

Public Relations

Part 2

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The “Publics” in Public Relations (Stakeholders)

The Stakeholders in PR⁶

- Organisations are not islands
 - Each is an internal systems of a social network
 - This social network exists within an interrelated systems of relationships with stakeholders
- There are many stakeholders with whom relations are needed to be maintained
 - These “Publics” of public relations are diverse groups of population.

The Stakeholders in PR

- These stakeholders are:
 - Employees
 - Community
 - Consumers
 - Media
 - Governments and Regulations
 - Others such as activists, politicians

The Stakeholders in PR

- **Stakeholders : Employees**

- PR professionals need inputs from various other departments for developing good employee relations
- This way conditions are created for all to reap the greatest benefit from the human capital they invest in
 - Human capital is the sum of talent, knowledge, skills, behaviour, dedication and time an individual employee commits to the job

The Stakeholders in PR

- Employee satisfaction is vital to the business
 - A satisfied employee is less likely to leave the organisation and look for another job
 - Behaviour of an dissatisfied employee towards customers may be just mechanical and as per the script provided by the organisation
 - It lacks in warmth to deal with customers so that they can go back home with a pleasant experience of the organisation
 - The hospital may expect that the satisfied customer will help in increasing clientele for the business

The Stakeholders in PR

- A satisfied employee is a committed employee and this will lead to increased productivity of higher quality
 - A satisfied employee will have a higher level of work engagement
- A highly engaged employee will be always ready to “walk that extra mile” and is likely to put more discretionary effort to their work

The Stakeholders in PR

- Satisfaction depends on trust and confidence in leadership
 - Source of satisfaction is open and honest communication
- PR professionals should develop programmes that help leaders win trust and confidence of employees, and
 - Show respect and appreciation for employees
- A study of high performing organisation's communication policies showed that:

The Stakeholders in PR

- The high performing organisations:
 - Provide channels for upward communication and use employee input in decision making
 - Focus on helping employees understand the business, its values and culture, goals and progress
 - Provide ways for employees to improve performance
 - Give communications professionals a strategic role in business planning rather than pigeon-holding them as facilitators
 - Do better in explaining major changes to employees and winning support for change

The Stakeholders in PR (Community)

- Stakeholder: Community
 - Community of an organisation has similar characteristics as that of a neighbour
 - What one expects from a good neighbour are consideration, understanding, mutual support, respect for each other and so on
 - Good neighbourliness, however, is conditional and contextual
 - The level of familiarity with neighbour may be based on willingness to engage in a relationship and neighbours' willingness to accept the friendship

The Stakeholders in PR

- **Changing definitions of community**
 - There is difficulty in defining the organisation's community.
 - The community may be the area around the headquarters, or it may include all the sites where there are major facilities
 - Community might also include all the market areas from which employees, donors, or consumers are drawn

The Stakeholders in PR

- **Results of Community Relations:**
 - Enhanced quality of life for employees and residents
 - Contributing to the cultural, recreational, and artistic life of a community may enhance an organisation's ability to attract and retain high-quality employees
 - It may also foster relationships between all those who benefit from programming
 - Also it may mitigate future complaints about liabilities of having certain organisations located in an area, such as traffic, noise, and so on

The Stakeholders in PR

- Equipped labour force
 - Supporting local educational systems may further contribute to the employee's satisfaction
 - Also it may enhance availability within the community of future employees
- Regulatory intervention
 - Organisations often need help from communities if they are to carry out their primary functions

The Stakeholders in PR

- These may reflect the need for a mutually beneficial relationship
- Businesses that receive tax exemptions during a specific time period may need to offer public infrastructure support in other ways
- This may be in the form of:
 - Using local vendors whenever possible
 - This way funding is circulated throughout the community

The Stakeholders in PR

- From PR practices community may receive certain benefits
 - Increased resources for community activities
 - Employees may volunteer or encouraged by their organisation may provide staffing service help to agencies, schools and cause organisations
 - Increased fiscal support
 - Organisations make financial contribution through taxes, pay rolls, and purchases

The Stakeholders in PR

- This is important to economy
- Growth of related industries
 - Many similar or ancillary industries are attracted by the organisation in the same community area
- Enhanced sense of local pride

