations and public affairs

Some unnecessary confusion has been created by the use of these two expressions. Public affairs is sometimes used to mean simply public relations. An American euphemism, it has been imported into Britain. Whilst public relations is generally regarded as the umbrella term for organizational communication activities, the more commercial and



**Figure 1.2** Public relations at Bass.

Source: Wilson (2001)

perhaps marketing-orientated communications now tend to be defined as public relations. Nowadays, regulatory affairs, parliamentary liaison and lobbying tend to be subsumed under public affairs. Public affairs activities are generally those that involve dialogue with government for purposes of public policy-making, legislation and regulation. This topic is considered in further detail in Chapter 29.

### Public relations and marketing

This is a more controversial topic. Kotler and Mindak (1978) outline five different models of how PR and marketing relate to one another: marketing and PR are distinct but separate; separate but overlapping functions; marketing is the dominant function and PR a subset; PR is the dominant function and marketing a subset; and marketing and PR are converging functions.

Some view marketing as distinct and separate departments within the organization. It could be argued that PR sometimes concerns organizations that might not be engaged in traditional marketing activity, e.g. political parties. However, even such organizations have now developed marketing departments that include advertising (often aligned with membership development or income generation departments). Charities generally have their own marketing departments as well. Whilst there are similarities between the two, the difference between the two is highlighted well in the following quote:

Marketing deals with markets and public relations with publics. Organizations can create a market by identifying a segment of the population for which a product is or could be in demand. Publics create themselves however, whenever organizations make decisions that affect a group of people adversely.

(J. E. Grunig, cited in Briggs and Tucson, 1993)

Often, within universities, there is both a corporate communications department and a marketing services department. Nevertheless, although these departments might well have different remits, they frequently report to the same boss: often the pro-vice chancellor for corporate affairs in the UK context. There are those who see public relations as a subset of marketing. PR, it is argued, is a component of the communication mix along with sales promotion, personal selling, advertising and direct marketing. An American academic, Martha Lauzen, assistant professor at San Diego State University, argues that marketing

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is attempting to subsume all PR's roles and functions. She defines this as marketing imperialism:

Marketing imperialism is the intrusion of marketing into the activities traditionally within the domain of public relations.

(Lauzen, cited in Briggs and Tucson, 1993)

Examples might include corporate identity schemes, cause-related marketing and corporate social responsibility initiatives, and sponsorship. But public relations activity principally aimed at an organization's customers is differentiated in this text by its denotation as marketing public relations. This topic is considered further in Chapter 28. Some might argue that PR should be the dominant function in relation to marketing because it considers all stakeholders, whereas marketing is mainly focused on the customer. Finally, marketing and PR could be seen as converging functions, particularly in markets where public opinion (that driven by the mass media) has considerable impact upon corporate image (e.g. the pharmaceutical market and anti-retroviral drugs in South Africa) and this is likely to impact upon profitability in the long term.

Really, it depends on what role marketing plays within a particular organization, and the power structures that develop within, and between, the two departments *vis-à-vis* the chief executive. If marketing has a strategic role, the PR function is more likely to come within its remit. Nevertheless, even in that scenario, public relations still has a role to play in every stage of a co-ordinated marketing communications campaign.

### Public relations and advertising

Several comparisons have been made between public relations and advertising. To emphasize and distinguish the differences between the two, let us consider four distinct areas in which these differences occur. They are:

1. The people addressed (i.e. the target audiences or publics).
2. The media through which these people are addressed.
3. The costs and methods of payment.
4. The purpose of the communication.

#### **I The people addressed**

Advertising campaigns are usually concentrated on the largest number of potential buyers. Public relations programmes are dispersed among different groups of people. Advertising addresses the target audience,

whereas public relations might address many publics. While advertising is aimed mostly at distributors, users and consumers in order to sell, and to suppliers in order to recruit and buy from them, publics can include stakeholders other than suppliers, customers or buyers. Not all organizations are involved in industry, trade or commerce. We have already mentioned that most public relations exists outside the business world, and to substantiate this claim here, in greater detail, ignore some of the non-business organizations in which the public relations function is particularly important:

- The police, armed forces, prison service, fire brigade, ambulance services.
- Hospitals and other health services.
- Universities, schools and other educational establishments.
- Societies, institutes and associations representing special interests, including professional and trade bodies.
- Churches and various religious organizations, such as missionary and denominational educational societies.
- Cultural organizations, e.g. libraries, museums, art galleries, symphony orchestras, and choirs and choral societies.
- Sports clubs representing every kind of amateur and professional sport.
- Political parties, political societies, trade unions.
- Central government, ministries and departments.
- Local government authorities.
- Charities and voluntary bodies ranging from Marie Curie Cancer Care to the Royal National Lifeboat Institute.

