Penulisan Korporat

KOM 3104 / KOC 3461 ( Unit 1-6 / 6 )

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43400 UPM Serdang
Selangor Darul Ehsan
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(KOM 3104)
PENULISAN KORPORAT

1. Salam Pengenalan

Saya, Muhamad Rosli Selamat, penulis modul ini mengucapkan tahniah dan syabas kepada semua pelajar yang telah berjaya meneruskan pengajian masing-masing ke semester 4 program B.Comm.(PJJ).

2. Makanat Penulis

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3. Tujuan Modul

Modul KOM 3104 ini bertujuan untuk mendedahkan pelajar kepada bidang penulisan komunikasi korporat (perhubungan awam) agar pelajar menjadi lebih bermaklumat terhadap perkembangan dan isu-isu yang berlaku dalam dunia penulisan korporat sesebuah perbadanan (corporation).

Seorang petugas atau pengamal komunikasi korporat yang berwibawa perlu tahu dan peka kepada kelainan dan keperluan publik-publiknya supaya ia berjaya dalam melaksanakan tugas dan berupaya mempertingkatkan ketrampilan dan profesionalisme komunikasi bertulis masing-masing.

Untuk lebih spesifik, melalui modul ini pelajar akan didedahkan kepada beberapa maklumat tentang penulisan dalam bidang komunikasi korporat yang melibatkan aspek-aspek yang berkaitan dengan tanggungjawab seorang penulis korporat, kepentingan penyelidikan dalam penulisan, prinsip penulisan dan kepelagaihan format, bentuk dan jenis penulisan korporat.
4. **Pengisian Unit**

Modul ini terdiri daripada 6 unit. Cadangan kepada perancangan pembelajaran adalah seperti yang dikemukakan dalam rajah berikut;

<table>
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<th>m.s.</th>
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<td>Peranan Penyeleidikan dalam Penulisan Korporat</td>
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<td>Penulisan Korporat untuk Audiens Khusus</td>
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5. **Penilaian**

Melalui modul ini (pembelajaran setiap unit), pelajar akan diberikan latihan dan tugas yang cuba mengukur keupayaan mereka untuk mendapatkan maklumbalas dan kefahaman terhadap unit yang telah dipelajari. Pelajar **tidak** perlu menghantar hasil latihan yang mereka lakukan. Walau bagaimanapun hasil [tugas] perlu dikemukakan kepada pensyarah bagi tujuan penilaian. Anda adalah digalakkan untuk membincangkan jawapan kepada latihan tersebut dalam sesi tutorial bersama tutor yang terlibat.

6. **Peperiksaan**

Soalan peperiksaan yang akan dikemukakan adalah berdasarkan modul dan bentuk soalan adalah berbagai (objektif, berstruktur, subjektif dan selainnya). Maklumat mengenai tarikh peperiksaan akan dimaklumkan kepada pelajar oleh Bahagian Peperiksaan & Rekod Pelajar, IDEAL.
Terdapat dua kali peperiksaan, iaitu;
Peperiksaan ½ Semester: Soalan adalah berdasarkan Unit 1-4
Peperiksaan Akhir Semester: Soalan adalah berdasarkan Unit 5-8

7. **Tugasan**

Setiap pelajar dikehendaki menyediakan tugasan-tugasan berikut bagi tujuan penilaian oleh pensyarah.

**Tugasan 1:**


i. Berita Harian
ii. The Star
iii. New Straits Times

Anda perlu menganalisis ciri dan kandungan penulisan korporat yang terdapat dalam akhbar yang anda pilih yang diterbitkan pada dua hari tersebut dengan menggunakan borang analisis berdasarkan format berikut;

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<tr>
<th>Nama Akhbar:</th>
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</table>

Berdasarkan data yang telah anda kumpul dan rekodkan di dalam dua borang yang bersaringan untuk dua tarikh yang berbeza, anda perlu membuat analisis perbandingan secara menyeluruh hasil penulisan korporat organisasi yang terdapat pada akhbar berkenaan.
Tugas 2:


i. Lima kapi periklanan korporat yang berlainan yang disiarkan oleh sebuah organisasi atau beberapa buah organisasi yang terdapat dalam majalah yang diterbitkan di Malaysia pada tahun 2000.
ii. Lima kapi periklanan korporat yang berlainan yang disiarkan oleh sebuah organisasi atau beberapa buah organisasi yang terdapat dalam internet.
iii. Buat analisis mengenai 10 kapi periklanan korporat berkenaan berdasarkan aspek berikut;
   a. Nama Majalah atau alamat laman web
   b. Organisasi
   c. Orientasi publisiti
   d. Komponen kapi periklanan (teks/ilustrasi)
   e. Saiz (Jumlah perkataan atau keluasan ruang)

Tugas 3:

Tugas ini perlu diserahkan kepada pensyarah selewat-lewatnya pada 16hb September 2000. Sediakan satu pakej penulisan korporat mengenai organisasi anda. Panjang penulisan berkenaan MESTILAH sekurang-kurangnya 1,500 kata perkataan. Pakej penulisan korporat tersebut boleh anda sediakan dalam bentuk kit portfolio atau hompej. Sekiranya anda menyediakan penulisan korporat berkenaan dalam bentuk hompej, anda perlu menyertahkan disket dan hasil cetakan dari hompej bagi tujuan penilaian. Penyerahan tugas akan secara hantaran e-mail tidak akan diterima atau dinilai

8. Maklumat Kursus

Kursus KOM3104 (Penulisan Korporat) bernilai empat jam kredit dengan komponen dua jam kuliah dan dua jam amali untuk setiap minggu pembelajaran bagi pelajar sepenuh masa. Walau bagaimanapun bagi pelajar PJJ, anda perluisah mengurus masa anda sesuai dengan agihan komponen tersebut. Antara objektif kursus KOM3104 ialah:
   i. menerangkan konsep dan komponen-komponen yang terkandung dalam perspektif penulisan perhubungan awan,
ii. menerangkan isu-isu penulisan yang dihadapi oleh pengamal perhubungan awam masa kini, dan

iii. menyediakan hasil kerja penulisan perhubungan awam.

Dari segi pelaksanaan, kursus ini mencuba untuk membincangkan peranan penulis korporat atau perhubungan awam, etika dan tanggungjawab perundangan penulis korporat, prinsip penulisan korporat, aplikasi indeks keterbacaan, analisis audiens, penulisan untuk audiens terpilih, penulisan untuk audiens media elektronik, penulisan untuk media cetak, dan penulisan untuk kampen komunikasi korporat.

Penilaian untuk kursus KOM3104 adalah berdasarkan agihan seperti berikut:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tugas/Tes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tugas Akhir</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>Ujian</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</table>

Antara teks rujukan yang boleh anda gunakan bagi mengukuhkan kefahaman mengenai kandungan kursus KOM3104 adalah berdasarkan senarai di bawah ini;


Selain daripada teks di atas anda juga digalakkan untuk menggunakan perkhidmatan rujukan secara on-line yang disediakan oleh perpustakaan UPM. Perkhidmatan tersebut boleh anda layari melalui laman web (http://www.epnet.com/ghost/).
9. **Pendekatan Pembelajaran**

Untuk Kursus KOM3104 ini, anda diberikan maklumat mengenai tajuk-tajuk yang berkaitan dengan penulisan korporat, ataupun dalam rujukan akademik dikenali sebagai penulisan perhubungan awam. Pada setiap unit, semua maklumat awalan diberikan dalam Bahasa Melayu. Walau bagaimanapun anda perlu membaca maklumat tambahan yang diberikan dalam bahasa Inggeris. Maklumat dalam bahasa Inggeris adalah diambil dari teks yang digunakan sebagai teks wajib Kursus KOM3104 yang diambil oleh pelajar-pelajar sepenuh masa program B.Comm. Universiti Putra Malaysia. Rujukan teks wajib berkenaan ialah sebagai berikut:


Umumnya, perkembangan bidang komunikasi korporat di Malaysia, memerlukan pengamalnya untuk mengetahui sumber maklumat dari dua bahasa utama, iaitu Bahasa Melayu dan Bahasa Inggeris. Berdasarkan keperluan tersebut, sumber rujukan tambahan dalam Bahasa Inggeris dibekalkan kepada semua pelajar PJJ yang mendaftar Kursus KOM3104 (Penulisan Korporat) sebagai asas pengukuhan bahasa berkenaan. Pada setiap bahagian akhir bahan pembelajaran tersebut terdapat senarai latihan yang diberikan. Anda adalah digalakkan untuk mencuba membuat latihan tersebut, khususnya latihan yang dicadangkan. Latihan tersebut difikirkan akan dapat membantu anda untuk mengukuhkan pengetahuan dan kemahiran asas anda dalam bidang penulisan korporat.

**SELAMAT MENTELAH**

**&**

**SELAMAT MENGHADAPI PEPERIKSAAN**
UNIT 1

PENGENALAN KEPADA PENULISAN KORPORAT

Objektif Pembelajaran;
Selepas membaca unit dan bahan pembelajaran tambahan anda akan;
1. Mengetahui definisi penulisan korporat.
3. Mengetahui prinsip asas penulisan korporat.
4. Memahami tanggungjawab seorang penulis korporat.

A. Latarbelakang
Bidang penulisan komunikasi korporat merupakan salah satu bidang tanggungjawab utama pegawai komunikasi korporat atau perhubungan awam (PR). Tujuan utama penulisan korporat ialah untuk meningkatkan imej dan identiti seorang atau organisasi. Amalan penulisan korporat di kalangan orang PR atau penulis korporat bermula sejak awal pembabitan mereka dalam profesi komunikasi korporat mahupun sesudah mereka menjadi perunding profesional yang berpengalaman. Sebelum memenuhi tanggungjawab menerbitkan bahan-bahan bertulis, seorang penulis korporat seharusnya memahirkan diri dengan asas penulisan yang baik, seperti pemupukan idea, penyediaan draf, mengaplikasikan pendekatan penulisan yang mudah yang mengandungi elemen kejelasan, bertujuan dan bersasaran.

Antara tanggungjawab utama seorang penulis korporat ialah menyediakan penulisan yang terdiri daripada siaran berita, biografi, berita rencana, kertas latar dan lembaran maklumat untuk diedarkan kepada publik, sama ada melalui sokongan medium ataupun secara langsung. Selain daripada itu seorang pegawai PR juga turut bertanggungjawab menyediakan ucapan pegawai atasan serta menghasilkan penulisan iklan, khususnya iklan institusi dan penulisan untuk media elektronik serta penulisan di dalam organisasi sendiri. Penulisan laporan
PR dan laporan tahunan harus juga dilakukan oleh penulis korporat selain menghasilkan penerbitan organisasi, seperti risalah, surat berita, akhbar dan buku.

Di dalam melaksanakan tanggungjawab tersebut, penulis korporat juga seharusnya menitikberatkan aspek-aspek perundangan dan etika penulisan. Sebagai satu aspek penting dalam pengurusan organisasi, bidang perhubungan awam atau komunikasi korporat adalah luas. Antara tugas utama yang terangkum dalam bidang komunikasi ialah perancangan, pengurusan, publisiti serta mengekalkan hubungan yang baik antara organisasi dengan publik, penyebaran maklumat, pengurusan acara khusus, pengukuh kan keterampilan sebagai jurucakap organisasi, menjalankan penyelidikan dan penilaian, menguruskan krisis dan menerbitkan bahan bertulis serta membina imej dan identiti organisasi. Sejajar dengan perkembangan dunia korporat di Malaysia, tanggungjawab pegawai komunikasi korporat adalah semakin mencabar. Mereka tidak dapat lari dari bidang penulisan kerana salah satu tanggungjawab utama penulis korporat adalah mengeluarkan bahan bertulis yang bertujuan untuk meningkatkan imej dan identiti sesuatu organisasi.

B. Apa dia Penulisan Korporat?
Penulisan korporat merupakan satu aktiviti penulisan yang dilakukan oleh organisasi bagi tujuan promosi atau publisiti imej. Penulisan korporat, secara khususnya diurus atau dipantau oleh seorang pegawai organisasi atau institusi yang bertanggungjawab melaksanakan tugas-tugas komunikasi korporat dan juga perhubungan awam. Ringkasnya, seorang pegawai perhubungan awam atau komunikasi korporat adalah bertanggungjawab untuk menjalankan kerja-kerja penulisan korporat bagi sesuatu organisasi.

Oleh kerana matlamat penulisan korporat adalah untuk mempromosikan dan menggiatkan publisiti imej organisasi, maka setiap hasil penulisan yang terdapat atau diusahakan oleh organisasi yang mengandungi unsur publisiti dan promosi boleh dikategorikan sebagai hasil penulisan korporat. Umumnya, pihak pengurusan organisasi bersetuju menganggap bahawa setiap hasil penulisan dan penerbitan organisasi boleh mencerminkan reputasi dan juga imej organisasi.

Penilaian terhadap unsur publisiti yang terdapat dalam contoh-contoh penulisan korporat yang dikenal sebagai penulisan yang tertinggi kepada kandungan teks dan juga unsur visual, seperti ilustrasi, grafik dan selainnya yang boleh menjana interpretasi imej, khususnya imej yang baik dan positif bagi sesebuah organisasi. Penilaian imej yang baik terhadap kandungan teks hasil penulisan korporat adalah berdasarkan unsur-unsur kejelasan dan kefahaman kepada teks.

Teks yang jelas dan mudah difahami, sifatnya adalah mudah dibaca dan ditafsirkan. Sementara unsur visual yang mencerminkan imej yang baik sewajarnya dapat memberikan identifikasi yang menarik, mempunyai komposisi yang seimbang dari segi warna, bentuk dan saiz. Sebagai contoh sepucuk surat yang dihantar oleh organisasi kepada seorang pelanggan, adalah dinilai berdasarkan kandungan surat, kualiti kertas dan juga rekabentuk kepala surat yang terlibat. Kesemua aspek tersebut adalah identiti surat berkenaan. Sekiranya identiti surat adalah baik, maka imej yang dijana oleh pelanggan dari surat yang diterima sudah pastinya positif. Situasi yang sama juga akan berlaku ke atas hasil-hasil penulisan korporat organisasi yang lain.
C. Tanggungjawab Seorang Penulis Korporat (PR)

Kebolehan menulis merupakan kemahiran yang diutamakan bagi seseorang penulis korporat. Kemahiran menulis dengan cepat, jelas, padat dan dengan gaya yang menarik menjadi keperluan asas bagi penulis korporat. Bidang kewartawanan pada kebiasaannya menjadi asas kepada seseorang untuk menjadi penulis korporat kerana bidang komunikasi korporat menitikberatkan kemahiran penulisan yang disemai melalui bidang kewartawanan. Selain daripada itu bidang kewartawanan merupakan penyokong industri media yang sentiasa tumpuan aktiviti komunikasi korporat, khususnya perhubungan media. Berdasarkan keadaan tersebut, tidak hairanlah sekiranya kebanyakan iklan untuk jawatan dalam bidang komunikasi korporat dan perhubungan awam mengutamakan mereka yang mempunyai pengalaman kewartawanan.

Kemahiran dalam penulisan di kalangan penulis korporat dan pegawai PR adalah juga diperlukan kerana mereka bertanggungjawab memberi penjelasan dan menyebarkan maklumat atau bahan berita mengenai organisasi yang diwakili. Berdasarkan situasi ini, bermakna seseorang penulis korporat harus bijak dan cekap dalam mengeluarkan bahan berita mengenai organisasi yang diwakili bagi tujuan publisiti. Pengamal PR dan penulis korporat adalah juga bertanggungjawab menyediakan penerbitan organisasi serta menyediakan teks ucapan bagi pegawai utama organisasi.

Seseorang penulis korporat seharusnya sedar tentang kepentingan sesuatu medium media massa bagi menyalurkan hasil penulisan mereka untuk bacaan audiens. Proses komunikasi massa yang konvensional, pada hakikatnya melibatkan ramai individu atau komunikator. Proses tersebut berlaku melalui perantaraan sistem media dan jarak fizikal di antara komunikator dengan sasaran adalah jauh. Unsur deria yang terlibat pula adalah terbatas dan maklumbalas diperolehi agak lambat. Walau bagaimanapun aplikasi media massa yang baru yang melibatkan teknologi komputer dan internet, telah membolehkan interaksi media massa berkenaan berlaku secara interaktif. Oleh kerana perkembangan teknologi tersebut turut mempengaruhi aktiviti penulisan korporat, maka sebagai
penulis korporat, pegawai organisasi perluah memastikan hasil penulisan itu
dapat diterima oleh audiens sebaik yang mungkin.

Tanggungjawab utama yang harus dilakukan oleh penulis korporat ialah
memahirkan diri dan memahami keperluan asas penulisan. Penulis seharusnya
dapat menulis dengan jelas, tepat dan padat serta meyakinkan. Penguasaan
kemahiran asas penulisan akan dapat membantu penulis korporat mengendalikan
pelbagai bentuk penulisan khususnya yang berkaitan dengan tugas penulisan
yang dijalankan.

D. Keperluan Asas Penulisan
Tidak semua orang mempunyai bakat atau kemahiran menulis sejadi. Walau
bagaimanapun kemahiran ini boleh dikuasai melalui sikap ingin belajar, rajin
berlatih dan sabar. Kemahiran asas penulisan boleh dibahagikan kepada beberapa
aspek, iaitu teori, amalan dan common sense.

Antara kemahiran asas penulisan penting yang perlu dikuasai oleh
sesorang penulis korporat adalah sebagai berikut:

1. Pembentukan idea asas
Penulis korporat seharusnya berfikir dengan jelas sebelum menulis. Tidak
ramai orang yang dapat menulis dengan baik sekiranya tidak berfikir dengan jelas
dan matang mengenai topik yang hendak ditulis. Pengalaman yang dialami tidak
boleh dijadikan asas bahawa sesorang boleh menulis dengan baik dan tepat.
Bagi menghasilkan sesuatu penulisan yang baik, sesorang itu haruslah
mempunyai idea, pemikiran yang waras dan tajam. Idea-idea yang baik haruslah
memenuhi beberapa kriteria seperti berikut;

i. Idea perluah mempunyai perkaitan dengan kepentingan pembaca.

ii. Idea dapat menarik perhatian jumlah audiens yang ramai.

iii. Idea perluah mengandungi bahan berita atau maklumat yang
berguna kepada audiens.

Idea penulisan kerap kali juga wujud secara mendadak dan terdapat juga
idea yang wujud atau timbul atau secara berperingkat-peringkat. Walau
bagaimanapun, tidak semua penulisan memerlukan idea yang baru. Apa yang
penting ialah kebolehan penulis korporat mengubah suai dan menyusunatur idea yang sedia ada untuk memenuhi tujuan khusus sesuatu penulisan korporat.

2. **Penyediaan draf**


3. **Memudahkan penulisan**


4. **Menjelaskan penulisan**

Penulis korporat adalah bertanggungjawab untuk menulis dengan jelas, ringkas, tepat dan padat. Setiap perenganan mestih ditulis secara terancang agar dapat menyampaikan maksud dengan sempurna dan boleh difahami. Di samping itu,
idea-idea yang hendak disampaikan haruslah juga berkesinambungan dan tidak menyelenggarnakan dari idea asal. Kerja-kerja semakan dan penyuntingan yang rapi perlu dilakukan di dalam penulisan korporat kerana setiap perkataan yang digunakan mungkin melibatkan implikasi kos kepada pihak organisasi. Oleh itu, penulis korporat harus sedar dan bertanggungjawab bagi memastikan hasil penulisan yang diterbitkan dihafami oleh audiens.

5. **Bertujuan**
Penulisan korporat perlulah memiliki tujuan, iaitu sama ada untuk memberi makluman, penerangan atau membujuk dan sebagainya. Pemilihan perkataan yang sesuai, tepat, baik dan sopan akan dapat mewujudkan suasana yang diingini bagi mencapai tujuan yang dikehendaki oleh sipenulis.

6. **Bersasaran**
Penulisan korporat yang berkesan haruslah mempunyai kumpulan sasaran agar penulisan tidak kabur dan menyelenggarnakan dari matlamat asal. Dengan adanya audiens sasaran, penulis korporat boleh mengubah mesej yang ingin disampaikan mengikut kehendak dan kebolehan audiens. Gunakanlah ganti nama yang sesuai dengan audiens agar kemesraan dan keharmonian di antara penulis korporat dan audiens dapat diwujudkan. Elakkan jurang di antara penulis dengan audiens.

E. **Kepelbagaian Jenis Penulisan Korporat**
Apabila seseorang penulis korporat telah dapat menguasai asas penulisan, mereka perlulah pula memantapkan lagi kemahiran dan kefahaman terhadap kepelbagaian jenis penulisan korporat. Memahami kepelbagaian jenis penulisan korporat merupakan salah satu tanggungjawab utama penulis. Antara kepelbagaian penulisan korporat ialah;

1. **Penulisan awam**
Terdapat lima jenis penulisan yang terkandung di dalam penulisan awam, iaitu:
i. Siaran Berita

Penulisan siaran berita sewajarnya diberikan penekanan kerana ia boleh meningkatkan imej organisasi. Siaran berita juga biasa dikenali sebagai siaran akhbar atau kenyataan akhbar yang disiarkan di dalam akhbar-akhbar tempatan yang pada kebiasaannya diterbitkan pada ruangan ekonomi. Siaran berita sering digunakan oleh penulis korporat di Malaysia untuk mendapatkan publisiti atau memaklumkan sesuatu mengenai kegiatan organisasi. Antara kegiatan organisasi yang dipublisitikkan melalui siaran berita ialah pengenalan barangan atau perkhidmatan baru di pasaran, perlantikan jawatan pegawai utama organisasi, penstruktur semula pengurusan organisasi, dan selainnya.

Umumnya siaran berita diolah berasaskan pendekatan penulisan kewartawanan yang berbentuk piramid terbalik, iaitu perenggan awal dimulakan dengan suatu maklumat yang terpenting yang kemudiannya diikuti oleh perenggan seterusnya yang mengandungi maklumat yang kurang penting. Pendekatan ini digunakan bertujuan untuk memastikan berita terpenting tidak akan terkeluar atau terpotong dari siaran sekiranya ruang penerbitan tidak mencukupi. Pada dasarnya pemotongan maklumat dilakukan oleh pihak penerbit, iaitu dengan mengeluarkan perenggan menggunakan pendekatan dari akhir ke awal – perenggan akhir akan dipotong terlebih dahulu dan kemudiannya diikuti oleh perenggan yang seterusnya secara menaik atau berundur. Perbincangan mengenai teknik dan cara penulisan siaran berita akan dilakukan secara lebih terperinci pada unit lain dalam modul ini.

ii. Biografi

Selain penulisan siaran berita, penulis korporat juga bertanggungjawab dalam penulisan biografi, khususnya biografi pegawai-pegawai utama organisasi. Penulis korporat perlu menulis dan menyimpan biografi setiap pegawai penting dalam organisasinya. Biografi ini mencatatkan fakta penting mengenai individu tersebut seperti jawatan yang disandang, pengalaman pekerjaan, latihan, pendidikan, portfolio kejayaan pengurusan, umur, taraf perkahwinan, minat,
maklumat keluarga dan sebagainya yang boleh dimanfaatkan bagi tujuan publisiti organisasi.

Penulis korporat hendaklah sentiasa mengemaskini biografi tersebut dan bersedia mengeluarkan atau mengedarkannya apabila diperlukan oleh pihak media massa. Penulisan biografi untuk siaran atau penerbitan boleh dibuat dalam bentuk siaran berita atau rencana. Pendekatan penulisan tersebut adalah bergantung kepada permintaan pihak media atau pihak pengurusan organisasi sendiri.

iii. Berita rencana
Berita rencana disediakan untuk bahan berita majalah, media massa, khususnya akhbar semasa penerbitan atau keluaran khas. Penulisan berita rencana adalah lebih luas dan lebih menyeluruh berbanding dengan siaran berita. Fakta dan data yang dikemukakan adalah lebih lengkap dan menyeluruh. Disamping itu penggunaan perkataan dan ayat pula adalah lebih banyak dan lebih pelbagai jika dibandingkan dengan siaran berita. Penyediaannya memerlukan perancangan yang teliti dan mengambil masa yang lama kerana pengolah dan pemantauan maklumat yang terperinci dan baik harus dilakukan.

Penerbitan berita rencana sesuatu organisasi dilakukan mengikut keperluan dan kesesuaian dan bukannya secara kerap. Penyediaan penulisan berita rencana adalah berdasarkan sesuatu event tertentu yang signifikan, seperti sambutan ulang tahun penubuhan organisasi, perasmian bangunan ibu pejabat baru, penubuhan cawangan baru, dan selainnya. Terdapat beberapa panduan untuk menyediakan berita rencana, antaranya:

a. Mengenalpasti media yang dianggap dapat memberikan liputan publisiti yang komprehensif dan bersesuaian dengan kandungan atau maklumat berita rencana.

b. Tidak mengedarkan maklumat berita rencana kepada penerbitan atau majalah yang bersaing.
c. Berhubung dengan media yang sudah dikenalpasti mengenai pendekatan atau gaya penulisan media berkenaan supaya persediaan awal dapat dibuat.

d. Mengenalpasti profil pembaca penerbitan media yang telah dikenalpasti.

e. Sertaisa berhubung dengan pihak media bagi memastikan penerbitan atau penyiaran maklumat dapat dilaksanakan secara terancang dan berkesan.

f. Sertaisa membuat penyelidikan mengenai fakta dan data yang akan dimuatkan dalam penulisan berita rencana berkenaan supaya salah-faham dan kekeliruan dapat dielakkan.

g. Mengelak daripada menggunakan pendekatan penulisan piramid terbalik. Penulisan berita rencana adalah bebas dari ikatan penulisan kewartawanan kerana umumnya penerbitan berita rencana telah terlebih dahulu dipersetujui oleh kedua-dua pihak penerbit (media) dan juga organisasi (pembekal maklumat/berita).

iv. Kertas latar


v. Helaiian fakta (fact sheet)

Dokumen padat dan ringkas yang mengandungi profil organisasi. Helaiian fakta juga merupakan fakta atau maklumat tambahan untuk menyokong siaran berita atau kertas latar. Di samping itu juga ia boleh dijadikan maklumat bantuan
kepada wartawan atau pemberita yang ingin menulis rencana atau mengolah berita.

2. Penulisan ucapan.

Salah satu tugas rutin pegawai yang bertanggungjawab mengendalikan aktiviti PR atau komunikasi korporat ialah merangka dan menulis teks ucapan pegawai-pegawai utama organisasi, khususnya ucapan yang disampaikan bagi mewakili organisasi, tanpa mengira sama ada organisasi itu organisasi kerajaan atau swasta. Penulis ucapan dianggap sebagai penulis khas yang perlu mengetahui segala latar belakang mengenai konteks dan situasi ucapan. Keadaan ini berlaku kerana pegawai komunikasi korporat merupakan orang yang terlibat secara langsung dalam pengurusan sesuatu majlis atau event organisasi. Dalam penyediaan teks ucapan adalah penting bagi penulis mengenalpasti kredibiliti fakta dan maklumat yang dikenmukakan. Penyampai pula perluah berkredibiliti dan memahami fakta yang dihujahkan.

Dalam proses penulisan dan penyampaian teks ucapan tersebut, kedua-dua pihak penulis dan penyampai perlu terlebih dahulu berbincang mengenai fakta, khususnya fakta yang melibatkan penggunaan angka dan nombor. Ketika menulis teks ucapan, penulis korporat seharusnya sedar bahawa ucapan merupakan satu
pelaksanaan proses komunikasi bersemuka. Oleh itu kandungan teks ucapan berkenaan mestilah memberi kesan yang dikehendaki apabila disampaikan agar audiens tidak mempunyai ruang untuk menolak atau mempertikaikan maklumat, fakta dan hujah yang disampaikan.

3. **Penulisan kapi periklanan**
Dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, pada masa kini manusia tidak dapat lari dari terdedah kepada iklan. Malah iklan atau periklanan merupakan satu medium yang boleh membantu meningkatkan pembangunan tamadun manusia dari segi pengetahuan mengenai pembangunan persekitaran dan kehidupan mereka. Manusia sebagai pengguna barang dan perkhidmatan yang dikeluarkan oleh sesuatu organisasi perlu mengetahui tentang perkembangan terbaru yang berlaku ke atas barang dan perkhidmatan yang mereka perlukan bagi meneruskan kehidupan.

Periklanan secara umumnya, boleh ditakrifkan sebagai satu proses komunikasi yang berstruktur dan terancang bertujuan untuk menyampaikan maklumat kepada pengguna dengan cara memujuk dan menggunakan pelbagai media. Penyampaian dan penerbitan periklanan secara konvensional adalah berbayar tanpa mengira sama ada periklanan berkenaan sebagai periklanan institusi/korporat ataupun periklanan produk (barang dan perkhidmatan).

Bagi tujuan memantapkan imej dan identiti sesuatu organisasi, pegawai komunikasi korporat atau PR boleh menggunakan periklanan institusi ataupun periklanan korporat. Pengiklanan korporat merupakan salah satu komponen utama aktiviti komunikasi korporat dan perhubungan awam yang bertujuan untuk menarik perhatian publik terhadap sesuatu organisasi agar organisasi kelihatan unggul dan berwibawa berbanding pesaing-pesaing organisasi yang lain. Peniklanan korporat tidak menonjolkan produk sebaliknya lebih menonjolkan identifikasi organisasi. Identifikasi tersebut pula adalah terarah kepada sesuatu isu atau situasi, seperti politik, sosial dan ekonomi.

Periklanan korporat boleh diterbitkan melalui media cetak atau media elektronik. Yang menjadi keutamaan ialah periklanan tersebut mampu menonjolkan imej yang dirancang dan dibina oleh organisasi dan boleh
mempersenbahankan slogan atau tema tertentu yang menjadi teras identifikasi organisasi. Sebagai contoh, Penerbangan Malaysia telah menaja periklanan yang memaparkan kesungguhan dan dinimisme anak Malaysia dari semua kaum untuk terbang tinggi bersama bangsa lain di dunia. Komitmen Penerbangan Malaysia untuk menyokong slogan Malaysia Boleh mencerminkan bahawa organisasi tersebut turut menyokong falsafah dan kempen kerajaan dalam menonjolkan keunggulan bangsa Malaysia untuk meneroka pembaharuan dan kejayaan di samping mewujudkan perpaduan kaum dan sikap kerjasama yang tinggi di kalangan rakyat Malaysia yang jamak budaya. Secara tidak langsung, periklanan tersebut turut menonjolkan imej Penerbangan Malaysia sebagai sebuah institusi penerbangan perkasa yang sama hebat ketrampiliannya untuk maju dan berdaya saing sebanding dengan syarikat-syarikat penerbangan lain di dunia.

Selain daripada periklanan institusi, penulis korporat juga bertanggungjawab dalam pengolahan periklanan lain yang lebih spesifik dan khusus sifatnya, seperti ucapan tahniah, takziah dan selainnya. Untuk menonjolkan periklanan itu lebih sempurna penampilan dan pemaparannya, penulis korporat boleh mendapatkan khidmat bantuan, penasihat dan perundingan agensi periklanan.

4. Penulisan Media Elektronik

Penulisan untuk media elektronik, pada kebiasaannya melibatkan penulisan skrip dan selalunya disediakan oleh pakar di dalam bidang berkenaan. Walau bagaimanapun, maklumat asas mengenai kandungan skrip adalah disediakan oleh penulis korporat sebelum organisasi, iaitu di kalangan pegawai komunikasi korporat dan PR. Hasil penulisan media elektronik tersebut disampaikan atau diterbitkan melalui program di televisyen, radio dan tayangan filem. Selain itu penyampaian penulisan jenis ini juga dikemukakan melalui persebahan slaid, multi-media dan video korporat.

Dalam penyediaan penulisan untuk media elektronik, penulis korporat seharusnya menggunakan ayat yang ringkas, mudah dan bersifat pengumuman. Nombor dan angka yang terlibat perluah dikemukakan dalam bentuk genap bagi memudahkan ingatan audiens terhadap data dan fakta.

5. Penulisan Penerbitan Organisasi.

Prestasi sesuatu organisasi dapat dinilai melalui hasil penerbitan organisasi yang disediakan oleh penulis korporat yang turut bertanggungjawab ke atas semua urusan penerbitan organisasi. Antara hasil penulisan penerbitan organisasi ialah risalah, surat berita, akhbar dalaman, brosur, buku cenderamata, kit media, laporan kewangan dan laporan tahunan. Dalam penerbitan organisasi, penulis korporat bukan sahaja perlu mempunyai kemahiran penulisan, tetapi juga perlu mengetahui prinsip dan teknik asas penerbitan yang merangkumi pemilihan jenis kertas, jenis huruf, saiz taip, teknik rekaketak dan rekabentuk serta selainnya. Kandungan penulisan penerbitan organisasi boleh dibuat dan dikemukakan dalam bentuk berita biasa, biografi, panduan, rencana atau laporan.

Kebanyakan penerbitan organisasi diedarkan secara dalaman sahaja, iaitu kepada kakitangan organisasi. Namun begitu terdapat juga edaran penerbitan kepada pihak luar, khususnya ahli lembaga pengarah organisasi, pemegang saham, pelanggan, kumpulan atau orang perseorang yang mempunyai kepentingan dengan organisasi. Penerbitan organisasi boleh dijadikan penghubung antara organisasi dan audiens. Audiens akan dapat mengetahui segala perkembangan yang berlaku di dalam organisasi. Segala maklumat atau berita
mengenai perlantikan kakitangan baru sehingga penstrukturkan semula pengurusan organisasi akan dapat dimuatkan di dalam penerbitan organisasi.

6. Penulisan Laporan

Laporan dianggap sebagai dokumen penting bagi sesuatu organisasi. Maklumat di dalam laporan akan merekod dan memaparkan segala perkembangan aktiviti organisasi. Pegawai komunikasi korporat dan PR merupakan orang yang bertanggungjawab untuk menyediakan kandungan laporan. Terdapat dua jenis laporan organisasi yang penting, iaitu laporan kewangan dan laporan tahunan. Selain dari itu laporan lain yang turut disediakan oleh penulis korporat, ialah laporan projek atau hasil kajian. Oleh kerana laporan tahunan dan laporan kewangan merupakan laporan wajib yang mesti dikeluarkan oleh organisasi, maka pemaparan laporan berkenaan perlulah mematuhi format yang ditentukan oleh prosedur perundangan. Dalam konteks Malaysia, laporan berkenaan perlulah mematuhi format yang dikeluarkan oleh pihak Pendaftar Syarikat.

Matlamat utama laporan tahunan ialah untuk memberi maklumat yang lengkap tentang kedudukan organisasi kepada audiens utama, iaitu ahli lembaga pengarah, pemegang saham, institusi kewangan dan bakal pelabur. Kandungan laporan tahunan biasanya mengandungi penyata kewangan, pemasaran, perjawatan, cukai, perudangan, pekerja serta maklumat-maklumat lain yang membolehkan audiens membuat pertimbangan atau justifikasi mengenai prestasi organisasi pada masa lepas, semasa dan akan datang.

F. Kesimpulan

Setiap penulisan korporat yang dihasilkan oleh sesuatu organisasi adalah mempunyai matlamat, sesuai dengan media yang digunakan dan juga audiens yang menjadi sasaran. Pemilihan audiens sasaran bagi sesuatu penulisan korporat akan menentukan gaya, bahasa, pendekatan serta media yang sesuai digunakan. Umumnya penulisan korporat adalah padat dan mudah difahami. Teks yang digunakan mengandungi ayat yang pendek dan tidak melibatkan perkataan yang
digunakan mengandungi ayat yang pendek dan tidak melibatkan perkataan yang boleh mengelirukan maksud yang hendak disampaikan. Perkataan-perkataan asing dan sukar difahami jarang terdapat dalam penulisan korporat.

Untuk menarik audiens, sama ada untuk terus mendengar, membaca atau menonton penulisan korporat, daya dan teknik penulisan mestih lancar dan konsisten. Faktor perundangan di dalam penulisan perlu diberi perhatian. Sekiranya penulis korporat menggunakan fakta dari sumber lain, maka sumber fakta berkenaan perlu dinyatakan. Keaslian sumber dan pengolahan penulisan perlulah diutamakan. Natijahnya, hasil penulisan korporat merupakan satu identifikasi yang tersendiri bagi sesebuah organisasi bagi menonjolkan imej yang asli dan berwibawa.

Bahan Pembelajaran Tambahan

1. *Public relations and the writer* (m.s.23)
2. *Ethical and legal responsibilities of the PR writer* (m.s.38)
3. *Readibility formulas* (m.s.62)

Latihan

Bagi mengukuhkan kefahaman, anda adalah digalakkan untuk mencuba semua latihan yang terdapat pada bahagian akhir setiap bahan pembelajaran tambahan yang dilampirkan.
Public Relations and the Writer

"Writing is writing," declared one public relations client exasperated at efforts to explain the difference between the information needed for a Web page and what was necessary for a position paper. Clients and employers usually don't know, and don't care. The writing job has to be done and you are the one to do it. The more you know about different media, the more facile you are with all writing assignments, the better off you will be in the kaleidoscopic job market.

The changing job market is bringing together various demands on the writer that used to be more distinctly categorized along separate job lines. Some public relations people will tell you that they don't write advertising copy. Too bad for them. They may get into a job where that skill is needed. Many public relations people are scrambling to learn about Web pages, and some are just relinquishing the task to a graphics designer. The results are dreadful if the designer is not a word person too. The demands on today's writers are for more versatility, greater understanding of the requirements of different media and increased competence in using visuals and sounds to help convey a message.

At the same time the demand for versatility is growing, there is more emphasis on accountability—evidence that the messages work. Employers want proof of results from communication efforts. There is no open checkbook for communication. Yet there is no need to despair. The writer who is genuinely good at the task of researching information, learning its meaning and communicating it effectively is and always will be needed.
You must understand what makes public relations writing different, though, from literary writing, news writing or selling although you may be involved in all three. Public relations writers do prepare messages for any medium that can convey information. Furthermore, much of the time these messages—words, images and often sound—are conveyed electronically. Potentially these messages can be received anywhere in the world.

The difference for public relations writing lies in the power and responsibility of the public relations person who is in the position of brokering goodwill between an institution and its publics. There are two aspects to this responsibility. Strategically, public relations involves the ways an organization’s operations and policies affect people—the face-to-face interaction of employees with customers or clients and the organization’s participation in the affairs of the community. Tactically speaking, though, good policies and good performance are worth little if people don’t understand the policies and don’t know about the performance. The heart of public relations practice remains in communication, particularly writing.

Good public relations requires communication skills, expertise in dealing with news media and a knowledge of mass communication, the dynamics of public opinion and the principles of persuasion. Further, the communicator must know when and what to communicate. This involves analysis, judgment, counseling and planning—in addition to and prior to communicating. In this chapter we’ll try to clarify the nature of this complex task and the writer’s role in it, beginning with a definition of the discipline, public relations.

**Defining Public Relations**

Even people who practice public relations don’t all agree on just what public relations is. Each practitioner probably has a slightly different definition, depending on his or her particular public relations experience. That experience is affected by the social, political and economic environment. Thus the practice of public relations in many
countries is different and the demands on the writers vary. Nevertheless, certain definitions express the meaning of public relations to the satisfaction of most professionals. One accepted definition was adopted in 1978 in Mexico City during the First World Assembly of Public Relations Associations and the First World Forum of Public Relations:

Public relations practice is the art and science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders, and implementing planned programs of action which will serve both the organization's and the public interest.

It's a broad definition but a useful one. By examining it more closely, we can get a better understanding of what public relations is and where the writer fits in.

**Analyzing, Predicting and Counseling**

The central part of this definition of public relations outlines the main roles of the professional public relations person: "analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders." These roles fall into the management context, in which personnel help to frame, implement, adjust and communicate the policies that govern how an institution interacts with its publics. It is through public relations that a firm acts with responsibility and responsiveness—in policy and information—to the best interests of the institution and its publics.\(^1\)

Doing this job well requires a broad educational background, expertise in many areas and, most of all, good judgment. Unlike the corporate attorney or accountant, the public relations practitioner cannot refer to a body of laws or procedures that prescribe behavior under given circumstances. Instead, the public relations person must know human behavior and combine that knowledge with specific information about people within the institution and people outside whom the institution deals with. For example, the PR director for a bank must consider the views of bank officers and bank employees as well as those of customers, the community, legislators and government regulatory agencies. The public relations person for the local school district must be aware of the feelings of students, parents, voters and the regional accrediting agency. Any institution has many audiences, and the public relations director must be able to advise management about the possible impact on those audiences of various policies and actions.

In addition to analyzing audiences and counseling management on the effects of policy, the PR person must be alert for signs of change. The right policy today will not necessarily be the right policy tomorrow. People's attitudes and opinions evolve, and the composition of the audience changes. The capable PR person notes trends in public opinion and predicts the consequences of such trends for the institution.

Usually, the public relations director also serves as spokesperson for the organization and overseer of the entire public relations program. The PR person at the top of the department spends little time on basic public relations techniques such as writing. The basics are handled by entry-level people, the staff writers.
Frank Wylie, a former president of the Public Relations Society of America, describes the division of public relations labor in this way: Senior-level public relations people are likely to spend 10 percent of their time with techniques, 40 percent with administration and 50 percent with analysis and judgment; at entry level it's 50 percent techniques, 5 percent judgment and 45 percent "running like hell."

Advertising, Publicity and PR

Much of the "running like hell" is done to carry out those "planned programs" of action mentioned in the definition of public relations. These programs, the most visible part of public relations practice, usually reach the public in the form of advertising or publicity.

However, as the lines between publicity and advertising are increasingly blurred, there's room for confusion about these two terms. Strictly speaking, advertising is time or space in a medium, purchased to display a message that has been prepared or approved by the buyer. Both content and placement—time and place, as well as duration—are controlled by the buyer. Publicity is information provided to a public without charge. The supplier controls content but relinquishes further control. When information goes to a news medium, the decision whether to use the publicity and the determination of its final form are controlled by the medium. Only when the medium itself is controlled by the source of the information is there full control of the message. Examples of controlled media would be employee communications of all types from magazines, newsletters and annual reports to video presentations and Web pages.

Confusion begins when advertising is not purchased, but is donated by a news medium to nonprofit organizations. Is this advertising or publicity? Technically, it's advertising because it looks like commercial advertising and is used in the time or space reserved for advertising. Further confusion arises over promotional letters and brochures. Are these direct sales (and consequently advertising), or are they promotions?

Adding to the problem is the fact that image, identity or institutional advertising is usually written by someone in a public relations department. On the other hand, ads for products or services, marketing-type advertising, often are handled exclusively by advertising agencies and their copywriters. Catalogs, which often require more promotional kinds of writing, fall somewhere between publicity and advertising.

In any case, both publicity and advertising require strong writing and conceptual skills. Most business executives are able to identify what they expect out of both, even when the lines begin to blur. However, many still equate publicity with public relations. Again there's an important difference. A publicist merely disseminates information. A public relations person, as we discussed, is involved in the analysis, counseling and planning that precede the dissemination of information. Or as PR authority Edward L. Bernays says, "Publicity is a one-way street; public relations is a two-way street." PR incorporates publicity, press agentry and public information, with the emphasis depending on the type of institution.
The Two-Way Street

The last part of the Mexico City definition of PR speaks of serving "both the organization's and the public interest." Publicists who simply transmit their organization's views to the media are not likely to serve the public interest. As Bernays says,

"Public relations is not a one-way street in which leadership manipulates the public and public opinion. It is a two-way street in which leadership and the public find integration with each other and in which objectives and goals are predicated on a coincidence of public and private interest."

This means that the task of PR people is not simply to communicate management's view to the public. The task also involves communicating the views of the public to management. The objectives of an institution and its public relations program must be designed with the needs and desires of the public clearly in mind.

Going one way, the PR person analyzes public opinion and the needs of the community, and opens channels of communication that allow such information to flow into the institution. Using this information, the PR person advises management on the policies that are likely to be of mutual benefit to the institution and the public—or at least acceptable, if not beneficial, to the public.

Then—going the other way down the PR street—the PR person opens channels of communication that reach out from the institution to the public. These channels are used to interpret the institution's policies and actions to its various audiences. Communication in this direction is largely the responsibility of the PR writer.

Publics, Channels and the Role of the Writer

It is a simple thing to say that the task of public relations writers is to communicate with the public. But in practice there is nothing simple about it. It's not as though there were one single "public" to write for. Rarely is a public relations message important to everybody in the "public."

If a gas company wants to say that the rate increase it's asking for is not to build corporate offices, it is likely to aim its message at home owners and regulatory agencies at the state and federal level; it won't be concerned with middle-school students. Those students might be a very important audience, though, for the theme park advertising its new ride. A welfare agency announcing new food-stamp rules would be most interested in getting the message to low-income families. A mayor raising money to pay for a downtown renovation project would be likely to appeal to the city's business leaders.

Home owners, legislators, students, business leaders—all are examples of publics. A public is any group of people tied together by some common factor. And as public relations writers soon discover, there are many, many such groups. As some public relations people say, and as we've acknowledged through usage in this book, the public in public relations should really be publics.
The Public in Public Relations

In his book *The Mass Media*, the late Stanford professor Bill Rivers describes the endless variety of publics in this way:

There are as many publics as there are groups with varying levels of income, education, taste, and civic awareness; as many as there are groups with different political allegiances, different religions and so on. What concerns and convinces one public may seem trivial to another. Furthermore, the definition of each public is never static; it changes as the issues change. When California is voting for a governor, a Los Angeles college student becomes one member of a large and diverse public that includes a San Francisco stevedore and excludes a college professor at the University of Maine. But, when higher education in the United States is the issue, the college student is one member of a public that includes the professor but excludes the stevedore—except that the stevedore’s working partner may have a daughter who attends the University of Idaho... and so on in bewildering variety.

Obviously, each of us belongs to many different publics. If you’re a student, you’re naturally a member of a public important to the university or college you attend. If you’re about to graduate, you belong to a public important to prospective employers in the community. If you’ve just married, you’re part of a public important to real estate firms eager to sell you a house. If you belong to the local chapter of the Sierra Club, you’re part of a public important to politicians and energy companies. Just as each individual belongs to many publics, each institution must communicate with many publics—from customers and suppliers to employees and stockholders. A public relations writer for a university must write for faculty, students, administrators, alumni, financial benefactors, community leaders, legislators and sports fans. The public relations writer for a political candidate tailors messages to fundraisers, voters, reporters and precinct workers.

The global proliferation of electronic technology also means that messages may be received by “unintended audiences,” or nimbus publics.” An awareness of these publics, knowledge of them and sensitivity to their potential reactions is critical because misunderstandings, some of crisis proportions, can result. As an example, a casual comment in a speech by a high-level business or political figure might characterize the citizens of a nation in such a way as to cause outrage when it is seen by them on television or reported in their other news media. Such a communications misstep can jeopardize trade negotiations or business deals.

