

COURSE GUIDE

MAC 425 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN PRACTICE

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INTRODUCTION

This course is titled: Public Relations in Practice. The course code is MAC 425. It is designed for undergraduate students of Mass Communication. The course provides the students with applicatory knowledge of public relations practice. At the end of the tutorials in the course, students are expected to have acquired sufficient knowledge of public relations skills processes and practice. Students will also learn the relevant theories in guiding public relations practice. Precisely, the students who have gone through this course would be expected to have in-depth understanding of the basic principles imperative for effective public relations practice. Students would also be expected to acquaint themselves with mainstream literature in public relations principles and practice; the major discussion that embed the literature and be able to apply the basic and concepts of public relations successful public relations practice.

This course guide therefore, offers you with informative insights into the course contents. It also provides you with a list of relevant materials you will need to gain adequate familiarity with in-depth understanding of the subject matter. The course design is structured in such a way that would enable you gain far reaching insight into the course. It will engage you into productive thinking through the underlying principles and theories of issues you will study. It will also serve as a guide post to effective understanding of public practice during and after the course of your study.

STUDY UNITS

MAC 425 which is titled Public Relations in Practice is a 400 Level course for undergraduate Mass Communication student. It is a 3 credit unit course. The course is packaged in five modules of varying units and lengths. The modules and the corresponding units are:

Module 1 Nature of Public Relations

Unit 1	Meaning of Public Relations
Unit 2	Publics in Public Relations Practice
Unit 3	Functions of Public Relations
Unit 4	Qualities of Public Relations Practitioners

Module 2 Public Relations Process and Application

Unit 1	Public Relations Strategy
Unit 2	Public Relations Tactics
Unit 3	Research in Public Relations

Unit 4 Budget and Budgeting in Public Relations

Module 3 Major Field of Public Relations Practice

Unit 1 Community Relations
Unit 2 Financial Public Relations
Unit 3 Media Relations
Unit 4 Government Relations

Module 4 Corporate Communications in Public Relations Practice

Unit 1 Press Release
Unit 2 Press Conference
Unit 3 Crisis Management
Unit 4 Issues Management
Unit 5 Speech Communication

Module 5 Theories in Public Relations Practice

Unit 1 System Theory and Public Relations Practice
Unit 2 Situational Theory and Public Relations Practice
Unit 3 Individual Differences Theory and Public Relations Practice
Unit 4 Innovation, Diffusion and Public Relations

It is important to note that every module offers you a listing of all the units that make it up. Each unit also offers you the content outlines, introduction and objectives with the main content preceding each unit. Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) will be provided to enhance learning, comprehension, internalisation and retention of what you will be taught. To further enhance learning and effectively monitor your progress on the course, every unit will end with Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA) which you are to work on and submit for marking.

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

Enormous effort was made to provide you with in-depth and useful materials you need to pass this course. However, you will find at the end of each unit, a listing of relevant reference materials you may consult at your convenient time to enhance your understanding of the course. I therefore, expect that you would make out time to consult as many of the relevant reference materials as possible within the time available to you even before attempting to do your exercises.

ASSESSMENT

To excel in this course, you would undergo two important assessments. These are Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) and Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA). Though you are not to submit the answers to SEAs questions to your tutor, it is importance you take it serious as it would help you to assess your own understanding of the course. It would also help you to identify the areas you need to improve on as the tutorials progresses. The Tutor-Marked Assignment should also be taken serious and carefully answered. It should be properly filled in your assignment file for submission and marking. Your performance in this exercise counts a lot as 30% of your total score on the course depends on it. You are once again encouraged to take it serious.

TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

You will find at the end of every unit, a Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA). I expect that you will carefully answer the assignments and put them in your assignment file for submission as instructed. Note that this course guide does not contain any Tutor-Marked Assignment questions. You will find them in virtually all the units of every module in the main course details.

FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

As a 3-credit unit course, the final examination for MAC 425 will last for three hours. The examination will count for 70% of the total course grade. Note again that the Tutor-Marked Assignment will be 30% of the total grade. So, your score in the Tutor-Marked Assignment plus your score in the final examination will determine your final grade in this course. The examination questions will reflect to a large extent on your SAEs and TMAs which you are expected to have answered while studies on the course last. I advise you make proper use of the time you have between the completion of the units and the examination to revise the whole course. You will find this exercise useful as it will help you to be familiar with SAEs and TMAs before your final examination.

HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE

To excel in this course, you will need to review your knowledge of principles of public relations and public relations straggles and tactics. This will certainly refresh your mind on the meaning and essence of public relations. Although the main course manual is well detailed and comprehensive, you will need to purchase at least, two textbooks out of the number of textbooks recommended to you. This will aid your mastery of the course. You may also need to visit some websites for

additional reference materials that will facilitate your understanding of the course. Also, you will need to visit institutional/organisational libraries for additional insights into their communication plans, strategies and actions in public relations process and practice. Finally, you will need to cultivate quality time to rehearse what you learnt in the course on weekly basis. This will further enhance your knowledge of the course.

FACILITATORS/TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

Tutorials in this course will span through 24 hours. The dates and locations of the tutorials as well as the name and phone number of your tutor will be communicated to you once you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments. Your tutor will also monitor your progress in the course and will be able to assist with your SAEs and TMAs. I therefore, encourage you to feel free to contact your tutor in case of any difficulty and ensure prompt submission of your assignments. Always attend your tutorials regularly and on time. Also ensure you always participate actively in class discussions.

CONCLUSION

This course is both theoretical and practical based courses. The course requires in-depth understanding of the theoretical foundations underlying it and the ability to apply the theoretical knowledge to effective public relations process and practice. You will therefore make the most out of the course if you cultivate the right attitude of mind of understanding how best public relations principles apply to the practice of the profession.

SUMMARY

This course guide is carefully packaged to give you tight insight into MAC 425 (Public Relations in Practice). The course is designed to equip you with rich conceptual and theoretical as well as practical knowledge of public relations. At the end of your studies in this course therefore, you would have learnt not only the conceptual/theoretical underpinning of the course but also, the strategic practical approaches to public relations practice. However, your success in this course will depend more on the quality and quantity of time you put into your tutorials; the efforts you put into solving your SAE and TMA questions; and your strategic planning for engaged studying and revising of the entire course. I sincerely wish you successful journey through your studies in the course and the entire programme.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

Nwodu, L. C. (2007). *Corporate Public Relations Management*

Black, S. (1990). *Introduction to Public Relations*

Nwosu, I. E. (1996) *Public Relations Management: Issues and Application*

Farrell, T. J. & Farrell, M. M. (1997) *Public Speaking: Skill and for Success*

Ndolo, I. S. (2001) *Understanding Business Communication*

Newsome, D. & Carrell, B. (2007) *Public Relations Writing: Form and Style*

Nwosu, I. E & Idemili, S. O. (n.d) *Public Relations: Speech, Media Writing and Copy*

Ademolekun & Ekundayo, T. (2002) *Interactive Public Relations*

Nweke, O. F. (n.d) *Public Relations Practice: Concept and Strategies*

Reddi, C. V. N. (2009) *Effective Public Relations and Media Strategy*

Johnston, J. & Zawawi, C. (2004) *Public Relations Theory and Practice*

Lattimore *et al* (2004) *Public Relations: The Profession and The Practice*

Nwosu, I. E. & Uffoh, O. (2006) *Environmental Public Relations Management: Principles Strategies, Issues and Cases*

Nwodu, L.C (2006) *Journalism Practice: News, Aesthetics, Ethics and Law*

MAIN COURSE

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MODULE 1 NATURE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Unit 1	Meaning of Public Relations
Unit 2	Publics in Public Relations Practice
Unit 3	Functions of Public Relations
Unit 4	Qualities of Public Relations Practitioners

UNIT 1 MEANING OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Definition of Public Relations
3.2	Implication of the Definitions to Public Relations Practice
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Public Relation Practice is a fourth year course designed to teach the students the strategic approaches to public relations practice. It is important to first understand public relations concepts before delving into the practice. This beginning unit therefore will expose the students to brief conceptual overview of the meaning and essence of public relations. The motive is to refresh your minds on public relations principles before commencing on in-depth discuss on public relations practice.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define public relations
- explain issues arising from the definitions of public relations.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning of Public Relations

According to Nwosu (1996), there are more than 600 standard and acceptable definitions of public relations in the world. This implies that there are several other definitions of public relations that are not considered 'standard and acceptable'. Be they 'standard and acceptable' or not, the fact remains that the striving to have as much as 1,000 definitions of public relations with many more emerging definitions clearly shows how important the profession is to the practitioners, researchers and scholars.

For better understanding of the meaning and nature of public relations, therefore, we shall consider few definitions out of the numerous existing definitions of public relations here.

1. Public relations is "essentially about positively and systematically using actions and communications to influence people's attitudes, opinions, belief, interest and behaviour in a given or desired direction (e.g. Adopting good environmental behaviours as well as building lasting credibility and reputation for individuals and corporate entities like profit or non-profit organisations and even nations, states, local government or communities" (Nwosu and Uffoh, 2006:12).
2. Public relations is concerned with "the promotion of rapport and goodwill between persons, firms or institutions, and other persons, special publics or the community at large, through the distribution of interpretative materials, the development of neighbourly interchange and assessment of public reaction"(Webster, 1992).
3. Public Relations is "the ethical and strategic management of communication and relationship in order to build and develop coalitions and policy, identify and manage issues and create messages to achieve sound outcomes within a socially responsible framework" (Johnston and Zawawi,2004:6).

Although the above definitions range from the simple to the complex, they all point to one direction which Nwodu (2006:1) says it involves "deliberate use of organised actions and persuasive communications to influence opinions and actions and by so doing, secure public sentiments or sympathy in favour of a cause".

The definitions were considered working definitions for discussing public relations practice because of their conceptualisation beyond the context of corporate organisation. It implies that public relations practice is not strictly restricted within the corporate framework or context alone. It extends to building coalition and relationship within and outside:

- Government circulation at various levels
- Community level
- Social institutions
- Faith Based organisation
- Social groups
- Non-governmental/Community-based organisations.

As Johnston and Zawawi (2004:7) put it, the public relations process can “occur at many levels and can explain the way in which practitioners, whether they are in government, corporations working for a community group, can use the same basic sets of skills and techniques...”.

3.2 Implication of the Definitions to Public Relations Practice

The three working definitions of public relations stated above were carefully selected from the lot. The reason as we emphasised earlier is that the definitions tend to capture the dimensions of public relations practice in contemporary time. The definitions therefore clearly take into cognisance the dynamic nature of public relations practice. The definitions show that public relations practice is no longer limited to big businesses often referred to as corporate organisations. The dynamic nature of the profession requires the practitioners to sharpen their professional skills to cope with the emerging challenges and expanding scope of the profession.

From the definitions also, it is decipherable that public relations communication activities are hardly carried out to impress. Communication activities must therefore be well planned, persuasive, purposive and goal driven to the extent they can positively influence public opinion and behaviour change. Nwodu (2006:3) summarises the implications of these definitions to public relations practice by saying that:

1. public relations actions must be well focused to achieve positive ends
2. the actions must be used systematically (that is in an organised manner)
3. the actions must be properly communicated to the targets.

4. the actions must be goal-orientated (that is designed to influence for purpose of achieving favourable image); and
5. the action must be aimed at achieving good social climate for corporate organisations (profit and non-profit, governments and communities).

4.0 CONCLUSION

Our discussion in this beginning unit serves as an eye-opener to the fact that the field of public relations practice is too broad. It extends to profit and non-profit organisations, institutions, governments, communities, groups and even high up individuals. It also buttresses the fact that “much of the communicating that public relations practitioners do is both persuasive and purposive”(Lattimore et al, 2004).

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit is concerned with laying the background for the study of public relations in practice. Thus, the definition and the implication of issues implicit in the definition were discussed to refresh the students' minds on the meaning and essence of public relations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Using at least two definitions of public relations as frame of reference, explain how the professional practice goes beyond the context of corporate organisations.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Lattimore, D. *et al* (2004). *Public Relations: The Profession and The Practice*; Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Johnson, J. & Zawawi, C. (2004). “What is Public Relations” in J. Johnson & C. Zawawi (Eds.). *Public Relations Theory and Practice*; Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.
- Nwodu, L.C. (2007). *Corporate Public Relations Management*; Enugu: Precision Publishers Limited.
- Nwosu, I.E. & Uffoh, O. (2006). *Environmental Public Relations Management: Principles, Strategies, Issues and Cases*; Enugu: IDS.

Nwosu, I. E. (1996). *Public Relations Management: Issues and Application*; Lagos: Dominican Publishing.

The Webster's Dictionary of English (1992). New York: Lexican Publication.

UNIT 2 PUBLICS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Understanding the Concept of Publics
 - 3.2 Constituents of Publics of an Organisation
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is important to note that the concept “publics” is not acceptable or does not exist in conventional grammar. This is because the word public is regarded as a collective noun which should ordinarily not have a plural form. However, in the context of public relations, the word exists as a professional jargon or register. This unit therefore aims at explaining the meaning of publics, who and/or what constitute the ‘publics’ of an organisation.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of publics in the context of public relations practice
- explain the actual publics of an organisation.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Understanding the Concept of Publics

Most scholarly definitions of public relations touched on the word “publics” either directly or indirectly. This is because “publics” are very crucial to the survival and business continuity of an organisation.

‘Publics’ in this context refers to all those groups whose activities affect an organisation and are being affected by that of the organisation. According to Lattimore (2004:7) publics refers to “groups that are almost always important to an organisation”. Nwodu (2007:14) broadly defines publics as “various individuals (internal or external), community or corporate entities who one way or the other, affect and are being

affected by the operations or activities of an organisation which could be corporate, government agency or public institution”.

Nwodu (2007:14) further emphasises that “it is proper to term a combination of different groups of people who affect and are also affected by the activities of an organisation as publics”. The implication is that no organisation exists as an island. To exist and function effectively therefore, there must be certain groups (in this context publics) who are imparted upon by the very existence of that organisation and whose actions also impact on the survival of the organisation.

Newsom and Carrell (2001:7) summarised it by submitting that publics “is any group of people tied together by some common factor.

3.2 Constituents of Publics of an Organisation

In defining and explaining “publics” as a concept, we did note that it means categories of people who become important to our organisation for one reason or the other”. That reason may be that such people render services to our organisation and therefore deserve their pay to the extent withdrawal of their service may adversely affect the operations of the organisation.

Another reason could be that the people supplied material input to our company on contractual basis and default on our side may attract litigation and consequently rubbish the image of our company. It could also be among others, that the activities of the company constitute nuisance to the environment and health of the people to the extent the affected publics begin “to express opinions, talk with others about the issues, and to reconcile their opinions with more long-standing attitudes, values and group affiliations” (Lattimore,2004: 9).Whatever is the case, that fact remains that once an organisation is established and is made functional, various groups will arise that will impact on the organisation even as the organisation impacts on the groups. This impact could be positive or negative or both. It is the responsibility of the Public Relations Director of an organisation to ensure that the positive impact is sustained and improved upon while effort will be made to transfer negative impact to positive one. It is important to note at this point that publics of any organisation are usually divided into two: the internal and the external publics. While the internal publics refer to groups that are under the employ of the organisation, the external publics are all those groups that one way or the other does business with the organisation.

So, when we define public relations as a deliberate use of action and communication to achieve smooth relationship between an organisation

and its publics, we mean that the profession is concerned with ensuring healthy relationship between the management of the organisation and both the internal and external publics.

