

AJEEP
Media Writing
Christine Di Salvo

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AJEEP Media Writing

Course Description

Media Writing is designed to hone your writing skills, focusing on materials most often used by public relations practitioners. This course emphasizes clear, concise writing that gets across the intended message to the intended audience(s).

Throughout all your assignments, you must focus on the importance of identifying and targeting an audience or audiences. This will not only guide your writing style and word choice, but will make the process of putting your message on paper much easier.

This course will teach students basic media writing techniques. This includes how to write press releases for print media, fact sheets and media advisories for the television media. The primary objective of this course is to equip you with the writing skills and the media background necessary for successful entry- level public relations positions and internships.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

After completion of this course you should have an understanding of skills including but not limited to:

- Understand how to get ready for writing
- Learn how to become a persuasive writer
- Awareness of how to find and make news
- Knowledge of how to write and produce materials such as news releases, fact sheets, media advisories and press kits.

Material Requirements

Laptop Computer

Assignments and Grading Policy

In class assignments (5) 10 points each,	50
Final Project: Press Kit,	100
Total points	150

135-150=A

119-134=B

103-118=C

87-102=D

Below 86=F

Students must earn a C to pass course.

Course Name / Course Schedule

List the agenda for the semester including when and where the final exam will be held. Indicate the schedule is subject to change with fair notice and how the notice will be made available.

Class	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1		Course Introduction, Lecture: Getting Organized for Writing, In class Assignment #1
2		Lecture: Becoming a Persuasive Writer Lecture: Finding and Making News
3		Lecture: Writing the News Release
4		News Release Assignments #2 & #3
5		Lecture: Preparing Fact Sheets, Advisories, Media Kits and Pitches Fact sheet assignment #4, Media Advisory Assignment#5
6		Final Project: Prepare a media kit that includes, press release, fact sheet and media advisory

**AJEEP
MEDIA WRITING
15 VOCABULARY WORDS**

1. Wikipedia
2. Jargon
3. Homonyms
4. Hype
5. Persuasion
6. Propaganda
7. Cognitive dissonance
8. Pseudo-events
9. Boiler plate
10. Inverted pyramid
11. Frequently asked questions
12. Pitching
13. Framing
14. Hierarchy
15. Charisma

Media Writing: Class 1 Lecture
Course Introduction:

The professor/instructor should go over the course syllabus and pay particular attention to the outcomes of the course which are, writing and producing public relations materials such as press releases, fact sheets and media alerts.

The professor/instructor should discuss the grading policy and the overall objectives of the course.

The professor/instructor should also show real press kits that have been used. There are a few press kits in this binder.

The professor/instructor should also explain that it is the goal of the class for every student to produce their own press kit for a real client. The students need to be thinking about whom they can use as a client. If the students have trouble choosing a client, the professor/instructor should assist the student(s) in this endeavor.

Getting Organized for Writing

The Framework of Public Relations Writing

Insert Slide 1 & 2 of Lecture 1 PowerPoint.

Before we begin talking about public relations writing, we first must discuss the components of public relations. The components are Research, planning, communication & evaluation. Before any public relations campaign is begun first there must be research, then planning, then communication and finally evaluation of the completed public relations campaign.

Writing is part of the communication component and in this media-writing course we are going to learn just a few components of public relations writing.

Before any writing begins a strategy must be determined. For example, before any political campaign, a strategy is determined and the writing is a tool of the strategy.

Public relations writers and media placement specialists are responsible for implementing the strategies and tactics in a public relations campaign. Therefore, writers are known as communications technicians.

The role of the writer and the technician is the standard entry-level position in public relations; some may be writers and technicians for most of their career. Professor David Dozier, San Diego State University, has done considerable research on roles in public relations. He says, "Managers make policy decisions and are held accountable for public relations outcomes where technicians carry out the low-level mechanics of generating communication products that implement policy decisions made by others."

However, that is not to say that managers don't fill both roles. A professional may be a manager as well as a technician if he/she is preparing a media kit or arranging a special event.

What is most important in our discussion today is that public relations are more than press releases. They are only a tool in the communication process but an important one at that.

The Public Relations Writer vs. Journalist
Insert Slide 3 & 4 of Lecture 1 PowerPoint.

It is very important that you understand the difference between a public relations writer and a journalist. Both share many common characteristics. Their approach differs in objectives, audiences and channels.

The journalist is usually employed by one news organization to gather, process, and synthesize information for the primary purpose of providing news to the organization's subscribers, viewers, or listeners. A hallmark of professional reporting is to present information in a fair and balanced manner.

The public relations writer, in contrast, is usually employed by an organization that wants to communicate with a variety of audiences, either through the news media or through other channels of communication. These organizations may include corporations, government agencies, environmental groups, labor unions, trade associations, or public relations firms that provide information on behalf of clients.

The journalist's role is to inform its audience in a fair and balanced way and should maintain objectivity in their reporting. The public relations writer is an advocate for a client, service or product. Their job is not only to advocate but also persuade and motivate audiences to change behavior in some way.

The journalist has one audience, the audience of its news organization. The public relations writer has many audiences. The public relations writer identifies their audience so that they can reach them in regards to their client's product or service.

The journalist reaches its audience through one channel, the news organization that they are writing for. The public relations writer has many channels, television, radio, print publications, blogs websites and more.

Preparation for Writing
Insert Slide 5 of Lecture 1

It is essential for the public relations writer to have a workspace that includes a computer and a printer, Internet access and a reference library. Public relations professionals spend most of their day in front of a computer. One survey of independent public relations practitioners found that 70-80 percent of their day is spent in front of a computer.

The type of computer will depend on your work environment. However, in today's workplace, it is more common to provide laptops for employees so that they can bring

their laptop to client meetings and home to continue working. It goes without saying that the computer must be equipped with a writing program such as Microsoft Office.

It is very important when you are working in public relations to keep an eye on industry trends and the news. It is also important to have a reference library. Today's reference library is located on the Internet.

The key point is to have references that quickly give you instant access to a body of knowledge and enable you to confirm basic factual information.

Encyclopedias

Today's most popular general reference is Wikipedia. www.wikipedia.org. This is among one of the top ten visited sites on the Internet.

Dictionary

The most common reference is an up to date dictionary. Today many writers utilize their dictionary in their word processing program. To access a Webster dictionary on line you need to log on to www.webster.com

AP Stylebook

It is also very important to have a stylebook at your fingertips. Because public relations writers are writing for journalists, it is very important that they follow AP Style, which we will discuss in this course. An AP Stylebook is a must for a public relations writer. If you do not want to consult an AP Stylebook, you can also purchase this service on line, http://www.apstylebook.com/?do=product&pid=online_overview.

PRWeek, PRSA Tactics

The public relations writer should familiarize himself/herself with public relations trade publications such as PRWeek and PRSA Tactics. These publications keep the public relations writer aware of what is happening in the public relations industry.

Research: The Prelude to Writing

Insert slide 6 of Lecture 1 PowerPoint

The key to good writing is research. Research can take many forms. Sometimes it is as easy as picking up some background material, interviewing a few folks, and then you are on your way. Sometimes you need more digging.

The most popular search engine today is Google. It is as easy as placing a few key words in the search box and you are on your way.

Databases like Lexis/Nexus give you synopsis of articles and entire articles if you want it. When searching for articles on a subject, it is important to choose the right keywords. Try to use specific words or phrases, uncommon words, nouns. Also try to use synonyms;

sometimes using the word attorney may get more results than using the word lawyer. Also, don't forget to use connecting words: AND, OR

Writing Guidelines

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Before beginning any writing assignment, take the time to ask yourself some key questions such as:

- What is your purpose?
- How does the writing contribute to organizational goals and objectives?

Some key guidelines when writing for the media are:

If you read print publications like the daily newspaper you will note that

Sentences and paragraphs should be tight; each paragraph should only contain three to four sentences.

The words should be kept simple.

