

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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The word Public Relations was coined in the states in the first quarter of the 20th Century. The term essentially means how a company was perceived by consumers and by the public at large.

The term Public in PR refers "to any group of people who share a common interest" and "Relations" is the outcome of mutual understanding derived from the process of sharing "Common interest".

Definitions of Public Relations:-

1. Deinny Griswold publisher of "Public Relations News" a pioneer newsletter of public relations.

"Public relation is the management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an organisation with the public interest, and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance".

2. Scot M. Cutlip & Allen H. Center author of the famous book "Effective Public Relations".

"Public relations is the management function that identifies, establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organisation and various public on which its success or failure depends".

3. Edward L. Bernays → "PR is the attempt by information, persuasion and adjustment to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement or institution".

4. Sam Black in "practical public relations" says that

"The fundamental purpose of PR practice is to establish a two way flow of mutual understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information".

5. K.R. Balan (Professor of public Relations) → "The profession which does not make you consent without your consent by highlighting the rewards of 'mutual understanding' and the risk in 'misunderstanding' between the individuals, groups, government and nations in this restless world of 'Man, The Unknown' is considered to be Public Relations.

6. Modern def. By International Conference of PR institutions held in Mexico City in 1978 :- "PR practice is the art of social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organisational leaders, and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organisation and public interest".

PR Historical View:-

Public relations as a management discipline is a twentieth century phenomenon. It is closely linked with the spurt in technology specially relating to mass media. Its genesis however, can be found in the ancient world.

→ The Greeks, though they did not use the word public opinion recognised the value of such opinions when they coined the expression "Vox populi vox Dei" - the voice of the people is the voice of the

god
→ "Machiavelli" firmly believed that the people must either "Caressed or annihilated".

→ Instances among Kings of yesteryears. Can be found when they went around among the common people in disguise to "feel the pulse" of the people.

→ English Kings considered the Lord Chancellor the "Keeper of the Kings Conscience" i.e. served as link between the Government and public.

→ In America, the slogan "no taxation without representation" spoke of the power of the people and their assertion in the governance of the state.

→ The slogan of the French Revolution of the 18th century, viz "liberty, equality and fraternity". too had the seeds of public relations.

→ The Soviet Revolution of 1917, when the people threw out the tyrannical Czar was another manifestation of the people's power.

→ Edward L. Bernays, a nephew of Sigmund Freud contributed richly to the development of public relations. His book Crystallizing Public Opinion, which he wrote in 1923, laid down the principles, practices and ethics in profession.

→ Scott M. Cutlip, Allen H. Center, Glen M. Poracomb in the 6th Edition of Effective Public Relation divided public relations development in the current century to six main periods. (1) Seed bed Era - (1900-1917) (2) World war I (1914-1919) (3) The Booming 20th Era (1919-1933) (4) Theodore Roosevelt Era (1933-1944) (5) Post world war II Era (1945-65) (6) The Era of the Information Society (1965 to the present)

→ The muckracking articles of 20th had a tremendous effect on the general public. The Govt and the organisations felt the need to put their point across to the public, thus paving the way to public relations activities.

→ Ivy Lee, Princeton graduate from Georgia, who is considered the **father of public Relations** got into the act on behalf of some organisations.

A financial reporter for the "New York Times", "New York Journal" and the "New York World", he felt that ^{the} need for openness on the part of business to get appreciation and win credibility with the press

→ America entered world war I almost at the flag end of the fighting in April 1917. The federal government set up a committee on public information under the direction of George Creel, a former journalist. Edward L. Bernays and Carl Byoir were junior to George Creel. Both Bernays and Byoir got into active ^{public} relations after the war and were very successful

→ John Hittler Hill, a newspaper man, became public relations pioneer when he set up an agency in New York with partner Don Knowlton. Today Hill and Knowlton is probably world largest public relations firm serving about 600 clients.

→ After the world war, the world faced with great economic depression with crash of stock markets in 1929. According to Cutler during this time both Roosevelt gov't and business men turned to PR for preparing plans to gain positive publicity

→ with world war II mass communication media grew at pace and United Nations formed in 1945 making the human being the axis of their charter

→ the International Public Relations Association formed in 1955 with only 15 members in five countries.

Development of PR in India :-

→ PR techniques of communication were instinctively used in ancient India. The best example is that of the Emperor Ashoka's rock edicts which informed the people of the policies of the government and exhorted them to carry out certain tasks.

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→ In 18th century, Shri Adi Sankara, the greatest religious leader, went about place to place, engaging himself in discussions and disputations with leaders of different sect and creed and established five monasteries across the country.