Many of these organizations also use advertising techniques to raise funds, recruit employees, and inform customers and consumers, but they are usually non-profit-making and so advertising has traditionally played a secondary role, perhaps because there is seldom the available budget for this activity or because it is regarded as less necessary. Notable exceptions to this include the NSPCC Full Stop Campaign. It is interesting to note that, despite its success, it was criticized in certain quarters as wasteful expenditure.

## 2 The media

Table 1.1 illustrates the different media used by the advertising and public relations functions for comparison purposes. If the lists are compared side by side, it is clear that there are differences in the use of some similar or identical media, while there are many media used only by advertising, and yet more which are specially created for public relations purposes. The latter may be called private or sponsored media and they are seldom mass media, whereas advertising generally exploits mass media.

20 *Public Relations***Table 1.1 An advertising and PR media comparison**

<i>Advertising media</i>	<i>Public relations media</i>
i. Display and classified ads in consumer magazines, trade, technical and professional journals	i. News stories, feature articles, newspapers, pictures for the press. Internal and external journals
ii. Commercials (film or videotape) and advertising films for transmission on television and cinema screens. Sponsored TV/radio programmes	ii. Videotapes, slides, cassettes, corporate video by satellite, video news releases, CD-ROM, DVD. Sponsored TV/radio programmes
iii. Radio commercials	iii. Taped radio interviews, studio interviews, phone-ins, news
iv. Posters, signs, buses and other ambient advertising media	iv. Educational posters, in-house posters
v. Public, trade, permanent or mobile exhibitions	v. Public relations aspects of all exhibitions and private exhibitions
vi. Sales promotion schemes	vi. Educational literature and other printed information
vii. Point-of-sale displays	vii. Sponsored publications
viii. Sales literature, leaflets, brochures, catalogues	viii. Seminars and conferences, spoken word sometimes combined with video shows, slide presentations and exhibits
ix. Direct mail	ix. Press facility visits, works visits, open days
x. Door-to-door mail drops of sales literature, samples, cash vouchers	x. Annual reports and accounts, company histories
xi. Sponsorship for purposes of advertising or direct marketing	xi. Event management, e.g. floats at carnivals, awards of purposes prizes, sponsorship of events and causes
xii. Special forms of advertising, aerial, shopping bags, other novelties	xii. Corporate identity livery, symbols (logos), colours, typography, uniforms, dress, badges

The lists in Table 1.1 are by no means complete, but they help to show that advertising and public relations can communicate differently by means of different communication media. There has, however, been a continuing trend to integrate marketing communications activity such that advertising and public relations programmes contribute to each other's objectives.

### **3 Costs and payment**

In marketing it is usual to refer to above-the-line and below-the-line. Advertising is regarded as above-the-line, whilst PR, sales promotion and direct marketing are below-the-line. The historical reasons for this are explained in Box 1.1. To explain the advertising agency commission

**Box 1.1**

The terms 'above' and 'below' the line developed because of the nature of the commission systems, and methods of billing, used by agencies for much of the twentieth century.

Companies would earn their money advertising work not from the advertiser but as a commission from the media owner. The media owner would invoice the agency less the commission, whereas the agency would charge at full cost. Thus, the agency's fees were 'above' and 'below' the line – included in the total and not as an extra.

If the agency offered a company other services (e.g. sales promotion, PR), these would be extra costs and designated below the line.

system more thoroughly, agencies may be recognized (or accredited as it is called in some countries) by bodies representing publishing houses and broadcasting stations or contractors. It is more convenient for the media to deal with a small number of space and air time buyers (e.g. advertising agents) than with large numbers of advertisers. Commission is seldom adequate and agents commonly charge their clients a supplementary percentage. Agents also earn commission on work which they subcontract in order to produce advertisements, e.g. typesetting and photography, but in some cases, e.g. printing, the supplier does not deduct a commission but adds a percentage which represents the agent's handling cost. Thus, whereas it could be cheaper for the client to buy print direct, it would not be cheaper for him or her to buy space or air time direct. The advertising agent's sources of income are various and complicated. There are some agents who reject the commission system and work more professionally for fees representing hours and expertise. There are also media independents which only plan and buy media and agencies that only do creative work.