Because you are writing news, you should always write in active, present tense, for example Dog Bites Man, not Dog bit man yesterday.

Whenever possible, try to include imagery and verbal illustrations in persuasive writing. In writing, especially for print publications it is important to always paint a picture, so the reader can visualize what you are talking about.

When writing, here are common errors to avoid

Insert Slide 9 & 10 of Lecture 1 PowerPoint

Remember poor spelling erodes credibility, you must edit, edit, edit. There is nothing that discounts your writing more, than poor spelling.

Try to “de-geekify” writing. This means you want to use common sense words and make words understandable to the average audience. It is great to use technical terms but if no one understands what you are writing about then, it is not good writing.

Try to take out jargon that may be industry-specific. Every occupation and industry has its own vocabulary. Telephone executives talk about “LATAs” and “attenuation rates.” Cable people talk about “pay to basic ratios,” and even public relations professionals talk about “mug shots,” “ANRs,” “VNR’s,” “boilerplate,” and “evergreens.” However the average person does not understand industry jargon. It is the mission of public relations writers to edit the jargon out of industry writing so that the general public can understand what is being said. Thus public relations writers are hired so that they can make information more understandable to the general audience.

Make sure that every sentence has a subject and a verb.

One cannot stress correct spelling enough in the public relations field. Spell check doesn't catch correctly spelled wrong words. You need to proof read, proof read, proof read.

Watch using homonyms and similarly spelled words. Sound alike words often give writers the most trouble. Such words sound alike and are similar in spelling but have different meanings. For example: chalk full of information rather than chock full or sole searching instead of soul searching makes for many chuckles.

Another major writing error is redundancy. It is not necessary to use the word totally to modify a word such as destroyed or completely to modify demolished.

Steer away from hype. Many journalists grow weary reading revolutionary, unique, the first of its kind. Only use those words when it is really true about your product, service or organization.

Be careful when stereotyping individuals in a story. Is it necessary to describe a women's physicality, would you do the same thing for a man?

Always use politically correct language. Politically correct language often changes with the times. For example today, writing about the Christmas Season is incorrect because many groups do not celebrate Christmas. Today, it is better to write holiday season, because this phrase is inclusive of all groups.

In Class Assignment #1

In order to write for public relations, students need to have a grasp of news writing. At this point in the class, it is important to give an in class assignment so that the professor/instructor can assess the student's level of news writing knowledge.

Write a news story about yourself utilizing third person journalism style. Your story needs a lead, short paragraphs and quotes. It can be about any part of your life, you just need to make it current.

The story should be one to two pages in length.

Media Writing

Getting Organized for Writing

The Framework of Public Relations Writing

- The components of public relations are research, planning, communication and evaluation.
- Writing is part of the communication component
- The role of strategy
- Writers are communications technicians
- PR is more than press releases

The Public Relations Writer

- Objectives
 - Advocacy, not objectivity
 - Persuade and motivate
 - Link to organizational goals

Audiences/Channels

- Many and varied

Preparation for Writing

- Computers and printers
- Keep an eye on industry trends and news
- References
 - Encyclopedias/Wikipedia
 - Dictionary
 - AP Stylebook
 - Trade publications/PR Week, PRSA Tactics

Research

- The key to good writing
- Search engines like Google
- Databases like Lexis/Nexis
- Search tips
 - Choose the right key words
 - Use synonyms
 - Use connecting words: And, Or

Writing Guidelines

- What is your Purpose?
 - How does the writing contribute to organizational goals and objectives?

More Guidelines

- Sentences and paragraphs should be tight
- Keep words simple
- Write in active, present tense
- Include imagery and verbal illustrations

Errors to Avoid

- Poor spelling erodes credibility
- “De-geekify” writing-take out jargon that may be industry specific
- Watch sentence structure
- Spell check doesn’t catch correctly spelled wroing words
- Homonyms and similarly spelled words

Errors to Avoid cont'

- Completely redundant redundancies
- Hype, stereotypes and politically incorrect language

Lecture 2-Becoming a Persuasive Writer

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Persuasion: As Old As Civilization

The art of persuasion goes back at least 2000 years. The ancient Greeks made rhetoric, the art of using language effectively and persuasively, part of their educational system. Aristotle for example was the first to set down the ideas of ethos, logos and pathos, which translates roughly as “source credibility,” “logical argument,” and “emotional appeal.”

Public relations is about conveying persuasive, credible messages. Today, we still use many of those ancient techniques. For example as you will see when we go on with this course, source credibility, logical argument and emotional appeal are key elements when writing for public relations.

In order for public relations writers to communicate to its audiences, it is important to understand the basics of communication and how our audience receives its messages.

Insert Slide 3 of lecture 2 PowerPoint

The Basics of Communication

The Basics of Communication consists of projecting ideas into the minds of others. There are four basic elements of communication, a sender, a message, a channel and a receiver. If all of these elements are present there will be communication.

Sender

- The sender is the organization that prepares and distributes the message.
- Every organization has different publics, divergent interests, and its own values.
- A writer must have thorough knowledge of the organization and its organizational objectives, such as selling a product, providing a service or educating the public about an issue or cause.

Message

- Planning starts with deciding what the key message is and what you want the recipient to think, believe, or do about it.
- A thorough knowledge of audience characteristics helps shape a message that is relevant to its interests, desires and needs.
- The message must be clearly expressed and in words that are understandable to the audience.
- Benefits to the audience should be the focus, not benefits to the organization.

Channel

- Organizations have multiple channels available to them. They may include traditional mass media, websites, social media, brochures, newsletters, videos, and events. Every medium has its advantages and disadvantages.
- The characteristics of the audience determine what medium or combination of channels should be used. College age media use different media than senior citizens.

- It is essential to know the format of each medium. Television requires visuals and short sound bites. A website requires strong graphics and interactive links.

Receiver

- Messages are most effective when tailored to a specific, well-defined audience that has similar characteristics in terms of gender, age, income, education etc.
- In public relations and marketing, there is no such thing as the “general public.” Instead there are groups of “publics” that may be defined as customers, suppliers, employees, community leaders, or investors. Each requires different kinds of information about the organization and its products, services or policies.

Finally, the professor/instructor can draw a graph on the white board demonstrating how basic communication takes place.

Theories of Communication

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There are numerous theories about how messages are conceptualized and how recipients filter and evaluate such messages. The following is a brief summary of the theories that you will find most useful in formulating messages and understanding how individuals process information.

Media uses and gratifications

When trying to communicate a message, it is important to know the demographics of an audience so you can choose messages based on their needs. For example when Burson-Marsteller tailored messages on behalf of the National Turkey Federation to generate year round sales, they used a psychographics model to break up their audiences in regards to lifestyle and economics. By segmenting the consumer public into different lifestyles they were able to place stories in different publications reaching different groups. For a lower economic group, they placed a story entitled *A Terrific Budget Stretching Meal*. Another magazine was used to reach the audience based on tradition featuring barbecued turkey as a summer classic on the Fourth of July. The higher economic group was reached through Gourmet Magazine with recipes for turkey salad and turkey tetrazzini.

Cognitive dissonance

People will not believe a message or act on it if it is contrary to their predispositions. This is Leon Festinger’s theory of cognitive dissonance. He says that people will not believe a message contrary to their attitudes and existing opinions unless the communicator can introduce information that causes them to question their beliefs. To create dissonance, the writer needs to make the public aware that circumstances have changed. For example, oil companies say that the era of cheap gasoline is over because a rising middle class in such nations as India and China also have cars and are now competing with U.S. drivers. Second, the writer needs to provide basic information about new developments so that this audience will question their beliefs.

Framing

Framing has been traditionally focused on journalists because most often journalists focus on certain parts of a story and don't focus on others. However, public relations professionals are now providing more than half the content in mass media today. In this case public relations professionals ensure the story is told in a way that's meaningful and focuses on attributes to generate maximum interest.

