

Public Relations

PURPOSE OF COURSE

Effective public relations skills are essential to so much of success in private and public spheres. Public relations efforts address how we wish to present ourselves to others, and how to deal with the perceptions of who others believe we are. Public relations tactics are useful for large international corporate projects, or something as personal as networking for your own career advancement.

If you are taking this course as part of a communications major, you may well find most every other course in the program is based on addressing how we relate to others. The field of public relations takes the theories of human interaction and applies these theories for real-life results.

This course will help prepare you to conduct public relations suitable for small start-up businesses, international companies, political campaigns, social programs, personal development, and other outreach projects. There are many tools useful to effective public relations. As we review the components of a public relations campaign, you will learn how to prepare the key materials that will help you get the job done. You will examine what has worked for others, as you craft your own form and style. You may develop your own public relations portfolio including news releases, pitch letters, biographies, position papers, crisis communications, and other tools of a strategic public relations kit. All of this will be accomplished by referring to diverse resources and examining extensive materials from successful practitioners in the field.

COURSE REQUIRMENTS

In order to take this course you must:

- ✓ Have access to a computer.
- ✓ Have continuous broadband Internet access.
- ✓ Have the ability/permission to install plug-ins or software (e.g., Adobe Reader or Flash).
- ✓ Have the ability to download and save files and documents to a computer.
- ✓ Have the ability to open Microsoft files and documents.
- ✓ Be competent in the English language.
- ✓ Have read the [Saylor Student Handbook](#).



COURSE INFORMATION

Welcome to COMM411. Please find below general information on this course and its requirements.

Course Designer: Steven R. Van Hook, PhD

Primary Resources: This course is composed of a range of different free, online materials. However, the course makes primary use of the following materials:

- [All About Public Relations](#)
- Steven R. Van Hook's [Media and Public Relations: A Primer](#)
- Steven R. Van Hook's [YouTube Video Library](#)
- [How-To Marketing](#)

Requirements for Completion: In order to complete this course, you will need to work through each unit and all of its assigned materials. You will also need to complete the Final Exam.

Please note that you will only receive an official grade on your Final Exam. However, in order to adequately prepare for this exam, you will need to keep detailed notes on the readings and resources throughout the course units.

In order to pass this course, you will need to earn a 70% or higher on the Final Exam. Your score on the exam will be tabulated as soon as you complete it. If you do not pass the exam, you may take it again.

Time Commitment: This course should take you a total of approximately **135 hours** to complete, including discussion participation and the Final Exam. Each unit includes a “time advisory” that lists the amount of time you are expected to spend on each subunit. It may be useful to take a look at these time advisories and determine how much time you have to complete each unit and to then set goals for yourself.

Tips/Suggestions: There are many resources noted throughout the course that may be useful as you advance in the field of public relations. As you review the materials, be sure to save links to resources so you may refer back to them later in your career. Please make sure to take comprehensive notes as you work through each resource. These notes will serve as a useful review as you study for your Final Exam.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Knowledgably discuss the origins, purpose, and methods of effective public relations.
- Conduct related research and prepare a comprehensive public relations plan.
- Craft a range of communications serving target audiences in commercial and social campaigns.
- Select suitable outlets and proper message format for media relations.
- Apply ethical principles to effective public relations practice.
- Develop messages using themes and images that connect with a multicultural audience in local and global campaigns.
- Identify resources for professional networking and job opportunities in public relations.



CONTENT OUTLINE

UNIT 1: Foundations of Public Relations

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 5.5 hours to complete

Subunit 1.1: 3 hours

Subunit 1.2: 2.5 hours

To understand where the field of public relations is heading, it helps to know its history. The past of public relations is still relatively young, so thankfully we do not need to dig too deep to find its roots. Public relations campaigns can involve media relations, employee and member relations, community affairs, government regulation, financial reporting, issues management, marketing communications, fund raising, and most any aspect of an organization's interaction with people inside or outside of its doors. Public relations professionals frequently advise the higher rungs of management, helping top decision-makers formulate a company message. Once that message is developed, it is disseminated to stakeholders within an organization and to the general public, using appropriate tools for effective outreach and media relations.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Discuss the origins and aims of public relations.
- Describe current and future trends impacting public relations.

1.1 Key Innovations and Practices in the Development of Public Relations

Reading: The Economist: “Rise of the Image Men”

Link: The Economist: “[Rise of the Image Men](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and read this insightful analysis of the beginnings, evolution, and current state of the public relations industry.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

Terms of Use: Please respect the copyright and terms of use on the webpage above.