The variety of publics is so vast that PR people often find it useful to divide the publics they deal with into two broad classes: internal and external. Internal publics are groups within the organization (such as employees or the board of directors). External publics are groups outside the organization (such as the media, your company’s customers or the state legislature). The distinction between the two is not always clear-cut; stockholders, for example, though essentially an external public, can have close ties to the institution. One definition of internal publics is “all those who share the institution’s identity.” Broad categories of publics appear in Examples 1.1 and 1.2.
Discovering and Prioritizing Publics

Publics for any organization fall into these categories developed by Jerry Hendrix.

### Major Publics

#### Media Publics
- Mass media
  - Local
    - Print publications
    - Newspapers
    - Magazines
    - TV stations
    - Radio stations
  - National
    - Print publications
    - Broadcast networks
    - Wire services
  - Specialized media
    - Local
      - Trade, industry and association publications
      - Organizational house and membership publications
      - Ethnic publications
      - Publications of special groups
      - Specialized broadcast programs and stations
  - National
    - General business publications
    - National trade, industry and association publications
    - National organizational house and membership publications
    - National ethnic publications
    - Publications of national special groups
    - National specialized broadcast programs and networks

### Member Publics
- Organization employees
  - Headquarters management
  - Headquarters nonmanagement (staff)
- Other headquarters personnel
- Organization officers
  - Elected officers
  - Appointed officers
  - Legislative groups
  - Boards, committees
- Organization members
  - Regular members
  - Members in special categories—sustainability, emeritus, student members
  - Honorary members or groups
- Prospective organization members
  - State or local chapters
  - Organization employees
  - Organization officers
  - Organization members
  - Prospective organization members
- Related or other allied organizations

### Employee Publics
- Management
  - Upper-level administrators
  - Mid-level administrators
  - Lower-level administrators
- Nonmanagement (staff)
  - Specialists
  - Clerical personnel
  - Secretarial personnel
  - Uniformed personnel
  - Equipment operators

(continued)
Drivers
Security personnel
Other uniformed personnel
Union representatives
Other nonmanagement personnel

Community Publics
Community media
Mass
Specialized
Community leaders
Public officials
Educators
Religious leaders
Professionals
Executives
Bankers
Union leaders
Ethnic leaders
Neighborhood leaders
Community organizations
Civic
Service
Social
Business
Cultural
Religious
Youth
Political
Special interest
Other

Investor Publics
Shareowners and potential shareowners
Security analysts and investment counselors
Financial press
Major wire services: Dow Jones & Co., Reuters Economic Service, AP, UPI
Major business magazines: Business Week, Fortune, and the like
Mass circulation and specialized
Statistical services: Standard and Poor's Corp., Moody's Investor Service, and the like
Private wire services: PR News Wire, Business Wire
Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for publicly owned companies

Government Publics
Federal
Legislative branch
Representatives, staff, committee personnel
Senators, staff, committee personnel
Executive branch
President
White House staff, advisers, committees
Cabinet officers, departments, agencies, commissions
State
Legislative branch
Representatives, delegates, staff, committee personnel
Senators, staff, committee personnel
Executive branch
Governor
Governor's staff, advisers, committees
Cabinet officers, departments, agencies, commissions
County
County executive
Other county officials, commissions, departments
City
Mayor or city manager
City council
Other city officials, commissions, departments
1.1 continued

**Consumer Publics**
- Company employees
- Customers
- Professionals
- Middle class
- Working class
- Minorities
- Other
- Activist consumer groups
- Consumer publications
- Consumer media, mass and specialized
- Consumer leaders and organizations

**Leaders of this public**
- Public officials
- Professional leaders
- Ethnic leaders
- Neighborhood leaders
- Organizations composing this public
- Civic
- Political
- Service
- Business
- Cultural
- Religious
- Youth
- Other

**Special Publics**
- Media consumed by this public
- Mass
- Specialized

---

(b) Prioritizing publics may be done in a number of ways. One informal method is called
the PVI: P, the Potential to influence a public, plus V, the Vulnerability of the
organization to that public (which may change over time and in different situations),
equals I, the Impact of that public on the organization. Here is a tabular form for
"computing" a PVI Index. Source: Jim Haynes, *Instructor’s Guide for This Is PR, 3rd ed.,*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience of Public</th>
<th>Potential for Organization to Influence (Scale 1-10)</th>
<th>Vulnerability of Organization to Be Affected (Scale 1-10)</th>
<th>Importance of Audience to Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Internal and External PR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publics</th>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>External</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>(top and middle)</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff and employees</td>
<td>(union and employee organizations—non-union)</td>
<td>(Marketing) Communications) Communications)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stockholders</td>
<td></td>
<td>Customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Potential</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Personal (person to person/person to group)</th>
<th>Personal (person to person/person to group)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audiovisual</td>
<td>films, slides, videotape, closed circuit TV,</td>
<td>Audiovisual films, slides, videotape, mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(specialized</td>
<td>computer networks)</td>
<td>media, specialized media available to external</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>media)</td>
<td></td>
<td>audiences such as externally distributed slide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications</td>
<td>(specialized media books, magazines, newspapers, newsletters)</td>
<td>presentations, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct mail</td>
<td>Exibits (including posters and bulletin board</td>
<td>Publications (mass and specialized, including</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>materials internally displayed as well as</td>
<td>controlled and uncontrolled publicity as well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>personalized items such as pins and awards)</td>
<td>as institutional and commercial advertising)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cless (individuals and institutions)</td>
<td>email</td>
<td>Direct mail (personalized, institutional and sales promotion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PAX (or facsimile)</td>
<td>Exhibit (mass and specialized externally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CD-ROMs</td>
<td>displayed and product packaging, graphics,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Web page</td>
<td>including point-of-sale promotions)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CD-ROMs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Broadcast fax</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listserve (e-mail)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internet site (such as one on World Wide Web)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Priority Publics**

On any one project it is impossible to direct attention equally to all publics. Therefore, PR people must select the audiences that are most important for the communication effort. They may include the group that a new policy will affect the most or the groups whose opinions are especially important. In any event, the groups considered most important for a communication effort are called the target audiences or priority publics.

But demographic information alone does not tell writers all they need to know about a public. Statistics such as age, sex and income are not useful in predicting whether a person would be likely to subscribe to the magazine *Dog World*, for example. Dog lovers come in all ages, both sexes, and most income levels—groups that might seem totally unrelated if defined by demographics alone.

In fact, what public relations people call psychographics is frequently more important to the PR writer than demographics. Psychographics classifies people by what they think, how they behave and what they think about—their special interests, such as dogs. Psychographic information is not merely helpful to the PR writer, it is often necessary. Consider the public relations director responsible for a university’s alumni association magazine, who admitted with some dismay that she didn’t know how to appeal both to an 80-year-old graduate of the engineering school and a 22-year-old sociologist. She did a research study that revealed a psychographic pattern binding all the alumni to the institution. This information suggested the sorts of articles that would interest alumni. The public relations director was then able to make informed decisions—and she now felt a great deal more confident in her choices.

**Channels**

To reach different publics, the PR writer must choose channels of communication carefully. To get the message across, the channel must be one that the target audience will receive and believe. For example, the amusement park that wants middle-school students to try its new ride would be foolish to run an ad in *Harper’s* magazine. Few middle-school students even know that *Harper’s* exists. They would not receive a message placed in that medium. But they do listen to radio and watch TV, so programs in those media are the channels that the amusement park would probably use.

The channel must also be appropriate for the message. Radio is not a good channel for conveying messages on complex subjects such as a university’s endowment. These subjects are better suited to a magazine, a channel that readers can spend time with. Radio, though poorly suited for discussing endowments, works just fine for telling students the dates for fall registration.

Channels may be individuals or media and may be mass media or specialized media. Each medium has characteristics that make it suitable for sending a particular message to a particular audience at a particular time.

People may be channels—for example, in person-to-person meetings or person-to-group interactions such as speeches or meetings. When communication
media are mentioned, you are likely to think of publications and audiovisuals. Publications may be books, magazines, newspapers, newsletters or reports. Audiovisuals may be films, videotapes, slides, Web pages, CD-ROMs or television—mass or closed circuit. But people, publications and audiovisuals aren’t the only channels of communication. Another channel is direct mail or even e-mail of personalized letters or institutional or promotional pieces. Exhibits are another channel. They encompass everything from trade-show displays to campaign buttons.

**Specialized Media** Media designed for a particular audience are called *specialized*, to distinguish them from media for general audiences. Specialized media include the internal publications that institutions produce to communicate with employees, staff, management and others close to the institution, such as directors and stockholders. Also included in specialized media are audiovisuals intended for internal use only, such as closed-circuit television, training films, videotapes and computerized message boards. Among these specialized media are electronic information networks of personal computer users. However, most specialized media are controlled by the institution using them.

**Mass Media** The mass media include magazines, books, newspapers, radio, television and the Internet. Since neither the circulation nor the audience of such media is controlled by the institution, mass media are usually used for communication with external publics. Public relations writers using mass media to reach general audiences must remember, however, that such media are seen by internal publics as well. For example, a leading metropolitan daily newspaper’s female employees objected to a promotional campaign that displayed women as sex objects. French police did not like billboards portraying them as “helpful” rather than as crime fighters facing danger.

**The Role of the Writer**

Public relations writers must be knowledgeable not only about publics and channels, but about all aspects of their institution as well. The PR writer for a social services agency must understand welfare eligibility rules and federal funding guidelines. A writer for the highway department must know about everything from road-building materials to traffic laws. PR writers must know enough about the financial aspects of a business to prepare the right message for security analysts and to develop an annual report that stockholders can comprehend and auditors will approve.

In addition to possessing a broad knowledge of their company’s business, public relations writers must be able to research specific subjects to determine what is and what isn’t important. They must be able to borrow ideas from other fields—psychology, social psychology, sociology and political science, for example—to help put their research in perspective. PR writers must be alert to changing patterns of thought and behavior in society and must fully comprehend the issues of the day.
Finally, and most important, the public relations writer must be an expert in communication. If you want to be a public relations writer, you must know how to write effectively in many different styles and for all media. You must understand the principles of good writing and be familiar with the vast body of scientific research on communication, persuasion and public opinion. Your goal is to be an efficient, effective communicator.

You must accept that your writing is management-oriented, strategic communication and therefore likely to be persuasive in nature. Because of the scope of your communication, you must command a knowledge of publics and their cultures—their corporate or work environment culture, their personal or lifestyle culture and their indigenous or ethnic culture. Beyond that, you must know the international communication networks and media systems and how they operate. No matter what message you communicate, what audiences you communicate with and what media you use to reach those audiences, you have to know which words will work and why. You are critical to the PR function.

Preparing you for these varied writing tasks is what this book is all about.

Conclusions

- A kaleidoscopic job market demands increasing flexibility and a greater command of technical skills from writers.
- More accountability for results is demanded by today’s employers and clients—they want proof that the messages worked.
- Messages, a combination of words, images and often sound, are often communicated electronically and may be received anywhere in the world, whether or not that is the intent of the sender.
- A public relations writer is responsible for helping an organization establish good relationships with its publics.
- There are two aspects to this responsibility: strategy of determining what and when to communicate to whom and tactic of handling that communication through the appropriate channels so that receivers understand the policies and performance of the institution.
- The lines between advertising and publicity are blurred and frequently not clear to clients or employers.
- Advertising is time or space bought to carry a buyer’s message, but public service announcements, although appearing in the same time or space as commercial copy, are carried at the discretion of the medium.
- Publicity is information supplied to the public without charge but also without control unless the employer or client owns the medium. Information supplied as publicity can appear in any form and whether it appears at all is at the discretion of the medium.
• Public relations communication is a two-way street, a conduit for incoming as well as outgoing messages.
• Publics are people tied together by some common factor(s).
• Factors binding people together as audiences may be uncovered through demographics—statistics such as age, sex and geography—and psychographics—interests and attitudes.
• Priority publics or target audiences are public relations publics selected for special attention and specific messages.
• Channels of communication may be specialized media or mass media.
• A public relations writer’s role is to know about the institution for which that writer is working, the audiences or publics of that institution and the channels of communication through which to reach them.
• Public relations writers must be effective, efficient writers in all media.

Exercises

1. Collect materials from your admissions office about your school. Analyze them for message statements about the school. Are different appeals addressed to first-year students, transfers, graduate students, older-than-average students? What are these appeals?
2. Examine the different types of materials from your school’s public relations office. List all of the publics these suggest.
3. Look at ads for your school (commercials, too, if you have them). Compare these message statements with the admission materials and the publicity about the school. What message statements are consistent? Are any of them inconsistent? For example, does admission material suggest it’s easy to get into the school while publicity talks about the high standards for admission?

Notes

1 Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk, and Dean Kruckeberg, This Is PR, 6th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1996), p. 4.
5 Bernays, Public Relations, p. 83.
Selected Bibliography

Jerry M. Hendrix, Public Relations Cases, 3d ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1995).
Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk and Dean Knuckleberg, This Is PR: The Realities of Public Relations, 6th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1996).
Ethical and Legal Responsibilities of the PR Writer

The image of public relations practice is often fuzzy and distorted. In some countries it is still equated with influence peddling and in others with promotional activities of questionable value. Even in the USA, where public relations has experienced its highest visibility, it still doesn’t command enough respect from top management to be a strong influence in policy decision making. Some indication of that is the fact that public relations is not taught in most schools of business.

Critics, inside and outside PR practice, cite evidence for viewing public relations practice in a negative light. What else can we expect if an organization conspires to withhold from its employees the fact that they are at risk because of unsafe handling of chemicals or materials? What appearance of public relations is given when a campaign worker plants false information about an opposing candidate? What about “spin doctors,” who often cast information more in a propaganda than a factual mold? Media representatives are likely to see the work of public relations more as creation of propaganda than as mediation among its publics. Video news releases, a staple of public relations practice, are seen by some as palming “fake news” off on an unsuspecting public. Other practices that continue to stimulate controversy are government representations of news events and public relations-marketing techniques. In the public affairs area, the 1996 election campaign drew criticism for managing party conventions as staged events. Also denigrated are
"photo ops" that have little or no news value. The area of public relations—marketing, controversies run the gamut from news releases to promotional campaigns to advertising. A corporate video showing a New York rabbi apparently blessing an Australian mining company sent the stock soaring and set the Australian Stock Exchange to investigating. In London, the Hoover company's promotion offering free-flight package holidays caused a furor when vacationers found the airfare was free but hotel rates were premium.

British Budweiser ads showing beer-guzzling American Indians created a cult hit in the U.K. but a public outcry in the USA. In these cases and others, the impact of global access to communication is a serious consideration for public relations professionals. Copley Pharmaceutical, Inc., got in trouble by delaying for nearly two weeks the publicizing of its response to a U.S. Food and Drug Administration's top priority order to recall Albuterol. The drug, which is used to alleviate breathing problems, has a bacterial contaminant that could cause death. Some lawsuits were filed regarding its continued use beyond the FDA-ordered recall.

In another controversial case, also in the United States, the National Mental Health Association launched a three-week campaign directed toward people suffering from depression, but drew criticism because the ads and commercials were paid for by Eli Lilly & Co., which makes the antidepressant Prozac.

Some might say this is just good business. What are good business ethics? John Wanamaker, a famous retailer at the turn of the 20th century, had his personal credo etched into a marble column in his Philadelphia store: "Let those who follow me continue to build with the plumb of honor, the level of truth and the square of integrity, education, courtesy and mutualty." That credo is as valid today as when Wanamaker penned it. And it applies to the professional practice of public relations as well as to the conduct of any organization that interacts with the public.

Embedded in that quote are two guidelines especially relevant to public relations. One is the idea of being genuinely sensitive to the feelings and needs of others. The other is the will to practice the golden rule, which says 'you should treat other people as you want to be treated by them. Although these two guidelines are at the center of responsible professional practice, they are too simple to fully describe the complex set of influences affecting how you approach and complete any writing task.

Public relations writers often initiate or implement practices that draw criticism, much of it justified. Although some public relations writing practices are legally prescribed, others are set by moral principles. Ethics are grounded on moral principles that are themselves grounded in ethics. Moral principles consist of a set of beliefs and values that reflect a group's sense of what is right or wrong—regardless of how these terms are defined in formal rules, regulations or laws.

This is the case whether you agree to the idea that a moral judgment must fulfill formal conditions or you think a moral judgment must also meet some material condition. The difference is that formal conditions call for moral guidelines or rules that are regarded as universal and prescriptive. But material conditions represent considerations that deal with the welfare of society as a whole and emphasize basic human good
or purpose. For example, agreements in the Geneva Conventions are prescriptive, but
they do not address restrictions on the freedoms of individuals within a society such as
apartheid or immigration quotas.

The debate about what constitutes a moral judgment has ancient origins: If
you ask for a public's view of your ethics, you are asking whether that public thinks
you deserve to exist. Don't be surprised if your organization is seen as undeserving.
The public view of an organization's ethics is likely to be based less on a definition of
morality than on the consequences of what the organization says and does, which will
be seen as either moral or not moral by each and all of its publics. This sense of right-
ness, even if it later proves to be in error, is the stuff of which public opinion is formed.
Clearly, public opinion is important. Much of what you will do as a professional
will be directed toward influencing, if possible, the opinion of publics. In the USA,
our treasured First Amendment is, in a real sense, the product of public opinion. That's
a sobering thought because it implies that the First Amendment can be abridged or
voided if public opinion no longer supports it. So if you write, say or do something
that violates society's sense of "rightness," you may be undercutting your constitutional
right to free speech. That's a heavy responsibility. As a writer, how can you
meet it?

Circles of Influence

One way to understand ethical responsibility is to look carefully at the interplay of
several levels of influence on your personal and professional behavior. These are rep-
resented as circles of influence in Example 2.1.

These circles are shown as concentric, but in reality they are far from it. They
bend and overlap, sometimes in the most unexpected ways. Thus the model in
Example 2.1 is merely an idealized perspective of how things ought to be, not how
they are. In fact, one highly influential circle is not included in the example at all. It
would signify an organization's antagonists and competitors, who may strongly affect
how the organization deals with its constituencies. Despite its limitations, however,
the concept of circles of influence can improve your understanding of the unpredict-
able, sometimes quirky rules of the game regarding your ethical and legal responsibili-
ties as a writer.

Dynamics

Perhaps the most important thing to recognize about Example 2.1 is that it represent-
s a freeze frame or still picture of an idealized reality. The relationship between you and
an organization changes with time. Provisions of communication law are always in flux
because a new court decision may put a different spin on a law, rule or regulation. And
society's expectations and judgments about what is right or wrong are notoriously
capricious. An example of changed expectations is the effect of what's happening in
cyberspace on the old protocol of a clear division between advertising and editorial
Circles of Influence on Public Relations Writers


Outer limits of what primary publics will tolerate

Philosophy, rules and laws of governments and regulators

Public relations industry standards and practices

Your organization/industry’s standards and practices

Your personal and professional standards

content. Web site editorial independence is seldom carefully defined and search engines finding information on a topic will not sort out the independent news from the sponsored information. Compounding the problem is the many organizations that have placed their Web sites in the hands of management information-systems specialists instead of public relations people. Because building and maintaining relationships is not necessarily high on their list of priorities, the result can be damaging to the corporate image.

So rather than seeing these circles of influence as concentric, you’d be wise to look at them as spiraling lines that wind and twist through time, sometimes getting hopelessly knotted and tangled. Those knots and tangles cloud your ability to know with certainty your ethical and legal responsibilities as a writer. Things simply change. What is wrong today may be right tomorrow, or vice versa. It is your responsibility to be sensitive to these changes; otherwise, you and your organization may get into lots of trouble stemming from the volatility of today’s values.
**Values**

The concept of values is another way of talking about ethics. The study of ethics falls into two broad categories: comparative ethics and normative ethics. Normative ethics are studied by theologians and philosophers. Comparative ethics—sometimes called descriptive ethics—are studied by social scientists, who look at the ways different cultures practice ethical behavior. Values form the foundation of our institutions and organizations, as well as of our informal and formal rules of behavior.

We’re taught from an early age that some values are eternal verities. But if we see them violated repeatedly without sanctions, we begin to wonder whether they really are verities or eternal. A deceptive public relations practice, for example, may go unpunished or even unnoticed, and its users may gain significant advantages to the detriment of others. Which are the values we are expected to exhibit as responsible public relations writers?

Look again at Example 2.1. The outermost circle represents the limits of what primary publics or constituencies will tolerate and accept. If you don’t know those limits, you are in trouble before you ever write a word. Remember that ethics, being value-based, are different in different cultures, something to be sensitive to when communications go to other countries and to be aware of in countries of diverse cultures, such as the USA. When the limits of what your primary public will tolerate turn out to be narrower than those of your organization or yourself, your ethical behavior will be open to public debate, which may result in censure or withdrawal of support. In such cases, your first concern should be with examining your own personal and professional standards.

**Influence of Personal Standards**

At the core of the circles of influence are your personal and professional ethical standards. If you find that your own standards are in conflict with those of your colleagues (especially your supervisor) in an organization, it can be personally and professionally upsetting.

Suppose that your task is to write, say or do something that, although legal, can’t readily be reconciled with your own standards. What is your responsibility? To resolve this problem, you must explore your options realistically. Four basic strategies are apparent: (1) try to educate those in your organization to your standards; (2) refuse the task; (3) ask that you be given another task; or (4) take the assignment.

**Educating**

You can try to convert those around you to your point of view. The character of an organization tends to reflect its top leadership. The leadership hires managers, who then hire people whom they perceive as fitting into and contributing to the goals of the organization. To say that you must be a clone of the top leadership is absurd, but
it is equally absurd to believe that you would be in the job if those doing the hiring
had not assumed that you “fit the mold” to some extent.

That assumption will be in your favor as you attempt to educate others in the
organization to your point of view, because you are presumed to be much like them.
If you use this identification tactic, you’ll probably find that some colleagues are open-
minded but others aren’t. If your organization encourages dialogue, however, your
 chances of getting a fair hearing are greater. But even with a fair hearing, you may not
convert them to your view of the world; besides, you may be wrong. A lot depends on
how carefully and thoughtfully you have drawn the personal and professional circles of
influence around yourself.

How pliable is your position? What is the absolute limit beyond which you will
not compromise? What justification can you offer to support your position? Is the basis
of your justification appropriate to the situation? You must ask and carefully answer
these questions and many like them before you attempt to implement a strategy of
conversion.

Suppose you ask and answer such questions to your own satisfaction and mount
a campaign to change the organization’s course of action. Can you win? Yes. Even if you
aren’t successful at converting your colleagues, you still may win in two important ways.

First, your colleagues will respect a well-articulated, well-reasoned argument,
even if they disagree with it. That’s because the subject of contention is a matter of
judgment. Neither you nor they can be absolutely certain of the truth of the matter,
but each of you may recognize and appreciate sincere efforts to divine it.

Second, you also win because, when you articulate a different or unpopular
standard, you accept the highest responsibility of being a professional public relations
person. You are expected to counsel your organization against doing something you
believe is wrong. Any lesser standard of behavior is not worthy of being called
professional.

If you don’t convert the others to your point of view, you can then adopt a
strategy of refusal.

**Refusing**

A position of refusal is often greeted with arguments that “It’s okay because everybody
does it.” If those arguments don’t succeed, they are often replaced by anger—even
retribution—that may get you fired. Your willingness to risk being fired is the severest
test of your conviction. If your belief is strong enough, getting fired may be a personal
and professional favor to you. That’s because it tells you clearly that the organization
does not respect you or your professional judgment and abilities. You need to know
this so you can find one that does. Also, you will not be subject to criticism when the
action of the organization draws fire.

No one and no organization can make you do something you believe is wrong,
even if it is not illegal. If you cave in because you need the money, you like your posi-
tion, you’re really counting on an attractive retirement program or the like, your con-
victions are mostly for show. That’s your fault. Don’t blame the organization, society
or some generalized “other” for the bottom-line decisions you make.

If you don’t have the courage of your convictions, you may tend to assume that
others don’t either. This may be true of some, but not of all. And such an assumption
is likely to make you less sensitive to the feelings, needs and values of others. As a result,
you may write, say or do things that are harmful to pertinent audiences, without even
recognizing it. Thus you may feed on and perpetuate stereotypes, confuse form with
substance and promote behaviors detrimental to the best interests of your target pub-
lies. If left uncorrected, this behavior can end in alienation and loss of support for your
organization, thereby setting the stage for program or organization failure.

To paraphrase the golden rule, the way you are treated as a writer is a reflection
of how you, as a writer, treat your target publics.

Requesting Reassignment

If you like what you are doing and your prospects for the future look good, you may
seek an alternative to refusing the task. One approach is to ask that you be assigned to
something else of equal or greater importance. The problem with this strategy is that
there may be no one else to take the assignment. Assuming that someone else is avail-
able, this strategy will produce three important results. First, by stating your case
clearly, calmly and logically, you will find out just how persuasive you really are. Sec-
ond, whatever the response to your request, you also discover how you are valued by
your supervisor and organization. Third, you’ll get a clearer picture of the people you
work with and for—what their values are and how they relate to the organization and industry with which they are identified.

**Taking the Assignment**

Taking the assignment, even if you are sincerely opposed to it, labels you as a team player who puts the values and needs of the organization above personal values. You are seen as fitting into the culture of the organization. You won’t rock the boat. You will safeguard the values of the organization because you are loyal and trustworthy. You may even get a raise, a promotion or both.

The problem with all this is that you may be expected to write, say or do things that, although not strictly illegal, may violate a primary public’s sense of right and wrong. If you push beyond what your target public will tolerate, you are likely to find yourself on trial in the court of public opinion. The judgments can be harsh. Even if you later clean up your act, you may never win an appeal or get a pardon. That will depend to some extent on the values and standards of practice exhibited by your organization and industry.

**Influence of Organization and Industry Standards**

Will having high personal and professional standards mean that you’ll always be swimming upstream in your organization? That depends on the organization you work for and the industry sector it is part of. Some organizations and industry sectors are seen as monoliths whose only purpose is to make more money or gain additional power and influence. Such perspectives often are based not on facts but on perceptions that masquerade as “facts.” Some organizations and industry sectors seem more gifted than others at keeping facts and “facts” in close harmony.

**Perceptions**

Johnson & Johnson is remarkably successful at marketing a wide range of medical products and supplies. This long-term success can be traced in part to its standards of practice, as explained simply in its corporate credo (see Example 2.2).

The credo places top priority on the welfare of its customers. Most organizations say no less, but J&J is perceived as really meaning it. That’s because J&J tries to respond quickly and responsibly to any threat to the welfare of its priority publics. This was demonstrated dramatically when the company immediately removed all Tylenol (made by a subsidiary company) from retailer shelves after a psychopath laced some capsules with cyanide, resulting in the random deaths of several people.

The economic loss to the organization was enormous. But the decision to remove Tylenol from the public was both quick and decisive because management believes the J&J credo means what it says. More importantly, the public perceived the
Our Credo

We believe our first responsibility is to the doctors, nurses and patients, to mothers and fathers and all others who use our products and services. In meeting their needs everything we do must be of high quality.

We must constantly strive to reduce our costs in order to maintain reasonable prices.

Customers' orders must be serviced promptly and accurately.

Our suppliers and distributors must have an opportunity to make a fair profit.

We are responsible to our employees, the men and women who work with us throughout the world. Everyone must be considered as an individual.

We must respect their dignity and recognize their merit.

They must have a sense of security in their jobs.

Compensation must be fair and adequate, and working conditions clean, orderly and safe.

Employees must feel free to make suggestions and complaints.

There must be equal opportunity for employment, development and advancement for those qualified.

We must provide competent management, and their actions must be just and ethical.

We are responsible to the communities in which we live and work and to the world community as well.

We must be good citizens—support good works and charities and bear our fair share of taxes.

We must encourage civic improvements and better health and education.

We must maintain in good order the property we are privileged to use, protecting the environment and natural resources.

Our first responsibility is to our stockholders. Business must make a sound profit.

We must experiment with new ideas.

Research must be carried on, innovative programs developed and mistakes paid for.

New equipment must be purchased, new facilities provided and new products launched.

Reserves must be created to provide for adverse times.

When we operate according to these principles, the stockholders should realize a fair return.
decision as the "right" thing to do, regardless of the economic consequences to J&J. It was not mandated by law; it was simply the most responsible thing to do. Performance that is perceived positively earns lots of favorable support. That support has carried J&J through subsequent crises as well.

On the other hand, Exxon's response to the aftermath of the Valdez oil spill provoked extensive criticism from many quarters. Whether Exxon did everything it could do as quickly as possible will likely be debated for years. But Exxon was perceived as not responding quickly and responsibly. Remember that perceptions become "facts" in the court of public opinion. Once those judgments are made, they may be very hard to overturn. And even when they can be overturned, the process is usually slow.

Organizational Culture and Values

When you start a new job, you'll go through a period of training in the culture and values of the organization. This may include attending a formal training program whose announced purpose is to acquaint you with the principal processes, techniques and policies that are to guide your behavior as an employee. These also reflect, at least sub rosa, the values and culture of the organization. But much of your training comes from simply watching and interacting with your new associates. That's how you learn the rules governing how you should behave in an organization. These rules of conduct may become so much a part of you that you hardly notice them. You may even respond automatically to new cues.

Automatic Responses

When you do things automatically, you're less likely to question your behavior or that of the organization. And if you don't question how, what and why you do things, you aren't much more than an automaton. The only real difference is that you draw a salary. Automatons are machines whose greatest expense comes in the form of an initial capital investment, supplemented by routine maintenance to keep them productive. When they wear out or become outdated, they are simply replaced.

A responsible public relations writer should be a thinking, constructively critical and contributing member of the organization. In fact, the highest contribution you can make is not your technical skill but your sensitivity to the needs of your organization's relevant publics. If you become so immersed in the culture and standards of the organization that you lose touch with the values of those publics, you can do little more than a machine can do. Remember that some machines get replaced often.

When you know the relevant publics well, you can construct messages that are valued and accepted by those publics. That is why the organization employed you in the first place.

Problems arise when the messages you shape undergo significant changes in the process of obtaining necessary approvals. The challenge for you is to see that these changes don't affect the sense of what must be communicated. This problem is aggra-
vated by "editors" who excise segments or change things just to prove they can. You are supposed to be good enough with words and language that you can retain the sense of the message without compromising its integrity and without challenging the ego of those who have authority to approve what you write.

Because you are part of your organization, you are expected to know as much about what you write as anyone in the organization. You can't rely on your word-smithing skills alone. You must know your organization and its industry thoroughly. You won't get much support or respect if you repeatedly make simple mistakes, such as using jargon incorrectly. You are supposed to know, and you shouldn't have to be told over and over. That's part of an organization's culture and values. But the practice of professional public relations also has its own culture and values, thus representing another circle of influence.

**Influence of Public Relations Standards of Practice**

Every professional field has its own code of ethics and standards of practice. One of the most widely acknowledged codes in public relations is the one adopted in 1988 and promoted by PRSA. This code replaces one that was adopted in 1960 but was subsequently revised several times.

The code has lots to say about standards of practice, but a few key points are especially pertinent to your role as a writer.

**Accuracy**

Credibility with primary publics is probably the most important asset a writer or an organization can have. Without credibility, it is very difficult to succeed at what you want to do. Factual inaccuracies usually are pretty easy for primary publics to detect. The more difficult such inaccuracies are to discover, the more damaging they may appear in the eyes of your audience. Publics may conclude that you have deliberately distorted or misrepresented the facts for some ulterior motive.

They may label you and your organization as dishonest—and you are, if you misrepresent the facts. But you and your organization can also make "honest" mistakes. These may seep into your writing as a result of rushed, sloppy editing, failure to verify details, and the like. But if you simply rationalize them as "honest" mistakes, you're really not being very responsible. You are paid to do things correctly, and this includes preventing "honest" mistakes from getting by.

To illustrate, the annual report of a major oil company contained an out-of-place decimal that dramatically reduced estimates of its oil reserves from those it had claimed in previous reports. The financial community immediately became alarmed because it feared the company had been puffing up earlier estimates of its reserves. Frantic phone calls and a dramatic drop in share prices ensued. The company quickly
issued a corrected estimate so the damage, though costly, was temporary—all because
the writers, editors and proofreaders made an “honest” mistake. You can also bet
that market analysts and brokers looked at the next year’s annual report with an extra
dose of skepticism. “Honest” mistakes are sometimes no less damaging than dis-
lionest ones.

Honesty, Truth and Fairness
The concept of honesty goes beyond the idea of accuracy and raises questions of truth
and fairness. You can deal with documentable facts as a writer and still be dishonest,
untruthful and unfair. So factual accuracy is not enough. The selection of facts and the
way you weave them into the fabric of a message are what establish you as honest,
truthful, fair and credible.

Must you use all the facts, even the bad? No. But to ignore the negatives is not
fair. Even if members of your primary audience are not highly sophisticated, they are
not dumb. If you fail to acknowledge damaging information, you simply invite disbe-
lief. Not only will you not be believed, you may be perceived as unfair. Honesty and
forthrightness served American Airlines well when one of its jets ran into a mountain
in Colombia. The airline’s chief pilot said, “Human error on the part of our people
may have contributed to the accident.” Years ago, the legal department might have
been in an uproar because of concern over protecting the company from liability. Now
most organizations see that a greater loss may come from a failure to speak out. A loss
of credibility translates to a loss of customers.11

False or Misleading Information
Misleading information can lead audiences to make bad decisions. When they discover
they have been misled, they withdraw their support. Although you and your organi-
ization may enjoy some advantage because of a deception, the advantage is usually
temporary. And the consequences of misleading people can be enormous as well as
long-term. In fact, disaffected audiences may seek retribution through legal action,
boycotts or other means.

Look at what happened to Manville, formerly Johns-Manville, the world’s larg-
est manufacturer of asbestos. Manville operated for six years under the protection of
bankruptcy laws and had to work through an extraordinary agenda of legal actions
because it failed to share with its publics what it knew about the lethal results of inhaling
asbestos fibers.

Truth has a way of emerging in spite of extraordinary efforts to keep it hidden.
In the vast majority of cases, false information is destined to fail. Writers who know-
ingly write and distribute false information, for whatever reason, violate one of the
trusts explicit in the PRSA code and risk losing the respect and acceptance of their
primary publics. False information corrupts not only a writer but also the channels of
communication used to distribute it. Hence, false information supplied to a newspaper and relayed to readers damages the newspaper, as well as the primary source, in the eyes of the readers. The result is that the newspaper may be reluctant to accept subsequent information from you. Moreover, not only will you find it more difficult to get information into that newspaper, but so will all other public relations people. The assumption will simply be that all public relations professionals are alike: You can’t trust any of them.

**Influence of Laws and Regulations**

Everything you write has the potential to spark litigation. Today’s society is litigation-happy. You must know your freedoms under the First Amendment (if you are in the USA) and the under laws governing commercial speech as well to bulletproof your writing as much as possible. If your material is going to other countries, check on your rights and restraints there too. You can’t fully immunize it from legal action, but you can minimize the potential for losses. And you don’t have to be an attorney to do this. Just follow some simple guidelines.

**Negative Laws**

The first guideline is to realize that laws are generally negative. They define what is not legal. They generally don’t define what is. You may suppose that something is legal because it has not been defined as illegal. But while that may be true at the time, you may be in for a surprise later.

A further guideline is to remember that case law is built on a series of court decisions, each citing previous decisions. Even when a substantial line of cases evolve from a seminal decision—often one that turns on some question of constitutionality—each new case has the potential to produce a different interpretation of what is illegal, thereby setting a precedent. One thing you should guard against is doing something that will turn you or your organization into a legal precedent.

A case in point was a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1989 declaring that the copyright of creative work is the property of the freelancer or vendor unless its ownership passes to someone else in a legal contract at the time the work is authorized. Organizations and PR agencies have sometimes acted as if they owned such creative work, even when no contract existed. The only way they can own it now is to contract for it ahead of time or to obtain permission to use it, which may involve paying fees for each additional usage.

Simply because you or an organization has always done things in a certain way does not mean that those procedures will be acceptable tomorrow. It is your responsibility to keep up with court decisions and new laws affecting communication in general and your organization and industry specifically. For example, watch for copyright laws to change regarding materials available through cyberspace.
That brings us to another guideline. Read and study each new issue of *Media Law Reporter*. This publication specializes in timely reports and summaries of laws and court decisions affecting every aspect of mass communication, including public relations. If you have any doubts about a new law or court decision, consult an attorney who specializes in communication law. Don’t depend on other attorneys, because they may know no more about communication law than you do.

**Contracts**

You’ll find that your organization probably uses lots of outside vendors—writers, producers, photographers, printers and the like. Because they are working for you, you are responsible for their actions in the process of preparing and presenting their material. You must know the nature of agreements with each of these suppliers. Otherwise you are liable to make a grievous error that may cost your organization lots of money and perhaps your job. One of the most important contract areas is work done “for hire.” Unless a vendor signs away ownership of his or her creative work to your organization in a legal contract, you may not use it for any additional or subsequent purpose unless you get legal permission and, sometimes, pay additional fees. This applies to all kinds of creative work.

Additionally, any time a photographer—whether staff or freelance—supplies you with pictures, each one that includes people (especially professional models) must be accompanied by a photo release form duly signed, thus “releasing” his or her likeness for use in the specified situation. If you’re using a freelance photographer, determine who owns the rights to the negatives before shooting begins. Ownership of the negatives falls under the “for hire” provision, too, so unless a contract says otherwise, the photographer retains the negatives and controls subsequent uses of them.

One contractual arrangement now simplified is for the organizational use of music—either for meetings or to entertain phone callers put “on hold.” The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers now has an umbrella contract covering the playing of copyrighted music in public. Some organizations play their own promotional jingles, which for copyright reasons they usually have written especially for that purpose unless they use music “in the public domain,” music on which the copyright has expired. There are some risks here because special arrangements of such music and performances of it may still carry a copyright.

In addition to explicit contracts governing outside vendor relationships, there is an implied contract between you and your employer that you will maintain confidentiality. Some firms actually write this into a separate employee contract, although most of the time it’s understood that you will keep to yourself what you learn about a client or an organization. That you will protect confidential information is an implied contract. You won’t share information with anyone outside the organization and will use a “need to know” basis inside. Such discretion is especially important when you’re dealing with financial matters that may constitute “insider information” and thus be of concern to the Securities and Exchange Commission. The fact is that if you tip
someone who uses that information for personal gain in the stock market, you are as
guilty for “tipping” as they are for “insider trading.”

Contempt

If your organization is in litigation, you can’t write commentaries about the case or
interpretations of it for public consumption. Doing so will invite a contempt of court
charge against you. You can’t go on talk shows, issue news releases, buy advertising
space or time or take other action to convey your position or that of your organization.
This can be very frustrating because it effectively gags an organization until the case
has been decided.

Libel Laws and Privacy Issues

If people believe they have been libeled by what you have written, they can bring legal
actions for actual and punitive damages. Your best defense against libel is to be accurate
and truthful to a fault—so much so that you can document anything you say. Public
figures (elected officials and people in the public eye) who bring libel actions must
prove you libeled them “with malice.” You should realize, however, that existing case
law makes it difficult to determine exactly who is a public figure.

You need to be very careful when dealing with both public and private figures.
If you don’t stick with provable facts, you can be in trouble in a hurry. You can’t play
fast and loose with words and avoid libel actions. Look at the list of “red flag” words
in Example 2.3. Any time you use them, you are inviting a court appearance. Ex-
ample 2.4 walks you through the steps of a self-check for possible trouble with claims
of libel.

Privacy laws are most often of concern when you want to use a person’s likeness
and name in publicity, advertising or other promotional materials. People in pictures
of crowds at public gatherings represent fair use, but you can’t single out people in the
crowd and use them for promotional purposes without their consent. If they happen
to be celebrities, you’ll also need a legal contract to back up the usage. Otherwise, you
may be guilty of invasion of privacy.

Defending yourself in these cases is not easy. In the case of libel, the docu-
mentable truth must be admissible in court, and that’s up to the judge. Privilege,
another defense, is a fair and true report of a public, official or judicial hearing, but
who determines whether the report is “fair”? The fair comment defense, which used
to protect people such as reviewers and columnists who often exaggerated statements
about public figures for humor, has suffered some severe blows in the courts. Some
claim that now such protection doesn’t exist. The privacy issue is often ignored within
organizations when they assume that because people work there it’s all right to use
their names and pictures without permission. This is not true, and the problems mul-
tiply if the representation is in something designed to make money for the organiza-
tion, such as an ad or a brochure. There are also problems if the employee no longer
works for the organization. The protection is a release form giving you permission.
"Red Flag" Words

Words can be semantic landmines. It is best not to step on them. These "red flag" words and expressions are typical of ones that may lead to a legal action if they are not carefully handled in news releases or other messages from an organization. Source: From Bruce W. Sanford. Synopsis of the Law of Libel and the Right of Privacy, rev. ed., Scripps-Howard and World Almanac, 1981.

adulteration of products
adultery
altered records
ambulance chaser
atheist
attempted suicide
bad moral character
bankrupt
bigamist
blackguard
blacklisted
blackmail
blockhead
boozehound
brother
brothel
buys votes
cheats
collusion
communist (or red)
confidence man
correspondent
corruption
coward
crook
deadbeat
deadhead
defaulter
disorderly house
divorced
double-crosser
drug addict
drunken
ex-convict
false weights used
fascist
fawning syphilitic
fool
fraud
gambling house
gangster
gay (in context of "homosexual")
gouged money
graft
grifter
growing office seeker
highbrow
hypocrite
illegitimate
illicit relations
incompetent
infidelity
informer
intemperate
inmate
insolence
Jekyll-Hyde personality
kept woman
Ku Klux Klansman
liar
mental illness
mental disease
moral delinquency
Nazi
paramour
peeping Tom
perjurer
plagiarist
pockets public funds
price cutter
profiteering
rascal
rogue
scam
scandalmonger
scoundrel
seer
shady dealing
short in accounts
shyster
skunk
slacker
smooth and tricky
sneak
sold his influence
sold out to a rival spy
stool pigeon
stuffed the ballot
box
suicide
swindle
unethical
unmarried mother
unprofessional
unsound mind
unworthiness of credit
vice den
villain

Any words or expressions impugning a loathsome disease, a crime, or words of "duly charging arrest, or indictment for or confession or conviction of a crime; anti-Semitism or other imputation of religious, racial or ethnic intolerance; connivance or association with criminals, financial embarrassment (or any implication of insolvency or war of credit); lying, involvement in a racket or complicity in a swindle; membership in an organization that may be in ill repute at a given period of time; poverty or squallor, unwillingness or refusal to pay or evading payment of a debt.
show that suggested red wine may help reduce the risk of heart disease. Another winery got into trouble for using similar information in an ad. A liquor store was also stopped from using an in-store wine sales campaign that had heart signs reading "Wines to your health" and "Be heart smart." Your responsibility is to know the applicable rules and regulations affecting your organization and industry. If you don't know the answer, ask someone who does. But you'd be wise to go to the original source, rather than risk acting on someone's well-intentioned but possibly wrong advice.

**Influence of Primary Publics**

Although the four major areas of influence already mentioned are vital to your success as a writer, none is more important than the influence of primary publics. Look again at Example 2.1. Notice that the circle representing this type of influence encompasses all other influences. That's because every organization, public or private, must be keenly aware of the influence of its primary publics. Indeed, the organization can exist only with their permission. Permission does not always mean approval of all that the organization is doing. However, the critical limits of an organization's ethical and legal behavior are determined by its primary or closest publics—those who share organizational identity, such as employees and (often) former employees, and those with whom it has an ongoing relationship, such as suppliers, distributors and customers.

**Shared Values**

The stronger a public's identity with the organization, the stronger its reaction will be to what the organization is saying and doing. Primary publics perceive themselves as having shared values with the organization. Any violation of these values is often reacted to very strongly and personally. "That was my bank that went under," a customer might say, and a new organization buying the assets of that bank is likely to face a big job in winning the confidence of the original customer base.

Customer trust is important. One customer sued for violation of privacy because a company hired a contractor to process survey data, and the contractor used prisoners. The customer discovered this when she got a 12-page letter from an inmate who used detailed information from the survey and who mentioned the magazine that had conducted the original survey. In his letter the prisoner created a sexual fantasy based on a product the customer said she had used.

**Adversarial Groups**

Another group whose reactions are anticipated in the planning process and closely monitored thereafter are those who are likely to have an adversarial relationship with the organization, such as regulators, competitors, special interest groups and activists.
concerned about certain aspects of society (the environment, endangered species, animal rights, etc.). These groups typically perceive themselves as having a different, not shared, set of values. That’s not always the reality, but it is almost always the perception. For this reason, adversarial groups exhibit little tolerance for “mistakes” or “poor policy decisions.”

Although the closest publics may respond quickly and personally to something they don’t like or something they see as a violation of shared values, they are much more forgiving than adversarial publics. These two groups set the boundaries within which an organization must operate to be successful—that is, to be allowed to continue to exist. Understanding their ethical standards and values is therefore crucial to planning.

**Conclusions**

- You have to be genuinely sensitive to the feelings and needs of others, and you must treat others as you want to be treated.
- Public relations writers often initiate or implement practices that draw criticism of public relations.
- Some public relations writing practices are legally prescribed; others are set by moral principles.
- Moral principles consist of a set of beliefs and values that reflect a group’s sense of what is right or wrong, regardless of how these terms are defined in formal rules, regulations or laws.
- Formal conditions call for moral guidelines or rules that are regarded as universal and prescriptive. Material conditions represent considerations that deal with the welfare of society as a whole and emphasize basic human good or purpose.
- The public view of an organization’s ethics is likely to be based less on a definition of morality than on the consequences of what the organization says and does, which will be seen as either moral or not moral by each and all of its publics. This sense of rightness is what creates public opinion.
- If you write, say or do something that violates society’s sense of “rightness,” you may be undercutting your constitutional right to free speech.
- One way to understand your responsibilities is to look carefully at the interplay of several levels of influence on your personal and professional behavior, as represented by concentric circles.
- Society’s expectations and judgments about what is right or wrong are notoriously capricious, so it’s your responsibility to be sensitive to changes and even to anticipate them.
- The study of ethics falls into two broad categories: comparative ethics and normative ethics. Normative ethics are studied by theologians and philosophers. Comparative ethics—sometimes called descriptive ethics—are studied by social scientists, who look at the ways different cultures practice ethical behavior.
• Remember that ethics are culture-bound. This can create controversies in ethnically diverse societies like the USA and provoke problems in other countries where values are different.
• The boundaries of the circles of influence represent the limits of tolerance of both primary publics—those closest to the organization—and adversarial publics.
• Since your own ethical standards are at the core of the circles of influence, you have to decide what to do when your standards conflict with those of the organization. You have four strategy options: (1) educate the organization and persuade them to accept your standards; (2) refuse the task; (3) ask that you be given another task; or (4) take the assignment.
• Publics work with perceptions of facts, and these perceptions become the "facts" on which opinions are based.
• When you go to work for an organization, you may be given formal training in the corporate culture or value system, or you may pick it up informally by watching others.
• Your real worth to an organization consists of your ability to be in tune with relevant publics. When you know these publics well, you can construct messages that are valued and accepted by them.
• Professional associations of public relations practitioners have standards with which you must comply in order to be accepted.
• Credibility with publics is essential for the success of an organization, and this quality depends on accuracy, honesty, truth and fairness.
• False and misleading information destroys credibility, and truth has a way of emerging. Besides, in some cases, giving out false information is against the law.
• This is a litigious society, and you need to bulletproof your writing as much as possible.
• Most laws are negative, defining things you cannot do. In addition to the laws themselves, there is a body of case law consisting of judicial decisions interpreting these laws. Since case law is in flux, you have to keep up with the changes.
• Watch for changes in the laws, especially those governing materials available in cyberspace.
• Contracts can keep you out of a lot of legal difficulty, but you must know what you need to specify in contracts and what is bound by contract.
• Commenting on a situation that is under litigation can earn you a contempt of court charge.
• Libel laws and privacy considerations can cause you legal problems if you don’t understand them thoroughly, even when you are dealing with public figures.
• Copyrights protect your creative works but not your ideas. You need to be sure that you observe the copyrights of others. The trademarks and such of an organization are protected by law, but legal protections are sometimes difficult to
enforce. You need to get permission when using materials protected by such registry.