The issue of bottled water is a good case study in framing. The \$12 billion bottle industry frames bottled water as being better than tap water, a healthy alternative to sodas, and part of an active lifestyle. Whereas the National Resource Defense Council (NRDC) frame the consumption of bottled water as environmentally irresponsible because the transport of bottled water such as Fiji generates green house gasses, a primary cause of global warming.

Diffusion and adoption

The diffusion theory was developed in the 1930s and expanded on by Professor Everett Rogers of Stanford University. It holds that the process of acquiring new ideas has five steps:

- Awareness-the person discovers the idea or product
- Interest-The person tries to get more information.
- Trial-The person tries the idea on others or samples the product.
- Evaluation-The person decides whether the idea works for his or her own self-interest.
- Adoption-The person incorporates the idea into his or own opinion and begins to use the product.

When we think about how we as consumers purchase a new item, such as a new fashion item or a car, we first become aware of the item. For example, Fiat has introduced a new car in America. First they are advertising it, and then the consumer becomes aware of the automobile. Then, the consumer may see someone driving one. Then they are interested. The next step may be that the consumer goes physically down to the automobile dealership and decides to test drive the car, that is trial. Then, the consumer may go home, talk about it among friends, should they purchase this car? Finally, the consumer decides to buy the car, this is known as adoption.

Hierarchy of needs

The hierarchy of needs theory has been applied in a number of disciplines, including communication. It is based on the work of Abraham H. Maslow, who listed basic human needs on a scale from basic survival to more complex needs:

- Physiological: These involve self-preservation. They include air, water, food, clothing, shelter, rest and health-the minimum necessities of life.
- Safety- These comprise protection against danger, loss of life or property, restriction of activity, and loss of freedom.

- Social**-These include acceptance by others, belonging to groups, and enjoying both friendship and love.
- Ego**-These include self-esteem, self- confidence, accomplishment, status, recognition, appreciation, and the respect of others.
- Self-actualization needs**-These represent the need to grow to one's full stature after all other needs are met. Individuals may learn a new language for the fun of it, volunteer for a cause, or travel.

The professor/instructor should illustrate examples of the above hierarchy of needs chart. For example when Hurricane Katrina hit in New Orleans, the citizens were in the physiological and safety stage.

Factors in Persuasive Writing

Insert Slide 6 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint

Your purpose in public relations writing is to persuade your target audience to act. Your message may be delivered in one way or many ways. As you work on message content keep the following in mind:

- Audience analysis**-A message must be compatible with group values and beliefs. People who commute by car for example become more interested in carpooling when the message points out the increasing cost of gas and how gridlock increases every year.
- Channeling**-Tapping a group's attitudes and beliefs is called channeling. It is the technique of recognizing a general audience's beliefs and suggesting a specific course of action related to audience members self interest
- Audiences can be described as either **passive or active**. Passive audiences have to be lured into accepting your messages. Active audiences are usually aware of the product or service or idea. The competent communicator acknowledges the existence of both passive and active audiences and prepares messages that vary in content and structure to reach each one.
- Source credibility**-A message is more believable to an audience if the source has credibility, which is why writers attribute information and quotes to people who are perceived as experts. Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, was a good example of this. As CEO before is death in 2011, he was highly credible as an expert on Apple products and considered a high tech visionary.
- Expertise, sincerity, charisma**- these are all great attributes, and most often someone who is perceived as credible has all three of these such as Steve Jobs.
- Celebrity "transfer"**-are often used to call attention to a product, service or cause. Celebrities attract passive audiences to a message. The sponsor's intent is to associate the person's popularity with the product and thus give it more glamour.

■ **Appeal to self-interest**-Self interest was mentioned in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. What public relations writers need to know about self-interest is what does the audience want to know about the product, service or issue.

• **Clarity of the message**-Communication does not occur if the audience does not understand the message. It is important to produce messages that match the characteristics of your target audience in content and structure.

Copy testing, readability and comprehension formulas-To be sure your message matches your audience, it is possible to copy test your message with focus groups.

Factors

Insert Slide 7 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint

■ **Timing and context**-Professional communicators often say timing is everything. For example, the best time to reach the commuter about mass transit may be when gas has gone up. You wouldn't communicate about a holiday product in July. Communicators need to pay attention to the timing of their message for it to be most effective. When it's relevant to your audience, they will respond.

• **Symbols, slogans, acronyms**-These can be highly persuasive. Nike tells us to "Just Do It" and McDonald's assures us that "You Deserve a Break Today," and Coca-Cola wants us to have "The Pause That Refreshes" and MasterCard talks about things that are "priceless."

Audiences do remember symbols, slogans and acronyms.

■ **Semantics**-The study of meaning given to words and the changes that occur in these meanings as time goes on is the branch of linguistics called semantics. Years ago gay meant frivolity, today it means something else. To write persuasively and to influence target audiences, a writer must be sensitive to semantics.

■ **Suggestion for action**-Persuasive writing must give people information on how to take action, and the suggestions must be feasible. If an energy company wants consumers to conserve energy they must tell them how to do so. If you are trying to convince voters to vote for an issue, you must supply them with the reasoning behind the choice. Persuasive writing ends with asking the audience to take action in some way.

Content and Structure

Insert Slide 8 & 9 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint

Audiences are motivated by theatrics and a good story. They are moved by bold action and human drama. If you can vividly describe what you are talking about-if you can paint word pictures-your message will be more persuasive.

• **Drama**-Everyone likes a good story. This is often accomplished by illustrating an event or situation. Thus, when we read about someone with AIDS, the family on welfare who is

suffering because of state cuts in spending, we can relate. In persuasive writing it is important to humanize the issue

■**Statistics**-Although numbers can be cold and impersonal they can also convey objectivity, largeness and importance in a credible way. For some reason, people are awed by statistics. In addition, the media loves statistics. So whenever you can use relevant statistics in your writing you should.

■**Surveys and polls**-The public and the media express a great deal of interest in what might be called popularity ratings. During a presidential election campaign, various polls and surveys about who is ahead and why seem to dominate coverage. These popularity ratings lead to “bandwagon.” The idea is to show overwhelming support for a particular idea or product.

■**Examples**-A general statement becomes more persuasive when a specific example can clarify and reinforce the core information. A utility company, when announcing a 5 percent rate increase, often clarifies what this means by giving the example that the average consumer will pay about \$5 more per month for electricity. These examples clarify and reinforce the message.

Persuasive Speaking

Insert Slide 10 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint

Psychologists have found that successful speakers use several persuasion techniques:

■**Develop a pattern or “yes” answers**

Start with points with which the audience agrees to develop a pattern of “yes” answers. Getting agreement to a basic premise often means that the receiver will agree to the logically developed conclusion.

■**Offer choice between this or that**-Give choices that force the audience to choose between A and B. College officials may ask audiences, “Do you want to raise taxes or raise tuition?” Political candidates ask, “Do you want more free enterprise or government telling you what to do?”

■**Get a commitment to action**-Get a commitment for some action on the part of the receiver. This leaves the door open for commitment on other parts of the proposal at a later date.

■**Ask for more; be prepared to settle for less**-Submit a complete public relations program to management, but be prepared to compromise by dropping certain parts of the program.

Insert Slide 11 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint

Persuasion and Propaganda

In order to discuss persuasion, one must discuss propaganda.

■**Propaganda:**

■“...the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist.”

■Propaganda’s roots go back to the seventeenth century when the Roman Catholic Church set up the congregation de propaganda (congregation for propagating the faith) The word took on very negative connotations in the twentieth century as a result of World Wars I and II, when competing sides accused each other of using “propaganda” to further their military objectives.

■Some critics believe that propaganda in the broadest sense of the word includes techniques of the advertising and public relations of entities such as Exxon and the Sierra Club. Social scientists say that the word propaganda should only be used to denote activity to sell a belief system.

■ **Insert Slide 12 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint**

■Advertising and public relations messages do use several techniques associated with propaganda, the following are the most common:

■Plain folks-An approach often used by individuals to show humble beginnings and empathy with the average citizen. Political candidates often are fond of telling about their “humble beginnings.”

