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PUBLIC RELATIONS: TELLING THE TRUTH OR SERVICING THE CLIENT?

No matter what its size, a corporation must attract support from the public. For this every organisation undertakes Public Relations. Whether it has PR as an active policy or not is another thing. PR is about building corporate image and generating goodwill among its stakeholders, and keeping ahead in the competitive market situation today. These are well accepted and a normal objectives of PR practice, as well as PR professionals, at the corporate level.

Prevailing Credibility Gap

Yet there exists another scenario which interestingly projects what Public Relations is commonly understood to be in the business world. It can be described through the example of an Indian chartered accountant, Narayan Swamy:

Swamy was an average man in many senses. He lived an average life. And when he died, and Chitragupta, the auditor of the Gods tallied his good deeds with his bad ones, they worked out even – a 50:50 ratio.

Swamy was told by Chitragupta that as his good deeds were equal to his sins they could not decide whether to send him to heaven or hell. So he would have to choose.

“But my lord,” said the thoroughly confused Swamy, who was always confused even while he lived, “how can I say what is good for me?”

“Don’t worry,” said Chitragupta. “I have an answer to that. I shall introduce you to the spokesmen of heaven and hell, and they will give you an idea.”

The spokesman of heaven dressed in a simple attire took Swamy to a corner window – a window to heaven. Swamy looked through it. The scene was what might be termed as idyllic. There were mountains of butter with rivers of milk flowing through them, and there were pots of honey. Rishis and gurus sat on the rocks meditating.

“Fantastic,” said Swamy, “let me now see hell.”

The spokesman of hell, clad in a Saville Row suit, puffed his Dunhill cigerette, offered Swamy one, and asked him whether he would prefer a beer or a gin and tonic before he viewed hell.
"Afterwards, may be," said Swamy. "Let's see hell first." And he was taken to another corner, where the window to hell was opened, and Swamy peeped in. The scene there was very much like the lobby of Hilton. Well-manicured, pedicured and coiffured men and women sat around sipping scotch on the rocks, wine and liquor. Eating expensive food and discussing the killings they had made in the stock markets. There was music and couples danced cheek to cheek. Every one was having a super time.

"Enough, enough," said Swamy, who for the first time ever could move out of his humdrum, average existence and join the upper decile. "I'll go to hell," he exclaimed.

The gate to hell was opened. Past dimmed corridors there was a steaming hot cavern to which Swamy was taken by one of hell's pretty looking angels. He was tied to a pole and flogged mercilessly by one devil, while another poured hot oil on his head, and the third singed him with a white-hot metal rod. And they refused his pleas for water.

"Stop, stop," shouted Swamy at the retreating figure of the spokesman to hell. "This is not what you showed me!" The spokesman disappeared without even looking back.

Swamy pleaded with the devils, and said he had been brought to the wrong place by mistake.

"There's been no mistake," said one of the devils.

"But he showed me some other place," pleaded Swamy.

"Of course, he would," replied the devil. "He's our PRO!"

The subject of our review here, therefore, is appropriately about credibility and truth in Public Relations and our PR actions!

This situation prevails worldwide. Public Relations has not been able to build for itself a distinct image, and acquire the professional recognition that, for instance, advertising and marketing have.

On the flip side, however, let me share with you three quotes that I have obtained on what Public Relations is and should be in reality. One is from the PR chief of a large company in the TATA Group, and the other two from Heads of two international PR companies operating in India.
1. Zelma Lazarus, General Manager, Corporate Communications of Voltas Ltd. and President of International Public Relations Association (IPRA) states:

"The dynamics of PR in the western world is undoubtedly very advanced and is always evolving with times. It is truly an industry consisting of associations, representative bodies, lobbying groups at the government and social organisations et al. There is a continuous endeavour to develop advanced processes, skills and techniques to make PR more relevant. Hearteningly, due to globalisation, PR precepts and practices are slowly percolating down to developing nations. At the same time, one should realise that dynamic Asian nation states like Singapore and Hong Kong have well-developed PR industries."

2. Roger Pereira, Managing Director of Burson-Marsteller's partner company in Bombay, says:

"I don't believe there are two answers to this question. You have to tell the truth if you agree to accept the client, or as your subject says "service the client." Without wanting to sound pompous, we screen clients precisely for this factor before we accept them. Our values system will not permit us to advise clients to do anything but tell the truth. Because the truth, like murder, will be found out. So, might as well let it be out from the beginning. That is the best service you can give your clients."