→ Similarly Swami Vivekanand moved across the country and to have first hand knowledge about his motherland. His pilgrimage is one of the most

Significant events of his life and its great value to public relations to enlarge on "mass communication"

- Saints like Thiruvalluvar, Kabir, Tulsidas, Tukaram, Purandara Dasa, Pyareswar, Pothana, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who diffused knowledge through the traditional media of communication in the language which the people easily understood.
- The great public relation personality of the 20th era is Mahatma Gandhi. He wrote thousands of thousands words in his 'Young India' and 'Harijan'. Travelled the length and breadth of India, organized many meetings. Spoke and talked tirelessly until he had reasons to believe that the country had understood his mission. His PR & Communication skill is on the concept of Credibility. This credibility over the years generated "mutual understanding". His prayers and pada Yatra to convey his message to the nation.

Philanthropic Phase

- The Tata Iron and steel company went into production in Jamshedpur in 1912. and then as TISCO started practising community relations by building Jamshedpur as a model township. They paid attention to the social, cultural and economic development of the society.
- During first world war in order to disseminate information about the war the govt set up the "Central Publicity Board in 1920. later this name was changed to "Publicity Bureau" and shifted office to Shimla.
- In 1921, the govt established a body called "Central Bureau of Information" giving info other than war. later merged with Directorate of Public Instruction.
- It was changed to Directorate of Information and Broadcasting in 1939. Then this directorate gradually developed.
- Railway comes to India in the 1920's as private enterprises, it was felt necessary to attract people to travel by trains. So, the publicity of railways was started and primary effort was made by GTN railways. The other railway companies also started organising PR activities by showing films and by extensively advertising in newspapers and journals. All these developments marked the birth of PR in India.
- After the world war, PR in India entered the stage of a conscious activity. The Indian public was, in general, against the war. A Dept of Information and Broadcasting with no. of units like, Film division of India, War Purposes Exhibition Unit, Central Bureau of Information was created to carry systematic campaigns for recruitment, price control and rationing food grains.

- In the fifties and sixties, companies like Burmah Shell, ESSO, Dunlop Phillips, etc. set up departments to execute programmes of Public Relations to meet the new situations. Indian Companies like House of Tata also began to set up their own public Relations departments to carry on organised PR activity.
- Around the Seventies with arrival of MNCs and growth of Corporate sector necessitated the need for developing healthy relations with public. Hence PR departments were set up in MNCs and large (private firms).
- The Govt of India also set up a Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) to monitor the functioning of Public enterprises, to set targets of performance and to frame guidelines for running them.
- Other Govt units are standing Committee on Public Enterprises (SCOPE) was set up with representatives of the important public enterprises, Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) (central association of PR professionals and practitioners, in the private as well as public sector), Parliamentary Committee on Public Undertaking (CPU) took note of all these deliberations and discussed the problem and issues confronting public undertaking in respect of their relations with the public.

PRSI

- The fourth stage in PR history is marked by the emergence of professionalism in India, with the formation of professional organisations such as the Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) in 1958.
- PRSI laid down the following objectives
 1. To promote the recognition of PR as a profession and management function.
 2. To promote and seek to maintain high and ethical standards in the practice of Public relations.
 3. To foster study and research in public relations.
 4. To issue a journal or bulletin or to publish pamphlets, books, surveys and other publications to disseminate information concerning public relations.
 5. To hold Seminars, Conferences, workshops etc. on a national and regional basis to promote PR awareness.

PRSI has fifteen chapters with a membership of 2,000. The Society has the following membership

- ① Individual Members
- ② Associate Members
- ③ Corporate Members
- ④ Student Members

Development of PR in the post Independence period

→ After the Independence, the first task before the Country was to frame a democratic Constitution. From the point of view of PR there were two significant features in the new Constitution

(i) One was the guarantee of certain fundamental rights, including the rights including the right to freedom of speech and expression; freedom of assembly, association or union, of movement, residence and the right to practise any profession or occupation.

(ii) The second was the adult suffrage, whereby all citizens who are not less than 18 years of age (originally it was 21 years), have the right to be registered as voters in any election to the Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies of the states

→ with the parliament establishment of parliament and elected legislative assemblies, along with the establishment of a free press. The two essential pre-requisites for the growth of PR had been fulfilled. The stage was now ripe for the development of the professional public relations in India

→ Some other developments which also contributed to a conducive environment for the spread of PR in the Country, also need to be noted. One was the planned industrialization. The act like Industrial policy resolution 1948, again Industrial policy resolution 1956, Industrial Development and Regulation Act 1951, Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTP), the foreign Exchange Act (FERA), Import and Export Act and Companies Act laid down an elaborate code for the functioning of companies. The adoption by the parliament of this elaborate framework of legislation and the setting up of so many bodies to regulate the various aspects of industry created a situation wherein it became necessary for industry to develop relations with the government, its many regulatory institutions and with the parliaments

