

FUTURISTIC INTROSPECTION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

by

Santwan Chattopadhyay

Assistant Professor, Department of Adult, Continuing Education & Extension,
Jadavpur University, Kolkata-700032, West Bengal, India
E-mail: santwanchattopadhyay@yahoo.com

PR 2020: The Trending Practice of Public Relations, Rita Bhimani, BEE Books, India, 2018, ISBN 978-93-80925-73-8, 244 Pages, 399 INR

The book starts with the reference of none other than Edward Barnays, the father figure of the genre known as Public Relations, who defined PR as “a management function which tabulates public attitudes, defines the policies, procedures and interest of an organization followed by executing a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance”. But this coinage has been formulated almost one hundred years back and the genre, by now, has become accomplished as a strong-rooted discipline. The crux of this book is perhaps to trace the long journey and redefining the purview of PR from its original conceptualization of definition. It will perhaps be needless to mention that the author Rita Bhimani is one among not very few persons who has earned authority to introspect into the discipline through her successful journey of four decades as a leading professional of Public Relations.

The book presents a large canvas – from conceptualization of Public Relations to its core application. The application parts have become living with several case studies as well as industry specific citation. Long experience of the author has helped further to explain the theoretical parts in a lucid way. How she has summarized the definition of Public Relations into six Cs is one such example.

The first segment of the book is befitting to set the mood of the readers for knowing about the core and integral sections of Public Relations. The author has discussed who needs PR and who does PR in a very candid way. She has elaborated the PR methodology in this connection and has detailed the PR mechanism of NGOs, educational institutions, political parties, corporate bodies

to make the process crystal clear to the readers. In continuation she has elaborated the execution part focusing on the characteristics and qualities of the people responsible for the enactment.

The second segment of the book has focused on pressing of image, identity and values to earn benefit for the organization with the aid of Public Relations by detailing corporate mission, vision and values. She has cited several instances to establish how different organizations carry the deep rooted values. The author has detailed the composite process of image building emphasizing on different brands.

The third segment of the book has thrown lights on the publics, the most premium section of PR. She has detailed mechanism to deal with both internal publics and external publics emphasizing on different tools for that. The art of using media or creation and maintenance of goodwill of an organization have got requisite importance in this book.

The fourth segment of the book has dealt with the importance of prediction. The special kinds of communication requirement for reading the pulse of the organization, understanding of the environment have been elaborated with specific instances to make the thing crisp and clear.

The fifth segment of the book has elaborated the concept of proactive corporate philanthropy. The general principles of Corporate Social Responsibility, its importance on the pretext of specific instances have been laid down in details. The author, in the process, has furnished concrete instances about how corporate CSR can multiply its effect on the publics.

The sixth segment of the book has extensively dealt with the improvisation and making of brand. The author has presented the evolution process of understanding brand from both international and national scenario.

The seventh segment of the book has presented the importance of PR in the emerging sphere of digital media. The author has aptly described the increasing popularity of digital media and has further substantiated the revolutionary changes in the field of Public Relations.

The eighth segment of the book has aptly portrayed the professional sector of Public Relations. Stories of both the agencies as well as the leading practitioners have been well canvassed. The most attractive part of this segment undoubtedly is the discussion on future of the industry and new age Public Relations.

The ninth segment of the book has thrown lights on handling crisis situation and managing reputation of the organization during such situation. The next segment has detailed the prospective fields of career in PR.

The last segment has resembled with the quality and craftsmanship of a successful professional who, as the author of this book, is responsible for listing the success quotients for keeping mark in the industry. She has listed twenty of such qualities and with profound mastery has marked the

presence of two letters P and R beside each other to portray a rare rhythmic balance between theory and application of the genre Public Relations, popularly abbreviated as PR.

Students of Mass Communication often complain with predominant theoretical bias of their reading materials where the aim of the theories actually found relevant in their applications. But this book will not allow them to raise any such issue. The strength of this book is that adequate examples have been furnished to substantiate the theoretical arguments. The name of the book itself has been pointing out at a confident author, who with all her professional success and profound far sight is courageous enough to look beyond the present time.