We need clear illustration to understand the internal and external publics. Let us use the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) as case to demonstrate the constituents of the internal and the external publics. Thus, it is imperative to note that the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is a corporate educational institution. Therefore, it has both external and internal publics which the institution should strive at all times to maintain favourable relationship with. This is so because if the relationship between the university and its internal or external publics or both is strained, it will rob on the image and reputation of the university.

The university management must, as a matter of necessity, be conscious of its actions, policies and communications, to ensure they do not jeopardise the publics' (internal and external) perception of the organisation. In doing this, however, there is need to determine or establish who constitutes the internal and the external publics of the university. This is what we mean by the constituents of the 'publics' of an organisation.

We can therefore identify the following as the internal publics of National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN):

1. The academic staff of the university who do the actual teaching or tutorials as well as rendering other academic-oriented services.
2. The administration or non-academic staff such as the registrar, the admission officers, the personal officers, the bursar etc.
3. Various categories and levels of students for whose sake the university was established to serve.
4. Junior cadre workers like clerks, cleaners, gardeners, gatemen and security men who are not decision makers but decision implementer and whose services count a lot in the success or otherwise of the organisation.

In case of external publics, NOUN can also have the following as some of its external publics.

1. Other organisations that are domiciled in the university environment but are not under the control of university management. Organisation like banks, restaurants etc.

2. Organisations that are not domiciled in the university environment that do also render services to the university community and management, like banks, insurance companies, affiliate institutions and sundry companies that render retainer services to the university.
3. The indigenes of the community neighbours or host communities of the university and whose actions can affect smooth operations of the university.
4. “Contractors that execute infrastructural development of the university which include landscaping; construction of classrooms, offices, hostels and sundry blocks; construction of parks, seat outs and other beautification media or recreational/sporting facilities; setting up of laboratories, studios, etc” (Nwodu, 2007:15).
5. “Artisans, food vendors, hawkers, business centre operators etc, who operate within and distant near the university premises because of the very presence of the university” (Nwodu, 2007:15).
6. Suppliers of all kinds who supply stationeries and office equipment, chemicals and reagents for the laboratory, studies equipment, vehicles etc.

4.0 CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it is clear that the ‘publics’ of any organisation are diverse. They include all those individuals and or groups whose action influences the operations of an organisation and whose actions are in turn influenced by the actions and policies of the organisation. It is important therefore that a tutorial in public relations in practice should refresh your mind on the concept of publics and the constituents of publics of an organisation. This is what we have explained in this unit

5.0 SUMMARY

Module 1 of this tutorial is design to refresh our minds on some important basic principles of public relations. The reason is that you cannot easily get to understand the public relations in practice without refreshing your mind on the principles underlying it. This unit therefore discussed the meaning of publics in public relation practice and concludes with clear explanation of the constituents of organisational

publics. To cap it, hypothetical cases of the components of both internal and external publics of an organisation were discussed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define and explain the concept, ‘publics’

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

You have just been employed as the Public Relations Manager of XYZ Oil, an oil exploratory company. Based on your knowledge of public relations, discuss your understanding of the internal and the external publics of the company. List at least five internal and five external publics of the company.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Lattimore, D. *et al.* (2004). *Public Relations: The Profession and The Practice*; Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Newsome & Carrell, B. (2001). *Public Relations Writing: Form and Style*, Badmouth, Wadsworth/Thomson Publishing.
- Nwodu, L. C. (2007). *Corporate Public Relations Management*; Enugu: Precision Publishers Ltd.

UNIT 3 FUNCTIONS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Factors Influencing Growth of Public Relations
 - 3.2 Functions of Public Relations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Governments, community, humanitarian organisation (voluntary and non-voluntary) and corporate organisation are increasingly realising the need for public relations in cementing their relationships with their respective publics. This realisation comes as a result of the increasing importance of public relations practice in organisational management. This unit shall therefore expose you to the functions of public relations.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the reason for the increasing need for public relations in the management of modern organisation
- discuss the relevance of public relations in an organisation.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Factors Influencing Growth of Public Relations

Public relations industry as a special field of practice has witnessed steady growth overtime. There is need for public relations in businesses regardless of whether they are small, medium or large scale businesses. In the political and government spheres, political class usually spend fortune to enhance their images and reputation in the eyes of members of the public.

Even in the area of faith-based organisations, Nwodu (2007:16) reports that they now use public relations strategies to publicise their congregation's prowess at healing and prosperity and by extension, enhance their credibility and membership. This by implication shows

that the industry is growing rapidly both in scope and areas of influence. According to Nwodu (2007:16) a number of factors combine to enhance the growth and scope of public relations practice and application in both individual and organisational image and reputation building and sustenance. Baran (1999:25-26) identifies some of the major factors influencing the growth and practice of public relations as.

- i. Technological advancement which provided enabling environment for mass production, distribution and marketing in addition to providing resources for efficient and effective organisational communication and more specific audiences.
- ii. Increase in the number of sufficiently educated middle class who to a large extent are conscious of the world around and desperate at getting information about people and organisations.
- iii. Growth of organisations like private and public sectors, government agencies and corporations, trade unions, voluntary organisations and sundry organisations that influence peoples' lives.
- iv. Advancement in social science researches which has led to systematic accumulation of reliable, dependable and sophisticated data needed to plan, execute and evaluate public relations campaigns and interpret public opinions and or sentiments.
- v. The professionalisation of public relations to the extent public relations regulatory bodies now exist at local, national and international levels.

3.2 Functions of Public Relations

Various definitions of public relations have pointed to a common denominator which is that the profession involves maintaining mutual relationship between two entities. This means that public relations management is all about relationship management with emphasis on image/reputation building and sustenance.

According to Nwodu (2007:4), it serves as a lubricant that galvanises the interaction between individual/groups (called publics) and corporate organisations; between government/government agencies and their allies/ subjects; and between communities and the constituent groups in the communities.

From the above, it is important to note that public relations, as a profession plays enormous roles in both corporate and societal lives.

This is true in view of the fact “no institution including government can survive let alone flourish if its policies, programmes and actions fail to meet or are perceivable as failing to meet the expectation of the publics it seeks to serve” (Barney, 1923 cited in Nwosu, 1990). The functions of public relations according to Nwodu (2007:4) included but not limited to:

- a) Identifying, interpreting and evaluating public opinions, attitudes, and feelings about prominent individuals, corporate organisations, government and communities.
- b) Initiating, planning and executing special events or programmes on short, medium and long term basis for purpose of winning publics’ consent and/or sympathy for a noble cause.
- c) Sufficiently informing various publics about the policies, activities and future plans of governments, organisational and community leaders.
- d) Engaging in conflict management and crisis settlement and wading off negative trend and press reports likely to mar the image and reputation of an organisation, government/or community.
- e) Providing level playing ground for healthy interactions between management of an organisation and/or government functionaries and their respective publics and subjects.
- f) Maintaining favourable relationship between an organisation and the mass media and by so doing, guard against engaging in negative and damaging mass media war..
- g) Helping to balance organisational vis-a-vis government interest with that of the publics-cum-subjects for optimum relation.
- h) Striving to achieve safe organisational social climate by engaging in community relations needed to enhance business motives of corporate organisations.

It is imperative to note therefore that public relations is essential in achieving and sustaining corporate and social climate for harmonious co-existence and for enthroning sustainable image and reputations. Abraham Lincoln, former American President summarised the relevance of public relations in the following words:

Public sentiment is everything; with public sentiment nothing can fail, without it nothing can succeed. He who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who makes statues and pronounces decisions...public relations is everything.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Of truth, public relations practice is very important in reducing friction within organisational set up. It emphasises the use of action and communication to build and sustain favourable image and reputation of an organisation. With sustainable favourable image and reputation, an organisation will be in proper position to enjoy the confidence and continued patronage of its various publics.

5.0 SUMMARY

Public Relations is no doubt, a growing industry. This unit therefore examined the factors that have facilitated the growth of public relations practice in contemporary time. It also discussed the functions of public relations.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the factors responsible for the growth of public relations practice in the modern time.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Mention and discuss the functions of public relations.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Baran, S.J. (1999). *Introduction to Mass Communication: Media Literacy and Culture*; California: Mayfield Publishing.
- Nwodu, L.C. (2007). *Corporate Public Relations Management*. Enugu: Precision Publishers Limited.
- Nwosu, I.E. (1990). *Mass Communication and National Development*. Aba: Frontier Publishers Limited.

UNIT 4 QUALITIES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Technical Qualities
 - 3.2 Normative Qualities
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The functions of public relations as we learnt in unit 3 above are enormous. To carry out such functions effectively and cope with other challenges facing the profession, the practitioners, of necessity, need to possess certain qualities. This unit is therefore designed to explore those qualities which public relations practitioners need to possess in order to excel in their professional practice.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- enumerate the basic educational qualifications required to practice public relations in Nigeria
- mention the traits and/or non certificated qualities the practitioner needs to possess in order to excel.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Technical Qualities

Every profession is usually distinct from other professions. One of the factors that distinguish a profession from the other is the nature of training the professional receive. Often times, the training is certificated. That is why one needs certain educational qualifications to function as a lawyer, medical practitioner or an engineer.

In the same manner, a public relations practitioner needs to attain certain educational level in order to practice the profession. This is what we refer to as technical qualities. Technical quality therefore refers to the

legal-cum-academic height one needs to attain in order to practice public relations in Nigeria. The implication is that public relations practice is not an all comer's affair. To practise the profession in Nigeria and indeed elsewhere, the practitioner must achieve certain specific technical qualifications.

It is imperative to make reference to Decree Act No 16 of 1990 which established the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) in order to understand the technical qualities expected of the professionals in Nigeria. Thus, Section 1 of the Act establishing the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) prescribes among other things that the Institute shall be charged with the responsibility of:

determining what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered members of the public relations professions and reviewing those standards, from time to time as circumstances may permit;

This legal provision clearly indicates that a given standard of knowledge and skill is required to practice the profession. To this end, Section 10(1) of the Act spells out the condition for registering one as a practitioner of public relations in Nigeria thus, if:

- a) He passes the qualifying examination accepted by the institute under this decree and completes the practical training prescribed by the council, from time to time; or
- b) He holds a qualification granted outside Nigeria and for the time being accepted by the institute and is by law entitled to practice for all purpose as a public relations practitioner in the country in which qualification was granted and the council that he has had sufficient experience as a public relations practitioners; or
- c) He holds at least one of the qualifications prescribed in Schedule 4 to this Decree for purpose of registration or the register and has complied with the other requirements prescribed under section 8 (4) of this Decree.

Note that reference was made to Schedule 4 of the decree in Sub-section 1 (c) above. It is important that we state also the provisions of the Schedule 4 to fully understand the technical qualities required of a public relations practitioner in Nigeria. The schedule which is concerned with accepted minimum qualification for registering somebody as a practitioner of public relations in Nigeria clearly stated as follow:

1. The institute's professional Certificate and Diploma.
2. Communication, Advertising and Marketing (CAM) Foundation Certification and Diploma in Communication Studies.
3. British Institute of Public Relations Membership Diploma.
4. Business Education Exams Council (BEEC) professional Certificate and Diploma in Public Relations.
5. Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Higher National Diploma, Master of Arts, Master of Science or Doctor of Philosophy in Public Relations; Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts (Mass Communication); Master's in Business Administration with major or specialisation in public relations.
6. Any other qualification as many be approved by the council.

The technical requirements one may attain in order to practise public relations in Nigeria as summarised by Nwodu (2007:26-27) are as follow:

- Higher Certificate (preferably degree) in mass communication or marketing or professional masters/PhD degree in public relations.
- At least five years cognate corporate relations/affairs management experience in a reputable organisation.
- Active membership of regulatory professional body or bodies like International Public Relations Association (IPRA), Federation of Africa Public Relations Associations (FAPRA), and the Nigeria Institute of Public Relations (NIPR).

3.2 The Normative Qualities

In our discussion of technical qualities above, we said it has to do with standard knowledge and skill required to practice public relations in Nigeria. In the case of normative qualities, the emphasis is usually on the “moral and psychological qualities of public relations practitioners” (Nwodu, 2007:26).

Decree Act 16 of 1990 establishing NIPR also touched on some parts of this aspect of the qualities of public relations practitioners. Section 10 (3) clearly stipulates that “An applicant for registration shall, in addition to evidence of qualification, satisfy the council that he:

- Is of good character.
- Has attained the age of twenty-one years; and
- Has not been convicted in Nigeria or elsewhere of an offence involving fraud or dishonesty.

Beyond these moral aspects of normative qualities, the practitioner needs to possess other psychological qualities. Nwodu (2007: 27-29) encapsulates these qualities. Below are the warts and all of these qualities, as Nwodu puts it:

- a) possession of sense of history
- b) possession of high sense of figure and statistics
- c) ability to take full responsibility for actions wrongly taken and learn from such actions
- d) ability to communicate effectively using precise, unambiguous, easy to understand language
- e) ability to identify and analyse trends in the social system
- f) ability to identify and appreciate the target cultures and be able to initiate and package public relations programmes that do not conflict with the cultures
- g) ability to adhere strictly to ethical precepts of the profession.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Public relations is not an all comers affair. It is a highly skilled area of knowledge and practice. The practitioner therefore needs to be conversant with the qualities required to practice the profession in addition to possessing them. To effectively practise public relations in Nigeria therefore, the practitioner needs to attain at least the minimum technical qualities in addition to possessing the normative qualities which are enumerated and discussed in this unit.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit discussed the qualities required to practise public relations. It recognised two broad qualities needed to excel in the professional practice. These are technical and normative qualities. While technical qualities refer to educational attainment required to practice the profession, the normative qualities are concerned with moral and psychological traits one needs to possess in order to cope with the demands of the practice.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Mention the two broad categories of normative qualities of public relations practitioners need to possess and explain in details how such qualities affect public relations practice in Nigeria.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Black, S. (1998). *Introduction to Public Relations*. London: The Modino Press.

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MODULE 2 PUBLIC RELATIONS PROCESS AND APPLICATION

Unit 1	Public Relations Strategy
Unit 2	Public Relations Tactics
Unit 3	Research in Public Relations Practice
Unit 4	Budget and Budgeting in Public Relations Practice

UNIT 1 PUBLIC RELATIONS STRATEGY

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Public Relations Strategy
3.2	Roadmap to Planning a Public Relations Strategy
3.3	Basic Performance Indicators
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The highly competitive environment in which modern businesses operate requires the operators should plan strategically. Strategic planning and execution of public relations activities are therefore sine qua non for image and reputation building/sustenance. This unit is designed to serve that purpose. Impliedly, this unit aims to expose the students to the rubrics and plans for the effective public relations strategy.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define public relations strategy
- explain specific plan for a public relations strategy
- enumerate the parameters for assessing performance in PR strategy.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Public Relations Strategy

The word ‘strategy’ is, no doubt, alien to management literature. It used to be a military term which refers to “the role of a military commander and his art and skill” (Allert and Zawawi: 2004, p.170). Over time, the concept was imported to management literature to mean a blue print for well coordinated corporate and planned corporate activities meant to achieve a long term corporate goal. According to Mintzberg and Quins (1991:5), strategy is:

...a pattern or plan that integrates an organisation’s major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole. A well formulated strategy helps to marshal and allocate an organisation’s resources into a unique and viable posture based on its relative internal competences and shortcomings, anticipated changes in the environment and contingent moves by an intelligent opponent.

Thus strategy in the context of public relations entails organisational management’s deliberate and well planned use of communication activities in the direction that would position the organisation as a credible one and by so doing, enhance both the image/reputation of the organisation before its publics on one hand and its market share on the other hand. By implication, public relations strategy according to Nwodu (upcoming) requires that:

- organisational leadership should have a well articulated and defined communication policy
- the policy should take into account the implication of corporate communication activities for the realisation of corporate goal or mission of the organisation
- the policy must be cohesive to the extent of improving customer relationship and translate same in the sustenance and even expansion of market share.

