

Effective Public and Media Relations

Public Relations is the planned effort to influence opinion (attitudes) through good character and responsible performance, based upon mutually satisfactory two-way communication.

- Scott Cutlip, Fellow PRSA, APR

Major reasons why public relations is practiced in the nonprofit/public sector arena:

- To develop an awareness and acceptance of the organization's mission
- To create channels of communication with those people the organization serves
- To establish and nurture an appropriate climate for funds
- To formulate and disseminate public policies that are related to the organization's mission
- To motivate the various audiences ranging from board members and staff to volunteers and relevant public officials to work to achieve the organization's mission

Media Relations

What you see is news what you know is background what you feel is opinion.

- Lester Markel, American editor

A. Your advantages

- The media are service-oriented
- You're the underdog
- You serve the public
- The "halo" effect

B. Possible Pitfalls

- Lack of judgment
- Lack of exclusivity
- Do your homework
- Overpromising

C. News Release/Reporter Relations – The Ten Steps

- **Focus and clarity:** Know what you want to say
- **Lead paragraph:** Structure your story
- **News story body:** Flush out the details
- **Imitation:** Follow the style and construction of existing articles
- **Completeness:** Cover all the facts (who, what, why, when and where)
- **Editorializing:** Don't give your opinion
- **Names:** Use proper style for spelling out of names
- **Closing:** Add a final paragraph
- **Editing:** Review your copy twice, then review it again
- **Accuracy:** Strive for a perfect news release