■ **Testimonial-** A frequently used device to achieve credibility. A well-known expert, popular celebrity or average citizen gives testimony about the value of a product or the wisdom of a decision.

■ **Bandwagon-** An implication that everyone wants the product or idea. For example, “millions of Americans support the ban on assault rifles.”

■**Card Stacking-**The selection of facts and data to build an overwhelming case on one side of an issue while concealing the other side.

■**Transfer-** The technique of associating the person, product or organization with something that has high status, visibility or credibility. The Olympic games falls under this category with official sponsors paying millions of dollars to be associated with the Olympic games.

■**Glittering Generalities-**The technique of associating a cause, product or idea with favorable abstractions such as freedom, justice, democracy, and the American way.

A student of public relations should be aware of these techniques to make certain that he or she doesn’t intentionally use them to deceive the public.

■ **Insert Slide 13 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint**

The Ethics of Persuasion

“Persuasion” is not a bad word. The ancient Greeks recognized rhetoric the “science of persuasion,” as worthy of study and an essential part of public discourse. PR Counselors must ensure that the messages we create, package, and target are efficient and cost effective and must be believable. According to the Arthur W. Page Society, a group of senior communication’s executives is to tell the truth by providing an accurate picture of the company’s character, ideals and practice.

Public relations practitioners sometimes get a bad reputation about persuasion. Because some feel persuasion distorts the truth and manipulates people. A common theme throughout the public relations practice is its ability to influence what people think and how they act.

However, persuasion is not a nasty concept. It does not have to be manipulative, propagandistic or full of half-truths. PR counselors need to ensure that the messages created, packaged and targeted are efficient and cost effective but must be believable.

Insert Slide 14 of Lecture 2 PowerPoint

To maintain ethics of persuasion, public relations professionals should avoid the following in persuasive writing:

- Falsehoods-do not use false, fabricated, misrepresented, distorted, or irrelevant evidence to support arguments or claims.
- Specious reasoning-do not intentionally use specious, unsupported, or illogical reasoning.
- Misrepresentation-do not represent yourself as informed or as an expert on a subject when you are not.
- Diverting scrutiny-do not use irrelevant appeals to divert attention or scrutiny from an issue at hand.
- Unlinked emotional appeals-do not ask your audience to link your idea or proposal to emotion-laden values, motives or goals to which it is not actually related.
- Concealing their purpose-do not deceive your audience by concealing your real purpose, your self-interest, the group you represent, or your position as an advocate of a viewpoint.

Becoming a Persuasive Writer

Media Writing

Lecture 2

Persuasion

- Ancient Roots
- Ethos, logos, pathos
- PR is about conveying persuasive, credible messages

The Basics of Communication

- Sender-the organization
- Message-contributes to organizational objectives and is convincing to recipients
- Channel-which medium is best
- Receiver-publics, stakeholders

Theories of Communication

- Media uses and gratifications-choose words based on the audiences needs
- Cognitive dissonance-reject messages that conflict with predispositions
- Framing-focusing on attributes to generate maximum interest

Theories of Communication cont'

- Diffusion and adoption
- Awareness, interest, trial, evaluation, adoption
- Hierarchy of Needs
- Physiological, safety, social, ego, self-actualization

Factors in Persuasive Writing

- Audience Analysis-Channeling, passive, inactive and active audiences
- Source Credibility-Expertise, sincerity, charisma, celebrity transfer
- Appeal to self-interest-What does the audience want to know?
- Clarity-Copy testing, readability, and comprehension formula

Factors

- Timing and context-when it's relevant to your audience
- Symbols, slogans, acronyms-Nike swoosh, "priceless," NOW
- Semantics-Word Choice and framing
- Suggestion for action-Tell them how to feasibly do something

Content and Structure

- Drama-Humanizing the issue
- Statistics-Conveying objectivity and importance
- Surveys and polls-Popularity ratings lead to “bandwagon”
- Examples-clarify and reinforce
- Testimonials-Form of source credibility

Content and Structure cont'

- Endorsements-Advocacy, third party
- Emotional Appeals-Guilt, fear, combine with logical arguments

Persuasive Speaking

- Develop a pattern or “yes” answers
- Offer choice between this or that
- Get a commitment to action
- Ask for more; be prepared to settle for less

Persuasion and Propaganda

- Propaganda:
- The deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist.

Propaganda Techniques

- Plain Folks
- Testimonial
- Bandwagon
- Card Stacking
- Transfer
- Glittering Generalities

The Ethics of Persuasion

- Persuasion is not a bad word
- Advocates must be persuasive

Ethical advocates should avoid:

- Falsehoods
- Specious reasoning
- Misrepresentation
- Diverting scrutiny
- Unlinked emotional appeals
- Concealing their purpose

■Lecture 2 continued:

■**Insert Slide 1 of Lecture 2 continued PowerPoint**

■**Finding and Making News**

■**Insert Slide 2, 3 & 4 of Lecture 2 continued PowerPoint**

■**The Challenge of Making News**

A major purpose of many public relations programs is to provide information to the media in hopes that it will be published or broadcast. The resulting coverage is called publicity. The public relations writer who writes and places stories in the media is commonly known as a publicist.

Publicists must know news values, how to find and package interesting news, how to develop creative publicity tactics. They must also know obstacles to publicists. These obstacles include, gatekeepers, who are the editors at the print publications and the assignment editor for the television stations. The editor/assignment editor decide on what is news and if your story will run in their print publication and broadcast. Therefore it is very important that publicists understand news so that they can pitch the editors their story.

Another obstacle is what is termed as shrinking news holes. Because advertising dollars have shrunk for both print publications and broadcast news, there is not much space allotted for editorial content. Therefore, the news hole has shrunk and consequently it is harder for publicists to place their stories.

The third obstacle is fragmented mass media. It is no longer possible to reach the larger public through a single medium or digital platform. That means today's public relations writer must be adept at preparing and packaging publicity materials in a variety of formats-for print, broadcast, video, direct mail, email and the Web. Increasingly interactive social media sites are being used.

Finally, our publics are facing information overload. In today's world of 24/7 news, everything from suburban weeklies to cable channels, online networks, and web sites compete for our audience's attention. As a consequence it is quite possible, your organization's news may never even get the audience's attention.

There are ways to overcome the above obstacles. Today's publicist must understand news values, target right media, keep in mind media consumers' needs, employer's objectives, and gatekeepers' requirements.

In order to understand how journalists feel about news values, publicists need to know what makes news. The following is a brief overview of elements of what makes news.

Insert Slide 5 of Lecture 2 continued PowerPoint

•**Timeliness**-Timeliness is the most important characteristic of news. By definition, news must be current. There are several ways to achieve this news value. Tie in your story

with something that is relevant to your story. For example, if you have a client that needs donations for the holidays, tie the story in to the holidays.

- Prominence**-Prominent people or organizations draw attention. The news media will rarely cover the grand opening of a store or anything else unless there is a prominent person with star power involved. For example, when IKEA opened in East Palo Alto, they procured, Jerry Rice, former San Francisco 49er Football Player to be on hand to great customers.

- Proximity**-Surveys have shown that the news releases most acceptable to media gatekeepers are those with a local angle. These stories are often called hometowners. They are custom tailored for the local newspaper or local broadcast station. Today it is easy to localize news releases and tailor them to a specific kind of media by using software applications that can automatically merge the names of local people into a news release.

- Significance**-Any event that affects a large number of people is a significant news story. Major disasters like a tsunami, fire, hurricane, these all get coverage because they affect a large number of people.

- Unusualness**-Anything out of the ordinary attracts press attention. When dog bites man it is not news but when man bites dog it is.

- Human Interest**-People like to read about other people. That is why the news media often focuses on the rich and famous. Interest in people, however, is not restricted to celebrities. A journalist may focus on the plight of one family on welfare to illustrate the problems of the entire social services system.