3.2 Roadmap to Planning a Public Relations Strategy

Strategic plan for corporate communication activities is hardly an easy task. In doing this therefore, a number of questions come to the mind of public relations practitioners. Allert and Zawawi (2004:174) articulated some of these numbing questions as:

- what business are we in?
- why does the business exist?
- what are our aims?
- what do we stand for?
- how do we see ourselves?
- how do others see us?
- what values and benefits do we hold?
- how can these be made manifest in our business?
- how do we view our clients?

Allert and Zawawi further posit that careful examination of these question and provision of satisfactory answers to them before progressing into any business direction (in this context corporate communication) are germane for successful business outing. This means that in planning public relations strategy, the practitioners must be in tune with the area of competence which their organisation is known for. This understanding will by extension equip the practitioners to gain clear understanding of the vision and mission of the organisation. To successfully infuse the corporate vision and mission into the corporate communication plan, the vision and mission statements must be clear, succinct, achievable and measurable.

While vision statement envisioned the future (that is where the organisation target to be in future), the mission statement describes in concrete and practical terms, the broad based approach for achieving the vision.

In consonance with the above, public relations mission statements according to Allert and Zawawi (2004:175) “are directly applicable to the public relations aims and objectives of the organisation, and are thus developed from, and directly related to, the organisation’s overall vision and mission.

So once the overall organisation’s vision and mission statement are established and adopted, the public relations activities particularly communication activities must be tailored along the line of the well defined mission and vision statements. This will in turn reconcile how we want to be seen with how others do actually see us vis-a-vis what we need to say in our corporate communications to achieve visibility, acceptance by target publics, and lasting business endeavour.

3.3 Basic Performance Indicators (BPIs)

In many management literatures, Basic Performance Indicators is the same as the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or Key Result Areas

(KRAs). Regardless of the nomenclature, they all refer to the major observable features for measuring success.

Applying KPIs in public relations strategy is to some extent difficult because “the results of public relations work can be intangible in nature and are not often repeated on regular basis” (Allert and Zawawi: 2004:177). The scholars further added that, most times, input and output rather than outcome is measured.

Thus, basic performance indicators can be measured in terms of:

- 1) Number of media organisations that attended an organisation’s public relations events and the number that actually reported the event positively or negatively.
- 2) Determining the number of press releases sent out on an issue and how much coverage was achieved (Allert and Zawawi: 2004:177).
- 3) How many invitations were despatched to the publics of the organisation and how many actually attended etc.

The implication is that practitioners should tailor their performance indicators in terms of input and output as earlier stated. The effects of such input and output actions are not easily measured.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Public relations activities can easily fail if they are not strategically planned. To succeed in achieving and sustaining favourable image and reputation, practitioners need to develop functional strategy for the use of communication. This is the essence of this unit.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit discussed the meaning of strategy in the context of public relations. Specific areas like public relations strategy, planning public relations strategy and performance indicators were discussed.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Define strategy in the context of public relations and explain the roadmaps for effective planning of public relations strategy.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Allert, J. & Zawawi, C. (2004). "Strategy, Planning and Scheduling" .In: Jonhston, J & Zawawi, C. (Eds.). *Public Relations: Theory and Practice*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.

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UNIT 2 PUBLIC RELATIONS TACTICS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Meaning of Tactics
 - 3.2 Controlled Tactics
 - 3.3 Uncontrolled Tactics
 - 3.4 Major Tools for PR Tactics
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Every plan must be put into action before it can yield result. Strategic plans will therefore amount to nothing if such plans are not religiously executed. This is why we cannot discuss public relations strategy without devoting a unit to talk about public relations tactics.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define tactics in public relations context
- list the types of public relations tactics.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning of Tactics

Public relations as a profession have been severally defined as deliberate use of communication to achieve convivial relationship between an organisation and its publics. In doing this, practitioners usually map out action plans to achieve set goals. While those action plans sum up to what is now known as strategy, the actual coordinated activities for the realisation of the plans are the tactics.

By implication, strategy is the overriding plan that allows a public relations practitioner to help ensure that organisational goals and objectives are achieved (Hudson, 2004:198). On the one hand, tactics is the actual steps, or actions taken to achieve those organisational goals

and objectives. According to Hudson (2004:198) “every tactics must relate directly back to its defined purpose: achieving the strategic outcome”. Public relations tactics can therefore be of two types: controlled and uncontrolled tactics.

3.2 Controlled Tactics

Controlled public relations tactics are those public relations activities which the practitioner has absolute control of all the processes. In this case, the practitioner is in full control of the communication activities right from the ideation to message development and distribution-cum-dissemination. Major examples of controlled public relations tactics are: advertising, annual report, brochures, posters, direct mail, corporate gifts and advertorials. These forms of communication are branded controlled in the sense that the practitioner takes absolute decision on the length of message, the wordings, the accompanying visuals, demonstrations etc. Hudson (2004: 199) summarises this form of tactics in the following words:

the practitioner crafts the message, selects exactly how it will be produced, what values may be utilised, and what kinds of colours, typefaces, fonts and papers may be chosen, then determines exactly when and where the information may appear or to whom the printed materials will be distributed.

3.3 Uncontrolled Tactics

As the name implies, public relations practitioners usually have, if any, minimal control over this form of tactics. Unlike controlled tactics, uncontrolled tactics can be altered by external influences. In this context, public relations practitioners are incapable of determining the length of message to be disseminated/distributed, when to distribute and how. It is important to note that most media relations practitioner who issues press release on behalf of their organisations cannot determine whether the release will be used, what quantity of it will be used, when it will be used etc. Other forms of uncontrolled public relations tactics include but are not limited to:

- i. press conferences which the practitioner cannot determine the angle the press will take in reporting the issues arising at the conference neither can he/she determine whether the press will actually cover the issues
- ii. public meetings which may be hijacked by various interest groups especially in a conflict situation

- iii. plant visits/tours in which the press men can decide what to report, when and how
- iv. public functions like the end of the year party where the participants decide what to say and the press will report what it considers news worthy.

The bottom line, however, is that the “most obvious uncontrolled tactics is media relations”(Hudson,2004:199).

3.4 Major Tools for PR Tactics

We have classified public relations tactics into controlled and uncontrolled tactics. It is also important to note that as we pointed out earlier, tactics refers to action packed activities aimed at achieving the goals of an organisation. According to Nwodu (2007:78), it is “a strategy in motion” in that while strategy is the plan for achieving set goals, tactics is the action taken to achieve such goals.

So, the major public relations tactics are not far from the public relations tools for achieving specific public relations objectives. A particular tactics used for achieving financial public relations objectives may be also used to achieve community or media relations objectives. We may however try to delineate major tools for public relations tactics according to areas of interest in the table below:

Areas of Specialisation	Major Tactics
Financial Public Relations	Annual/quarterly reports, fact books(or factsheets), press releases, newsletters, telecommunication devices (old & news communication technologies, meetings with and presentations before the financial publics (Reddi, 2009: 171)
Press (Media) Relations	Press releases, press conferences, press tours, feature articles, letters to the editors, rejoinder, press interview, press photographs, newsletter, media advisories, curtain raiser, facts sheets, press kit, pitch letters(short letter to the editors about news items) electronic news services, corporate press advertising, advertorials, press inquires, press reception, press open day, press clippings services (Reddi, 2009: 325)

Community Relations	Press releases, press conferences, press tours, feature articles, factsheets, advertorials/supplements, meetings with host communities, public lectures, event sponsorships, physical development of host communities, organisation of fund raising, social visits, employment creation, patronising local suppliers, etc. (Nwodu, 2009).
Government Relations	Printing brochures, features articles, letters to the editor, sponsorship of definition for or against a cause; lobbying, telephone calls, courtesy calls/ visits, text messages/ e-mail; government event sponsorship, etc.
Employee Relations	Meetings, memos, requisitions, newsletters, end of year party, staff retreat etc.

Note that the public relations tactics are not limited to the above. There are very many others not listed here. But what we have here constitute the major tools or tactics for effective public relations practice.

4.0 CONCLUSION

One of the popular maxims in public relations practice is: failing to plan is planning to fail. So, planning is essential part of public relations practice. However, best strategic plan can come to grief if not put into action. Practitioners should as a matter of necessity show greater commitment to the execution of public relations plans. This is where understanding of public relations tactics comes into plan

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit exposed students to different dimensions of public relations tactics. Thus, the meaning, types and major domain of public relations tactics were discussed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Distinguish between public relations strategy and the tactics.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss two categories of public relations tactics known to you.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Hudson, M. (2004). "Tactics" In: Johnston, I & Zawawi, C (Eds.). *Public Relations Theory and Practice*. Crows Nest: Allen and Unwin.
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UNIT 3 RESEARCH IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Classification of Public Relations Research
 - 3.2 Scope of Public Relations Research
 - 3.3 Procedures for Conducting Public Relations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Effective planning and execution of public relations programme requires one form of research or the other. Research is therefore necessary both at the public relations planning stage to the execution through evaluation stages. For this reason, practitioners, of necessity, need to understand social science research in order to excel.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning and forms public relations research
- state the process for executing public relations research.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Classification of Public Relations Research

Before we categorise public relations research into different forms, it is germane that we first understand research as a concept. Research is defined as “a systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical proposition about the presumed relationship among natural phenomenon” (Kerlinger; 1979:21). This means that research “is concerned with systematic probing of the relationship existing between variables” (Nwodu; 2006: 3).

The implication is that a research exercise is usually geared towards providing a dependable solution to a problem. It usually raises questions of why certain things happen in certain specific ways under certain

conditions. Research also tries to provide through systematic approach, dependable answers to the ‘why’. Dependable in the sense that once research outcome establishes answers to why things happen in certain specific ways, another researcher following the same approach under the same condition can investigate similar issue and arrive at the same answer.

However, public relations research like other social science research can be categorised into the major forms or types. These are:

1. **Applied Research:** As the name implies, applied research is usually carried out to solve specific problem facing the industry. The essence is not to add to knowledge. Rather it seeks to find solution to the problems of strategy and tactical effectiveness. According to Nwodu (2006:4)

Most organisations carry out applied research to aid management decision regarding specific personnel problems, sales strategy, image problem, product adulteration, information diffusion problems etc.

Impliedly, applied research in the context of public relations are of two kinds which, according to Nwodu (2009:16) are strategic research and evaluation research. Nwodu adds, “while strategic research bothers on empirical evaluation of public relations offerings-cum-campaigns; evaluation research is concerned with systematic examination of the potentials of such offerings-cum-campaigns in solving the problem for which they are meant to solve”.

2. **Pure (Basic) Research:** This is a knowledge-based research. It is more of academic value than problem solving. It helps in the generation of public relations ideas, principles, models, theories, concepts and constructs that aid the classification and increase in the body and understanding of knowledge of public relations: According to Wimmer and Dominick (2003:380) pure research “is most interested in examining the underlying process of and in constructing theory that explain public relations process”. Nwodu (2009:17-19) rightly points out, this type of public relations research provides answers to:

- What to hypothesise in the context of public relations variable relationship.
- Establishing, testing and validating models that simplify our understanding of variable relationship and evolution of

principles, concepts and constructs that help our understanding of the nature of the subject, express ideas and define meaning.

- Make empirical-based deduction or generalisation, regarding how a change in a given public relations variable affects another corresponding.

3. **Introspective Research:** The word “introspective” according to Summers et al (1996:748) is the process of thinking deeply about your own thoughts and feelings to find out their real meaning. This in the context public relations means “an inward look at public relations as distinct field of learning”(Nwodu;2009:18). Expanding on this, Nwodu (2009:18) adds:

It is a deep-rooted probing of the potentials of the profession in contemporary highly competitive economic environment; the future of professionals in the field; the direction of research and development in the field; the place of the profession in modern business management.

3.2 Scope of Public Relations Research

Kerlinger (1977:46) and Wimmer and Dominick (2003:382-388) identify the scope of public relations research as:

- i. Environmental monitoring which involves accumulation of baseline data concerning social, political and economic issues and trends; determining public acceptance or otherwise of change in policy matters; tracking issues arising from social environment and predicting the future trends based on the outcome of environmental scanning.
- ii. Public Relations Audits which entail introspective studies of public relations practitioners’ disposition to the profession. It involves deliberate studies aimed at finding out “the stakeholders’ overall attitudes, behaviours and perceptions towards their organisation” (Nwodu, 2007:21).
- iii. Communication Audit which bothers on the effectiveness of corporate channels of communication. Emphasis here is usually on what proportions of organisation’s public are exposed to the organisation’s channels of communication. Channels of communication here refer to corporate communication tools like

newsletters, annual reports, company/product profiles, diaries and sundry publications (Nwodu, 2009:21).

- iv. Social Audit which is “one of the potent means an organisation can use to find out the publics’ perception of its social action” (Nwodu, 2009:21). The emphasis here is on investigating the public’s assessment of an organisation’s level of commitment to its social responsibility.
- v. Evaluation research which as the name implies entails systematic study of the outcome of a public relations campaign/programme. It involves pre and post project/campaign evaluation geared towards ascertaining among others, what to plans, why, for whom, at what cost and what benefit. It also entails a critical evaluation of the result or outcome of an already executed project/campaign.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Research is very crucial in public relations practice. Public relations campaigns can fail to yield the desired result if not anchored on painstaking research. Practitioners are therefore advised to develop public relations campaigns after a painstaking research.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit explored the types and scope of public relations research. The students are expected to be conversant with the meaning, types and scope of public relations research as treated in this unit.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define and explain the concept, research in the context of public relations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Mention and explain the major areas of interest in Public Relations research.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Kerlinger, M. (1973). *Fundamentals of Behaviour Research*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
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UNIT 4 BUDGET AND BUDGETING IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Meaning and Domain of Public Relations Budget
 - 3.2 Features of a Typical Public Relations Budget
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Public relations practice involves a lot of planning. One of the essential things that come up at the planning stage is budgeting. Without a clear and realistic budget, a public relations programme may fail to accomplish the set objective. This unit is meant to expose the student to brief tutorial on budget and budgeting process.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the meaning and essence of budget
- explain the basic elements of budgeting
- describe a typical public relations budget.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning and Domain of Public Relations Budget

Budgeting is very essential in the planning of public relations activities. It is needed for effective and economic accomplishment of a public relations task as well as profitable engagement of consultants (Jefkins, 1972). Budget is therefore, a forecast of expenses which are to be expended in the administration of public relations programme/activities including the coordination and execution of such programme/activities (Nwanwene, 1993). A well articulated budget should therefore establish 'definite cost objectives for proper accounting prudence with little or no waste in programme elements'. This is why Nwodu (2007:175) argues that 'budgeting aims at fixing specific costs to specific items'.

However, the domain of any budget is largely dependent on the nature of programme as well as the specific items being budgeted for. Nevertheless, Jefkins (1972:42) identifies four domains of budgeting in public relations practice as:

1. Labour covering salaries (for both management and staff), honourarium for consultants and other hired staff.
2. Office overhead covering payment for rents and rates, telecommunications and insurance services, power supply and client liaison.
3. Material cost involving stationeries, postages, photographs, printed matter, visual aids, exhibition stand, alternative power supply, vehicle and sundry material needs.
4. Miscellaneous which covers out-of-pocket expenses incurred by staff members while carrying out official duties. Such expenses according to Nwodu (2007:176), include unbudgeted but necessary transport fares, hotel bills, entertainment allowances.