Public relations consultancies, by contrast, do not generally accept commissions. They are mainly selling time (e.g. man-hours and expertise) and materials and expenses. The hourly or daily rate for public relations services covers salaries, overheads and profits, and is often paid as a retainer. Costs associated with advertising agency and public relations agency services are outlined in Table 1.2.

**4 The purpose**

Generally, advertising and public relations functions have tended to work to different objectives. More recently, with the introduction of integrated marketing communications programmes, their purposes have become increasingly intertwined. Generally, public relations aims to

22 *Public Relations***Table 1.2 Comparison of advertising and PR costs**

<i>Advertising costs</i>	<i>Agency payment</i>
Advertising space in the press	Commission on space, air time, screen bookings, poster site rentings
Airtime on television and radio	Charges for artwork and costs of production
Rental of poster sites	On-costs of work farmed out to suppliers (e.g. printers)
Screen time at cinemas	Discounts from suppliers (e.g. photographers, film, videotape, DVD, CD-ROM makers)
Stand space at exhibitions	Fees for work which bears no commission
Production costs of:	
(a) Press advertisements	
(b) Television commercials	
(c) Radio commercials	
(d) Cinema screen commercials	
(e) Exhibition stands	
(f) Print, display material	
<p>Although commissions were the traditional method of agency payment, the number of clients using this method has declined significantly in favour of a combination of methods including (Smith, 2002):</p> <p>Commission rebating – where the client received a rebate on the inclusive commission price</p> <p>Fees – larger companies in particular are moving to retainers or project fees</p> <p>Pay by results – some agencies (usually the young and aspiring ones) are prepared to gamble on the success of their work</p>	
<i>Public relations costs</i>	<i>Consultancy payment</i>
Time – salaries	Fee based on hourly/daily rate
Materials – stationery, postage, photography	Recovery of cost of materials, usually at cost, but sometimes with handling charge
Expenses – travelling, hotels, hospitality	Recovery of expenses at cost

educate and inform in order to create understanding, whereas advertising seeks to inform or remind in order to persuade and sell. The two may be related in the sense that it is difficult or excessively costly to persuade and sell if prospective buyers lack knowledge and understanding of what is being advertised. Public relations can often be a precursor activity to advertising. The success of the advertising may also depend on the corporate image and the reputation of the advertiser, which also requires publics to have knowledge, understanding and, perhaps, previous experience.

## The Tate Modern launch case study: an IPR excellence award winner, 2001

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The Tate Modern communications team was a winner of an IPR excellence award in 2001. Their winning submission to this award is reproduced here, in abridged form, to provide readers with an indication of what the organization of a PR campaign involves. It provides details of the campaign's background and objectives, strategy and plan, target audience, campaign execution and implementation and, finally, the results and evaluation of the campaign, and why it was so successful. It clearly outlines those aspects of a campaign that a PRO would need to consider when writing a PR campaign plan.

### Background and campaign planning

Tate Modern opened to the public on 12 May 2000. It was the first new national museum to open in London in a century. It became the first national museum for modern art in London and was supported by a Millennium Commission project funded by the National Lottery. Housed in the former Bankside Power Station, Tate Modern displays the Tate collection of international modern art from 1900 to the present day. There is a full range of special exhibitions and a broad public programme of events throughout the year. The ex-power station has been transformed into a modern museum by Swiss architects Herzog and de Meuron. The former Turbine Hall now marks a breathtaking entrance to the gallery. At night, a lightweight luminous roof is a unique addition to the London skyline. The objective of the Tate communications team was to ensure that the launch of the new Tate was covered sufficiently by both the national and international media. It also wished to broaden appeal, double attendance, be seen to be worth the entrance fee, differentiate the new Tate from the original by calling one Tate Modern and the other Tate Britain, achieve international acknowledgement and involve the local community. Each of these objectives is considered further in Table 1.3.

