UNIT 1 PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

In this unit, we shall discuss the principles that govern and guide the practice of the PR. After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- list the principles of the PR communication;
- describe the constituents of the PR principles;
- define the key concept of 'Public Attitude';
- explain the importance of judging and analysing public attitudes;
- analyze how the knowledge of public attitudes facilitates and enhances mutual understanding with the public(s); and
- describe the term 'Social Environment' and, on the basis of that, help formulate organizational objectives to meet social objectives.
In the earlier Block, we defined and discussed the nature, process and scope of the PR along with the ethical codes governing its professional practice. Further, we also introduced you to career prospects in the PR profession, and the contexts in which PR operates in the developmental processes of the country.

In the first Unit of this Block, we shall acquire an understanding of the principles which form the bedrock of the PR. Also, we shall discuss a few key concepts like 'public attitude' and 'social environment' within which these attitudes function. We shall see how organizational objectives can be related to larger social objectives. It is only the PR effort that creates mutual understanding between an organization and its publics, by influencing change in public attitude, and by modifying management policies (in tune) with the interests and aspirations of its publics.

These principles are basically related to the function of communication, which we all practice effectively as a matter of routine, but without conscious effort. As a student of PR, you must ingrain these basic principles of communication in order to develop reflexes which are essential for this profession. To think in terms of the PR communication, it is also suggested that you should be on the constant look out for professional communicators and analyse their effectiveness or otherwise.

1.2 THE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

In the earlier block, we described in detail the process of communication as it relates to the process of PR. It is clear that the principles governing and guiding all PR activity depend on the principles of communication as these have evolved over a period of time. Though the Public Relations, Publicity and Advertising are viewed as different areas of specialisation, the underlying concept for all these is similar, as they are essentially drawn from the principles of communication.

Briefly, these principles include the framing of a message by a source that sends it through a channel to the receiver, which interprets the message, and, in turn, communicates his response or reaction back to source. However, since the PR communication is essentially persuasive in nature, the Public Relations have acquired an identity of their own, directly related to the objectives of the profession. Thus, the PR have incorporated a few more aspects, which may be termed as 'Principles' governing the nature, process and function of the PR as a profession.

1.2.1 Principles in General

Before we discuss the principles of communication and the PR, we shall first examine what is meant by the term 'Principle'. It implies either i) the basic general truth of the concept, or ii) the guidelines within which the concept is supposed to operate.

1.2.2 The Principles of the Public Relations and Communications

While it is true that often deliberate communication processes bring about considerable desired changes, it is also true that a great deal of communication effort either fails or has unexpected effects. It is, therefore, necessary to examine a few salient factors on which much of our communication depends.
You have already gained an understanding of the various communication theories and models in earlier courses. We shall, therefore, only list some factors on which the success of communication depends:

- Knowledge of the exact frame of reference and the field of experience of the receiver/audience/target public is of utmost significance. This is known as the predisposition of the receiver, based on his socio-economic background and cultural moorings, his education, experiences and exposure, which moulds his outlook on life. Only such communication, which keeps the receiver’s frame of reference in mind, can be successful.

- The receiver’s tendency to believe what is comforting to his firmly held beliefs shields him from guilt or fear.

- The basic needs of the individual, such as individual worth, group acceptance, self-admiration, security, his skill, knowledge and power, motivate an individual to react to persuasive messages.

- The basic need for harmony between the needs and desires of the individual, and social demands and pressures he faces is equally important. According to a basic communication principle every person inherently moves towards acceptance of what enhances harmony, and shields himself from what might create dissonance within him.

- The fidelity of the message is also a very significant factor. Does it reach the recipient in the form in which it has been sent? In other words, does the receiver interpret the message exactly as intended by the source?

- Finally, the overriding factor in all communication efforts is the skill and experience of the communicator. Masterly skills can work wonders. On the other hand, amateurish efforts can prove to be counter-productive.

Thus, barriers to effective communication can be many. The flaw may be in the source, receiver or the message itself.

1.2.3 Influence of the Group in Message Acceptance

Another important principle of communication that has direct relevance to PR effort is the influence of group membership. Berelson and Steiner, renowned communicologists, hold the view that, on matters involving group norms, the more attached people are to the group, or the more active they are within it, the more their membership determines their response to communication. This predisposition determines the recipient’s perception of the communication and the degree to which he exposes himself to an idea.