Most time, some unscrupulous staff members hide under miscellaneous expenses to defraud their organisations. For this reason, management of organisations (particularly in most developing nations) is not favourably disposed to miscellaneous expenses. To cushion the negative effects of miscellaneous expenses therefore, most organisations often spell out fix cost for most of things that constitute miscellaneous. Nwodu (2007:176) summarises the common practice now in the following words:

The in-thing now is to fix different transport, hotel and daily saving allowances (DSA) for different staff and consultants based on their varying official cadre or status and possibly the distance between where they work and where the programme will take place.

3.2 Features of a Typical Public Relations Budget

Budgeting in public relations does not differ significantly from other forms of budgeting. What differs if any is the area of specific things to be budgeted for. The structure of the budget is basically the same. By structure here, we mean the format of presentation. The format of a good budget is usually presented in a table which clearly indicate the serial number of specific item budgeted for, the quantity of the specific item needed, brief description of the item budgeted for, unit and total cost of each item budgeted for. Below is typical sample of a public relations budget culled from Nwodu (2007:178).

Table 4.1: A Sample Budget for a Four-Day Capacity Building (TOT) Workshop on Corporate Financial Relations Management in a Democratic Culture

S/No	Qty	Item Description	Rationale (Where necessary)	Unit Cost (N)	Total Cost(N)
1	4	Honourariums for 4 Guest speakers	To train participants	50,000x4	200,000.00
2	100	Trainee Allowances	500 per day	500x100x4	200,000.00
3		Nominee letters to 50 organisations/postage	To forward names of participants	50x50	2,500.00
4		Letter of invitation to guest speakers/postage		50x4	200.00
5		Telephone call/internet services	To follow up invitations/other arrangements		20,000.00
6		Hiring of hall for 4 days		25,000x4	100,000.00
7		Hiring of public address system	To enhance oral presentations	720x4	2,880.00
8		Hiring of slide projectors/other visual aids	For power point presentation/illustrations	2330.16x4	13,320.64
9		Tea break for 110 persons		350x110	38,500.00
10		Launch for 110 persons		750x110	82,500.00
11		Accommodation for 10 persons		10,000.33x10	100,003.30
12	130	Workshop bags stuffed with stationery		450.05x130	58,506.00
13		Transport allowance for staff (6 persons) to and fro		5000x6	30,000.00
14		Impress Account	For contingencies		45,000.00
15		Decorations			35,000.00
Grand Total =					915,089.94

From the above it is clear that a typical public relations budget like budget of any other kind should have the following features as itemised by Nwodu (2007:178):

- (a) Title of the budget
- (b) Item serial number
- (c) Quantity of item needed where necessary
- (d) Item name/description
- (e) Rationale for budgeting the item, where necessary
- (f) Unit cost of each item budgeted
- (g) Total cost of the items budgeted
- (h) Total cost for all the items budgeted

4.0 CONCLUSION

Budgeting is very important in planning and execution of public relations event. It helps in determining what an event will cost before actual execution. A good public relations practitioner should be able to know what is required for successful public relations activities as well as drawing up realistic and reasoning budget for such events.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit offered a brief insight into budgeting in public relations practice. The meaning and domain of budgeting in public relations as well as the essential features of public relations budget were discussed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain what you understand by budgeting stating clearly the domains of public relations budget.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

The management of your organisation has just resolved to organise a media tour for senior journalists in your locality. As the public relations manager of your company, draft a 20-item budget for the event that would be present in the next management meeting to demonstrate your knowledge of public relations budgeting.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 3 MAJOR FIELDS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

Unit 1	Community Relations
Unit 2	Financial Public Relations
Unit 3	Media Relations
Unit 4	Government Public Relations

UNIT 1 COMMUNITY RELATIONS

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
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3.2	Rationale for Community Relations Practice
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3.4	Problems of Community Relations Practice in Nigeria
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The survival and consequent perpetuation of the business activities of any corporate organisation within a given community and its environs depend in part, on how the organisation relates with its host community (Nwodu, 2007:214). This is why Chukwu (2000:50) argues that the good mutual relationship is necessary for effective operation of the organisation. This unit discusses the meaning of and strategies for practicing community relations.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define community relations technically
- discuss why the practice of community relations is important
- explain strategic ways for enhancing relationship between organisations and their host community relations.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning of Community Relations

Community relations is a branch of public relations concerned with the cultivating and sustaining healthy relationship between an organisation and the community or communities where the organisation exists (Nwodu, 2007:214). It is simply conceptualised as “social service responsibility of an organisation” (Ademolekun and Ekandayo, 2002:133).

The essence of community relations practice therefore is to achieve and sustain safe operational climate for any organisation operating within a given community. Peak (1991:177) cited in Nwosu (2001:49) therefore defines community relations as an institution’s planned, active and continuing participation within a community to maintain and enhance its environment to the benefit of the institution, its employees and shareholders and the larger community.

The implication is that community relations practice is beneficial to both an organisation and its host community. The organisation benefits by operating in a safe community atmosphere and the community benefits by having its environment developed by the organisation. This will in turn help to ameliorate conflict between the organisation and its host community. Community relations therefore require that organisations should:

- know the community or communities in which they exist
- identify with the needs of the community or communities in which they exist
- be and function as corporate citizens of the community or communities in which they exist
- ensure at all times that there is healthy relationship between them and the community or communities in which they exist.

The above clearly reinforce Nwodu’s (2004:185) position where he argues that community relations demand that:

...corporate organisations should work closely with their host communities in order to sufficiently understand and contribute immensely to the concrete priority needs of such communities and by extension achieve harmonious relationship with the communities. This harmonious relationship is needed to enhance the corporate objective of any business concern as such could hardly be achieved in a climate of violence.

3.2 Rationale for Community Relations Practice

It is incontrovertible that the very presence of a corporate organisation in a given place easily impacts on socio-cultural, economic and physical environment of that locality. By localising an organisation in an area, the residents of that area who suffer from the ugly consequences of such localisation should also gain from positive outcome of the business activities of that organisation.

Community relations are therefore needed to ensure that host communities receives fair treatment from the organisations operating within their communities. This explains why the indigenes of Niger Delta (the major oil producing area in Nigeria) have persistently “clamoured for fairness in what they have termed exploitation without commensurate compensation from the necessary quarters for long years of oil exploration in their area” (Chukwu, 2000:50).

Note that the discussion here is not meant to support or debunk the veracity of the above claim. But what it shows however is that real or perceived unfair treatment of host communities by corporate organisations operating in such communities can lead to a chain of conflict which if not properly managed could snowball into crisis. When such is the case, the economic activities of the organisation can be crippled as was the case with Mobil Producing Unlimited which was reported to have lost about ₦6b in a single communal clash (Media Report cited in Ademolekun and Ekundayo, 2002:136). It makes sense therefore for organisations to engage in community relations so as to achieve harmonious relationship between an organisation and its community neighbours. The rationale or need for community relations practice as articulated by Nwodu (2007:221- 222) includes but is not limited to:

- a. Understanding the power-cum-leadership structure inherent in the community and fashion out how to use the potentials of the power structures to achieve common understanding between the organisation and the host community.
- b. Understanding the state of social institutions like schools, hospital, market etc, existing in a community in order to know how such institutions could be enhanced.
- c. Understanding the cultures including the norms, values, mores, social events (festivals) and general life style of the community members.

- d. Understanding clearly, the core needs of the community and prioritise such needs according to their relative degree of importance.
- e. Providing enabling environment for constant dialogue between various arms of or interest groups in a community and by extension, monitor their feelings and dispositions toward the company.
- f. Understanding how best to go about the management the organisation's social responsibility functions without provoking negative reactions from the community residents.

3.3 Strategies for Community Relations Practice

Raya (2001) cited in Onabanjo (2005:88) identifies the primary objectives of community relations as:

- to increase sales and patronage of its product or service;
- to exhibit commitment in the area of social responsibility of business – the contemporary prime objectives of business;
- to make the community a better place for both the organisation and the people of the community alike;
- to maintains peace and harmony with the community, and
- to prove good corporate citizenship.

In attempt to pursue some of all of these goals, organisations have often found themselves at logger-head with the host communities. The reason being that most of the times the desires of the organisations for their host communities often conflict with the actual desires of the communities. To strike a balance between the corporate organisation's desires for the host communities and the actual communities' desire therefore requires that community relations practitioners should as prescribed by Nwodu (2007:223 – 224):

- i. Ascertain by the empirical means the community's disposition towards the organisation and its depth of knowledge pertaining to the organisation's policies, philosophies and practices.
- ii. Correct misrepresentation of, misconception and misinformation about the organisation via regular dissemination of credible and convincing information about the organisation's policies, products and services.

- iii. Strike balance, via wide consultation between and advocacy, between the community's tall demands and what the organisation can actually offer.
- iv. Influence local, state and national legislations in favour of the organisation's business short, medium and long term interest.
- v. Position the organisation as committed, genuine, caring and invaluable corporate citizen of the organisation.

3.4 Nuggets for Improving Relationship between an Organisation and Host Communities

Nwodu (2010: 284-285) identifies seven nuggets for improving relationship between organisations and their host communities in community relations practice. These nuggets are discussed below:

- (i). **Event Sponsorship:** A corporate organisation can enhance its relationship with the community neighbours through event sponsorship. The community neighbours may therefore develop a sense of belonging when the corporate organisation operating in their area decided to sponsor an event that is so dear to them. In Nigeria for instance, the sponsorship of traditional events like new yam, Mmanwu (Masquerade), Oro and Argungu festivals; educational programmes like quiz and essay competitions, and sporting competitions can go a long way to cement the relationship between an organisation and the host communities.
- (ii). **Physical Infrastructural Development:** Part of the social responsibility functions of corporate organisations demands that organisations should carryout physical development of the community neighbours. Note that public relations business is all about action and communication. So, taking action in this direction and communicating same will help immensely to enhance the image and reputation of corporate organisations before the host communities.
- (iii). **Assisting in Community Development Projects:** By collaborating with town unions to organise fund raising for the execution of community initiated development projects.
- (iv). **Social Visits:** The management team of a corporate organisation can also help to achieve cooperation of host communities by visiting community leaders, the management of some institutions located in the communities and influential people in the community.

- (v). **Creating Employment:** The image and reputation of an organisation can further be enhanced by employing members of the host communities in the organisations operating within the area. Such employment will give the employers a sense of 'oneness' and by extension, make them to treat the organisation as their own.
- (vi). **Patronising Local Contractors/Suppliers:** Where necessary local contractors/suppliers should be patronised to further give them a sense of belonging. As Nwodu (2010, p.285) puts it, this will make such contractors/suppliers "feel belonged and by extension, become favourably disposed towards the corporate organisation".
- (vii). **Being a Good Corporate Citizens of Host Community:** The corporate organisation should always strive to position itself as good corporate citizen of the host community. This the organisation can do by responding positively, identifying and participate actively in community activities as well as paying its corporate tax promptly.

3.4 Problems of Community Relations Practice in Nigeria

A number of challenges bedevil the community relations practice in Nigeria. Nwodu (2010:287) identifies some of these as:

1. **Rumour:** many times few selfish interest seekers and dubious enlightened cliques in communities often sponsor destabilising rumour against the corporate organisation. The interest is usually to incite the numerous illiterate community neighbours against the corporate organisation just to service their selfish interest.
2. Some communities' demands are often numerous, in fact, much more than what the corporate organisations can afford.
3. **Brazen hostility by host communities:** In this case the communities may not have any cogent or justifiable reason for disrupting the business activities of the companies they play host to. This is often demonstrated through frequent, boring and impracticable demands with a view to deliberately provoke the companies' staff and management.
4. **Unfair treatment of host communities by some corporate organisations.** Chukwu (2000:53) observes that many a time organisations "may decide to establish a project that will not have much relevance to the needs of the community".

5. Government influence to some extent also impact negatively on the relationship between corporate organisation and its host communities. This is usually the case when organisation are made to pay heavy or excessive taxes to the government to the extent the companies may not have enough to pay their staff, pay suppliers, service machines and meet their social responsibility obligation to the host communities.
6. Ignorance: Most time community neighbours are easily brainwashed and mobilised against a corporate organisation that is doing its best to impact positively on the host communities due to ignorance. Cases abound where some dubious cliques in the community deliberately hijack a company's welfare packages meant for the entire community without the community residence knowing about it.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Community relations practice is very important for the survival of an organisation within the host community. Effective community relations are needed to achieve convivial relationship between an organisation and the host communities. Therefore, practitioners shall not go about it with levity.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit focused on community relations as one of the specialised areas in public relations practice. In consonance with the objectives of the unit, issues relating to community relations practice were discussed extensively. Precisely, the meaning, rationale and strategies for community relations practice as well as the problems of community relations practice in Nigeria were discussed.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define and explain community relations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the rationale and strategies for community relations practice.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 FINANCIAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Definition of Financial Public Relations
 - 3.2 Publics of Financial Public Relations
 - 3.3 Factors Influencing Financial Public Relations Practice
 - 3.4 Strategies for Financial Public Relations Practice
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Financial public relations is one of the highly skilled areas in public relations management and practice. It is also, one of the fastest growing aspects of public relations practice. This is because corporate organisations now appreciate the need to attract and sustain reputable investors needed to boost their financial base. This is why the practice of financial public relations has become so crucial in modern organisational management. This unit examines financial public relations as a distinct area of public relations practice.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning and nature of financial public relations
- list those involved in financial public relations practice
- describe what is involved in financial public relations practice.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition of Financial Public Relations

According to Nwosu (1996:132), financial public relations are a “specialised area of modern public relations management that is concerned with all matters that affect or could affect the financial existence, standing or survival of any organisation. Earlier, Nwanwene (1993:9) defines financial public relations as:

... the relationship of a corporation with all the publics is important to its financial success. It aims at fostering easy and accurate lines of communication between a company's financial and commercial activities, and the various publics or groups affected by the activities or can have influence on the company's prospect and successes.

The implication is that the practice of financial public relations involves establishing and sustaining rewarding relationship between an organisation and the financial publics. Financial publics here include both the individuals and groups who contribute to and or benefit from the financial success of an organisation. This is why Nwodu (2009:159) informs that financial public relations usually target:

- wealthy individuals who have money to invest in shares and capital market
- real and or potential financial corporate friends of an organisation.

3.2 Publics of Financial Public Relations

It is not in doubt that certain individuals or groups contribute to the financial success of an organisation. It is, therefore, those individuals and groups that contribute to the financial success of an organisation that sum up the financial publics of the organisation. The financial publics of an organisation include:

- real and potential share holders of an organisation
- stock brokers who help organisations to sell or buy shares
- financial institutions like banks, insurance and assurance companies that contribute to the financial growth of an organisation
- employees of an organisation responsible for financial transactions of the organisation
- employees of other organisations who consult with other organisations on financial matters. Examples here are employees of auditing, public relations and marketing firms
- financial press (like *Financial Times* and *Financial Standard*) and financial analysts in various media organisations whose comments, views, opinions and financial news reports can affect the financial success of an organisation
- consumers who part with their discretionary income in order to consume the products or secure the services of an organisation
- wholesalers and retailers who help to distribute the products of the organisation

- research institutes that conduct periodic applied research needed to improve on the offerings of an organisation and by extension, enhance its financial success
- security analysts and operators who from time to time advise corporate organisations on strategic ways of moving their financial resources from place to place as it is often the case with financial institutions.

3.3 Factors Influencing Financial Public Relations Practice

According to Nwodu (2007:16):

factors like continued increase in the number, expansion and diversification of corporate organisations, the intense demand on corporate organisation by stock and shareholders to maintain sound financial credibility and reputation; the pressure on organisations to keep clean record of account; and their actual investment on corporate organisations among others, combine to enhance the growth of financial public relations in modern times.

