

Public Relations I

Lecture #1

Introduction to Public Relations

- ❖ **Defintions**
- ❖ **Components of Public Relations**
- ❖ **Functions of Public Relations**
- ❖ **Goals of Public Relations**
- ❖ **Difference between advertising and public relations**

1.

Definitions

Definition: 1

“Public Relations is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and understanding between an organisation and its publics”. British Institute of Public relations (BIPR)

This definition suggests that public relations is the **creation or establishment of mutual understanding** between an organisation and its publics. It also suggests that public relations is not a **haphazard process**. It must be **consciously designed**. **Planning calls for attention, deliberation, research, anticipation, analysis and consequences.**

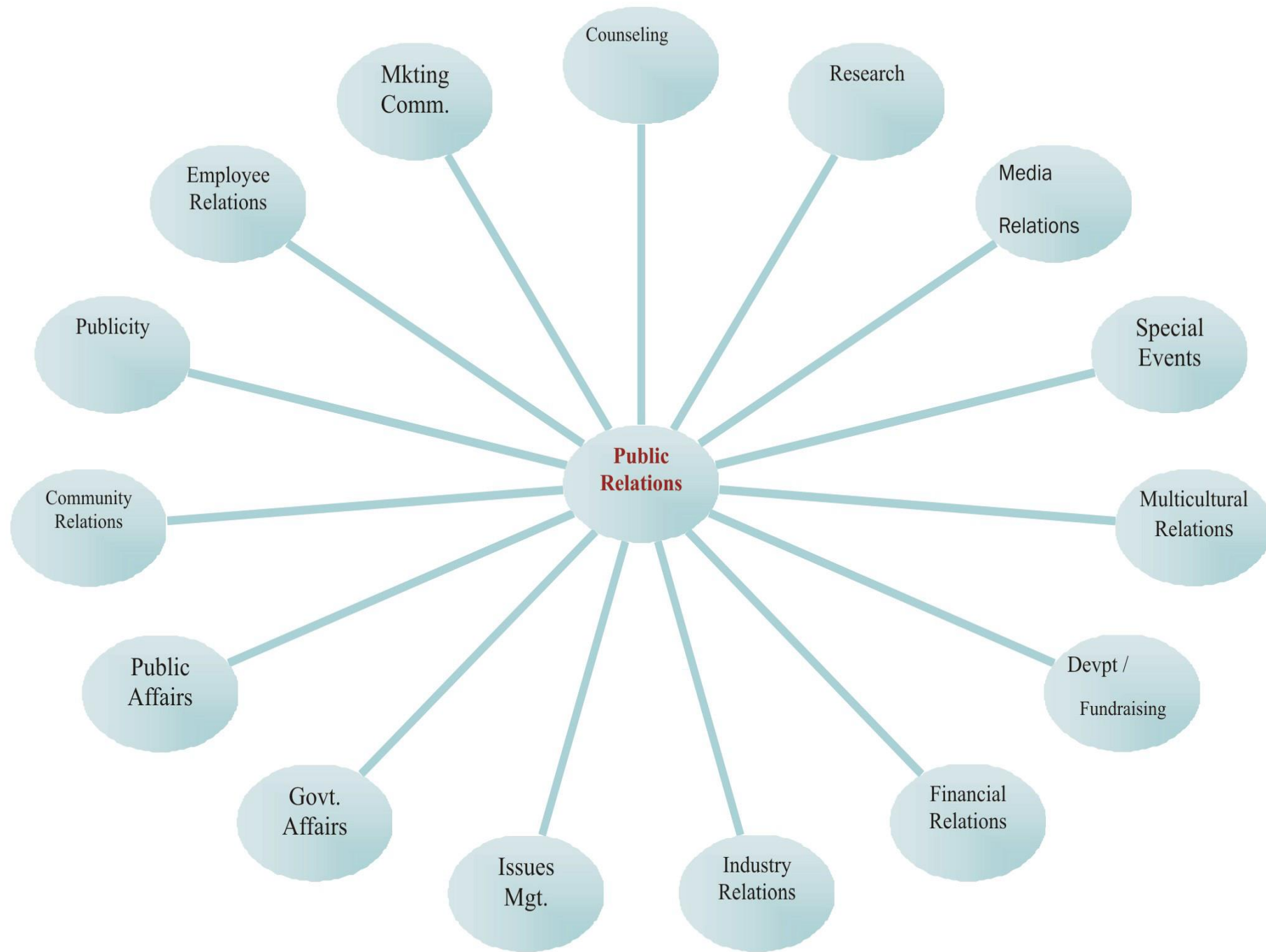
Definition: 2

“ Public Relations is the art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organisational leaders as well as planning and implementing a programme of action that will serve the interest of not only the organisation but also that of its publics.” Mexican Statement adopted by first World Congress of National Public Relations Associations, held in Mexico in 1978

- ❑ Public relations is an art because it involves artistic skills, fine arts, language, writing, public speaking, etc.
- ❑ It is a social science because it uses social scientific instruments to understand and predict human behaviour. It attempts to understand its environment and relates with it mutually.