It is a well known fact that people are more likely to talk about controversial matters with like-minded people than with those who do not share their views. Those who are already interested in a subject and inclined favourably towards it are the ones who are most willing to receive information about it. To state a simple example an anti-cigarette campaign may not interest chain smokers. In fact, as far as PR is concerned, the principle seems to be that those who read about an issue or a controversy also tend to listen, and those who pay attention at one time tend to pay attention at another.

Berelson and Steiner are of the opinion that the effect of the communication programmes which try to convert opinions on controversial issues is usually very little. If the issue matters to the audience, predispositions may block conversion. If the issue is not important, it may get little attention.

It is vital, therefore, for any PR professional to recognize the complexities and pitfalls, as enshrined in these communication principles, and to eliminate possible errors before launching any communication programme or campaign.
Check Your Progress  1

Notes:  i) Use the space given below for your answer.

ii) Compare your answer(s) with those given at the end of this unit.

1) What do you understand by the term “Principles”?
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2) Mention some factors on which a successful PR communication depends.
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1.2.4 The Public Relations Principles

Till very recently, it was believed that the essence of mass persuasion was exposure of an idea, a brand, a name, a product to the target audience. The success of communication was measured in terms of the number of people reached and the number of exposures. Today, we know that not only do individuals respond differently to the same stimuli, but the response to a communication is also very selective. The PR professionals, therefore, need to evolve a new set of principles to guide their efforts.

Let us then examine the following:

i) efforts involved in modifying or altering the attitude of an individual towards a particular object, idea, person or institution;

ii) also such efforts as systematic scanning, monitoring and interpretation of the relevant social environment, and how these impinge on the performance of the organization:

A) Honest Communication

Increasing literacy rates and growing education has led to an attitude of skepticism towards a kind of communication that seeks to influence, motivate or persuade them. Thus, the first principle ought to be that PR communication should be honest and sincere. Blatantly insincere PR efforts are not only ineffective but build up resistance to the acceptance of any future persuasive efforts.

B) Tackling Information Overload

The mass media message output being phenomenal, the mass audience suffers from what has come to be known as ‘information overload’ i.e. communications being targeted by different interest groups from all sides to the same audience. It is necessary, therefore, for the PR practitioner to be careful in ‘positioning’ his PR messages. Instead of directly sending persuasive messages, one can adopt a strategy of injecting ideas and information into that broad stream of communication, for example, a newspaper which flows incessantly to the target publics. These may be picked up along with all other ideas and information, and subtly help become part of a receiver’s thinking, which moulds his attitude. This requires tact, and comes with experience.

C) Use of the Intermediates or Opinion Leaders

Nearly five decades ago, Berelson, Lazarsfeld and Gaudet propounded the two-step
flow theory of communication. "Ideas often flow from radio and print to the opinion leaders, and from them to the less active sections of the population. While the concept of the 'opinion leaders' is useful, the problem are involved in locating them as they are not clearly identifiable by position or otherwise. However, there is evidence that some media are far more suited to imparting information and ideas to opinion leaders in the areas they cover than others. Choice of appropriate media is, thus, a crucial task for the PR professional. Further, the two-step process is now being partially displaced by the instant visibility being achieved through the audio-visual media like the TV, Video and Films. These media bring the 'reality' directly into the lives of the mass audience. The greater impact of the TV, higher literacy/educational levels, and more leisure time have transformed the way in which the PR influence is generated.

The researchers have identified three separate groups in the "leader" category. These are:

- Vocal Activists who devote themselves to advocating a cause;
- Leaders such as the mass media and key educators;
- Power Leaders like the politicians, bureaucrats, judges and others who have the power to take actions that affect organizations and society.

Among the three most important groups is that of the Power Leaders, who can actually make things happen. The other two groups have access to the power leaders, but have little power themselves. However, the information input that gets to the Power Leaders is much more from the vocal activists and opinion leaders than from the general public and the public organizations.

As a result of this disproportionate pattern of input, Power Leaders often tend to assume that the distorted impressions they receive from the small articulate groups are what the public feels. This aspect has to be borne in mind, when the PR professionals interact with Power Leaders.