However, Miller (1971) cited in Okoro et al (1999:98) identifies eight factors responsible for the growth of financial public relations as:

- i. increase in the number and sophistication of security analysts
- ii. increase in the number of organisations going public
- iii. the ever-rising number of companies that are listed on the stock exchange
- iv. increase in the demand for better management
- v. the rising rate of corporate mergers and acquisitions and the desire for higher stock prices
- vi. the rising awareness of the need for expert guidance especially in view of court cases
- vii. growing awareness, education and sophistication of investing public
- viii. higher ethical and professional standards in relation to disclosing information by securities and exchanging commission.

3.4 Steps for Planning Financial Public Relations Activities

Financial public relations practitioners are often saddled with lots of activities. Some of these activities according to Nwodu (2007:173) range from stakeholders and stockholders forum to interactive session with financial reporters; board of trustees and management team; take over/right issues meeting to fund raising and exhibitions/plant visits etc.

Any of these events certainly calls for proper planning and execution. These financial public relations personnel of an organisation is therefore expected to take certain steps to ensure success. Such steps, according to Nwodu (2007:174), include:

- i. itemising special programmes or activities that will feature in the event
- ii. deciding who should do what activity for the overall success of the entire programme
- iii. making a detailed budget for the activities, material and other logistics needed to actualise programme plan
- iv. midwifing the packaging and production of programmes of events, brochures, hand bill, and so on with company's corporate identity engraved on such publications to further promote the image of the organisations during the occasion
- v. ensuring maximum coverage of the event for publication in the national media and company's newsletter or house journal
- vi. arranging for press kit and sundry facilities needed to facilitate press work and by extension, attract favourable press reports
- vii. defining mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of programme execution and implementation as well as measuring the programme outfit.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The challenging and competitive environment in which modern businesses operate demands that image and reputation managers of businesses should be conversant with financial public relations. Public relations practitioners should therefore be conversant with financial public relations to guarantee corporate organisations' financial success. This is the hallmark of financial public relations.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit examined different dimensions of financial public relations. Precisely, the unit discussed, among other issues, the definition of financial public relations, factors responsible for the growth of financial public relations practice and steps in planning events for financial publics were discussed.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What is *financial public relations*? Mention and discuss the basic steps for planning financial public relations activities.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 MEDIA RELATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Definition of Media Relations
 - 3.2 Relationship between Media and Public Relations
 - 3.3 Tools for Media Relations Practice
 - 3.4 Media for Internal and External Relations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Media Relation is part of the essential aspect of public relations. Practitioners can hardly do without the media. In fact, no aspect of public relations practice can thrive without contact with the media. Through the media organs, public relations practitioners bring messages and images to the attention of the various publics. This unit therefore, discusses media relations as an important element in public relations practice.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the meaning and state the objectives of media relations
- explain the synergy between media and public relations
- discuss media relations instruments or tools; among other things.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition of Media Relations.

According to Onabajo (2005:13):

Media relations are essentially a two-way operation. It is the link between an organisation and the media, comprising the press, radio and television. The organisation, on the other hand, supplies information and provides facilities to the media on request while,

on the other hand, it takes steps to initiate comments and news.

This rightly implies that media relations are concerned with corporate organisation's deliberate and conscious effort at seeking and achieving the cooperation of the media. Organisations need this profitable relationship given that it helps to wade off negative media coverage. Media relations therefore is :

Public relations function which establishes and maintains mutual understanding, goodwill, co-operation, respect and support between an organisation and the mass media practitioners/owners with the aim of achieving public relations objectives (Nkwocha, 1999:40).

Nkwocha (1999:43-44) therefore isolates the objectives of media relations to include establishing and sustaining cordial relationships between an organisation and media houses; ensuring that organisations get sufficient and positive coverage of their products , services and activities; and to explain an organisation's policies and actions to media men particularly in crisis situations.

3.2 Relationship between Media and Public Relations

According to Marshall and Kingsbury (1996:127) "PR has become one of the most important external influences in journalism as it is now practiced." This means that public relations practice has a lot to do with the press. Public relations practitioners often have media releases to push to the publics; media conferences to organise and media tours to embark upon and none of these take place without the collaboration of the media.

Public relations practice and media practice share a lot in common to the extent Habermas (1989:263) emphasises that press demands or requirements enhance the growth of public relations industry. Research evidence has also lend weight to the fact that both public relations/practice influences media practice.

Macnamara, cited in Johnston (2004:263) for instance found that 30% out of 250 newspaper articles examined were news releases, about 20% of which were used verbatim. The relationship between public relations practice and media practice was aptly summarised by Johnston (2004:263) where the authors says:

But while public relations practitioners may rightly see their role as vital to the media, it is not a one-way relationship. Just as public relations provide information to the media, so too does the media provide information to the public relations profession. This is done through the simple task of media monitoring: reading, watching and listening to the media every day - a simple, yet vital form of research.... The practitioner will use the media in their role of issues management, monitoring trends, government policy and legislation, debates and opinions. In daily monitoring of the news media, a range of areas should be covered to gauge public opinion and trends. These include the news and features pages, the editorial or leader, columns, letters to the editor, talkback, radio and television panel and review programmes.

3.3 Tools for Media Relations Practice

In our discussion on the relationship between public relations practice and media practice, we noted that each of the practices not only deal with information but also depend largely on each other for information. The platform for this healthy exchange of information comes in different forms which we described here as tools for media relations. This segment highlights various aspects of those tools that enhance media relations practice. The essential tools of media relations are:

- i) **Press release:** Which is often called news or media release. According to Nwodu (2007:49) it is “corporate news issued out by an organisation via the instrument of the mass media for public consumption with the purpose of enhancing the corporate image of the organisation.” Press releases are therefore generated by corporate organisations who use the tool to tell stories about their activities with emphasis on the events happening or about to happen in an organisation; refute negative publications; comment on issues affecting the interest of the organisation or government agencies concerned (Nwodu; 2007:49).
- ii) **Press conference:** Which is also called news or media conference. According to Johnston (2001:275), three major reasons account for the organisation of press conference and these reasons are to allow for a wide dissemination of a story; to give all media access to the news at once; and to allow journalists to ask follow-up questions.

- iii) **Media tour:** Which is usually arranged for the purpose of getting new chief executive of an organisation acquainted with media men.
- iv) **Media parley:** The primary purpose of which is meant to establish a rapport with people who will always write about you and your organisation (Popoola, 2005:56).
- v) **Information kit:** Which showcases varied write-ups concerning the history of the organisation issuing the kit; the product range; the mission and vision; and colourful pictures of departments and personalities in the organisation.
- vi) **Interviews:** Which could be either exclusive or general press interviews. Regardless of the form, it usually takes place either in the office of the chief executive or the organisation's conference room.
- vii) **Personality broadcast interviews:** In which the company's chief executive officers "are oftentimes invited to feature on a personality interview either on the radio or television" (Popoola, 2004 cited in Onabajo, 2005:59).

3.4 Media for Internal and External Publics

Corporate organisations are usually interested in maintaining healthy relationship with both their internal and external publics. In doing this, the organisations use the media a lot. However, there is a significance difference between media channels or modes used to reach different publics of an organisation. This segment therefore aims at highlighting the various media used for the internal and external publics.

While the media for internal publics is needed to enhance employer-employee relationship, the media of external publics are used to reach out to widely dispersed publics. In the case of internal publics, the following formal and informal media channels are usually employed to serve the purpose of maintaining a healthy employer-employee relationship. These according to Onabajo (2003:64-73) are:

1. **Newsletters:** Which communicate news in a timely and targeted fashion to the internal publics.
2. **Supplementary publications:** This includes pamphlets, brochures, manuals and books. According to Cutlip et al (2000:293) they serve three major purposes which are indoctrination, references and institutional promotion.

3. **Letters:** Which Onabajo (2003:67) rightly says “support line communication by ensuring accuracy of information...”
4. **Inserts and enclosures:** Which to a large extent guarantee high message receptivity (inserts) and many a time, induces the targets to imitate actions in the positive direction (enclosure).
5. **Reprinted speeches:** Which can be used to inform and reassure the target publics about issues of mutual interest.
6. **The grapevine:** This fills the information gaps left by an inadequate communication process.
7. **Meetings:** Which brings people together and provide opportunities to speak and listen to others, speak in a two-way communication system.
8. **Teleconferencing:** Which enables speakers or conferees to meet and discuss online without having to physically travel several kilometres to participate.
9. **Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV):** This allows for live telecast and beaming of messages for the consumption of many employees at the same time.
10. **Video film and slide presentations:** This aims at developing favourable ideas, innovations, attitudes or behaviours in viewing audiences.
11. **Displays and exhibits:** Which seek to achieve marketing and sales objectives and by so doing, boost employer-employee relationships.

On the other hand, media of external publics include all the organs of mass media, social media; and the wire services and news syndicate. The choice of these channels of communication for reaching external publics stems from the fact that they have the potential of reaching diverse heterogeneous publics irrespective of their spatial location. Details of the potentials of each medium in enhancing external publics relations are documented in Onabajo (2005:76-85).

4.0 CONCLUSION

Media relations practice is very crucial in the creation and sustenance of healthy relationships between an organisation and its publics. The use of the media for this purpose requires that the practitioners should be

conversant with various media for both internal and external publics of an organisation. The practitioners should also know which medium to be used to address specific situation or occasion.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit focused on media relations as an essential aspect of public relations practice. In line with the objectives of the unit therefore specific areas of media relations like the definition of media relations, relationship between media and public relations, tools for media relations and the media for internal and external publics were discussed.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Define media relations and explain various media of internal relations.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 GOVERNMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Government as the Major Public Relations Client
 - 3.2 Functional Public Relations
 - 3.3 Lobbying and Government Relations
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The nature of public relations training and practice does not permit that practitioners should engage in criticising government and institutions (Nwodu, 2007). Rather than criticise therefore, practitioners should help key players in governments and its institutions cultivate convivial relationship with the citizens through the pursuit of people-orientated programmes and policies. Government public relations has therefore come to stay as an essential part of public relations practice that enhances the relationship between and among government/government agencies and various institutions and individuals within the areas of a government's sphere of influence. This unit therefore is designed to expose the students to the basics of government public relations.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the rudiments of government relations
- discuss the major scope of government public relations
- explain the rudiments of lobbying as a public relations tool

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Government as Public Relations Client

Government exist because nations exist. For as long there is a nation state therefore, there must be a government. And for any government to win the sympathy and confidence of the governed, that government must ensure that healthy relationship exist between it and the citizens

including corporate citizen on one side and between the government and other national governments.

Since government “regulates the socio-political environment in which individuals, private institutions, businesses and public institutions interact” (Ogbidi, 2007:51).It (government) is therefore an important public relations client. Every level of government has intense need for favourable image in order to remain relevant among the subjects.

Public relations therefore, are relevant in state governance. Ogbidi (2007:51) is therefore right where he identifies the working domain of government public relations practitioner as:

1. creating contacts and programmes to improve communication with government personnel and agencies
2. monitoring the activities of legislators and regulatory agencies regarding statutes and prospective laws affecting business
3. facilitating participation in carrying out social programmes
4. advancing awareness and understanding natural constituencies about matters affecting their interests
5. encouraging the participation of constituents in the political process at all levels of government.

3.2 Functions of Public Relations in Government

The working domain of public relations practitioners in governance as presented above clearly shows the relevance of public relations in governance. No government can therefore go far without sound public image and reputation.

The implication is that public relations play lots of functions in restoring confidence in political process and governance. Odigbo (2007:203-204) identifies the functions of public relations in politics/government as:

1. Issues monitoring and trend analysis of event likely to impact either positively or negatively on the client(s) and mapping out strategic plans to take advantages of the positive one, while nipping the negative ones in the bud.
2. Carrying out planned public education and enlightenment programmes aimed at disseminating relevant information on government policies, programmes and actions.
3. Taking concerted professional efforts to correct the misrepresentation, misinformation, disinformation, prejudice and biases against the government, political parties or politicians.

4. Daily mass media auditing to discover areas of negative press and fashion out public relations initiatives to correct these while strengthening or consolidating on the areas of positive press.
5. Counselling, building and maintaining a positive public image, reputation and conducts for the government.
6. Winning public goodwill, acceptance, co-operation and support to the government's view, policies, programmes and projects.
7. Influencing and ensuring at all times mutual understanding and more harmonious relationship between the government, party or politicians and their publics.
8. Ensuring effective two-way communication mechanics between the government and the governed.
9. Helping to achieve without much opposition or dissent all the bottom line objectives, policies and programmes of the government, party and politicians.
10. Encouraging the governed to view life and future with hope as against despair which is a precursor to antagonisms and ill feelings.
11. Representing government interests effectively before government's key publics like the press, labour unions, students union, organised private sectors etc.
12. Counselling on and helping to see that the government meets up public expectations as public relations does not carve a rotten wood.
13. Training the leaders on better communication ways and public speech manners.
14. Encouraging the leaders to live up to their social responsibility obligations to the led and the entire society.
15. Ensure citizens willingly show obedience/compliance to the laws of the land.

3.3 Lobbying and Government Relations

We cannot end discussion in this unit without mentioning lobbying. This is because lobbying has come to stay as an essential element of government public relations.

Lobbying means deliberate effort by groups of individuals, businesses and or an organ of government to facilitate or stop the passage of legislation. According to Ogbidi (2007:52) lobbying involves:

- digging out information from officials or records that ought to be known
- persuasively informing government officials
- promoting legislative or administrative actions for an organisation or against an adverse interest
- obtaining government cooperation or sponsorship.

A sound government relations practitioner should as a matter of necessity master the techniques of positive lobbying to achieve positive goal for their clients.

As Ogbidi (2007:53) summarises it, “government relations and lobbying offer a lot of opportunities and challenges to NIPR members who possess the right skill and attitude”.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Government public relations as an aspect of public relations practice are very crucial in the enthrone and sustenance of good governance. Practitioners should therefore take it serious.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit focussed attention on government public relations as an essential aspect of public relations practice. Issues pertaining to the working domain of government public relations, functions of government public relations and lobbying as essential aspect of public relations were discussed to provide the students clear understanding of government public relations practices.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Define government public relations and explain at least, five essential functions of government public relations.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Black, S. (1990). *Introduction to Public Relations*. London: Modino Press Limited.

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MODULE 4 CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

Unit 1	Press Release
Unit 2	Press Conference
Unit 3	Crisis Management
Unit 4	Issues Management
Unit 5	Speech Communication

UNIT 1 PRESS RELEASE

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Meaning of Press Release
3.2	Writing the Press Release
3.3	Forms of Press Release
3.4	Problems Associated with the Use of Press Release
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Press Release is one of the effective means through which corporate organisations reach out to their external publics. It usually affords the organisation the opportunity to tell its own story its own way. This is because the organisation writes the stories concerning activities taking place in the life of the organisation and dispatches the stories to media organisations as press releases. This unit discusses this aspect of corporate communications practice.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning and essence of press release
- list the different types of press release
- discuss factors that could make media organisations not use press release.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning of Press Release

The concept, 'press release' has other terms for which it is known in public relations literature. It is therefore the same as 'news release'. It is also called 'media release'. Press Release is therefore defined as "corporate news issued out for consumption by an organisation via the instrument of the mass media with the purpose of enhancing the corporate image of the organisation" (Nwodu, 2007:48). Again, Nwodu (2007:48) informs that press release is regarded as corporate news given that the content of press releases usually focuses attention on the activities of the organisation issuing the releases rather than on public interests.