Reading: Wikipedia's “Public Relations”

Link: Wikipedia's “[Public Relations](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and review this useful Wikipedia article for an overview of the history, definitions, and methods of public relations. It is not necessary to



digest the entire article at this time, but it serves well as a touch point as the course delves into the finer aspect of successful public relations practices.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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Readings: All about Public Relations: Steve Simon's "Traditional PR Still Remains Strong" and Peter Granat's "A Recipe for Marketing Success"

Links: All About Public Relations: Steve Simon's "[Traditional PR Still Remains Strong](#)" (HTML) and Peter Granat's "[A Recipe for Marketing Success](#)" (HTML)

Instructions: Please click on the links above and read these articles prepared by long-time public relations executives. While considering the contemporary changes in public relations practices, these pieces help to consider how much of a PR practitioner's work remains grounded in fundamental traditions and methods.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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1.2 New Directions in Public Relations

Readings: All about Public Relations: Marsha Friedman's "The Past, Present and Future of Public Relations" and Blake Miller's "The New Rules for Public Relations"

Links: All About Public Relations: Marsha Friedman's "[The Past, Present and Future of Public Relations](#)" (HTML) and Blake Miller's "[The New Rules for Public Relations](#)" (HTML)

Instructions: Please click on the links above, and read the two articles which provide practitioner's insights into the changing environment of public relations. In the first reading, agency owner Marsha Friedman interviews Al Ries, an international marketing expert and author. This interview covers case studies in traditional marketing and PR campaigns. In this interview, Friedman and Ries discuss how changing times have modified a professional's focus. In the second reading, public relations executive Blake Miller describes the changing strategies for challenging times in the field.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2.5 hours to complete.

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UNIT 2: Public Relations Components and Planning

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 9 hours to complete

Subunit 2.1: 5 hours

Sub-subunit 2.1.1: 4 hours

Sub-subunit 2.1.2: 1 hour

Subunit 2.2: 4.5 hours

Sub-subunit 2.2.1: 3 hours

Sub-subunit 2.2.2: 1 hours

Most major undertakings start with the essential process of plotting a plan. This is especially true in public relations efforts, where a complex mix of tools and coordinated timing is crucial to the successful outcomes of a campaign. The process begins with identifying the many intricate parts of a specified project, than assembling them into a working mechanism guided by a detailed blueprint called the Public Relations Plan.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Specify the fundamental components of a public relations campaign, including the terms, concepts and tools essential to PR planning.
- Design a formal public relations plan suitable for presenting to key decision makers.

2.1 Essential Components of Public Relations Planning

2.1.1 Public Relations Primer

Web Media: Steven R. Van Hook's "Media and Public Relations: A Primer"

Link: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Media and Public Relations: A Primer](#)"

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and visit this interactive resource. You should review each of the primer modules, and make a note of any resources or templates you may find especially useful at a future date as you undertake a public relations campaign. We will be referring back to this primer elsewhere in the course for specific examples supporting unit topics ahead. This primer was prepared to help government and business leaders in the former Soviet Union make the transition from a centralized system to a market environment where they were expected to interact with a freer and more independent media. The concept of 'public and media relations' was new to many of these leaders, so this primer provides a fundamental overview of the basic ideas and tools of PR.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 4 hours to complete.

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2.1.2 Fundamental Terms and Concepts

Web Media: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "Marketing Fundamentals"

Link: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Marketing Fundamentals](#)" (YouTube)

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and view the YouTube video summarizing the fundamentals of marketing terminology and practices. Many of the terms and concepts found in public relations are rooted in the foundations and traditions of marketing. Please pay extra attention to the key concepts of Targeting, Positioning, Demographics, and Segmentation. These topics are critical when defining public relations audiences and the methods to reach them.

Viewing and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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2.2 The Public Relations Plan

2.2.1 Preparing the Public Relations Plan

Reading: About Public Relations: Craig Miyamoto's "How to Write a Comprehensive Public Relations Plan"

Link: About Public Relations: Craig Miyamoto's "[How to Write a Comprehensive Public Relations Plan](#)" (PDF)

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and then find the link to "How to Write a Comprehensive Public Relations Plan" which will take you to a PDF file for this excellent primer on crafting a PR plan.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 3 hours to complete.

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2.2.2 Public Relations Planning Primers

Readings: All About Public Relations: Steve Le Vine's "Public Relations: Your Saving Grace?" and Pari Noskin Taichert's "Plan It: A Four-Point PR Primer"

Links: All About Public Relations: Steve Le Vine's "[Public Relations: Your Saving Grace?](#)" (HTML) and Pari Noskin Taichert's "[Plan It: A Four-Point PR Primer](#)" (HTML)

Instruction: Please click on the links above, and read the article by PR agency founder Steven Le Vine, who provides a 5-point overview of key concepts a practitioner must keep in mind when planning a public relations campaign; and Pari Noskin Taichert's brief summary of the four initial steps for preparing a public relations plan.



Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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UNIT 3: Key Target Audiences

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 5.75 hours to complete

Subunit 3.1: .75 hour

Subunit 3.2: 2 hours

Subunit 3.3: 3 hours

Certainly the most important aspect of any outreach campaign is to first know your target audience. Once you have clearly identified the target, all other aspects of your communications plan may readily fall into place. Some of the demographic identifiers most critical to a communicator are age, gender, and income level. Other useful demographic information includes education level, marital status, geographical location, culture, and psychographic information such as a person's hopes and fears. As we come to better understand our target audience, we are much better prepared to develop a public relations message and strategize how to disseminate this message. Publics and stakeholders are those who share some sort of interest in the issues and outcome of an endeavor; they could be stockholders, employees, customers, members of the community, government regulators, vendors, suppliers, distributors, or even competitors. Being a stakeholder does not necessarily mean having a financial stake or even awareness that one may be connected to a company or program's work. Quite often, an organization's stakeholders have conflicting interests—such as a company's managers looking to reduce costs, while its workers demand higher pay and better benefits. As you consider the materials in this unit, try to imagine all of the people who may have an interest in a particular message or position and the different approaches you might take to communicate with them.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Quantify and qualify characteristics of his or her domestic and/or global target audience.
- Formulate messages that will connect with the demographics and particular mindsets of his or her audience.
- Research and analyze key issues to be addressed within a public relations campaign.
- Identify stakeholders involved with and impacted by public relations efforts.

3.1 Publics and Demographics

Web Media: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "Who Are Your Publics?"

Link: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Who Are Your Publics?](#)" (Video)

Instructions: Please click on the link above and view the YouTube clip on publics and demographics. Among the most important aspects of a communication campaign is



forming a clear picture of just who the targeted audience is. This video helps describe key publics, demographics, and segments we should identify early in our communication planning.

Viewing and note-taking will take approximately .75 hour to complete.

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3.2 International and Global Demographic Research Resources

Web Media: How-To Marketing: Marketing Research Resources

Link: How-To Marketing: [Marketing Research Resources](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click the link and review this international research resource for connections to domestic and global demographic data including gender, age, income, national profiles, and company reports. Among the most useful for international campaigns are the CIA World Factbook and the Economist Country Briefings.

Reviewing and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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3.3 Formulating Messages for Diverse Demographics

Web Media: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "Transcultural Communications"

Link: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Transcultural Communications](#)" (Video)

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and view the YouTube video on international communication tactics using themes and images that transcend cultural differences. If you publish a website, then you are positioned to reach a global audience. English may connect us in global business with a common language, but we still need to be sensitive to cultural differences.

Viewing and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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Readings: All About Public Relations: Eddie Velez's "For Best Promotion, Think Human Nature"; CR 'Cataunya' Ransom's "Launching a Multicultural PR Campaign"; Neil Payne's "Public Relations Across Cultures"; and N. Chandramouli's "Putting Passion in Public Relations"

Links: All About Public Relations: Eddie Velez's "[For Best Promotion, Think Human Nature](#)"; CR 'Cataunya' Ransom's "[Launching a Multicultural PR Campaign](#)"; Neil



Payne's "[Public Relations Across Cultures](#)"; and N. Chandramouli's "[Putting Passion in Public Relations](#)"

Instruction: Please click on the links above, and read the articles by public relations experts specializing in cross-cultural communications.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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UNIT 4: Media Relations

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 15.5 hours to complete

Subunit 4.1: 2.5 hours

Subunit 4.2: 13 hours

Sub-subunit 4.2.1: 2 hours

Sub-subunit 4.2.2: 3.5 hours

Sub-subunit 4.2.3: 2 hours

Sub-subunit 4.2.4: 3.5 hours

Sub-subunit 4.2.5: 2 hours

One sure need at all newspapers, magazines, television, radio stations, and websites is material to fill up their pages and their broadcast time. You need only supply media outlets with the material they crave in a way they can use it. Media releases are going to be your primary and most important means of contact with editors and reporters. The American Wall Street Journal estimates 90-percent of its coverage originates with companies making their own announcements. The best way to develop your skills in media relations is to work as a reporter in different media, but it also serves to learn to think like a reporter: what does a reporter look for? How could you present your message in a way that appeals to the media? This is such a critical topic, you will have a large number of related readings assigned in this unit, as well as the next unit on Writing for Public Relations.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Describe traditional and new media outlets.
- Select the most appropriate media for connecting with target audiences.
- Prepare effective communications that appeal to media gatekeepers.

4.1 Traditional and New Media Outlets

Reading: Media and Public Relations Primer: Understanding the Media

Link: Media and Public Relations Primer: [Understanding the Media](#) (HTML)



Instructions: Click the link and read the public relations primer module on media relations, featuring a summary of criteria editors and reports may use in deciding which stories to cover, and a brief overview of characteristics particular to specific media.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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Readings: About Public Relations: Joanna Lulesa’s “[Plugging in New PR Technologies](#)”; Diana Ennen’s “[Social Networking Changes Everything](#)”; and Marsha Friedman’s “[How do Mainstream Media Use Social Media?](#)”

Links: About Public Relations: Joanna Lulesa’s “[Plugging in New PR Technologies](#)” (HTML); Diana Ennen’s “[Social Networking Changes Everything](#)” (HTML); and Marsha Friedman’s “[How do Mainstream Media Use Social Media?](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by public relations experts specializing in relations with social media.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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4.2 Effective Media Relations

4.2.1 Attracting Media Attention

Readings: About Public Relations: Marsha Friedman’s “[How to Get the Media Interested in You](#)”; John P. David’s “[Want the Media’s Attention?](#)”; and Robert Bernarduci’s “[Want More Media Coverage?](#)”

