

California State University, Fullerton

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Marketing/ Communications Campaign Action Plan

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Your Marketing/ Communications Campaign Action Plan

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Effective communication is...

- Building mutually beneficial relationships
- Encouraging trust
- About helping, more so than being a 'hero'
- Using technology as a tool, not as a message
- Targeted to specific publics
- Planned with a purpose
- Constantly reviewed for success

Your target publics

- Young physicians & residents
- Groups of 10-50
- Hospital-based physicians

Timeline for development:
One year

1. The situation

- What's happening here? (Benchmarks)
- What are our key messages?
- How do we know what we know? (Theoretical models, case studies/ research)
- What are potential communication themes/ messages to potentially address situation(s) and bring benefit for targeted publics?
- ***Brainstorming!***

2. Action and response

- Action: *Proactive communication to targeted publics.*
- Response: *Addressing negative or incorrect communication already present.*
- How do we know what the targeted publics know? Is it true?
- How do we balance these two approaches?
- ***Remember, people always ask “WIIFM?”***

2. Action and response

- What do you want people to do?
- What do you want people to know?

Everything you do hinges on the answers to these questions.

Keep it simple.

3. The objectives

- What can we accomplish through a campaign?
- How do we know?
- Does action really have hope of helping?
- Develop a 'plan of attack' for each target public (strategy).
- Within the strategy is a series of 'action steps' for each targeted public.
- Action steps lead to communication messages.

Public relations planning is *social science*

“While most general business managers can devise strategies and objectives, few possess the communications capability to create persuasive messages.”

Public relations involves a strategic plan, with reachable, measurable objectives, in a campaign built around persuasive messages to targeted publics.

PR planning = social science

By Fraser Seitel

PR planning is a bona fide social science that distinguishes strategic PR from the seat-of-the-pants practice of which many in the field are often guilty.

Too often, alas, “PR planning” consists of a supervisor exhorting his troops to “Get some bodies, cameras, lights to the press conference — now!”

Not a particularly thoughtful strategic process.

More preferable — especially if you consider the practice of PR, as my friend Prof. John Doorley does, a bone fide social science — is to approach every assignment

will take you there.” And you may well end up in the wrong place.

Fifth, Audiences / Stakeholder Groups. PR people must break down audiences into demographic or psychographic subgroups. This is particularly true in a day of splintered media and Internet sub-publics.

There is no such thing as “the Congress” or “the press,” or “the employees” or “general public.” The more “granularly” to quote a popular business term — define our audiences, the more likely we are to persuade them.

Sixth, Messages. What messages will help us reach our audiences and accomplish the objectives? The best messages are those distinctly designed for a particular well-delineated public. What employees care most about in a particular PR situation — job security, for instance — might be different from what shareholders care most about — usually earnings.

PR messaging is where the “rubber meets the road.” While most general business managers can devise strategies and



Fraser P. Seitel has been a communications consultant, author and teacher for 30 years. He is the author of the Prentice-Hall text, *The Practice of Public Relations*.

Seitel, F. (2010, May). PR planning is social science. *O'Dwyer's*, p. 57.

4. Success

- “Multiple measures of success” are best
 - Quantitative
 - Qualitative
- What were your benchmarks?
- How will you verify success was reached?
- What about unintended consequences?
 - “Oh, s____!”
 - “Oh, hurray!”

5. The budget

- Have you planned an effort that is...
 - Ambitious, and unaffordable?
 - Tentative, and cheap?
- Seek a balance.
- “Quality” of effort doesn’t directly relate to how much money you spend or don’t spend.

6. The calendar/ marketing mix

- Remember, you're dealing with people in a social science context. Getting people to think or act differently takes time.
- People are easily distracted, and contrary or messages are ignored or filtered out.
- Consider 'pull' and 'push' of messages.

Hadley Cantril's Laws of Public Opinion

<http://www.djswansonapr.net/>

7. Evaluation

- Measurement
 - Assessment
 - Evaluation
 - Revise/ refocus/ ***reset!***
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- Your 'Action Plan' should never really be ***done***. It should be a constant process of communication improvement with targeted publics.

Activity to get you started!

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