In conjunction with PR consultants, Bolton and Quinn, the Tate communications team secured the support of high-profile endorsers and key members of the media. An editorial column in the *Financial Times* ran from 1997, as the Tate Modern was still fund-raising. The campaign achieved a build-up of interest through strategically generated editorial coverage at all major stages of the project.

24 *Public Relations***Table 1.3 Objectives of the Tate Modern campaign**

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Further Details</i>
Broaden appeal	Make modern art more accessible and less elitist by attracting people who intend to come to galleries but who rarely do
Double attendance	In figures, the Tate communications team set sights on doubling the attendance to Tate
Be seen to be worth the money	Needed to ensure it was seen to be a project worth the money compared with other millennium projects
Clarify Tate Britain	Position Tate at Millbank as Tate Britain before launching Tate Modern. Tate Britain was dispatched two months ahead of Tate Modern
Achieve international acknowledgement	Ensure the attention of the international media, particularly those in New York and Paris, which already have well-established modern art museums
Involve the local community	Involve local residents and community groups so that they could benefit from the new gallery

**Campaign execution and implementation**

The communications team wished to attract a wide audience to Tate Modern, so it was necessary to secure the support of television, the mid-market papers and crucially the tabloids. Favourable coverage in the tabloids was arranged through events such as the black-cab drivers preview. In a special preview session, 20 000 black-cab drivers in London were invited to a preview especially for them. The idea was that this would enable the 'cabbies' to explain and talk about the gallery to their passengers. An ingenious idea, since it is likely that they would frequently be asked for directions and to be driven to its location. The Tate communications team distributed press releases and photographs. In March 2000, *The Observer* did a special supplement to launch Tate Britain, and *Vogue* magazine printed its own feature in May. The Tate Modern team also managed to secure a four-part documentary on Channel 4 on the architecture and building project, in addition to four art documentaries on BBC2, whilst the actual opening by the Queen was covered live on BBC1. GMTV hosted their breakfast show from the Tate Modern. Working with PR agencies in France and New York, the Tate communications team was able to secure extensive international coverage and specialist art world press throughout the world. In its corporate identity programme, The Tate logo, designed by Wolff Olins, was applied to all items of print, the website, merchandise, signage and

**Table 1.4 An outline of the key audiences and the advocacy mechanisms adopted**

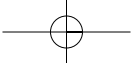
<i>Target Audiences</i>	<i>Key advocacy mechanisms</i>
Media: press, broadcast (television and radio), national and international	Enlisting the support of high-profile endorsers and key members of the media
Government	Lobbying government to ensure Tate Modern entry was free
Artists	Involvement of British artists (important in international context)
Art critics (national and international)	A range of private views and tours for all sectors throughout the project were arranged.
Art enthusiasts	Communication liaison and involvement through the set-up of visitor centres. The <i>raison d'être</i> for the Tate Modern was explained
Art 'beginners' (e.g. cab drivers) – see below	
Local Southwark community	Prior to the main press days, a private view of the museum for local residents and press was arranged

uniform at both the Tate Modern and Tate Britain. The PR programme was supported by other marketing and advertising activity. Table 1.4 outlines some of the key ways in which the Tate team communicated with their audiences.

The creative content of the campaign was enhanced by collaborations with British artists, one of the campaign's stated objectives. A fanfare by Sir Harrison Birtwistle was commissioned for the Queen's formal opening of the museum and Tracy Emin produced a front cover for *The Observer's* British Art supplement. Celebrities were invited to the opening party (e.g. Madonna, Mick Jagger, Kylie Minogue and Claudia Schiffer).

### Results and evaluation

The campaign's initial objectives were achieved. The media campaign was successful in ensuring favourable tabloid coverage. Between 12 and 17 May 2000, the Tate Modern had 317 column inches of space in national print media, making it the fifth biggest story that particular week. International media coverage was also extensive. The approximate total audience reached through national television alone during April, May and June 2000 was estimated at 126.7 million. Thirteen articles in the tabloids represent a potential reader audience figure of



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approximately 32.5 million. In addition, 5.25 million people visited Tate Modern in its first year (more than double the team's expectations). Over 1 million of these came in the first six weeks. The website was initially registering an average of 24 million hits per month. By May 2000, the website was receiving around 10 million hits per day.