"If you work proactively and continuously with clients, this issue need not arise. In other words, you should not face the kind of crisis that has been identified."

2. Rajiv Desai, Managing Director of Indian Public Affairs Network (IPAN), which is a Hill & Knowlton associate in New Delhi, adds:

“One of the greatest PR men of the century was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and his unflagging strategy was insistence on truth. I follow the Mahatma's dictum always. In an ambiguous situation of the type summed up in the headline (subject), my approach invariably is to go with the truth. In the end, of course, we can only advise the client; the final decision is his. It has happened a few times that our counsel fell on deaf ears. In the circumstances, it is not at all surprising we no longer work with the client!"

This quote will also remind you of the way some of the great leaders in your own countries went about achieving great things for their people. In India, Mahatma Gandhi achieved so much despite his simple personality. What drew people to him was a great idea, his genuine belief in truth, and a relentless plan. Ghandhi’s triumph was not only a triumph for peace; it also showed the real power of Public Relations. Each one of you will have an example of this type to look up to and draw inspiration from.

All three top PR professionals from India, whom I have quoted, are unanimous on the fact that PR must be proactive, truthful and strategic, if it is to have any value and impact.
PR cannot be expected to help a corporation that is doing a job badly. It comes into play when you want to draw attention to the fact that you are doing a job well.

PR professionals of today have to be qualified and trained to take on the communications challenges and effectively deliver goods. Their performance will overcome the ills of the credibility gap that I referred to, as well as mitigate negative insinuations in a question like “Telling the truth or servicing the client?” Such a question, or doubt, should not even have to arise.

In that respect, I was much impressed at the observations on PR made by Arun Mahizahnan, Senior Research Fellow with the Institute of Policy Studies, Singapore, at a conference organised last year by the Institute for International Affairs in Singapore. He claimed that PR is no longer a function of organising a corporate party or the pretty face handing out the pen at a signing of an MOU. PR is becoming a profession. Practitioners are being professionally trained and accredited. They are now dealing with issues as well as events. PR directors and consultants are getting into the boardroom and discussing strategies instead of just dealing with press statements. And PR is also getting paid its worth for this.

Thank you Arun for your encouragement to people who want to make a career in Public Relations.

Changing face of PR Today

Compounding the poor state of affairs is the equally lamentable situation where we are bogged down in the quicksand of the many definitions of PR. We seem to be juggling with words ... carrying on a futile exercise in semantics. Why should PR be termed and understood some other way? Does it change our approach, our application of knowledge, or even enhance our status? Why not let PR remain what it is – a simple people-to-people relationship based on norms of decency, common courtesy, understanding of the other person’s point of view, and truth and nothing but the truth? If we have to be judged by any standard, let it be the code of ethics as adopted by most national PR associations on the basis of the Code of Athens of IPRA. Let our performance be judged by that yardstick. The extension of such codes of conduct, until they apply to all practitioners, would be the ultimate way to ensure high standards of PR practice and behaviour.

Public Relations, is a niche profession, second to none other in today’s context. Its appeal lies in its rich diversity. It is not marketing or advertising or sales promotion. It is rather all of these, communications and other image building disciplines at the corporate level. It is multi-dimentional, sophisticated and exciting. More so in the present-day context of the development of Asian economies – with the inflow of MNCs, growth of corporations, the rise in consumer expectations, and the rest of things which have been set into motion in business.
Asia today holds out a tremendous potential for the growth of business. And, therefore, disciplines like Public Relations and Corporate Communications need to imbibe new skills. PR professionals need to be, and perform as true-blue professionals. PR function as a whole has to be capable of providing essential services and support to corporate managements in their internal and external communications and image building objectives. This must happen by design and not by default! The key lies in engineering this truthfully and effectively.

This engineering process, today, has to be more and more research based -- perceived and potential value research. It must help reveal the hidden part of the iceberg to release the full potential of corporate communications and image. This can be further strengthened through evaluation and benchmarking processes. This is often an ignored area. It needs to be changed for better results. As it is said, if you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it!

Service Challenges

As in every other sphere of our professional lives, in Public Relations too as a professional service to its clients we have to face and meet specific challenges to achieve our goals. Among them, three major challenges facing PR, today, are its:

1. Being truthful and accountable.
2. Adding value as a service to clients. And using technology effectively in the delivery of messages.
3. Being result oriented in the execution of strategies.