Links: About Public Relations: Marsha Friedman’s “[How to Get the Media Interested in You](#)” (HTML); John P. David’s “[Want the Media’s Attention?](#)” (HTML); and Robert Bernarduci’s “[Want More Media Coverage?](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by PR experts specializing in media relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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Web Media: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook’s “[Communication Appeals & Tactics](#)”

Link: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook’s “[Steven R. Van Hook’s “Communication Appeals & Tactics](#)” (Video)



Instructions: Please click on the link above, and view the YouTube video presenting basic appeals and tactics for effective communications. It answers questions of “How do you get someone’s attention, and what do you do if you manage to catch it?” Remember that though you’re going through the media’s gatekeeping editors and reporters, it’s ultimately their audiences you are trying to reach. Have an appeal that works for their audience, and the media will help you do that.

Viewing and note-taking will take approximately .5 hour to complete.

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4.2.2 The Media Release

Reading: Media and Public Relations Primer: Effective Media Releases, Kits & Conferences

Link: Media and Public Relations Primer: [Effective Media Releases, Kits & Conferences](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click the link and read the public relations primer module on media releases, and how to pitch the news media. Be sure to check the embedded links to sample media release formats.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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Readings: About Public Relations: Bill Stoller’s “Press Releases for Every Occasion”; Scott Lorenz’s “Fifty-five Reasons to Send out a Release”; B.L. Ochman’s “Press Releases are a Colossal Waste of Time”; and Steve Turner’s “How to Get Better Media Coverage”

Links: About Public Relations: Bill Stoller’s “[Press Releases for Every Occasion](#)” (HTML); Scott Lorenz’s “[Fifty-five Reasons to Send out a Release](#)” (HTML); B.L. Ochman’s “[Press Releases are a Colossal Waste of Time](#)” (HTML); and Steve Turner’s “[How to Get Better Media Coverage](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the four articles written by PR experts specializing in media relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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4.2.3 Pitching Your Story

Readings: About Public Relations: Arit Essien’s “How to Pitch Best for Media Placements”; Regine J. Nelson’s “The Art of Pitching to the Media”; Mark Macias’ “How to Pitch Stories Like a Journalist”; and Marsha Friedman’s “How to be a Print Reporter’s Best Pick”

Links: About Public Relations: Arit Essien’s “[How to Pitch Best for Media Placements](#)” (HTML); Regine J. Nelson’s “[The Art of Pitching to the Media](#)” (HTML); Mark Macias’ “[How to Pitch Stories Like a Journalist](#)” (HTML); and Marsha Friedman’s “[How to be a Print Reporter’s Best Pick](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the four articles written by PR experts specializing in media relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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4.2.4 Presenting Yourself to the Media

Reading: Media and Public Relations Primer: Preparing for Media Interviews

Link: Media and Public Relations Primer: [Preparing for Media Interviews](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click the link and read the public relations primer module on ten steps in preparing for media interviews, the types of reporters you might meet, and three interview mistakes people often make.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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Readings: About Public Relations: John Millen’s “Simple Techniques for Media Interviews”; Jim Cameron’s “Making the Most of Your Media Interviews”; Marsha Friedman’s “Tips for Taking on Tough Talk Radio”; Marsha Friedman’s “How to Make Sure the Camera Loves You”; and Scott Lorenz’s “What to Wear for a Television Interview”

Links: About Public Relations: About Public Relations: John Millen’s “[Simple Techniques for Media Interviews](#)” (HTML); Jim Cameron’s “[Making the Most of Your Media Interviews](#)” (HTML); Marsha Friedman’s “[Tips for Taking on Tough Talk Radio](#)” (HTML); Marsha Friedman’s “[How to Make Sure the Camera Loves You](#)” (HTML); and Scott Lorenz’s “[What to Wear for a Television Interview](#)” (HTML)



Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by public relations experts specializing in relations with news media.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2.5 hours to complete.

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4.2.5 Maintaining Media Relationships

Readings: About Public Relations: Charlotte Tomic's "Ten Core Media Relations Strategies"; Vicky Gallion's "Winning the PR Media Game"; Jonathan Bernstein's "Trial by Media: A Roster of Do's and Don'ts"; Jonathan Bernstein's "When the Media Go Too Far"

Links: About Public Relations: Charlotte Tomic's "[Ten Core Media Relations Strategies](#)"; Vicky Gallion's "[Winning the PR Media Game](#)"; Jonathan Bernstein's "[Trial by Media: A Roster of Do's and Don'ts](#)"; Jonathan Bernstein's "[When the Media Go Too Far](#)"

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by these PR experts specializing in media relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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UNIT 5: Writing for Public Relations

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 11 hours to complete

Subunit 5.1: 4.5 hours

Sub-subunit 5.1.1: 2 hours

Sub-subunit 5.1.2: 2.5 hours

Subunit 5.2: 6.5 hours

Sub-subunit 5.2.1: 4 hours

Sub-subunit 5.2.2: 1.5 hours

Sub-subunit 5.2.3: 1 hour

Public relations communications may take many forms from media releases to public speaking, counseling, training seminars, and hosting public events. Public relations writing will embrace a range of styles from straight-laced, corporate-speak to artsy, entertaining, and spellbinding. Sloppy disregard for fundamental rules will alienate the editors who control the gates of information flow and will undermine authority with your audience. One key resource for public relations writers is the AP Stylebook, which covers the standard writing style expected by most print editors. Writing primers can help with the basis of crafting effective communication. Examples of successful public relations materials are readily available: media releases, company reports, promotional materials, executive speeches, feature articles, and more.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Identify resources to enhance proper writing style (such as AP guidelines).
- Effectively prepare a range of PR communications.