- Federal government regulators that figure most prominently in public relations writing are the Postal Service, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Trade Commission.
- When in doubt, consult a good attorney who is a specialist in communication law.

Exercises

SITUATION: You are the vice president for corporate communication at Enodyne, a conglomerate. You are in a corporate board meeting, having just finished presenting the communication plan and budget for next year, when an emergency phone call from Ben McConkle—the public relations director of a subsidiary, Fielding Works, which manufactures industrial solvents and other chemicals—advises you that a Fielding transport on its way to a toxic waste dump had an accident near North Platte, Nebraska, about three hours ago. The truck turned over three times and several containers of toxic chemicals ruptured, posing high danger to officers on the scene and to people within a 5-mile radius, depending on the speed and direction of the wind. No one was injured seriously, but the driver and his companion suffered minor abrasions and bruises. The driver is Burl B. Benton, 33, an employee of 10 years with a spotless record. The companion is Helene A. Haven, 30, a female non-employee. McConkle wants quick guidance on how to handle inquiries, especially those related to these facts: (1) tests showed that Benton and Haven had been drinking; (2) neither was legally drunk; (3) tests showed that Haven had traces of cocaine in her system; and (4) McConkle has not yet notified Mrs. Benton and her two children of the accident. McConkle needs your advice now, not later, because the news media will pick up these facts very soon.

1. What guidance will you offer McConkle? Is your guidance fully responsible to Enodyne, to the driver and/or his family, to the people in the area of the accident and to others? How so? Why so?
2. Write a one-page summary of the ethical problems involved in this situation, and explain how they might affect you as a writer.
3. Write a one-page summary of the potential legal problems in this situation, and explain how they might affect you as a writer.

Notes

2 James Horton in "The Media's Treatment of the Public Relations Profession, Based on Con-
8 John Pavlik and David Dozier, research quoted in “Study Details Bumps to Watch Out for on Info Superhighway,” PR reporter, August 5, 1996, p. 2.

Selected Bibliography

Books

Conrad C. Fink, Media Ethics (Needham, Mass.: Allyn & Bacon, 1995).

**Journals**


**Government Publications** are useful, especially those from regulatory groups such as the Post Office, Federal Trade Commission, Food and Drug Administration, Securities and Exchange Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency.
Readability Formulas

Research in readability goes back at least to the 1920s. Early work identified various factors—like sentence length, word length, prepositional phrases—that affected the readability of prose.

In *What Makes a Book Readable*, published in 1935, William Gray and Bernice Leary discussed 64 different aspects of prose that seemed to affect reading difficulty. It would have been nearly impossible to devise a usable formula covering that many variables, so when readability formulas were developed, most emphasized two of the most important factors: sentence length and word length.

Dozens of formulas have been designed to measure readability. In 1939 George Klare identified 31 formulas and 10 variations, and he didn’t cover all the different types of formulas. Many more formulas have been designed since then, although only a handful of these are in general use. The three best-known formulas are those devised by Rudolf Flesch, by Robert Gunning, and by Edgar Dale and Jeanne Chall.

**Flesch’s Reading Ease and Human Interest Formulas**

The first formula to gain much notice was the one proposed by Flesch in the late 1940s. His formula is based on average sentence length and average number of syllables per word.
To use the Flesch formula, select 100-word samples at random from your text. Divide the number of words by the number of sentences to obtain an average sentence length ( \( \text{aw} \), expressed in words per sentence. Next count the number of syllables in the sample and divide this by the number of words to obtain an average word length ( \( \text{aw} \), expressed in syllables per word. Then insert these values into the Flesch “Reading Ease” formula:

\[
\text{Reading Ease} = 206.835 - (84.6 \times \text{aw}) - (1.015 \times \text{asi})
\]

The resulting score should fall between 0 and 100. The higher the score, the easier the material is to read. A score in the 70–80 range is “fairly easy”; a sixth-grader could understand it. Scores below 50 are considered difficult reading. Scores below 30 are generally found only in scientific and technical journals.

When using the Flesch formula, count contractions and hyphenated words as one word. When counting sentences, count clauses separated by colons or semicolons as separate sentences.

Recognizing that there is more to easy reading than short words and sentences, Flesch devised a “Human Interest” formula that measures the degree of reader interest. It is not used as often as the reading ease formula. It is based on the number of personal words ( \( \text{pw} \) ) per 100 words and the number of personal sentences ( \( \text{ps} \) ) per 100 sentences. Personal words include personal pronouns and any other words that are either masculine or feminine. Personal sentences are direct quotations, exclamations, questions—sentences that address the reader directly. The formula is as follows:

\[
\text{Human Interest} = (\text{pw}/100 \text{ words} \times 3.635) + (\text{ps}/100 \text{ sentences} \times 0.314)
\]

A score below 10 is dull; 20 to 40 is interesting; above 40 is very interesting.

**Gunning’s Fog Index**

Gunning’s formula is much simpler to apply than Flesch’s. The “fog index,” as Gunning calls it, measures reading difficulty rather than reading ease.

Gunning also counts words and divides by the number of sentences to find an average sentence length. But rather than counting syllables, Gunning’s method is to count the number of long words—those of three syllables or more. He excludes from this count all proper nouns, verbs where the third syllable is an “-ed” or “-es,” and compound words made from two short words, like workable.

To apply the formula, take the average sentence length and add to it the number of long words per 100 words. Multiply the total by 0.4.

The resulting score is roughly equivalent to the grade level of difficulty. A score of 12, for example, indicates that an average high-school senior should be able to read the material. In practice, no general-audience magazine would rate above 12 on the Gunning index. *Time* magazine probably rates about 10, *Reader’s Digest* would score about 9 and comic books would score around 6.
Dale-Chall Formula

The Dale-Chall formula is more difficult to apply, because it requires the use of a list of 3,000 words. Words on the list are known by 80 percent of fourth graders. [The list is included as an appendix to Gunning's book, *The Technique of Clear Writing*, rev. ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968).]

To use the Dale-Chall formula, select 100-word samples and determine the average sentence length (as with the Gunning and Flesch tests). Then count the number of words not on the Dale list. Here is the formula:

\[
(Average\ sentence\ length \times 0.0496) + \\
(Words\ not\ on\ Dale\ list \times 0.1579) + 3.6365
\]

Dale-Chall scores are usually lower than Gunning scores for a given piece of writing. A Gunning index of 16, for example, indicates readability on the college graduate level; the same piece would score about 10 on the Dale-Chall test.

Keep in mind that readability scores do not reflect a "recommended" level of reading difficulty. They only indicate the readability level that an average reader (average seventh-grader, average high-school senior or whatever) is likely to understand. To make the reading easy, the writing level should be a couple of steps below the educational level of the intended audience. Rarely do popular magazines—even those read by college graduates—score higher than the readability level of a high-school senior.

Other Readability Tests

A completely different type of readability test is Wilson Taylor's "Cloze" procedure. This test, first used in the early 1950s, was developed from concepts of Gestalt psychology. It tests readability by seeing how easily a reader can "fill in the blanks" when words are left out of a passage.

For example, readers might be given a passage with every fifth word deleted. From the context, the reader should be able to fill in some of the missing words. The more words the reader can fill in, the more readable the selection is.

This unique readability test has one major drawback: it can't be applied simply by making calculations. The prose must be tested on real readers, and those readers must accurately represent the intended audience.

All readability formulas are approximations, because no single formula can cover all the variables that affect readability. With the increased use of computers, though, more complicated formulas may soon come into use. Computers can be programmed to calculate readability automatically when a sample of a story is typed in at a computer keyboard.
An early formula appropriate for computerized use is the Danielson-Bryan formula. It is based on the total number of characters (letters) per word and per sentence. Here is the formula:

\[(1.0364 \times \text{characters per word}) + (0.0194 \times \text{characters per sentence}) = 0.6059\]

Danielson devised an even more elaborate formula to measure the probable time period of prose. It has long been known that English sentences have, on average, become shorter over the centuries. Taking a random sample of novels published between 1740 and 1977, Danielson found several other variables that change with time, such as paragraph length (shorter now than in the past), presence of long words (less frequent now than in the past), and presence of “internal apostrophes” for possessives and contractions (more frequent now than in the past).

Using data from his sample of novels, Danielson produced a formula that would predict the publication date for a fiction selection. These predictions work with a fair degree of accuracy on fiction, but the formula in no way predicts publication year for non-fiction, since only novels were included in the original sample. However, any prose can be given a style year rating by applying the formula. And while the formula is not a readability measure by design, style year scores show a very high correlation to readability scores obtained by standard formulas (see Table A.1).

A computer program has been written to apply this formula, and tests show that a selection with a style year of 1900 or later rates “very readable” on standard readability tests. Style year scores of 1850 or before are not very readable.

The formula, which must be applied to an integral number of paragraphs, is as follows:

\[
\text{Style year} = 1949 + (36.41 \times \text{internal apostrophes per sentence}) \\
- (2.57 \times \text{words per sentence}) - (2.93 \times \text{sentences per paragraph}) \\
- (16.71 \times \text{long words per sentence})
\]

In Danielson’s system, long words are defined as words with 10 or more letters.
UNIT 2

PERANAN PENYELIDIKAN
DALAM PENULISAN KORPORAT

Objektif Pembelajaran;
Selepas membaca Unit 2 dan bahan pembelajaran tambahan yang terdapat dalam unit ini anda akan;
1. Mengetahui beberapa kategori penyelidikan dalam komunikasi korporat atau perhubungan awam (PR)
2. Matlamat penyimpanan maklumat penyelidikan PR.
3. Mengenalpasti sumber-sumber maklumat penyelidikan PR.
4. Mengetahui senarai semakan kaedah penyelidikan PR.

A. Latarbelakang
Peranan penyelidikan adalah sangat penting dalam penulisan korporat atau penulisan perhubungan awam (PR). Penyelidikan yang dijalankan dapat membantu meningkatkan lagi mutu penulisan korporat. Penyelidikan dalam penulisan korporat merangkumi banyak aspek, antaranya yang melibatkan dasar, bahan-bahan sokongan, sasaran publik, kandungan mesej, pemilihan media dan penilaian program. Kesemua aspek ini perlu diberi perhatian dalam penghasilan penulisan yang baik. Maklumat mengenai hasil penyelidikan juga perlu disimpan dan diurus, dengan baik supaya ianya mudah diakses, dikemaskini dan digunakan bagi tujuan penyelidikan pada masa akan datang.

Dua kategori sumber yang lazimnya diguna untuk mendapatkan maklumat oleh seseorang penyelidik atau penulis ialah sumber sekunder dan sumber primer. Seorang penulis PR atau penulis korporat perlulah sentiasa berhati-hati dan bebas dari segala pengaruh dalam mendapatkan atau semasa mengumpul maklumat agar hasil penulisan berkenaan lebih berwibawa dan tidak menimbulkan sebarang


Oleh kerana maklumat yang diperolehi melalui internet merupakan maklumat siber yang terlalu banyak jumlahnya, maka pencarian maklumat berkenaan perlulah dilakukan secara terpilih. Seseorang penulis korporat perluah berkeupayaan untuk menentukan dan membuat pilihan keutamaan mengenai maklumat yang hendak digunakan sesuai dengan keperluan organisasi. Maklumat yang berlebihan akan menyukarkan perancangan atau penstrukturkan penulisan dan mengakibatkan penulisan berkenaan sukar diterbitkan atau disiarkan, khususnya apabila penerbitan atau penyiaran hasil tulisan berkenaan melibatkan pihak ketiga, seperti agensi berita atau media.

Terdapat pandangan yang menyebut bahawa apabila sesuatu bahan penulisan korporat ingin disiarkan atau diterbitkan oleh sesebuah organisasi melalui pihak ketiga (agensi berita atau media), maka adalah wajar maklumat berkenaan dikumpul dan ditulis menggunakan pendekatan yang dianjurkan oleh pihak ketiga berkenaan. Bahkan dalam situasi siber sekarang, pihak ketiga yang juga berfungsi sebagai agensi media atau berita boleh dijadikan sebagai sumber maklumat seseorang penulis atau penyelidik. Semasa proses pencarian maklumat
mengenai sesuatu perkara hingga kepada penganalisisan, pengawalan dan pengurusan krisis organisasi.


4. **Mesej.** Apa yang diperkatakan dan bagaimana untuk menyatakan mesej akan menentukan kejayaan usaha komunikasi korporat atau PR. Pengurusan mesej komunikasi adalah mudah dilakukan sekali audiens yang terlibat hanyalah dari satu kategori sahaja. Tetapi keadaan akan menjadi kompleks jika terdapat lebih daripada satu kategori audiens. Hakikat umum, audiens adalah berbagai, walaupun awalnya perancangan adalah ditujukan kepada satu kategori audiens sahaja. Sama ada satu atau lebih kategori audiens, adalah lebih baik bagi seseorang penulis korporat untuk bermula dengan mengurangkan mesej kepada satu idea yang mudah. Idea yang mudah bukan bermaksud bahawa pengurusan penulisan itu dilakukan secara mudah dan sambil lewa. Idea yang mudah bermaksud bahawa penyampaian mesej perlu dipermudahkan agar senang difahami oleh audiens.

Memandangkan pelbagai kaedah boleh digunakan untuk membina mesej supaya dapat mencapai kesan yang maksima, maka pemilihan pendekatan penulisan untuk mencapai maksud mesej adalah penting. Kajian dalam bidang komunikasi penulisan mencadangkan bahawa kaedah terbaik untuk menghasilkan mesej yang berkhas ialah dengan memokokkan hasil penulisan berkenaan kepada kategori audiens yang sofistikated, yang terdedah kepada pelbagai maklumat dari
pelbagai sumber. Walau bagaimanapun teknik ini dianggap kurang sesuai bagi golongan yang isolated dari sumber maklumat. Oleh itu cara terbaik untuk menyampaikan mesej kepada audiens ialah dengan menyesuaikan kandungan mesej berkenaan dengan golongan audiens sesuai dengan tahap pendidikan audiens itu sendiri.

5. Media. Pemilihan saluran media adalah penting dalam aktiviti komunikasi korporat dan PR. Dua saluran media yang umum ialah media cetak dan media elektronik. Pelbagai perkara dan faktor perlu dikaji terlebih dahulu dalam memilih media yang sesuai sebagai alat penyebar maklumat. Ini kerana ia boleh melibatkan kos yang tinggi dan memakan masa yang banyak. Media yang efektif akan membantu dalam penyebaran maklumat kepada publik secara berkesan dan meluas.

6. Penilaian program. Salah satu tugas yang harus dilaksanakan oleh penulis PR ialah untuk menilai keberkesanannya sesuatu program. Penilaian tersebut penting kerana seseorang penulis perlu tahu sama ada aktiviti yang telah dibuat itu berkesan ataupun sebaliknya. Penilaian boleh dilakukan melalui maklumbalas yang dikumpul menggunakan borang soalselidik, tinjauan, temubual dan melalui sumber sekunder, seperti rujukan terhadap fakta dari akhbar dan bahan bertulis lainnya. Bukti yang diperhatikan secara fizikal daripada orang ramai, seperti perubahan tingkahlaku dan tindakan akibat terdedah kepada mesej komunikasi yang telah disampaikan dianggap sebagai suatu bukti atau kesan kritikal yang perlu dinilai secara kritikal dan menyeluruh.

C. Matlamat Pesyimpanan Maklumat Penyelidikan PR
Seseorang penulis PR profesional sentiasa berhadapan dengan masalah untuk berkomunikasi sekitar mereka tidak mencukupi maklumat dalam pelaksanaan aktiviti PR. Maklumat-maklumat asas yang berfokus kepada polisi dan prosedur organisasi, audiens, latarbelakang agensi media, kandungan mesej dan selainnya
perlulah diketahui agar dapat diselaraskan dengan keperluan program penulisan yang akan dijalankan.

Hasil penyelidikan PR boleh berfungsi sebagai maklumat bagio pengurusan aktiviti PR pada masa hadapan. Penyelidikan PR secara umumnya turut melibatkan penyelidikan mengenai media, arah aliran semasa (trends) publik, khususnya mengenai citarasa (taste) dan minat (interest) mereka. Kebanyakan maklumat mengenai publik boleh diperoleh daripada penyelidikan komprehensif yang telah dilakukan oleh media komersial tentang audiens mereka. Penyelidikan lain pula diperoleh daripada institusi pemasaran produk dan perkhidmatan yang menjadikan publik sebagai penentu kepada kejayaan aktiviti institusi berkenaan.

Dalam penulisan komunikasi korporat atau PR, asas penting pencarian fakta atau maklumat adalah berdasarkan kewibawaan atau keaslian fakta. Pengumpulan maklumat dan fakta tersebut boleh dilakukan sendiri atau melalui perundang penyelidikan. Walau apa pun kaedah pencarian fakta yang digunakan, prinsip asas yang perlu dipatuhi ialah setiap penulis korporat atau PR perluah mempunyai pengetahuan dan menguasai taknir penulisan. Beberapa aspek yang perlu diberi perhatian oleh seseorang penulis korporat atau PR ialah:

1. Penyusunan atau pengorganisasian. Oleh kerana maklumat komunikasi korporat dan PR diperoleh dari pelbagai sumber, maka penyusunannya boleh menimbulkan masalah atau kesukaran. Salah satu kaedah penyusunan maklumat ialah dengan mengkategorikan maklumat mengikut publik organisasi sama ada publik dalam atau luaran berdasarkan aspek yang berkaitan, seperti pengurusan tinggi (dasar organisasi), pengurusan pertengahan (peraturan dan tata cara penyelanaan aktiviti), pengurusan hadapan atau sokongan (maklumat peraturan dan prosedur pelaksanaan tugas atau aktiviti), dan publik luaran (perikuan, citarasa dan minat). Pengkategorian jenis publik tersebut akan juga memudahkan seseorang penulis korporat atau PR untuk menentukan jenis media yang akan disesuaikan aplikasinya dengan publik yang menjadi sasaran hasil penulisan berkenaan.
2. **Penyampaian.** Penyampaian maklumat seharusnya dapat menunjukkan kaedah sesuatu maklumat berkenaan dapat dimanfaatkan. Dalam penyampaian maklumat, adalah penting untuk diterangkan sumber maklumat berkenaan dan kesan-kesan kepada situasi semasa. Maklumat ini juga sewajarnya dapat menunjukkan perkaitannya dengan hasil penyelidikan lain yang berkaitan yang dapat memberikan gambaran yang lebih jelas mengenai sesuatu topik atau subjek.

3. **Pengemasan.** Pengumpulan maklumat dan fakta penyelidikan sepatutnya dapat memudahkan pengemasan maklumat yang berkaitan dengan penilaian dan pengukuran pendapat publik terhadap perkara yang berlaku pada masa-masa tertentu yang dianggap kritikal, seperti dalam kampung pilihanraya dan selainnya. Kebanyakan penyusunan maklumat pada masa kini disimpan dalam komputer atau terdapat dalam pangkalan data dan penulis PR perluah mengetahui tentang kaedah penyimpanan atau cara untuk menggunakan sistem tersebut secara efektif.

4. **Penggunaan semula.** Penambahan atau penggunaan semula maklumat penyelidikan adalah sukar sekiranya maklumat berkenaan tidak tersedia untuk dicapai atau diakses. Proses pencapaian atau mendapatkan semula maklumat adalah kritikal sekiranya orang PR tidak mempunyai kaedah penyimpanan maklumat secara bersistem. Penulis PR perluah bekerjasama dengan pihak pengurus sistem maklumat untuk memaklumkan kepada mereka mengenai ciri dan kategori maklumat yang perlu digunakan dalam penulisan PR. Segala aspek mengenai keperluan penulisan PR yang bercirikan 5W/H perluah tersedia dan mudah didapati. Untuk keperluan penyelidikan PR, sistem pengumpulan maklumat tersebut harus direka supaya data dapat disusun secara teratur dan disampaikan dalam kaedah yang baik dan boleh dikemaskini dengan mudah.

D. **Sumber Maklumat**

Kesemua kategori penulis dan penyelidik, termasuk penulis PR bergantung kepada dua sumber maklumat yang asas, iaitu bahan bertulis dan publik. Bahan
bertulis tidak semestinya bermaksud buku. Ia juga boleh dirujuk kepada CD-ROM, disket, filem, pita video, pita audio atau apa sahaja bentuk bertulis yang tersimpan yang dapat menjana maklumat. Walau bagaimanapun, perkara yang paling penting bagi seseorang penulis ialah mengetahui kategori sumber maklumat berkenaan, iaitu sebagai sumber sekunder atau sumber primer. Sumber sekunder atau sumber kedua adalah sumber maklumat yang telah tersedia secara bertulis atau bercetak. Sementara sumber primer pula, ianya adalah sumber utama di mana maklumat diperolehi secara langsung daripada publik atau responden.

1. **Sumber maklumat sekunder.** Setiap penulis PR semestinya menggunakan sumber maklumat sekunder dalam penyediaan penulisan mereka. Mereka sewajarnya membuat rujukan di perpustakaan atau melalui pembacaan persendirian terhadap segala laporan dan juga bahan bertulis lain yang berkaitan dengan topik penulisan PR yang akan mereka sediakan. Perpustakaan dianggap sebagai tempat utama jika sebarang maklumat sekunder diperlukan. Kebanyakan maklumat di perpustakaan tersimpan dalam satu tempat iaitu komputer, dan perisian komputer pula mengandungi banyak rujukan dan pakej penyimpanan fakta. Sebagai rumusan, sumber sekunder boleh juga diperolehi melalui;

   i. Perpustakaan (Maklumat yang terkumpul dalam perpustakaan)
   ii. Rujukan sendiri (Maklumat simpanan atau koleksi peribadi atau individu)
   iii. Bibliografi (Maklumat berdasarkan rekod atau senarai rujukan institusi)
   iv. Pangkalan Data (Maklumat yang disediakan oleh pembekal maklumat)
   v. Rekod awam (Maklumat yang dikumpul bagi tujuan rujukan awam, seperti yang terdapat dalam Arkib Negara)
   vi. Rekod kerajaan (Maklumat kerajaan yang terdapat dalam simpanan institusi atau agensi kerajaan yang boleh diakses oleh publik)

2. **Sumber maklumat primer.** Maklumat primer atau utama diperolehi secara terus daripada publik atau responden. Terdapat dua cara yang kebiasaannya digunakan untuk mengumpul maklumat daripada publik iaitu melalui temubual dan pengumpulan maklumbalas melalui borang soalsettik.
i. **Temubual.** Proses temubual dijalankan, setelah kajian awal untuk mengenalpasti jenis dan lokasi publik atau responden dilakukan. Langkah seterusnya adalah menanyakan atau meminta pandangan daripada publik yang mempunyai pengetahuan tentang subjek penyelidikan yang dipilih. Walaupun sebahagian orang (penyelidik) mempunyai bakat semulajadi untuk mendapatkan maklumat daripada orang lain, tetapi bagi penulis PR, mereka seharusnya tahu dan berlatih untuk menguasai teknik menemubual secara yang betul. Latihan tersebut adalah penting bagi memastikan sesi temubual dapat dilaksanakan secara lancar.

ii. **Pengisian borang soal selidik.** Penyediaan borang soal selidik adalah suatu perkara yang sukar diurus. Beberapa soalan yang dikemukakan, kadangkala hanya berupaya untuk mendapatkan sedikit maklumat. Adalah sukar untuk bertanyaan soalan yang membolehkan responden benar-benar tahu atau faham apa yang dimaksudkan. Kesemua soalan yang disediakan perlulah bebas daripada 'bias'. Pelbagai faktor perlu dipertimbangkan dalam menyediakan borang soal selidik, termasuk kefahaman terhadap subjek, penyusunan soalan mengikut aturan logik, pengurusan borang dan pemberian markah atau skor terhadap jawapan responden.

Secara umumnya, kebanyakan maklumat yang diperolehi melalui sumber sekunder dan primer adalah dalam bentuk statistik yang bergantung kepada pemahaman tentang konsep mengenai jumlah, purata, kekerapan dan peratusan. Pemahaman ini penting supaya maklumat yang diperolehi tidak tersalah tafsir dan tersalah andalan, kerana jika perkara tersebut berlaku maka kesimpulan yang dibuat akan mewujudkan rumusan yang salah terhadap publik.

Kajian mengenai sesuatu maklumat yang menyimpulkan hubungan sebab-musabab biasanya melibatkan lebih banyak aspek statistik yang kompleks yang melibatkan aplikasi penyelidikan dan metodologi. Umumnya penyelidikan yang menggunakan, sama ada data sekunder atau primer, data yang diperolehi adalah dicurigai atau dipersoalkan, khususnya apabila pengumpulan data dilakukan berdasarkan kepada persampelan rawak (*random sampling*). Oleh itu, tata cara
atau prosedur perlu digunakan dalam setiap penyelidikan yang melibatkan interpresasi data. Sekiranya terdapat kesamaan yang menyebabkan gambaran tentang maklumat yang dikumpul tidak dapat dilakukan, maka data dan kesimpulan yang diperolehi adalah dicurigai atau dipersoalkan. Walaupun maklumat tersebut bekemungkinan boleh dipercayai, tetapi adalah lebih baik bagi seseorang penulis atau penyelidik PR untuk sentiasa berwaspad.

Apabila hasil maklumat mula digabungkan bersama dengan maklumat-maklumat lain, maka sumber-sumber maklumat yang terlibat haruslah dinilai semula. Sekiranya terdapat percanggahan atau pertindihan maklumat, maka penggunaan maklumat dari sumber primer perluah diutamakan. Sementara maklumat dari sumber sekunder pula boleh dijadikan maklumat sokongan atau tambahan.

E. Senarai Semakan Kaedah Penyelidikan

Senarai semakan kaedah penyelidikan yang biasa dilakukan sifatnya adalah konsisten. Senarai tersebut perlu difahami dan diketahui oleh seseorang penyelidik atau penulis PR bagi memastikan kandungan maklumat yang dikumpul adalah menyeluruh dan kemaskini. Secara umumnya senarai semakan untuk kaedah atau tatacara penyelidikan adalah sebagai berikut;

1. Apakah nama orang atau organisasi yang terlibat dalam penyelidikan?
2. Bilakah tempoh atau tarikh penyelidikan tersebut dilakukan?
3. Sekiranya sampel digunakan, apakah langkah yang diambil untuk memastikan pemilihan sampel dibuat secara rawak?
4. Apakah langkah yang dibuat untuk mengesahkan soalan penyelidikan sebelum soalan berkenaan dikemukakan kepada responden?
5. Apakah langkah yang diambil bagi memastikan kewibawaan penggunaan kaedah penyelidikan berkenaan?
6. Apakah salinan soalselidik atau instrumen pengukuran dimasukkan dalam laporan penyelidikan?
7. Bagaimana maklumat yang terkumpul melalui penyelidikan tersebut dapat membantu anda atau organisasi anda dalam membuat keputusan?
F. Kesimpulan

Secara umumnya, penggunaan komputer dalam pengumpulan data penyelidikan adalah mudah diurus, tetapi kewibawaannya boleh dipertanyakan dan bergantung kepada keaslian sumber. Bagi seseorang penulis PR, penyelidikan adalah penting kerana hasil penyelidikan akan dapat menjelaskan maklumat organisasi dari segi dasar, latarbelakang, publik sasaran, kaedah penyampaian mesej, pemilihan media, dan prestasi kejayaan sesuatu program.

Setiap penulis PR perlu memastikan bahawa maklumat penyelidikan disimpan secara terancang agar ianya mudah untuk dikemaskini, diguna dan diakses. Sumber maklumat penyelidikan boleh diperolehi melalui sumber sekunder dan juga sumber primer. Penggunaan maklumat penyelidikan perluah terlebih dahulu disemak dan disahkan agar maklumat yang diedarkan kepada publik berkualiti dan bermakna. Pada kebiasaannya, matlamat utama sesebuah organisasi membuat penyelidikan PR ialah bagi tujuan penyediaan maklumat untuk penerbitan kit media dan juga helaiannya faktta berdasarkan fungsi dan juga sejarah. Maklumat-maklumat tersebut sifatnya adalah konsisten, dan sebarang penyelidikan PR yang baru hanya berfungsi sebagai pengemaskinian maklumat yang berkaitan dengan sesuatu program PR yang dijalankan.

Bahan Pembelajaran Tambahan

1. Research for the public relations writer (m.s.78)

Latihan

Bagi mengukuhkan kefahaman, anda adalah digalakkan untuk mencuba semua latihan yang terdapat pada bahagian akhir setiap bahan pembelajaran tambahan yang dilampirkan.
Research for the Public Relations Writer

Computers make the fact finding you need for public relations writing easier but riskier. Research that used to involve a trip to the library now can be done from your personal computer, but the source of the information must be identified and evaluated. CD-ROMs generally provide reliable information because you know the source, who compiled the facts. Getting information out of cyberspace, however, is problematic because there’s no fact traffic cop on the information super-highway. One suggestion is to use known sources such as the U.S. Census Bureau or reputable publications with online access, such as The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal. On the other hand, information from “newsgroups” or independent electronic newsletters may or may not be valid. That doesn’t mean don’t use it. It does mean check it out against other sources, just as you would in any fact finding operation.

The newsletter PR Reporter cautions that opinion polling and academic, market, audience and advertising research often don’t meet the needs of research in public relations. The point is made that public relations pros, including writers, need action data that:

1. Answer questions essential to planning projects, programs and campaigns. The most desirable research methods focus on the latent readiness of audiences to behave in certain ways and on how audiences get information and how they use it to arrive at decisions.
4.1

Prewriting Checklist

1. Gather the facts of the matter and get them right.
2. Gather authoritative opinions and interpretations of the matter.
3. Evaluate facts and opinions for their pertinence. Discard those not directly related to the matter.
4. Synthesize the remaining facts and opinions into a cohesive body of information.
5. Organize the information for writing.
6. Develop a writing outline that moves logically from one point to the next.

2. Test, if possible, and deflate assumptions. Convention wisdom, often what leads senior management to decisions, may be wrong.

3. Produce baseline data that permit accurate evaluation. Good baselines help us to know how far we’ve moved, if at all, whether a process is working and whether behavioral change goals are met.¹

Research, then, is the key element in professional success—research at the beginning and at the ending of any endeavor. Research is as important to the beginner as it is to a senior counselor, although the focus of research may change as you move up the career ladder.

Because most entry-level jobs in public relations are directly related to the writing process, it is important that you learn as much as you can about research and how to use it as a writer. For this reason, you should review and remember the prewriting checklist in Example 4.1.

Research in Public Relations

What kinds of research must you know about and be able to do? In the field of public relations, there are six major categories of research with which you must be concerned:

1. Policy
2. Background material
3. Audience
4. Message
5. Media
6. Program evaluation

All six are important in every PR situation, but rarely are they all equally important. Your sensitivity to the problem at hand will help you determine which category or combination of categories is especially important in a particular case.
Categories of Research for the PR Writer

Policy "‘The company line’ is a euphemism that hardly does justice to the full concept behind the term policy. Policy is a considered statement of purpose, position or direction that is expected to guide the behavior of those it covers.

Every firm or organization in both the public and private sectors has a set of policies. Anyone working for or with the firm or organization is expected to know the provisions of applicable policies.

Policy is of two general types: internal and external. Internal policy is that of your employer. It is a set of guidelines that directs and controls the collective behavior of the organization and the job behavior of each employee. Such policies may range from a policy governing employee benefits to a policy of public candor in the face of a community crisis.

External policy is policy that comes from a source outside the organization’s immediate control but bears on the organization’s behavior toward its constituencies. For example, if you are writing the annual report for a publicly held company, you must know and observe certain Securities and Exchange Commission policies and requirements.

It is critical that you know applicable policies in order to avoid problems. This may not only save your job, it may even get you promoted.

Some policies you may need to know are available to you only in oral form. Oral policy can be especially frustrating, for three primary reasons. First, oral policy is easily distorted. What you believe today to be a clear understanding of the policy may be completely obsolete a year from now. Second, management may be unsure of itself and thus reluctant to put a decision into writing. Third, management may have a hidden agenda. To understand this point, suppose you are about to write a series of releases for the local media about your country club’s gala next month, some proceeds of which will go to the United Negro College Fund. Club policy does not bar African-Americans from membership, but there are no African-American members in the club. And you are told, when you ask the club manager, that no African-Americans are invited or expected to attend the gala. Written policy may say one thing, but unwritten policy may say something else.

If you find yourself relying more on oral than written policy, urge management to put the oral policy into writing. If management resists this suggestion unreasonably, start looking for another job.

Background Material Successful public relations writing is based on a solid, fully developed body of facts. The kinds of facts necessary will vary, depending on the situation.

For example, suppose you are retained to write a brochure in support of a bond election to double the community’s hospital bed space. What facts do you need to know before you begin to write?

For starters, here are a few: What has been the community’s rate of growth over the last 20 years? How much is the community expected to grow in the next 20? What accounts for this rate of growth? What is the ratio of community patients to patients
from outside the community? Why? Has this ratio changed in the last few years? Is the ratio expected to change in the future? Why? Is the interest rate on the bonds favorable? How do local financial leaders view the bonding program? Why?

The number is not the issue. The point is that public relations planning, decision making and writing depend on the careful accumulation of facts and ideas.

As you begin the task of assembling background materials, you should assume the traditional role of the news reporter by asking who, what, where, when, how and why—especially why. As you ask these questions, you'll begin to build an elaborate, sophisticated, project-specific system of information that will help you handle assignments ranging in diversity from staging a small symposium to handling a crisis at a chemical plant.

If your search for the proper background material leads you into legal or government documents and you find that an office or agency is uncooperative, you may want to request the needed information, if it qualifies, under the Freedom of Information Act. For guidance and materials on how to make an FOI request, contact the Freedom of Information Clearinghouse at (202)514-3642, or 514-FOIA.

One of the key points to remember about background materials is that, even if the public relations situation is new to you, it is not new. Others have faced the same situation or a similar one. Learn from their experiences.

**Audience** As noted earlier, professionals in public relations are fond of talking about publics or audiences. These terms are used synonymously. It is rare in public relations that you will deal with a single audience. Even when it appears that way, closer examination usually turns up two or more subsegments, each with its unique characteristics, concerns and needs.

Thus, the question is: How can you identify the audience or subsegments? This requires research, perhaps at different levels of sophistication. To illustrate this point, consider this situation.

You are director of public relations for a new bank with a national charter in a metropolitan area. The bank's management is aware that deregulation allows savings and loans and investment firms, such as Merrill Lynch, to provide many financial services previously available only at banks.

Your management decides to "sell" the bank to certain types of potential customers—specifically, those whose incomes are $50,000 or more annually. This rules out a lot of potential depositors from your target audience. And it focuses attention on specific segments of the community, such as physicians, dentists, attorneys, retailers, owners of manufacturing or service firms, architects, designers and engineers.

In this situation you will first try to divide the priority public into segments by using demographic information—income, sex, education, occupation, marital status, home ownership and the like, as discussed earlier. Once the demographic profile is complete, the picture of this public comes into sharper focus. But does it tell you all you need to know? Perhaps. Perhaps not.
What you may need now is psychographic information—information about lifestyle, attitudes and behavior. Information of this type may give you important clues indicating that your public relations program should communicate differently with, say, physicians and dentists than with retailers and manufacturers. For example, physicians and dentists may be more concerned with long-range financial planning, whereas retailers and manufacturers may be more concerned with managing cash flow. If so, messages going to these two groups must be different.

Research helps you to understand to the fullest extent the needs of your audience and its components so that you can shape messages that speak to their distinct needs (see Example 4.2).

**Message**  What you say and how you say it may have a great deal to do with your success. Recall our discussion about audiences. If you are lucky enough to have a single audience with which to communicate, your job will be easier. But when you have several audiences, your job can be complex.

Whether it is one audience or several, you are generally well advised to begin by reducing your message to a single simple idea. Remember, though, that a single simple idea is not necessarily an insignificant or simple-minded idea. Reducing what you want to say to this level is necessary to help keep you on the right track as you shape your message.

Since different methods can be used to construct a message for maximum impact, you should select an approach based primarily on your purpose for the message.

Is the purpose to change or to reinforce behavior? If it is to change, you must remember to make a reward obvious to the receiver of your message. If it is to reinforce, your message must avoid information that contradicts current behavior.

Should you use a conclusion-drawing technique? In this method you select and present information that will lead your audience to draw the conclusion you want it to draw. Communication-research literature suggests that this is a good method of communicating with sophisticated audiences. However, this technique can be fatal if used with unsophisticated audiences.

There are many techniques of message presentation in addition to the ones discussed. You should review the communication-research literature and develop a personal understanding of these methods. What are they? How do they work? Under what conditions do they appear to work best? A good way to begin is to review Chapter 3.

**Media**  As you work your way through a public relations problem, you will have to make choices about which channels of communication to use and how to use them. Before you can make these decisions, however, you need to know the characteristics of the various media available to you. What are their technical qualities and requirements? What can they or can't they do? What are their emotional qualities? How do people react to them? How and why do people use them as they do? Should you use general media, specialized media or a combination of the two types? These are serious
Researching Your Audience—Mailed Questionnaire

Note the simplicity of the responses required and yet the enormous value of the guidance that will accrue to an editor planning the content of the publication, and to the people charged with promoting it. This is one of “twin” mailed questionnaires for a
3. How many people work in your current location?
   - 1-2
   - 3-5
   - 6-9
   - 10-50
   - Over 50

4. What makes the database about which documents information resources are available in your department?
   - PC
   - Server
   - Mainframe
   - Local area network
   - Internet/corporate wide area network
   - Intranet
   - Archive
   - Other

5. Do you have an electronic network of your office?  Yes:  _ No: ___

6. How much of the following information today do you use your Last fax? (check all that apply)
   - Financial news
   - Local news
   - Business news
   - Professional news
   - Technical news
   - International news
   - Entertainment
   - Other

7. Which information services do you use? Please check all that apply and put a check mark in the box next to each service, and number 2, 3, etc., by the most often heavily used service.
   - CompuServe
   - CNN/USA
   - Dow Jones/Reuters
   - Over the Internet
   - Over the Internet
   - Other

8. For what purposes do you use electronic documents?
   - News
   - Research
   - Financial information
   - Technical information
   - Educational
   - Personal
   - Other

9. Do you go online monthly?  Yes: _ No: ___

10. How much time do you spend online in a typical week?
    - Under 1 hour
    - 1-3 hours
    - 3-10 hours
    - Over 10 hours

11. Do you own a home computer?  Yes: ___ No: ___

12. Do you use CD-ROM to research business/professional information?  Yes: ___ No: ___

13. Does your company have a library or information center?  Yes: ___ No: ___

14. Do you access your company computer or information center?  Yes: ___ No: ___

15. Do you own a scanner for color and monochrome?  Yes: ___ No: ___

16. Do you go online for leisure or recreational purposes?  Yes: ___ No: ___

(Please fill, tape, and mail. DO NOT STAPLE! Thank you!)
questions, the answers to which are not easy and may involve large amounts of time and money. But you need to know, not guess.

Once you have chosen the media, you’ll need to assess whether they are effective and efficient in implementing this particular public relations program. This suggests that you’ll need to monitor progress and evaluate success. Four questions are important here. Did you reach your priority public? Was your message really heard and accepted? Was your message acted upon? Was the use of the media cost-effective?

**Evaluation** Public relations programs have to prove their worth. This means that one of your tasks as a writer is to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the program. You will need to know what worked well, what did not, and why. Most of the techniques discussed earlier are used in this phase, too. It is simply a matter of employing questionnaires, interviews, and secondary sources to evaluate what has been accomplished. Of course, such common pieces of physical evidence as how many people attended an event, how many people were exposed to your message and how many people responded to a special coupon offer are critical in basic program evaluation.

**Research for Storage and Retrieval**

Public relations professionals would have more serious communication problems than they do if intensive paperwork in policy, background materials, audience, message and media had to be fresh with each new program. However, professionals routinely accumulate pertinent research information, initiate research for later use and plan for future research needs.

A large proportion of public relations research is borrowed from the social sciences, especially from behavioral areas. Useful research studies are accumulated and indexed for future use. Research about publics and about media is continually reviewed and stored. Much of the information about publics comes from comprehensive studies done by the commercial media about their audiences. Other studies come from product and service institutions concerned about their own publics. Research on internal policies is mined from organizational sources, whereas external policies are gleaned from various municipal, state and federal organizations, professional or associational groups and the like.

A particular public relations situation may require some original fact finding. In conducting original research or in hiring a research firm to do it, the public relations practitioner must know clearly what is needed. Otherwise, the resulting information may be imposing but inadequate.

**Organizing** Since public relations information comes from such a wide variety of sources, organizing it can be a problem. One common organizational pattern follows the lines of our earlier discussion. Information is categorized according to policy (pertinent internal and external guides), background material (substantive facts bearing on
the situation), audience (facts about the people you want to reach), message (facts about successes of message types in similar situations) and media (the most effective ways of delivering your message).

**Presenting**  The organization of the research should reflect the ways in which it will later be presented and used. In presenting this information, it is important to explain the implications of the findings when these are not obvious and to suggest what bearing the research has on the situation. The information should also indicate what other research is needed to make the picture clearer.

**Updating**  Organization of the research should allow for easy updating, especially where ongoing research, such as periodic opinion measurement (as in an election campaign) is critical. Today most organizational information is stored in computers, and the PR professional must know enough about the method of storage to use the system effectively. What works best for information-systems people may not always be what works best for the public relations person trying to use the information.

**Reusing**  Adding to or reusing research information is difficult if the information is not readily accessible. The retrieval process, therefore, is critical. PR professionals must work with information-systems people to tell them how the information will be used—what will be needed, under what conditions, when and in what form. For PR research needs, the system must be designed so that data is well organized, is presented in a meaningful way and can easily be updated.

**Sources for PR Writers and Researchers**

Writers and researchers of all types—not just public relations professionals—depend on research from two basic sources: paper and people. Of course, “paper” doesn’t always mean books. It can mean CD-ROMs, magnetic tape or disks, film, videotape, audiocassette, or some other form of storage. The important point to remember is that sources are either secondary (paper or other form of stored information) or primary (people).

**Secondary Sources for Research**

Every public relations writer should have at least a working library in the office that contains a dictionary, a thesaurus, appropriate reference volumes and bibliographies, and pertinent professional and technical journals and documents. Completing this working library is a file system where information can be placed for easy and immediate access. This office library will be your first line of attack when you need secondary information. For some writers, all of this will be in one place—their computer. Computer software can include many language references and fact-storage packages. Com-
puter access to data banks is also available. Much information can be accessed electronically with a good search engine.

If you need help, call a reference librarian. You can save time if you can succinctly describe the information you want. Some reference librarians will answer simple questions on the phone.

**Library**  Most metropolitan areas have public libraries containing adequate resources for basic research. They also usually have cooperative agreements with other libraries to get information on loan. College and university libraries contain scholarly material you may need. Some university libraries are repositories for government documents. These documents represent a large body of research in many different areas. Some churches have substantial holdings of religious works, and many cities have law libraries. Some libraries have special collections that are open to qualified researchers.

**Reference Works**  The primary tools of both the reference librarian and the researcher in the library are collections of information and reference works. These are maps that enable you to find the treasures of information you seek. Standard reference works include encyclopedias, biographical dictionaries, dictionaries of quotations, concordances of the Bible and other famous works, atlases and gazetteers, chronologies or other books of dates, handbooks and source books such as dictionaries of all languages and areas of specialization.

**Bibliographies**  One reference source that is especially important is the bibliography. In compiling and categorizing bibliographies, authors provide you with paths through mazes of footnotes. Bibliographies usually identify reliable sources of information that you will want to tap. Many libraries offer electronic access to stored bibliographies so that you can call up on a screen all the most likely sources. Hard (printed) copies are also available from material listed in these data banks.

**Periodicals/Data Bases**  If using electronic sources, you need to know that the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address for each Internet location tells you what type it is. There are three types: the telnet site (which handles your organization's e-mail); a text-only site (Gopher); a graphics site (http). One resource accessible in electronic systems is The New York Times Index. Using this database, you can track, call up and read any story that has appeared in The New York Times within a specific number of years. Since The New York Times makes an effort to be a newspaper of record, it is possible to do a great deal of research through this index alone. NEXIS/LEXIS, CompuServe, The Source, Dow Jones News Retrieval Service and others are electronic data banks that can be tapped by public relations writers for research purposes. Many newspapers in addition to The New York Times, such as The Washington Post, The Daily Oklahoman and the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, provide data bank services that may be helpful. For commercial publications, the most useful index is the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature. ADTRACK is a database consisting of all ads of a quarter page or more in 148 U.S. magazines. You can also find indexes and
database that focus on highly specialized fields, such as law (LEXIS) or medicine (Medline).

Some scholarly organizations, such as International Communications Association (ICA) offer CD-ROMs for reference articles.

An extensive database on public opinion is available from the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. Opinions were gathered from 1,606 respondents on 560 variables, including measures of scientific and environmental knowledge, personal involvement in environmental activities, concern for issues such as air pollution, pesticides, nuclear energy and global warming. The data is available on a disk formatted for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), a statistical analysis program. Another source is PRFORUM, a network of more than 200 subscribers from nine countries. PRFORUM is an interactive exchange network through which professionals can seek information from or offer it to colleagues in many places around the world. Indexes and databases also exist for most scholarly publications and even for a few newsletters issued by national institutions or organizations. (The database for most communication materials, for example, is ERIC.)

Other good references for events and issues of the day are Facts on File and encyclopedia yearbooks.

**Public Records** Government records at all levels—local, state and federal—are available to you unless they contain classified information. Some government agencies offer significant research assistance. For example, the Library of Congress is very helpful in locating information and will often offer advice to put you on the right trail.

**Government Records** Most government offices are storehouses of information, and many government offices distribute their own materials. The federal government has its materials published by the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). A central store in Washington, D.C., contains information on every imaginable subject, as do GPO regional offices in cities with federal centers. Ask to be put on the GPO's mailing list. One essential source of information for PR people is the *Statistical Abstracts of the United States*, published annually by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, even though it is said to underestimate minorities.

**Public Access to Information** The Freedom of Information Act has opened many files of both public and private institutions to examination. This means that normally you now have access to all documents—titles to property, budgets of state institutions, court proceedings and the like—that have been filed in a public place. A wealth of information exists in these documents.

