



# Program Planning

## Chapter 6

Program planning, the second step in the public relations RACE process, is called “Action” because the organization starts making plans to do something about an issue or situation.

# The RACE is On...

Research...ACTION...Communication...Evaluation

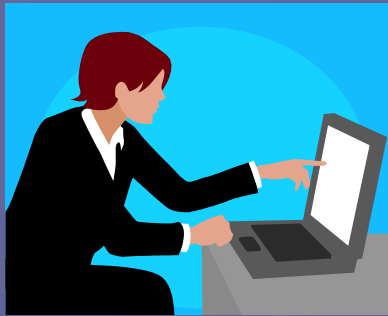
- This chapter examines:
  - The Value of Planning
  - Different Approaches and Models to PR Planning
  - The Eight Elements of a Program Plan:
    - Situation
    - Objectives
    - Audience
    - Strategy
    - Tactics
    - Calendar/Timetable
    - Budget
    - Evaluation



# Program Planning Involves...

- Giving considerable thought--before any PR activity can be implemented--to what should be done and in what sequence to accomplish an organization's objectives
- Strategic planning– meaning “deciding where you want to be in the future (the goal) and how to get there (the strategies)”





# Specifically...

- PR Program Planning can involve the coordination of multiple methods: social media, news releases, special events, web pages, press kits, news conferences, media interviews, brochures, newsletters, speeches, advocacy ads, etc. to try to achieve specific results
- Such systematic planning prevents haphazard, ineffective communication
- Having a blueprint of what is to be done and how it will be executed makes programs more effective and PR more valuable to the organization

# Planning Your Plan!

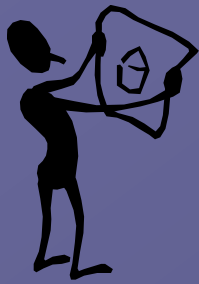


- A PR program plan identifies what is to be done, why, and how to accomplish it
- By preparing such a plan, either as a brief outline or an as extensive document, the practitioner can make certain all the elements have been properly considered and that everyone involved understands the “big picture”
- Often this plan goes to the client for approval and possible modification before it is started

# Eight Elements of a Program Plan

- Situation
- Objectives
- Audience
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Calendar/  
Timetable
- Budget
- Evaluation





# 1. Situation

- A clear understanding is needed of the situation that led to the conclusion that a public relations program was needed:
  - Is there a problem or negative situation that needs to be overcome? Ex: Market share/sales are down (Butterfinger's "The Finger" campaign p. 149)
  - Is there a need to reinforce an ongoing effort to preserve an organization's reputation and public support? Ex: Denny's and Clorox
  - Is this a one-time project? Ex: New library opening

## 2. Objectives



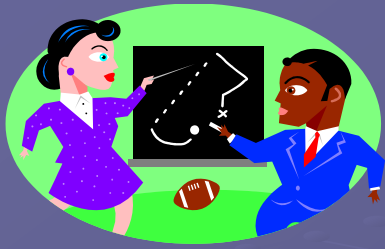
- What is the desired outcome?
- Does it really address the situation?
- Is it realistic and achievable?
- Can success be measured in meaningful terms?
- Types of Objectives:
  - Informational: Increase public awareness; deliver key messages (Examples: p. 152)
  - Motivational: More bottom-line oriented with goals to increase/expand sales, attendance, donations, media placements (Examples: p. 152-3)



# 3. Audience

- PR programs should be directed toward specific and defined audiences or publics
- Use market research to identify key publics by such demographics as age, income, where people live, social strata, education, consumption of specific products
- Audience Examples p. 153





## 4. Strategy

- How, in concept, is an objective going to be achieved?
- Key themes and messages should be stated that will be reiterated throughout the campaign on all publicity materials
- Plan should contain a listing of key messages that the campaign wants to get across to the target audiences and the media
- See examples p. 154



## 5. Tactics

- These are the “nuts and bolts” of the plan that describe, in sequence, the specific activities that put the strategies into operation and help achieve the stated objectives
- Strategy establishes why something is being done and why it will work for the campaign’s purposes
- It’s the tactics that get the job done
- Tactics involve using the tools of communication to reach primary and secondary audiences with key messages
- Nestle’s April Fool’s prank (p. 156)

# 6. Calendar/Timetable

- Deciding when a campaign should be conducted
- Determining the proper sequence of activities
- Compiling a list of steps that must be completed to produce a finished product
- See Gantt Chart p. 158





## 7. Budget



- No program plan is complete without a budget
- An obvious question amid all of the objective, strategy and tactic-setting is: “How much will all of this cost?”
- Organizations establish an amount they can afford and then ask the PR staff or outside agency to write a program plan that reflects that amount



## 8. Evaluation

- Previously stated objectives must be measurable in some way to show clients and employers that the program accomplished its purpose
- Types of evaluation can be: compilation of news clips, broadcast air time, brochure distribution, readership and/or viewership figures, sales, market share
- CofC's recent Bully Pulpit series- the College was exposed to 108 million TV viewers and had an advertising equivalency value of \$21 million

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