The Stakeholders in PR

- **Communicating with communities**
 - Varieties of tools can be used. Some of these are:
 - Local media
 - Face-to-face contacts
 - Meetings, and
 - Special events
 - Organisations need to explain their positions to the public
 - Also there is a need to create opportunities for the public to react and respond to them

The Stakeholders in PR (Consumers)

- **Stakeholders: Consumers**

- Consumers are people who either purchase goods or avail the services offered by an organisation
- Organisations are all the time trying to woo the customers as the survival of an organisation depends on the customers patronage
- In hospital industry in India, however, due to huge demand and supply gap, consumers (patients) have very little choice
- The public relations practitioners have to adopt various communication techniques including use of social media and inform the potential consumers about the services being offered

The Stakeholders in PR (Consumers)

- Still competition, particularly in big cities, for hospitals is very fierce
- Unlike a consumer goods sale where by marketing techniques, the number of potential consumers can be increased
- It is not so in case of hospitals – the consumer base in a community, by and large, is fairly constant
 - A hospital, by their marketing techniques, cannot increase, say for example, the number of cardiac patients in a community

The Stakeholders in PR (Consumers)

- Therefore, all the hospitals in the city have to compete for the same number of patients to have a bigger share
- Customers are not aware about what happens in a hospital
 - Audio-video media can be used to provide a virtual hospital tour and certain high-end equipment and procedures
- To be able to get a bigger share of the customer base, the organisations have to create customer loyalty
- Customer loyalty means that customers are coming back to the same organisation again and again
- Of course for a hospital, a customer is not expected to come back again and again unless he/she suffers from a chronic ailment

The Stakeholders in PR (Consumers)

- But customer loyalty is reflected in his behaviour by recommending the hospital to his/her family and friends in case they need the services
- Hospital can achieve this by
 - Providing excellent patient experience
 - Adopting patient centered communication technique such as AIDET
 - Providing high quality , competent and safe services
 - Being transparent
 - Being compassionate
 - Providing efficient services

The Stakeholders in PR (Consumers)

- Recognising the patient as an individual and not as a commodity
- Making them a part in the decision making process for actions that would affect them after providing necessary health education
- Giving them the respect and dignity due to them
- Satisfying his/her other needs such as that of information, privacy
- Being honest and sincere
- Admitting mistakes, if any such thing happens inadvertently
- Obtaining their feedback and promptly acting on the negative aspects and informing the clientele the preventive actions taken and thanking for the positive ones

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)⁷

- Media relations
 - This is one of the most important and ongoing activities of a PR department
 - It must be properly researched, planned and implemented
 - It involves:⁸
 - Providing the target media with information
 - Giving press release
 - Arranging interviews and visits
 - Monitoring social media

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Encouraging debates on important issues
- Arranging press meet for important events
- Media plays an important role in reflecting the voice of people.
- It can reach a vast number of people in a very short period of time.
- It tells people what is happening and where it is happening
- People usually tend to believe what ever is published in the media
- It can shape the opinion of people
- It is considered as the 4th pillar of democracy

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Under the rights of freedom of speech guaranteed by the Indian Constitution, media can publish, broadcast or telecast matters what it considers as having news value
- In India, there are about 892 TV channels including regional and national channels
- There are about 762 million viewers recorded per week in 2019 ⁹
- Therefore, to shape the image of an organisation, the PR Practitioners must maintain good media relationship
- The media is news hungry

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- To reach the target audience, the PR department must feed the media with messages that has news value
- A message that has news value has the following characteristics:
 - It should be timely
 - It must produce an impact on the target audience
 - The message should be of interest to its audience
 - A message reflecting an event that is routinely happening around us has no news value
 - It should be something conflicting or something which is odd
 - A news may be a bit dramatic, unusual, or having human value

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Types of Media ⁹
 - Paid media
 - It is the payment of cash or consideration to journalists and media organisations by individuals and organisations for sustained coverage to portray them in good light
 - As per Press Council of India (PCI), Paid News can be defined as “Any news or analysis appearing in any media (print and electronics) for a price in cash as consideration”
 - The PCI report dated 30 July 2010 on paid news mentioned :
 - That the phenomenon of paid news has gone beyond corruption of individual journalist and media companies and has spread like cancers