- Conflict**-When two or more groups advocate different views on a topic of current interest, this creates news. For example, labor disputes between employees and management, or disputes between political parties, this is conflict and is news.

- Newness**-Any press release announcing a new product or service has a good chance of being published. Apple takes advantage of newness every time they announce a new product.

Now that you understand what constitutes traditional news values, you should have a good framework as you approach the process of finding news.

Insert slide 6 & 7 of Lecture 2 continued PowerPoint

•How to find news

The first step in finding news is to become totally familiar with the organization that you represent. One way to learn about the organization is to do research. This involves looking at a variety of sources, including the following:

- Internal business documents (e.g., annual reports, position papers)
- Employee newsletters/magazines
- Be a roving reporter in your organization

■ You may also find ideas through external news sources. Read, listen to, and watch the news. Try to link news events to your organization, as appropriate. If there is a poll or survey about a subject that your organization can comment on, seize the opportunity. Don't forget utilizing trade publications as a source.

There is no hard and fast definition of what is news. A Hearst editor once declared, probably with more truth than he realized, "News is what I say it is." It's also true that most news is created by individuals and organizations that plan activities and events for the purpose of creating public awareness to inform persuade and motivate. Here are some ideas on how to create news:

Insert Slide 8 of Lecture 2 continued PowerPoint

Pseudo events-Historian Daniel Boorstein coined the term to describe events and situations that are created primarily to generate news coverage. The Miss America contest was a creative solution by a publicist hired by the Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce which wanted to extend the summer tourist season past Labor Day. The Academy Awards also began as a publicity stunt. It was begun in 1929 by the movie industry to garner media attention and also increase movie attendance during the Depression.

Brainstorming-Public relations firms such as Ketchum generate creative ideas by conducting brainstorming sessions. In these sessions, **share** ideas without concern for their practicality or merit, you will be surprised creative solutions often arise.

•**Special events**-any number of events are created or staged to attract media attention and make the public aware of a new product, service or idea. Such ideas are ribbon cuttings for a new facility, product releases for a new product and celebrating milestones such as a 100-year anniversary of an organization.

•**Contests**- are a good way to earn publicity. There are essay contests, eating contests and baking competitions. In the past several years, M&M's held a contest to decide what color a new M&M should be.

•**Polls and surveys**-The media are fascinated by polls and surveys and people are curious about others attitudes about lifestyles, habits, product quality, politicians and more. These are great publicity opportunities. The topic should be timely, have news value and fit the needs of the organization.

■ Insert Slide 9 of Lecture 2 continued PowerPoint

■ Here are more ways on how to create news:

■ **Top 10 lists** are an alternative to polls and surveys. Many consumer magazine issues thrive on this concept. And these issues sell more magazines. Each year *People Magazine* publishes the sexiest male actors and the sexiest female actors. *Sports Illustrated* produces a swimsuit issue once a year. These are ways to gain more publicity for the publication as well as sell more products to consumers.

■

■ **Product demonstrations**-Product demonstrations bring the journalists out and create news for the company. Apple does these very well. They do not release to the press ahead of time what they are releasing, and bang, they end up on the front page of every newspaper in the country. It also gives consumers or journalists a chance to see how the product works.

■ **Stunts**-Journalists often disparage publicity stunts but if they are highly creative and visual, they often get extensive media coverage. One popular theme is doing something that qualifies as the world's largest or Guinness Record-breaking. For example, in San Jose when the Vietnam population protested the naming of an area of the city, a man spent nearly a month at San Jose's City Hall starving himself until the city changed their mind on the renaming of the area.

• **Rallies and protests**-If you want to bring media attention to your organization or cause stage a rally or protest. A rally or protest generates news because one of the traditional values of news is conflict. So that is why groups use demonstrations as a tactic so that they can publicize their cause. **Rallies and protests** create news because of the conflict element.

■ **Personal appearances-generate news.** If you are looking for news for your organization, schedule a speaking engagement for your CEO in front of a prominent group and you will probably get press for your organization. In addition, if you invite a celebrity to the opening of your news building, chances are the news media will turn out and cover your event.

• **Awards**-Giving awards or receiving an award – “Best,” “Outstanding” or organizing an award event will generate news for an organization. Organizations give any number of awards. The local YWCA may honor the “Outstanding Woman of the Year” or a local college may honor the “Graduate of the Year.” Giving or receiving an award is a great way to receive publicity for your organization.

Lecture 2 continued

Finding and Making News

The Challenge of Making News

- Publicists must know
 - News values, how to find and package interesting news, how to develop creative publicity tactics

Obstacles to Publicists

- Gatekeepers, shrinking news hole, fragmented mass media, information overload

Ways to Overcome Obstacles

- Understand news values, target right media, keep in mind media consumers' needs, employer's objectives, and gatekeepers' requirements

What Makes News?

- Timeliness
- Prominence
- Proximity
- Significance
- Unusualness
- Human Interest
- Conflict
- Newness

How to Find News

- Internal news sources-internal business documents (e.g., annual reports, position papers)
- Employee newsletters/magazines
- Be a roving reporter in your organization

External News Sources

- Read, listen to and watch the news
- Link news events to your organization, as appropriate
- Polls and surveys
- Trade publications

How to Create News

- Pseudoevents
- Brainstorming
- Special Events
- Contests
- Polls and Surveys

More Ways to Create News

- Top 10 lists
- Product demonstrations
- Stunts
- Rallies and protests
- Personal appearances
- Awards

Lecture 3/ Writing the News Release (Press Release)

Insert Slide 1 & 2 of Lecture 3 PowerPoint

The News release often called a press release by the older generation is the backbone of publicity programs. Your news release must stand out from the competition to increase likelihood of publication. News releases follow a standardized format. In order for a news release to be effective the writer must know and meet the needs of its audience. The news release must also be timely.

Insert Slide 3 of Lecture 3 PowerPoint

■The Value of News Releases

■News release help achieve organizational objectives, are cost effective and lead to news articles, which affect purchasing decisions

Insert Slide 4 of Lecture 3 PowerPoint

■Planning a News Release

When planning a news release know your purpose. Ask yourself the following questions:

- What's the subject and focus of the release?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What are the benefits for the audience?
- What are the organizational goals?
- What do you need to achieve and communicate via the release?

Insert Slide 5 of Lecture 3 PowerPoint

•News Release Format

The public relations writer should use white, standard-sized paper. Format rules vary with organizations. The copy should be 1 ½ spaced, the margins should be wide and pages should be numbered. Use standard 10- to 12-point type and follow AP style.

Insert Slide 6 of Lecture 3 PowerPoint

These are the types of news releases:

- Announcements-** if you are announcing new personnel, new location or a new product or financial earnings.
- Response to problems of external cause-**the organization may have an oil spill or a recall that needs attention. It is up to the organization to respond to these external events.
- Reaction-** When an event or situation impacts the organization, the public wants to hear about it. If it is bad news the organization should comment, and not cover it up.
- Local news-**If the organization can come up with a local angle for the news release localized news gets covered more often.

Insert Slide 7 & 8 of Lecture 3 PowerPoint Parts of a Traditional News Release

Now let's take a look at the news release samples that I have given you today. Let's first look at the news release from the organization, Worry Less Wealth. Notice that the news release begins with the **logo** from the client. The first page of the news release should be printed on client letterhead. With the availability of the Internet it is easy to create **client letterhead**.

On the left side of the release, a column should read Press Release (News Release), For Immediate Release and today's date. On the right side the writer should list the contact information. Make sure to list a contact name, phone number and email so that the contact person is easily accessible to the media.

Next, center a headline for the release. Make sure the headline gives the reader the news. It should be in active, present tense, devoid of hype. In the first paragraph place a dateline, this is the city of origin and date.

The first paragraph of the news release should contain the lead. Along with the headline, the lead is the most important sentence in the release. It is the most important paragraph. It lays the foundation and draws the reader in.