Case for Truth and Accountability

The common impression is that Public Relations conceals more than it reveals. Truth in PR, however, cannot be hidden – no sooner than later it will come out in the open. We have a parallel in advertising. Advertising is said to be a double edged weapon. It hastens the death of a bad product or service. In the case of a corporation it is its reputation and image. PR which is false and misleading will kill a reputation and tarnish corporate image.

In my own personal view, PR cannot change what is “black” to “white”, or vice versa. Yet it has to provide the professional service it is expected to provide to meet the specific needs and objectives of its clients’ – the corporation and its stakeholders. Words must be backed by deeds in any attempt to generate favourable publicity.

Contrary to popular perception, ethics in PR does not begin at the PR agency’s think tank, but in the client’s boardroom. The corporation should have the right attitude towards ethics, and truthfulness in it communications and PR. Public Relations professionals need to ask what credible strategic options are available and what alternative claims are possible.
The corporation should be in a position to support the claims. More important in all this is the concept of self-regulation – or what should not be claimed or projected. PR which may be seemingly innocuous, or deliberately false, may not be violating any laws or professional codes, but self-regulation demands that the industry exercise restraint to maintain high levels of standards and credibility.

I believe, unlike some other industries, the PR industry unfortunately does not have a powerful lobby. It is like a sitting duck. Anyone can take a shot at it. And this is what happens. Hence, if we put the things we do, or plan to say or do, through a 4-way test before we actually do them, PR will be perceived as being much more credible and useful. By asking the following four simple questions we can solve or prevent plenty of problems and awkward situations:

- Is it the truth?
- Is it fair to all concerned?
- Will it build goodwill and better relationships?
- Will it be beneficial to our stakeholders?

This may seem very simplistic or unrealistic in today’s business world. But the fact is that people are getting restive; they are not easily satisfied. They want to know more about the “whys” and “why nots” of any situation; their expectations and demands are rising. In all this truth well told is what good PR is all about. In an increasingly interdependent world, and a more open world due to communications, corporations in society will become more transparent allowing outside influences to have greater impact. Within the corporation there will be a growing need for information and consultation. Outside there will be increased interaction between business and its environment, and managements will be more conscious of their role in shaping environment in so far as it affects business. In PR, therefore, we need to overhaul our ethics and update our ethics policy towards this objective.

Adding Value in Managing Issues

Business today also requires us to move beyond our own personal roles and gain an understanding of all the forces at play in our interactions with our stakeholders. We need to get the issues on the table, resolve them and move on. For this, our goal as good Public Relations professionals must be to “add value” in whatever we do. Value addition will determine the effectiveness of our performance, and rewriting our future and acceptance as professionals.

PR, today, extends beyond the usual institutional advertising, brochure, audio-visual and house journal. It concerns management of all types of “issues” at the internal and external clients level. It extends to giving a helping hand to policies and practices in all the management, divisional, and departmental functions at a corporation. For instance:
1. Corporate identity and corporate image, which is synergistic with the corporate positioning and vision. That is taking strategic actions for getting stakeholders from being merely “aware” of the corporation to their being “loyal” to it. A recent example of this in the Indian context is the Tata Group instituting a “fee” or “royalty” payable by the companies of the Group for the use of the TATA name and logo. According to Ratan Tata, the Group’s Chairman, the Tata name is an equity comprising minimum standards of product quality and image. Payment of this fee would not only ensure this at the companies, but will also help build up a corpus to fund activities to further strengthen the equity at the Group level.

2. Marketing. In terms of building relationships with customers, suppliers and business associates. Especially industrial corporations where company reputation is a powerful influencer.

3. Manufacturing. Going in for ISO Certification, TQM, and other quality measures for better quality products and services and productivity at the workplace.

4. HRD. In training and development, empowerment, and motivation of employees, plus industrial relations (IR). PR today must be proactive towards these.

5. Financial promotion and marketing. In situations where corporations are growing to be large, having to go public, and those going in for joint ventures and tie-ups with global corporations. In this PR’s role with financial institutions and financial publics is vital and critical.

6. Crisis management. In overcoming the ill-effects as a result of strikes, scams, disasters, failures of different kind. One does not have to remind you of the importance of PR in situations like Bhopal and Chernobyl. There are many other problems where effective PR is necessary and important.