D) Choice of Tools

Further, the growing visibility of events, through the mass media, has led to higher public reaction levels. Therefore, as a principle, the PR professionals need to know all that could be made to capture the imagination by becoming real forces in people's minds--actions, emotion-stirring speeches, films, events, dramatizations, events, displays, exhibitions or symbols, have a chance to capture the public attention, and win public support.

E) Ensuring Receptivity

Finally, for the PR to be effective, the basic principle that always needs to be kept in mind is that the target public must be in a 'posture of receptivity'. This is of critical importance in PR. It is a recognized fact that the favourable inclination of an individual towards all messages from a given source is the result of his total experience with that source.

The character of an organization is exemplified by its actions and the sincerity of its previous attempts and efforts. On this depends the acceptance or rejection with which the organization's communication is met.
1.3 PUBLIC ATTITUDE

Having discussed the principles of the PR let us see how these could be applied to influence public attitude, the most important function of the PR.

An 'attitude' is the feeling or made of an individual for or against some person, organization, issue or object. It represents the predisposition of an individual to evaluate controversial questions in a favourable or unfavourable manner. Attitude can be defined as the degree of positive or negative effect associated with some psychological object. The psychological object may be a symbol, phrase, slogan, person, institution, ideal or idea, towards which people can differ with respect to positive or negative effect.

Simply stated, it is an inclination to respond in a given way to a given issue or situation.

1.3.1 How are Attitudes Formed?

Attitudes are dormant until aroused by motives that are incited by a need, emotion, idea or physical state. The motives that arouse attitudes in individuals originate in desire for reward, self-defence, expressions of personal values and acquisition of knowledge. Attitudes may be shaped by a desire for reward, as in the case of an employee who has a positive attitude towards a trade union, because it is striving for increased wages and other benefits. Managements, therefore, seek to foster a favourable attitude by rewarding employees with benefits for improved performance. Attitude may also originate from motives of ego defence. A worker with a feeling of inadequacy may try to come to terms with his environment by adopting an attitude of superiority towards a section of the people around him. An attitude, once aroused in an individual, may be repressed due to external influence or will-power. For instance, a critical attitude may be repressed for fear of disciplinary action by the management.

1.3.2 Types of Attitude

Individuals manifest three types of attitude: positive, passive and negative. A positive attitude is one which is directed towards an object or person with approval. It is the opposite of the negative attitude which is directed towards an object or person with disapproval. A passive attitude is one which is indifferent and neutral towards an object or person.
attitude induces a person to react favourably towards another person, an issue, a policy or an organization. For instance, an entrepreneur, generally, has a positive attitude towards the government's efforts to simplify industrial licensing, for he sees the benefit the policy will bestow on him and the society to which he belongs.

An individual's attitude towards an issue, person or an organization may be completely passive. As a consequence, the person will have no opinion on issues affecting the group. The voters' apathy during elections is, at times attributed to the passive attitude of a significant section of the electorate towards persons and issues that are involved in the elections.

Attitude may also be negative. An individual with such an attitude has an unfavourable opinion of a person, issue or organization; for instance, in the case of privitization of the public sector units, about which the trade unions generally have a negative attitude. This explains their unfavourable opinions on the issue.

1.3.3 Attitude and Public Opinion

Attitude become opinions. Active attitudes when publicly expressed become opinions. The basic motives, inducing persons to express their attitudes in the form of opinions, are their desire for comfort and convenience, safety and protection, pride, affection and to escape pain. The opinions of individuals are activated by their attitudes, which are motivated by mental and physical forces inducing them to express themselves.

People are usually not aware of their motives impelling them to express attitude in the form of opinions. The intensity of one's motives varies from time to time as the urgency of the need increases or diminishes with circumstances. It is here that Public Relations steps in. The basic objective of PR is to measure and analyse the influence of the public opinion, which is shaped by the attitudes of the individuals comprising the public. Therefore, it is important for PR personnel to understand:

- the meaning of attitudes;
- why people hold the attitudes they do;
- the role of attitudes in the opinion-forming process; and
- the motives that cause people to express their opinions.

1.3.4 Public Attitude and Organization

Having realized the relationship between public relations and attitude; let us now examine the management functions of PR to analyse and interpret the anticipated public opinion, which might affect the operations and plans of an organization.

