

Public Relations Programming

Pat Adanti-Joy, APR

March 4, 2006

Material covered in research
and programming sessions
represent 30% of
APR Exam content

Programming session outline

- Programming components
- Four-step programming process
- Programming presentation tips

Readiness Review questionnaire
and portfolio presentation **MUST**
highlight the **SAME** program.

Featured program:

- Must have been implemented
- Doesn't have to be recent
- Should have been primarily executed by candidate
- Should include all programming components
- Can include some gaps, but not too many and should be filled with "should haves"

Readiness Review Scoring

- 3 panelists evaluate both questionnaire and portfolio presentation
- 48 possible points on evaluation scale
- Candidate requires minimum of 32 points from each panelist with no zero scores
- Panelists will “advance” or “not advance” candidate to sit for multiple choice exam
- PRSA National will forward results

When developing a public relations program:

Always start with company's mission statement. All elements of PR plan should be consistent with company's stated mission.

Programming components

- Purpose/problem/mission statement
- Goal(s)
- Publics
- Objectives
- Strategies
- Tactics/tools

THEY'RE EASY TO CONFUSE!

Programming components

Think of a pyramid with ONE purpose/problem/mission – at the top and most general in nature – working on down to many tactics/tools, which are very specific.

Purpose/problem/mission statement

- Only one
- Briefly describes organization's situation or existence
- Emerges from situation analysis – the research conducted once a problem, need, opportunity is identified

Purpose/problem/mission statement

- Written in present tense
- Based on objective research and documentation
- Wording doesn't imply solution or blame
- Communication is included as solution

*To bring affordable transportation to the
common person*

Goal(s)

- Only one or a small handful
- Relates to one aspect of problem/mission
- A bit more specific than problem statement
- Summarizes desired outcome of program

To increase use of mass transit.

Differences of opinion exist regarding whether goals should be measurable.

In the UAB concept, measurement is built into objectives, not goals.

Publics

- Also known as target audiences, constituents, stakeholders, etc.
- Create list even though publics mentioned in objectives
- Select publics according to those groups involved in/affected by the situation for which the program is being developed
- For exam, sufficient to prioritize as primary and secondary

Ways of identifying publics

- Internal
- External
- Functional
- Segmentation
 - Geographic
 - Psychographics
- For exam, focus on a “manageable” number of publics

Objectives

- Milestones that drive closer to goal
- Relate directly to one or more publics
- Define the who, what, when of a plan
 - What behavior, attitude or opinion want from public(s)
 - How much hope to achieve
 - When hope to achieve it
- For exam, highlight a “manageable” number of objectives

Wording objectives

- Name public or target audience
- State desired action
- Indicate level of attainment (including percentages or numbers)
- Include time frame

To increase public transportation ridership in Metro Detroit (action) by 8% (level) among workers earning less than \$25,000 per year (public) within the first six months (time frame) of the communication program.

Objective cautions

- Focus on outcome/impact objectives (those that measure behavior, etc.) rather than output/process objectives (those relating to numbers of releases, contacts, etc.)
- Make sure objectives are attainable – it's unrealistic to aim for 100%

Strategies

- There can be several for each objective
- A plan of action offering the most promising means of reaching publics and, ultimately, the program goal
- Do not include specific tactics/tools to achieve objectives
- For exam, highlight “manageable” number of strategies

Strategies

- Address the how of the plan
- Identify the best means of reaching public(s) and achieving the desired end result

*To demonstrate that riding
public transportation to work
is a reliable mode of travel.*

Tactics/tools

- Subdivisions of strategies – more specific “how” items
- Specific activities conducted or items created to address/achieve strategies
- Involve the use of specific personnel, time, cost and other organizational resources
- For exam, highlight “manageable” number of tactics/tools

Design, produce and distribute radio, television and print public service announcements.

Conduct a “why I’d rather be riding” essay contest.

Four-Step Programming Process

- Define the public relations problem
- Programming and planning
- Taking action and communicating
- Evaluating the program

Define the Public Relations Program

- Begins with situation analysis (research)
 - Conduct research to learn what's happening
 - Establish benchmark for measuring results and evaluating program's success
- Formulate problem/mission statement
 - Develop concise statement that's one or a few sentences
- Continue situation analysis (research) to further refine problem statement

Programming and Planning

- Strategic planning – “what should we say and do, and why?”
- Step in which highlight program goal(s), target publics, objectives
- Any pre-testing of publics and objectives conducted in this step
- Acknowledge how PR goal(s), objectives intertwine with other business units in organization

Taking action and communicating

- Actual program implementation
- Answers “how and when do we do and say it?”
- Includes action and communication/media strategies
 - Action strategies: organizational changes
 - Communication/media strategies: details of messages and channels or media used to disseminate information – and why they’re best

Taking action and communicating

- Includes tactics/tools
 - Special events, collateral materials, speakers' bureaus, etc.
- Outlines implementation plans
 - Timelines
 - Staffing and assignments
 - Budgets

Be sure to clearly label/identify strategies and tactics/tools and which objectives they support.

Evaluating the program

- Includes periodic and final assessments
- Addresses “how did we do?”
- Revisit research conducted at program’s start to measure success
- Includes preparing/presenting management reports
 - Management communication should be scheduled throughout program
 - Includes suggestions for adjusting program for future

Ten-step plan covers the same areas as four-step plan

- Goal(s)
- Publics
- Objectives
- Strategies
- Tactics/tools
- Activities
- Evaluation
- Materials
- Budget
- Timetable

Programming presentation tips

- Offer enough explanation, definition and/or key “academic” words to demonstrate understanding, but don’t get bogged down in it.
- Make sure, when all is said and done, all programming elements are covered (including budgets, timetables, etc.) in both questionnaire and portfolio presentation

Programming presentation tips

- On RR Questionnaire, provide information in section it's asked – don't refer panelist to another section to find an answer.
- It's okay to cover advertising, marketing and other disciplines in RR, but do so sparingly – this is a PR exercise.
- RR Questionnaire should be free from grammatical, spelling, typographical etc. errors.

Programming presentation tips

- Readiness Review Questionnaire
 - Include your name and page number at the top of each page.
 - Be sure to one and one-half or double-space your text and clearly number all answers to correspond with questions.

Public Relations Programming

Pat Adanti-Joy, APR

March 4, 2006