Next comes the body of the release. Be sure to use the inverted pyramid style where the most important facts are in paragraph 2, essential background material and paragraph 3, elaborate on paragraph 1.

The news release should end with a boilerplate. This tells all about the company in a few sentences. Notice in the Worry Less Wealth release:

About Eric Heckman:

Author, Eric Heckman is the primary planner and oversees the firm, Heckman Financial and Insurance Services. His specialty is creating simple solutions to complex financial problems. Heckman came into the financial services business after finishing his finance degree at Santa Clara University in 1992.

In 1998, Heckman Financial & Insurance Services became a Registered Investment Advisor, allowing the company to offer full service, fee-based financial planning. Heckman's motto is to Stay Ahead of Your Finances and Worry Less About Your Wealth. For more information about Worry Less Wealth you can log on to

www.WorryLessWealth.com

If your release were coming from Apple, you would have a two to three sentence background paragraph to end your release.

Always end your release with 3 centered pound signs, ###. The news release does not need to be more than 1-2 pages long.

Lecture 3

Writing the News Release

The Backbone of Publicity Programs

- News release, also known as press release
- Must stand out from the competition
- To increase likelihood of publication- follow standardized format, know and meet the needs of your audience, be timely

The Value of News Releases

- News releases...
- Help achieve organizational objectives
- Cost effective
- Lead to news articles, which affect purchasing decisions

Planning a News Release

- Know your purpose
- What is the subject and focus of the release?
- Who is the intended audience?
- What are the benefits for the audience?
- What are the organizational goals?
- What do you need to achieve and communicate via the release?

News Release Format

- White, standard-sized paper is best
- 1 1/2 spaced copy
- Keep margins wide
- Number pages
- Use standard 10-12 point type
- Follow AP style

Types of News Releases

- Announcements
- Response to problems of external cause
- Reaction
- Local news

Parts of a Traditional News Release

- Letterhead-print the first page on organizational letterhead
- Contacts-include PR contact information
- Headline-Factual, pithy, active present tense, devoid of hype
- Dateline-city of origin and date
- Lead-most important paragraph, lays the foundation and draws the reader in.

News release parts continued

- Body
- Inverted pyramid
- Paragraph 1: Most important facts
- Paragraph 2: Essential background material
- Paragraph 3: Elaborate on paragraph 1

WORRY LESS WEALTH

Press Release
For Immediate Release
May 29, 2012

Contact:
Chris Di Salvo
Mobile: (408) 506-0455
E-mail: profef@com

***Worry Less Wealth*, financial strategy book is now available in book form or e-book San Jose, CA...** Are you retiring soon? Or are you already retired and wondering how you are going to make it financially in your later years. If that is the case, you may be interested in a new released book, *Worry Less Wealth*, Financial Strategies for those who have over \$500K in assets or make over \$200K a year.

Worry Less Wealth is written by San Jose's financial services professional Eric Heckman, CFP, CLU, CHFC. "I see many clients in their later years who are frustrated with the level of financial advice given to those who work and live in Silicon Valley. I wrote the book to provide insights on the financial planning business, the way various financial products work and how to incorporate that all in to a systematic easy to follow financial plan," says Heckman.

Here is a list of topics covered in the book:

Be prepared for the 2013 tax law change:

"Most people are not totally aware of this," says Heckman, "but on January 1, the tax law is set to change." Heckman says brackets may jump, capitol gains will double and those making \$250K married or \$200K single will see their taxes increase. In addition, Heckman calls 2012, the year of the gift because right now with any estate under \$5.1 million there are no estate or gift taxes.

-more-

Keep your money safer from loss:

Worry Less Wealth will walk you through the type of investments you already have and let you know if your money is safe from loss. It also points out a lot of alternative investments

How to create a personal lifetime pension:

Near the retirement stage, people should be concerned about distribution rather than accumulation, *Worry Less Wealth* explains how to do this.

Must have alternate investments.

“The problem with most portfolios is that there is too much invested in the stock market,” says Heckman. That was great in the 80’s and 90’s because there was a 1000 percent return, in the last 11 years there has only been a 5% return.” *Worry Less Wealth* explains about how to invest in alternate investments such as gas and leasing partnerships, which can be a tax deduction.

Learn how to properly pass on your wealth.

Everyone who has substantial wealth has a fear about how his or her heirs will react to suddenly inheriting a nest egg. *Worry Less Wealth* will walk you through the steps to take to pass your wealth to other generations without turning them into Paris Hiltons or beach bums.

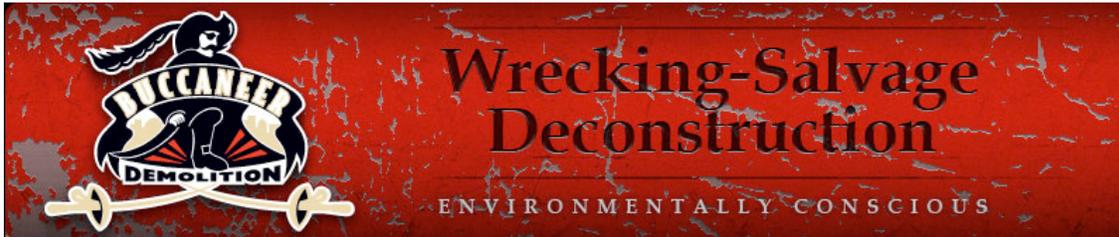
About Eric Heckman:

Author, Eric Heckman is the primary planner and oversees the firm, Heckman Financial and Insurance Services. His specialty is creating simple solutions to complex financial problems. Heckman came into the financial services business after finishing his finance degree at Santa Clara University in 1992.

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Wealth. For more information about Worry Less Wealth you can log on to www.WorryLessWealth.com

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News Release
For Immediate Release
March 22, 2012
Contact:
Chris Di Salvo
Mobile: (408) 506-0455
E-mail: profeff@aol.com

Buccaneer Demolition Goes Above and Beyond State Construction and Demolition Requirements

San Jose, CA...When Buccaneer Demolition, a San Jose Wrecking, Salvage and Deconstruction company demolishes a building, they pride themselves on achieving the highest diversion recycle rate possible.

According to California's 2008 Statewide Waste Characterization Study, construction and demolition (C&D) materials account for 29 percent of the waste stream. Many of these materials can be reused or recycled, thus prolonging our supply of natural resources, and potentially saving money as well as the environment in the process.

Common C&D materials include lumber, drywall, metals, masonry (brick, concrete, etc.), carpet, plastic, pipe, rocks, dirt, paper, cardboard, or green waste related to land development. Of these, metals are the most commonly recycled material while lumber makes up the majority of debris that still goes to a landfill.

"It is very important to me and my employees that construction and demolition debris does not end up in the landfill," says Jim Salata, President of, Buccaneer Demolition.

In 1987, Salata was the superintendent on the construction of the O'Neil Building on South First Street, in downtown San Jose. "It was my first job and I was responsible

for building this building. The building was never used and ironically three years ago, Buccaneer Demolition deconstructed it, took it apart and saved plywood, floor joists, beams, blocking, hardware and provided it to a general contractor to utilize in a retrofit project.”

Recently, Buccaneer Demolition partnered with C.W Driver on a five story, 160,000 square foot interior demolition for a new Dream Works project and when it was completed Buccaneer achieved a recycling rate of 93.19%, which means that less than 7% of the total materials removed from the jobsite ended up in the landfills.

When Buccaneer Demolition cleared the Mirrasou Winery property, they removed Pine and Redwood trees. “We immediately took the trees to a company who milled the trees into lumber, says Salata. “Between recycling trees, lumber, metal, and concrete, the recovery rate of the demolition of the Mirassou property was a whopping 98%.”

“I’ve been recycling since the 1980’s,” says Salata. “Ten years ago, you couldn’t recycle plastics and I would try to find places to take it and it would eventually end up in the landfill. I’m happy to finally see these environmental trends where we find the ability to recycle materials and the market is expanding because of the cost of the end use.”