It is essential that the PR practitioner, who is the 'eyes and ears' of an organization, functions like a 'radar'. This helps to detect obstacles and eventualities which might shape the opinions/attitudes of its various public towards the organizational image.

No organization can afford to disregard the opinion of its publics—both internal and external.

Here, we can draw a distinction between the attitude of the employees or internal publics within the organizational functioning and its image, and also the attitude of those outside the organization or the external public, which cannot be ignored.

The attitude of the internal audience employees is important for the performance and image of the organization.

Also, this attitude often accurately reflects an organization's image of itself. For the employees, to respond in any way to an organizational ideal, the ideal must be defined and communicated to make the employees understand it in order to enable shaping of attitude in a desirable direction.
Principles and Functions of Public Relations

The communication gap between the organization and the employees, that affect the morals of the latter, is extremely harmful, and could tell upon the performance of the organization and its image. For instance, if the workers in a type-manufacturing factory have apprehensions about emissions of poisonous gases and the impact on their health, there is a need to educate them on the anti-pollution measures undertaken so that there is no threat to their health. This could foster a positive attitude towards the organization.

Similarly, the attitude of the external audiences or publics is of paramount importance, if an organization is to gain social acceptability. Take for example, the case of a cigarette manufacturing firm. The external audience, or particularly the health conscious and environmentally sensitive publics, cannot be expected to have a positive attitude in view of the harmful effects on health and environment. However, if these publics are convinced that this organization is making a positive contribution to society in, the form of the much needed foreign exchange it is earning, and the employment it is generating, then a change to some degree, could be brought about in their attitude.

It is clear from the earlier discussions that effective public relations involve changing the attitude of the internal and external publics towards the organization in a desired direction. But, how are the attitudes changed?

1.3.5 How are Attitudes Changed?

Changes in attitude occur when an existing attitude no longer provides a person with satisfaction or when the aspirations of the person are raised. Changes in attitude are accomplished by communications aimed at creating new beliefs or by appealing to the emotions that arouse favourable or unfavourable attitudes. Changes in attitude are also brought about when an individual experiences problems, frustrations or dissatisfaction with his cherished beliefs, self-image, economic status, value system and other circumstances. Appeals to the physical, social and economic needs of the people are most effective in changing their attitudes.

Attitude change is directly related to the immediacy of the issue to the individual. An issue, directly affecting the satisfaction or personal welfare of a person, is likely to cause a change from a passive attitude to either a positive or negative attitude.

Factors Influencing Attitudes: Attitudes are influenced by value symbols: these are the criteria by which persons, institutions or events are judged to be good or bad-wealth, material, possessions, prestige, physical appearance, etc. These value symbols are important factors in determining value judgements, and in influencing the attitude of the people.

Events play an important role in changing attitudes. Happenings or occurrences of direct significance to the members of a group are major determinants of attitudes and opinions. These have a stronger impact on attitudes and opinion than the simple communications. The PR practitioners, in view of this, plan events, and try to use these to change attitude and opinions. Some events could have a temporary effect on the attitudes but events that persist over a period of time, could have more lasting impressions on the attitudes.

Options are the public expression of active attitudes. The opinions of individuals are activated by their attitudes, which are motivated by mental and physical forces that induce them to express attitudes in the form of opinions. The public relations practitioners should understand the motives that cause people to express their opinions so that the public relations communications could appeal to the needs and motives of the people.
Activity 1

In your neighbourhood, interview five families to find out which of the following consumer durables they possess, the name of brand purchased and the factors that influences the purchase decision.

You might use the format given below to tabulate information. Use the given codes to indicate influencing factor: More than one factor could be used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Two Wheeler</th>
<th>Music System</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name of the Factor Brand</td>
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Codes for factors influencing purchase decision

Reliable quality = R

Impression gained through advertisements = A

Opinion of a well wisher = O

1.3.6 Analysing Public Attitude

As discussed earlier, effective public relations involve shaping public attitude and public opinion. However, a prerequisite of such an effort is to guage and analyse the existing public attitudes on various issues relevant to the organization. The evaluation is done through a scientific rigour, called Research. If a major policy decision like the Golden Handshake or the voluntary Retirement Scheme is to be introduced, it is imperative that a systematic study of the attitudes or opinion of the employees be undertaken.