5.1 Effective Public Relations Writing

5.1.1 Reference Materials for Proper Writing Style

Reading: Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL): Associated Press Style

Link: Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL): [Associated Press Style](#) (HTML)

Click the link and carefully review this free resource providing a useful overview of the most essential rules for writing in the proper AP style.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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Reading: Associated Press Stylebook

Link: [Associated Press Stylebook](#)

Instructions: Visit this website and consider this official guide to writing in AP style, a standard form for most print publications in the United States. If you are going to do extensive work with the news media, it is a worthwhile investment to purchase this book.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately .5 hour to complete.

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5.1.2 Writing Primers

Web Media: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "Best Writing Tips"

Link: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Best Writing Tips](#)" (Video)

Instructions: View this video for suggestions on how to immediately improve your written communication skills. Public relations professionals spend lots of times writing ... internal, external, media releases, company reports, memos ... here are six tips on how to do it much better.

Viewing and note-taking will take approximately .5 hour to complete.

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Readings: About Public Relations: Dr. Thomas Klipstine's "How to Communicate More Effectively"; Marcia Yudkin's "Six No-Hype Copywriting Techniques"; Daphne Gray-Grant's "Dramatically Improve PR Writing Skills"; and Ann Wylie's "Improve Your Team's Writing Skills"

Links: About Public Relations: Dr. Thomas Klipstine's "[How to Communicate More Effectively](#)" (HTML); Marcia Yudkin's "[Six No-Hype Copywriting Techniques](#)" (HTML); Daphne Gray-Grant's "[Dramatically Improve PR Writing Skills](#)" (HTML); and Ann Wylie's "[Improve Your Team's Writing Skills](#)" (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by these PR experts specializing in public relations writing.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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5.2 Preparing PR Communications

5.2.1 Creating PR Materials

Readings: Media and Public Relations Primer: PR Toolkit

Link: Media and Public Relations Primer: [PR Toolkit](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click the link and read the public relations primer modules providing communication samples of media releases, public service campaign scripts, commentaries and speeches.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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Readings: About Public Relations: Steve Turner’s “How to Get Better Media Coverage”; Marcia Yudkin’s “Effective Content for Catalogs & the Web”; Kyle Potvin’s “The Road to Inspiration”; Sara Fletcher’s “Connecting Emotional Intelligence with PR”

Links: About Public Relations: Steve Turner’s “[How to Get Better Media Coverage](#)” (HTML); Marcia Yudkin’s “[Effective Content for Catalogs & the Web](#)” (HTML); Kyle Potvin’s “[The Road to Inspiration](#)” (HTML); Sara Fletcher’s “[Connecting Emotional Intelligence with PR](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by these PR experts specializing in PR communications.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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5.2.2 Public Presentations

Readings: About Public Relations: Andrew Gilman’s “How to Prepare for Speeches & Presentations”; Steve Markman’s “How to Maximize Speaking Engagements”; and Ed Barks’ “The Truth About Public Speaking”

Links: About Public Relations: Andrew Gilman’s “[How to Prepare for Speeches & Presentations](#)” (HTML); Steve Markman’s “[How to Maximize Speaking Engagements](#)” (HTML); and Ed Barks’ “[The Truth About Public Speaking](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by these PR experts specializing in public relations writing.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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5.2.3 Internal Communications

Readings: All About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “[Why Internal PR Should Come First](#)” and Tonya Bacon’s “[How to Use Internal Communications to Engage Workers](#)”

Links: All About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “Why Internal PR Should Come First” and Tonya Bacon’s “How to Use Internal Communications to Engage Workers”

Instruction: Please click on the links above, and read the article by public relations expert specializing in internal communications.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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UNIT 6: Social Projects and Public Relations

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 6 hours to complete

Subunit 6.1: 1.5 hours

Subunit 6.2: 1.5 hours

Subunit 6.3: 3 hours

Public relations skills, tools and tactics are not only for achieving business ends, but also serve to advance social programs and outreach projects in public education, health, political campaigns, human rights, and many other ends that promote a public cause rather than a private interest. Many of the same tactics and tools apply to social promotions as to commercial, though quite often more must be undertaken on smaller budgets in the attempt to change hearts and minds, rather than simple behaviors.

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Describe and identify the types of social programs, campaigns, outreach, and so on that can use public relations tactics to advance their success.
- Craft public relations communication plans that serve social projects.

6.1 Public Relations in Social Marketing

Reading: Weinreich Communications: Nedra Kline Weinreich’s “What is Social Marketing?”