**Primary Sources for Research**

When you must research primary sources, generally you have two ways of gathering information from people. One is the interview and the other is the questionnaire. Whether you're asking questions face to face or through a questionnaire, you must
prepare yourself ahead of time so that the answers you get give you the information you want. Let’s look at each of these methods in turn.

**Interviewing** After you have done some fundamental research, you are ready to begin asking questions of people who might be knowledgeable in your subject. In any interview you may want to begin by asking yes/no questions, but always use these as the basis for asking open-ended questions in the body of the interview. Find authorities through your research, develop questions for them and then follow up any leads they may give you.

Although some people seem to have a natural talent for getting information from others, every public relations person should develop and practice interviewing skills. Like people who play musical instruments by ear, natural interviewers—and all others—become even better with practice.

Go to an interview prepared with questions on paper. Keep information in mind that you have gained from your research. Then, if the opportunity arises, you can follow a different line of questioning. Take notes and use a tape recorder, and try not to rely solely on one or the other. It is unquestionably ethical to advise your interviewee that you want to record the conversation and to seek consent. No federal law requires prior consent in a face-to-face interview, but if the interview is recorded via interstate telephone without prior consent, it is illegal. A few states require prior consent to record intrastate telephone conversations. Be sure to check out legal provisions in the state where you work.

Listen to what the person is telling you, and try to remember the information by putting it into the context suggested by your prior research. Encourage full responses by asking relevant questions and by participating in the conversation. Avoid being judgmental. You are asking, not telling. Example 4.3 provides an interviewing checklist.

Some of the important information you get from the interview will come from keen observation of the behavior of the person you are interviewing. Watch for nonverbal communication cues, and note both physical characteristics and environmental factors that could be telling. In particular, note gestures that indicate personality characteristics and remember emotional emphases. The latter are particularly evident in the way something is said: the inflection of the voice, the expression on the face. Be cautious, however, about reading more into these details than is there. Be aware of your own bias and involvement with the subject, so you don’t misinterpret what you experience. To safeguard against misinterpretation, some researchers prefer to videotape interviews so that they can capture this information and isolate it later.

Keep in mind that there are several characteristics of a good interview. First, you need to present yourself as a warm, responsive person to the interviewee. If you cultivate that impression consistently, people you interview will respond warmly to you. That goes a long way toward convincing respondents that their interaction with you will be both pleasant and personally satisfying. Second, you need to create a permissive atmosphere in which the person being interviewed does not feel inhibited by
Checklist for Interviewing

1. Research your subject before the interview.
2. Know something about the person you are interviewing.
3. Prepare a list of questions in advance.
4. Inform the interviewee in advance of the kinds of questions you will be asking.
5. Whenever possible use a tape recorder and take notes. Never put complete trust in a machine or in your memory.
6. Ask for explanations if you don’t understand something.
8. Ask one question at a time. Don’t throw several questions into the same sentence and expect the interviewee to answer—or even to remember—all of them.

Your questions and which invites candid responses. If respondents see your interview as important, they’ll tend to be more cooperative. Third, you must be sure not to apply pressure of any kind, real or implied, on the person you are interviewing. If you maintain a detached, but permissive posture in the interview, respondents are more likely to “open up” with more candor than you may have expected.

To achieve these purposes, it is recommended that you follow these steps:

1. Introduce yourself by name and explain your affiliation (show documentation if it is needed or is asked for).
2. Explain clearly what it is that you are doing.
3. Explain to the interviewee how he or she was chosen to be interviewed.
4. Adapt your behavior to the personality of the person being interviewed.
5. Build rapport.

Questionnaires The second means of getting information from people is the questionnaire. The questionnaire is a research workhorse. Drafting a questionnaire is difficult, however. Several simple questions are sometimes necessary to get a single piece of information.

It can be difficult to ask a question so that the respondent knows exactly what you mean by it. For example, a national survey once asked a question about “consumer movement leaders.” Another researcher, attempting to replicate part of the study, used the same expression with different audiences and was asked by one respondent for a definition of “consumer leader.” Did the researcher want to know about movement activists, government appointees or civil servants involved in consumer information, or corporate employees charged with responding to consumers? The question was invalid because it was being interpreted in different ways. One technique that
helps to safeguard against this is to pretest the questions before actually using the questionnaire.

All questions should be phrased in such a way that they are bias-free. Consider this question: Do you still drink too much? Even a negative response signifies that the respondent drank too much at some previous time, though in fact the respondent may have never indulged in liquor at all. Questions asked in this fashion are not only ineffective but also unethical.

To develop a questionnaire, begin by simply listing all the information you want to know. Then begin to draft questions that will get at the information. Next, consider your respondents. Who will be responding to these questions and under what circumstances? Some people get impatient with long telephone questionnaires, especially if the questions are on a topic that is personally uninteresting. A questionnaire that can be returned by mail gives the respondent the choice of answering on his or her own schedule. However, because you cannot control who responds to mail questionnaires, problems may arise regarding the representativeness of the sample.

The age and educational level of respondents may also be factors in how questions should be phrased. Familiarity with the subject is another possible factor. The less familiar respondents are with the topic, the simpler the questions and the longer the response times need to be. It is also important to arrange questions in logical sequence so that answers develop naturally in the respondent’s mind.

In writing the questions, it is also important to consider how the questionnaire will be administered and scored. If a questionnaire is to be used in a busy shopping mall, for example, or in a phone call, the respondent may not want to take time to answer long or involved questions. Open-ended questions are difficult to evaluate and score. How you ask a question affects the response, and that determines whether the information you get from the questionnaire will be valid and useful.

Some open-ended questions and some interview responses are later subjected to content analysis. This just means that words are counted to see how often they appear, and in what context. At least two national research agencies use in-depth interviewing and content analysis extensively. The system involves transcribing oral interviews and entering these into the computer, as you would other open-ended responses. The computer can rank the words by their frequency of usage, and a social science software program can be used to analyze each word in relation to others. Subtle themes often emerge from such analyses, making it possible for researchers to determine accurately what people mean by what they say.

Caveats Much of the information you get from secondary and primary sources will be in simple statistical form that relies on your understanding of concepts like sum, mean (average), median and mode. If you are not adept with these terms now, get a mathematics book and study it until you are. Otherwise, you run the risk of misinterpreting factual information, drawing poor conclusions and eventually misleading your public.

Research information that infers cause-effect relationships usually entails more sophisticated statistics and research methodologies. There are several good books you
Checklist of Research Protocols

1. What is the name of the person(s) or organization that did the research? What was the date on which it was done? For whom and why was it done?
2. If a sample was used, what steps were taken to ensure randomness?
3. What steps were taken to validate the questions before they were asked of respondents?
4. What steps were taken to ensure the reliability of the research methods?
5. Is a copy of the questionnaire or measuring instrument included in the research report?
6. How will this material help you or your organization to make a decision?

You can consult for help in these areas. One is Frederick Williams’ *Reasoning with Statistics*, a paperback designed for people who lack a statistical background but who need to know how to interpret and use information that is available only in statistical form.

Whether you are using secondary or primary data, be skeptical about their meaning, especially if the compilers claim that it is based on a random sample. The term random has a very strict scientific meaning when applied to survey research. It means that every person in your public should have an equal and known statistical probability of being included in the sample. The key point to remember here is that only when the sample is truly random can the findings be generalized to the total public being researched.

You should look for certain research protocols in every piece of research data you use. These are listed in the form of questions in Example 4.4. If answers to these questions are missing from the research report or if they are so vague you can’t get a clear view of how the information was gathered, be wary of the data and of any conclusions based on it. It is possible, of course, that the information is reliable, but you should still use it with caution.

**Verifying**

When you start putting information together from all your sources, you will want to cross-check your sources. Check primary sources against each other. If you find areas of conflict, look for more primary sources so that the weight of information will clearly support your conclusions.

In addition, check primary sources against secondary sources. People have fallible memories. In attempting to check out information, you’ll often find conflicts among secondary sources. Historians, for example, sometimes spend years tracking down an elusive date for an event. Most PR researchers don’t do that type of research, nor do they have the time for it, but it pays to be careful, especially now that so much
information is highly specialized and technical. If authorities disagree, you need to
know it and to find out why. Check and keep checking until a pattern emerges.

Skepticism—A Requisite for All Research

Research involves digging, thinking, verifying and analyzing. It is the act of deciding
between the probable and the improbable, the true and the false, the likely and the
doubtful, the acceptable and the unacceptable and the right and the wrong. These are
vital decisions in any PR situation. They call for sustained reasoning, a dedication to
knowing the truth and a determination to be satisfied with nothing less.

Questions to Ask

Every writer should be from the “Show Me” state, because skepticism is the hallmark
of all successful writers, including those in public relations. Skepticism should not be
confused with cynicism. The former is a mindset that says “I will believe but you have
to prove it to me.” The cynic often rejects proof without considering it.

This skeptical approach is especially important for you to adopt as a public rela-
tions writer, as it is for other writers in mass communication, even when presenting
your side of the story, because you are legally accountable for false information. You
simply can’t afford to take the word of any one person as “the truth.” You should always
insist on documentation and then cross-check the documentation just to be safe.

Probe with questions such as these: Who says this is true? What documentation
is available? Where is the evidence? Is there outside authority to substantiate this? What
is the experience within the industry? Can I test this myself? What does other research
suggest might be the case? What is my instinctive reaction to the credibility of each
source? Just remember that the only dumb question is the one not asked.

Answers Prompt Questions

When you begin researching secondary and primary sources, you’ll discover that an-
ers to your questions suggest more questions. These questions become an agenda
for future research. The point is that, if you expect to make it in PR, you’ll need to
dedicate yourself to being a good researcher who is always pursuing new questions.

Virtual Reality and Research

In the book _Jurassic Park_, a medical team was placed in a submarine and all were
reduced to the size of a cell and injected into the bloodstream of a patient to explore
the human arterial system. _Jurassic Park_ was developed on the premise that dinosau-
DNA was discovered in amber. With proper incubation, these prehistoric beasts could
be hatched. These are, of course, fictional accounts, but ancient insect larvae have been discovered in amber. In fact, amber with small insects encased has become a scarce commodity since Jurassic Park was published. And medical researchers the last few years have been exploring the human nerve and muscular systems by way of a new technology, virtual reality. It gives them much the same experience as the one described in Fantastic Voyage.

Virtual reality is a new technology that merges people and machines into a computer-generated environment where they can interact with that environment and other people. This place within cyberspace is six-dimensional and can be highly dynamic and social. It is a contemporary version of H. G. Wells’ The Time Machine. To enter virtual reality, you must don special gear and you must be hooked up to a special computer that has appropriate peripherals and software. But you can move about and touch things in cyberspace by using a variety of response devices, including a mouse key. VR is already being used by architects, pilots, engineers and others.

Although VR is only in very limited use in communication research now, its potential application to the needs of public relations, indeed for anyone interested in communication and human behavior, seems limited only by our imagination.

Suppose you’re trying to win support and raise money for a new hospital. You could put together a VR program in which people not only could see the architect’s rendition of the new facility but could “actually” go inside and inspect it before it is built.

Or maybe your organization is promoting a theme park, like Disney World. Members of your target audience could visit the park, through virtual reality, to see what they liked or didn’t like.

Although these are but two of uncountable possibilities, it should be clear to you that such research procedures will make obsolete what is now thought to be the best, most reliable ways of evaluating opinions, attitudes, beliefs and behavior. VR as a research tool in our field is at the amoebic stage, but it will grow. The only question now is: How quickly? Stay tuned.

**Facts Sheets—Basic PR Tools**

A good bit of research is internal—finding facts about your organization and its activities. Standard facts sheets present the fundamental facts about the organization. These should be readily available, either on a single sheet or in folder form. You also need a historical facts sheet covering landmarks in the organization’s development. Special-event facts sheets not only tell others what’s going on, they’ll help you preserve your sanity.

A special event is one of the most common activities PR people get involved with. Such events are held for various purposes, such as to raise money or just to draw media attention (the so-called media event). Whatever the purpose of the special event, the first thing to do when you’re faced with one is to prepare a facts sheet.
The facts sheet should contain a description of all activities, plus the day, date, time and duration of each activity and the name of the person responsible for each. Give each person's title (in relation to the event), too. Once you have drafted the timetable, add all the background: where and when the event will be held; charges (if any); sponsors; and your name, plus all the places and phone numbers where you can be reached. Your facts sheet will then be essentially complete.

On a separate page, you might want to add a brief history of the event, giving dates and milestones, as another basic element in your media kit. (Chapter 19 discusses media kits.) To update a facts sheet on a pro-am (professional-amateur) benefit, you might add a single sheet describing past benefits, naming participants and stating who won, what their scores were, how many dollars were raised, who benefited, who the sponsors were and where previous benefits were held (if different from the current location).

**Conclusions**

- Computer-accessible data is easier to use but can be less reliable, depending on its origin.
- Research is vital to the public relations writer.
- The focus of research for the public relations writer is on applicable internal and external policy, relevant background material, appropriate publics, methods of message presentation, the most effective media for delivering the message and evaluation of program success.
- Research information must be stored in such a way that it can be easily accessed, updated and used.
- The most common sources of secondary information include libraries, reference works, bibliographies, periodicals, databases and government records.
- Primary information is developed mostly through interviews and questionnaires. To get information by these means, you must prepare yourself carefully to ask good questions of the right people under the right circumstances.
- Gathering information is not enough. The data you collect has to be cross-checked and verified before you can base decisions on it. Be skeptical.
- It is in the nature of research that answers to questions prompt still more questions.
- You can secure a place in public relations by becoming a skilled researcher.
- A good bit of your facts finding is internal. Much of an organization's basic internal information is produced in facts sheets.
- Although it is not yet common in public relations research, virtual reality offers exciting prospects for the future.
- Facts sheets for organizations are of two types: functional and historical. The functional ones may be organizational or devoted to special events.
- Facts sheets should always be included in media kits but are also used with other publics such as investors, donors, volunteers and supporters.
Exercises

1. Locate 10 Web sites for reliable reference material.
2. Compile a bibliography of at least 10 publications whose primary emphasis is on public relations.
3. Develop a bibliography of at least 10 reference sources on manufacturing in your state.
4. Analyze the bias in the following questions. Rewrite them as necessary to eliminate bias.
   A. Do you still believe smoking is not hazardous to your health?
   B. How often do you smoke?
   C. Do you believe that jogging does serious damage to the bone structures of the foot and joint?
5. Do research for and draft a questionnaire that probes the attitudes of the target audience toward physical fitness. The target audience is young men and women, ages 21–35, upwardly mobile in their professions, most with college degrees or some college, living in metropolitan areas. They lead very active social lives, but their careers are generally stressful.

Notes


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UNIT 3

PENULISAN KORPORAT
UNTUK AUDIENS TERPILIH

Objektif Pembelajaran;
Selepas membaca unit dan bahan pembelajaran tambahan anda akan;
1. Mengetahui komponen dan format penulisan memo.
2. Mengetahui jenis-jenis penulisan memo.
3. Mengenali format penulisan surat perniagaan.
4. Mengetahui komponen-komponen yang terdapat dalam penulisan laporan dan kertas cadangan.

A. Latarbelakang

Memo diklasifikasikan kepada enam jenis iaitu memo bulitin, memo esei, memo maklumat, memo tindakan, memo ringkasan dan memo fail. Memo dianggap lebih berkhas sekerana ditujukan terus kepada penerima dan sekerana memo itu ditujukan kepada penerima yang ramai ia mestilah menarik dan dapat menyampaikan maklumat dengan tepat. Aplikasi teknologi moden, seperti penggunaan mel-elektronik telah sedikit sebanyak menjejaskan aplikasi memo dalam pengurusan kerana terdapatnya ciri-ciri canggih pada mel-elektronik. Walau bagaimanapun, aplikasi memo masih terus diamalkan kerana sifat
fizikalnya yang lebih peribadi, khususnya apabila memo itu ditulis mengikut prosedur yang betul.

Umumnya, penulisan memo mempunyai format yang tersendiri dan berbeza daripada penulisan surat. Walau bagaimanapun, penulisan surat masih dianggap penting dalam urusan seherian sesuatu organisasi. Terdapat enam kategori surat iaitu surat maklumat, permohonan, promosi, penghantaran, penutup dan surat jawapan. Surat juga mempunyai format yang tertentu yang terbahagi kepada enam bahagian utama, iaitu bahagian kepala, tanda hormat, badan, penutup, tandatangan dan rujukan. Bagi laporan dan kertas cadangan pula, penulisannya lebih berbentuk penulisan secara ese, khususnya mengenai hasil kajian dan juga cadangan projek atau penyelidikan. Gaya dan penampilan penulisan cadangan mestilah mudah dibaca dan difahami oleh audiens agar isu atau cadangan yang dikemukakan relevan dan logik untuk dilaksanakan.

B. Penulisan Memo


Penulisan memo adalah bertujuan menyebarkan maklumat secara lebih mudah tetapi ia mempunyai formatnya yang tersendiri. Berikut merupakan aspek penting yang terkandung dalam format penulisan memo;


2. Bahagian kedua mengandungi maklumat mengenai diri penulis dan jawatan yang disandang. Masukkan alamat organisasi di bawah nama sekiranya penulis daripada organisasi yang berbeza, jika tidak memadailah dengan menulis...
nama jabatan sahaja. Sekiranya memo ditulis di atas kertas berkepala surat atau
letterhead, alamat organisasi tidak diperlukan.

3. Sekiranya memo dihantar dengan mesin faksimili, anda mestilah menulis
nama terlebih dahulu dan diikuti dengan nombor telefon dan akhir sekali nombor
faks. Nombor faks diletakkan di belakang sekali bagi memudahkan pihak
penerima (surat faks biasanya diterima oleh pembantu pejabat) yang kemudianya
menyerahkan kepada penerima sebenar memo berkenaan. Nombor telefon
penerima perlu dimasukkan kerana terdapat sesetengah jabatan dalam organisasi
yang berkongsi mesin faksimili.

4. Masukkan tarikh mengikut urutannya iaitu hari, bulan dan tahun. Terdapat
juga organisasi yang mengubah urutan ini iaitu kepada bulan, tarikh dan tahun.
Sebagai seorang pengamal komunikasi korporat atau PR, mereka mestilah peka
dengan perkara tersebut dan dapat mengenalpasti amalan yang biasa dilakukan.
Begitu juga dengan penulisan tarikh dengan menggunakan tulisan Roman.

Panggilan perhatian contohnya kepada, daripada, dan perkara merupakan
aspek yang juga dianggap penting dalam penulisan memo. Dari segi penggunaan
bentuk huruf, penulis boleh membuat pilihan sendiri, iaitu sama ada untuk
menggunakan huruf besar atau sebaliknya.

Jarak ruang selepas perkara dan bahagian badan memo mestilah diselang
iga hingga empat baris. Pada bahagian bahagian badan memo akan dimasukkan
teks mesj. Penulisan teks adalah ringkas, lebih pendek dan padat berbanding
dengan penulisan surat.

C. Tujuan dan Kandungan Memo
Memo dicipta dan ditulis bagi tujuan untuk berkommunikasi secara senyap dan
denyampaian maklumat adalah cepat, iaitu disampaikan kepada penerima secara
hantaran tangan. Kandungan memo berfungsi untuk memberitahu, mempengaruhi
dan mengarahkan seseorang untuk melaksanakan sesuatu tugas atau kerja.
Amalan yang biasa menunjukkan bahawa memo bergerak dari atas ke bawah
ataupun secara mendatar. Amalan penulisan memo secara dari atas ke bawah melibatkan amalan komunikasi menurun. Sementara memo yang bergerak secara mendatar pula melibatkan pergerakan memo di kalangan penyampai dan penerima dalam kategori atau status jawatan yang sama.

Penulisan memo yang mudah adalah mengandungi maklumat 5W/H, iaitu apa, bila, siapa, di mana, mengapa dan bagaimana. Apa merujuk kepada perkara. Bila merujuk kepada tarikh memo dikirimkan dan tarikh untuk penerima bertindak terhadap perkara yang dinyatakan. Siapa merujuk kepada penerima atau pengirim memo tersebut. Di mana merujuk kepada unit atau bahagian dalam organisasi, pengirim dan penerima bekerja. Mengapa merujuk kepada kepentingan penerima melakukan perkara yang dinyatakan di dalam memo. Sementara bagaimana pula merujuk kepada kaedah pelaksanaan perkara yang dinyatakan dalam memo. Perlu diketahui bahawa tidak semua memo mempunyai kesemua unsur 5W/H ini, kerana kehadiran unsur tersebut adalah bergantung kepada jenis memo yang ditulis.

D. Jenis-Jenis Memo
Terdapat enam jenis memo yang biasa ditulis atau disediakan oleh sesebuah organisasi, khususnya organisasi korporat. Keenam-enam jenis itu ialah;

2. Memo esei. Memo esei mengandungi maklumat yang dapat memberikan penjelasan kepada penerima berbanding memo buletin. Kandungan memo tersebut boleh digunakan untuk tujuan perbincangan secara yang lebih terperinci. Kandungan memo berfokus kepada dasar dan falsafah pengurusan sehingga...
kepada arahan-arahan am kepada kakitangan, seperti mengemas bilik rehat selepas digunakan dan juga arahan kerja lebih masa. Gaya penulisan adalah dalam bentuk penyampaian lisan, iaitu menggunakan bahasa pertuturan sehari.

3. **Memo maklumat.** Memo maklumat selalunya lebih terperinci dan penulisannya lebih lengkap. Ia mengandungi maklumat mengenai keputusan yang diambil atau ditentukan oleh pengurusan. Hasil keputusan tersebut seringkali memberikan implikasi ke atas dasar organisasi dan juga program atau projek organisasi pada masa akan datang. Penulisan memo jenis tersebut adalah bersifat rasmi dan memerlukan perhatian yang menyeluruh di kalangan penerima.

4. **Memo Tindakan.** Memo tindakan menerangkan tentang tindakan atau rancangan yang akan dilakukan. Ianya berkaitan dengan tindakan terhadap masalah yang sedang dan akan dihadapi. Memo tindakan mempunyai ruang untuk ditandatangani oleh penerima sebagai tanda persetujuan atau pun sebaliknya terhadap perkara atau kandungan mesej memo berkenaan. Memo tindakan mengandungi unsur paksan dan juga pembuhaftakan, kerana pihak penerima perlu bersetuju ataupun sebaliknya, dan perlu memberikan jawapan dengan kadar yang segera. Edaran memo tindakan pada kebiasaannya dilakukan secara edaran tangan oleh pembantu pejabat dan diserah daripada seorang penerima kepada seorang penerima yang lain.

5. **Memo ringkasan.** Secara asasnya memo ringkasan merupakan memo yang ditulis dalam bentuk perjelaskan ringkas. Walaupun ringkas, penerima masih dapat memahami kandungan kerana isi utama mesej adalah dijelaskan dan kerangka ringkasan berkenaan. Kandungan memo kebanyakannya tertumpu kepada hasil perbincangan dan tindakan yang dikumpulkan daripada mesyuarat. Memo tersebut ditulis bertujuan untuk menilai proses atau kemajuan sesuatu rancangan. Maklumat terhadap memo tersebut adalah bertujuan untuk pengumpulan maklumat mengenai respons penerima memo dalam masa yang terbatas tentang
perkara susulan yang sewajarnya dilakukan oleh organisasi. Pergerakan memo pada umumnya adalah secara mendatar.


E. **Kaedah Penyampaian Memo Yang Berkesan**
Antara teknik penyampaian dan penulisan memo yang berkesan ialah dengan;

1. **Memo yang baik mestilah menyebutkan nama penerima.** Walaupun memo dihantar kepada ahli organisasi yang terpilih berdasarkan status jawatan (khususnya memo mengenai urusan pengurusan dan pentadbiran), namun nama penerima perlu ditulis supaya penulis dapat memperibadikan (personalized) keadaan memo berkenaan. Selain nama, jawatan dan alamat penerima perlu juga dimasukkan. Amalan biasa yang dilakukan ialah apabila sesuatu memo dihantar kepada beberapa penerima, maka kesemua nama penerima tersebut akan ditulis pada memo berkenaan berdasarkan susunan nama, sama ada mengikut abjad atau penerbitan kesenian mereka.

   Setiap penerima akan menerima salinan memo yang mengandungi senarai nama penerima tersebut dan sifatnya dianggap terlalu formal. Kebaikan memo yang mempunyai senarai nama penerima ialah adanya rasa bertanggungjawab di kalangan penerima kerana semua penerima akan menyiapkan diri atau membuat-
persediaan untuk merespons atau terpaksa merespons, kerana wujudnya rasa "diperhatikan" oleh penerima-penerima yang lain dalam situasi formal.

Walau bagaimanapun untuk mengurangkan formaliti tersebut, maka adalah lebih wajar setiap penerima dihantar dengan memo yang mengandungi hanya nama penerima sahaja dan bukannya secara bersenarai, sama seperti yang biasa diamalkan, seperti surat panggilan mesyuarat atau selainnya. Bagi penerima memo yang bertanggungjawab, soal semua nama penerima disenaraikan atau tidak, sama sekali tidak menjelaskan penglibatan mereka untuk merespons mesej memo yang diterima. Tetapi secara psikologinya, penerima akan merasa lebih selesa sekiranya memo yang diterima itu hanya mengandungi nama penerima secara bersendirian.

2. Jika jumlah penerima memo adalah ramai dan kesemuanya merupakan ahli organisasi, maka cara yang terbaik untuk dilakukan ialah hanya dengan meletakkan memo tersebut di papan kenyataan yang strategik atau memanghantarnya kepada ketua/penyelia kumpulan untuk seterusnya diedarkan kepada setiap orang. Dalam situasi pengurusan sekarang yang berusaha untuk mengurangkan penggunaan kertas, maka penyelesaian yang terbaik ialah dengan meletakkan memo berkenaan di papan kenyataan. Bagai memo yang diletakkan di papan kenyataan, beberapa perkara perlu diambil dalam penyediaan memo berkenaan, antaranya;
   a. Memo perlu disediakan dalam format poster.
   b. Unsur grafik dan visual yang menarik perlu dimasukkan.
   c. Penggunaan jenis dan saiz fon yang sesuai.
   d. Sasaran memo perlu diulih ditulis dengan jelas dan mudah dibaca.

F. Kebaikan Penghantaran Memo menggunakan Mel-Elektronik
Dalam alaf baru ini penggunaan mel-elektronik merupakan satu perkara yang dianggap perlu dan mesti. Pengurusan moden berusaha untuk memastikan segala-galanya terurus dengan betul dalam masa yang singkat dan pantas. Keadaan ini berlaku kerana perubahan persekitaran dari segi politik, ekonomi, sosial dan
teknologi yang berlaku begitu deras dan perlu diikuti atau disertai oleh setiap pengurus. Jika tidak pengurusan organisasi akan ketinggalan. Oleh itu dilihat bahawa terdapat banyak kebaikan penggunaan internet, khususnya mel-elektronik dalam pengurusan moden. Dengan melihat bahawa kebaikan melebihi beberapa kekurangan, berikut disenaraikan kebaikan-kebaikan penghantaran memo melalui mel-elektronik:

1. Menjimatkan masa dari segi penghantaran mesej dan maklumbalas.
2. Wujudnya proses interaktif dua-hala.
3. Respons boleh dihanter secara terus tanpa melibatkan aspek inferioriti, yang mungkin wujud semasa bersemuka.
4. Masa penghantaran tidak terhad dan boleh dilakukan pada sebarang waktu.
5. Maklumat lebih pelbagai dan tidak terhad kepada teks sahaja malah grafik juga boleh dimuatkan.
6. Maklumat boleh disampaikan dengan cepat tanpa halangan geografi dan sebagainya.

Umumnya, penghantaran memo yang melibatkan penggunaan mel-elektronik adalah sangat mudah kerana apa yang perlu dilakukan oleh penghantar, ialah hanya melampirkan atau membuat attachment memo yang telah diformat dalam mel-elektronik yang ditulis. Masalah utama yang mungkin timbul hanyalah jika penerima tidak mempunyai kemudahan internet atau pun terdapat gangguan teknikal terhadap hardware atau software yang berkaitan.

G. Surat Perniagaan.

Surat masih dianggap sebagai alat yang penting dalam mewujudkan sesuatu perhubungan. Walau bagaimanapun, masalah utama yang dihadapi oleh ramai pengurus atau pentadbir ialah bagaimana hendak menulis surat yang berkesan. Selain itu terdapat juga masalah dimana maklumat terlampau banyak dan penulis surat terpaksa dilakukan dengan panjang lebar hingga menyulitkan penyediaan dan juga menyukarkan pembaca. Dalam situasi, di mana maklumat terlalu banyak, adalah dicadangkan supaya penulisannya tidak dilakukan secara
surat, tetapi dengan menggunakan kaedah penulisan laporan dan surat hanya berfungsi sebagai cover letter yang diiringi dengan laporan. Amalan penulisan surat dalam pengurusan sebahagian korporat adalah dilakukan menggunakan pendekatan atau format surat perniagaan. Secara umumnya surat perniagaan mengandungi enam bahagian penting, iaitu:

1. **Kepala surat.** Bahagian tersebut terbahagi kepada dua iaitu identiti penghantar dan juga maklumat surat yang mengandungi tarikh, dan nama, gelaran serta alamat penerima. Bahagian identiti penghantar merupakan maklumat yang terkandung dalam kepala surat (letterhead). Penghantaran surat perluah mengandungi dua bahagian tersebut, walaupun penghantar mengenali penerima secara peribadi atau sebagai kawan karib. Sifat utama sesuatu surat ialah "rasmi".

2. **Panggilan hormat.** Baghagian tersebut merupakan bahagian penting untuk mewujudkan hubungan yang safatnya rasmi. Penerima perlu dihormati dan panggilan hormat tersebut perlu ditulis sesuai dengan jawatan yang disandang oleh penerima. Umumnya, surat yang ditulis dalam Bahasa Melayu menggunakan panggilan hormat Tuan, untuk setiap surat yang dikirim oleh penghantar kepada penerima. Panggilan Tuan adalah dirujuk kepada jawatan yang disandang dan bukannya berdasarkan jantina penerima.


Sebaliknya jika panggilan hormat berkenaan disebut sebagai Semua Wanita Yang Budiman, Para Gadis Yang Dihormati dan selainnya, maka panggilan tersebut sebenarnya telah mewujudkan satu diskriminasi jantina dan mengakibatkan surat tersebut tidak mendapat perhatian, khususnya di kalangan
jantina yang bertentangan dan boleh mengakibatkan masalah. Antara masalah yang timbul ialah;

a. Kerjasama atau sokongan dari kumpulan jantina yang tidak dipanggil hormat sukar diperolehi.

b. Proses publisiti terbatas kepada penerima dari satu kelompok jantina sahaja.

c. Wujud persepsi buruk terhadap organisasi yang menghantar atau mengirim surat berkenaan.

2. **Badan atau isi surat.** Pada bahagian badan atau isi surat, ayat yang digunakan adalah bergantung kepada status sasaran. Umumnya ayat yang digunakan sifatnya adalah rasmi dan saling menghormati antara pengirim dan penerima. Jika penerima surat adalah individu yang mempunyai hubungan rapat dengan pengirim, maka ayat yang digunakan perlu dalam situasi yang menggambarkan keakraban, tetapi sifatnya rasmi. Sekiranya individu berkenaan tidak dikenali maka sewajarnya nada ayat adalah rasmi dan berupaya mewujudkan atau memulakan hubungan. Panggilan-panggilan hormat perlu dimasukkan dalam bahagian badan atau isi, bagi menggambarkan bahawa penghormatan yang tinggi diberikan kepada penerima.


4. **Tandatangan.** Bahagian tersebut perlu ditulis atau ditandatangani menggunakan pen. Warna dakwat yang biasa digunakan adalah berwarna hitam. Di bawah tandatangan perlu ditulis nama pengirim dan juga jawatan pengirim. Nama jawatan tidak perlu ditulis sekiranya jawatan pengirim telah ditulis pada
6. **Perkara rujukan.** Bahagian surat tersebut perlu dimasukkan maklumat dalam bentuk simbol atau huruf ringkas untuk menggambarkan beberapa elemen, seperti:

a. **Maklumat penandatangan surat dan penaiq surat.** Contohnya, jika penandatangan surat ialah Hashimah Hashim dan jurutaip surat pula ialah Joyce Lim, maka maklumat rujukan adalah sebagai HH/jl atau HH/jl (HH untuk Hashimah Hashim dan jl untuk Joyce Lim). Elemen tersebut diperlukan bagi mewujudkan perakuan kepada kewibawaan kandungan surat dan juga rasa tanggungjawab mereka yang terlibat dalam penyediaan dan pengiriman surat. Andaikan jika surat berkenaan tidak ditandatangani dan juga tidak diperlihatkan perakuan mereka oleh jurutaip dan penandatangan. Tentunya penerima merasa curiga dan tidak memberikan respons yang sewajarnya.

b. **Maklumat mengenai lampiran yang terkandung bersama-sama surat yang dikirim.** Maklumat tersebut biasanya ditulis sebagai Lampiran (...) dalam Bahasa Melayu dan singkatan Enc. (...) atau enclosure dalam Bahasa Inggeris.

c. **Maklumat mengenai penerima salinan surat selain daripada penerima utama yang disebut dalam bahagian kepala surat.** Huruf ringkas yang biasa digunakan ialah s.k. (dalam Bahasa Melayu) dan C: (dalam Bahasa Inggeris). s.k. adalah singkatan untuk salinan kepada, sementara C pula adalah (copy/copies to).

d. **Maklumat kepada penerima lain yang hanya diketahui oleh pengirim.** Dalam Bahasa Inggeris huruf ringkas yang digunakan ialah bc yang dirujuk sebagai blind copy. Penerima blind copy hanya diketahui oleh pengirim sahaja, tetapi tidak diketahui oleh penerima atau penerima-penerima salinan lain. Huruf ringkas bc hanya terutul pada surat milik pengirim sahaja. Umumnya tujuan penggunaan huruf ringkas bc adalah untuk memaklumkan penerima blind copy.
mengenai kandungan surat sebagai suatu maklumat, khususnya jika kandungan surat berkenaan mempunyai kepentingan dengan penerima *blind copy* tersebut. Jumlah penerima *blind copy* pada kebiasaannya adalah seorang individu sahaja.

H. Jenis-jenis Surat

Dalam penulisan perhubungan awam, surat ditulis dan dikirim berdasarkan tujuan atau matlamat mesej surat berkenaan. Berdasarkan tujuan inilah, penjenisan surat dibuat. Ringkasnya terdapat enam jenis surat iaitu:


Selain itu surat tersebut juga akan turut memaklumkan penerima mengenai senarai bahan bertulis yang turut dihantar kepada penerima sebagai kaedah untuk menguatkan hujah mesej pembujukan yang terkandung dalam surat. Contoh terbaik surat jenis ini ialah surat yang dikirim oleh agensi pengeluar kad diskaun kepada para pelanggannya. Surat daripada agensi kad diskaun tersebut akan mengandungi aspek promosi dan mencuba membujuk pelanggan atau penerima supaya merespons secara positif. Selain itu, surat berkenaan juga akan menyenaraikan maklumat mengenai organisasi atau syarikat perniagaan yang menyertai aktiviti promosi penggunaan kad diskaun berkenaan.


6. Surat respons atau penghargaan. Bagi pengamal perniagaan dan juga pengamal perhubungan awam, setiap pelanggan perlu dihargai. Kaedah yang terbaik yang boleh dilakukan oleh organisasi atau syarikat untuk menghargai pelanggan ialah dengan menulis surat kepada pelanggan dan memberikan penghargaan kepada mereka di atas segala kerjasama dan juga sokongan yang
telah mereka berikan. Surat penghargaan dan ucapan terima kasih tersebut boleh ditulis kepada setiap individu pelanggan ataupun ditulis secara umum dan diterbitkan melalui media cetak seperti akhbar dan juga majalah. Surat respons adalah ringkas kandungannya dan biasanya hanya satu muka surat sahaja.

I. Laporan dan Kertas Cadangan.

1. **Surat.** Surat iringan atau surat transmital untuk sesuatu laporan dan/atau kertas cadangan mempunyai beberapa fungsi atau tujuan. Antara fungsi surat berkenaan ialah;

   a. Surat iringan ditujukan kepada pembaca laporan/kertas cadangan yang mengandungi maklumat mengenai isi laporan/kertas cadangan, nama-nama penyelidik dan juga mereka yang terlibat sama ada secara langsung atau tidak langsung dengan pelaksanaan penyelidikan dan penulisan laporan/kertas cadangan berkenaan. Selain itu maklumat ringkas hasil penyelidikan dan cadangan yang dikemukakan turut dimasukkan.

   b. Surat transmital bagi tujuan pengesahan mengenai seseorang atau sekumpulan orang yang dimandatkan untuk menjalankan penyelidikan atau kajian. Seterusnya individu atau kumpulan penyelidik tersebu juga dimandatkan untuk menulis laporan/kertas cadangan yang berkenaan.
2. **Pengenalan atau hadapan.** Bahagian pengenalan sesuatu laporan mengandungi kulit luar, isi kandungan dan senarai jadual atau rajah yang terdapat dalam laporan/kertas cadangan. Halaman maklumat tersebut perlu ditulis menggunakan nombor Roman kecil (i, ii, iii, iv dan seterusnya). Muka surat kulit luar dianggap sebagai muka surat pertama dan penulisan nombor Roman kecil tidak diperlukan untuk muka surat tersebut. Muka surat kedua dan seterusnya perluah ditulis dengan nombor Roman kecil berkenaan.


Bahagian badan atau isi laporan/kertas cadangan pula perlu menjelaskan hasil penyelidikan berkenaan selepas diberikan tafsiran secara yang menyeluruh. Penjelasan adalah menggunakan penerangan mudah yang disokong menggunakan unsur visual yang relevan. Sekiranya terdapat maklumat atau unsur ilustrasi yang kompleks, maka maklumat kompleks tersebut akan dimasukkan ke dalam bahagian terakhir laporan/kertas cadangan, iaitu bahagian lampiran.
Bahagian rumusan pula akan menjelaskan secar ringkas hasil kajian dan juga cadangan-cadangan yang dikemukakan, khususnya bagi menyokong dan memastikan pengukuhan terhadap penyelidikan berkaitan topik yang sama pada masa akan datang.

5. **Rujukan.** Bahagian rujukan mengenai sumber maklumat untuk menyokong perbincangan atau hujah dalam penulisan laporan/kertas cadangan perluah dikemukakan. Segala rujukan yang dikemukakan akan membantu pengukuran kewibawaan hasil laporan/kertas cadangan. Maklumat lengkap sesuatu sumber yang dirujuk, seperti buku, jurnal dan bahan-bahan bertulis lain perluah diulas dengan lengkap berdasarkan format yang piawai dan konsisten.

6. **Lampiran.** Bahagian lampiran mengandungi maklumat tambahan bagi menyokong hujah atau perbincangan yang terdapat dalam laporan/kertas cadangan. Lampiran yang biasa dikemukakan adalah maklumat yang menyeluruh dan kadangkala kompleks jika dikemukakan dalam bahagian badan laporan/kertas cadangan. Maklumat dalam lampiran biasanya dikemukakan secara grafik dan visual, seperti graf, carta, rajah, gambar, dan selainnya.

**J. Kesimpulan**

Secara umumnya, kesemua hasil penulisan yang dikemukakan dalam bentuk memo, surat perniagaan, laporan dan kertas cadangan adalah mempunyai pembaca atau audiens yang terpilih. Selain dari jenis penulisan tersebut, jenis penulisan yang juga mempunyai pembaca yang terpilih, ialah kertas latar dan kertas rujukan/posisi (backgrounders and position papers). Dalam bahasa mudah di kalangan orang kebanyakan, kedua-dua kertas tersebut dikeyani sebagai kertas putih. Penulis telah terlebih dahulu mengenali pembaca atau audiensnya. Oleh kerana itu dari segi perancangan penulisan, sewajarnya seseorang penulis perhubungan awam dapat menyediakan segala maklumat yang berkaitan dengan jenis penulisan dan juga sasaran pembaca yang mereka pilih. Soal, kandungan
hasil penulisan tidak difahami atau disukai oleh pembaca, sewajarnya tidak timbul sama sekali.

Bahan Pembelajaran Tambahan

1. *Memos and Letters, Reports and Proposals* (m.s.115)
2. *Backgrounders and Position Papers* (m.s.159)

Latihan

Bagi menguakahkan kefahaman, anda adalah digalakkan untuk mencuba semua latihan yang terdapat pada bahagian akhir setiap bahan pembelajaran tambahan yang dilampirkan.
Memos and Letters, Reports and Proposals

A questionnaire from an accrediting group asked how many "business writing" classes students at the targeted universities were required to take. Some universities don't formally offer any such courses. That doesn't mean, however, that the kind of writing needed to transact and maintain "business" relationships is not being taught. It is. This chapter is about the kind of writing that creates and maintains some of an organization's most important relationships.

Because this writing is so critical to an organization, it's rather astonishing how little attention is given in college courses to the business writing tasks themselves, especially memos and letters.

About a week into an internship a student came to complain about "all that clerical work" she was doing. What she was describing as "clerical work" was writing memos and letters. When asked who signed these memos and letters, she replied, "my supervisor, the public relations director." And who would write them if you weren't there, she was asked. "My supervisor," she responded with a glimmer of recognition that much of public relations work is, in a sense, clerical, or at least business, not journalistic, writing.

Public relations professionals write lots of memos, letters, reports and proposals in their everyday routine office work. They may also write many such pieces for key officers in the organization, because these forms of writing frequently function to persuade in some way. The purpose of this chapter is to give you some basic guidelines to follow when you must write in any of these forms.
**Memos**

The word *memo* is the short form of *memorandum*, meaning an informal reminder of something important that has occurred or will occur. Memos are generally used to communicate within the firm. They should seldom be used to communicate with people outside the organization. Letters serve the latter purpose. An exception is the fax. Messages sent by facsimile are usually written in a memo format.

**Memo Formats**

A good memo disseminates information simply. It should begin with a guide to its contents, as in the following example:

September 7, 199x

To: John Gill, controller  
From: Susan McConnell, investor relations  
Subject: Planning conference for 199x annual report, September 14, 2 p.m. in the conference room

If the writer and receiver know each other, the memo style may be even less formal, containing neither last names nor titles. This is especially common when the memo is to someone in the same office or immediate area of operations.

When people have the same mailing address, it is unnecessary to use anything more than a departmental designation. Include addresses below the names if the addresses are different, such as different internal post office box numbers. Of course, if you are using letterhead, there’s no need to include your address below your name. If you don’t use letterhead or if you have memo-sized stationery that does not have phone numbers and addresses, include your address. The memo would then look like this:

September 7, 199x

To: John Gill, controller  
From: Susan McConnell, investor relations  
Subject: Planning conference for 199x annual report, September 14, 2 p.m. in the conference room

A variant of this format calls attention to the direction of the correspondence by using all caps for the “TO” and “FROM,” and some use “RE” for “regarding” instead of the word subject.
When you are sending the memo as a fax, you follow the names with the phone and then the fax numbers. There’s a practical reason for using the fax number last. Some fax operators only look at the last number when they get ready to transmit the message. The phone number of the recipient is included because some offices share a fax machine; the person responsible for collecting and distributing the faxes can contact the recipient when the fax arrives. In a large corporation, a department post office box or room number may be necessary to ensure delivery of the fax. The message now looks like this:

September 7, 199x

TO: John Gill, controller
    POB 311
    Phone: 741-3186, ext. 322
    FAX: 741-3111

FROM: Susan McConnell, investor relations
    POB 286
    Phone: 741-2651, ext. 434
    FAX: 741-5322

RE: (or SUBJECT:)
    Planning conference for 199x annual report, September 14, 2 p.m.
    in the conference room

Another element that may appear on memos when mailed or sent by fax is who is getting the communication, other than the person addressed. The old designation of “cc” stood for “carbon copy.” No one uses carbons now, so just use one “c,” either lowercase or a capital. This can go below the topic of the memo or at the end of the body of the memo. If it’s only one name, you may find it easier to put the “C. Jane Penney, CFO” (chief financial officer) below the topic. If a number of people are getting the message, but only for their information, put the names at the end of the body of the memo.

When you are sending the memo or fax message to a number of people, all of whom are supposed to act on it, you need to list them all in the “TO,” skipping spaces between each, but including their addresses and/or their phone and fax numbers. Your memo or fax could look like this:

TO: John Gill, controller
    POB 311
    Phone: 741-3186, ext. 322
    FAX: 741-3111

    Larry Miller, public relations
    POB 287
    Phone: 741-2654, ext. 343
    FAX: 741-2655
FROM: Susan McConnell, investor relations
POB 286
Phone: 741-2651, ext. 454
FAX: 741-5322

RE: Planning conference for 199x annual report, September 14, 2 p.m. in the conference room

C: Jane Penney, CPO

Many word processing programs include attractive preformatted memos and faxes, which include blanks for the essential information.

Body The body of a memo differs from the body of a letter by being shorter and by providing more visual cues, such as lists of numbered items.

Memos are designed to communicate salient information quickly and efficiently. Their tone ranges from formal to informal. Memos directed up the chain of command tend to be more formal, while those directed down the chain tend to be less formal. The least formal of all are memos that move between persons at the same level in the organization. Exceptions to these guidelines turn on personal relationships. For example, an account executive in a public relations firm would probably write a fairly formal memo to the president of the agency, unless the president happened to be a fishing partner.

Memos ordinarily have a limited audience. They are usually addressed to just one person or to a small group. At times, however, they may be directed to a large audience. For example, the president of the company may distribute a memo to all 600 employees simultaneously, stating that the firm has just recorded its highest annual profits ever. This information, of course, would also be appropriate in the company newsletter and in releases to the media, but the memo is often used to share important information quickly with all employees. Of course, e-mail may be used for this if all employees have access to it.

Visual Cues In addition to having an explanatory salutation, the memo usually contains a number of visual cues that help communicate important information quickly.

The most important stylistic characteristic is the use of common words, short sentences and brief paragraphs. The last is especially important, because a memo is typed single space with double spaces between paragraphs. Each paragraph represents a new, but related thought. In effect, each paragraph is a subsequent "take" in the thought processes that organize information related to the content and purpose of the memo.

Other visual cues, often not found in letters, are indented paragraphs (for emphasis), numbered items (to accent important matter), fragmented sentences (for emphasis, but be cautious about using these often), and lists of items (often in vertical format rather than serially in a paragraph).
Context  Memo writers tend to assume that, because the person addressed in the memo is a member of the team, he or she knows all the pertinent background information related to the topic at hand. This is often a mistake. If you want to be understood, provide clarifying information that makes what you say comprehensible, and leaves little room for misinterpretation. Do not, of course, provide superfluous information.

Establishing a context for your message is especially important if the memo is directed to persons with whom you do not work regularly. When in doubt, always provide appropriate background materials. These may not be needed, but it is better to be safe than sorry. (See Example 8.1 for what not to do.)

When you do provide background materials, you need to say so. The way you do that is to put at the bottom of the memo the word “Attachments:” or “Enclosures:” followed by a list of everything you are including. List the items vertically and use bullets so it’s easier to check them all. Sometimes not all of the enclosures make it into the envelope. The intended recipient needs to know what to expect.