Public opinion research includes image surveys, motivation research, effectiveness surveys and studies of individual publics. Two or more of surveys may be used concurrently in determining the character of opinion. Opinion research seeks answers to what people think about an organization and why they think as they do so. That constitutes is the public reactions to organizational policies, practices, services or products.

In addition to determining the views of the public as a whole, studies are made of opinions regarding individual publics such as employees, stock holders, dealers, etc. The effectiveness of the public relations activities in creating favourable public opinion towards an organization is also studied to determine possible improvements in the communication programme.

Image surveys determine the institutional profile or corporate image in the public mind by ascertaining its attitude towards an organization, how well it understands it and what it likes or dislikes about it. Image survey seeks to understand how well a
company is known, its reputation and what the public thinks about its products, services, prices, advertising personnel and practices.

**Motivation Research** seeks to find out why the public looks with favour or disapproval upon an organization. It seeks to discover through in-depth interviews with a representative sample of the population, the factors that motivate the public attitude towards an organization.

To understand the motives that influence an individual's opinion, it is necessary to explore the psychological factors that shape that person's attitude towards an organization. The 'public image' of an organization may be affected not only by its policies and actions, but also by the attitude of the public towards the industry of which the company is a part. Motivation studies are undertaken to discover the underlying emotional factors that influence the public opinion about an organization.

**Effectiveness Surveys** are used to measure the impact made by the public relations activities of the organization on public opinion. These surveys are used to measure the response of the public to the communications of the organization, as well as to measure the public opinion of specific events such as open houses, anniversary celebrations and so on.

**Content Analysis Study** is a technique through which an objective, systematic and quantitative analysis is made of the content of one or more of the mass media. Through this technique, an organization can determine what is being published or broadcast about it and the context in which it was presented.

**Check Your Progress 3**

**Notes:**

i) Answer the following questions in the space provided below.

ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of the unit.

1) Define 'Opinion'.

2) What are three kinds of attitudes?

3) State some factors that influence attitudes.

4) Mention some public opinion research studies.

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1.4 **SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

There is a very close relationship between the PR and the social environment in which
it operates. The official statement on public relations says ‘public relations help our complex pluralistic society to reach decisions, and function more effectively by contributing to mutual understanding among groups and institutions. It serves to bring private and public policies into harmony.’

Also Public Relations serve a wide variety of institutions, such as business, trade unions, government agencies, voluntary associations, foundations, hospitals, educational and religious institutions. To achieve their goals, these institutions must develop effective relationship with many different audiences or publics such as the employees, members, customers, local communities, shareholders, other institutions, and also with society at large.

In a democracy like India, with its diverse cultures, religion, language and wide socio-economic disparities, the Public Relations assume greater significance, their importance to the task of binding these groups into a harmonious whole by shaping the public opinion.

No organization can function in a vacuum. Firstly, it must interact with and work in a social environment, which is in a constant state of flux. The basic element of a sound PR programme lies in the social philosophy of management, which places the interests of the public on the top priority. Secondly, since the right of an organization to operate is conferred on it by the public, this privilege might be withdrawn by the same public. These organizations serve the primary needs of the people dependent upon it for employment, wages, income, goods and services, social and moral satisfaction.

The Social philosophy of management is reflected in the policy decisions taken in the public or national interest. For instance, in the recent past when the industrial units of India, both in the public and private sectors, were called upon to step up exports to help tide over the problem of depleting foreign exchange reserves, the more enlightened organizations responded to the challenges and contributed their mite towards solving the national problem.

1.4.1 Organizational Objectives vis-a-vis Societal Objectives

The Public Relations department of any organization has to work towards the realization of certain objectives. These objectives are designed within a broad framework to help foster and sustain mutual understanding between the organization and its publics. The objectives of the Public Relations Unit represent an action plan with responsibilities delegated at various levels of the PR setup. However, these objectives, themselves are drawn from the overall goals and objectives of the organization.

How does an organization set its task in terms of objectives? Every organization has to operate in a Social milieu. Often, contradictions occur between the overall social objectives and the given objectives of an organization. As a result, an organization has to work towards the realization of its objectives to conform with the realization of its objective to conform with the realization of the social objectives.