About Buccaneer Demolition:

Buccaneer Demolition is a full-service general and demolition contractor with over 20 years experience serving Monterey to the San Francisco Bay Area. Buccaneer has the experience to convert buildings back into shell condition or remove them entirely as a turnkey operation. Budget conscious and environmentally responsible, Buccaneer Demolition recycles above and beyond industry standards. In addition, Buccaneer Demolition has a warehouse that stores bricks, doors, windows, floors etc. that is used by Garden City Construction and other construction companies.

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Lecture 4
Writing Press Releases

Today we are going to write two press releases. You will need your laptop computer and a word processing program. Press release assignment #1 is about The Balcor Corporation announcing a new president. This is an announcement press release.

This assignment is worth 10 points and I will be grading you on your writing, the utilization of active, present tense, punctuation and spelling. You will also be graded on the proper use of the news release format. Please edit your work. One point will be deducted for each error. When you are finished turn them in to me and once I grade it you can begin Press Release #2. Follow the same rules that you did in the first assignment.

Press Release Assignment
#1

The Balcor Corporation, a diversified commercial real estate company, has a new president. He is Harvey Wilson, formerly executive vice president of Knox Company, a developer of suburban shopping malls. He replaces Adam Smith, president of Balcor for the past 15 years, who has announced his retirement. Wilson's appointment was announced by Balcor's board of directors.

Wilson's background is as follows:

- a. He is 52 years old.
- b. He is married and has two children in college.
- c. He has been executive vice president of Knox Company for the past seven years. Prior to this, he served as the chief financial officer of several construction firms including Krupp Company, which builds hotels around the globe.
- d. He has a B.A. degree in accounting from the University of Washington and an M.B.A. from Stanford University.
- e. He is a member of the National Accounting Association and was formerly on its board, the Illinois Business Round Table, an organization of business executives; the Chicago Sailing Club; and the Chicago Athletic Club.
- f. He is respected in the construction and real estate industries for his quiet and efficient management style.
- g. He lives in Arlington Heights, Illinois.
- h. He will assume the presidency of Balcor, headquartered in Atlanta, next month.
- i. Balcor Corporation owns a number of office parks across the nation and manages 22 other business properties. Total revenue last year was \$47 million.

Your assignment is to write a news release announcing Wilson's appointment for the local and national real estate press.

Press Release Assignment #2

A new 25-story office building will be built in downtown Minneapolis. The building, to cost an estimated \$40 million, is part of a downtown redevelopment effort to keep major corporations in the central city.

The office building will be the new headquarters of Kelso Industries, a diversified manufacturer of building products and the owner of a hardware chain, Kelso Supplies, with more than 100 stores throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

The Minnesota Redevelopment Agency is guaranteeing the financing of the building and contributing up to \$5 million to landscape the public areas around the building and improve the surrounding streets. The architect is Weber and Associates, and the contractor is Rudolph and Sletten. The building will be completed in about 18 months. Company executives and city officials say the building is the cornerstone of the downtown revival.

Write a press release on behalf of Kelso Industries to announce the decision to locate its headquarters in downtown Minneapolis. Use appropriate quotations from company executives and city officials, as you deem necessary. You can also elaborate on facts given in this summary to describe the building.

Lecture 5/Fact Sheets, Advisories, Media Kits, and Pitches

Insert Slide 1 of Lecture 5 PowerPoint

As discussed in the previous lecture the news release is the backbone of most publicity programs. However, there are other tools to use so today we will discuss how to expand the publicity tool kit.

Insert Slide 2 of Lecture 5 PowerPoint

Have samples of these materials on hand and explain them so that the students can see them while you are lecturing.

- Fact sheets – one-page background
- Media or press kit – contains a variety of materials (e.g., releases, fact sheets, photos)
- Media alert or advisory – lets media know about event or opportunity

Insert Slide 3 of Lecture 5 PowerPoint

Fact Sheets

A fact sheet is in outline or bullet form that reporters can use when writing a story. There are several types of fact sheets. One may be announcing an upcoming event. The other can be an organizational profile of the organization. You can write a fact sheet about a product or service. Or another format that is being used is Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that are now being used to inform the reporter in q and a form.

Insert Slide 4 of Lecture 5 PowerPoint

Media Advisories/Media Alerts

A media advisory or media alert is used to communicate with television assignment editors about upcoming news events or opportunities. It is particularly used when a story has a local angle.

The format is one page, type media alert across the page, a headline and then brief paragraphs outlining the story with the 5 w's, and h, who, what, when, where, why and how.

Don't forget to put your contact information on the bottom right.

Insert Slide 5 of Lecture 5 PowerPoint

Media Kits/Press Kits

Before the Internet, media kits/press kits were mailed to the media and sat on their desks for weeks. When a public relations professional called the journalist, invariably the journalist could not find it. Now with the Internet, most media kits/press kits are virtual. They are on line or emailed to the journalist when pitching a story.

Insert Slide 6 of Lecture 5 PowerPoint

The professor/instructor should have samples of press kits to show students. Here is what a basic media or press kit includes...

- Main news release
- News feature

- Fact sheet(s)
- Photos or graphics with captions
- Biographical material on key players
- Brochure(s)
- May be compiled in a clever delivery system to catch attention
- Electronic media kits delivered via CD, e-mail, or through an online newsroom

Of course a press release, media advisory, fact sheet would not be valuable if the public relations professional does not know how to pitch a story to the journalist. Pitching a story means that the public relations professional has to sell the idea of the story to the journalist so that they will want to do the story. So, the professional first must know the needs of the journalist, the medium, and the audience. The professional needs to know what type of stories does the journalist do.

Today, the pitch is emailed. It should be brief, well written, have an enticing lead. You must also have a good subject line so the journalist will open your email. Once you have sent your pitch, then follow up with an email to see if the journalist is interested.

A good rule of thumb for pitching is to write the press release first. Place the lead in the subject line of your email. Then in the body of your email, either copy and paste the rest of your release, or write a synopsis of your story and end with I think your readers would be interested in this story because....

■

Media alert and fact sheet assignment instructions:

Now that we've learned about media alerts and fact sheets, today the class assignment is to write a media alert about the opening of the Minnesota Zoo's Bug Exhibit. Here is the assignment sheet. Once you have finished your media alert, turn it in to the instructor.

Once it is turned back to you, proceed to write a fact sheet for the Minnesota Zoo and turn that in to the instructor.

Media Alert Assignment Sheet

The Minnesota Zoo is opening a major exhibit on bugs. As the director says, “Thousands of live bugs will be creeping and crawling so visitors will not only be entertained but also learn about the impact they have on all of us.”

Included in the exhibit will be colorful North American butterflies and moths; a working colony of leaf cutter ants, giant millipedes; centipedes; land crabs; arachnids, such as the world’s largest spider, tarantulas, and scorpions; and zebra cockroaches. In addition, zoo goers will be able to walk through a butterfly garden where up to 600 free-flying butterflies and moths will be feeding, resting and emerging as adult butterflies.

The grand opening of this event is May 1. Write a media alert inviting the press to the opening and make some suggestions about who might be available for interviews, and what opportunities there will be for photo and video coverage.

Fact Sheet Assignment Sheet

Once you write your media alert and have the instructor grade it, then take your media alert and write a fact sheet about the Minnesota Zoo opening up a major exhibit on bugs.