The procedure is a bit different when you are sending a fax. You may need to use a cover page for the fax, which looks like the heading of the fax, but also tells the addressees how many pages to expect.

October 1, 199x

TO:  Alan Cooper  
Phone (313) 457-6733  
FAX (313) 457-6734

FROM:  Susan Foster  
Phone (623) 535-6354  
FAX (623) 535-7453

RE:  Art Work for St. Louis Hospital Brochure

Pages:  6 plus cover

Classifications of Memos

The tone and tempo of a memo depend on its purpose, style and audience. There are six general categories of memos: bulletin, essay, informative, action, summary and file.

Bulletin Memo  The bulletin memo usually possesses a sense of urgency. It is generally brief and may be somewhat terse in style. It is the telegram of the memo world. It always conveys a sense of immediacy. The bulletin memo gets its name from the bulletins that appear on the wire services notifying editors that something important has happened or is about to happen. Given the nature of its content, such a memo may wind up being posted on a bulletin board, even if it is addressed to just one person.
How to Make Sure No One Reads Your Memo


1. Hide the Message in a Block of Print

You want your reader to pick up your document, and put it down again.
You can get this block effect in several ways.

- Make the document as long as possible. You see how forbidding the one-page memo is. Imagine seeing two pages of it. Imagine them printed on both sides of one sheet.
- Make your paragraphs long. Think of three inches as a minimum length. Write everything single-space.
- Don't leave a blank space between paragraphs. Announce a new paragraph by indenting the first line 1/4 of an inch. Add as many modifiers as you need to make sure the last line in a paragraph extends to the right margin.
- Justify the right margin.

Do this and you'll produce a formidable document. It's one most readers will glance at and immediately set aside.

2. Make the Message Appear Difficult and Irrelevant

Your goal is to lose the reader's interest.

- Send the message "To: File" or "To: Distribution." This is a strong barrier. It tells readers that the document has no relevance to them personally. The longer the distribution list at the end, the clearer the message.
- Use the "Subject" announcement to turn off the reader. It should make your topic seem dull or complex. (The word "theory" is especially useful here.) There must be no hint that the topic has any immediate importance.
- People who read beyond the subject-heading are a threat. You have to stop them with the first sentence of the text. This sentence must contain 30–50 words. It will help if a dozen of these words separate the subject and the verb.

  The first sentence should discuss a single detail of the report. There must be no suggestion of a summary or a conclusion.

- Use the second sentence as a fail-safe device. Hopefully, no one will do more than glance at it. But that glance must show it says nothing about the purpose of the document.

  It's a good idea if the second sentence starts with a long dependent clause. Let it begin with "If" or "Although."

  Readers who go beyond the second sentence are intrepid and will be hard to stop. But they can be slowed down. You must take steps to frustrate them.
3. Make Individual Sentences Difficult to Read

Again, you should follow the example of the Fort Knox memo. It illustrates all the important techniques. Try them.

- Use a typeface that is hard to read.
  
  Write with a sans serif font. This is more difficult for many people to read. A good word-processing program will let you choose from a dozen or more fonts. Some of them are pretty bizarre.

  **WRITE IN ALL CAPS. THIS SLOW DOWN READING BY 10 PERCENT OR MORE.**

- Use 8-point type. The tiny print puts so many words on a crowded page that your reader, on finishing one line, will have difficulty seeing where the next line begins.

- Write crowded sentences.
  
  Use long, compound-complex sentences. Begin with a participial phrase 15 words long, and end with a "which" clause that is 20 words long. Insert one or two parenthetical sentences in every paragraph. Keep your subject some distance from your verb. Stay with the passive voice.

- Use vague jargon that turns off the reader. Rely on abstractions, words ending in "ness," "itty," "tion," "ence," "ship," and "ment." Avoid anything specific, like proper names or sums of money.

  Devise difficult words, like "condostral," and challenging phrases, like "quantum signification." Introduce obscure acronyms, like "B.O.A. optimization."

  Sprinkle the message with high-sounding cliches, like "pursuant," "in lieu of," "et al.," "parameter," "closure," and "prioritize." These have deadened reading for years.

- Confuse readers with an unusual division of words. This is a subtle tactic, but quietly effective.

  It bothers most people to see merged forms like "problem-solver" and "out-effective." They are thrown off by words unexpectedly separated, like "fore men" and "counter indicated." They will be frustrated by unusual hyphens, as in "bi-normal" and "diagnostic." And you can unseat them with slashed creations, like "enhance / monitor."

  Always justify your right margin. This leaves disturbing gaps between words throughout the text.

- Provide a dim copy. Make your readers work to recognize the words on the page.

By now you have the message. If you want your memo to remain unread, you can do wonders. You can offer a block of print, or introduce it with a deadly subject-heading, or write awkward sentences full of strange acronyms. You don't need to do this often.

*But you will see these forms every day.* You'll see reports crowded with pages, and pages crowded with words, and paragraphs crowded with tiny print. You'll see messages written in all-caps or in italics or in the Mos Eisley font. You'll see dot-matrix print too faint to read and dictographed memos which have faded into obscurity. You'll throw away some important announcement because the subject-heading read "Patterns of Supernumerary Clarification."

And all these documents come from people who genuinely want to be read. Somehow they never learned that effective writing takes more than facts, vocabulary, and prose style. It takes readability.
**Essay Memo**  An essay memo is usually a lot more descriptive than a bulletin memo. It is used for “let’s talk it over” material or situations. Its content may range from management philosophy to questions of how to get employees to clean up the coffee room after using it. The style is often conversational and flowing.

**Informative Memo**  The informative memo is usually a detailed descriptive piece of writing. An example might be a memo from the account executive to the account group and client. This memo might document actions taken and their results. Or it might recommend programs for the future and describe projected outcomes. The style and tone of these memos are usually fairly formal.

**Action Memo**  The action memo describes action taken or planned. Such memos, especially those dealing with future actions, often contain places for responses by recipients. For example, there might be a space for the receiver’s initials on a section to indicate that he or she accepts responsibility for the initiated action. Or in the case of a supervisor, the initials might indicate approval or disapproval of the planned action.

Action memos sometimes include an element of coercion. This may be the case, for instance, when the author of the memo does not assign or suggest responsibility but seeks volunteers to assume responsibility. Coercion is at work when the implication of the memo is, “If you don’t select an area of responsibility, one will be assigned to you.” If you’re alert to this message, you’ll quickly “volunteer” for the area of action that you will do best and enjoy most. Why sit back and wait for an assignment you will neither handle well nor enjoy doing?

**Summary Memo**  A summary memo is basically a detailed descriptive memo in essay or outline form. Discussions and actions are collected under appropriate topical headings to facilitate progress during a meeting. The summary memo is frequently used, too, in evaluating the progress of a program. In this case, it reflects an accumulation of information over time and often explains actions taken or planned.

**File Memo**  As its name implies, a file memo is addressed to the file—not to another person. It simply records information and is stored in the file for reference. Memos of this type are used extensively when the program being planned is complex, when many people are involved in some ongoing action or program, or when sharp divisions in points of view arise as to how or whether something should be done. In style and tone, it may be terse, almost cryptic. The purpose, remember, is merely to record information for internal use.

In a sense, a file memo is like a diary. It records names, dates, places and points of information. If serious debate arises over how or whether something should be done, the file memo should identify persons with their respective points of view, even including verbatim accounts as necessary.
Factors Affecting the Use of Memos

Memos should be personalized. Involve the recipient with your memo by emphasizing "you." This is not only a pleasant way to write, it is also effective.

The way your memo is distributed may affect the attention it receives. One common way to disseminate a memo, other than making several copies of it, is to route it among the people who should read it. A routing slip is attached and the memo is passed from one person to the next. Each person initials the slip to indicate it has been read and then passes the memo on to the person whose name appears next on the list. Although routing is a common practice, it can be a problem if the content of the memo is timely. People tend to assign a lower priority to a message attached to a routing form than to a message addressed to them personally. Therefore, even if you save some paper and copying costs by routing memos, you may wind up paying a high price in lost opportunities.

Posting memos on a bulletin board is a common practice, but this can be even less effective than routing them. The company bulletin board is often filled with messages that remain unread by many people in the organization. If you intend your memo for posting, design it like a poster. Add graphics to gain attention, and treat the content like a bulletin to encourage easy, quick reading.

If your memo is to be distributed to a large number of people in the organization, you have several options. The best approach, of course, is to send the memo to each person by name, title and address. An alternative is to provide supervisors with stacks of copies and rely on them to pass a copy along to each employee. Many supervisors will be careful to distribute the information, but others will not, and communication breakdowns may result.

Some memos are best suited for special methods of distribution. For example, an announcement about changes in employee insurance coverage might better be stuffed into pay envelopes. You can count on employees opening their pay envelopes and seeing your memo. On the other hand, a memo about the company picnic might better be mailed to employees' homes, since you'll want spouses to know about the event, too.

The setting in which the memo is received may also influence its effectiveness. Obviously, the company picnic is a social event that involves the employee and spouse. Therefore, it is appropriate to send the memo announcing it to employees' home addresses. On the other hand, a memo calling a meeting of department heads should be sent to the recipients' respective offices, not to their homes. In general, if the memo is social, send it to the employee's home; if it is business, send it to the employee's work address.

One cautionary note about internal memos or memos intended only for sympathetic audiences: There is a better than average chance that outsiders are going to get hold of them. Remember not to say anything in them you would not want to see in a newspaper or in an opponent's publication. The president of the Sierra Club, Carl Pope, sent a memo to the heads of fellow environmental groups explaining
why the Sierra Club was changing its old message, “Every American has a right to a safe and healthy environment. Don’t let them take it away.” The new message—“Protect America’s environment . . . For our families . . . For our future”—was the result of some research summarized in the memo. The change and the rationale behind it became the subject of a humorous piece in the column “In the Loop” by Al Kamen of The Washington Post. He ended his piece about the Sierra Club with a jab at the public relations department: “All they need is Dan Quayle doing the promo.”

Electronic Mail: e-Mail

When business cards began carrying e-mail addresses, electronic mail clearly had become the preferred method of communication. It does have its problems, though, chief among which is that people don’t necessarily access their e-mail on a regular basis. How frequently they do usually depends on how important to them the messages there are likely to be.

When e-mail is part of an operation, the first thing people do when they arrive at their offices each weekday is to call up on their computers any mail meant for them. The design of most e-mail systems allows a person to send the same memo or letter to all workstations on the network or to selected stations on it.

People seem to pay more attention to e-mail messages and respond to them more quickly than to paper messages.

Interoffice or external postal systems can suffer from delays in delivery. But e-mail is instantaneous. This can be an enormous advantage when a major development—especially one that was not anticipated—begins to unfold. Speed counts and e-mail meets that need.

Time management can be enhanced by e-mail. If you are working and have a question for someone, you can send the query immediately (before you forget it) and that person can respond when convenient. Your question is logged in your mailbox or electronic notebook for reference. You can also leave messages for people when they are away from their desks—at meetings or on business trips or vacations. Then they can respond and you’ll get the message even if this time you’re the one who’s not available.

Within organizations e-mail systems are usually interactive—that is, two-way communication can occur. So a message may be superseded immediately by an exchange of information between senders and receivers. When they use interactive systems, people tend to feel they are listened to more carefully by their supervisors. And they can “talk back” without the risk of a face-to-face confrontation. Some organizations have yet to understand the benefit of this and use interactive e-mail only to communicate with other managers, reverting to less reliable, and less threatening, systems for employee feedback.
Emoticons—Spin-offs of the Smiley Face

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Portable or laptop computers have also increased the use of e-mail. Suppose you’re on deadline with a major writing task and you work at home until 3 A.M. to finish it. You write a short memo to the vice president for corporate communication explaining that, because you finished the project at 3 A.M., you won’t be in the office at your regular time. You transmit it and your copy to the office via modem and go to bed. When you awaken at 9 A.M., you call up e-mail at the office and find a message from the VP saying that the copy looks great and that you should sleep tight. The VP might even conclude that message with a symbol. (See Example 8.2.)

And e-mail systems make it possible for you to be an integral part of your organization even though you may be working at home or in an airport lounge on the other side of the world.

If you have an e-mail address in cyberspace, you can transmit pictures as well as text. Some systems can transmit color pictures and sound. The major systems within the Internet are CompuServe, Prodigy, and America Online. With the amount of international communication today, it’s useful to have an easily accessible address for instant communication.

Companies in crisis situations have found e-mail particularly useful because it allows for a timely interchange of information across not only geographic boundaries,
but also those that separate customers and investors from management and even employees from management and each other.

**Formats and Content**

The e-mail address is simple; all you need to do to respond to one is hit the reply button, type in your response and then hit "send." The problem is what you say and how you say it. The ease of this technology often works against clarity and accuracy. People tend to write "stream of consciousness" messages and send them unedited. The consequences can be mystifying to the recipients who are trying to figure out what you meant from what you sent. Other consequences, such as lawsuits, are more serious.

The spontaneity of the process often encourages intemperate remarks that can result in legal action. The system itself is regarded as a cross between a telephone message and a letter or interoffice memo, so it encourages people to put messages on the screen that they would never put on paper. The result has been some unpleasant legal battles over discrimination or sexual harassment, for example.

The ease of sending copies to multiple recipients also creates difficulties. While the method, used sparingly, can be useful in facilitating internal communication, managers complain that they get over 100 FTT messages a day, drowning out the real messages they need to attend to.

**Style**

Remember that while the message is electronic, the recipient is human and you need to imagine how that person is likely to respond to your message. Begin with an appropriate greeting, one that you might use in face-to-face conversation with that person or on the phone.

You need to be conversational in tone since this is a more spontaneous type of communication, but avoid words that might be acceptable if said but sound too harsh or inflammatory in print. They will be in print, on the screen, even if a hard copy isn't made.

Let the person know right away what the message is about so they can begin to follow your thought processes.

Make it easy to read by using simple words, short sentences and very brief paragraphs.

Let the recipient know what you expect from them. Use something like, "Please let me know about xyz." Or "I'll expect to hear from you this afternoon (or a time and date) about the following: 1. x; 2. y; 3. z." This allows them to respond perhaps immediately by saying something like, "Thanks for your message this morning. I can tell you now about x and y. Before I answer you about z, I need to make some phone calls. I'll get back to you (date and time). Good to hear from you."

Used the right way, e-mail can be a very satisfying means of communication. Excessive, inconsiderate or inappropriate use can elevate your bloodpressure considerably.
Letters

Letters still play a significant role in relationships. With the increasing use of memos, faxed messages and e-mail, letters tend to be longer. The problem is that some letter writers think that because they are going to the trouble to write a letter that it must be long. One solicitation letter from a university president to alumni was four full pages. Too long. As a rule, try to keep your letters to one page in a readable size of type. To give one-page letter writers more space, many letterhead designers put all of the addresses, including e-mail, phone and fax information in a single line along the bottom of the stationery. This also helps response rates.

Business Letter Format

The typical business letter has six parts: heading, salutation, body, close, signature and reference matter.

Heading The heading has two parts. The first is the identity of the sender. This material is usually printed on the letterhead. The second part is the date, plus the name, title and address of the recipient. The heading should always contain these elements, even when you know the person you are writing to quite well. Always document the sender and receiver completely and accurately.

Salutation In the salutation you address the person to whom you are writing. This might appear to be a simple proposition, but it can cause some problems if you are insensitive to your receiver.

Suppose you are writing a letter from your CEO to Doug Newsom, one of the co-authors of this text, seeking names of persons who might be used as public relations consultants. You might address Doug variously as “Dear Mr. Newsom,” “Dear Professor Newsom,” “Dear Dr. Newsom” or “Dear Doug.” The first salutation would be incorrect because Doug’s name is Douglas A. Newsom, but she goes by Doug. The second form would be acceptable, because she is a professor. The third form would be correct, too, because she does have an earned doctorate. The last form would be correct only if your CEO knows her personally. Two points are illustrated here: Avoid using a gender-specific title if you don’t know the person’s gender, and do not use a title if you don’t know that it is correct.

If you are writing a promotional letter to send to hundreds of clients, and it will not be personalized by name, use a salutation like “Dear Customer,” “Dear Client” or “Dear Colleague.” Even though these salutations are impersonal, they are better than ones that might be genuinely offensive.

Body The level of formality in the tone depends on the relationship between the writer and the recipient of the letter. If a personal relationship exists, the letter may have a casual salutation and a conversational tone. In general, the tone of the body will
be more formal if the letter is addressed to a person whose status is higher than that of the writer; it will be more informal if the writer's status is higher than the recipient's.

Close  The close of a business letter contains two elements. One is an urge to action (if that is the purpose of the letter) or an offer of further help. The other is a complimentary statement that appears above the signature. Most business letters close with a simple “Sincerely” above the signature block. Business letters between friends outside the firm sometime close with “Best regards,” “Cordially yours,” or simply “Cordially.” Letters between strangers are more likely to have a more formal close, such as “Respectfully yours” or “Respectfully.” Whatever the form used, only the first letter of the close is capitalized.

Signature  The name of the writer should always be typed; the handwritten signature will appear just above it. The signer's title should also be typed immediately below the name if the title is not printed on the letterhead.

When the recipient is a friend, the signer might inscribe only his or her first name. If little or no personal relationship exists between the writer and the receiver, however, the full signature is required.

Reference Matter  All business letters prepared by a person other than the sender should contain symbols below the signature block that look like this:

BCC

The capitalized letters are the initials of the writer and the small letters are the initials of the typist.

The next element in the reference material is a notation about enclosures, if any, that go with the letter. The notation reads like this:

Enc.: [name of enclosure]

This note serves both as a form of documentation by the sender of the message and a flag to the receiver that material is enclosed.

The third element in the reference material designates other people (if any) who are to receive a copy of the letter. The designation reads like this:

C: [name of persons who also receive copies]

You may use “bc,” which stands for “blind copy.” Use this when you want to share information with another without letting those who received official copies know about it. (The “bc,” of course, is typed on your copy only.)

Types of Letters

Public relations writers generally find themselves writing six types of letters: information, solicitation, promotion, transmittal, cover and response.
Information These letters inform. They let people know about an event that is coming up, a decision made or an action taken. A letter of recommendation for a person would also be of this type. They are straightforward and try to anticipate and respond to any questions the reader might have. While these letters might require an acknowledgment, they seldom require a response.

Solicitation Letters making any kind of request can be considered a solicitation. Nonprofit organizations often write letters asking for contributions or pledges of support of one kind or another. Politicians ask for your support and your vote. These letters should be careful to suggest some sort of reward, usually intrinsic, for that support. Letters from an environmental group may ask you to “Save the Rain Forest.” The question is “Why?” The letter will probably tell you that many of the new medicines that could save your life are being discovered in the rain forest.

Promotion Causes or events are promoted in letters that encourage your acceptance and participation. There should be an emotional appeal to the letter but also a specific call to action. By using subheadings, italics, boldface, underlining and indents, you can help the reader to spot these two important elements in your message.

Transmittal Use letters of transmittal when you are sending a number of materials to someone, like a client. The letter reminds the receiver of what is being sent and why. Sometimes it is appropriate to tell the person to call after receiving the materials, especially if there are any questions or concerns. This letter should have a paragraph that lists the contents, separating items with indented bullets, and with at least the titles in boldface. You want to make it easy for the person to look at the letter, see what should be included in the package and quickly determine if everything listed is indeed included.

Cover Some people confuse cover letters with letters of transmittal. The cover letter is a very brief note in letter format that simply tells the recipient what is being sent, why, and what the recipient might be interested in doing with it (see Example 8.3).

Response The most important form of response letter is the “Thank You.” You should thank people for doing or saying something to support you or your organization. It’s amazing how many people think to ask but forget to thank. You can build strong relationships by being gracious and thoughtful.

Responses can be intended for private or public use. Response letters are usually written to react to something that has occurred, which may be something said or written. The private response letters are written to individuals with the anticipation that the letter will not be made public. However, it's always possible that the recipient will make the letter public. Therefore, it's better to write all letters with the anticipation that the contents may be made public.

Some letters are written for public use, and often these are sent to news media to be published or broadcast. Some are written to correct or to put something in
Cover Letter

This cover letter from the Corporate Economic Research of the Americas, Inc., introduced a single-page, double-sided piece offering information and promoting the Research Center’s services. Source: Used with permission of CERS and William R. Rutherford.

CERS
Corporate Economic Research of the Americas, Inc.
Research Center
2375 West Northwest Highway, Suite 3225
Dallas, TX 75220
(214) 337-4625
William W. Rutherford
Co-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

February 15, 1996

Douglas Ann Newsom, Ph.D.
Professor
Texas Christian University
PO Box 32930
Fort Worth, TX 76129

Dear Dr. Newsom:

The opportunities that an alliance can create is currently getting the attention of many corporate leaders. Some companies are accomplishing many great things with them. Others have not been as fortunate and don’t see what the excitement is all about. I hope your experience falls into the first category.

Dr. Newsom, if you are contemplating entering into an alliance with another organization, I think you will find some valuable information in this month’s “Leadership Insights.”

Sincerely,

[Signature]

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LEADERSHIP INSIGHTS

"Alliances" – If they’re such a good idea, why aren’t we doing more of them?

Alliances are quite the craze right now. Everyone seems to be talking about them. This concept is exciting and the benefits are intriguing, but remarkably few have come to fruition. If they’re such a good idea, why aren’t we doing more of them?

One problem in many leaders’ heads is the term alliance. Its definition is vague. To most it means any association entered into for mutual benefit which can cover everything from a merger or joint venture to a purchasing, lease, or service contract.

Another problem is that alliances in the 1970s and 1980s had a history of not working well. They were usually long, costly, legal contracts put in place to control a large company’s vendors and suppliers. The way they were written precluded any efficiency or enhanced growth opportunities that might have resulted from the relationship. And companies often administered these agreements aggressively, exhausting much of the potential savings in trying to manage the other party’s actions to painstakingly catch them in a mistake.

Successful alliances today have four different objectives. One purpose is to gain a cost advantage by dramatically restructuring the total cost of a product, function, or service. Another is to considerably enhance a product’s delivery to the market. Either way, these resulting arrangements typically offer significant improvements to a company’s strategic, operational, and asset performance.

To achieve these advantages, existing supply chain relationships are being tied to new, far more efficient designs. What was once a complex, interwoven system is being divided up into small, more manageable parts. This new architecture will be the key to unlocking the full potential of these alliances. Companies that are able to implement this new approach will be rewarded with increased efficiency, lower costs, and greater flexibility. Those that don’t will find themselves at a disadvantage in this ever-changing landscape.

Alliances can be very threatening to employees, existing functions, and business units. What if someone else could sell, market, and distribute our product better than we do ourselves? What if another firm could more efficiently purchase, inventory, and service our needs? What if we were to remove some of our assets from our Balance Sheet resulting in strong improved ROA and ROCE performance?

An alliance, well thought through, can have a significant impact on financial performance. ROCE and ROA can be very misleading to our existing shareholders who are used to seeing these numbers as a measure of how well we are doing. An alliance has the potential to dramatically improve these metrics, but it is only effective if the right alliances are formed and managed effectively. It is crucial to have the support of all stakeholders, including employees, customers, and partners. By working together, we can achieve better results for all parties involved.

Leadership itself is often a stumbling point. We must become much more familiar with the benefits that can be achieved and grow our ability to effectively execute these benefits to our organizations. Only then can we help overcome the fear of doing something that is new and different.

The balance sheet of an alliance is a critical point to consider. Many alliances fail because of a lack of proper planning and execution. Understanding the financial implications of an alliance is essential to ensuring its success. By carefully analyzing the potential impact on the balance sheet, we can make informed decisions that will lead to long-term success and growth.

Microsoft

Rutherford Consulting

[continued]
Professional Services
Creative insights that enhance business results

Building Alliances – Identifying and Achieving the Benefits
Service Offering Examples:

Alliance Opportunity Identification — Through a series of workshops and private discussions, identify where alliance opportunities potentially exist within your business. Begin to understand the benefits that an alliance can bring to both your company and your alliance partners. A decision process item helps you determine which alliance alternatives to pursue through the next phase, Business Case Development.

Business Case Development — We will assist you in developing a business case for the alliances you are interested in pursuing, and architect the approach to be used in the Blueprinting phase. Structural and organizational drivers will be identified and a sensitivity analysis will be completed. Barriers to success will be determined and leadershps role defined. This step culminates with the determination of what alliance opportunities you choose to blueprint.

Blueprinting — Before you build a house, you would first architect it. A resulting design is then expressed through a blueprint, which defines how the new structure will be built, what its performance characteristics will be, and how it will fit into the surrounding environment.

The Blueprinting phase provides the same structure for your alliance candidate. It architected how it will work and who will do what, when, and how, in order to achieve the greatest potential benefit. It takes into account your past experiences and future desires. It provides you the opportunity to make a rational, fact-based, yet or no decision on your fully developed alliance opportunity. Your final decision is whether or not to go forward.

Phased Implementation — We can provide you with our professional assistance in implementing an alliance, in the proven practical way you expect.

For more information, please contact:

Ms. Elizabeth Alvarez (214) 739-9500
Assistant to the Chairman (214) 739-0430 Fax
Rutherford Consulting, Inc.
8609 Northwest Plaza Drive, Suite 410
Dallas, TX 75225

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perspective. Others are observations or comments. You can find these in newspaper and magazine "letters to the editor" columns and hear them on radio and on television, where a brief version of the contents often is scrolled for the viewer. The important point to remember about public letters is to be direct and concise. The editor of the medium is not going to give you much time or space. Think in terms of sound bytes even when you are writing for print.

Choose your words carefully, because the tone of the expression conveys both mood and character. Be persuasive in your choice, because you want to have an impact. You may be writing to change an opinion that a previous presentation in the media has created, or you may be attempting to correct an error that has been made by a medium. Be clear. These letters get a quick scan. You need to be sure your point is not missed.

Some broadcast media allow verbal responses to be called in to be taped. Write the response first. Read it into a tape recorder and play it back. You should say what you have to say in 15 seconds or maybe 20. No more. It won't be used if it isn't succinct. Try out your response on some others who are hearing it for the first time without seeing the written piece. Test for tone and clarity. Many public relations writers will have to get response letters cleared by multiple levels of management. You will have to be very persistent to prevent distortion of the message. Be cautious about using humor or sarcasm. These can be easily misunderstood or taken for arrogance.

Reports and Proposals

The requirements for organizing and writing reports and proposals are similar enough for both to be considered together. As used here, the terms report and proposal refer to extensive documents that are researched, written and presented much like a traditional scholarly research paper or the manuscript for a monograph or book.

In fact, if you must write a report or proposal of this type, the first thing you should do is get a copy of a style manual such as Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. A style manual will save you innumerable hours of research time by showing you, as you begin to research the project, what information you need to gather and how to credit it.

Organization of Reports and Proposals

After your research on the topic is completed, you are ready to begin to organize and write your report or proposal. This requires special skills and attention to details, because a finished project often has as many as seven major sections: letter, front matter, synopsis, body, references, bibliography and appendices.

Letter A letter of documentation should always accompany a report or a proposal. Sometimes a letter of transmittal should also be included if there are many enclosures.
A letter of documentation, sometimes called a cover letter, addresses the person or persons who will consider the report or proposal. It usually describes both the content of the report and the people who did the research, planning, writing and illustrating. The letter may close with a brief summary of findings or recommendations, and it may call attention to any conditions affecting adoption or rejection. Finally, it should indicate where the person who signed the letter can be located. A letter of documentation is sometimes made a part of the report, in which case it should be inserted immediately following the front matter.

A letter of transmittal is needed when a person or group has been authorized to write a report or proposal. It should seek to establish the credibility of the report or proposal. The letter should note who gave the authorization and when, as well as summarize results or recommendations. It may include a list of acknowledgments of special help or meritorious work by individuals who contributed to the project. Such a letter allows you to include information that may not belong in the body of the document but nonetheless provides additional insights into what is there.

Skillfully written letters of documentation and transmittal prepare readers of the document for what follows.

**Front Matter** The front matter in a report or proposal is organized in the same general way as the front matter of this book. It consists of a cover page, a table of contents and a list of tables, figures and illustrations. These pages are numbered serially with small Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, v and so on). Although the cover page is counted in this series of numbers, no number appears on the cover page.

**Synopsis** When a synopsis is used, it appears at the end of the front matter and before the body of the report or proposal. Usually only a page or two in length, it is a concisely written digest of the content of the document. Its purpose is to give the reader a clear picture of what is in the document. A synopsis is also known as an abstract or an executive summary (see Example 8.4). In the business world, executive summary is the term most often used, and you’ll be expected to use it when your employer asks you to write a report or proposal.

**Body** The body of the report or proposal follows the executive summary. It consists of three basic parts: introduction, body and conclusions.

The introduction should review the background of the problem being studied, the scope of the study, and the methods used in the study. It should also explain why the study is important, what special problems (if any) were encountered in the course of research and how these were resolved. The last point is especially important because it prepares the reader for any limitations of the study.

The body of the paper should be built around a single, simple statement. Called a thesis statement or hypothesis, it unifies the entire paper and helps you address the issue point by logical point. Develop each point and support it with pertinent facts. Use headings and subheadings to guide the reader through the body of the paper.
Sexual Harassment and America's Schools

The AAUW Educational Foundation underscores the importance of educational policies that promote a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. Sexual harassment is a pervasive issue in schools, affecting both boys and girls. Here are some key points:

1. Sexual harassment starts early: Girls report experiencing harassment as early as elementary school.
2. Girls experience more harassment: A survey found that girls experience harassment more frequently than boys.
3. Harassment can have lasting effects: Students who experience harassment may develop anxiety and depression.
4. Schools can do more: Implementing policies that discourage harassment and support victims is crucial.

Working together, the AAUW Educational Foundation and educators can create a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. For more information, visit AAUW.org.

AAUW Educational Foundation
1111 19th Street NW • Washington, D.C. 20036
Conclusions should follow naturally from any summary findings in the report or proposal. Sometimes recommendations will stem from your conclusions. Conclusions and recommendations should be stated clearly. This may take courage, because you may conclude or recommend something that your readers would prefer to ignore. Clarity is necessary because a report or proposal that invites many interpretations is not very useful to anyone.

**References** In a report or proposal of this type, you must properly cite the source of every piece of information that is not common knowledge to your audience. This means using footnotes or endnotes, with complete bibliographic citations, so anyone can locate and read the original materials. In this respect, proposals and reports are exactly like scholarly research papers.

In addition to supplying footnotes or endnotes, you must include a full bibliography. The bibliography, of course, includes all of the basic sources cited in the footnotes or endnotes, but it also includes sources you reviewed but did not specifically cite in the body of the paper. Thus, the bibliography identifies the full range of works you consulted, whether or not you eventually cited them.

**Appendixes** An appendix contains any charts, tables, illustrations, maps, copies of questionnaires and other exhibits that could not be woven into the body of the paper. As a general rule, the only items of this type that should appear in the body are simple tables and charts illustrating specific points. More complex material goes in the appendices. Be certain, however, that you interpret the complex materials sufficiently to make them understandable. Each appendix should be labeled separately—Appendix A, B and so on.

**Readability and Applicability**
A reader of your report or proposal should be able to conclude something from what you have written. Two factors will influence this outcome: readability and applicability.

**Readability** If your report or proposal is in a specialized field, your reader expects to see jargon common to that field used in your document. But this is not a license to use jargon without restraint. On the contrary, you should write in plain English with just enough jargon to establish your credibility with the reader (see Example 8.5).

Jargon invariably makes your writing more difficult to understand. Review the readability formulas in Appendix A. Try out Gunning’s fog index on some samples of writing in your report. Then go back and do some severe editing to make it clearer and easier to understand.

Unless you are an extraordinarily gifted and lucky writer, you will not be able to write a good report or proposal in the first draft. You will probably have to write the whole report at least twice. You may have to rewrite several times. In this sense, the art of good report and proposal writing is rewriting.
8.5

Research Report

This Hogg Foundation research report is a clearly written explanation of sophisticated research. Much of its mental health foundation's research is done with a mixture of public (government grants) and private (donations) funds. Source: Reprinted with permission of the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health.

MOTHER CARE:
A CAREER OPTION
FOR NOW

Louise Isowo
Diane Welch

© Hogg Foundation for Mental Health 1992
The University of Texas
Austin, Texas 78713-7998
INTRODUCTION

When we first broached the subject of a survey of mothers who have chosen to alter career plans to spend more time at home with their children, people's comments were consistent. "There aren't enough to bother with."

"Where will you find them?"

"What mothers at home?" But find them we did, and when we talked to these women about our proposed survey, we began to hear a different response. "That would be wonderful," they said. "We didn't think anyone cared." The more we listened, the louder the refrain.

Prompted in part by the fact that little data exist on these women and in part by a concern for today's families, the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at the University of Texas and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service (a part of the National Cooperative Extension Network) at Texas A&M University supported this work.

Some limitations of the survey should be noted. It was not intended to be representative of all mothers who primarily stay home with their children, nor was it intended to place a value on women's choice of lifestyle. Rather, the samples were drawn from a select subgroup of Texas women who have deliberately chosen to stay at home or were able to leave full-time employment to rear their youngsters, and this report reflects their status and their views.

For the respondents themselves and their counterparts, this document should be reassuring. Beyond that, it could be used to help other women who are contemplating work force/child care choices, as well as help mental health professionals recognize the feelings and needs of a significant segment of the population. It also might encourage employers and the child care industry to adopt more family friendly policies and practices, a necessary step if business and industry truly are concerned about keeping women in the work force.
As the 20th century draws to a close, at least one demographer sees a new century in which full-time homemakers will go the way of the dinosaur. But she also predicts that career paths will not be straight and unbroken. Rather, they will have side tracks in which both men and women can leave the main line to go to school or rear their children while working part time, returning to the main track when they are ready. This paper on Mother Care: A Career Option for Now, describes a number of today's mothers who are choosing this path and documents how they are making it work.

**MOTHERS PRIMARILY AT HOME: A SURVEY**

Who the Mothers Are

Major news magazines in recent years, among them Time, Business Week, and Newsweek, have featured cover stories and articles on families. Academic studies as well as the media have focused primarily on families at greatest risk—the poor, single parents, the dysfunctional, and on the divergent paths of motherhood, especially mothers in the workforce full time and the attendant need for better and more affordable child care and for child and family policies. Little information, however, has been collected on women who have chosen to leave the full-time work force or not join it for the present in order to have more time with their children.

To find out more about this population, an exploratory survey was conducted with support from the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health and the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, part of the National Cooperative Extension Network. Because there was no way to obtain a truly random sample of the target population, an availability sample was obtained through Texas Agricultural Extension Service county faculty in 14 regions serving 35 counties throughout the state.

Additional surveys were distributed through mothers-only groups selected randomly from the Yellow Pages in the directories of six Texas cities—Austin, Bryan/College Station, Fort Worth, Houston, Richardson, and Waco—as well as mothers' support groups.

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groups sponsored by two hospitals and one museum in Austin. A stamped, self-addressed envelope was enclosed with each survey.

A total of 993 surveys were distributed, 534 through the Extension Service and 459 through mothers' programs. Of these, 493 were completed and returned, 284 from the counties and 209 from the programs, for a return rate from each sample segment and from the survey as a whole of approximately 50 percent. In addition, 37 mothers were interviewed in depth either in person or by telephone, primarily in the Austin area.

Surveys were received from mothers in every part of the state and every type of community. Respondents were almost equally divided among large cities of more than 250,000 population, small to mid-sized cities of 10,000 to 250,000, and rural areas of less than 10,000. Apart from geographic diversity, however, the respondents showed more similarities than differences: a large majority were white (90 percent), married (97 percent), and 30 to 39 years old (64 percent). More than 90 percent had completed high school and many had continued their education, with 54 percent completing some college and 38 percent earning bachelor's degrees. An additional 9 percent had advanced degrees. Half of the respondents reported family incomes of more than $40,000 per year; almost 20 percent, $31,000 to $40,000. Only 10 percent listed annual incomes of $20,000 or less. Thus, a majority had the resources to leave the full-time work force, though according to the written and verbal comments it often was at some financial sacrifice.

More than 75 percent of the women had been employed previously, and their occupations covered a wide range. The largest number—about one out of four—were in service occupations, primarily teaching, nursing, and social work, followed by secretarial and other types of office work; sales, marketing, and public relations; and banking, insurance, and other businesses. The respondents included a small percentage of doctors, lawyers, architects, and engineers. Of the women previously and currently employed, about half considered their work as careers, half as jobs.

Following are the results of the survey, augmented by a sampling of the many notes written on the survey forms as well as by comments made by the mothers inter-
viewed. Together, they suggest the concerns, satisfactions, and suggestions of these mothers who have chosen to make the care of their children a primary job for now.

Making the Choice

Influences

Mothers who choose to stay home do so for their children. They want to be with them, to guide them, to care for them, and they don't want to delegate those duties to someone else.

That was the overwhelming consensus of the mothers surveyed, over 90 percent of whom cited their child or children as being the primary influence on their decision to stay out of the full-time work force. A number of women specified that their decisions were made jointly with their husbands, while others stated that their husbands were supportive but left the decision up to them. Only two respondents wrote that their husbands did not want them to be employed as long as the children were at home.

Other major influences were families and tradition. Some women stayed home because of memories, both good ones of their own mothers' being home and bad ones of "having being left home alone." A small number said that religious beliefs were a motivating factor, and a few had individual reasons such as a sick or handicapped child. Friends, colleagues, child care, and other potential sources of influence played little part in most parents' choices.

"It's my decision," wrote in several respondents. "It's where I want to be."

"We never discussed whether or not I would stay home with the children, nor did we ever assume it would be right for us. And it is. It meets our values and lifestyle."

Support

Ask any mother of infants and preschoolers and she'll tell you that being home with young children all day isn't easy. Especially in a time when society appears to place greater value on women in the work force, women who choose to stay home seek support for their decision.

Almost all of the mothers surveyed received strong support
from their husbands, and, as noted previously, almost all of the respondents were married. A majority also received support from their families and friends, and some listed their church or synagogue, mothers' clubs and play groups, and other stay-at-home moms. Few, however, received much support from their associates or former colleagues at work.

Reactions of friends and colleagues were mixed when mothers in the workforce opted to return home, ranging from easy to complete lack of understanding. A bookkeeper in Abilene with one toddler said several co-workers "wished they had the nerve or the finances to do what I was doing." But a nurse in Lubbock with two preschoolers said her colleagues "just couldn't understand, and they still can't."

"When someone asked me what I do all day, I told her, 'You pay someone to do things with your kids that I do with my own.'"

Older first-time mothers, especially if they had experienced satisfying careers, appeared less concerned about the opinions of their friends and colleagues. A graduate student in Austin summed it up this way:

"I'm at a good place in my life to have a child. I don't have to prove anything to myself or to others. I have confidence in myself. I'm where I want to be. As to finances, I'm used to not having any."

Other studies have reported similar views, pointing out that women who focused on developing themselves and their careers in their twenties were more likely to be ready to focus on their new infants in their thirties. They talked about getting a career "out of their system," of finding motherhood satisfying and fulfilling, of changing their priorities to "make every day count" not with their careers but with their children. And because they had worked, they often had the skills and experience that enabled them to find satisfactory part-time jobs and to manage the combination of caring for their children while participating to some degree in the work force.

Advantages and Disadvantages

The primary advantage of staying home, according to almost all of the mothers surveyed, is that it is good for the children. Beyond that, however, is the fact that these mothers consider it
good for themselves, good for their families, and that they believe they are "doing the right thing for now."

A number of mothers explained their reasons, mentioning greater influence on children's development, more loving care, less guilt feelings, healthier children, and a more stable family life. Lower costs also were mentioned, reflecting a common complaint that expenses of child care plus a working wardrobe can quickly swallow an average salary. But the greatest rewards can be difficult to explain.

"It's really hard to say how great it is to be here with the children. They eat home-cooked food, go to bed on time, do their lessons, and practice the piano on a regular basis. I'm here for them when they need me. I help them grow up with our values. Staying at home isn't easy. We never have enough money to go around and the kids do without lots of junk that other kids have, but our lives seem to be so much better than the lives of other people I talk to."

Disadvantages also were pointed out. The most frequently cited were that work never ends, difficulty keeping up professional skills and contacts, loneliness, and lack of status. Some found the lack of structure or routine a problem, especially at first. Lack of extra income was seen as a major disadvantage by only a few respondents but some disadvantage by about four out of ten. This in part would seem to reflect the relative affluence of the sample studied.

Many mothers commented on the lack of adult companionship and how they had overcome that problem. Said a dental assistant in Browywood:

"With my first child I felt isolated, and I missed my friends at work. I was lonely until I met other mothers in the public library and made friends on the block. You have to reach out; it works."

But the disadvantage of not being in the work force most frequently mentioned by respondents was lack of respect from society in general. "Some people assume that because I don't have a 'real' job I don't do anything," was a typical comment. An office manager in Denton put it this way:
"I would like to feel that I don’t have to apologize for my choice to rear my own children, that society could respect mothers who stay home not because it’s the only thing they know how to do but because they choose to do the most important—and also the hardest—job in the world."

Expectations and Regrets

For a large majority of the respondents, staying home with their children met or exceeded their expectations, and nine out of ten had no regrets about their choice. Some, however, voiced concerns or mentioned things that they would have done differently.

Several women pointed out that at first it was more difficult than they had expected and that it took time to adjust to a different lifestyle. Several noted that “it’s hard to keep your perspective, to remember your priorities, and to organize your time.” “It has worked out as I’d hoped and expected, as far as the kids go,” mentioned a school counselor in Midland. “But I wasn’t expecting an identity crisis. I like putting and doing domestic things, but in terms of who I was, that was a crisis.”

Ambivalence was a common theme. A number of mothers couldn’t help wondering what they might have achieved in a career or whether they could in time return to a good job. “It’d feel better,” said one, “if I didn’t think I had to forfeit a successful career to give my children the foundation they need.”

Several wished they had worked for a few more years, completed their education, or planned better financially before having children. Some raised their status and recognition in the work force: “I have regrets—fleeting ones—when people treat me as if I were too stupid to work so I just stayed home.” Others missed bringing home a paycheck, and a few feared that professional skills were becoming rusty. And some recognized individual differences. One respondent pointed out, “Some people can’t take kids all day. I have days like that, too, but only a few.”

In contrast, a number of respondents considered being a mother at home “the perfect job for now.”
"I loved my career for 19 years and now I love being a mother. Living on one paycheck is really difficult but the benefits of being home with my youngsters far outweigh the sacrifices. I have no complaints!"

Respondents’ Suggestions

The decision whether or not to leave the full-time work force to stay home with a new baby or growing preschooler must take many things into account: a mother’s wishes and dreams about both her infant and her career, a father’s concerns, family income, ideas and opinions about child raising, and personal and religious beliefs. For most, the choice is not easy. As one mother said,

"Many mothers are torn between work and home. People don’t realize this—and they don’t understand home choice."

The women surveyed and interviewed offered a variety of suggestions to help with that decision.

- Leave your options open. You don’t know how you will feel when the baby arrives.
- Make sure you and your spouse are together on your decision. Without the husband’s support, it is difficult for the mother as well as for the couple’s relationship.
- Talk to other mothers. Learn what they have gained and what they have given up to get an idea of the realities of motherhood at home.
- Develop financial plans. Recognize potential sacrifices as well as ways to scale down.
- Be comfortable with your decision, and let others be comfortable with theirs. A pharmacist with three youngsters noted that, “It’s hard work at home, but it’s also hard to have a job and take care of a family and home, as well. Those in debt often have no choice.”
- Expect feelings of ambivalence. Noted a former office manager in El Paso with two preschoolers: “Either way, you feel ambivalent. If you work, you wish you could be home; if you’re home, you think you’ll go nuts if you can’t work. There’s always that pull.” As Dana Friedman of New York’s Family and Work
Institute has pointed out, "few mothers are likely to be completely resolved about their decision to stay at home or to work outside the home."

Making the Choice Work Out

A majority of respondents had few regrets about the career choice they had made for now. They did have wishes, most of which might be echoed by women in the full-time work force—a little time off, having family nearby, help with household chores, more income, more time flexibility, and such traits as a positive attitude and a sense of humor.

Other wishes and suggestions grew out of their experiences at home.

Meeting other mothers. As one mother said, "Finding another mother who's at home for the same reasons you are makes all the difference." Suggestions for meeting other mothers included babysitting co-ops, mothers-day-out programs, library programs, and going to parks and playgrounds.

Approximately one-third of the respondents participated in mothers' support groups, and those who did had nothing but good to say about them. One might learn about them through friends, the baby's doctor, a prenatal group, or a bulletin board notice at a church or library. Some women start their own groups by talking to neighbors or running an ad in a neighborhood paper.

"Our prenatal exercise group continued as a new mothers' support group. It's been a lifesaver—and we still exercise some."

Respect from society. Lack of respect from society was a major problem noted by almost one out of every four respondents. As one woman commented, "I get tired of people ranking motherhood so low. We need credibility for making our families a priority and caring for our own children."

The media, especially television, were blamed for presenting negative images of mothers at home while glamorizing working women, and their potential for reversing these images was noted. A common theme was summed up in this suggestion: "Television and other media could help by presenting mothers who choose to..."
stay home as being as important and valuable as mothers who work for pay instead of making them out to be second-class. Fathers' help. More than half the respondents indicated that the fathers provide some help with the children; about one out of four help a lot. Some virtually take over child care when they get home, not merely playing with their children but also bathing them, handling the bedtime routine, and getting up with them at night when necessary. In addition, almost one out of three fathers helps some, but not a lot, with meal preparation, transportation, and grocery shopping.

On the other hand, more than half provide little or no help around the house except for yard and car care, which traditionally are viewed as men's chores. And the mothers weren't happy about this. That is in line with other studies which have shown that whether or not women were employed, they suffered less stress when their husbands shared equally in household tasks. They further pointed out that such sharing, though increasing, is rare. Parent education. Whatever their level of education or employment status, mothers generally acknowledge that they received no preparation for child rearing, and many would like to learn more about it. They want practical, "how to" information on physical and mental development, guiding children in developing values, understanding their children's needs as individuals, and preparing for discussing and handling the potential problems of teenagers. Frequently mentioned was a need for parent workshops and discussion groups, lectures, and printed information not only on parenting but also on such skills as budgeting and organizing.

Less materialism. Although the survey contained no questions about materialism, it was a concern expressed by a number of respondents. In interviews with middle class parents, Whitehead also found that materialism was viewed as a major problem in rearing children, not as an economic issue but as an issue of basic values. She reported that, "As these parents express it, they are losing the struggle to pass on their family values to their children--losing it to an aggressive and insidious consumer culture.""

"It's surprising how many material things we can do without and not really miss them. It's a matter of priorities."
WORK FORCE OPTIONS
AND REALITIES

Longer life spans, smaller families, and more education are creating options for today's mothers. So, too, is a business sector that is beginning to realize the need to reshape policies if it is to attract and retain women in the work force.