To cite an example, the Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited (BHEL) has formulated an objective to earn profits in the wake of the ongoing economic reforms to bring about self-sufficiency of the Public Sector. At the same time, the BHEL operates against social objective of supplying cheaper power to the consumers, particularly the peasants and artisans. Thus, power generation at a subsidized rate clashes with profit objective of the BHEL.

It is in such cases that the principle of Public Relations comes into action. The PR department in a particular organization has to convince its management about the rationale behind its objective, keeping in view its social objective. Thus, the pursuance
of social objectives might call for a degree of sacrifice of immediate profit, but, in the long run, it could reap more benefits in terms of social acceptability.

Now, let us discuss the social goals which every organization has to bear in mind while retaining its objectives:

- Overall economic progress,
- Social harmony and tranquillity,
- Social justice,
- Respect for cultural values and practices, and
- Development of human resources.

These social objectives are not static but change with the changing environment. It is a principle in Public Relations that these changes are to be monitored and analyzed.

### Check Your Progress 4

**Notes:**

i) Answer the following questions briefly in the space provided below.

ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

1) Why should public interest be taken into account by the management in policy decisions?

2) Mention some broad social goals that every organization should bear in mind while formulating its objectives?

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### 1.4.2 Management by Objectives and the PR

Let us introduce you to a relatively modern concept called Management by Objectives (MBO). We shall first try to understand the need for such a concept in the Public Relations. This concept seeks to

- provide a **focus** to three PR activities,
- organize the PR activities for effective realization of objectives, and
- involve the personnel at various levels.

After understanding the need for such a concept in the PR, we shall discuss the various stages in the implementation of this concept.

The PR goal should be clearly stated by the top executives of the PR Unit, and the approval of the management obtained. Thus, the PR goal is accepted as an organizational goal.

- The goal should be defined in terms of specific objectives.
- The individual objectives for different levels in the PR set-up top, middle and lower should be well defined so that the action plan could be carried out correctly.
Measurable standards in terms of implementation should be worked out. This will help in judging the performance of the individuals and the unit, as a whole.

For instance, if you are a PR Manager of an organization, which is poorly projected in the press, your goal would be to improve the organizational image. This broad goal could be translated into specific objectives such as:

- establishing rapport with the press.
- to liaise with the press to arrange for publishing features, special articles and interviews to enhance awareness of your organization, and
- to organize press conferences, press visits, exhibitions, and so on.

Thus, we see that working by objectives enables the Public Relations Unit to perform its functions methodically and effectively.

ACTIVITY 2

Make a list of activities that an organisation might carry out locally in public interest to obtain goodwill. A few ideas are mentioned for your benefit. Look around your town and in the local newspaper columns for ideas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Organisation</th>
<th>PR Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) ABC</td>
<td>Maintaining children's park</td>
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<td>2) XYZ</td>
<td>Building bus shelter</td>
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<td>3) OPQ</td>
<td>Donating for relief funds</td>
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1.5 RELATING THE PR OBJECTIVES TO PUBLIC INTEREST

- A Public Relations Unit sets itself a task in the form of objectives. These are shaped, keeping in view the objectives of both the organization and society at large.
- The PR Unit, through its various activities and communications, constantly strives to educate its publics on the objectives of organization and the efforts it is making to realize the same.
- To illustrate, let us think of a two-wheeler manufacturing organization, which may have set its objective of becoming a market leader. The PR Unit in the organization must address itself to the task of educating various publics, such as
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employees, dealers, auxiliary suppliers, stockholders, etc. While such an effort is bound to motivate the publics, such as employees and dealers, in realizing these objectives, the esteem of the organization will also go up in the minds of the other publics.

• Another dimension to the PR role is that of monitoring and analyzing the opinions and attitudes of the various publics, their aspirations, and expectations from the organization.

If, for instance, you are a top executive in the PR Unit of an airlines, it should be your endeavour to gauge the opinion of various publics such as air passengers, tourists, and top executives, in the hotel and tourism industry.

ON the services the Airlines offers, its drawbacks, their perceived need of new routes, new services and new package of tariffs that are viable, both in terms of utility and productivity.

This could be done by conducting surveys. The result of such surveys can form the basis for advising the management about modifying or adopting new objectives.