7. Social and cultural responsibility of the corporation and the role of communications in that. In areas like environment protection, community welfare, health and education, and so on. Largely country specific some of these areas are taking on global perspective – AIDS, drug abuse, ozone depletion, for instance.

8. National issues and events of concern at the corporate and industry levels. The “Made in India label” being promoted in India as part of its globalisation thrust and in order to actually make and project its products and services as being world-class – like those “Made in Japan”.

7
Working It Out At Work

Corporations worldwide are realising that you have to create a culture that welcomes communications and image building as an opportunity, and develops a workforce and organisation that responds with creativity and initiatives to the challenges and conflicts that necessarily arise.

In Public Relations, therefore, “working with a difference” is again one of the major challenges faced in corporations. PR helps you to focus on your best stakeholders, with specific messages to different and specific people. Within this managing of change, building organisational culture, resolving conflicts and crisis, and encouraging innovation and creativity are four key areas in getting PR to be an important and effective service to clients.

Managing change

The current trend is for PR to respond to the business, corporate and marketplace situations in a way which builds a strong bond between the corporation and its stakeholders.

If we are to measure up to the demands, in the remaining years of this century, two things are of prime consideration – 1) first, we must understand the accelerating changes taking place around the globe; 2) second, we must understand and master the breathtaking changes in the technology of communications in our information society. In this context, we must remember the words of James Thurber, the noted humourist and cartoonist, who said “Man is moving so fast in the world that is round that he is headed for what may be called a rear-end collision. He will not know that what hit him from the back is man himself.”

These changes have made the concept of “Global Village” a reality today. The impact of globalisation on the economic and political prospects of our countries and the integration of developing Asian countries in the network society and benchmarks indicates that the globalisation process will continue and cannot be reversed. Therefore, the first thing PR has to do is to get rid of the cobwebs. Our priority has to be in being strong, objective oriented and with a track record of milestones. In this we need to partnership with technology to search ways to deliver goods and to reap the benefits of effective communications.

A multimedia power surge

The business, social and cultural impact of computers, satellites and communications technology is well known. Cameras may be prohibited in places like ports and airports, but one can see everything these days through the satellite! The impact of technology on business especially Internet and Internet websites is far greater than that of the printing press, telephone and computer put together. The word “distance” today has no meaning. A whisper in the boardroom of a corporation becomes world news in a matter of seconds.
Some of the new media technology that will impact PR in the Asia Pacific Region in the coming years will be:

**Mass-media technology:**

1. Internet, E-Mail and Video Conferencing with more networks and online usenets which will be accessible locally and internationally. This will make it imperative for the big and small organisations to get their business hooked-up to the rest of the world.

2. Video compression (multiplexing), or technically combining radio and television signals will enable TV sets to play several channels at once.

3. Increased usage of fibre optics in telephone and cable TV channels.

4. Interactive digital video wherein computers will allow instantaneous feedback at the touch of a button – allowing editing without loss of quality.

**Interpersonal technology:**

1. The boundaries between PCs, network computers and televisions will get fuzzy as new machines begin to mix capabilities. Lap top computers and hand held PCs will grow in popularity. 3-D graphics will become mainstream for users of new PCs.

2. Miniaturisation of satellite communications wherein uplink transmitters and downlink receivers will become cheaper in price. Direct broadcast satellite may also work worldwide someday. Experiments in this have been successful in Europe, the Pacific Rim, and the Middle East.

3. Megavoice chip players in which computer chips will play digitally recorded messages in a variety of languages.

4. Palm-sized video projectors. These are already a reality. Projectors about the size of a shampoo bottle throwing an image three feet wide, and even operating for 30 minutes on a camcorder battery are the future.

Further still, we are entering the domain of VIRTUAL REALITY. It is making its presence felt in the field of communications – through CD-ROMs and multimedia technologies. For the first time it has also been captured in a movie, namely “The Lawnmover” released all over the world late last year. I think it certainly has tremendous potential for PR purposes such as corporate presentations and promotions.
More and more governments today are taking steps to be up-to-date in respect of communications technology at the national level. We hear about "community networks" being set up in the West. In our own region we see Malaysia is planning a massive "Multimedia Super Corridor" outside Kuala Lumpur with US help. Singapore is opening up its telecom to competitors of Singapore Telecommunications to provide basic fixed-line services in the city-state starting in the year 2000. An Australian company has launched a service that allows subscribers to place cheap long-distance calls over the Internet using a conventional telephone rather than a personal computer. OzEmail Phone, as it is called, was launched in Australia but is listed on the U. S. Nasdaq, and the company aims to make it international.

