The Four-Step Process

- Step 1: Research – Define the public relations problem
- Step 2: Planning
- Step 3: Implementation (taking action)
- Step 4: Evaluation
Planning Terminology

- The Universal Accreditation Board and many other authorities believe that goals should be broad targets.
- Objectives should be specific.
- Strategies should indicate how you are going to proceed to carry out your objectives and reach your goal.
Planning Terminology

- These are the definitions of planning terms you will need to know to prepare for the Readiness Review and the computer-based Examination for Accreditation in Public Relations.
Research Is the First Step

- Who do we want to reach?
- What do we want them to DO?
- What messages do we want to communicate to each public that will encourage desired behavior, increase knowledge and change attitudes?
Writing a Public Relations Plan (the 10 Steps)

- The 10 steps for writing a public relations plan will give you the framework to assess any public relations situation – even if you are faced with a case study from an industry with which you aren’t familiar.
Step 1: Goals

- Goals are longer term, broad, more global.
- Goals are a future state of “being.”
- A goal is commonly described as the desired outcome of a plan of action.
- EXAMPLE: To become a recognized leader.
Step 2: Target Audiences or Publics

The groups or sub-groups with whom you need to communicate (both talk and listen.)

- Who needs to know or understand?
- Who needs to be involved?
- Whose advice or support do we need?
- Who will be affected?
Step 3: Objectives for Those Audiences

- **Shorter term.**
- Define what behavior, attitude or opinion you want to achieve from specific audiences, how much to achieve and when.
- Think in terms of the awareness, attitude or action you desire - the end result.
Objectives MUST:

- Address the desired result in terms of opinion change and/or behavioral outcome.
- Designate the public or publics among whom the behavioral outcome is to occur.
Objectives MUST:

- Specify the expected measurable level of accomplishment or outcome.
- Identify the time frame in which those accomplishments are to occur.
Types of Objectives

- **Outcome Objectives** — Change behavior, awareness, opinion, support; require high-level strategic thinking.
Types of Objectives

- **Output Objectives** – Measure activities or outputs such as the number of news releases. (This metric has no direct value in measuring the effectiveness of a campaign.)
Example of an Objective

- To increase by 8 percent the ridership of public transportation in the Los Angeles metropolitan area by workers earning less than $45,000 per year within the first six months of the communication program.
Step 4: Strategies

Strategies: The road map or approach to reach objectives.

- Do not indicate specific actions.
- Use verbs such as demonstrate, collaborate, etc.
- EXAMPLE: Demonstrate that riding public transportation is an attractive, affordable alternative to driving.
Step 5: Tactics

Tactics: The specific activities conducted to implement strategies of a program.

- How you will use your resources to carry out your strategy and work toward your objectives.
- EXAMPLES: Meetings, publications, news releases, websites, billboards.
Step 6: Activities

- Include specific activities required under your tactics to carry out strategies.
- Informal plans often jump from objectives to activities.
- Vehicles or channels you will use to communicate are listed here.
Step 7: Evaluation

- How will you know if you are reaching your objectives?
Step 8: Materials

- What do you need to implement/execute your tactics?
- Folders for press kits, etc.
Step 9: Budget

Four basic methods or control factors relate to public relations budgeting:

1. Overall income
2. Competitive necessity focus
3. Goal or task model
4. Excess profit model
Step 10: Timetable and Task List

- Who does what and when?
- Work backward from deadline or forward from start date.
Back to the Four Steps

- Step 1: Research
- Step 2: Planning
- Step 3: Implementation
- Step 4: Evaluation
Step 3: Implementation

- Actual messages sent through what channels.
- Monitoring tools for execution.
Step 4: Evaluation

- Measure effectiveness of the program against objectives.
- Identify ways to improve and recommendations for the future.
- Adjust the plan, materials, etc., going forward.