- ❑ Public relations monitors, surveys and researches issues and happenings in the environment.
- ❑ It advises the organisation so that the policies of the organisation are in line with the expectations of its publics.
- ❑ It implements programmes that will favour both the organisation and the publics in a win-win outcome.

Components of Public Relations



Components

Public relations has divergent parts. According to the Public Relations Society of America, the components of public relations include the following:

- **Counselling:** Providing advice to management concerning policies, relationships, and communication with its various publics.
- **Research:** Determining attitudes and behaviours of publics through research in order to plan public relations strategies. Such research can be used to (1) generate mutual understanding or (2) influence and persuade publics.

Components

- **Media Relations:** Working with the mass media in seeking publicity or responding to their interest in the organisation.
- **Publicity:** Disseminating planned messages through selected media to further the organisation's interest.
- **Employee/Member Relations:** Responding to concerns, informing, and motivating and organisation's employees or association or club members.

Components

- **Community Relations:** Planned activity with a community to maintain an environment that benefits both the organisation and the community.
- **Public Affairs:** Developing effective involvement in public policy and helping an organization adapt to public expectations. The term is also used by government agencies to describe their public relations activities and by many corporations as an umbrella term to describe multiple public relations activities.

Components

- **Governmental Affairs:** Relating directly with legislature and regulatory agencies on behalf of the organisation. Lobbying can be part of the government affairs programme.
- **Issues management:** Identifying and addressing issues of public concern that affect the organisation.
- **Financial Relations:** Also known as Investor Relations or Shareholder Relations. It involves creating and maintaining investor confidence and building good relationships with the financial community.

Components

- **Industry Relations:** Relating with other firms in the industry of an organization and with trade associations.
- **Development/Fund-Raising:** Demonstrating the need for and encouraging the public to support an organisation, primarily through financial contributions.
- **Multicultural Relations/ Workplace Diversity:** Relating with individuals and groups in various cultural settings.

Components

- **Special Events:** Stimulating an interest in a person, product, or organisation by means of a focused "happening". They are activities designed to interact with publics and listen to them.
- **Marketing Communications:** Combination of activities designed to sell a product, service, or idea. These activities may include advertising, collateral materials, publicity, promotion, direct mail, trade shows, and special events.

Functions of Public Relations

The work of public relations may be divided into many areas or functions. Fundamentally, public relations practitioners perform the following functions:

1. Writing and Editing
2. Mass Production
3. Media Relations
4. Research
5. Strategic Planning
6. Management and administration
7. Corporate counselling
8. Organising special events
9. Speaking
10. Coaching
11. Crisis Communication

- ▣ **Writing and editing:** Writing is a very vital skill in public relations. Therefore you must learn not only to appreciate good writing but must also be able to write well. The beauty about writing is that it is a skill that can be learned. Good writers are in high demand in most agencies.

- **Mass Production:** Practitioners of public relations engage in the writing of various messages for the purpose of communicating with both internal and external publics. This is why the skill of writing is vital to public relations. Some of the messages that PR practitioners write are packaged as magazines and other forms of publications, which require editing and production.

- **Media relations:** The mass media in both print and electronic are the channels through which public relations practitioners communicate with the public. This is why PR practitioners need to need to cultivate and maintain good relations with mass media organisations and other personnel, especially editors, reporters and columnists.

- **Research:** Public relations problems are not solved by guess work. PR practitioners carry out formal research to obtain information that is vital to planning.
- **Strategic planning:** Public relation practitioners who operate at the top level participate in the formulation of organisational missions, policies and goals. .

- **Management and administration:** Public relations practitioners engage in management work. Public relations is a distinct management function which helps to maintain mutual lines of communication between an organisation and its publics. PR practitioners manage people, businesses, and events.

- **Corporate counselling:** Public relations practitioners advise management on matters concerning their organisations' relationships with their various publics.
- **Organising special events:** The organisation of events, such as trade fairs, trade exhibitions, `press conferences, fashion shows, factory tours, special observances (e.g. mothers' day), etc is part of work public relations practitioners do.

- **Speaking:** To represent their organisations, PR practitioners do engage in speaking assignments of different kinds for different publics. For example, your organisation may be invited by students who are studying a subject that underlies the work of your organisation to give a public lecture during their career day.
- **Coaching:** PR practitioners also engage in training and coaching top management staff on public speaking and press interviews.

- **Crisis Communication:** A very special type of work that PR practitioners do is helping their organisations to resolve crises whenever they occur. They do this essentially by managing the flow of information between the organisation and the public, via the mass media, and by advising management on what to do and how to do it, so that the crisis is not aggravated. To practice preventive public relations, it's necessary to plan extensively to avoid crisis, but since crisis must occur, it is your duty to counsel management in crisis situations.