Link: Weinreich Communications: Nedra Kline Weinreich’s “[What is Social Marketing?](#)” (HTML)



Instructions: Click the link and read the article by social marketing author Nedra Kline Weinreich. Many of the communication tactics working for social programs are the same as those applied to commercial undertakings, including the most fundamentals of traditional marketing and public relations. However social communications focus more on the consumer, rather than the product.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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Web Media: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "Social Marketing"

Link: YouTube: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Social Marketing](#)" (YouTube)

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and view the YouTube clip on social marketing. Most of the tools for promoting commercial projects can be applied to advancing social causes and programs. This video considers four additional Ps of social marketing, and how they might be applied to a specific campaign.

Viewing and note-taking will take approximately .75 hour to complete.

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6.2 Methods of Social Public Relations

Readings: About Public Relations: Mary White's "Five Simple Ways to Promote Special Events"; Kyle Potvin's "Successful Grassroots Marketing"; Diana Laverdure's "Partnerships with Non-Profits"

Links: About Public Relations: Mary White's "[Five Simple Ways to Promote Special Events](#)"; Kyle Potvin's "[Successful Grassroots Marketing](#)"; Diana Laverdure's "[Partnerships with Non-Profits](#)"

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by these PR experts specializing in social project public relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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6.3 Resources for Social PR Practitioners

6.3.1 Connecting with Social Programs

Readings: About Public Relations: Tammie Ferguson’s “Public Relations for Non-Profits” and Anna Levy’s “Social Responsibility and Public Relations”

Links: About Public Relations: Tammie Ferguson’s “[Public Relations for Non-Profits](#)” (HTML) and Anna Levy’s “[Social Responsibility and Public Relations](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles written by these PR experts specializing in non-profit public relations projects.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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6.3.2 Support Resources for Social Project Planning

Readings: How-To Marketing: Social Marketing

Link: How-To Marketing: [Social Marketing](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Visit the webpage above for links to a number of resources useful for public relations planning within social projects. Among the selections are the Social Marketing Institute that seeks to apply “the very best social marketing practices in a wide range of settings all over the world” with resources including success stories, papers, and employment listings. The Social Marketing Resource Guide provides useful social marketing tools and case studies. The Nonprofit and Philanthropy Good Practice pages features hands-on tips, articles, best practices and discussion forums supporting social project planning.

Resource review and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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UNIT 7: Crisis Communications

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 11 hours to complete

Subunit 7.1: 4 hours

Subunit 7.2: 5 hours

Sub-subunit 7.2.1: 2 hours

Sub-subunit 7.2.2: 1 hour

Sub-subunit 7.2.3: 2 hours

Subunit 7.3: 2 hours

Success is a long haul, but disasters happen in an instant. A little advanced preparation can help save the day when a crisis strikes, and a crisis communication strategy can calm the flames before the home burns down. For most organizations, a crisis is a barrage of urgent, unexpected, unpleasant events that allows no time to think, organize, or plan appropriate actions. Unfortunately, most organizations begin to plan for crises after the crisis hits. This is a big mistake. The goal of a crisis management plan should be containment and positive counteraction. The three best approaches to a crisis are to 1) avoid it in the first place, 2) quickly address and resolve issues before they escalate, and 3) seek possible ways to turn your crisis into an opportunity.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Describe and prepare advanced crisis planning.
- Explain how to conduct crisis management and public outreach.

7.1 Crisis Plan Preparation

Readings: About Public Relations: Gerard Braud’s “Writing Your Crisis Communications Plan”; Ellie Whims’ “Crisis Communications for Small Business”; Andrew Gilman’s “The Case for a Reputation Protection Model”

Links: About Public Relations: Gerard Braud’s [“Writing Your Crisis Communications Plan”](#) (HTML); Ellie Whims’ [“Crisis Communications for Small Business”](#) (HTML); and Andrew Gilman’s [“The Case for a Reputation Protection Model”](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles by public relations experts specializing in planning and executing crisis management programs. Carefully take detailed notes on this important aspect of public relations services.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 3 hours to complete.

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Reading: Media and Public Relations Primer: Crisis Management

Link: Media and Public Relations Primer: [Crisis Management](#)



Instructions: Click the link and read the public relations primer module on crisis management, featuring a case studies and a five-step process for managing crises.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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7.2 Crisis Management and Public Outreach

7.2.1 How to Avoid Crises

Readings: About Public Relations: Gerry McCusker’s “The Truth About PR Disasters”; Mark Grabowski’s “Crisis Prevention Through Foresight”; and Robbie Vorhaus’ “Escaping the Taint of Scandal”

Links: About Public Relations: Gerry McCusker’s [“The Truth About PR Disasters”](#); Mark Grabowski’s [“Crisis Prevention Through Foresight”](#); and Robbie Vorhaus’ [“Escaping the Taint of Scandal”](#)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles by these three public relations experts who specialize in avoiding crisis situations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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7.2.2 How to Apologize

Reading: About Public Relations: Richard S. Levick’s “The Art of Mea Culpa”