→ In 1958, PR Society of India (PRSI) was established to promote public Relations as a profession and to formulate a code of ethics of PR. The Society is recognised by IPRA and is one of the founder of PAN-Pacific Public Relations Federation

- PRSI has a quarterly journal Public Relations which aims to promote the Cause of the profession. PRSI is Affiliated to IPRA. IPRA, however, does not allow institutional membership. PR practitioners therefore, have to acquire membership in their individual capacity.
- So far 12 world Congresses have organised by IPRA, one every three years. A gold paper on a subject is chosen in each world Congress to promote professionalism and current practice.
- PRSI has so far organised 15 annual conferences between 1968 and 1992. Different regional chapters ~~take~~ take the responsibility of hosting the conferences.
- PRSI has created the Indian foundation for PR Education and Research (IFPR) as a trust in New Delhi. It publishes a professional papers. A number of monographs by professionals have already been published encompassing themes such as employer-employee relations, PR in Crisis, PR in Marketing Media relations etc. Other themes are in the offing.

There is a recently announced IFPR programme for a fellowship to conduct basic research on public relations in India.

Role and Importance of PR :-

Importance of PR in organisation and Govt institution can be elaborated as given below.

- ① PR conducts a planned and sustained programme as a part of the management of an organisation.
- ② It deals with the relations between an organisation and its publics.
- ③ It is essentially a group or public communication effort.
- ④ It analyses the impact of policies, procedures and actions on publics.
- ⑤ The PR of an organisation minimise the resistance of the publics to the policies and action of the firm. more important to present all of these in a right perspective.
- ⑥ It also gives information about new actions, policies and procedures which would be beneficial for managing the firm.
- ⑦ It ensures two-way communication flow between the organisation and its public.
- ⑧ It changes or tries to change the opinions, attitudes, knowledge levels, behaviours, and thought processes of the people within organisation.
- ⑨ PR exercises is always an effort to build long term relations with the firm between the firm and its publics.
- ⑩ PR plays a vital role in creating right environment and harmonious

relations between the organisations and their respective publics.

- (11) Public relations, even in the context of ~~the~~ National development, plays a vital role between the administrative machinery for development and beneficiaries of the development schemes.

Its role lies not only in creating awareness about development programmes but also in making the beneficiaries partners in the implementation of the programme.

- (12) Public relations plays the role of a catalyst. Before you recruit some body towards the desired objective or goal, those whom you want to change must be supplied with full information and thorough knowledge of the issues. This role is performed by PR in various ways
- ① Information
 - ② Education
 - ③ Motivation
 - ④ Participation

- (13) PR has emerged as a catalyst for Socio-Economic development in the third world countries.

Job of a PR :-

The job of a PR in an organisation is to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) facing the organisation. Here are some postulates

- ① The PR department should ideally be involved in organisational intelligence. The work will entail environment scanning. Even before a product is launched in the market place, it is very important to know the market forces, the perceptions of the target consumers, the competitors strengths and weaknesses, the potential for real and stimulated demand and the mood of the opinion makers, decision makers and the fourth estate vis-a-vis the organisation. All this forms part of environment scanning and monitoring.
- ② PR has an advisory role towards the top management about internal and external development that are likely to affect the reputation of the organisation.
- ③ It must create necessary avenues within the organisation in different line and staff departments for seeking information for communication and identifying the communication needs of individual departments.
- ④ The PR department has to identify and establish contacts with a cross-section of important external publics, encompassing decision makers, opinion makers, the media, consumer protection groups, wholesalers/retailers, specialist groups etc.
- ⑤ It is also a PR job to create channels for effective flow of communication to selected publics.

- ⑥ Similarly, PR should organize image surveys within and outside the organization to gauge the people's perception about the organisation, the product or the service and to put up the findings to the management to facilitate decision making for corrective measures.
- ⑦ Another job is to help establish a PR environment within the company whereby people feel free to give vent to their feelings at appropriate forums and not fall victim to grapevine. In fact the public relations department should prevent the creating of communication vacuums which if not filled by official sources, will be filled by gossip and unauthorised sources.
- ⑧ Last but not least, it is necessary for PR to create an emergency communication plan which should form part of the disaster management plan of the organisation.

TOOLS OF PR

Mass Media constitute a nation's public information system - a system in which the PR practitioner play an important role by disseminating information. However choice of publicity media will depend on the needs of organisation, aims of publicity, kind of audience to be reached and the available budget.