Most times, it is the job of the government officers or company's Public Relations Officers (PROs) to write and dispatch press releases.

3.2 Writing the Press Release

According to Black (1989:14) in preparing press release, "it is well to remember that it will have to compete for attention with a great quantity of similar communications which editors receive daily". This means that "press release should be properly written to minimise the struggle for space or airtime in the mass media. When poorly written therefore, a Press release can suffer the possibility of not being used in the news content of the media organisations.

Modern editors have enormous task of editing volumes of news items on daily basis to the extent that their attention is easily turned off by poorly written press release. On the other hand, editors are easily attracted to press releases that conforms to the standard and rules of news writing and to some extent, each news medium's house style. Nwodu (2007:50) reinforces this view where he argues that "public relations managers, officers or practitioners should of necessity master basic rules of news writing in order to excel in the business of writing news releases". Some of those rules, according to Nwodu (2007), included:

1. Be accurate on the use of facts and figures; objective in the presentation of issues; fair to all concerned with or likely to be affected by the release by balancing your story; prompt in writing and delivery of the release (that is being timely and/or current); punchy (brevity) in language use; and clear in the expression of thoughts and ideas.

2. Ensure that the lead (that is the first paragraph of the release) provides answer to what is most important about the issue for which the release is being issued. This is so because the release will be meaningless if it is silent on the “action” which in fact is the news. This is why Newsom and Carrell (2001:195) counsel:

Once you have written a lead, read it over to make sure that it states clearly what the release is about and that it grabs the readers’ interest. In other words, the lead must be interesting - both to catch the eye of the editors and to get the attention of the newspaper reader.

3. Stick to news writing style. News release is simply a news item not an essay. Therefore, the lead and subsequent paragraphs like that of news story must of necessity provide answers to the who; the what; the why; the where; the when and the how of the story. Besides, the writer must be at home with writing rules with greater emphases on brevity (use of concrete words); concise (use of short sentences and paragraphs); precision (use of exact expressions/words to communicate the intended ideas/meanings); and simplicity (use of common language that is free from confounding technical jargons).
4. Ensure proper use of quotation lead when necessary. Whether the quote is created by the consultant (or information officer) or originated from the client (chief executive) the most important thing is to ensure that it properly fits where it is placed.
5. Do not assume that editors and readers already know the subject your release is meant to address. Avoid expressions like “as you all know”, “we are aware that”, “it is common knowledge,” and “everybody knows”. They are misleading, irritating and should be avoided like plague.
6. Be conscious of the length of the release. If your release becomes too lengthy, it may face the risk of not being used.
7. Avoid too much use of statistics. Too much statistics usually bore your audience and therefore should be used sparingly.
8. Ensure the entire structure of the release conforms to the structure of a typical news stories. Most times public relations officers write to impress their Chief Executives. This is wrong. To attract editor’s attention and arouse his/her interest, news release should flow like typical news story.

3.3 Forms of Press Release

Different kinds of press release exist. Below are some of the commonly used forms of press release:

- a) **Response Release** which is usually issued to serve as a company's response to an issue in the media that is critical of the company's actions and/or inactions.
- b) **Spot News Release** which companies affected by unprecedented occurrences like fire outbreak, aero hijack, bombing of oil sites and sundry man-made/natural mishaps often use to hint members of the public about the problem.
- c) **Bad News Release** which companies often use to state their positions on image damaging news or issue already in circulation.
- d) **Features News** which is used to publicise the achievements and/or success stories of a corporate organisation.
- e) **Announcement Releases** which as the name implies, announces "the marketing of a new products, the opening of a new plant, the company's latest financial results or a new company's policy" (Newsom and Carrell, 2000:205). This release is used to publicise an organisation's tangible and intangible products.

3.4 Factors That Impede on the Use of Press Release

A media organisation has the right to use or drop any press release issued to it by any corporate organisation. And given that space and air time are very scarce in the news media, editors often evaluate the relative importance and uniqueness of press releases before use (Nwodu, 2007:64). In this case, how well or otherwise a press release is written determines whether the release will be used or not. However, Nwodu (2007:65) isolates six factors that could prompt editors to reject a release as:

- a) If the release lacks local angle, colouration or interest.
- b) If the release has manifest commercial undertone. That is, it is an advertisement packaged in the form of press release.
- c) If the release is full of grammatical, spelling and syntax errors.
- d) If the release is very drab, uninteresting, vague and essentially lacking factual and concrete information.

- e) If the release is maliciously done and as such, capable of provoking legal tussle.
- f) If the language and style of presentation of the release runs counter to the policy of the news medium and/or its house style.

It is important for public relations officers evaluate their press releases against these backdrops before dispatching them to media organisations. This will help to reduce the risk of rejecting the releases.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Press release is an important corporate communication tool. It is usually issued to serve specific purpose. Regardless of the purpose, press release must be properly written to arouse the interest of editors who decide whether or not it will be used in the news bulletin. A well written press release therefore stands a better chance of being used in a medium's news of the day.

5.0 SUMMARY

The emphasis in this unit is on understanding the meaning and essence of press release. In doing this, issues relating to the definition of press release, writing and forms of press release were discussed. Also discussed are the problems that could hinder press releases from being used by editors.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

A press release that is poorly written often stands the risk of not being used. Discuss this against the backdrop of the factors that could prompt editors to reject a press release.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Black, S. (1989). *Introduction to Public Relations*. London: The Modino Press.
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UNIT 2 PRESS CONFERENCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Meaning and Rationale of Press Conferences
 - 3.2 Planning and Executing Press Conferences
 - 3.3 Post Press Conference Activities
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Press conference like the press release is one of the essential tools or elements of corporate communications. Public relations officers make extensive use of press conferences to enhance two-way communication between their organisations and the publics of the organisations. This unit examines the press conference from conception to planning and execution.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the meaning of a press conference
- explain the essence of press conference
- discuss the planning and execution of press conferences.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Definition of Press Conference

The press conference is also regarded as news conference or media conference. Corporate organisations often organise press conferences to explain its position on a topical issue likely to impinge on the image and reputation of the organisation.

It is often organised to “create a two-way communication situation for an organisation to share information and ideas with media on major break – through and controversial complex facts that need proper explanation and in similar important information exchange situation (Nwosu, 1996:30).

Press or news/media conference is therefore “a two–way communication between an organisation and the press men through which the organisation shares its important information with the press which in turn publicise the information for public consumption” (Nwodu 2007:67).

Press conference is therefore a very serious media event. According to Wilcox and Nolte (1995 p 46) six conditions that lead to warrant the need for press conference are:

1. When an announcement of considerable importance to a large number of people in the community is to be made (Example: an election date);
2. When a matter of public concerns needs to be explained (Example: a food recall);
3. Where reporters have requested access to a key individual and it is important to give all media equal access to that person (Example: a visiting celebrity).
4. If a new product or an invention in the public interest is to be unveiled , demonstrated or explained to the media (Example: A solar–powered vehicle);
5. When a person of importance is coming to town and there are many media requests for interviews (Example: The Minister); and
6. When a complex issue or situation is to be announced and the media need access to someone who can answer their question (Example: Company Manager).

It is on this basis that Nwodu (2007:69) agrees that press conferences can be organised to achieve any or combination of the following purposes.

- ❖ Explain new company policies
- ❖ Publicise a company’s latest invention
- ❖ Introduce a company’s new product or changed brand image, or state clearly a company’s position in a crisis or conflicting situation.

3.2 Planning and Execution of Press Conferences

As we noted earlier, press conference is a very crucial aspect of corporate communications that should not be treated with levity. It therefore, requires proper planning and execution to achieve the purpose prompting an organisation to organise such a conference.

In planning for a press conference therefore, the public relations officers should consider what Nwodu (2007:69-74) as the “ five nuggets” of press conference planning. These are:

- a. Who should be invited which entails drawing list of media organisations within a locality and deciding which among the lot to invite based on specific reason(s).
- b. Deciding the most convenient and efficient way of distributing the invitation to ensure it sets the targets.
- c. When to hold the conference which entails deciding on a date that will not clash with major or bigger event.
- d. Venue of the conference which requires deciding on a venue that is centrally to the invitees.
- e. Cost of the conference which entails proper articulation of the cost implications of the conference. Costing is the same as budgeting; it requires itemising all that it will take to organise a successful conference and fixing prices to them in line with market realities.

After the planning, next is action that is the actual execution of the press conference. Nwodu (2007:76) listed some of the things that are involved in actual execution of press conference as:

- a) Making adequate provision for the registration of media men in attendance and proper distribution of conference kits/materials to them.
- b) Ensuring proper arrangement of the hall in a manner that would enable the pressmen see and hear the speakers and actions at the high table with less friction.
- c) Ensure a seasoned reporter is on ground to take accurate record of major issues raised and discussed at the conference, responses to press questions, and useful comments made by both the speakers and other participants.

- d) Arrange for alternative power supply and mini-information processing centre stuffed with computers, photocopying machines, fax, and internet facilities to enhance the work of print and electronic journalists in attendance.
- e) Ensure the hall is well lit to enhance the shootings and shots by camera men (see Nwodu, 2007:76-78 for details).

3.3 Post Press Conference Activities

At the end of every press conference the public relation officer is expected to take a number of post conference actions to further ensure success. Some of these post conference actions or activities include:

- i. Distribution media Kits and Sundry Conference Materials to invited pressmen who were unable to make it to the conference.
- ii. Evaluate press reports on the conference by ascertaining the quantity and quality of news feature and opinions. Editorial within in the matter.
- iii. Evaluate the success or other wise of the conference in terms of the impact of the conference on the image the organisation.
- iv. Evaluate the on-the-spot impression of the participants (particularly the press – men) regarding the conference.

4.0 CONCLUSION

When properly planned and executed press conference can enhance the image and reputation of an organisation on the other hand, a poorly managed press conference can mar the image and reputation of an organisation. Public relations practitioners should therefore take press conference planning and management serious.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit discussed various dimensions of press conference. Precisely, the unit discussed the meaning of and rational for press organisation; nuggets of press conferences planning and actual execution of press conference among other things.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define Press conference and explain the rationale behind the covering of pre conference.

6.0 TUTOR–MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the process of planning and execution of a successful press conference.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Black, S. (1989). *Introduction to Public Relations*. London: the Modind Press Limited.

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UNIT 3 CRISIS MANAGEMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Meaning and Nature of Corporate Crisis
 - 3.2 Major Source of Corporate Crisis
 - 3.3 Stages of Managing Corporate Crisis
 - 3.4 Post Crisis Measures
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Crisis is inevitable in the life of any corporate organisation. So whenever it occurs, the onus lies on the public relations officer to manage the crises. The public relations officer also tries to nip the crisis in the bud by taking some measures. The essence of this unit therefore is to teach the students the basic things they should know in crisis management.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the concept and nature of crisis
- explain possible cause of crisis
- discuss the step in managing corporate crisis.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning and Nature of Corporate Crisis

According to Summers et al (1996:322b) crisis is “a period or moment of great danger, difficulty, or uncertainty, especially in politics or economics”. Corporate organisations often anticipate crisis and when they do the common thing will be to take pro-active measure to nip the impending crisis in the bud.

However, pro-active measures often task practitioners to take actions capable of checking crisis situation from snowballing into full crisis.

The essence is to avert the likely image problems the impending crisis may cause the organisation if allowed to implode.

On the other hand, there are occasions pro-active measure may not actually forestall a crisis from occurring. So when the crisis occurs reactive approach becomes the most effective means of managing the problem.

The implication is that there are two broad ways or approaches to managing crisis– the proactive and reactive approaches. Which of these approaches to be applied in crisis management depends on the nature of the crisis. Black (1989:13) isolates two broad categories of crisis as:

1. Known and Unknown

Every organisation has a defined line of business. The nature of the business therefore makes it imperative that certain defined catastrophe would actually occur in the corporate organisation. For instance, “a company that produces chemical or nuclear weapon may” according to (Nwodu 2007:82) “anticipate a radioactive or lethal discharge as its potential danger”.

In this case, it is obvious that someday a crisis would occur but what is not certain is when it will occur. So, the potential danger is known but when it may eventually occur is unknown. in this case it is the responsibility of public relations practitioners to advise the staff and management of the organisation on safety measure to added in order to forestall the impending danger from occurring” (Nwodu, 2007:82). The advice should also entail making adequate arrangement to cushion the probable effects of the anticipated catastrophe when it eventual occurs. These pre-conditioner measures come under pro-active measures. Proactive measures therefore refer to precautionary measures taken to forestall impending crisis and or to cushion the effects of anticipated crisis.

2. Unknown Crisis

Unlike known unknown crisis, the unknown crisis can hardly be predicted nor anticipated. It just takes the organisation by surprise. According Black (1989:11) unknown unknown crisis are “sudden calamitous events that cannot be foreseen by anybody”. It is hardly anticipated and when it occurs, the affected organisation must react to the issue concerned so the approach for managing this kind of crisis is the reactive approach.

The above clearly shows that “crisis is of two major modes which are predictable (or anticipated) and unpredictable (or unanticipated) crises” (Nwodu, 2007:84).

3.2 Major Sources of Corporate Crisis

It is important to note that sources in this context are the same as causes. It implies situations and/or corporate actions that can cause crisis if not properly managed. Mackey (2004:16) however, identifies seven factors that could cause crisis as:

- ❖ A takeover bid: A planned takeover of ownership and management of a company can lead to crisis if the members of staff of the organisation are not certain that the security of their job will be guaranteed.
- ❖ Product tampering which usually occurs when the consumers of product suspect that the quality of the product has been tampered to the negative.
- ❖ Flood, fire, storm or drought which is caused by natural phenomena like the flooding in most of Nigeria’s coastal plain. Also, accidents like plane crashes can cause crisis.
- ❖ Faulty product which usually occurs when the product fails to perform the functions claimed by the advertiser.
- ❖ Challenges and changes to the leadership can also induce crisis where the change is deemed to be unfair or “where the new leader manifest evidence of inexperience, ineptitude, corruption and lack of focus...” (Nwodu, 2007:86).
- ❖ Industrial dispute which emanates from dispute between one department of an organisation and another; between the management and staff; between the organisation and the host community; or between the management and the stakeholders etc (Nwodu, 2009:86).
- ❖ A terrorist action like the bombing of the WTC Tower in the USA and the UN House in Nigeria.

3.3 Stages for Managing Crisis

Crisis management according to Summers et al (1996:322) is the process of dealing with usually dangerous or difficult situation. Given

that crisis is inevitable, every organisation should have well articulated means of dealing with both predictable and unpredictable crisis.

On a general note however, Nwodu (2007:87) categorised the procedures for managing crisis into three broad categories these are:

1. Pre - crisis measures which entails planning for potential crisis. Pre-crisis measure would therefore, require the public relations officers to advise their organisations' management to:

- a. Always ensure it conduct its activities in line with the corporate objectives and the socio-culture, political, economic trends and the legal provision within their areas of operation.
- b. Engage on periodic risk audit as the organisation expands in terms of operational special, volume of production or services staff strength etc.
- c. Strive to cultivate public confidence in advance since it has been established that “ if people known and trust the organisation, it will be far easier for you to maintain that trust in difficult times” (Mackey, 2004:221).
- d. Create a risk or crisis management team that should thinker out concrete and practicable strategies on the procedures for managing crisis.
- e. Decide in advance who should be the spokes person or persons in time of challenge.
- f. Ensure that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) does not double as the spokesperson.
- g. Expose the members of the crisis management team to periodic media training and retraining

2. On-the-crisis Management Measures. The emphasis here is on the tactics that is the actual execution of crisis management strategies. According to Ademolekun and Ekundayo (2001:116), the functional tactics for managing crisis included but not limited to:

- a. Understand the nature, extent and impact of the crisis.
- b. Accept blames and responsibilities; never deny or denounce the existing problem
- c. Operate an open policy and promptly communicate action to all stakeholders.