Link: About Public Relations: Richard S. Levick’s [“The Art of Mea Culpa”](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click the link and read this strategic communications company president’s detailed article on how to help corporate clients apologize for their mistakes.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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7.2.3 How to Fix Crises

Readings: About Public Relations: Abbe Ruttenberg Serphos’ “Effective First Steps to Counter a Crisis”; Jonathan Bernstein’s “The Three C’s of Credibility in Crises”; and Camrick Clark’s “Twitter: A Crisis Communications Tool”

Links: About Public Relations: Abbe Ruttenberg Serphos’ “[Effective First Steps to Counter a Crisis](#)” (HTML); Jonathan Bernstein’s “[The Three C’s of Credibility in Crises](#)” (HTML); and Camrick Clark’s “[Twitter: A Crisis Communications Tool](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles by these three public relations experts who specialize in resolving crisis situations.

These readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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7.3 Crisis Case Studies

Readings: About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “Learning from Past Public Relations Crises”; Soterios Zoulas’ “The 1982 Tylenol Crisis”; and Steven R. Van Hook’s “Crisis Management Moments”

Links: About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “[Learning from Past Public Relations Crises](#)” (HTML); Soterios Zoulas’ “[The 1982 Tylenol Crisis](#)” (HTML); and Steven R. Van Hook’s “[Crisis Management Moments](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read the articles by three public relations experts who focus here on crisis case studies.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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UNIT 8: Ethical Issues in Public Relations

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 6.5 hours to complete

Subunit 8.1: 3.5 hours

Subunit 8.2: 3 hours

The public relations professional is frequently the conscience of a company, not only by representing the organization's interests to the public, but also by conveying the public's interests back to the company. PR people are often put on the spot—if not to determine the morality of a course, at least to help envision the fallout. Fortunately, there are valuable touchstone tools for finding our way. We might also remember that public relations is a two way street: not only do we represent our organization to the public, but we must also present the opinions of the public back to our organization. We should help our colleagues understand how the public perceives our actions.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Locate codes of ethics governing public relations practitioners.
- Apply codes of behavior to specific situations.

8.1 Codes of Ethics Governing Public Relations Practitioners

Readings: About Public Relations: Steven R. Van Hook's "Ethical Public Relations: Not an Oxymoron" and Peter O'Malley's "In Praise of Secrecy: The Ethical Foundations of Public Relations"

Links: About Public Relations: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Ethical Public Relations: Not an Oxymoron](#)" (HTML) and Peter O'Malley's "[In Praise of Secrecy: The Ethical Foundations of Public Relations](#)" (HTML)

Instructions: Click the links and read these articles detailing fundamental ethical questions facing PR practitioners.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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Web Media: Illinois Institute of Technology: Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions

Link: Web Media: Illinois Institute of Technology: [Center for the Study of Ethics in the Professions](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Visit this resource providing links to codes of ethics and other related resources for a large number of professional fields. Public relations practitioners work in a sweeping array of fields, so it's useful to be familiar with a wide range of ethics codes.



Research at least two different professional categories (such as “marketing” and “health care”) for related codes of ethics.

Resource review and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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8.2 Applying Codes of Ethics

Reading: About Public Relations: Steven Le Vine’s “How to Run Ethically Sound PR Campaigns”

Link: About Public Relations: Steven Le Vine’s [“How to Run Ethically Sound PR Campaigns”](#)

Instructions: Click the link and read the article by public relations agency founder Steven Le Vine for a five-point summary on how to avoid ethical hazards in PR campaigns.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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Web Media: The Center for Media and Democracy: PR Watch

Link: The Center for Media and Democracy: [PR Watch](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Visit this resource providing for a large assortment of reports and links providing a critical look at specific cases of shady public relations. Spend some time reading several articles to give you an idea of steps you might take to avoid becoming a target of this organization.

Resource review and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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UNIT 9: Careers in Public Relations

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 12.75 hours to complete

Subunit 9.1: 2.25 hours

Subunit 9.2: 5 hours

Sub-subunit 9.2.1: 2.5 hours

Sub-subunit 9.2.2: 1 hour

Sub-subunit 9.2.3: 1.5 hours

Subunit 9.3: 5.5 hours

Well-honed public relations skills have a place in just about every human enterprise from international commerce to campaigns for public office to solving social ills. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that the employment opportunities for public relations practitioners will grow in the years ahead. Among the issues to consider for those contemplating a job in public relations are the skillsets required, the working conditions, the potential for advancement, and salary levels. This unit will introduce you to employment resources available that aid public relations aspirants in finding their first job and advancing through a professional career.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Identify the job skills necessary for a public relations professional.
- Describe working conditions and career prospects in public relations.

9.1 Job Outlook for Public Relations Professionals

Web Media: Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook: Public Relations Managers and Specialists

Link: Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook: [Public Relations Managers and Specialists](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Please click on the link above, and find extensive data on the public relations profession including pay, education and skill requirements, number of jobs currently and projected, work environment, and so on.

Reading and note-taking will take approximately 1.75 hours to complete.