On the other hand, governments like of UAE have also launched a service to censor Internet sites (9669 sub-sites) which breached local morals and values. The UAE government has blocked access to known and unwanted sites after a lengthy study and research. Soon in some industries one will witness introduction of cyberspace copyright laws. Music and other copyright-based industries are campaigning for a global pact to sort out who owns what on the Internet.

The PR value of all this is dependant upon the modernisation programme within the country and the organisation. The response to media and technology in the 21st century is already visible in many of our countries. LIVE and HOT coverage of news and events is common place today. In fact if it is not 'live' it is considered stale. Coverage of events and business by CNN, BBC, and Star TV is an example in the case of mass media. In the interpersonal media we have examples of companies going on the Internet for PR and image building. The newest trend in this being PR agencies and ad agencies offering cyberspace to their clients and helping them with their image building and communications in the medium.

**Building Organisation Culture**

Corporate culture involves assessing the current culture and identifying changes needed to move ahead. It involves integrating corporate PR strategies for building commitment to the future. It is in a way "thinking global and acting local". It is not just a question of maintaining expensive machines, but maintaining human relations in their broadest form, at every level – organisational, societal, and even national.

Corporate images within organisational culture are not the real things, they are only reflections of real things. Our challenges as PR professionals today are to make the reflections of our company as sustained, clear and accurate as possible. Cosmetic applications to our corporate image will be washed away to reveal the things we try to hide.

Growth in business will not be confined to growth in terms of volume and profit alone. While profit will remain a good index of sound business health, contribution to social progress will increasingly become a measure of business achievement.
As a result the concept of "corporate social responsibility" is one of the key objectives in PR. Corporations, are expected and duty bound to give back something to the community and society in return for all that they make out from it.

In all this a positive linkage between corporate Public Relations, NGOs, and communication technology will greatly help cope with culture and human relations problems and opportunities that crop up for corporations in the new world order and because of the many changes in just about everything we can think of.

**Resolving Conflicts**

Apart from government intervention, more and more groups with vested interests and increased power will emerge in society making corporate actions rigid and subject to veto. In respect of this we, in India, have two classic examples. You will have heard and read about them. One was the billion dollar ENRON Power Project, on which the Indian government played ping-pong on approvals, and the NGOs have put up a strong resistance against the project. The other example is the Tata-SIA private airline project which has run into rough weather. While government officials at New Delhi are divided on giving it a go-ahead, the public sector airline and the other private airlines are lobbying against its being set up for the fear of losing their monopolistic share of business. As a result the whole issue is hanging fire. No one really knows what the final outcome is going to be.

In this increasingly competitive and complex world, the greatest problem for business will be to learn to live together and to find meaning and sense in a business of bewildering size and contradictions and dominated by technology, yet torn apart by conflicts and confrontations. Indeed, the trends and demands in the coming years are going to be ever changing, affecting the outlook, decision making ability and motivations of managements. Understanding the impact of broken bonding, learning to use conflict constructively, and incorporating conflict as a generator of creativity and necessary change, will be always a major task of PR and PR professionals at corporations.

**Role of the Press**

Napolean Bonaparte once said that he was afraid more of one newspaper than a hundred bayonets. He was referring to the power of Press. The situation is the same today when it comes to business and corporations. The Press (and that includes other media) plays a crucial role in building or demolishing corporate images and reputations. PR faces the task of getting the Press to report truthfully and factually. This is indeed a difficult task as seen in many cases. In India, among the recent issues, the one that stands out prominently is the media reportage on the ITC and British American Tobacco (BAT) fallout when BAT was trying to take more control of the Indian company. It was a great media war between the two in the first instance, which led to its becoming an expose of a financial scam involving almost all the Directors on the Board. The media made it very messy for months together, and in the process seriously damaging the image and reputations of both ITC and BAT, which otherwise were among the most respected companies in India.
It was something that should have been avoided at all costs. But the company’s PR could do very little as the situation went out of hand very quickly, leaving the company at the mercy of journalists. It is in situations like this that PR can, and should, be able to rise to the occasion and add value by being able to control the situation.