- d. Map out planes to solve the problem so that it will never re-occur
- e. Show concern to victims, let affected parties understand that you care
- f. Do not count your losses in public. Let that be for management consumption only.
- g. Be ready to pay compensation to victims. It is your cross, bear it boldly.
- h. The Chief Executive should lead the way in communicating crisis resolution programmes; being self – evasive is not advisable.

3.4 Post Crisis Measures

This stage is very crucial in dealing with crisis. After taking practical steps in managing crisis it is important to review actions taken at the on-the-crisis management stage. This is what is meant by post crisis measures and it involves:

- ❖ evaluation of the entire actions taken in the process of managing a crisis to ascertain what lessons to be learnt from the action
- ❖ make public thank you speeches appreciating both the internal and external publics of the organisation for the patient and understanding during the crisis
- ❖ organise a memorial service for the diseased as a show of love, care and concern where lives are involved. This is usually the case when there is plane or auto crash
- ❖ write and dispatch letter of appreciation to concerned publics who stood by the company at the trial period.

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have said severally in this unit that conflict is inevitable in the life of any corporate organisation. It is important that both the students and practitioners of public relations are properly ground on the nature of crisis and how best to manage it.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit dealt with the meaning nature and forms of crisis. It also treated various professional approaches to managing crisis.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Define crisis and using relevant examples, discuss various stages for managing crisis.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Ademolekun, W. & Ekundayo, T. (2001). *Interactive Public Relations*. Lagos: Joe-Tolaku and Associates.

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UNIT 4 ISSUES MANAGEMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Issues Defined and Explained
 - 3.2 Nature of Issues
 - 3.3 Critical Steps in Issues Management
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked-Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Like crisis, issues are bound to arise in governance, in corporate life and even from individual actions and inactions. This obvious fact has made issues management one of the core aspects of modern public relations management. This unit therefore exposes the students to the core of issues management.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain what is an issue
- discuss stages involved in issues management.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Issues Defined and Explained

In the context of public relations practice, issues is “a condition or pressure, either internal or external, that, if it continues, will have significant effects on the functioning of the organisation or its future interests” (The Conference Board of America cited in Black, 1989:10). This definition clearly shows that for a phenomenon to build up as an issue there must be:

- i. a condition, situation or pressure upon which an issue of public interest must build on
- ii. the condition, situation or pressure must come from either within or outside the system

- iii. the condition, situation or pressure must be properly managed to avoid its escalation
- iv. allowing the condition, situation or pressure to escalate will spell doom to either the contemporary functioning of the system or its future activities or both.

3.2 Nature of Issues Management

According to Mackey (2004:334) issues management is defined as “maintaining the viability and reputation of the organisation or industry by anticipating, understanding and keeping in touch with significance currents of thought in society”. Earlier, Chase (1984:78) defines issues as “the process of identifying issues, analysing those issues, setting priorities, selecting programme strategy options, implementing a programme of action and communication and evaluating effectiveness”. Also, Nwosu (1996:115) defines issues management as “...tracking, analysing, collecting and presentation of data and making practical recommendations to management or administration of the organisation on issues and problems that may have negative or positive impact on the growth and survival of the organisation”.

The nature of issues management can be deduced from the above definitions. The nature and essence of issues management according to Nwodu (2007:99) involves:

- a. Scanning the environment primarily to identify salient policy issue (like the introduction of 100% inspections of imported goods in Nigeria sea ports; or emerging ugly natural phenomenon like Avian Flu influenza.
- b. Sourcing for and collating sufficient data pertaining to policy issue, trend and phenomenon.
- c. Organising and analysing data obtained with a view to determining the most credible, reliable and dependable approach to handle the issue.
- d. Designing, budgeting for and enlisting management support to execute a programme of action needed to realistically address the issue.
- e. Taking stock by way of evaluating the overall programme planning and executions vis-a-vis the results obtained for purpose of pointing out what needed to be changed or reinforced in future action plans.

3.3 Stages Involved in Issues Management

Scholars like Chase (1984), Ewing (1990) and Okereke (1994) have overtime tried to document stages involved in issues management. Lesely (1981) for instance prescribes seven-point approach to issues management as:

- a. structure, which suits for the establishment of issues management team in an organisation comprising of top management team
- b. preparing, by means of various research techniques for every issue opportunity
- c. identify or select the relevant publics concerned
- d. design realisable action packed plans for managing the issues
- e. set timetable, making room for flexibility
- f. establish realistic budget
- g. review and evaluate actions and results.

Okereke (1994), the in-thing is to identify the issues of interest, evaluate the issues, priorities setting, company response and implementation while Chase (1984) insists on issues identification, issues analysis, issues strategy options, issues action programme and evaluation of results. Nwodu (2007) synthesise all these approaches and came up with six nuggets of issues management. These are:

1. Issues identification which involves close monitoring socio-cultural, economic, political and ecological trends within and outside the organisation to identify any emerging issue likely to affect the interest of the organisation monitoring here entails periodic opinion research, corporate image assessment and evaluation research, communication audit and content analysis/record review.
2. Issues analysis and salience which entails thorough and systematic issues identified during environmental scanning. The analysis will help to determine the degree of importance of the issues and how they related to the organisation.
3. Issues prioritisation which involves scaling or ranking the issues in terms of the urgency required to deal with the issues.
4. Issues programme planning which involves stating objectives and diversing strategies for dealing with the issues.
5. Issues programme implementation which involves putting plans into action. It simply means actualising plans already mapped out to deal with the issues.

6. Evaluation which entails critical review of the overall plans and actions taken in dealing with the issues.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Early dictation of emerging issues and devising well-thought out plans for dealing with issues are very crucial in issues management. Every public relations practitioner and even student should therefore master how to identify and deal with issues likely to mar the image potentials of the organisation.

5.0 SUMMARY

Issues management is very crucial in the life of any organisation. This unit therefore explained the meaning and nature of as well as steps in managing issues.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define and explain the concept, “Issues”.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What is issues management? Mention and explain the stages involved in issues management.

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UNIT 5 SPEECH COMMUNICATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Meaning of Speech Communication
 - 3.2 Speech Genres
 - 3.3 Speech Delivery Styles
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Speech writing and delivering is an essential part of public relations practice. Given that speech entails “an effort by one person to, in some way, influence a group listeners”(Ndolo, 2001: 83), it is very crucial in winning the public's sympathy to the side of an organisation. It is important that modern public relations practitioners “should of necessity, master the techniques for writing and delivery of memorable speeches capable of influencing others” (Nwodu, 2007, p.108). This unit therefore is designed to expose the students to the rudiments of speech writing and delivery as essential element of public relations practices.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning and essence of speech communication
- list the types of speeches
- discuss the relevance of speeches in public relations practice.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning of Speech Communication

According to Nwosu (1992:74) speech is a specialised essay written for oral delivery to a usually specialised audience”. Going by this definition, speech communication means a specialised written communication designed for oral presentation to a specific audience.

It is important to note however, that speech presentation goes beyond “written essay”. It extends to other forms of speech communication like impromptu and memory speeches. Broadly defined therefore speech communication is “an organised thought which could be written or unwritten designed for oral presentation in public and targeted at a given audience for the purpose of influencing the audience” (Nwodu; 2007:110). According to Nwodu (2007:110), it is deducible from the above definition that a typical speech involves:

1. written or unwritten well-articulated statement;
2. formulated and presented by a speaker;
3. in public glare;
4. targeted at a specific audience; and
5. with ultimate goal of influencing them.

3.2 Types of Speeches

Speeches are usually classified on the basis of the function each speech is designed to play. Speech classifications therefore included but not limited to:

1. Informing speeches which in public relations context, are designed to share a company’s information with specific or a number of its publics. This is usually done during Annual General Meeting (AGM). During such meetings the organisation usually the executives share the success stories of their organisations as well as the challenges facing their organisations with the shareholders. According to Onwe (2003:186), “through informative speeches, information and ideas are shared, perception of reality shared, agenda set and opinion classified.”
2. Persuasive speeches which according to Nwodu (2007:111) are usually designed to “subtly yet incisively appeal to the audience to show greater commitment to a particular action or cause. Nwodu further submits that persuasive speeches help to :
 - affect attitudes, behaviour and/or practices;
 - prompt, inspire and mobilise;
 - debunk or reinforce tradition-bound beliefs and claims; and
 - convince doubters.

The essential tools for persuasive speeches as isolated by Nwodu (2007:112) include to graphs that can buttress the persuasive theme; booklets and charts that can enhance conviction and other documents that can support the persuader’s arguments/topic.

3. Entertaining speeches which as the name implies are meant to amuse the audience. This kind of speeches usually take place when organisations organise special functions like silver or golden jubilee celebration; dinner parties, end of the year parties, executives luncheon, and sundry social activities. The essence is to put the attendees in a lighter mood and leave them with sustained “pleasant, exciting and favourable impression about both the speaker and the organisation” (Nwodu, 2007:112). Entertaining speech is considered a serious public relations tool. To effectively deliver therefore, someone who has a blend of juicy sense of humour with modest sense of reason should be engaged to speak. It is instructive to note that “an uninteresting, dry, vulgar-ridden and drab speech can spoil a good occasion and leave the audience with lingering poor impression about both the speaker and the organisation behind the event”(Nwodu, 2007:112).
4. Technical speeches which are usually rendered by professionals in special field of endeavours. The major skill required of a speaker in this context is expertise. So the speaker should possess superior skill and erudition to be able to teach his/her professional colleagues important professional case(s). This kind of speech is usually done in conferences, in workshops and seminars.
5. Brief remarks which is usually a feature at the beginning or closing of an event. This kind of speech comes in form of the “opening or closing remark in an occasion; welcome or acceptance speech; vote of thanks and sundry speeches” (Nwodu, 2007:113). According to Newsom and Carrel (2001:270), “what works best for these occasions is to develop gist or context of the remark and have the speaker put them in his or her own words”.

3.3 Speech Delivery Styles

Just as different types of speeches exist, so different styles of speeches also exist. This segment discusses different styles or forms of speech delivery. These are:

- a. **Impromptu speech**, which according to Nwosu (1992:108) is “delivered or made with no advance notice and with little if any advanced preparation”. Since it is not planned ahead of the time, it usually takes the speaker by surprise. The in thing here is that public relations managers should always get prepared at all times to deliver impromptu speeches or guide their Chief Executives on how to cope with impromptu speeches. Speech situations that

could call for impromptu speech delivery includes meeting, business sessions, political rallies, cooperate carnivals, public events and plant visits. Nwodu (2007: 122) lists the secrets of success in the impromptu speeches as:

- anticipation that one might be picked to deliver a speech
- listening attentively to what other speakers are saying in an occasion
- scribble some vital issues/points that come to your mind as you ponder over the theme of the speech
- be confident that you can make it.

b. Extemporaneous speech, which differ from impromptu speech in many respects. One, the speaker is aware he/she is going to make a speech at given time, place and occasion. Two, the speaker prepares his/her mind by organising his/her thought on what to say and how to say. Three, the speaker prepares a full script or outline of the highlights of his/her speech. It is important to note however that although the speech may be scripted, the actual presentation does not require reading through a script. The speaker is usually deemed to be a master of his/her subject. He/she is therefore, expected to speak on the subject of the speech coherently and fluently without reading the script. Nwodu (2007:123) catalogues the advantages of extemporaneous speech delivery as follows:

- i. it boosts audience rating of the speaker's credibility, integrity and intelligent quotient
- ii. it is flexible in nature and therefore allows for easy adaptability and adjustability of the speech to suit the actual or real situation on ground
- iii. it makes a speech fresh, natural, original and exciting
- iv. it offers the speaker wide latitude of freedom to choose his words and restructures his language to suit the immediate speech situation.

Nwodu (2007:123) however, cautions that the above advantages are not automatic as the success or failure of this form of speech delivery lies more on the speaker's skill and expertise. Nwodu further adds, "when poorly handled, speaking extempore can be a nightmare to the point that the demerits easily override the merits which include unnecessary repetitions; frequent use of irritating mannerism; wrong use of words, phrases, tenses and facts; loss of audience interest and prompting the press to either misquote, under-quote or exaggerate points used by the speaker.

- c. **Written speeches**, which are considered as the most important and most widely used speech delivery pattern in public relations (Nwosu, 1996:57). This is so given that “every word, phrase, sentence or idea is thoroughly vetted and the real and implied meaning ascertained before presentation” (Nwodu; 2007:124-125). Written speech is meant to be presented as written. This means that the presenter will not skip nor paraphrase any aspect of the speech. This does not imply that the speaker cannot pause occasionally to buttress or emphasises a point. But whenever he/she pauses to emphasise a point, he/she usually starts from where he/she stopped after the emphasis.

Most times Chief Executives rarely have time to write their speeches. The most common practice is to get their public relations practitioners to thoroughly research on the subject of their speeches and do the actual writing of the speeches for them. In preparing a speech for the chief executives, the speech writer should understand the subject matter.

In addition, he/she according to Nwodu (2007:123) should also understand the basic characteristics of the Chief Executives some of which are his/her:

- public carriage;
- proficiency in the oral and written language of communication;
- diction, tone, pitch and sundry essential qualities of oral presentation
- ability to decode meanings at the spur of the moment and by extension makes adjustments to suit the situation
- state of health (especially as it pertains to sight and ability to stand for a reasonable length of time).

Public relations executives need these data to enable them attune their written speech to suit the speech length and language level the Chief Executive can comfortably cope with. However, written speech can be presented using either verbatim or memorised approaches. While the verbatim approach requires strictly reading through the script word for word, memorised style of presentation requires occasional breaks to introduce joke, antidotes or additional facts to spice up the presentation and lively up the listeners (Nwodu, 2007:126).

Effective written speech delivery can be achieved by ensuring that the occasional breaks, jokes, antidotes or additional facts are use as brief as possible and are capable of enhancing the overall speech delivery. This is why Nwosu (1996:57) counsels that the speaker should mark

“sections, paragraphs, sentences or underlines some words during rehearsal to help him do effective, meaningful, stressed, controlled, clear, organised and articulate delivery”.

4.0 CONCLUSION

From the above, it is pertinent to note that speech making helps to shore up the image and reputation of an organisation. Public relations executives should therefore see speech writing and delivery as a serious public relations activity that must be treated with serious commitment.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit discussed speech delivery as an essential tool of public relations management. Precisely, the meaning and types of speech writing and delivery were discussed. Also discussed here are the forms or styles of speech presentation.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Define speech communication and explain types of speech communications known to you.

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MODULE 5 THOERIES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

Unit 1	System Theory and PR Practice
Unit 2	Situational Theory and PR Practice
Unit 3	Individual Differences Theory and PR Practice
Unit 4	Innovation Diffusion and PR Practise

UNIT 1 SYSTEM THEORY AND PR PRACTICE

CONTENT

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	System Theory: An Overview
3.2	Application of System Theory in PR Practice
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As we noted earlier, theories help scholars and practitioners in diverse discipline to understand nebulous situations. This is why the knowledge and application of theories is important in any professional practice. This unit will therefore focus on the relevance of system theory in Public Relation practice.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the meaning of system
- explain the major premise of system theory and the relevance in PR practice.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Understanding System as a Concept

The concept 'system' is a complex concept. It is complex in that it is open to different interpretation in diverse fields. It is important therefore to look at system from different professional stand points.