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Sponsors of paid news
 - Politicians
 - Businesses and celebrities
 - They sponsor paid news and “private treaty”
- Owned Media
 - Some business houses or political parties own and control print or electronic media
 - It publishes or telecasts news, ads, press releases and other publicity materials in a manner that is favourable to them

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Earned Media¹⁰
 - In this type of media coverage, the media activity is not directly generated by any individual or organisation
 - It cannot be bought or owned
 - These are usually generated by customers or journalists themselves
 - It publishes stories that has news value
 - It is the most cost effective method of maintaining media relations
 - In mid 2016, an Indian tea company had delivered 6000 bags of green tea and launched a video on you tube and Facebook ¹¹
 - This was a most creative PR stunt

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Media Research
 - India has a vast number of diverse media with large viewership
 - It is, therefore, necessary to obtain the latest readership and viewership information of all major media
 - Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC), India publishes viewership data
- The Television Rating point (TRP) is also published by agencies like Indian National Television Audience Measurement (INTAM) and DART
- The research data helps to determine where to send your story or Ad

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- For a print media It is necessary to remember that:
 - The heart of all journalism is reporting
 - Journalists want a story
 - Never to contact the editor or other staff whether your story is going to be used or why your story has not been used
 - It might not have been used due to lack of space
 - Deadlines are crucial for every news paper
 - Every news paper or TV channels competes with other publications or channels

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- The Do's and Don'ts of good media relations¹²
 - Understand the media
 - Tell the truth
 - Be accessible
 - Be prepared
 - Regard press people as fellow practitioners
 - Show visiting press people around
 - Provide facilities
 - E.g. ,Find them a quiet room, a desk, a chair and so on

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Maintain a friendly relationship
 - But do not exploit friendship
 - Think of the occasion when you can be nice to the press people
 - Do not try to buy them with too many drinks or lunches
- Do not get relationship for stopping stories
 - Sometimes you may not like them to telecast a story
 - Try providing an alternate replacement story

The Stakeholders in PR (Media)

- Do not ask a reporter why your story has not been used
- Do not expect a story because your organisation advertises
- Be careful about corrections
 - Errors do occur
 - The editor may be genuinely unaware about the error
 - Do not antagonise editors – no editor likes to publish an apology or correction

Research in Public Relations

Understanding Research⁷

- PR is concerned with research in some way or the other
 - Some form of PR research is informal and some are formal
 - The simple counting of press releases for the client is a rudimentary form of research
 - Finding out which press has carried those releases is another form of research
 - Both of these are informal form of research
 - They do not provide much of information beyond the potential reach

Research ...

- PR practitioners today need much more
 - They have to unearth evidence that their activities have indeed contributed to enhanced bottom line of the business organisation
 - This demand has necessitated that today's research be formal methods of social sciences research
 - The PR profession has now moved away from large groups of people to more targeted groups with specialised characteristics

Need for PR Research¹³

- For a research plan, the research needs have to be determined
 - Initial situation analysis of the organisation may help to find out this need
 - There may be problems, opportunities, the constraints and the situation (SWOT Analysis)
 - Even if you think you know, these have to be tested and confirmed by gathering evidence

Need for PR Research¹³

- Research may be needed for:
 - Determining and understanding target publics
 - These include the following aspects:
 - Demographics
 - Psychographics
 - Personality, attitudinal characteristics, including their beliefs, values, liking and disliking, lifestyle and so on
 - Sociographics - Their covert power, position, reputation, organisational memberships, role in decision process

Need for PR Research

- Behaviours
 - Who the customers are and what services they are preferring
- Image of the organisation in public's mind
 - Extent of awareness of the community about the organisation and their feeling about the organisation
 - Are they inclined to avail the services of the organisation
 - And, if not why not

What is Research

- **Formal research**
 - It is the systematic gathering, analysing, and evaluating of data via some methodology, be it quantitative or qualitative.
- **Informal research**
 - is the observing of people, events, or objects of interest as they occur, typically through qualitative methods.

End of Part 2