Lecture 5

Fact Sheets, Advisories, Media
Kits, and Pitches

Expanding the Publicity Tool Kit

- Fact sheets-one page backgrounder
- Media or press kit-contains a variety of materials (e.g., releases, fact sheets, photos)
- Media alert or advisory-lets media know about an event or opportunity

Fact Sheets

- Facts in outline or bullet form that reporters can use when writing a story
- Types of fact sheets-upcoming event, organizational profile, summary of product or service
- FAQ format is a frequently used variation

Media Advisories/Media Alerts

- Tell assignment editors about upcoming news events or opportunities or local angles
- Format-one page, headline, brief paragraph outlining the story with necessary 5 Ws and H
- Contact information

Media Kits

- Main news release
- News feature
- Fact sheet (s)
- Photos or graphics with captions
- Biographical material on key players
- Brochure (s)
- Electronic media kits delivered via CD, e-mail, or through an online newsroom

Pitching a Story

- Preparing a pitch
- Know the needs of the journalist, medium and audience
- Pitches should be brief, well written and have an enticing lead
- Email pitches-have a good subject line
- Face to face-succinct and complete
- Follow up on pitches

MEDIA ALERT* MEDIA ALERT* MEDIA ALERT* MEDIA ALERT

Breathe California Celebrates Its 100th Year by going “Over The Edge”

WHO: Breathe California, who fights lung disease in all forms is commemorating its 100th year anniversary by going “over the edge,” of the Hyatt Regency Santa Clara. Breathe California works with its communities to protect lung disease in Santa Clara County.

WHEN: Friday, August 26, Noon to 5 p.m.

WHERE: Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, 5101 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA

WHAT: Approximately 30 participants will be rappelling down the front of the Hyatt Regency Santa Clara. Many local politicians and vips such as Jamie McCleod, City of Santa Clara Council Member, Sam Liccardo, City of San Jose Council Member, Ken Yeager, Santa Clara County Supervisor and Sharkie, San Jose Sharks Mascot are participating in this event.

PHOTO OPPS:

This is an opportunity to photograph many politicians going “over the edge.” If media are interested in rappelling the building, call Steve at Breathe California 408-998-5865 for a set time spot to rappel.

For More Information Contact:

Chris Di Salvo

Mobile: (408) 506-0455

E-mail: profef@aol.com



Silicon Valley Habitat for Humanity

513 Valley Way
Milpitas, CA 95035

Your Partner in Home Ownership:

*Working Families

*Local Cities

*Community Organizations

Fact Sheet

Established:

July, 1986

The Mission:

To eliminate sub-standard living conditions in Silicon Valley for deserving families with low incomes. Along with the help of the community, Habitat helps families build and own their own home.

Completed Homes:

- 10 homes completed in Alviso
 - 8 homes in San Jose
 - 6 homes in Campbell
 - 1 home in Los Gatos
 - 3 homes in the City of Santa Clara
- First 19 years of building: 28 homes
Next three years of building: 29 homes

Home Building Challenges:

Average home price: \$500,000+

Average price of an acre of land: \$2 Million

2005-2007 Building Sites:

San Jose: Murphy St. 11 homes

N. 13th St.& E. Julian St 4 homes.

San Jose: Willow St. Women Build 1 homes

Santa Clara: Gianera II 6 homes 2006/07

Morgan Hill: 6 homes in 2006/07

Delmas: 1 home in 2007

How Does a Family Qualify?

The family must live in substandard housing

Must meet HUD low-income guidelines

Does not qualify for conventional real estate financing

Must have a history of financial responsibility and a steady income

Must have demonstrated an ability to repay the loan to Habitat for Humanity

Demonstrates a willingness, desire and commitment to participate in the planning and building of the home or in the building of Habitat homes for others

Must invest 500 hours of *sweat equity* to build their home

Must be a permanent resident or a citizen of the U.S.

How is the Family Chosen?

Family Selection Committee is made up of 20+ volunteers

Families are invited to attend a community meeting to apply

Prior to submitting the applications, special meetings are held to answer questions and to assist the families in completing the application

The review and evaluation of applications take up to 90 days

The process also includes personal interviews and meetings with the families in their current residence

The selected family is notified just prior to the Ground Breaking Ceremony

Homeownership Facts:

Homeownership provides shelter and security to families, and fosters involvement in community life as well as participation in democratic institutions.

Homeownership provides important social as well as economic benefits. It is the cornerstone of a healthy community and the basis for positive community involvement. For homeowners, the value of their homes – the largest investment most of them will make in their lifetimes – creates an incentive to stay abreast of local government actions. Owning a home gives people greater reason to care, and that makes a huge difference. Owners do not move as frequently as renters, providing for more neighborhood stability. In turn, involvement in community quality of life issues helps to prevent crime, improve childhood education and supports neighborhood upkeep.

A higher quality home environment contributes to both the physical and cognitive growth of children. Children of homeowners tend to have higher levels of achievement in math and reading, and generally have fewer behavior problems. That contributes to higher educational

achievement, lower teenage pregnancy rates and higher lifetime income.

How can you help?

Adopt a House

Your corporation, civic club, congregation, church or organization can **Adopt a House!** All you have to do is make a commitment to provide the financial resources (minimum \$100,000) and the volunteer work force required to help in the building of a Habitat house. Adopt a Rooms also available at lesser amounts.

Donate Land or Funds

Donations of cash are always appreciated, and now we are accepting donations of stock to Habitat. But our most desperate need is for land to develop in Santa Clara County.

Become a Habitat Volunteer

The heart and soul of Silicon Valley Habitat for Humanity is its volunteers.

Those energetic volunteers who wield a hammer on a construction site, serve on committees, or those who help out in our office.

Executive Team:

Robert Freiri, Executive Director

David Randolph,
Construction Project Director

Ted Becker,
Resource Development Director

Jennifer Simmons,
Project Development Manager

Kerry Edmonds,
Community Services Director

Contact Us:

Address: 513 Valley Way, Milpitas, CA 95035

Phone: (408) 942-6444

Fax: (408) 942-6446

E-mail: info@habitatsanjose.org

Web address: www.habitatsanjose.org



**26th Annual
Italian Family Festa
Presented by the Italian American Heritage Foundation
At Santana Row, San Jose
September 29, September 30 and October 1, 2006
Fact Sheet and Entertainment Schedule**

Friday, September 29

Noon-Festival Opens

Entertainment Schedule

- 4:15 - The Classy Cats
- 6:00 - Pasquale Esposito
- 7:30-9:30
- - The Joe Sharino Band

10:00 P.M.-Festival Closes

Saturday, September 30

11:00 A.M.-Festival Opens

11:30 A.M.-Dedication Ceremony

Dedication ceremony honoring the late John and Lonnie De Vincenci, Founders of the Festival

Entertainment Schedule

- 12:30 – Gilbert Gauthier
- 1:00 – Dick Contino
- 2:15 – Folk Dancing by Danza Italiana
- 2:45 – Bella Sorella
- 3:15 – Gilbert Gauthier
- 3:30 – Grape Stomp Contest
- 4:00 – Dick Contino
- 4:30– Bella Sorella Duo
- 6:30– 10;PM
 - Mike Marotta Band, Street Dance
- 7:30 – Tarantella Contest
- 10:00 P.M.-Festival Closes

Sunday, October 1

10:00 A.M. –Outdoor Catholic Mass

11:00 A.M-Festival Opens

Entertainment Schedule

- 11:30 – Gilbert Gauthier, Tribute to Frank Sinatra
- 12:00 – Dick Contino
- 1:30 – Pasquale Esposito, Stylist of Italian Songs
- 3:00 – Grape Stomp Contest
- 3:30- Raffle Prize Drawing
- 4:00-5:00
- – Dick Contino

5:00 P.M.-Festival Closes

For more information:

Contact:

Chris Di Salvo

Phone: (408) 265-0302

Mobile: (408) 506-0455

E-mail: profef@aol.com

Mary Coluccio,IAHF Office

Phone: (408-293-7122.

Final Project

We have spent the last five classes learning about media writing. Most importantly we have learned what materials are contained in a press kit. In the beginning of this course, I asked you to think about a client you could write a press kit for. For your homework you are to choose a client and prepare a press kit for your client. The press kit should include a press release, fact sheet and media alert and any other materials such as photographs, brochures etc. that you would like to include.

Please bring your finished press kits to Class 6 and we will evaluate them in class.

Class 6

Today, we are going to evaluate everyone's press kits. We are going to trade them and let the student know what you like about the press kit, and what you think could have been better in the press kit.