For instance, a system in technological perspective is "the summation of related interdependent functional parts or components of a machine like computer that has various parts or components" (Nwodu; 2009;250). In the context of sociology and other related social-cum-behavioural sciences, a system is "a complex whole formed from related parts, a combination of related parts organised into a complex whole" (Encarta Dictionary, 2007). System in the natural sciences also means "a configuration of parts that are in a relationship of interdependence" (DeFleur et al, 1971:47).

All these boil down to the same fact. The fact that a system must be a 'whole' and the whole must comprise of related parts that makes it.

3.2 System Theory: An Overview

From the above, it is clear that system theory is simply a theory that helps us to understand how a system functions. Simply put, the theory according to Nwodu (2009:251) states that "in a system, the whole is greater than the summation of its component parts". According to Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff (1990:136-137), the theory emphasises:

A series of relationships among independent and dependent variables in which, changes in one or more variables are accompanied or followed by changes in other variables or combination of variables.

Nwodu (2009:251) captures the major premise of the theory where he submits that the theory postulates that:

A nexus of functional parts must come or be assembled together with each parts functioning in a differential manner that compliments rather than contradicts the function or role of the other parts to the extent that a problem in one part affects the functioning of the whole which is the system.

Nwodu further admits that the theory “offers a realistic understanding as well as practical approach to managing complexities of human existence”. And these complexities include those arising from public relations practice.

3.2 Application of System Theory in PR Practice

According to Mackey (2004:47):

Open system theory suggests that we can draw a picture of communication which can help us map the public relations and other information process of an organisation. The map will show the routes of inputs, throughputs and feedback of messages and opinions which affect understandings and relationships.

Mackey further informs that “used intelligently by public relations strategists, this analysis can help discover where and how an organisation talks to itself and others, and what needs to be done to keep all this conversation on message”. This clearly establishes the relevance of system theory in public relations practice. The knowledge of the theory will equip the practitioner to:

1. Appreciate that his/her organisation is first an organic part of the larger society in which it exists and must conduct its business activities in a manner compatible and consistent with the laws and norms of the society.
2. The organisation is also a whole in a way with the publics as organic parts. Therefore, official communications must be fashioned in a manner that would not unnecessarily hurt any of the publics of the organisation regardless of whether such public is internal or external.
3. Engage in effective monitoring of communication arising from parts (publics) of the organisation that may affect the interest and image of the whole and fashion out proper public relations response or strategy that would properly address it before it gets out of hand.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Proper application of system theory enhances public relations practice. Every professional therefore, needs to learn it, know it and be able to apply it in their professional practices in order to excel.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit discussed the meaning of system as it relates to system theory. It also discussed the relevance of system theory in public relations practice.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define and explain the concept, 'System'.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the major premise of system theory and how it relates to public relations practice.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Churchman, C. W. (1979). *The System Theory and Its Enemies*. New York: Basic Books Inc, Publishers.
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UNIT 2 SITUATIONAL THEORY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Meaning and Major Premise of Situational Theory
 - 3.2 Relationship of Situational Theory and PR Practice
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A public of an organisation can react or fail to react to a given corporate policy or action based on its perception of the policy or action. Situational theory offers a deeper understanding of this maxim. The unit will therefore discuss the area of application of knowledge of situational theory in public relations practice.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the major propositions of situational theory
- discuss the relevance of the theory in public relations practice.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Meaning and Major Premise of Situational Theory

The Situational theory was developed by Grunnic and Hunt (1984:160). It is one of the major theories developed under public relations scholarship. According to Mackey (2004:43) “the theory suggests that the situation in which people find themselves influences whether or not they will protest or try to get their opinions heard”.

And since the publics of an organisation are many, the theory helps public relations practitioners to classify their publics based on their situational dispositions to issues. The publics of an organisation according to Grunnic and Hunt (1984:160) can be grouped into:

- i. publics that are active on all issues of public relations
- ii. publics that are apathetic on all issues
- iii. publics that are active only on issues that involve nearly everyone in the population - such as drink driving or environmental pollution; and
- iv. single issue publics such as neighbourhood activities or 'save the whale' protesters.

Situational theory therefore postulates that clear classification of the publics of an organisation into these groups help immensely to determine specific programmes for specific publics. According to Mackey (2004:630) theories provides three independent variables for predicting people:

1. **Problem Recognition:** Do people recognise a problem which should be fixed for instance, global warming) and do they think about it.
2. **Constraint Recognition:** Do people think there is very little they can do about an issue for instance, global warming because of the political complexities and their ability to understand those complexities or to assert any political power?
- 3 **Level of Involvement:** The extent to which they are affected by the problem for instance, people on low-lying pacific atolls may recognise and feel very involved in the issues of global warming even though they see big constraints on what they can do about it in terms of protesting to oversee governments and polluting industries.

3.2 Implications of Situational Theory to Public Relations Practice

Knowledge of situational theory is very crucial in public relations practice. It means that the degree at which people recognise a situation as a problems; get involved and ably affect the situation determine to a large extent how active or passive they tend to exhibit to a communication behaviour.

The implication is that organisations can use knowledge of the theory to fathom "which groups of people are unlikely to protest even if their interests are harmed, because they do not feel they have the literacy, unity or because they fear retaliation in a political or economic sense" (Mackey, 2004:63). There are therefore, situations where powerful and wealth organisations may deal with powerless or disadvantaged groups within and outside the organisation. When such is the case, ethical

public relations according to Dervit and McComas (2003) cited in Mackey (2004:63) requires a community based intervention. This according to the Scholars will reduce the barriers of severely constrained publics by ensuring that the disadvantaged groups should be “protected, compensated and given training and communication resources in order to change such situations”.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The situations in which various publics of an organisation find themselves vary significantly. While some are found in advantaged situation, others may be in disadvantaged situation. The situational theory helps public practitioners to determine the disadvantaged groups or publics of an organisation and the right public relations programmes to apply in order to assign the burden of the disadvantaged group.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit is concerned with the situational theory of public relations practice. Discussions here therefore covered the meaning and major premise of situational theory and how it applies to public relations practice.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the major premise of situational theory pointing out how it applies to public relations practice.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Gruning, J. & Hunt, T. (1984). *Managing Public Relations*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.
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UNIT 3 INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES THEORY AND PR PRACTICE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Background to Individual Differences Theory
 - 3.2 Understanding Individual Differences Theory
 - 3.3 Application of Individual Difference Theory in PR Practice
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor–Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As individuals vary in a number of ways, so do communities, organisations and situations vary significantly. So what works in given situation may or may not work in another situation given their variability. This unit therefore explains how we can tap on the knowledge of individual differences to enhance our professional practice (public relations practice in particular).

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the major preposition of the individual differences theory
- discuss how the theory applies to public relations practice.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Background to Individual Differences Theory

The major pioneer assumption regarding media effects is that mass mediated communication posses magical powers. The assumption was that audience members react to mass media content on impulse. The import is that “mass mediated messages have inoculation effects on the mass media audience” (Nwodu, 2007:261). That is to say that mass media audience member’s react to mass media content in the same fashion one would react when hit by bullet or pricked by needle.

It was not long before communication and psychology scholars discovered that the all powerful media effects, dubbed 'Bullet' or 'Needle' Theory was based on wrong assumption. This discovery was based on series of studies on media effects. One of the outcomes of those series of studies is the Individual Differences Theory.

3.2 Understanding the Individual Differences Theory

Individual differences according to Nwodu (2007:261) hinges on the premise that as mass media audience members differ so their responses to a given mass media content differ. Nwodu further submits that Kernels of the theory are:

- a. No two individual react or respond in similar way or manner to a given communication signal or stimulus.
- b. No particular individual responds to the same stimulus the same way all the time.
- c. The underpinning of the theory therefore is that since no two individuals nor a particular individual can feel, react and interact the same way all the time based on a given mass media content ; programmes targeted at the audience members should reflect their social needs, psychological disposition, and their cultural realities.

3.3 Application of Individual Differences Theory to PR Practice

Knowledge of individual differences theory is very crucial to public relations practice (particularly in community relations practice). This is so given that the publics of a corporate organisation vary. And as they vary, so there is need to package specific public relations programme to suit specific public. For instance, while the customers (external publics) of an organisation may need the occasional Christmas party to encourage them to continue to patronise the organisation, the workers (internal publics) may need more than a Christmas party. Thus packaging Christmas gift for them in addition to the party would encourage them to put in more commitment to duty. Also shareholders would want an increase either in their dividend or bonus share or both. In applying individual differences theory to public relations practice therefore would require the public relations officers to:

- ❖ See each of the major public of the organisation as separate entity whose needs and expectations from the company vary.

- ❖ Design different public relations programmes for each of the major publics in line with their varied characteristics, needs and expectations.
- ❖ Perceive each major public as a very dynamic social system. In view of this programmes designed for them should not be static. It should be reviewed from time to time in line with their emerging priority needs.
- ❖ Avoid generalising that what worked for a given public will work for the other or that what worked for a public last year will still work for the same public this year.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The publics of an organisation are usually very many. As many as they are, therefore, so they differ in size, characteristics, need and expectation. Public relations officers as a matter of necessity needs to understand all these and tailor their public relations programmes in line with these differences in order to be effective. This is why the practitioners need to be grounded in knowledge of individual difference theory.

5.0 SUMMARY

A summary of the issues discussed here include the base for the birth of the Individual Differences Theory, the major propositions of the theory and how the theory applies to public relations practice.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the major propositions of the Individual Differences Theory and how it applies to public relations practice.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 INNOVATION DIFFUSION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Conceptualising Innovation and Diffusion
 - 3.2 Major Premise of the Theory
 - 3.3 Innovation Diffusion and Public Relations Practice
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor–Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Innovation Diffusion Theory is one of the theories that aid public relations knowledge and practice. It is therefore, important that students be exposed to the theory and how it relates to public relations practice. This is the major concern in this unit.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of innovation and diffusion
- discuss the theoretical premise of innovations diffusion
- explain the relevance of innovation diffusion theory in public relations practice.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Conceptualising Innovation and Diffusion

Two key concepts combine to make up what we know today as Innovation Diffusion. These are “Innovation” and “Diffusion”. These key concepts need to be properly explained to facilitate our understanding of Innovation diffusion theory.

Thus, ‘innovation’ means an idea, practice or object perceived as new by an individual (Rodger and Shoemaker, 1971). According to Nwodu (2007:263), the “idea, practice or objective of innovation may not be entirely new to the target or individual”.

The new thing here may not mean that the idea is entirely new to the individual concerned. The new thing could be that the individual has no identifiable disposition to the new “idea, practice or object”. The onus therefore lies on the public relations practitioners to design affective programme that will aid individual to take a particular intended disposition towards the idea, project or objective being projected. Worthy of note here is that the disposition could be favourable, unfavourable or neutral depending on what the mission is.

The next concept that requires clear explanation here is diffusion. This, according to Katz (1961), is “the process of spread of a given new idea, or practice over time via specifiable channels, through a social structure”. According to Nwodu (2007:264) could be as small as a clan or as large as a nation”. However, social structure in the context of our discussion refers to various publics of an organisation. This is why Nwodu further submits that diffusion involves:

- i. evolution of an idea or practice that is novel (new);
- ii. use of identifiable channels or practice; and
- iii. defining a social group that will benefit from the idea or practice.

3.2 Major Premise of Innovation Diffusion Theory

We have explained the meaning of innovation and diffusion in the segment above. A synergy between the two concepts gave rise to diffusion of innovation or innovation diffusion. As an amalgam, innovation diffusion therefore means:

strategic dissemination of persuasive information about a new idea or practice among a target social groups with a view to convincing members of the groups to accept, practice, adopt and internalising the new idea or practice for their own good.

Innovation diffusion therefore means getting people in touch with new ideas, convincing the people to adopt the ideas and by extension drop their old or crude ways of doing things. The theory explains the conditions imperative for the adoption of new idea. Rogers (1983:15–16) however, isolates five factors which should guide innovators in measuring the strength an innovation programme. These factors as explained by Nwodu (2007:263-264) are:

1. **Relative advantage:** Which measures or assesses the level of superiority of the innovation over the idea or the practice it is meant to replace or better still, innovate.

2. **Compatibility:** This measures or assesses the degrees of compatibility or consequence of the innovation with executing ideas or practice vis-a-vis the needs of the targets of innovation.
3. **Complexity:** Which determines the extent the innovation is likely to be perceived by potential adopters as complex, ambiguous, hard to comprehend and difficult to use.
4. **Triability:** This is concerned with the degree of susceptibility of the innovation to experimentation, using small group drawn from potential adopters.
5. **Observability:** This emphasises visible manifestation of the innovation on the adopters.

3.3 Innovation Diffusion and Public Relations Practice

It is important to re-emphasise that for innovation to diffuse, the idea to be diffused must pass through certain stage which are:

- i. the awareness or knowledge stage where the individual in a social groups age is exposed to the nature and importance of innovation
- ii. formation stage, where the potential adopters are persuaded to form favourable opinion about the innovation
- iii. doing stage, where the individual tries or begins to practise or implement the innovation
- iv. adoption stage where the individual makes decisions to embrace and imbibe the innovation based on self conviction
- v. advocacy stage, where the individual begins to testify to the efficiency of the innovation by talking with others to try out the innovation.

The question at this juncture is how does the theory apply to public relations practice? The answer is simply a lot. Public relation practice is all about maintaining and sustaining favourable image between an organisation and the publics. In doing this, businesses according to Nwodu (2007:206) “often engage in the propagation or execution of ideas or practices respectively that are novel to the publics of the organisation”. Continuing, Nwodu argues that:

Such novel ideas, practices and/or projects if not properly managed, may fail to yield the desired goal. The failure in the acceptance and adoption of innovation may not strictly mean that the publics deliberately decided to resist the innovation. The

problem may at times lie with the diffusion of innovation.

This is highly instructive. It means public relations practitioners should be well concerned with how they package and manage their image laundering programme activities. Knowledge of innovation diffusion will therefore aid public relations practice in:

- i. Planning realistic and effective public relations programmes that will be beneficial to the publics to the extent of encouraging adoption;
- ii. Designing messages of innovation that are highly informative to the extent of increasing the publics' knowledge about the innovative idea, practice or project;
- iii. Packaging and delivering innovation programmes in a manner that will encourage the publics to be favourably disposed to the programme;
- iv. Creating healthier atmosphere for encouraging the programme targets to start implementing innovation ideas, practice or practice;
- v. Enable public relations programme planners to fashion out practicable strategies for encouraging public relations programme target to adopt and internalise innovative programmes as well as encouraging others to develop favourable disposition towards the programme; and
- vi. Determining appropriate medium or media vehicle that could carry the message of innovation for effective diffusion (Nwodu: 266-267).

4.0 CONCLUSION

Knowledge of the innovation diffusion theory is very crucial in public relations programme planning and execution. Scholars practitioners and students of public relations should of necessity, understand the major premise of the theory and be able to apply in design their public relations programme.

5.0 SUMMARY

This unit discussed the concepts of innovation and diffusion. It also discussed the major premise of the innovation diffusion theory and how the theory applies to public relations practice.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the concepts, 'Innovation' and 'Diffusion; pointing out the link between the two.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Knowledge of Innovation Diffusion is crucial in modern public relations practice. Discuss

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Katz, E. (1963). "The Diffusion of New Ideas and Practices". In: Schramm W. (Ed.). *The Science of Human Communication*. New York : Basic Books.
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- Rogers, E.M. (1983). *Diffusion of Innovation*. New York: The Free Press.
- Rogers, E.M. & Shoemaker, F.F. (1971). *Communication of Innovation: A Cross Cultural Approach*; New York: The Free Press.