Stepping In, Stepping Out

For women who prefer to stay home full time with an infant or young child, "sequencing" is a word heard increasingly. This refers to having a succession of "careers" ranging, for example, from education to a profession to motherhood to a return to a former career or the start of a new one. This concept is not new, but it is not considered as often as might be expected.

A legal secretary in Austin commented that, "No one ever told me about 'stepping out' of a career. I did it for six years and now I've stepped back in. It worked for me." At least one study validates this comment: "The busiest of being out of the work force for a few years and never being able to get back in is very exaggerated for most jobs." Others question it, especially at top professional levels. Whether women or men can do so and achieve the level to which they aspire remains open to question.

One key to work force reentry at any level is maintaining skills, another is keeping in touch with others in the field. Continuing education is one approach.

"I take a special course periodically and attend workshops when they're given in this area so that I will have current training on any record."

Another is occasional employment.

"I have continued to do consulting work (in marketing). I can't rely on the income because I can't predict when I will have work, but it helps me keep current and I enjoy the change in routine."

One personnel consultant offers the following suggestions:
- Maintain several contacts in your field. This isn’t always easy—professional and baby schedules don’t mix well—but an occasional phone call or lunch can be enough to keep in touch.
- Get a letter of reference from your employer before you leave your position. Even though dated, it may help you obtain freelance work or reenter the work force.
- Do volunteer work in your specialty area. On a resume, this can show sustained interest and experience in your field.

**Employment Options**

**Part-time**

A majority of respondents both in and out of the work force see more advantages than disadvantages in part-time work. The surveys showed that income is considered the chief benefit, followed by stimulation, social contacts, and keeping up with one’s profession. Disadvantages cited were difficulty finding child care, time away from the children, extra costs such as child care, clothing, and transportation, and stress and exhaustion.

For many women who had been employed full time before having children, part-time work provides balance to their new lifestyle. Almost half of the women surveyed find it useful for keeping up with their professions. Others point out that it helps them break the intensity of child rearing, gets them out of the house and doing a different job, allows them to be home when older children return from school, and enables them to be, as one woman said, “a nicer mom and more sensitive to the children’s needs when I get away for a while to do my own thing.” Many might agree with a speech therapist in San Antonio who said, “I find working part time to be a perfect solution.”

It may be a perfect solution, but part-time work—whether fewer hours, flexible schedules, job sharing, or split-shifting—can be difficult to find. Most businesses do not yet offer nontraditional work schedules, nor do they provide the equivalent pay, benefits, and potential career mobility that accompanies full-time jobs.

**Home-based**

Home-based work is gaining in popularity, especially among women. According to Link Resources of New York, the number of
men and women working at home increased from almost 25 million in 1988 to 38 million in 1991; the number of self-employed women working at home from 378,000 in 1985 to 1.1 million in 1991.

There is reason for this increase. Home-based work can offer independence, flexibility, income, and satisfaction along with one of its main drawing cards—enabling a parent to be at home with the children and, at the same time, be a productive member of the work force. But there are drawbacks, as well: lack of space, lack of sustained time, interruptions from friends and family, and for the self-employed, lack of most fringe benefits. A mother with a home-based job can take time off whenever she pleases, but she does so without either pay or benefits.

New Careers

Not all women who have stepped out of the full-time work force want to return to their former type of work. Some survey respondents never considered their jobs as more than short-term, even if that term stretched on for years. Others were considering continuing their education or pursuing a different type of work, often due to the time and stress involved in their previous jobs rather than because of the work itself. Still others suggested turning a talent or skill into a new career that offers flexibility or can be carried out from home. Future plans generally involved compatibility with caring for children. As one mother said:

"I won't return to law or any other desk job. They're too inflexible. I do some writing projects now and plan to take on more projects when my children start school."

Volunteer Work

Communities would have trouble maintaining many of their services if it weren’t for volunteers. But volunteer work can do more than help the community; it can also enable the volunteer herself to maintain skills and contacts and develop new ones while she is out of the work force.
"I think it's a myth that you'll be set back because, as a mother, you are growing all the time. I'm not a recluse; I volunteer."

Volunteer work can vary greatly, depending on one's interests and available time. Often it starts with child-centered activities such as participation in a baby-sitting co-op or a church nursery, then expands to school projects when children grow a bit older. It might be an occasional community-related service such as working at the polls during elections or an ongoing effort such as serving as a docent at a museum or gallery. Often, it is an opportunity to fulfill other interests such as environmental action, adult education and literacy programs, cultural enrichment, women's issues, or health-related concerns. Churches, schools, and local volunteer bureaus are good sources for finding out about needed services.

Volunteering can offer challenges and rewards equal to those in the work place with the exception, of course, of providing income. As several women pointed out, the main thing is to be involved. Whether in volunteer work or with neighborhood endeavors that center around young children, being involved in the community is an important aspect of being a mother primarily at home.

"Schools and churches have always relied on mothers to help with children's programs. With more moms in the work force, those of us who stay at home are getting more and more of the responsibility for these school- and church-related programs."

**CHANGING PERSPECTIVES**

Rediscovering the Family

The American family has changed considerably in the past 25 years. Prominent among these changes have been the increased divorce rate, now leveled off on a high plane; the increase in non-marital cohabitation; and the higher percentage of women, and especially of women with young children, in the labor force."
Among this latter group another change is taking place among a small but growing number—women who are opting to leave the full-time labor force to care for their children. A study by O'Donnell came to many of the conclusions paralleled in this survey. O'Donnell found that “women who had planned on more extensive workplace involvement had begun to reconsider priorities, recognizing that children are young for such a short time, the years are so fleeting, and how pliantable it can be to watch them change and develop.” She also found that women primarily at home not only felt they were doing the right thing for their children but also gained satisfactions from mothering. And to many this came as a surprise. “Perhaps,” she noted, “it is only as women have gained the opportunity to be more than just mothers, as they realize they can incorporate other forms of meaningful employment into their lives before, after, and even during the time they raise children, that the benefits of mothering become truly evident.”

Women seem to be recognizing that their years as full-time mothers are transitory; families are small and children grow up quickly. The mothers in O'Donnell's study were almost unanimous in wanting others not to miss out on those special years even though it may mean cutting back on workplace involvements and redefining one's career goals. In the current mother care study the respondents were more hesitant to give direct advice, tempering their statements with such comments as “if it is at all possible” or “if you and your husband agree.” They viewed choice as an individual matter, and a large majority had no regrets for the decision they had made.

Both studies also were in accord that parental guidance is needed beyond the preschool years. “Being there for the children” was seen as crucial for monitoring youngsters' activities and passing on family beliefs and values.

Men, too, are discovering that in their quest for the good life, their energies have been limited to the pursuit without allowing time to enjoy the benefits. One recent poll by an executive recruiting firm found that more than half of the 500 men surveyed said they would be willing to take a 25 percent salary cut to gain more personal or family time, and 45 percent indicated they would...
8.5 continued

turn down a promotion if it meant spending less time with their families."

In a 1992 study of 200 executives from among the nation's largest companies, more than two-thirds (68 percent) said companies should offer a "parent track," or slower career path, to allow a working parent more family time. Three years earlier, in a survey of 1,000 employed men and women, 78 percent stated they would choose such a parent track if given the opportunity.

These and other articles seem to reflect shifting perspectives and values among today's young families. Only recently have policy makers and employers acknowledged that there are conflicts as well as opportunities in pursuing a dual career of motherhood and a paying job in the work force. They, along with parents, are beginning to recognize that trying to give full attention to both work and family is indeed a task for a supermom.

Reshaping the Work Force

These changing attitudes are beginning to reshape the traditional work structure. Job sequencing, flexible hours, variations in work places, and greater opportunities and benefits for part-time work are just some of the methods being tried. The driving force for both men and women is to gain child care time and family time; beyond salaries and promotions, they are seeking a better quality of life. If the work force is to be maintained, business will have to do its share. As Business Week has pointed out, "The challenge for companies is to provide flexibility and a rainbow of options so both men and women can raise their families as they see fit and still contribute."

This challenge is not just for today's mothers but for the next generation as well. Full-time homemaking generally is not in the plans of young women currently in high school. In looking ahead to the time when they have children, only 3 percent plan to stay home with their infants and preschoolers. However, fewer than 10 percent plan to work full-time, opting instead for a schedule that will satisfy their needs and their children's as well."

More than 25 years ago, Margaret Mead had this to say: "Now America needs skilled womanpower. The climate of opinion is turning against the idea that homemaking is the only form of feminine achievement. But the pendulum must not swing too far, far-
ing out of the home women whose major creative life is grounded in motherhood and wifehood. Finally, women can only be given real opportunity by being offered real choices, each one underwriten by fair law and fair practice and a social climate that ensures that each life pattern will be considered a feasible and dignified one."

Some ten years later at least one writer thought that opportunity had arrived. "Yesterday," she said, "staying at home to raise a family was a woman's destiny; today it is her choice." That choice may not yet be available to all women, but for many mothers and their children it is already making a difference.
continued

1Waldrop, J. You'll Know It's the 21st Century When ... American Demographics, December 1990.
3The Mommy Track: Business Week, March 15, 1989; Durston, Nina-
6Heath and Company.
7Oppenheim, J. A. Stay-At-Home Moms: Good Housekeeping, September 1990.
14David Blankenhorn (Ed.), to be published by basic books.
18Trost, C. and Hymowitz, C. Careers Start Giving In To Family Needs.
If time allows, you are sure to improve the readability of your report by writing a draft and then putting it aside for a week or more. When you pick up the document and read it cold, trouble spots will jump out at you. Fix them immediately and do the reorganizing and rewriting necessary to clarify the draft.

And don’t forget that headings, subheadings, indented segments, underlining and other visuals can improve readability.

All these points apply to both reports and proposals, but one consideration applies to proposals alone. In a sense, proposals resemble ad copy. They are meant to persuade, to sell ideas. So showmanship with words counts more in proposals than in reports.

**Applicability** When you complete a report, you will want your readers to accept the document as meaningful and significant enough to prompt a course of action. You’ll want your readers to say, “This is important. We should do something.” When you submit a proposal, you’ll be trying to evoke this response: “This is a really good idea. Let’s go with it.”

You will elicit such judgments only if the reader finds what you have written to be clear, reliable and justified. Additionally, what you present should be singularly relevant to the situation. And any action you call for must appear easy to accomplish (see Example 8.5).

**Conclusions**

- Memos usually are for internal communication, an exception being messages sent by fax, which employ the memo format.
- The form of address on the memo or fax is critical to getting a good response.
- Memos can be classified in six ways: bulletin, essay, informative, action, summary and file.
- Memos are most effective when addressed to individuals. Effectiveness decreases when they are sent *en masse* or are posted.
- E-mail is so common now that most people include an e-mail address on their business cards and letterhead.
- When e-mail is a major part of an organization’s communication structure, it decreases response time during a crisis.
- E-mail also facilitates distance communication in that messages can be sent to and from anywhere in the world through cyberspace.
- A difficulty with e-mail messages is that they are so spontaneous, writers tend to be careless about content.
- The spontaneity also encourages intertemperate remarks that can result in lawsuits.
- Organize e-mail messages carefully, use simple language and tell the recipient what you expect from them by way of a response or some sort of action.
Letters remain an important means of communication, especially for formal correspondence within the organization and for external communication.

- A letter has six principal parts: heading, salutation, body, close, signature, and reference matter.
- Letters can be categorized as: information, solicitation, promotion, transmittal, cover and response.
- Reports and proposals are done much like scholarly research papers.
- Reports and proposals can have as many as seven parts: letter, front matter, synopsis, body, references, bibliography and appendixes.
- Jargon is expected by readers in specialized fields, but it should be used with restraint.
- Style and visual elements should be used in reports and proposals to improve readability, understanding and acceptance.
- Your reader should come away with a clear sense of the problems studied and your proposed solutions.
- Your suggestions should also serve as a call to action that appears to be doable.

**Exercises**

1. You are a public relations writer for a hotel in a major resort community. Some extensive remodeling will begin next week on the west wing of the ninth floor. West-wing rooms will be closed, and guests in the east wing will have to put up with some noise and unsightly construction equipment. Prepare a letter for people who have reservations for next week in the east wing on the ninth floor. Explain that the inconvenience will be kept to a minimum.

2. Draft a memo that tells students in your department when the next grammar, spelling, punctuation and keyboard proficiency (typing) tests will be given. Be sure you tell them how to sign up for these tests and how to prepare for them. Let them know if these are prerequisites for taking certain skills classes. Don’t forget to address the problem of transfer students who may have had tests like these before. Consult your department’s policy on giving the tests.

3. Write a report on ethnic and cultural diversity as represented by your university’s statistics on student enrollment over the past five-year period. Then write a cover letter to the Admissions Department that will accompany your copy of the report to them.

4. Write a proposal for an honors code at your university (if you don’t already have one). Cite information on dishonesty at colleges and universities nationwide and information from colleges and universities that have such a code. Write a cover letter to your student government that would accom
pany the proposal. Remember, your letter has to get them to read the proposal.

Note


Selected Bibliography

David Angell and Brent Heslop, The Elements of E-Mail Style (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1994).


Backgrounders and Position Papers

College students like to think that graduation means they can leave behind forever the chore of researching and writing term papers. But if they are going into public relations or any of its related fields, their college experience may represent only the beginning, not the end of such activity. Beyond the reports and proposals discussed in Chapter 8, PR professionals must compose other kinds of research papers.

Outside academia, these are often called white papers. In public relations they are called backgrounders or position papers. There is a difference. The backgrounder is similar to a historical research paper that looks at a situation or problem in the present by considering its origins and its implications for the future. The position paper more closely resembles a research paper that takes a point of view or perspective on a situation and marshalls evidence in support of the position taken.

Reports have obvious value for internal decision making and planning, but they can be critical in media relations, particularly in responding to reporters’ inquiries. Reporters may ask questions like: “What’s your position on [name of act] now before the Congress in Washington?” “What’s your firm’s stand on the cause of the pollution in [name of river or area]?” “What does your company believe will be the impact of the new EPA rules?” “I’m doing a story on declining innovation in your industry. Can you give me some information?”

Your company’s executives must be able to respond quickly and knowledgeably to such questions. A “No comment” response is not acceptable. And if an
executive promises to call the reporter back, this must be done faithfully. If such queries are not handled with skill and dispatch, the firm loses credibility in a hurry. A firm's credibility is hard won and easily lost. A thoughtless response can do unlimited damage.

The role of the public relations writer in such instances is to provide either in-depth information on the topic (in the form of a backgrounder) or a clear, definitive company point of view (in the form of a position paper). As the public relations writer, you are the eyes and ears of company spokespersons. You have to arm them with facts—solidly researched and documented, organized in logical fashion, clearly written and easily understandable.

Good public relations departments do not wait until a reporter calls to begin developing basic information for backgrounders and position papers. PR staffs routinely comb popular and specialized media and documents, searching for salient bits of information affecting their firm or industry. These bits of information are accumulated and filed for reference. When the task of writing a backgrounder or position paper is assigned, they already have a headstart on research.

Sometimes backgrounders and position papers are written and filed away for later use. The hope is that they will not be needed. But if they are, public relations personnel can respond quickly and appropriately to queries from any source.

Preparing backgrounders and position papers is often the first stage in planning a new public relations program. For example, assume that an electric utility is considering a new way of charging for the use of its electricity. The proposal calls for higher rates during the day but very low rates at night and on weekends. The PR department should prepare a backgrounder that describes the history of this time-of-day pricing structure, where such methods have been tried and with what success, the availability and cost of “time” meters, and related points. Of course, the backgrounder should also compare this method to the one currently in use and to other methods.

At some point, company management will decide to stay with the present system or go with the time-of-day system. The backgrounder will help management make this decision. If the decision is to adopt the time-of-day system, the backgrounder will be used as the basis for developing and writing a company position on the new system. Both the backgrounder and the position paper will contain the information necessary to write news releases, ads, brochures, speeches and articles for the company magazine or newsletter.

Backgrounders tend to be heavy on facts and light on opinion. Position papers are heavy on opinion or interpretation, supported by only a few selected facts. Both can deal with broad or specific questions or issues. However, backgrounders tend to deal with general topics, while position papers tend to treat specific issues.

For example, a backgrounder might deal with the broad topic of the transportation of coal, reviewing technological, economic and environmental questions and related issues. A position paper, however, might focus on a specific proposed law designed to regulate coal slurry pipelines. It would take a pro or con position and present facts to support that position.
Backrounders

Backrounders have many purposes. They serve as an information base for company executives and employees. They provide source materials to copywriters preparing ads, news releases, brochures, speeches or articles for the company magazine. They may also be used as documents to hand out to reporters or members of the public who inquie about a certain topic. And company executives on the spokesmen's circuit can use them to bone up on a subject so they can field questions from the audience. Rarely does a backrounder serve only one of these purposes; keep all of them in mind.

The hallmarks of a good backrounder are accuracy and comprehensiveness. This means that the topic must be thoroughly researched.

Research

Doing research for a backrounder often involves using all the research skills, techniques and sources discussed in Chapter 4. Read that chapter again and review each point as it might apply to researching a backrounder.

You are not being professionally responsible if you leave one bit of salient information unrecorded or ignored in your evaluation. It just might contain the germ of an idea or the fact that makes all of your other material inconsequential or misleading. This can be fatal to the firm because company spokespeople have to rely on you for the information they convey to members of the media or to the public.

Research is a never-ending process. Once a backrounder is completed, it becomes less useful with each passing day because of new information. You should establish the practice of accumulating pertinent information, filing it and updating the backrounder at regular intervals. Backrounders that do not include the very latest important information are worthless.

Writing

Writing a backrounder begins first with a simple statement of the issue and why it is important. Including such a statement may appear trite, but it is necessary to focus your research and writing. It keeps you on the right track. This opening statement should be both precise and concise. Besides helping you in the writing, it tells the reader what to expect in the document.

Once your opening statement is honed to perfection, write the body of the backrounder. Be sure to provide an adequate, clear history of the issue, a thorough discussion of the current situation and implications for the future.

Backround As the name implies, a backrounder supplies background on a topic or issue. It should provide a fairly complete historical overview so a reader unfamiliar with the topic can understand how the current situation evolved. You have to answer the question “Why are things the way they are today?” And you can’t answer this question without giving details about how things were and how and why they have changed (see Example 9.1).
# Backgrounder


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(continued)
"...we wish we had the real professor. It actually had been the African American woman's initiative; it was mainly her work. Because they had vested each other's classes, the students interpreted the white woman's presence as overseeing a research assistant."

Barricades to advancement that persist in all areas—hiring, promotion, Garcia-Brown, scholarship, beauty, damage, and meeting—effect multicultural women faculty in uniquely adverse ways.

1. Discriminatory Hiring Practices

While the experiences of women faculty at some schools belie the existence of a glass ceiling, barriers remain for many others. Particularly disturbing is the slowdown in the increase of women in the professorate, from 8.9% in 1987 to 1994, when the percentage of women in the professions is increasing. Some surveyed faculty report that tenured women faculty are only visible at their institution. Others have observed that administrators have an increased reliance on the faculty to hire women and the application of higher standards to female candidates.

"...it's been very hard to hire faculty at law school. There has been a real struggle just getting the faculty to accept the idea of hiring women. And the women we have hired tend to have the tenured professors as the men. Most of the women are not..." (I.B. Midwest, female, dean)

Unfortunately, women who appear to be deans face even greater, barriers than female faculty who are working within systems. During the last ten years, the number of female deans at ABA-accredited law schools has increased by 40%, to a total of 14 in 1995."

Some reports that Deans search committees, which usually do not include women, apply different standards to women candidates than men. Seemingly gender-neutral criteria, such as experience in fund-raising, are used to discriminate women from consideration, and are sometimes not even applied to male candidates with similar backgrounds. "Like the search of female managing partners in firms, the lack of women at the top of many law schools demonstrates the continuing existence of barriers to women's equal participation in legal education."

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2. See discussion of reports at 353.
3. (J.A. Northwestern, dean; H.J. Northwestern, faculty)
4. See general, ABA, Committee on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar, 1995.
5. M.J. Kansas, Southern, faculty
The typical backgrounder includes such details as significant historical events, legislative enactments, changes in government and company policy and applicable social conditions. It specifies names, books, documents, articles and reports that played an important part in the development of the issue. In sum, this section of the backgrounder should describe the evolution of the current situation.

**Current Situation** Having built a foundation on the past, you should now examine the current situation, including reviewing current public and company policies. Perhaps these points could be extended to include a discussion of alternative policies now under consideration.

The purpose of a backgrounder is to assemble and convey information, not to judge it. Any discussions of policy or alternatives should be presented from an objective, neutral position. Stick to facts. Describe policy options, discuss their good and bad points, but don't judge them.

For example, if the issue is the high cost of home heating and its effects on poor people, one policy to consider might be the use of energy stamps to help poor people pay their utility bills. This idea has its good and bad points. One writer might say:

Using energy stamps is a poor way to solve the problem because stamps require a massive, wasteful bureaucracy and excessive government funding.

Another writer might say:

Using energy stamps is an excellent solution to the problem because stamps could be easily administered by existing government organizations.

Both writers may be justified in their points of view, but this is a backgrounder, not a position paper. Instead of taking a position, write to inform, saying:

Use of energy stamps is one solution to this problem. An energy stamp program would require government funding and a system for administering these funds. Such a program might be administered by existing organizations.

**Implications** To this point, we have considered the historical background and the current situation. The next step in writing the backgrounder is to examine the consequences of selecting one policy over another. If the backgrounder does not address such future implications directly, it should at least highlight points that must be considered.

A backgrounder on national energy policy, for example, might discuss the production of gas and electricity from coal as a substitute for declining oil reserves. Such a discussion would surely include a supply-demand analysis, an evaluation of current technology, and an analysis of economic and environmental effects. It would also include an assessment of this method's ability to meet the country's demand for more energy.

These are obvious points, but less obvious are the following complex implications: Even if this method can efficiently meet the energy needs of transportation,
using great quantities of coal for this purpose will diminish its supply for generating electricity. And although production of energy for transportation is possible, energy generated from coal puts more carbon dioxide in the air than some alternative methods and eventually can cause climatic changes.

Identifying the implications of a certain policy includes anticipating developments. The public relations writer has to be aware of the flux of ideas about the issue and which of these may gain or lose support over time. Perhaps a public policy change is being debated now in Washington. Perhaps an extensive government study is underway, the results of which won’t be released for a year. Perhaps the topic will be the focus of a convention this year. In all these cases, the issue and its implications are likely to be in the news now and in the future. As a public relations writer, you must be ahead of these developments.

**Documentation**

You must present full documentation of the information you use in the background. Before you try to write, as suggested in report writing, get a reliable style manual and study it carefully.

Although a backgrounder does not require the same rigorous scholarship and style required of reports and proposals, a style manual can help you properly cite the material you use in the backgrounder. Use a footnote or endnote system of citation, and include a complete bibliography at the end.

It is important to cite your sources carefully, because people using the backgrounder, whether inside or outside your firm, may want to pursue a specific point more fully. Or if they find a discrepancy between the facts in the backgrounder and those in some other source, they may want to evaluate the sources you have cited. This is especially important when backgrounders provide the foundation for a position paper.

**Position Papers**

As the name signifies, a position paper is designed to state a firm’s position on an issue (see Example 9.2). The issue may be local, regional, national or international in scope. For example, suppose your firm opposes a national health insurance plan under consideration in Congress. The position paper should tell why. Your firm may also take a positive position regarding a substitute proposal authored by a representative from the local district. The position paper should explain why it supports the substitute plan.

Like the backgrounder, the position paper requires extensive research. Much of the information you need will be found in the backgrounder, so new research should be minimal. At this stage, however, you will need to solicit the input of management, which must scrutinize salient information, sort out the pros and cons of alternative positions and then make a policy decision. Research on a problem may produce a
Position Paper

This call to action by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) embodies many of the hallmarks of a good position paper. It is clear, simple, and straightforward. There can be no misinterpretation of AARP's position regarding health care reform. 

CALL TO ACTION

AARP board of directors issues appeal to members

The following is the full text of the AARP board appeal to members:

The voice of individual Americans is being lost in the noisy health-care reform debate. We have had enough of slogans, soundbites and partisan politics. The time for action is now.

As the Congress begins to act, the AARP board of directors calls upon its members and their families to urge their representatives and senators to enact meaningful health-care reform in 1994.

Reflecting the clearly expressed wishes and concerns of our members, AARP supports real health-care reform that provides every American:

- quality health care coverage, not merely as a goal, but on a timetable, specified in the law;
- a long-term care benefit that guarantees security and peace of mind to Americans of all ages faced with severe disabilities and chronic illnesses;
- prescription drug coverage to assure that no American is denied access to essential, often life-saving, drug therapies;
- system-wide cost containment that assures consumers affordability and doctors and hospitals a fair price;
- financing that is fair and adequate.

Real health-care reform must ensure current and future Medicare beneficiaries that the Medicare program will be strengthened to protect access, quality and affordability.

Real health-care reform must also guarantee every American the same health security that we already guarantee each member of Congress and the president.

It is time to move health-care reform legislation forward toward solutions. It won't be easy. But doing nothing means higher costs, fewer benefits and increasing loss of coverage for all, including Medicare beneficiaries and those privately insured. We are all vulnerable.

The great achievements in our history have come from leaders who weren't afraid to challenge the status quo. We applaud the president's courage and leadership in the effort, as well as those members of Congress who are taking up the challenge to improve our health-care system. It is now time for the American people to become actively involved.

AARP pledges to work with the president and Congress as we fight to provide health security and peace of mind to all Americans, young and old. This is our legacy; it is also our future. Make your voice heard. Call your representatives and senators today.
backgrounder that results in a management decision to offer a solution or support a solution. Then you may be asked to write a position paper.

Once that decision has been made, you can write a thorough position paper representing the company’s point of view. If PR professionals in the firm are held in high esteem, management may ask that a proposed position be written and used as a basis for discussion. A draft position paper is written with the expectation that it will be approved in principle, modified or rejected. After modifications are completed and approved, a final version is prepared for distribution to management and other publics.

Whenever a new issue surfaces, the public relations department should alert management to the need for a position paper. Recognizing an issue constitutes the first step in writing a position paper.

**Stating the Issue**

No position paper will have much value if it fails to state the issue clearly. Your job as writer demands that you describe the issue fairly and honestly. Don’t distort the issue to suit your purposes or to make it easier to form—or defend—an opinion. The purpose of a position paper is to address an issue squarely, not evade it.

If your firm is an oil company and you must write a paper on its position regarding excess profits, you would not be addressing the issue directly if the major thrust of your paper was to claim that profits are necessary to attract capital and to reinvest. The issue is not whether profits are needed, but whether profits are excessive and, specifically, whether your firm is making an unfair profit. Don’t dance around the issue; meet it squarely near the beginning of the paper. One of the most obvious ways of doing this is by providing relevant background.

**Background**

If you want your position paper to be comprehensible, you must provide pertinent background information. But remember that a position paper is not a historical analysis; leave that to the backgrounder. Give just enough background to provide a context for your position and to help your readers understand why the subject under discussion has become an issue. The nature of the issue often obviates the need for extensive background information, but be sure to give enough to make the basis for your position intelligible.

**Position**

Don’t keep your readers in suspense. Come to the point immediately. Don’t try to build suspense by including elaborate recitations of facts and flashy figures, and don’t culminate the paper with an eloquent conclusion.

Begin by stating your position, so readers know where you stand. Then support it with facts and figures, logically organized and clearly written. Use examples or metaphors that readers can understand. Use statistics sparingly but include enough of them to support and reinforce your points.
Long lists of numbers might be appropriate in a backgrounder, but in a position paper they will only clutter up your argument and cloud its sense. Make your point in clear, plain language; then select just the right statistic to support it. If you feel that a lot of statistics should be included as support material, put them in an appendix so they don’t overpower the paper. Always provide the sources of your statistics. Readers who spend time with such information place a lot of weight on the authority behind the numbers.

**Consider Both Sides** Although a position paper should come down strongly on your side of an issue, don’t ignore opposing sides. You are expected to amass as much information as you can in support of your point of view, but don’t stack the cards.

“Card-stacking” is a propaganda device whereby all the supporting arguments are given but no opposing points are mentioned. This gives the impression that the favorable evidence is more compelling than it really is. Such a position paper may seem impressive at first glance, but when readers discover other points of view, they will distrust not only this message but others you send them later.

It is far better to state opposing points of view and try to refute them than to ignore them. This is especially important when the opposition has some good points. Acknowledge the cons, but show why you think these points are outweighed by objective evidence. With this tactic, you will gain respect, even among your foes.

**Consider the Audience** Although most position papers are written for internal use by management, some are written for distribution to other publics. Even when writing a position paper you believe will only be used internally, you must keep in mind other potential publics.

For example, a position paper may be written for presentation to the board of directors by management in an attempt to explain company policies to stockholders. But Wall Street analysts may ask to see the company’s position, too. And what about the media’s business editors? They may ask for and should be given copies.

This can pose a serious problem for you as a writer, because information that makes sense to your management may not make sense to the external publics or to stockholders. It would be ideal, of course, to write one version of the position paper for use by all possible audiences, but the nature of the issue may make this impractical. You may have to write more than one version of the same paper. You should not tell a different story in each version; rather, you should tell the same story differently and appropriately. Remember, too, that different publics may be more concerned with some questions than with others. Alter the emphasis of each version of your position paper accordingly.

**Recommendations**

It is generally perceived as bad form to be against something without offering an alternative solution. Taking a position means being both against one thing and for something else. If you omit your alternative proposals from your position paper, you will
inevitably be asked what you recommend as a suitable substitute for something you oppose.

For example, if Congress is considering a national health insurance plan that your firm opposes because it means higher taxes, that is a suitable topic for a position paper. But if that's all you say, you really haven't faced the issue, which includes coming up with an alternative solution. If the issue is significant enough to command company attention, the company has an obligation to help with its resolution.

Sometimes position papers suggest new policy on an issue or support a recommended but not yet implemented policy. Position papers can also support existing policy in the face of proposed change.

**Format**

When the writing is completed, its format and method of distribution must be determined. A backgrounder or position paper intended for internal use is usually typed on plain or letterhead paper, copied, assembled, stapled and then delivered. Those distributed outside the firm may be produced the same way, or they may be published as a printed booklet or monograph, embellished with art, color, design and typography, and printed on expensive paper.

Some firms prepare背景者 for public consumption on special forms. These forms contain a printed company heading with the word backgrounder prominent. Other companies, particularly those in heavily regulated industries that require a large number of backgrounders or position papers annually, produce punched versions suitable for inclusion in a loose-leaf notebook. When new versions of positions are called for by management, the old ones can be removed and the new ones inserted. Sometimes, long and exhaustive backgrounders and position papers are distributed spiral-bound, even if they have simply been typed and copied.

Many backgrounders and some position papers include charts and illustrations to help explain the topic. Computer software allows you to easily add these items. For formal reports, preparing graphics for reproduction is often done by a graphic artist. However, you should be fully aware of their content, how they look and where they will appear in the finished report. Locating these visuals close to appropriate verbal segments makes the information easier to understand.

**Special Uses**

Although position papers have many uses, especially as frames of reference when questions come from journalists and to orient spokespersons and management personnel, they also have some special uses. An organization that wants to exploit all the avenues for advocating its point of view can use a position paper as the basis for an essay or
commentary to be submitted to the op ed page in the local newspaper. The position paper should have enough documentation in it to stand alone as the basis of an op ed piece. If it doesn’t, go back to the backgrounder on which the position paper was based. That should give you more than enough information with which to work. Other kinds of documents can also be used as you prepare the op ed piece, but if a position paper is executed well, there should not be much need to seek and use other information.

Another special area is the use of position papers as the locus for image ads and public service announcements (PSAs) for an organization. Position papers can be of enormous help in positioning or repositioning an organization as it tries to shape and project a consistent image.

Plans for action, as in lobbying for or against something, can spring directly from position papers. If your organization is against the dumping of poly-carbonated diphensols (PCPs) in local streams, the position statement against that policy represents your first line of offense in furthering the cause. Backgrounders may also be of use, but it is the position paper that sets the direction and highlights the major points of contention.

**Conclusions**

- Every firm can count on receiving inquiries about background information and positions on issues. It should prepare for these by producing backgrounders and position papers in advance.
- Backgrounders serve as sources of information for company executives, public relations writers, media personnel, financial analysts, the external publics and a variety of other publics.
- Backgrounders should always provide a historical context, a description of the current situation and a discussion of the implications of the matter under study. This information should be free of opinion.
- Position papers state a position on a topic. They are basically opinions supported by a few facts. They should treat opposing points of view as well as supporting arguments.
- When the firm takes a position against something, it should also suggest alternative solutions.
- Backgrounders and position papers—especially backgrounders—should fully acknowledge sources of information used in their preparation.
- Clear writing is a must.
- Position papers can be especially useful as the inspiration and support for essays and commentaries for the op ed pages of local newspapers.
- Position papers may be used as the locus for image-building ads and PSAs.
- Position papers can set the agenda for action, such as lobbying for or against an issue, task or process.
Exercises

1. Choose a topic that concerns your school, such as the increasing use of drugs, getting term papers off the Internet or other forms of cheating, lack of diversity in the student/faculty. Do your research and write a background on the topic.

2. Imagine you are the public relations writer for a medical organization that favors licensing midwives. Prepare the opening paragraphs of a position paper to support your organization’s opinion. In outline form, indicate what you might include in the rest of the document.

3. The position by the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) regarding health-care reform is explained in Example 9.2. Analyze AARP’s position statement and suggest areas where it may be open to dispute or, at least, to some skepticism.

Selected Bibliography


UNIT 4

PENULISAN KORPORAT UNTUK MEDIA CETAK
DAN MEDIA ELEKTRONIK

Objektif Pembelajaran;
Selepas membaca unit ini dan bahan pembelajaran tambahan yang terdapat dalam unit tersebut anda akan;
1. Mengetahui peranan penulisan korporat dalam media cetak dan media elektronik.
2. Mengetahui definisi dan kepentingan berita.
3. Mengetahui teknik dan prinsip penulisan siaran berita.
4. Mengetahui prinsip penulisan untuk media elektronik.

A. Pengenalan
Akhbar dan majalah merupakan media yang lebih awal diperkenalkan, berbanding dengan radio dan televisyen. Pada peringkat awal, akhbar dan majalah menjadi saluran atau media utama dalam penyampaian maklumat yang melibatkan publisiti imej dan identiti. Pada peringkat awal, apabila radio dan televisyen diperkenalkan, kedua-dua media tersebut telah mengambil tempat akhbar dan majalah dari segi populariti dan tumpuan audiens untuk mendapatkan maklumat. Walau bagaimanapun, populariti tumpuan audiens kepada media tersebut pada masa sekarang adalah seimbang, bergantung kepada matlamat perguntingan audiens itu sendiri kepada media yang mereka pilih.

Kedua-dua ini berlaku kerana terdapatnya, tarian tersendiri dari segi fungsi penyampaian mesej dan maklumat di kalangan media berkenaan. Akhbar dan majalah, memerlukan audiens untuk membaca bagi mendapatkan maklumat, tetapi radio hanya memerlukan audiens mendengar dan televisyen pula mendengar dan menonton. Kelainan yang terdapat pada radio dan televisyen telah menyebabkan radio dan televisyen dianggap sebagai lebih istimewa berbanding
akibat dan majalah. Keadaan ini berlaku kerana radio dan televisyen memerlukan penggunaan deria yang lebih berbagai berbanding dengan akhbar dan majalah.

Radio dan televisyen dianggap sebagai media elektronik yang dominan yang terdapat di negara ini pada masa sekarang. Kedua-dua media tersebut menjadi saluran komunikasi yang utama digunakan untuk penyebaran maklumat terutama perkara yang berkaitan dengan kepentingan masyarakat dan juga maklumat perdagangan. Di samping itu terdapat juga penggunaan peralatan elektronik lain, seperti filem video dan CD-ROM tetapi ia tidak sepopular radio dan televisyen.


Tanpa mengira sama ada maklumat berkenaan dikenakan atau disalurkan melalui radio, televisyen, internet atau kaedah elektronik lain, pihak pembekal atau penyedia maklumat adalah berperanan bagi memastikan bahawa maklumat yang dikenakan adalah berwibawa dan bermanfaat kepada pengguna atau audiens.

B. Peranan Penulisan Korporat dalam Media Cetak & Elektronik
Peranan komunikasi korporat atau PR secara profesional bagi sebuah organisasi perlu berfokus kepada penonjolan secara positif kegiatan organisasi. Oleh itu, antara peranan utama penulisan PR atau penulisan korporat bagi sebuah organisasi ialah untuk;
1. Menonjolkan maklumat mengenai perancangan organisasi yang telah, sedang dan akan dilaksanakan.
2. Menonjolkan imej dan identiti organisasi bagi mewujud dan mengekalkan keharmonian dengan publik. Pengekalan keharmonian tersebut boleh dicapai melalui kaedah:
   i. perundangan dan kerjasama yang berasaskan pengetahuan terhadap perlakuan dan sikap manusia.
   ii. penyelarasan dan pemantauan komunikasi dua hala berdasarkan maklumat yang benar dan lengkap.
   iii. Menganalisis sikap, harapan dan pandapun publik.
   iv. Menyemai dan menanam perasaan muhibbah dan tolak-ansur di antara publik termasuk publik dalam dan juga publik luaran organisasi.
3. Menyediakan dan merumuskan maklumat signifikan yang terdapat dalam organisasi untuk diterbitkan melalui penulisan rencana, siaran media majalah, laporan tahunan, surat berita, brosur, risalah, pemakluman aktiviti syarikat dan selainnya.
4. Menyokong aktiviti penyebaran maklumat yang dilakukan melalui sidang media, seminar, bengkel, forum dan lain-lain aktiviti yang signifikan dengan organisasi.
5. Menyokong pengurusan acara-acara khusus secara berstruktur supaya publisiti dan imej organisasi dapat ditonjol dan disebarkan kepada publik.
6. Menguahkan ketrampilan sebagai pegawai komunikasi korporat yang menjadi jurucakap organisasi. Pegawai komunikasi korporat atau PR merupakan perantara bagi organisasi dan publik. Oleh itu ketrampilan komunikasi bersemuka yang disokong oleh maklumat bertulis adalah asas kuku penonjolan imej bagi melahirkan penilaian positif publik terhadap organisasi. Situasi first impression is the last impression merupakan suatu situasi yang kritikal bagi seseorang pengamat komunikasi korporat atau PR dalam menentukan keberkesanan peranan masing-masing. Oleh itu segala maklumat PR yang diterbit dan disiar dalam media cetak dan elektronik turut membantu pengukuhan ketrampilan mereka.
7. Menjelaskan dan menghebahkan hasil penyelidikan dan pembangunan (R&D) yang dilakukan oleh organisasi. Aktiviti PR atau komunikasi korporat tidak dapat dipisahkan dari pengurusan maklumat. Semakin banyak maklumat R&D yang ditonjolkan oleh sesuatu organisasi, khususnya maklumat yang bernilai komersial, maka semakin tinggihal imej dan identiti organisasi berkenaan.

B. Peranan Media Cetak

Media cetak merupakan antara teknologi terawal dalam perkembangan bidang penulisan. Bagi tujuan menyampaikan maklumat, pengurusan media cetak perlu dilakukan menggunakan kemahiran penulisan di kalangan mereka yang terlibat dalam penyediaan bahan penulisan, khususnya di kalangan penulis PR. Selain daripada bertujuan untuk menyampaikan maklumat, media cetak juga berperanan untuk membujuk dan memaklumkan audiens mengenai sesuatu mesej organisasi. Antara media cetak yang utama ialah surat khabar, buku dan majalah. Selain daripada tiga media cetak utama tersebut, terdapat juga media cetak lain yang diterbitkan oleh sesuatu organisasi. Terbitan organisasi tersebut dikenali sebagai terbitan dalaman.


1. media cetak,
2. media elektronik, dan
3. media fotografik.

Penggunaan media tersebut adalah untuk menyampaikan mesej, maklumat dan pengetahuan kepada publik selain dari bertujuan mempengaruhi dan membujuk audiens sasaran. Media cetak merupakan antara teknologi terawal yang

Terdapat persoalan kenapa penggunaan media cetak, khususnya akhbar, diberi keutamaan oleh organisasi untuk menyampaikan mesej dan maklumat kepada publik? Akhbar secara yang lebih spesifik dianggap sebagai media yang berkuasa kerana bahan-bahan bertulis di dalam akhbar boleh mempengaruhi perubahan terhadap persepsi, pandangan dan tindakan audiens. Sebagai contoh, apabila membaca akhbar, seseorang individu perlu melibatkan diri dan memberi perhatian sepenuhnya untuk memperolehi data dan maklumat. Kesungguhan tersebut turut meletakkan fokus minda pembaca ke tahap yang paling tinggi yang akhirnya mengakibatkan pengembelengan fikiran pembaca supaya lebih aktif untuk merespons yang berkesudahan dengan kewujudan perubahan terhadap persepsi, pandangan atau tindakan di kalangan pembaca. Situasi ini menunjukkan wujudnya hubungan yang amat rapat di antara akhbar dan pembaca atau publik.

Walaupun populariti dan penggunaan media elektronik seperti TV, radio dan internet semakin meningkat, namun penggunaan media cetak, khususnya akhbar bagi tujuan publisiti oleh pihak organisasi masih lagi diutamakan kerana kebanyakan publik masih secara mudah terdedah kepada akhbar. Penggunaan akhbar dalam aktiviti PR organisasi amat penting kerana akhbar mempunyai kesan atau impak propaganda yang baik serta daya mempengaruhi dan membujuk yang lebih kuat terhadap audiens. Keadaan ini berlaku disebabkan oleh capaian mesej dan maklumat di kalangan audiens lebih mudah diperolehi melalui akhbar terutamanya akhbar yang diterbitkan setiap hari.

Penulisan PR yang banyak diterbitkan melalui akhbar adalah dalam bentuk siaran berita. Secara umumnya penyelesaian atau penulisan siaran berita merupakan salah satu aktiviti utama penulis PR. Siaran berita merupakan alat yang paling banyak dan kerap digunakan oleh untuk mendapatkan publisiti PR.
Siaran berita dianggap sebagai satu alat komunikasi yang amat bernilai, khususnya apabila penulisan siaran berita itu benar-benar mengandungi berita (news), iaitu maklumat terkini yang bernilai dan bermanfaat.

C. Berita Media Cetak

Apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan berita? Setiap individu mempunyai definisi yang berlainan bagi berita. Dari dahulu sehingga kini pengertian dan pemahaman mengenai berita semakin meluas. Salah satu definisi bagi berita ialah intipati sesuatu maklumat yang disalurkan di dalam media yang berperanan untuk memaklumkan mesej yang terkandung dalamnya.

Salah satu definisi berita yang dianggap sesuai adalah berdasarkan aplikasinya dalam konteks penyebaran maklumat ialah sebagai suatu bahan maklumat terkini yang mempunyai nilai signifikan yang boleh dimanfaatkan oleh sasaran. Walau bagaimanapun, bagi orang PR, tidak terdapat satu definisi khusus untuk berita kerana dari perspektif PR, berita dirujuk sebagai sebarang maklumat yang diterbitkan oleh media, baik media cetak mahupun media elektronik. Oleh itu apa yang penting bagi orang PR, ialah berita itu perluah dapat disiarkan oleh radio dan TV, serta diterbitkan oleh akhbar dan majalah.

Dalam melaksanakan tugas sebagai penulis komunikasi korporat atau penulis PR, jalinan perhubungan atau rangkaian dengan pihak media adalah sangat penting kepada sesebuah organisasi kerana media boleh menentukan kewujudan pelanggan bagi setiap produk atau perkhidmatan yang disediakan oleh organisasi terbabit. Pemilihan media, sama ada media cetak atau media elektronik bagi penonjolan imej dan identiti sesebuah organisasi adalah dipengaruhi oleh beberapa faktor. Faktor-faktor tersebut ialah;

1. Jangkauan (Reach)

Jangkauan ialah jumlah publik atau pelanggan yang terdedah kepada maklumat yang disampaikan pada sesuatu masa. Ia merupakan ukuran tentang sejauh mana pendedahan publik terhadap sesuatu media. Contohnya, jika terdapat 10,000 pendengar daripada 20,000 pendengar yang mendengar iklan jam tangan
di stesen Radio MRS atau membaca akhbar Y2U atau menonton TV9, sekurang-
kurangnya sekali dalam jangkamasa empat minggu, maka jangkaunannya ialah
50% atau 10,000 daripada 20,000 pendengar/pembaca/penonton. Kaedah
pengiraan untuk jangkaun ialah;

\[
\text{Jangkaun} = \left( \text{Jum. pendengar iklan} + \text{Jum. pendengar radio} \right) \times 100\%
\]
\[
= \left( \frac{10,000}{20,000} \right) \times 100\% = 50\%
\]

2. **Kekerapan**

Kekerapan merujuk kepada hitung panjang bilangan sesuatu mesej itu
sampai kepada khalayak atau individu yang sama dalam sesuatu masa yang
tertentu. Jika terdapat;

A. 10,000 daripada 20,000 publik atau khalayak mendengar,
menonton atau membaca iklan jam tangan tiga kali dalam masa
sebulan, dan

B. 1,000 orang mendengar, menonton atau membaca lima kali dalam
tempoh sebulan, maka hitung panjang kekerapan ialah sebanyak
3.2 kali.

\[
\text{Hitung panjang kekerapan} = \left( \text{Jum. pendedahan A + B} \right) \div \text{Jum. Jangkaun}
\]
\[
= \left( \left( \frac{10,000 \times 3}{20,000} \right) + \left( 1,000 \times 5 \right) \right) \div \left( 10,000 + 1,000 \right)
\]
\[
= 35,000 \div 11,000
\]
\[
= 3.2
\]

3. **Impresi**

Impresi ialah jumlah bilangan pendedahan iklan atau jumlah bilangan
mesej yang disebarkan dalam sesuatu iklan. Impresi diukur dengan mendarah-ban
bilangan individu yang menerima mesej dengan jumlah bilangan penerimaan
mesej iklan di kalangan jumlah individu berkenaan. Misalnya jika 11,000 orang
menerima mesej berkenaan dalam hitung panjang 3.2 kali, maka nilai impresi ialah 35,200.

4. **Kadar kasar khalayak atau publik (KKK)**

Kadar tersebut merupakan satu petanda untuk menunjukkan kadar penyebaran iklan bagi sesuatu penjadualan penerbitan media dalam sesuatu situasi pasaran tertentu untuk tempoh masa yang tertentu. KKK diukur dengan menggunakan formula yang berikut;

\[
KKK = \text{Jangkauan} \times \text{Kekerapan}
\]

Sekiranya jangkauan iklan ialah 50 peratus dan kekerapannya ialah 3.2, maka KKK ialah 160 = \(50 \times 3.2\).

5. **Kesinambungan**

Kesinambungan dirujuk kepada jumlah masa sesuatu iklan itu disampaikan dalam waktu yang ditetapkan. Sesuatu siaran iklan mungkin dijadualkan pada kekerapan yang sama sepanjang tahun atau hanya ditumpukan pada musim-musim tertentu. Jadual yang mempunyai kesinambungan dalam media yang sama memberikan impresi yang berulang pada khalayak atau publik yang sama. Jika penggunaan media berubah, maka kesinambungan juga akan turut berubah.