The Press :-

- Publicity through the press is a popular and effective tool with maximum impact. The govt, public and private sector, and non-profit organisations use columns of newspapers to disseminate information to their publics.
- There is a growing crop of specialised magazines catering to professional groups, business and industry. The explosion of magazines is seen even in regional languages for new audiences with new interest.
- Information may be given to the press in a variety of ways like press release, features, articles, backgrounders, etc.

News release :-

News from organisation, also known as press release is the most common type of publicity. Organisations serve as source material for media and hence they should provide such news and facts which will be of interest to the readers. The following must be kept-in mind while preparing a press release.

- ① Indicate clearly the name or organisation, address and telephone number along with the sender's name, designation, etc.
- ② The date of release should be indicated.
- ③ Content should be newsworthy, error free and written in a journalistic style and typed on one side of the sheet only.
- ④ It should be brief and unambiguous.
- ⑤ It should have a headline and should be signed.
- ⑥ It should be released well on time for publication.

Editorials, Articles, and Features.

A public relations person, having good rapport with the media and having sufficient persuasive skills, can recommend subjects for editorials by providing background material and suggesting possible line of approach. Similarly articles could be prepared by the PR personnel or get done through a columnist by appropriate briefing. Letters to Editor is another tool can be utilized by a PR person to make a forceful point that do get published without difficulty.

Television :-

- Television has great force and scope as a publicity medium - a medium which allows the use of the printed words, spoken word, pictures in motion, colour, music, animation and sound effect, all blended into one
- with Satellite communication having become a reality, the impact of TV is persuasive, worldwide and powerful. T.V has come to be a dramatic and the most intimate mass media.
- Industrial news, business news, development features, interviews, talks, discussions, analytical programmes can be all used with great advantages.

Radio :-

- Covers 90% of population and is a mobile medium with a flexibility no other medium can match. Even though radio is a mass medium, it possess the qualities of a direct personal medium as it uses the spoken word and human voice for the most part to convey its message.
- All India Radio has a no. of programmes pertaining to current affairs, industry, panel discussion, etc which can be appropriately utilised by the practitioner. Public relation person can serve as a news source for the broadcast stations. Popular programmes can be sponsored by the company.

Films

→ Films as a Public Relations medium can be utilised in the following ways. They can be used for external and internal public. It could be a documentary on the organisations.

→ Films could be used for training employees, educating consumers, development efforts for community relations or to build motivation among employees, or safety precautions, or company's achievements or even for coverage of special occasions.

→ As film making is expensive, time-consuming and cumbersome, more and more public relations professionals use video films.

Oral Communication

→ Oral communication is used as medium chiefly in employee communication for training them or informing them about the company's policies. It is also used in consumer, dealer, community and stockholder relations programmes.

→ Oral communication may be carried on through meeting, speeches, telephone calls, public address system, panel discussions, counselling etc.

→ Oral comm. is very effective, speedy and with little expense. However it has limitation in that it may be forgotten quickly or partly understood as one cannot refer back to it.

Printed Literature

→ Every organisation, whether in business or service, whether commercial or non-profit making, needs publicity literature to promote its products, services or activities. These can take various forms like. House Journals, annual reports, brochures, folder, poster, pamphlets, catalogues, booklets, leaflets, direct mail etc.

House Journal :-

A house journal among others is a selective media. There are two types of house journals: internal and external. The internal journal is one of the important tools for effective employee communication. The external house journals, however, aim at some segments of external 'publics' like dealers, shareholders, etc. A third type is a combination of both internal + external, meant for employees as well as external publics.

Annual Reports :-

Annual Reports were have come to be recognised as an important Public Relations tool for Corporate Communication. With more and more organisations going public, annual reports can serve as prestige publications to be sent to the shareholders and attract prospective investors. *

Brochures :-

A brochure is a multi-panel publication that covers information usually on a specific subject. A brochure is also called a pamphlet, a flyer, or a folder. A booklet has the same purpose as a brochure except that it has more pages that may be stapled together rather than folded.

As a public relations person, one can have the service of a professional designer or a professional agency to go about the job, it is useful to know the basis so that one can guide the production.

Advertising :-

→ Public Relations advertising aim at promoting favorable attitudes among the public for the organisation, so as to attract and maintain shareholders, build goodwill within the community to improve employee relations and morale, educate customers, secure goodwill of dealers and suppliers, and keep the govt informed.

→ Tool of advertising

- stickers, posters, labels to serve as reminders
- Racks or bins for display of products, window display
- Identification on the pack
- Speciality gift like calendars, diaries, pens, key chains, etc
- Provision of any necessary leaflets, catalogues etc to assist

customer's decision to buy

Direct Mail

Direct mail in some circumstances is the most powerful and certainly the most cost-effective Public Relations tool for disseminating of messages, announcements. It is called a selective marketing technique. A letter addressed to the recipient, outlining benefits he will get is must included in the mail.