*With Professionalism and Creativity*

We have today entered a new era in business. Susan Campbell in her book “From Chaos to Confidence” describes this era as one in which we are going from the age of uncertainty to the age of chaos. Or into the age of non-stop and ever-accelerating change. Though Campbell is talking in the American context, it seems to apply to us all in Asia as well. Problems may vary from place to place, or situation to situation, but we have to realise that the old ways will not work. We have to learn and adapt. One has to understand one’s role as a Public Relations person and also the role of the corporation; and organisational change is unpredictable.

In PR, therefore, the challenge today is to encourage initiative, innovation and creativity needed to succeed in the changing markets. PR professionals have to stretch out of their comfort zone and build on qualities to be able to withstand change and come out winners even while setting their own pace. This may require a total shift of paradigm and from the way PR is done or undertaken at corporations. Futurists predict further revolutionary changes in business and economic scenario in the future. In that only those who have the ability to adapt to change will survive. And Public Relations is no exception. We have to prepare for it, from now.

Stephen Covey, the author of the best seller “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”, offers a beautiful definition for responsibility. He says it is “response ability”. The ability to respond. In our sense it is to respond to the “Three R’s” of Public Relations management, namely: PR which builds Respect, Relationships and Responsibility for the corporation (and also itself) among its stakeholders through:

- Ideas about new kinds of action;
- Ideas to improve our organisations;
- Ideas that will give the corporation new vistas and opportunities to contribute to business and society.

In the words of an Indian guru, Swami Ranganathananda, an ideal manager (PR person) should thus be a **RAJARISHI**, that is one who combines the heroism of a **RAJA**, and the saintliness of a **RISHI**. Heroism in terms of ideas and impact. Saintliness in terms of values and ethics in PR.
Benefits Outweigh the Investments

As seen at the marketplace, the actual benefits of Public Relations far outweigh the seemingly high investments – both for the corporation and the stakeholders. In fact PR helps the corporation to reach the top of a hierarchical ladder as depicted in the triangle below (Fig 1) from merely being ‘known’, to its becoming a ‘dominant image’ corporation with loyal stakeholders supporting it in every respect.

![Dominant Company](image)

**Fig. 1**

Another way of looking at the benefits of PR to the corporation is through the “FRED Model” as used in the Brand Asset Valuator Study of the American ad agency Young & Rubicam:

- **F** = Familiarity
- **R** = Relevant to me
- **E** = Esteem
- **D** = Differentiated (from competition)

“FRED”, in the study, stands for Stature and Vitality of the corporation built through factors of its familiarity, relevancy, esteem, and being different from its competitors in the eyes and mind of its stakeholders.
If we are to analyse the image features of some of our well-known corporations on the “esteem” and “familiarity” parameters on a perceptual map, the result will look something like this (Fig. 2):

![Esteem vs Familiarity Diagram](image)

On the “relevant” and “differentiated” factors the picture for the same corporations that possibly emerges is (Fig. 3):

![Relevant vs Differentiated Diagram](image)
PR professionals need to map their corporations in this way, on various image parameters, to check out the stature and vitality of the corporation in respect of its true position and satisfactory relationships among its internal and external stakeholders. This will also help them establish their own worth and their value as service providers to managements and clients – which seems so necessary as seen from experience of individual professionals and the PR industry at large.

A Melting Pot

I would like to end on a note that has further to do with the reality of professionalism and professionalisation of PR, especially in the coming years.

There is always a benefit to belonging to a niche profession -- like Public Relations. PR is a profession for those who want to grow. For those who want to expand their professional contents. Its strength lies in its diversity. It is a melting pot of people, experiences and ideas at the national and international levels. Within it we need to strive for our professional best. In fact we must make being the professional best as one of our strategies for success.

Whether in the national or international arena, one thing is clear: amateurs have no place in today’s complex society. PR too demands professionalism through education, training and discipline. Our objective, therefore, as PR professionals must be to be focused vis-a-vis the corporate objectives, expected results and selection of PR activities. Adding value for those grappling with problems in many different fields of business, community and government. If we are not able to do this our masters will look somewhere else for help, and we will be reduced to being nothing more than purveyors and processors of information and communications. Whether the impending transformation will be orderly, or convulsive, will depend entirely on our own foresight and will.

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