Efforts of this kind certainly help the organization to redefine its objectives in the light of the attitudes of the various publics, and enable it to perform to the greater satisfaction of its publics. The PR Unit has a vital role to play in this important exercise.

Check Your Progress 5

Notes:  
  i) State whether the following statements are true or false.
  
  ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this unit.

1) The PR activity is independent of social environment

2) Immediate and tangible profits are more important than long term benefits for an organisation

3) There may be contradiction between the overall social objectives and the given objectives of an organisation

4) Purchase of social objectives could prove beneficial in the long run

5) Social objectives might change with changing environment

1.6 LET US SUM UP

• This unit is devised to help you understand the basic principles guiding the PR practice.

• These principles are derived from an understanding of factors which influence the success of any communication. The PR personnel must, therefore, minimize errors in communication.
In the light of the changing communication and media scenario, we have described how communication flow. The two-step flow of communication and the role of the opinion leaders in the formation of the public opinion are explained.

The current social environment and the need for the PR personnel to make appropriate choice of the media to overcome audience resistance to persuasive messages has been discussed.

There is a constant need for monitoring approval: an organization must try frame its broader objectives in tune with the social objectives. The PR personnel can help accomplish this integration with their skill and effort to achieve mutual understanding with the public.

Activity 2

1) Prepare a questionnaire to study the attitude of the commuters in your area to assess their opinion of the services offered by the State Transport Organization.

2) Study the house journals of any two institutions, and identify the items on which these institutions are trying to fulfil the societal objectives.

1.7 GLOSSARY

**Fidelity** : Faithfulness

**Posture of Receptivity** : The favourable inclination of an individual towards all messages from a given source is the result of his total experience with that source.

**Public Attitudes** : The degree of positive or negative effect associated with some psychological object in the minds of the public.

**Value Symbols** : The criteria by which persons, institutions or events are judged to be good or bad.

**Self Esteem** : Value on oneself or self respect.

**Persuasion** : Process of influencing attitudes and behaviour.

**Field of Experience** : Sum total of experiences of an individual that guides the interaction of the person with the external world. It is believed that communication cannot be successful unless the field of experience of the source and the receiver overlap.

**Image** : Mental representation.

**Information overload** : conditions in which the complexity or amount of information available is too complex to be managed effectively.

**Opinion Leaders** : Persons who are articulate, possess leadership qualities and serve as intermediaries between the group and the media. They help to disseminate information, and act as catalysts.
1.8 FURTHER READING

Black, Sam and Melvin L. Sharpe; *Practical Public Relations*; 1983.

1.9 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: MODEL ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 1

1) The term 'principles' covers information about the nature, process and functions of the PR as a profession and the achievement of its objectives.

2) Some factors governing successful PR communication include.
   a) Exact frame of reference of the target public,
   b) Firmly held beliefs of the receiver,
   c) Self esteems of the receiver,
   d) Whether or not the message has group acceptance,
   e) Harmony between needs/desires of the individuals and the social demands/pressures,
   f) Fidelity of the message, and
   g) The communicator's skill.

Check Your Progress 2

a) The phenomenal output of messages by the mass media targeted to the same audience from all sides is said to result in information overload.

b) In order to ensure that the message is received by the target public, one could adopt the strategy of subtly injecting ideas and information in the broad stream of communication so as to change the attitude of the receiver without his recognising the perspective effort.

c) Ideas often flow from the mass media to the option leaders, and through them to the less active persons, because of the role of intermediaries. Such flow of communication is called two step flow.

d) Deciding which channel may best help to capture public attention in a given target group for specific messages from among the available choice of the media, e.g., mass media, display, speeches, etc.

Check Your Progress 3

1) Active attitudes when publicly expressed become opinions.
2) Positive, passive and negative.
3) Value symbols and events, and appeals through communication.
4) Image surveys, motivation research, effectiveness surveys, content analysis studies.
Check Your Progress 4

1) Organisations depend on the public for their material and human resources. They owe their very existence to the cooperation and goodwill of the public. Hence, to reap long term benefits, it is important to consider the public interest.

2) Overall economic progress, social harmony and tranquility, social justice, respect for cultural values and practices, and development of the human resources.

Check Your Progress 5

1) False
2) False
3) True
4) True
5) True