D. **Perancangan Perbelanjaan Media Elektronik**

Penyampaian mesej PR melalui media elektronik boleh dilakukan melalui beberapa kaedah. Antaranya ialah siaran berita dan juga edaran maklumat kepada pihak media. Kedua-dua kaedah tersebut akan melalui proses pengampangan (gatekeeping) yang dilakukan oleh pihak media. Oleh itu kedua-dua pendekatan tersebut tidak dapat dijamin kejayaannya dari segi publisiti kerana pihak media elektronik yang terlibat masih boleh menyiarkan atau sebaliknya menolak sahaja maklumat berkenaan daripada disiarkan.

Berdasarkan pengalaman, cara yang termudah untuk mendapatkan ruang penyiaran dan publisiti untuk imej dan identiti ialah melalui media elektronik
ialah melalui periklanan, iaitu dengan membeli ruang masa siaran media elektronik. Periklanan yang dirujuk berdasarkan perspektif PR ialah periklanan institusi atau periklanan korporat. Bagi tujuan tersebut, perancangan dan juga pengurusan perbelanjaan untuk media elektronik perlulah dilakukan.

Perancangan perbelanjaan media elektronik dirujuk sebahagian besarnya kepada kaedah pemilihan media yang sesuai untuk menyampaikan mesej periklanan kepada khalayak sasaran, khususnya periklanan korporat. Proses menentukan jenis ruang atau masa media yang dibeli, memerlukan sejumlah wang yang diperuntukkan bagi sesuatu kumpulan iklan. Pengurusan penyebaran maklumat PR menggunakan periklanan korporat melalui media elektronik juga bergantung kepada penjadualan masa penyiaran iklan berkenaan. Beberapa perkara yang perlu diperhatikan dalam proses perancangan antara lainnya melibatkan jawapan kepada soalan-soalan berikut:
1. Siapakah yang menjadi sasaran pasaran?
2. Siapakah pula khalayak sasaran?
3. Bilakah masa yang sesuai untuk penyiaran?
4. Apakah kualiti media?
5. Bagaimanakah sifat mesej?
6. Apakah strategi pesaing?

Organisasi yang baru mestilah menggunakan periklanan untuk membuat publisiti mengenai kehadiran organisasi agar ia diketahui oleh publik. Periklanan dianggap sebagai suatu persembahan idea, barangan atau perkhidmatan secara bebas tanpa dipengaruhi oleh perasaan atau emosi. Ruang atau masa periklanan tersebut perlu dibayar kepada pihak pengiklan oleh penaja. Pengiklanan tersebut juga melibatkan pengumuman awam yang bertujuan untuk membantu publisiti produk atau perkhidmatan yang turut menonjolkan mesej untuk mewujudkan kerjasama atau tidak langsung.

Dalam usaha mencari publisiti, PR perlu membuat bayaran kepada pihak media untuk memastikan proses publisiti dilakukan. Contohnya dengan menaja sesuatu program di televisyen atau radio, periklanan mengenai organisasi akan
disiarkan. Iklan mengenai organisasi boleh dibuat melalui beberapa format bersesuaian sama ada ia disediakan untuk tv, radio atau internet. Format-format tersebut termasuklah format demonstrasi, gambaran kehidupan, melalui jurucakap, gambaran mengenai gaya hidup, penggunaan watak kartun atau sketsa, dokumentari, dan selainnya.

E. Pemilihan Media Elektronik

Media elektronik yang paling kerap menjadi pilihan organisasi untuk menyokong aktiviti publisiti ialah:

1. Televisyen

   Ia merupakan media yang pesat berkembang sejak selepas Perang Dunia Kedua. Televisyen mempunyai beberapa jenis. Tetapi yang paling popular ialah televisyen komersial dan televisyen penyiaran publik.

   i. Televisyen komersial turut dikenali sebagai televisyen kabel. Untuk mendapatkan siaran program melalui televisyen kabel, siap pengguna perlu terlebih dahulu melanggar program yang ingin ditonton. Perkembangan televisyen kabel yang sifatnya komersial berlaku akibat daripada kemajuan dalam bidang penyiaran. Di Malaysia, stesen televisyen Astro boleh dikategorikan sebagai stesen televisyen kabel atau komersial.

   ii. Televisyen penyiaran publik. Televisyen tersebut memberikan khidmatnya kepada pelanggan atau penonton secara percuma dan pada kebiasaannya stesen tersebut diurus atau dioperasikan melalui siaran periklanan yang kebanyakan daripada periklanan tersebut ditaja atau dibayar oleh pihak swasta. Hasil pendapatan utama televisyen penyiaran publik ialah melalui iklan. Walau bagaimanapun kepelbagaian program siaran televisyen penyiaran publik adalah lebih terbatas berbanding televisyen kabel yang pelbagai sifatnya.
F. Format Periklanan Korporat Televisyen

Beberapa format periklanan televisi telah menjadi pilihan pelanggan organisasi atau institusi. Antara format tersebut adalah;

1. Demonstrasi -- Demonstrasi selalunya diperbesar-besarkan sebagai suatu pendekatan untuk memberi idea yang jelas dan berulang-ulang. Proses ini dianggap dapat diterima asalkan penonjol penulisannya tidak keterlaluan sehingga menyimpang dari kebenarannya.

2. Gambaran kehidupan -- Pendekatan tersebut telah mendapat pilihan yang popular pada masa ini terutama oleh syarikat-syarikat korprat di Malaysia seperti Petronas, Telekom, EON, Penerbangan Malaysia, Kurnia Insurans dan selainnya. Contohnya periklanan Penerbangan Malaysia yang memaparkan secebis gambaran kehidupan anak-anak Malaysia yang mengamalkan ketekunan dan kesungguhan sejak zaman anak kecil sehingga apabila mereka dewasa mereka berjaya menjalankan serangan Malaysia Boleh melalui kejayaan mereka memaklumi Kib uli Utara, Puncak Gunung Everest dan kejayaan mengelilingi dunia menggunakan kapal layar. Kejayaan ini merupakan sebahagian daripada gambaran kehidupan sebenar mengenai kejayaan yang pastinya dicapai apabila diusahakan sejak awal lagi dengan sokongan ketekunan dan semangat dan jati diri yang tinggi.

3. Jurucakap -- Teknik ini menggunakan individu yang berada di hadapan kamera untuk menyampaikan pesan. Pada kebiasaannya, jurucakap yang dipilih adalah di kalangan personaliti yang popular yang akan membuat pengakuan atau pengesahan terhadap barangan atau perkhidmatan yang digunakan. Misalnya perakuan Siti Norhaliza terhadap penggunaan barangan kecantikan Maybeline telah meninggalkan kesan yang mendalam terutama di kalangan remaja kerana Siti adalah idola kepada sebahagian daripada remaja atau golongan muda. Dengan penggunaan
skrip "bibirku menyerlah dengan Maybeline" sudah cukup untuk memukau atau mempengaruhi golongan muda untuk turut menghampirkan diri mereka kepada produk Maybeline.


6. **Format lain** — Terdapat juga format lain yang digunakan bagi tujuan publisiti imej dan identiti organisasi. Antara format tersebut ialah dokumentari, naratif atau periwayatan, watak fantasi dan selainnya.

G. **Peranan Televisyen sebagai Saluran Publisiti (Periklanan Institusi)**

Perkembangan dan kemajuan yang dialami oleh televisyen (TV) berlaku dengan cepat dan ianya telah banyak menawarkan kemudahan atau ruang publisiti kepada pengiklan. Antara peranan TV ialah:

1. Memberikan peluang pengiklan membuat liputan secara besar-besaran dengan kos yang rendah.
2. Sebagai alternatif di mana pengiklan boleh memilih waktu siaran yang sesuai.

3. Berperanan untuk menarik empati penonton kerana TV seringkali menerbitkan iklan dalam bentuk lakonan hidup.

4. Meninggalkan kesan mendalam terutama apabila publisiti turut melibatkan penggunaan celebrity.

5. Menyalurkan maklumat atau mesej yang berwibawa kerana TV dianggap mempunyai authority. Contohnya, apabila berita ekonomi disiarkan di TV, audiens dan masyarakat secara umumnya memberi kepercayaan yang tinggi.

6. Mendominasi dan mempengaruhi arah aliran sosial yang tinggi kerana TV dianggap sebagai media elektronik utama di negara ini.

H. Bentuk Publisiti Korporat di Radio

Perniagaan, maklumat yang dilakukan oleh organisasi menggunakan pendekatan PR atau komunikasi korporat di radio adalah tertumpu kepada aspek-aspek pembangunan atau kemajuan yang dialami oleh organisasi. Antara kemajuan itu, termasuklah penonjolan produk baru, R&D dan pembangunan infrastruktur yang dialami oleh organisasi. Pengurusan atau penyediaan maklumat untuk disiarkan di Radio, pada kebiasaannya dirangka dalam empat bentuk utama iaitu;

1. Kertas atau helai fakta (fact sheet) -- Helai fakta digunakan sekiranya stesen radio mempunyai penyampai yang juga personaliti yang berwibawa yang boleh menyampaikan fakta korporat dalam tempoh siaran yang terbatas.

2. Skrip -- Maklumat korporat yang disediakan oleh organisasi dalam bentuk skrip. Skrip yang disediakan oleh organisasi akan diserahkan kepada pihak penyiar radio untuk diuruskan siarannya.

3. Gabungan periklanan dengan muzik -- Pengiklan akan menyediakan muzik yang bersesuaian untuk menyokong penyiaran atau publisiti maklumat atau mesej yang dikemukakan oleh organisasi.
4. Penyediaan rakaman – Terdapat organisasi yang mengemukakan rakaman mesej korporat, sama ada menggunakan pita, disket atau cekera yang dikirim kepada stesen radio, dan penyiar hanya bertindak mengurus siaran mesej berkenaan pada waktu yang telah ditetapkan.

I. Publisiti Maklumat Melalui Internet


Melalui internet, maklumat disebarkan tanpa batas sempadan kerana dunia telah dihubungkan secara siber (cyber). Kesen cyber (unseen network) tersebut telah membolehkan manusia mendapat maklumat dari seluruh pelosok dunia dalam tempoh waktu yang amat singkat. Sasaran atau audiensi penyebaran maklumat adalah tidak terbatas dan jumlahnya adalah besar (khususnya di kalangan audiensi yang mempunyai peluang untuk mengases internet).


Sama ada sesuatu hompej itu dibina oleh organisasi atau individu, kaedah asas penyediaan maklumat untuk hompej adalah sama. Pada peringkat awal maklumat publisiti adalah ditulis dan dirangka. Kemudian daripada itu ia diperkemaskan untuk dimasukkan ke dalam hompej yang dibina, sama ada secara sendiri atau melalui pihak ketiga atau perunding yang membantu penyediaan dan pembinaan hompej berkenaan.

Kebolehan untuk menerbitkan maklumat melalui hompej bagi organisasi atau individu yang terbabit memberikan peluang kepada gaya pemaparan imej dan identiti yang tersendiri dan kesemuanya adalah bergantung kepada kreativiti PR masing-masing. Penyebaran maklumat melalui internet dan hompej boleh mengurangkan risiko pengampangan (gatekeeping) atau pengawalan ketat berbundng dengan media lain, seperti radio, TV, majalah dan akhbar.

Penyaluran maklumat melalui internet dianggap bersifat semasa dan timely kerana maklumat dapat disiarkan dan dikemaskinikan pada setiap minit bahkan pada setiap saat, berbanding dengan media elektroaik lain yang lebih iewat dikemaskinikan maklumat siarannya. Maklumat tambahan menggunakan unsur visual dan grafik secara warna boleh dibuat untuk publisiti maklumat melalui hompej yang menyebabkan siaran maklumat lebih menarik.

Walaupun penyebaran maklumat menggunakan hompej adalah terbuka luas merentasi wilayah sempadan, namun sekiranya sasaran publisiti yang difokus adalah untuk wilayah tertentu, maka risiko jumlah audiens yang terbatas mungkin akan berlaku. Sebagai contoh, sekiranya maklumat publisiti PR melalui hompej untuk sebuah organisasi hanya difokus kepada mereka yang berada di Malaysia sahaja, maka hanya mereka yang memiliki kemudahan internet di Malaysia sahaja yang boleh mengases maklumat publisiti berkenaan. Sementara mereka yang tidak mempunyai kemudahan internet tidak akan memperolehi atau terdedah kepada maklumat berkenaan.
News Releases for Print Media

Want to see what a news release looks like? Go to your computer and use one of the search engines to find the news releases that have been put in cyberspace for news prospectors or just interested parties.

Want to see what kind of information the news media are looking for? Go to the site where news inquiries are located. Public relations people mine these sites daily to see if they can offer a response to an inquiry on behalf of their organization or a client.

Astute public relations people will contact the medium placing the query directly to see if they can fulfill the need. If the medium is interested, then the details are arranged about how the information is to be sent. It may go by modem or on an electronic disk. (Make sure the disk is in a format compatible with the recipient's computer.) It may go by fax. It must go directly to the person who intends to use the information in a story. And, it must go only to that person.

Public relations people who don't honor the protocols of responding to queries by giving the medium exclusive information lose their credibility in a hurry. They are probably the same PR people who send their news releases by "broadcast" fax. There are a number of problems with this approach. The media receiving the "broadcast" on their fax see their machine tied up and their fax paper used for something they didn't ask for and probably don't need or want. Furthermore, if they are going to use the information, they have to pay a news clerk to put the information into their electronic system. Clerks get paid. So, the PR person is costing the news medium money.
Nevertheless, the news release is probably the most frequently used tool for getting publicity. It is also frequently misused by public relations people and often not used at all by the media. A conservation-minded editor remarked that whole forests could be saved by outlawing news releases.

Why are news releases rejected? Studies generally cite these reasons as most significant: poor writing, incompleteness, inaccuracy, poor timing and little local or no reader interest. A paper simply doesn't have the space to print all the releases it receives, nor does a magazine. But basically, it gets down to this: Most releases don't get used because the PR people preparing them don't know what they're doing. Many think they do. One study of news release quality measured writing, accuracy, completeness and timeliness as perceived by public relations practitioners and media gatekeepers. The PR people considered their print and broadcast materials to be better written and more timely than the media representatives did. However, the media representatives rated the releases higher on accuracy and completeness than the PR practitioners rated the media's edited versions of public relations releases.1

Although some PR practitioners can recount stories of media errors, some editors keep files of releases that demonstrate glaring PR incompetence. One such file contains a very nice piece of news release stationery that came to the editor saying "For Immediate Release." That's all it said; the rest of the sheet was blank. One release said "Do not use after Sept. 23." It arrived in the editor's mail on September 25. In another, the name of the firm was spelled one way on the letterhead and a different way in the body of the release. Of course, these examples are a little extreme. Many releases come to newsrooms correctly spelled and punctuated. The names and dates are all where they should be. But they still get thrown away. Why? Because they contain no news.

**News**

The first responsibility of a public relations person preparing news releases is to know what news is. If a release doesn't contain news, it won't get used. On the other hand, if it contains valuable news, editors are quite likely to overlook poor writing, typographical errors and other blunders just to get the story. It's essential to know the difference between news and non-news.

**What Is News?**

Different people have different definitions for news. Textbooks on beginning reporting and articles about the mass media in society construct elaborate definitions of what news is or should be. But for public relations people, no esoteric or philosophical definition is necessary. A practical one will do: News is what newspapers publish and what radio and TV stations broadcast on their news shows. News is not what you think it is.
or what the company president thinks it is. Realizing this will take you a long way toward writing effective news releases.

In the words of well-known public relations consultant the late Philip Lealy,

The medium decides absolutely, in most cases, what it will use, when, and in what form. The editorial judgment or attitudes of the editors, however they may differ from those of the publicist and his organization, are the only determinants.1

This is not a new idea. The best public relations people have said the same thing for decades. Ivy Lee, one of the pioneers of public relations, once described how corporation executives would call on him to get their ideas printed in the newspaper. "They say you can get anything on the front page of the newspaper," an executive would tell Lee. He would reply: "I cannot do anything of the kind. If you want a subject to get on the first page of the newspapers, you must have the news in your statement sufficient to warrant it getting the first page."3

Furthermore, Lee would point out, what good would it do if the paper did print something just because you wanted it to? If a piece has no news value, people probably won't read it. And if people are likely to read it, it does have news value. If readers will be interested, an editor will be happy to use it without coercion or tricks.

The reason you want mass media gatekeepers to pay attention to your release is twofold. First of all, appearance in a publication that is important to your priority publics gives the information third-party credibility. Secondly, if a news release is picked up by a newspaper that has an on-line service or by a news service like the Associated Press or a media-owned service like the Dow Jones Wire or The New York Times, then people may encounter the information from your news release in more than one place. Repetition helps.

Finding News

You can encourage both mass and specialized media gatekeepers to use your materials by paying attention to what sort of material they are currently using and by building a reputation as a good source of timely and reliable information. To accomplish this, you must do two things. First, become familiar with the newspaper (or magazine, TV, radio station or other medium) you'll be sending releases to. In other words, if you want to know what news is, you have to read the papers. You have to watch TV newscasts. You should listen to radio news shows. You'll soon develop a sense for what is accepted as news and what isn't.

The second step is to become familiar with your own company or institution so that you'll be able to find the news within it. Presumably, you will work for an organization that does something worthwhile or that does things the public might find some value in knowing about. If you look around, you'll find things going on in the company that are similar to what the newspapers report about other companies. You'll find people who know things the public would like to know. You'll find research on
topics that affect people’s lives. You’ll find unusual things that are simply interesting in themselves.

Of course, a public relations writer’s job is to get things into the paper that will benefit the organization. Just looking for things editors consider news, therefore, may not achieve your goals. But there is a broad area where public benefit and private benefit overlap. Generating a greater public understanding of your company and its activities is almost always beneficial, and if in the process the public is entertained and informed, then everyone benefits.

**Getting News to the Mass Media**

Once you find the news within your organization, your next step is to get it to the public through some medium—newspaper, magazine, TV or radio. The news release is the tool most often used to do this.

*PR reporter* reminds us to distinguish between reportorial media and access media. News media committed to providing traditional news, defined as information that helps citizens make decisions, are reportorial media. They are represented by traditional newspapers and news magazines and the serious news operations in radio and television. News worthiness remains the primary criterion for deciding what to use.

And these media are typically the ones in which you want your releases to appear. Access media among newspapers, magazines, radio and television operations are more interested in sensationalizing and entertaining. Examples of access media include such forums as television talk shows, call-in shows, radio talk shows and public affairs panels. News worthiness has low priority with access media. Provocativeness seems to be of more concern. If something can wring an emotional response from readers, viewers or listeners, it can get distribution.

In cyberspace news releases are placed on-line either through news suppliers who provide that service to organizations or through organizations who present the information in their own Web sites. These new channels offer opportunities for exposure beyond the mass media. Trade and industry editors surf the Web to look for news. Competitors frequently scan sites to see what “the others” are doing. Special interest groups also monitor news release sites.

These clear distinctions between reportorial and access media do not hold in cyberspace, where news, entertainment and advertising can appear in an indiscriminate jumble. In addition to recognized news institution, cyberspace has all sorts of “news groups” and chatrooms that carry information that may or may not have any foundation in fact. Furthermore, there are rarely gatekeepers, which means that anyone can write anything and stand a good chance of having it accepted as fact.

For this reason, you’ll need to monitor what others may be saying about your organization or about issues your organization is concerned with. You might need to respond to false information. There’s a risk to ignoring it on the premise that to respond is to give the false information credibility. You had better correct something before it takes on a life of its own as it easily can in the access media.
Actually, misinformation about your organization or an issue your organization is concerned about can provide a news peg to get you space in the reportorial media. A news peg, or something timely to hang your story on, is essential to successfully place a story.

One way you can respond to false information is by sending appropriate news media a tip sheet that alerts them to the story. Tip sheets usually have their own letterhead that uses “tip sheet” as a heading and then identifies your organization with appropriate addresses and phone numbers. These tip sheets can be sent electronically, although many news editors say they are drowning in e-mail and faxed messages. You can also put the news tip on a news release service on the Internet.

Depending on how important you feel it is to get your story out, you can wait for a reporter to follow up on your tip sheet or you can simply file a story on your own. Be sure you put the story on the news release service, but also respond in the news group or chat site where the original misinformation appeared.

The widespread blurring of boundaries in cyberspace disturbs some news purists. They might see a problem with your putting a news release on your Web site, although many public relations people discount this point of view. An organization’s Web site is clearly a promotional place, one that may even carry advertising. Some editors complain about the increasing fuzziness between news and advertising. Others don’t seem to mind.

Those who don’t mind say that newspapers and magazines already are blurring the lines with things like newspaper special sections whose editorial content is paid for by the sections’ (often same-subject) advertisers, and magazine inserts and pullouts that look like news but are really advertising. In both of these cases, the material is supposed to be labeled “advertising,” but often the consumer doesn’t notice.

You want to be sure, though, that you know the differences between news, entertainment and advertising and that you carefully decide what you want to send to “reportorial” channels. How do you know if the release you want to send is newsworthy? There are several easy tests. Ask yourself: Is the information of general interest to readers not connected with your business? Is it about something that affects the lives of the media’s audience in some way (especially economically)? Is the substance of your release something unusual, out of the ordinary, or even bizarre? If you can answer yes to any of these questions, your release probably contains legitimate news, even if it also serves your own purposes.

**Writing News Releases**

How do you write legitimate news? The answer is simple: Prepare the material as you would if you were a reporter working for a paper. A news release should be written in the same form and style, following the same punctuation and spelling rules, that the publication you want it to appear in uses.
If you’ve ever been a reporter, writing a news release should be as easy as writing a straight news story. If you haven’t, you need to know something about the methods of writing news.

**Approach**

Every reporter has a personal method for approaching a story. But all methods should have the same first step: Identify the most important thing about the story. In writing a news release, the first step is identical. You must answer the question: What’s the most important thing I have to say? Your answer will determine what you should say in the lead.

**Lead**
The lead—the first paragraph or perhaps the first two—is the most important part of the release. You can’t write a good release without a good lead, and you can’t write a good lead until you’ve answered the question about what’s important.

Deciding what’s important sometimes takes a little judgment. *Important* must be construed broadly. What you really want to isolate is the most significant and most interesting aspect of your subject. And you have to keep in mind that *new* is what is happening *now*.

For example, if the release is about the opening of a new plant, the most important thing is the fact that the plant is *opening*. The action is the news. But is there something especially interesting about the plant itself? Is it the largest plant of its kind? The first? Will it provide a lot of jobs for the local economy? Once you’ve decided what’s important and also what’s interesting, you can write a lead.

The most important thing—in this case the action—should form the main part of the lead. “The plant is opening.” The interesting thing about the story provides an “angle” for the lead: “The first plant of its kind is opening,” according to X authority.

Sometimes you don’t have to look for the most important aspect of the story. For example, it may be the appearance of someone noteworthy. That is your lead. Of course, that might explain why public relations people planning special events always try to get celebrities to attend. The appearance of a well-known person becomes the focus for the news release.

Using the most interesting angle in the first sentence may cause you some problems in constructing the traditional newspaper lead, in which the who-what-when-where-why-how all appear in the first paragraph. Traditional leads are still the rule for most wire-service stories, because the first paragraph is all some newspapers will use. However, that first sentence can get very long if you try to jam in all the essential elements. The rule is often relaxed, so that only two or three of the traditional elements appear in the first sentence, with the others following in the next sentence or two.

If you’re writing a release for a wire service, try to get all of the elements in the first paragraph or, at most, the first two. When writing for dailies in your area, study...
Model News Release

Whether distributed by mail, in person or electronically, a news release should follow the basic format shown here. Look at each of the elements and study the content. Then compare it to the release in Example 10.3. Source: Used with permission of Doug Newsom and Bob J. Carroll.

Model News Release
Klaxon Corporation, One Professional Place, Anytown, USA 89999

Contact: Your name and title
Address: Corporate Communication
Klaxon Corporation
9999 Constellation Avenue
Anytown, USA 89999

Phone: 123 456-7890 (office)
FAX: 123 456-8901
E-mail: http://www@klaxon.com

Date release was distributed For immediate release

Identifying head: Proper form for news releases

Begin the body of your release about halfway from the top of the page. Always type double-spaced. There are no exceptions. That's because print or broadcast news editors need room to prepare your release for production.

Be sure the contact information is complete, including your home phone number and the date the release was distributed.

If it is a timed release, delete the "for immediate release" line and insert the proper embargo information, such as "12 noon, Friday, September 7, 199x." Be explicit.

An identifying headline should summarize the gist of the story. Its function is to tell editors in capsule form what is in the release.

-more-

(continued)
SHELL OIL PRESIDENT CITES POTENTIAL AND CHALLENGES
IN DEEP WATER GULF OF MEXICO

WASHINGTON (April 11, 1994) -- Large discoveries made in the last 10 years of
drilling in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico have identified this frontier area as the
next great potential source for domestic oil and gas resources, according to Philip J.
Carroll, president and CEO of Shell Oil Company.

"Oil and natural gas discoveries in waters up to one and a half miles deep have
shown the deep water Gulf of Mexico has the potential to rival our country's largest oil
field, Alaska's Prudhoe Bay," said Carroll today at the annual meeting of the National
Ocean Industries Association in Washington, D.C.

Carroll cited the significant progress made in the deep water, which he defined as
water deeper than 1500 feet. He identified future challenges to realization of the area's
full potential, which could approach 15 billion barrels of oil and natural gas.

"Just a decade ago, there were major questions about the area's geology and our
technological capability to produce in the deep water," said Carroll. "Many of those
questions have been resolved. Already an estimated three to four billion barrels have
been discovered, and production is set to begin in waters more than one half mile deep."

The largest deep water discovery announced to date is Shell's giant Mars field,
with potential ultimate recovery estimated at more than 700 million barrels. Mars
production will begin in 1996. Shell plans to begin production this month at its $1.2
billion Auger project, located in 2,860 feet of water off Louisiana. Shell installed a
record-setting tension leg platform at the site earlier this year. In addition, Shell is
developing two deep water natural gas discoveries using subsea technology.

- more -
Although industry has successfully developed deep water production technology, its high costs are limiting wide-scale development of the area’s oil and gas. Less than half of the deep water volumes discovered to date — about 1.5 billion barrels — have been deemed commercial and slated for development. Shell currently is evaluating the economics of going forward with 10 additional deep water Gulf of Mexico discoveries.

“A major challenge to our industry is to achieve technological breakthroughs to lower deep water production costs,” said Carroll. “And we are making progress. For example, we have designed Mars to have more than double the production of Auger at about the same cost.”

Despite refinements in technology, Carroll cautioned that opportunities for cost reductions are limited, and oil and gas prices are not forecast to be sufficient to support full development of the deep water’s potential.

He called on the U.S. government to move forward with measures designed to provide economic incentives for further deep water production. Legislation has been introduced in the U.S. Senate to reduce deep water royalty payments and to provide a deep water production tax credit.

Carroll cited an analysis conducted by DRI/McGraw Hill which found that a deep water production tax credit would stimulate deep water development, create thousands of jobs and result in a net increase in federal revenues.

“In the past decade, our government has enacted measures to prevent drilling in virtually all other offshore areas. It is time now for our political leaders to stop forward and cooperate in development of the deep water’s tremendous potential,” said Carroll.

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HOUSTON  
713-241-4544

Mike Sternasky  
NEW YORK  
212-632-4888

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Proper form for news releases, ADD 1 -

Use at least one-inch margins at the right, left, top and bottom. Your release should be typed perfectly. Do not insert editing marks. Indent paragraphs at least 10 spaces.

The first paragraph is the lead or summary of the most important fact(s) in the story.

Paragraphs should be short, preferably no more than four lines, punctuated correctly, easy to read and understand. Sentences should average about 15 to 16 words.

If you are writing a broadcast release, use broadcast style. Especially remember to use active verbs, spell out numbers rather than using Arabic numerals and give phonetic pronunciation (in parentheses) for names or technical terms.

One-page releases are more likely to be printed or broadcast, but you can use additional pages as necessary. If you do, remember to insert "-more-" at the bottom of all but the last page.

At the top of the second page, flush left the identifying "slug" line from the suggested head and "Add 1" for page two, "Add 2" for page three, and so on. Never split a sentence or paragraph between pages.

Although the symbol "-30-" is used most often to show the end of a release, some people prefer "end" or the symbol "\^".

- 30 -
Unfortunately, the writing in most releases is more complex than that in the news stories of a typical daily paper. You must learn to write for the editors if you write news releases. Don’t write for your boss. Write your releases for a city editor, just as you would write any news story if you were a reporter.

That doesn’t mean you should give the facts in such a way that your story makes your company look bad (as a real reporter might do). But it does mean that you leave out no pertinent facts, however embarrassing they might be.

When you write a story, it’s not enough to conform to newspaper style in level of complexity and in basic story structure. You must follow newspaper style to the finest detail, making sure that every comma and period is in the proper place.

For newspapers, this generally means adhering to the AP Stylebook. Most newspapers follow AP style, but many have special style rules that you should know. It’s a good practice to ask editors for copies of their stylebooks. You can get a copy of the AP Stylebook at a college bookstore or by writing directly to AP.

The stylebook will guide you on such matters as how to capitalize, how to abbreviate and what titles to use for specific people. It also describes certain punctuation rules that may differ from common usage. In AP style, for example, there is no comma between a name and Jr. or Sr., as in “Joe Zich Jr.”

AP has adopted Webster’s Third International Dictionary as the standard guide for spelling. Use the first spelling listed, or the spelling given with a complete definition if a word has more than one entry (like T-shirt and tee shirt). The AP Stylebook lists some exceptions to the dictionary spelling. If a word isn’t in Webster’s New World, check in Webster’s Third International (and think again about whether you should use the word).

Since any written material you give to a newspaper will be copyedited anyway, you might wonder why it’s necessary to pay strict attention to the details of newspaper style. In fact, it’s not absolutely necessary but it’s still a good idea. Even if your release is rewritten completely, the rewriter will notice if the original was in correct style—and will take particular note if it was in incorrect style. It’s a matter of making a good impression. If your style is correct, an editor will know that the release was prepared carefully by someone who knew what he or she was doing. Correct spelling is even more important in this regard. If you don’t bother to spell words correctly, an editor is likely to assume that you aren’t very careful with the facts either. And if an editor can’t trust your information, the release is worthless.

What about grammar? Some writers worry about grammar above all else, combing every line for a possible split infinitive or a who that should be a whom. Certainly good grammar is important, and awkward, obvious errors like subject-verb disagreements should not be tolerated. But don’t worry more about grammar than about communication. Your first concern must be the clarity of the message. If your sentences are clear and understandable, the grammar will take care of itself (see Chapter 7).

One more word about style. If you plan to send releases to papers other than local dailies— releases about financial news, for example, might go to The Wall Street
Journal—you should know that these papers sometimes have completely different style rules. Some public relations people send the same release to all papers, using the style applicable to the majority. You can get away with this, but it never hurts to tailor releases to individual publications. Remember that some papers—for example, The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times—have styles of their own.

Electronic Transmission of Releases

Having the correct style is particularly important now that many public relations practitioners are sending releases directly from their computers to the news medium’s computer via modem. Other releases are sent by facsimile. One practitioner predicts that the delivery of news releases by any other means (non-electronic mail, messenger or in-person delivery) will be obsolete soon. The advantage of computer transmission over facsimile transmission is that, once the release is in the medium’s computer system, it can be called up for editing (or, of course, “killing”).

Electronic or fax distribution systems aren’t without problems, however. When Consumers Union turned over a news release to a fax firm for distribution to about 1,000 editors, it learned later that some editors received two, three, or even eight copies of the release. That’s a little irritating to editors, who raised a storm of complaints. More than 300 letters of apology went to these editors—at the expense of the fax firm, of course—but the damage was done.4

Types of Releases

Once you know how to write a release, the next question is: Why and when should you write one? The reason for writing releases depends on the type of company or institution you write for and what its goals are. Frequently the release is just one of many tools a company uses to get publicity. Sometimes releases are an important communications tool for explaining the company’s position on major public issues. But
remember that PR people also, as Boston University PR professor Otto Leding puts it, "have an obligation to satisfy people's right to know about the operation of government units and the activities of corporations and nonprofit organizations that affect the public interest." News releases are often necessary to meet that obligation to the public.

Another reason for issuing releases is simply to keep the record straight. Tight-lipped corporations that maintain low profiles and seldom issue releases are frequently headed by executives who complain privately about the "unfair" treatment they get in the media, or about the media's many mistakes in covering their companies. But they have little right to complain when a paper gets the facts wrong if they haven't provided that paper with the correct information. News releases are one way of helping papers get the facts right when they report about your business.

It's not only a matter of information. Besides getting publicity for your company, a good news release program helps build good media relations. Reporters get paid to find news and write stories, and if you help them find news—real news—the reporters will be grateful. One way to help reporters find news is to send out tip sheets.

If you've spotted a news story, you may want to alert an editor through a tip sheet. Send to the appropriate editor by name and department, the tip usually opens with a provocative sentence or paragraph that sets the stage for the story idea. Details then follow, perhaps with suggested treatment.

If it is a good tip, the editor may call and ask you to do the story as suggested or with some other slant. You can be sure the editor's interest is high or the request would not be made. If the story is both newsworthy and complex, the editor may call to say that a reporter has been assigned to the story and will need your help getting background and details. The odds are good that the story, if done, will appear in print. Your task, then, will be mostly to provide liaison and assistance with gathering information. While doing that you'll have many opportunities to plant ideas about how the story might be approached and written.

Sometimes you'll find it advisable, and productive, to send along a selling memo with a news release. Such a memo is especially useful if you've written a story exclusively for one newspaper or one that goes to several newspapers but with different treatments. Selling memos seem to have little value for the same release that goes to all media in exactly the same way. Such releases are looked upon almost as boilerplate by editors. Many editors simply won't touch them for that reason.

A specially tailored story, one that may be a little weak on news value but reasonably strong in human interest, can be "sold" with the right mixture of persuasiveness and substance. Like tip sheets, selling memos often open with a provocative sentence or paragraph to gain attention and then follow with the selling message. The essential point to remember about writing a selling memo is that editors buy for their reasons, not yours. That means that you must know your readers, listeners or viewers of the medium in order to make an argument the editor will heed. If you don't tailor your sell to a particular editor and the medium's audience, you'll end up with no sale.
When do you write releases? The rule is simple: When you have news, release it. Certain things call for news releases. Generally these fall into one of several basic categories: announcements, created news, spot news, response situations, features, bad news and special matter.

**Announcement Releases** These releases can announce the marketing of a new product, the opening of a new plant, the company’s latest financial results or a new company policy. Such routine items don’t require long releases. Just be sure the news is legitimate. In most cases a new line of a familiar product is material for an ad, not a news release. The product has to be of a completely new kind—something unique—to deserve a news story. A good test for the value of the information is “Who cares?” If the answer is “Only a few,” it’s not news for the mass media, although it may be trade press or association news.

**“Created News” Releases** Often, a mere announcement isn’t enough to attract much media attention. A company may therefore try to “dress up” the announcement release by making sure something newsworthy is going on. The company might bring a well-known speaker to a company function, for example, or stage a formal ceremony or other event such as a concert or rally. This gives the news release writer something more interesting or newsworthy to say and an opportunity to draw positive attention to the company.

Remember one thing, though: There should never be any confusion about what’s really going on and who is responsible. If the company is behind an event, make that fact clear. Deception of any kind is reprehensible, but it’s doubly reprehensible in a news release.

**Spot News Releases** Announcement releases can usually be planned. But sometimes things happen without warning. An electric utility’s main power plant can break down, for example, raising the prospect of power shortages or higher costs for replacement power. An explosion can occur in a munitions factory; an airplane can be hijacked. Such occurrences are spot news, and when they happen, a news release is in order. You must fill in the facts as they become available, issue news bulletins and follow with a release incorporating as much information as you can provide.

In these cases the public relations person must function like a reporter working on deadline, gathering the information quickly and writing the news bulletin for release without delay. If media people aren’t provided with information immediately, they will write their stories from whatever scraps of information they can find. And frequently in such a case the reporting is inaccurate.

A spot news release often has to be followed up the next day with a second release, explaining how the initial events were resolved.

**Response Releases** Often news about a company reaches the media from sources other than the public relations department. A consumer group may issue a report criti-
cal of the company, for instance. The government may announce an investigation into company pricing practices. A research group may publish a major study on your company's industry.

When these things happen, reporters call for a response. Companies with good public relations organizations anticipate these calls and have response releases ready. Responses may be brief statements or full-fledged news releases with the company's position set down in detail.

In emergency situations, news releases may not be enough. If this is the case, public relations people must use the telephone, e-mail and fax to transmit the latest developments to the media. Chapter 14 discusses crisis communications.

Under normal circumstances, even if you are not asked for a response, you may want to offer one anyway as a way of communicating your organization's views. For example, when animal rights groups protested against the use of animals in research laboratories, organizations including the American Heart Association (which funds research) volunteered responses, as did universities that had accepted grants for such research. Other respondents were drug companies, cosmetics manufacturers and medical professionals.

**Feature Releases** Not every story in a newspaper involves events that happened yesterday or today. Feature stories about topics of special interest occupy an increasing amount of newspaper space these days. All public relations people can find feature material somewhere in their organizations—something going on in research and development, for example, like a new production process that improves efficiency or helps reduce pollution. Such feature stories can be prepared for newspapers as ordinary news releases.

Feature releases create a problem, however, if more than one newspaper in the same city covers your company. Newspapers don't expect special treatment when it comes to regular news; they know you give ordinary news releases to all news media. But features are different. An editor is not likely to use a feature if he or she knows some other paper might be running the same story. It's best to offer different features to different papers, or at least to develop a different angle on the story for each paper in the area. For feature writing, see Chapter 12.

**Bad-News Releases** Sometimes events occur that a company would like to keep quiet. The natural tendency in such cases is to issue no news releases at all and hope that the problem will go unnoticed. But more often than not, attempts to keep bad news out of the media backfire. Such stories often involve a company's regulatory agency. Since regulatory agencies are supposed to act in the public's interest, you can be sure the agency will release a report. You've seen such stories: a restaurant gets a poor sanitation report from the city's health department; an industry is accused of contaminating a water supply; a nuclear plant gets a poor safety rating from a routine inspection; a manufacturing plant is accused of exposing its workers to health hazards.
without warning or protecting them. And what do you commonly see as the response of the accused? "No comment."

If your company has been attacked and you have made your own announcement release on the situation, the story will still be in the paper—and it may be prominently displayed—but it will be treated in a less sensational manner than if you issued no comment. If you hand over the facts to a reporter, the result will usually be a straight report. When a reporter has to dig the story out, however, he or she will make the article more dramatic, and the story will be more likely to linger on the front pages, with the reporter unveiling additional bits of information as they are uncovered. This is the classic treatment of a cover-up. In recent years, organizations have begun to realize that covering up a problem can become a worse problem than the original problem itself.

**Column Notes, Letters, Guest Columns and Photos** Sometimes the information you'd like to see in the paper doesn't fit the form of an ordinary news story. That doesn't mean you should forget about it. Most papers have special columns or sections that print unusual items, and these are often among the best-read parts of the publication. Individual columnists might make use of readers' information. Or readers might want to write a "guest column." (You might want to write one under the byline of your company's chief executive.)

Such items don't always follow the form of an ordinary news release, but they can accomplish much the same thing. Study the newspapers your organization deals with so you'll know what outlets are available.

Photos are among the most effective publicity tools. Photos must tell a story to be worth using. They can accompany a release as an illustration, or they can stand alone. In either case, they must interest the audience. Sometimes single photos and their captions even qualify as what editors call "wild art"—photos that add reader interest to the page. Captions for photos that illustrate a story carry information that relieves the story of some detail. A caption for "wild art" only tells readers what they are looking at and points out the picture's significance, if any.

The AP's rules for captions are worth remembering:

- The caption's job is to describe and explain the picture to the reader.
- The challenge is to do it interestingly, accurately, always in good taste.
- A further challenge is to write the caption, whenever appropriate, in a sprightly, lively vein.
- An APME Continuing Study Committee put together Ten Tests of a Good Caption. They are:
  1. Is it complete?
  2. Does it identify, fully and clearly?
  3. Does it tell when?
  4. Does it tell where?
  5. Does it tell what's in the picture?
  6. Does it have the names spelled correctly, with the proper name on the right person?
  7. Is it specific?
8. Is it easy to read?
9. Have as many adjectives as possible been removed?
10. Does it suggest another picture?

And rule No. 11, the Cardinal Rule, never, never to be violated:

NEVER WRITE A CAPTION WITHOUT SEEING THE PICTURE.

The biggest boon to PR photo distribution is the Associated Press's 1993 creation of PhotoExpress, which delivers PR photos for a fee to its more than 1,000 member newspapers in the USA.

For media that don't get PhotoExpress, two other major delivery wires for photos are PR Newswire (PRN) and Business Wire (BW). These have been photo distributors for PR sources for a number of years, but the media make the decision about whether to accept photos from either of these services.

Both PRN and BW use other services to format and deliver photos to AP. BW uses Feature Photo Service and PRN uses Weck, which does not initiate any business itself. Weck Photo Database automatically stores all color and black-and-white photos sent by PRN.

Some organizations have started to use photo databases for images that they may want to use for internal or external distribution. As desk-top video techniques improve, companies will certainly take advantage of this technology, especially to deliver video to broadcast media.

For photos going abroad, it is necessary to use an international distribution channel, which moves the photos via satellite.

Preparing and Delivering News Releases

With news releases, as with most things, substance is more important than form. But that doesn't mean that form is unimportant. Knowing some things about form will help you prepare releases in the way most convenient for the people who use them. (See Example 10.3.)

Technical Considerations

Leave space at the top of the first page, where an editor can write instructions.

Double- or even triple-space. Your copy needs to be easy to read and edit. A newsperson may edit the copy, but a newsclerk will probably type it into the computer system.

Make sure the name, address and phone number of the company or organization are all on the news-release form. Also include the name, office phone number, home phone number and fax numbers of a person to contact for further information. A morning paper may be working on a story at midnight, and if a question comes up, the editor will need a number to call.
News Release Checklist

1. Is the lead direct and to the point? Does it contain the most important and most interesting aspects of the story?
2. Has the local angle been emphasized?
3. Have who, what, when, where and why been answered in the first few paragraphs?
5. Has editorial comment been placed in quotation marks and attributed to the appropriate person?
6. Are quotations natural? That is, do they sound as though they could have been spoken?
7. Has newspaper style (AP or other) been followed faithfully throughout the release?
8. Are spelling and punctuation correct?
9. Have all statements of fact been double-checked for accuracy?
10. Has the release been properly prepared, typed and double-spaced?
11. Is the release dated? Is release time indicated?
12. Are names, phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses for further information included?

The release should have two dates: the actual date the release was sent to the media and the date on which the release is cleared for use. If the release can be used at any time, "for immediate release" is sufficient to indicate the release date. When necessary, specify "A.M. papers" or "P.M. papers" to indicate that the release can appear only in the day's morning edition or only in the day's evening edition. Remember, some morning papers have an early edition that appears before the stated publication day. This is especially true for Sunday editions. Afternoon papers often issue a street edition that appears well before noon. If the time of the story's appearance in print is critical, be sure to specify which edition the story can be used in, or fix a time after which it may be used. Releases to non-daily newspapers should be embargoed by date only, not by edition or time of day.

Once the release has been typed on a typewriter, word processor or computer terminal and is ready to be sent, go back one more time and check every fact, name, place, time and date. You can't afford mistakes. Nothing is more important than absolute accuracy. If you give an editor a release with just one false sentence, one misspelled name or one wrong date that gets into the paper, that editor is going to have to apologize to somebody for your mistake. And the next time that editor receives a
release from you, he or she will have to take extra time to check over the facts in your story. The editor who doesn’t have the time—and editors usually don’t—will probably throw your release away rather than risk more mistakes. Things might not go this way every time with every editor, but there’s only one way to guarantee they won’t happen this way at all: Get everything right, every time.

Dealing with the Media

Once you have written a release and checked it for errors, a few important questions remain. Where should you send the release, and to whom? When should you send it? And, aside from preparing it properly, what can you do to make sure the release is used?

Ordinarily, you send releases to the daily newspaper. If your company serves an entire region, your release should be of interest to several daily papers. A nationwide firm may want to send releases to every city where it has a plant or office. The military sends its news releases to the hometowns of the individuals involved in the stories. A computer program can handle this kind of distribution, filling in names and appropriate information in blanks in a formatted story. Stories going to international media are usually translated at the point of origin, except when agencies have international offices to handle translation and distribution.

Although most news release publicity begins with daily newspapers, it is a mistake to stop there. Don’t overlook wire services if the release will be of interest over a wide area. With news wire services, though, the release will not go to a paper in the form you gave it; the wire editors will rewrite it. If you want to get the release to the paper as you wrote it, you can use one of several publicity wire services. 49

Weekly papers that serve small towns, rural areas and, sometimes, neighborhood communities within large metropolitan centers are another important place to send releases. Weeklies may have a low circulation, but they are well read by those who receive them. If you’re trying to reach community audiences, weeklies can be much more effective than dailies. However, their news hole is small, so be concise.

Most releases should also be sent to the electronic media. But remember, broadcast style differs from print style. A release prepared for a newspaper must be completely rewritten for TV or radio (see Chapter 11 on broadcast writing). Since the electronic version will normally be much shorter than the print version, you should attach the print version to the release you send to radio and TV stations. This makes the details available to the electronic journalists if they need them.

It’s helpful to know the right person to send a release to. Most TV and radio stations have a news director, and all releases should go to that individual. Newspapers are more complicated, however. Various section editors may be interested in the news you have to offer, but sometimes their responsibilities overlap and it’s hard to choose the right recipient. Most large cities have media directories, updated monthly. You can refer to these in determining your contacts.
Otherwise, a few simple guidelines may be helpful. Releases specifically aimed at a single topic (such as food or sports) should go to the section editor. If the news is of general local interest, the city editor is usually the right person for the release. (When you're in doubt about who should get the release, the city editor is probably the best bet.) If one reporter covers your company or organization all the time, send the release directly to him or her.

Sometimes it's appropriate to send a release to more than one person at the same paper—a reporter and an editor, for example. Some companies regularly send copies of releases to editorial writers, especially if the release addresses a controversial topic. If you send more than one copy of the release to a given paper, though, make sure that you indicate that you have done so on the release. To avoid duplicated story assignments, you must let the editor know that a reporter already has your release.

When should you send the release? On breaking news stories, as soon as possible; hand-deliver the release if at all feasible, or call and connect your electronic system to the medium's if the news contact wants your story. For announcements of upcoming events, mailing the story three or four days in advance is usually sufficient. For a major story that should be released at a specific time, have the release arrive at the newspaper the day before the desired publication date. Keep in mind that weekly papers have different deadline schedules from dailies. A weekly published on Thursdays might have a deadline as early as Monday. You must know the deadlines in order to deliver your release on time.

Calendar-of-Events editors often have early deadlines and should receive notification in a short form that matches their style.