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Reading: How-To Marketing: Steven R. Van Hook's "Marketing Employment Trends"

Link: How-To Marketing: Steven R. Van Hook's "[Marketing Employment Trends](#)" (HTML)

Instructions: Please click on the link above and read the article summarizing employment outlook in the fields of marketing, public relations, advertising and sales.



Reading and note-taking will take approximately .5 hour to complete.

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9.2 PR Employment Tips

9.2.1 Just Starting Out

Readings: All About Public Relations: Dick Pirozzolo’s “New PR Graduates: Words of Advice” and Cori McKeever’s “The Public Relations Career X Factor”

Links: All About Public Relations: Dick Pirozzolo’s “[New PR Graduates: Words of Advice](#)” (HTML) and Cori McKeever’s “[The Public Relations Career X Factor](#)” (HTML)

Instructions: Please read the two articles linked above for advice from experienced PR professionals on the first steps towards a career in public relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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Web Media: About Public Relations: PR Internships

Link: About Public Relations: [PR Internships](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Please click on the links above and find a number of articles and linked resources for finding internships in public relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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9.2.2 Entry Level Public Relations Jobs

Readings: All About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “How to Start a Dream Career in Public Relations” and Carlo Pandian’s “How to Get a Job in Public Relations”

Links: All About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “[How to Start a Dream Career in Public Relations](#)” (HTML) and Carlo Pandian’s “[How to Get a Job in Public Relations](#)” (HTML)



Instructions: Please click on the links above for the two readings by young public relations professionals with their best tips on landing a first job in PR.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1 hour to complete.

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9.2.3 Career Advancement

Readings: All About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “How to Start Your Own Public Relations Agency” and Mike Crawford’s “Marketing Yourself for a Public Relations Job”

Links: All About Public Relations: Amanda DiSilvestro’s “[How to Start Your Own Public Relations Agency](#)” (HTML) and Mike Crawford’s “[Marketing Yourself for a Public Relations Job](#)” (HTML)

Instruction: Please click on the links above for two articles written by PR professionals on advanced career options and methods in public relations.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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9.3 Employment Resources for Public Relations Job Placement

Web Media: Public Relations Society of America: Job Center; About Public Relations: Jobs in Public Relations; How-To Marketing: Jobs in Marketing

Links: Public Relations Society of America: [Job Center](#) (HTML); About Public Relations: [Jobs in Public Relations](#) (HTML); How-To Marketing: [Jobs in Marketing](#) (HTML)

Instruction: Browse the resources above for articles on finding work and links to employment agencies for jobs in public relations, communications, and marketing.

Resource review and note-taking will take approximately 3 hours to complete.

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Web Media: Database of Transnational Organizations

Link: [Database of Transnational Organizations](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click the link to visit this database detailing numerous international organizations, with direct links to their job pages where you can search for opportunities in public relations and communications.

Resource review and note-taking will take approximately 2.5 hours to complete.

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UNIT 10: Professional Development

Time Advisory: This unit should take approximately 7.5 hours to complete

Subunit 10.1: 6 hours

Subunit 10.2: 1.5 hours

The public relations office can be a lonely spot, hovering between the realms of internal and external interests. Fortunately, there are many professional organizations and support systems in place for PR practitioners, including social networking that provides a means to share tips, job leads, case studies, and mutual support for colleagues facing common problems. Successful professionals will make use of these resources, as well as make their own contribution to the expanding field of knowledge and best practices.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the student will be able to:

- Locate suitable resources for career development and support.
- Identify networking skills to better interact with other PR professionals.

10.1 Professional Resources for Career Development

Web Media: Council of Public Relations Firms; International Association of Business Communicators; International Public Relations Association; Public Relations Society of America

Links: [Council of Public Relations Firms](#) (HTML); [International Association of Business Communicators](#) (HTML); [International Public Relations Association](#) (HTML); [Public Relations Society of America](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Visit these organizations which support public professionals. You may well want to associate with one of these organizations as you might rise in a public relations career. Please pay special attention to the many free resources they provide non-members.



Resource review and note-taking will take approximately 4 hours to complete.

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Web Media: About Public Relations: Professional PR Organizations

Link: About Public Relations: [Professional PR Organizations](#) (HTML)

Instructions: Click this link to visit a page listing numerous organizations serving public relations professionals.

Resource review and note-taking will take approximately 2 hours to complete.

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10.2 Forming Professional Social Networks

Readings: All About Public Relations: Dr. Dan Eller's "Friendraising New PR Relationships"; Mark Macias' "How to Effectively Promote Yourself with Networking"; and Pari Noskin Taichert's "Put Your Networking to Work"

Links: All About Public Relations: Dr. Dan Eller's "[Friendraising New PR Relationships](#)" (HTML); Mark Macias' "[How to Effectively Promote Yourself with Networking](#)" (HTML); and Pari Noskin Taichert's "[Put Your Networking to Work](#)" (HTML)

Instructions: Please click the links above for articles written by public relations professionals on tips, tactics, and the benefits of networking for career advancement in public relations. The very same skills you use to promote your company and causes can also be used to effectively market yourself.

Readings and note-taking will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete.

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