As for getting the papers to use your release, there is no substitute for a well-written release with genuine news value. All other considerations are secondary. But assuming that the release is properly prepared, you can do some things to enhance the chances that it will get printed. One is to choose the proper release date. Setting the release time for Sunday helps your chances, since Sunday papers are large and have more space to fill. Monday is also good, because news staffs are small on the weekend and news tends to be slow. Including a good picture with the release is also helpful, since editors are always interested in good art for page-design purposes. Perhaps the best way to get a release used, however, is to get it moved on the wire services. Newspapers use wire stories in preference to releases to save time in editing and formatting.

One thing that won't help you to get the release used is printing it on colored paper stock. Many public relations people use this technique to attract attention to their releases, but according to one survey an overwhelming majority of editors disliked colored news release paper—although most thought that colored ink for the name on the letterhead was acceptable.

This chapter has covered primarily news releases to newspapers, but in practice you will be sending releases to a number of specialized news media, including trade
papers and internal publications. These publications are discussed in Chapters 15 and 17. Writing news releases is just one of many activities you will be involved in.

**Conclusions**

- Many people other than media gatekeepers have access to news releases placed on the Internet.
- News releases can be a valuable communication tool, but only if they are really news.
- In general, news media personnel do not consider news releases to be as well written and as timely as public relations practitioners think they are.
- Internet access to news releases poses advantages and disadvantages.
- News media personnel evaluate releases on the basis of writing quality, accuracy, completeness and timeliness.
- To understand what news is most acceptable to the media you are trying to serve, you must study the media.
- You must understand your own institution to find the news within it.
- Use news and advertising information appropriately, recognizing that lines between the two are blurring.
- The lead is the most important part of your news release.
- A local angle is important in getting the news editor’s attention.
- In amplifying the lead, use short, concise sentences and be sure to cover the who, what, when, where, why and how of the story in the first two paragraphs.
- PR writers can develop quotes for stories and get them approved by the person to whom they are attributed—a luxury news writers don’t have.
- News releases should be written in a simple, clear, direct style.
- The *AP Stylebook* dictates generally accepted news style, though some media have their own styles.
- News tips are sent to media to stimulate editors’ interest in covering a story.
- News releases are written to communicate announcements, information on special events, spot news, responses to events, features and reactions to bad news.
- Some information should be placed in forms other than straight news releases—for example, column notes, letters or guest columns.
- Technical conventions determine the proper form for releases.
- Releases may be sent computer to computer. Some are placed on the Internet.
- All news releases used by traditional news media will be edited, and some may not appear at all.
- Before you approach the media with releases or news tips, be sure you know the difference between reportorial and access media.
- Use tip sheets to enlist the consideration of editors for a story.
You may need to write a “selling memo” to accompany your news release if it is a little weak on news value but has good human interest.

- Photos and their captions may be sent with a story as illustrations or alone as “wild art.” In either case, they are good public relations tools.
- AP’s distribution of PR photos has aided delivery.
- Photos may be sent via satellite by news wire services.
- Many organizations are developing databases for their photos.
- The decision where to send releases is critical.
- Releases should be prepared in a style and format appropriate to the medium.
- Before distributing a news release, public relations writers should review all 12 items in the news release checklist (see Example 10.3).
- To help communicate public relations messages and to build good media relations, news releases must contain genuine news, must be written in the proper form and style and must be truthful, complete and accurate.

Exercises

1. Prepare a news release for newspapers from the position paper in Chapter 9.
2. Write a news release for a specialized publication from the same position paper. Name the publication and state its purpose.
3. Write cover letters for both, telling each editor why the story has value for that publication’s audience.

Notes

10 For a description of publicity wire services, see Doug Newsom, Judy Van Slyke Turk and Dean Kruckeberg, This is PR, 6th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1996), Chapter 12.
Selected Bibliography

Kevin Barnhurst, Seeing the Newspaper (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).
Doug Newsom, Judy VanSlyke Turk and Dean Kruckenberg, This is PR, 6th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1996).
Chris Petersen, Fresh Ink: Behind the Scenes at a Major Metropolitan Newspaper (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995).
Radio and Television

Radio and television, including cable, offer many opportunities for the public relations writer who wants to effectively reach both mass and specialized audiences.

Broadcasting and its various forms are important because they serve as the primary source of information for most of the population. More than 80 percent listen to the radio daily, and people spend more time watching television than doing anything else other than working or sleeping.

Writing for electronic media, however, requires a special perspective. This chapter explains how to think in terms of how writing sounds to the ear, how sound bites can be integrated into copy, and how visual elements can be used to tell a story.
RADIO

Radio, lacking the glamour of television and the gee-whiz technology of space satellites, is not always the first medium that public relations people think of when planning an information campaign.

Yet on a local level, radio is a cost-effective way to reach large numbers of people in various age, ethnic and income groups. Radio benefits by its ability to be heard almost anywhere. It is the only medium, for example, that can reach millions of Americans as they commute to and from work in their cars. In addition, the miracle of the transistor brings radio to mail carriers on their routes, carpenters on construction sites, homeowners pulling weeds in their gardens and exercise enthusiasts working out at a gym or jogging.

Approximately 10,000 radio stations are on the air in the United States, ranging from low-powered outlets operated by volunteers to large metropolitan stations audible for hundreds of miles. Although radio is a mass medium, each station has its own defined audience.

The station’s format often determines the nature of the audience. There are hard rock stations for young people, all-news stations for commuters, classical stations that appeal to an older and better-educated group, and stations playing 1960s music for aging baby boomers.

A public relations practitioner should study each station’s format and submit material suitable to it. There is little sense in sending information about senior citizen recreational programs to the news director of a hard rock FM station with an audience primarily of teenagers.

You can determine the demographics of a station by consulting radio and television directories or contacting the station’s advertising and marketing department. One common source of advertising rates and demographic data is published by Standard Rate and Data Services.

Radio News Releases

Because so many radio stations completely rewrite all the news releases they receive, some public relations people just send newspaper-type releases to radio stations. However, numerous radio stations accept real radio releases and definite rules apply to these. Radio is based on sound, and every radio release must be written so that it can be easily read by an announcer and clearly understood by a listener.

Format There are several major differences between a radio release and a news release prepared for print media. Although the basic identifying information is the same (letterhead, contact, subject), you also need to give the length of the radio release. For example, “RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT: 30” or “RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT: 60.” This indicates that the announcement will take 30 or 60 seconds to read.

The timing is vital because broadcasters must fit their messages into a rigid time frame that is measured down to the second. Most announcers read at a speed of
150 to 160 words per minute. Because word lengths vary, it is not feasible to set exact word counts for any length of message. Instead, the general practice is to use a line count. With a word processor set for 60 spaces per line, you will get the following times:

- five lines = 20 seconds.
- eight lines = 30 seconds.
- 16 lines = 60 seconds.

Another difference is style. A print news release uses standard English and punctuation. Sentences can be quite long at times. In a radio release, a more conversational style is used and the shorter the sentence, the better. This allows the announcer to draw a breath between thoughts and the listener to easily follow what is being said. An average sentence length of 10 words is a good goal.

It's also possible to use incomplete sentences in a radio news release. Here is an example of a 30-second announcement:

It’s been called the best investment a woman can make for herself ... For her own health—and for her family. It’s a mammogram for the early detection of breast cancer. October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month ... and all month long you can get discounted mammograms by calling the American Cancer Society at 1-800-AC5-2345. That’s 1-800-227-2345. Get a mammogram—it can save your life.

Notice that the telephone number is repeated twice. This is always a good idea because listeners don’t always get the number on the first mention.

**TIPS FOR WRITING THE RADIO NEWS RELEASE**

- Time is money in radio. Stories should be no longer than 60 seconds. Stories without actualities (found items) should be 30 seconds or less.
- The only way to time your story is to read it out loud, slowly.
- A long or overly commercial story is death. Rather than editing it, a busy radio newscaster will discard it.
- Convey your message with the smallest possible number of words and facts.
- A radio news release is not an advertisement; it is not a sales promotion piece. A radio news release is journalism—spoken.
- Announcers punctuate with their voices; not all sentences need verbs or subjects.
- Releases should be conversational. Use simple words and avoid legal-speak.
- After writing a radio news release, try to shorten every sentence.
- Listeners have short attention spans. Have something to say and say it right away.
- Never start a story with a name. While listeners are trying to figure out who the person is, they forget to listen to the sentences that follow.

Source: News Broadcast Network, 600 First Avenue, Suite 310, Seattle, WA 98104.
Audiotape News Releases

Audiotape sent to a radio station can take two forms: the straight message, recorded by an unidentified announcer, and the "actuality," which uses the voice of an identified spokesperson. When an actuality is used, it is customary to have an introduction and a close that identify the person speaking.

Actualities are better than straight announcements because the message comes from a "real person" rather than a nameless announcer. They are also more acceptable to stations, possibly for the same reason.

Here is an example of an actuality:

For:  Marshal Hale Memorial Hospital
Radio News Actuality
"Eating Disorders Program"

LEAD: Today, a new local clinic is being dedicated that exclusively treats the eating disorders anorexia and bulimia. Here's Dr. Erica Goode, medical director of the eating disorders program at Marshal Hale Memorial Hospital.

DR. GOODE: We've seen a higher incidence of anorexia and bulimia partially because body conformation has become an important priority in our society. In other words, many people, especially women, feel pressured to keep their bodies thin. Here at Marshal Hale, we have a treatment process that emphasizes psychotherapy, body image therapy, and a food and eating group. I'm excited about our program because we're able to separate anorexics and bulimics from psychiatric patients and provide them with a relaxing atmosphere where more help can be given to them.

CLOSE: The goal of the eating disorders program is to normalize the patients' eating and bring back their emotional well-being.

Format The preferred length for an audiotape is one minute; however, shorter tapes can be used. It is advisable to accompany any sound tape with a complete script of the tape. This enables the news director to judge the value of the tape without having to run it.

Not all sound tapes are limited to one announcement. It is a common practice to record several public service announcements (PSAs) on one tape. They may be of varying length, but they should be accompanied by cue sheets and scripts. The format and structure of PSAs will be discussed shortly.

Production Every audiotape starts with a carefully written and accurately timed script. The next step is to record the words. In doing this, it is imperative to control the quality of the sound. A few large organizations have complete facilities for this; some get help from moonlighting station employees; but most people use a professional recording service.

The recording services have first-class equipment and skilled personnel. They can take a script, edit it, eliminate words or phrases that will not be understandable,
record at the proper sound levels, and produce a finished tape suitable for broadcasting. They can find an announcer of whatever type is best suited to the kind of message to be delivered, and they can produce many copies of a tape.

Radio news stories and PSAs can be produced on cassette or reel-to-reel tapes. The most common method, and the most economical, is cassette. If you're doing a national distribution, the CD format is also suitable. You can find a recording service by asking your colleagues for recommendations or by looking under "Recording Services" in the Yellow Pages.

**Delivery** Audiotapes can be mailed to stations, and this is often done if the topic doesn't have a crucial time element. The radio news feature in Figure 8.1 is an example. In the trade, such features are called "evergreens" because they are in season year-round.

However, most late-breaking news material is now transmitted by telephone. When a forest fire threatened California's Napa Valley, a large winery featured its president in a topical actuality. He reported that the fire had not endangered the grape crop and went on to forecast an excellent harvest. When the tape was offered by telephone to 50 or so radio stations, almost 40 accepted it for use.

**Use** Producing audiotapes can be costly. When Sears distributed a radio news release responding to charges of overcharging customers at auto repair centers in California, the cost of preparing and distributing a national release was $3,900. Ford racked up a $3,500 bill for a news release on battery recycling as part of Earth Day festivities.

The basic point is that you should be selective about distribution to stations that have an interest in using such material. Radio releases, like news releases, should not be shotgunned to every radio station.

You also need to monitor usage. Many organizations send a return postcard on which the station can report use. However, News Broadcast Network estimates that usage cards only generate a 5 to 7 percent response rate. Other organizations simply call the station and ask how many times a particular story or announcement aired. By using Arbitron ratings, which give estimated audience figures, public relations people can then calculate how many listeners were exposed to the message. Evaluation procedures are discussed in Chapter 20.

The use of audiotapes is popular among radio stations and is expected to increase as stations search for ways to cope with reduced news staffs. One survey, by Coleman Research, found that 43 percent of the radio news directors surveyed nationally planned to increase the use of sound bites in their news shows.

**Public Service Announcements**

A public service announcement (PSA) is defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as an unpaid announcement that promotes the programs of government or voluntary agencies or that serves the public interest. In general, as part of their responsibility to serve the public interest, radio and TV stations provide free time to charitable and civic organizations. Thus a PSA may be a message
NEWS OF YOUTH

If a teen says you're "wack," is that a compliment—or are you getting "dissed" (put down)? Is WAZDA 4-1-1 a new phone extension? If a guy says a girl is "mobile," does that mean she has a really nice car? If you feel like a "barney"—a newcomer or novice—to the world of teen slang, you're certainly not alone. Ready to clear up the confusion are researchers at Leo Burnett, the Chicago-based advertising agency that conducts a semi-annual study of youngsters nationwide on such topics as television, fashion and music. WAZDA 4-1-1 means "what's up?" Mobile means attractive. Wack is cool and bonk is uncool. Someone who's wiggin' is strange or weird. And a couch commander is a TV remote control! Data from this study on what's hot and what's not with today's teens is used by many of the nation's top companies.

Figure 8.1: Ever wonder where disc jockeys get their material? One source is the topical news feature. In this case, the source is Leo Burnett, a Chicago advertising agency. Notice, however, that the focus is on information—and the agency is mentioned only once. (Courtesy of North American Precis Syndicate, New York.)

From the American Heart Association about the necessity of regular exercise or an appeal from a civic club for teacher volunteers in a literacy project. Profit-making organizations rarely receive free broadcast time despite the "public service" nature of their messages, but sometimes an informational campaign by a trade group qualifies. For example, the Aluminum Association did get free airtime on a number of stations by producing a PSA about how to recycle aluminum cans. Before the announcement was released, the association received an average of 453 calls a month. Five months after the PSA began appearing, the association had received 9,500 calls at its toll-free number. The PSA was used in 46 states, and 244 stations reported 16,464 broadcasts of the announcement.
OFFER PSAS IN VARYING LENGTHS

It is important to furnish a radio station with public service announcements of varying lengths. This gives the station the opportunity to vary the message and use the appropriate one for the time available. Keep in mind that you should use active voice and simple sentences. Never use a clause between a subject and a verb. Here are some sample PSAs from the American Red Cross:

20 Seconds

Ever give a gift that didn’t go over real big?
One that ended up in the closet the second you left the room?
There is a gift that’s guaranteed to be well received.
Because it will save someone’s life.
The gift is blood, and it’s desperately needed.
Please give blood. There’s a life to be saved right now.
Call the American Red Cross at 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

30 Seconds

Ever give a gift that didn’t go over real big?
One that ended up in the closet the second you left the room?
There is a gift that’s guaranteed to be well received.
Because it will save someone’s life.
The gift is blood, and the need for it is desperate.
Over 20,000 people must choose to give this gift every day.
We need your help.
Please give blood. There’s a life to be saved right now.
Call the American Red Cross at 1-800-GIVE LIFE.
This public service message brought to you by the Advertising Council and the American Red Cross.

60 Seconds

We want you to give a gift to somebody, but it’s not a gift you buy.
We want you to give a gift, but not necessarily to someone you know.
Some of you will be happy to do it. Some of you might be hesitant.
But the person who receives your gift will consider it so precious, they’ll carry it with them for the rest of their life.

(continued)
This gift is blood / and every day in America, thousands of people desperately need it.
Every day, we wonder if there will be enough for them.
Some days, we barely make it.
To those of you who give blood regularly, the American Red Cross and the many people whose lives you’ve saved would like to thank you.
Those of you who haven’t given recently, please help us again.
There’s a life to be saved right now.
To find out how convenient it is to give blood,
call The American Red Cross today at 1-800-GIVE LIFE.
That’s 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

This public service message has been brought to you by this station, The Advertising Council and The American Red Cross.

This example shows the potential effectiveness of PSAs. Remember, however, that others are aware of the potential; therefore, many PSAs are available to the stations. Only those that are timely and of high recording quality stand a chance of being used.

Here are a few more points to remember about PSAs:

1. Only nonprofit, civic, and voluntary organizations are eligible to use PSAs. Announcements by profit-making organizations are considered advertisements, and stations charge regular advertising rates for carrying them.
2. Since deregulation of the broadcasting industry in the 1980s, stations feel less pressure to provide a community service by running PSAs for nonprofit groups. Although a station’s renewal of its license is still based to a certain extent on serving the community and the public interest, there is no minimum standard for broadcasting PSAs.
3. PSAs, which are broadcast free of charge, are rarely used during periods of peak listening, when a station can run revenue-producing advertisements. Consequently, the PSA about a community health fair may only be heard at 3 a.m. or late Sunday night, when there are fewer ads. Because of this, even non-profit groups, wishing to reach the largest possible audience, often pay regular advertising rates to get their PSAs on the air.

TELEVISION

The fundamental factor that separates television from the other media and gives it such pervasive impact is the visual element. The combination of color, movement, sound, and sight on a screen in your own living room is hard to resist. No wonder the medium is the primary source of news, information and entertainment for most people.
Network television and cable offer a variety of public relations opportunities. To find and use these opportunities, you need to know how a television station is organized and who is in charge of various programs. The titles may vary somewhat, but the following positions are common at both radio and television stations:

- **General manager.** This person, comparable to the publisher of a newspaper, determines general policy and manages all the departments.
- **Program director.** This person decides which programs to produce and broadcast—including news, public affairs, and entertainment programs.
- **Directors and producers.** These people moderate the various interviews and talk shows that are the staple of many stations. They are comparable to the section editors of daily newspapers.
• News director. This person, comparable to the managing editor of a newspaper, manages the entire operation of gathering and producing newscasts.

• Assignment editor. This person, comparable to the city editor of a newspaper, assigns reporters and camera crews to cover news stories.

• Reporters. These are the people who write and report the news, as well as the sound and camera technicians who accompany them on assignments.

• Public affairs or public service director. This person is the station’s public relations representative. Duties may include working with community organizations to broadcast public service announcements and organizing public affairs programming.

• Promotion director. This person promotes the station by sponsoring contests and events, often in partnership with other community groups.

You may have reason to contact all of these people at one time or another. Specific placement opportunities for talk shows, call-in programs, product placement, community calendars and other messages are discussed later in the chapter. Here, we focus on working with television news directors, assignment editors and reporters to generate news coverage of your organization or client.

Every station gathers local news with its own facilities. To get your news story on local television, there are three possible procedures. You can phone the news department, ask for the assignment desk (or assignment editor) and give the highlights of your story; you can send a news release; or you can send a videotape.

For a station in your own town, the first method is by far the best. For out-of-town stations, the news release with accompanying slides, film or videotape is the only possibility. Some people have had success with this. When a local station covers a news story, the public relations person arranges for extra videotapes of the item. These are then rushed to the nearby stations in time for their next new programs. For example, a station in Harrisburg might not be able to cover a story in Philadelphia but might use the story if the tape were provided.

The major networks also have news-gathering departments that cover stories throughout the world. The networks maintain bureaus in major cities, both domestic and foreign. In addition, a network may pick up a story from an affiliated station or use material from another network, with permission. Also, the networks get news from the wire services.

To get onto a network, news must be of great interest. It must be of national importance or have such a strong human interest that it will appeal to practically everyone.

If you are convinced that you have a story worth national exposure, you should telephone the nearest office of each of the networks and ask for the news department. Give the highlights of the story and ask if the network is interested. If so, you must set up a place and time for the news team to cover the story.

Remember that it takes some hours to cover a story, get it to a studio, and edit it for broadcast. If it is hot news, it should get to the networks in the morning so as to have a chance of making the evening broadcast. Morning news may use material from the afternoon of the preceding day.
Television News Releases

As with radio, the written release is not as satisfactory as a recording. Nevertheless, all television announcements start with a written message that is then turned into an audiovisual presentation.

Format There is one basic difference between a television release and a radio release. With television, it is necessary to supply not only the words but also the illustrative material. Accordingly, the script will describe the illustrative material (graphics) on the left side of the page and present the words (audio) on the right. This script is accompanied by the visual material.

The graphics may be in the form of 35-mm slides, art cards or videotape. They must be in color. As with all audiovisual materials, it is vital to coordinate what is seen with what is heard. The words should describe the visuals, and the illustrative material must show what is being talked about.

A good example of how visuals and copy are coordinated is the following television PSA for local stations by the American Red Cross. Notice that both videotape and slides are used.

- Dr. Snyderman in lab coat walking down hospital corridor—tracking shot
- Art card
- Snyderman at nurse station with clipboard
- Zoom to CU

Infectious diseases used to cause the greatest concern about the health of children, but today, accidents are responsible for most childhood injuries and death.

- You can learn how to cope with accidents and injuries by attending a free 90-minute training session in your community on Saturday, March 13, cosponsored by the American Red Cross and KPIX.

"Survival Saturday" is absolutely free, and sessions are held throughout the day at 28 locations in the Bay Area. Because accidents happen, you need to know how to respond. Make a commitment to learn "Skills for Life" on March 13.

Video News Releases

The best way to get your news used by a television station or cable system is to provide a videotaped news release (VNR).

Large organizations seeking enhanced recognition for their names, products, services and causes are the primary clients for VNRS. The production of VNRS can
LAND OF FIRE AND ICE

All one hundred thirty-two of the islands that make up the Hawaiian Islands were formed by ancient volcanoes, although only Kilauea (kill-a-way-ah) volcano on the “Big Island” of Hawaii is still active. Two, now-dormant volcanoes that helped form Hawaii—Mauna Loa (mauna-low-ah) and Mauna Kea (mauna-kay-ah)—are the tallest mountains in the world measured from their underwater base.

Mauna Kea (mauna-kay-ah), which means “white mountain,” actually has snowfall during the winter, allowing skiers to schuss (shooch) down the slopes. The snowy peak provides an icy backdrop for the swimmers, snorkelers, sunbathers, and surfers below who bask in the warm, tropical sunshine.

Kilauea (kill-a-way-ah) volcano, which generates lava flows with temperature twelve times hotter than boiling water, is continuously adding to the size of the island. Kilauea (kill-a-way-ah) and Mauna Loa (mauna-low-ah) are both part of Volcanoes National Park, the third most popular attraction in the state of Hawaii. It is one of more than eight hundred tours, attractions, and events available in the islands. The experts at Pleasant Hawaiian Holidays, the largest travel company to Hawaii, for free information about visiting Hawaii, the land of fire and ice, or the other Hawaiian Islands, contact your travel agent or call 800-2-HAWAII.

Figure 8.2 This television feature was prepared for a travel agency specializing in Hawaii. In this case, slides were used for the visual element. Notice that complex names are phonetically spelled out to help the announcer reading the script. (Courtesy of North American Precis Syndicate, New York.)

more easily justified if there is potential for national distribution and multiple pickups by television stations and cable systems.

A typical 90-second VNR, says one producer, costs $20,000 to $25,000 to produce. Costs for production and distribution vary, however, depending on the num-
## VNRS REACH MILLIONS OF PEOPLE

Here’s a sampling of video news releases that, according to Nielsen Media Research, were widely used by television stations:

- Michael Jackson’s new CD, Scream, by Sony Music (161 million viewers).
- The Beatles: Live at the BBC, by Capitol Records (130 million viewers).
- Chrysler’s new minivan door latch (89 million viewers).
- American Medical Association (AMA) findings on tobacco addiction (90 million viewers).
- Disneyland’s 40th anniversary celebration (85 million viewers).
- Feature about Doritos/Super Bowl commercials (77 million viewers).
- Reebok’s Shaq vs. Shaq (86 million viewers).
- McDonald’s Batman Forever (82 million viewers).
- Wrestlemania XI news conference (66 million viewers).
- Bean Bag Chair recall by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (44 million viewers).

Number of location shots, special effects, and staff required to produce a high-quality tape up to network standards. A sampling of brochures from various producers gives a range of $4,000 to $50,000 for VNRS. In addition, distribution costs (via satellite or mail) can run $4,000 to $12,000.

Because of the cost, you must carefully analyze the newsworthiness of your information and consider whether the topic lends itself to a fast-paced, action-oriented visual presentation. If you have nothing to show except talking heads or graphs and charts, you should think twice about producing a VNR.

You should also consider whether the information will be current and newsworthy by the time a VNR is produced. On the average, it takes 4 to 6 weeks to script, produce and distribute a high-quality VNR. In a crisis situation or for a fast-breaking news event, however, VNRS can be produced in a matter of hours or days.

A good example of rapid response is Pepsi. Within a week of news reports that syringes and other sharp objects had been found in cans of Diet Pepsi, the soft-drink company produced and distributed a VNR showing that the insertion of foreign objects into cans on their high-speed bottling lines was virtually impossible.

This VNR reached an estimated 186 million television viewers and helped avoid a massive sales decline of Pepsi. Subsequently, Pepsi commissioned three more VNRS on such subjects as a message to consumers from Pepsi’s president, a surveillance camera catching an alleged tamperer, and a “thank you” to consumers for their support. According to Medialink, the producer and distributor, the VNRS were seen by an aggregate of 300 million viewers on 3,170 news programs.

**Format** Essentially, a VNR is a television release converted to a finished tape that can be broadcast. The standard length is 90 seconds, which is preferred by the overwhelming majority of TV news directors. Some features, however, can run up to two minutes.
AMERICAN EXPRESS
NEW TRACK FOR FREQUENT FLYERS
VIDEO NEWS RELEASE

VIDEO

AUDIO

LOCAL ANCHOR LEAD-IN: THEY’VE BECOME
THE CURRENCY OF THE NINETIES:
FREQUENT FLYER MILES. YOU CAN EARN
THEM BY EATING IN RESTAURANTS,
RENTING CARS, OR EVEN ORDERING
FLOWERS. TODAY, XXX TELLS US THE BEST
WAY TO GET THE MOST MILEAGE OUT OF
YOUR POINTS.

Frequent flyer signage; Domestic and Foreign
airlines; someone checking in with FF card
(Use either Delta USA/Central, Southwest,
Arroteno and Mexicana.)

THERE ARE NOW MORE THAN 70 DIFFER-
ENT FREQUENT FLYER PROGRAMS IN
PLACE. ALMOST EVERY MAJOR AIRLINE HAS
ONE. IT’S NO WONDER THAT MEMBERSHIP
IN FREQUENT FLYER PROGRAMS IS
CLIMBING ABOUT 12 PERCENT A YEAR.

Man on street

CASEY: “The frequent flyer cards are with me
always. I carry them with me every single day.”
(2:23:32-33:33)

Heart checking in scene

BUT KEEPING TRACK OF ALL THESE
PROGRAMS CAN BE CONFUSING.

Randy Peterson, Editor
Frequent Flyer Magazine

“People belong to an average of seven programs. A
lot of different mail. A lot of different offers. Mail
coming in 3 1 days a month.”

Vignettes of passengers boarding; REWARDS PLUS
GOLD CARD flies in over scenes; ticketing;
vacation scenes

TO HELP SOLVE SOME OF THAT
CONCLUSION, AMERICAN EXPRESS HAS JUST
INTRODUCED ITS REWARDS PLUS GOLD
CARD, WHICH CAN PROVIDE MEMBERS
WITH A MONTHLY STATEMENT THAT
SHOWS POINTS IN ALL OF THEIR FREQUENT
FLYER AND FREQUENT STAYER PROGRAMS,
AND EVEN TELLS THEM WHEN THEIR
POINTS EXPIRE.

Frank Sullivan, American Express Travel
Related Services

SOT: It’s the only card with the ability to keep track
of airline frequent flyer and hotel frequent users
programs on a monthly consolidated statement.
(1:56:13-1:56:30)

Generic travel scenes

REWARDS PLUS MEMBERS ALSO GET AUTO-
MATIC FREE ENROLLMENT IN THE
MEMBERSHIP MILES PROGRAM.

Person at airport

RITA: “I’ve travelled to London on vacation. I’ve
been to Hawaii once. I’m going to Hawaii again.

Airports scenes, etc.

THE NEW CARD ALSO GIVES MEMBERS
DOUBLE MILES IN THE MEMBERSHIP MILES
PROGRAM THE FIRST YEAR—FOR ALL
CHARGES WITH PROGRAM AIRLINE AND
HOTEL PARTNERS. THIS IS XXX REPORTING.

Figure 8.3 A draft of a television VNR. The left column describes the video elements in relationship to the script and sound bites in the right column. (Courtesy of PCS Broadcast Services, Ridgewood, NJ)

Your VNR package should also include two or three minutes of B-roll, or background pictures, for use by the TV news producer in repackaging the story. Typical B-roll includes additional interviews, sound bites and file footage. A Nielsen Media
Research survey of 130 TV news directors, for example, found that almost 70 percent wanted a VNR with a B-roll attached.

An advisory will accompany the VNR package or will be sent to news directors before the actual satellite transmission of the video to the station. The advisory, in printed form, should contain the basics: the key elements of the story, background and descriptions of the visuals, editorial and technical contacts, satellite coordinates and date and time of the satellite transmission.

Production Although public relations writers can easily handle the job of writing radio news releases and doing basic announcements for local TV stations, the production of a video news release is another matter. The entire process is highly technical, requiring trained professionals and sophisticated equipment. Consequently, the public relations writer primarily serves as an idea creator and a facilitator.

He or she may come up with the idea, write a rough storyboard (outlining the visual and audio elements) and make arrangements for a video production and distribution service to produce the video. Such firms are listed in the Yellow Pages under “Video” and “Television.” The advertisements in public relations magazines (see Chapter 1) are also a good source.

It is important to keep in mind that the video producer follows the basic storyboard (outline of who and what should be included) to achieve the organizational objective, but will usually videotape many minutes of footage and use the editing room to make the finished 90-second product.

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**THE JARGON OF WRITING FOR VIDEO**

Do you know where your SOT is? Do you need a CU or a V/O for your script? The video industry has its own vocabulary and you should be familiar with it when writing storyboards and scripts. Here are a few of the most common terms:

- **A-Roll** Video that contains the audio portion. This may be an announcer speaking or a quote from someone being interviewed.
- **B-Roll** Only the video portion without sound.
- **CU** Close up shot of a person or object. An MCU is a medium close up.
- **Dub** A duplicate of an audio- or videotape.
- **On Cam** Person or object is on camera—part of what is being videotaped.
- **Pan** Moving the camera (while shooting) from side to side.
- **SOT** Sound on tape. Usually refers to an interview.
- **Super** Printed material, usually words, to show name of a person, a telephone number, or a location.
- **V/O** Voice-over. A story where someone off camera, usually an announcer, reads a portion of the video story. Sometimes listed as ANNCR V/O.
- **Zoom** Changing the camera angle by going from a wide shot to a close shot, or vice versa.
Consequently, it is not necessary to write a prepared script for everyone who appears on video. It is better, and more natural, to have them talk informally in front of the camera and then use the best "sound bite."

Medialink, a major producer and distributor of VNRs, gives some tips about the production of VNRs that best meet the needs of TV news directors.

- Give TV news directors maximum flexibility in editing the tape using their own anchors or announcers. This can be done by producing the VNR on split audio (the announcer track on one audio channel and the natural sound of the VNR on another). In this way, the producer has the option of "stripping" the announcer's voice.
- Produce the VNR with news footage in mind. Keep sound bites short and to the point. Avoid commercial-like shots with sophisticated effects.
- Never superimpose your own written information on the actual videotape. TV news departments usually generate their own written notes in their own typeface and style.
- Never use a stand-up reporter. Stations do not want a reporter who is not on their staff appearing in their newscast.
- Provide TV stations with a local angle. This can be done by sending supplemental facts and figures that reflect the local situation. These can be added to the VNR when it is edited for broadcast.
- Good graphics, including animation, are a plus. Stations are attracted to artwork that shows things in a clear, concise manner.

Pintak Communications, of Washington, D.C., adds to the Medialink list of suggestions. The firm says that VNR disasters can be prevented if you do the following:

- Use outside experts to give credibility. A VNR with only corporate spokespeople is not a good idea. In addition, don't clutter up the VNR with an excessive number of corporate logos.
- Avoid commercialism and hype. The VNR is a news story, not a corporate advertisement.
- Avoid overproduction. Slick dissolves and flashy effects are great for music videos, but news producers equate it with advertising.

**Delivery** Satellite distribution is the most cost-effective way of distributing VNRs. In addition, it is the preferred method of most news directors. Virtually every television station in the country now has at least one satellite receiving dish. The mechanics of satellite distribution, including media tours, are discussed in Chapter 9. In brief, the master VNR cassette is delivered to a studio where the signal is transmitted via microwave or fiber-optic cable to a satellite "uplink" facility. According to the Video News Release Handbook, distributed by Medialink, the transmission is then beamed from the uplink to one of several communications satellites used for news transmission. The satellite receives the transmission and beams it back to earth on any of its leased "transponders" or "channels," which project the signal ("footprint") across wide areas of the country, TV stations,
Diabetes PSA's:
DON'T CONTROL :30

OPEN ON A CAPE COD HOUSE WITH
LOTS OF YARD, ZOOMING IN TO A
TIGHT SHOT OF ITS WOODEN
SHINGLES.

CUT TO BLACK AND WHITE
FOOTAGE OF TERMITES INSIDE
WOOD EATING AWAY AT IT (THIS
AND SUBSEQUENT B&W FOOTAGE
HAVE EXAGGERATED SOUND
EFFECTS, GROWING LOUDER).

CUT TO SERIES OF OTHER B&W
SHOTS OF WEATHER AND WEAR
CAUSING DAMAGE TO A HOUSE AND
YARD, GETTING PROGRESSIVELY
WORSE.

CUT TO SERIES LIKE ABOVE, BUT
RAIN IS SUBSIDING, TERMITES ARE
FEWER, ETC. (AND SOUND EFFECTS
GET QUIETER).

CUT TO COLOR SHOT: A PAINT
BRUSH ... PULLING BACK TO SHOW
PAINTING OF SHINGLES ON THE
CAPE COD ... BY AN OLDER WOMAN.
SHE STOPS PAINTING, REMOVES
GLOVES, SITS IN PORCH SWING
(DRINKS ICED TEA) AND CHECKS
BLOOD SUGAR WITH ONE TOUCH II.

SUPER TITLE:
Think of your body as a home where you
plan to live into your golden years ...

if there were something eating at its
structure, you'd want to know ...

Yet many people who have diabetes let it
break down the body's own tissues,
destroying blood vessels in the heart, eyes
kidneys, limbs ... leading to heart attack,
stroke, blindness, kidney failure,
amputation.

Long-term effects can be prevented ... by
using regular blood sugar monitoring to
balance diet, exercise and medication.

Properly maintained, any home can last
as long as you need it!

People with diabetes can get help
learning to control it:
1-800-TEAM-UP 4
American Association of Diabetes
Educators

Figure 8.4 This draft of a 30-second television PSA describes both the audio and the video.
Television stations would receive two versions: an A-Roll with both the video and sound bites
combined, and a B-Roll with just the video portion so the station announcer could read the
script. The term "super title" at the end designates printed material that appears on the video.
In this case, it is the name of the organization and a telephone number. (Courtesy of PCS
Broadcast Services, Ridgewood, NJ.)
alerted to the transmission via a wire service advisory or a telephone call, orient their receiving antennae to the correct position. The signal is then "downlinked" for recording in a studio or for live on-the-air transmission.

VNRs can also be distributed by mail, but this is time-consuming and expensive. Multiple cassettes must be produced and mailed. The preferred format is 3/4-inch VHS cassette, but stations also accept 1-inch VHS tapes and Beta tapes.

On occasion, however, VNRs that are not time-sensitive can be mailed to selected stations. As previously noted, these are known as evergreens because they are always in season. A VNR on general research into AIDS could be held by a producer for use in an eventual series, or a VNR from the U.S. Forest Service on how to prevent fires could be held in reserve until summer, when the danger is highest.

Mail distribution is also used for what is known as stock footage—standard video shots of a company's production line, headquarters or activities that the station can store until the company is in the news. Then, as the anchor gives the news, the viewer sees the stock footage on the screen. A news story about an electric power plant, for example, may use stock footage from the utility company showing interior scenes of the facility.

**Broadcast Use of VNRs**

VNRs are widely used by television stations and cable systems. A survey by Nielsen Media Research, for example, found that every one of the 92 television stations surveyed regularly used VNRs.

As early as 1990, Broadcasting magazine editorialized that video news releases had become a staple of local TV broadcasts. This is particularly true among stations in small markets that don't have the staff and facilities to generate their own coverage. But larger news operations in metropolitan areas are also using VNRs as stations cut costs and reduce news staffing.

The television networks and CNN also use VNRs. For example, a VNR by the Aetna Insurance Company featuring dogs trained to investigate fires was aired nationally on CBS This Morning. And Toys 'R' Us got national network coverage with its VNR announcing that it would no longer buy look-alike toy guns, including those that could be altered to look like real guns.

Remember, however, that VNRs go through the same gatekeeping process as news releases and features submitted to newspapers and magazines. Emil Gallina, senior vice president of Hill & Knowlton's Electronic Media Services, makes the comparison by writing in *Communication World* (October 1991):

> Video releases look like TV news in the same way that press releases read like newspaper articles. And the moving pictures we distribute for television are the equivalent of the 8 x 10 glossies we send to newspapers and magazines. Their purpose is the same: to encourage coverage and to provide materials the reporter might not otherwise obtain.... They are merely one source of raw material from which news reports can be created.

In other words, television news directors ultimately decide what they want to use, and they may edit a VNR substantially before it is aired. This is comparable to the newspaper practice of rewriting news releases.

Despite their almost universal use, VNRs are not without controversy. In a 1992 cover article, *TV Guide* blasted the use of VNRs by television stations. Calling
them “fake news,” the article chided TV stations for using VNRs prepared by public relations sources to “plug a product, polish an image, or ensure that a particular political spin is spun” and passing it off to viewers as legitimate news.

The article went on to say that TV news directors have a responsibility to identify VNRs on-screen as supplied by “nonnews outfits.” It contended that the integrity of the news would “continue to erode” if newscasters “pretend out of pride that what they broadcast is real news, instead of labeling it for what it is.”

Although VNR producers and distributors strongly objected to the idea that their releases were “fake news,” most of them did agree that TV news directors should do a better job of acknowledging the source of VNR materials that they use on the air. Indeed, a number of VNR distributors and producers subscribe to an informal code that includes the following rules:

- VNR producers and distributors should clearly identify the sponsor or client in any materials sent to broadcasters.
- Television news organizations should identify the source of the VNR material used on the air.
- Blatant commercialism should be avoided.
- VNRs should be authentic footage and materials, and the context should not be manipulated.

While broadcasters worry about source credibility and slick VNRs masquerading as news, many public relations people continue to express doubts about the expense of VNRs and whether the audiences reached are worth the cost. Related to this issue is the problem of monitoring the use of VNRs by broadcasters. One technological innovation that is now widely used is to give each VNR a code that can be read electronically by various monitoring services, such as Nielsen’s SIGMA system.

This is discussed in Chapter 20.

Client expectations are another concern. Well-publicized success stories, such as Pepsi’s VNR responding to tampering claims, have caused clients to think their story will be on every TV set in America. In reality, a well-done VNR will usually get 40 to 50 station airings with an audience of 2.5 to 3 million viewers.

It is important that you understand the value, purpose and limitations of VNRs. Before you commit $20,000 to $25,000 to have a quality VNR produced and distributed, you should first assess (1) the news value of the topic, (2) whether the topic lends itself to a visual treatment and (3) whether reaching various broadcast audiences can contribute significantly to organizational objectives.

Another approach to getting broadcast coverage is the satellite media tour, which can be more cost-effective than a VNR. Such tours are discussed in Chapter 9.

**The Rise of Infomercials**

Video news releases are now an established part of television and cable news programs. As noted, they are “news releases” that are distributed to news departments as news; they are not considered paid advertising.
TURNING PITCHES INTO PLACEMENTS

Radio and television news directors, as well as the producers of various talk and interview programs, receive numerous letters offering subject ideas and spokespersons. A good, persuasive query or "pitch" often results in multiple placements.

Unfortunately, too few pitches are well conceived and tailored to the media gatekeeper's needs. Here are some tips on writing good pitch letters.

1. Keep the pitch to one page. If a news anchor can highlight the essence of a major news story in a few sentences, you can write about a client's product in the same amount of words.
2. Localize your pitch. If you're pitching nutrition to a certain segment of the population, write about that segment of the market. For instance, "The 450,000 women in Boston..." or "We estimate that one out of four children in Tampa..."
3. Think trend. How does your product or program fit into the trends, take a lead in trends, or even buck the trends that have already been noted by the media?
4. Keep pitch letters informative and lively. Makes them interesting to the reader. Stiff prose won't make a story shine and come alive.
5. Research your pitch. Imagine being a news director or talk show producer and then ask the type of questions these people would want answered. Target marketing, not a shotgun approach, is the name of the game.
6. Consider alternative dates. Negotiate with news directors and program producers. If they can't use the idea or your representative this month, how about next month? If they can't interview a person at the studio, how about a phone interview?
7. Reach beyond the client and your immediate program. Offer to help a reporter on stories that may be only indirectly connected to your product or event. You'll make an editorial friend for life.
8. Take no for an answer. But get a sense of why the story has been rejected. It may offer you an opportunity to repackage and get a yes on your next pitch.

Source: Adapted from Ketchum Public Relations, New York.

In the advertising arena, however, infomercials seem to be gaining popularity. Many top companies find program-length formats to be an effective advertising medium for demonstrating uses of a product or explaining a complex issue.

Advertisers, according to one study by an association of electronic dealers, spend about $290,000 to produce a 30-minute program and $3 million in paid time to air it. In contrast, a 30-second commercial on a prime time program may cost double that amount.

Political candidates also use "politicomercials" to get in-depth messages to the voting public. Ross Perot, in 1992, first used such programs to promote his views. The advantage of infomercials is that the advertiser or political candidate can present information without the filtering mechanism of regular news reporting.

However, the Advertising Council has also begun to do public service announcements as 30-minute programs on behalf of charitable organizations. Its first
effort, a program to promote volunteering to help children, was aired on the majority of ABC's 225 affiliated stations.

Although the air time is usually paid for by corporations or donated to nonprofit groups, many of the same rules apply to infomercials as video news releases. They can't be too commercial, and they must present information in a journalistic, objective format. As one producer says, "It is a documentary in the truest sense of the word."

PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Radio and television stations, as well as cable systems, increasingly operate on round-the-clock schedules. They require a vast amount of programming to fill all the time available.

So far in this chapter we have concentrated on how to prepare and generate timely material for newscasts. Here we will present an overview of other placement opportunities in broadcasting, from getting people booked on talk shows to having a popular sitcom use your employer or client's product on the show.

In these cases, your contact is no longer the news department but the directors and producers of various specialty features and shows. Your most valuable communication tools are the telephone and the persuasive pitch letter.

Before using either tool, however, it is necessary to do your homework. You must be familiar with a show's format and content, as well as the type of audience that it reaches. You can obtain this information in several ways.

One method is to study the station and descriptions of its shows in a broadcast directory. Directory listings can tell you program format, types of material used and the name of the director or producer.

A second approach is to watch the program or feature and study the format. In the case of a talk or interview show, what is the style of the moderator or host? What kinds of topics are discussed? How important is the personality or prominence of the guest? How long is the show or a segment? Does the show lend itself to demonstrations and visual aids? The answers to such questions will help you tailor your phone calls and pitch letters to achieve maximum results.

Talk Shows

Radio and television talk shows have been a staple of broadcasting for many years. KABC in Los Angeles started the trend in 1960 when it became the first radio station in the country to convert to an all-news-and-talk format. Today, more than 1,110 radio stations (out of about 10,000 total) have adopted the format. Thousands of other stations, of course, have talk shows as part of their programming.

The same growth rate applies to television. Seven years after KABC started the talk format, Phil Donahue began his TV show. Today, there are more than 20 nationally syndicated talk shows and a countless number of locally produced shows. For the past decade, the No. 1 daytime talk show has been Oprah Winfrey, attract-
Radio Stations

Chicago, 60601-7747
Owner: Infinity Broadcasting
E-Mail: wjad@iol.com
Network: AP, Westwood One
Profile: Talk, T.A.-1:54, W-1:56, News-7, Streets, 3% Staff
Prod., Talk-5%, Staff Prod., Guests-Live, phone
General Management/News Executives:
General Manager: Harvey A. Pearlman
Operations Manager: Nick Patton
News Director: Christopher Michael
Sales Director: Scott McPherson
Promotion Director: Michelle O'Kane
AM Drive-Time Host: Ed Vrbiky
AM Drive-Time Host: Ty Wansley
Programs:
Chicago Law (Sun., 11:00 AM-1:00 PM)
Profile: General Interest, Government/Law Format: Talk, Listener Phone-In
Host: Greg Adams
Producer: Greg Adams
Guest Contact: Karen Conlin
CTN Friday Night Edited
Ed Vrbiky & Ty Wansley Show (Mon-Fri, 9:30-10:00 PM)
Profile: General Interest, Format: Talk, Interview, Listener Phone-In
Host: Ed Vrbiky
Guest Contact: Ty Wansley
Executive Producer: Blake Ackles
News Anchor: Mercedes Escobari
NYC Morning Edit
Sound of Chicago (Sun., 9:30-10:00 PM)
Profile: Public Affairs, Format: Interview
Host: Christopher Michael
Your Computer Connection (Sunday, 10:00-11:00 AM)
Profile: Computer, Format: Talk, Interview
Host: Jason Post
Your Health Matters (Sun., 9:00-11:00 AM)
Profile: Health, Format: Talk, Interview
Host: Michele Lowrance
Executive Producer: Michele Lowrance
Your Money (Sun., 1:00-2:00 PM)
Profile: Business/Finance, Format: Talk, Listener Phone-In
Host: SteveRuntime
Producer: Steve Runtime

Chicago, 60605
Owner: Emmis Broadcasting
Profile: Rock Alternative, T.A.-1:48, W-1:56, News-7, Streets, 3% Staff
Prod., Talk-5%, Staff Prod., Guests-Live, phone
General Management/News Executives:
General Manager: Chuck Hiller
Operations Manager: Bill Lampl
Program Director: Bill Green
Promotion Manager: Mary Shrineman
Public Affairs Director: Frances Palm
Sales Manager: Moe Maki
Marketing Director: Ray New
AM Drive-Time Host: Lee Jackson
PM Drive-Time Host: Jimmy Stoll
Night Drive Host: Scott Barna
Programs:
Sound Quintet (Mon., 10:00 AM-12:00 PM)
Profile: Music, Format: Interviews
Host: Bill Wyman
Executive Producer: James Van Gelder

Chicago, 60601-7747
Owner: Emmis Broadcasting
Profile: Adult Contemporary, T.A.-25, W-1:56, News-10
Profile: 100% Staff Prod., Talk-100% Staff Prod., Guests-Live, Phone, Taped
General Management/News Executives:
General Manager: Philip L. Ready
Program Director: Mark Edwards
News Director: Mary Ann Meyers
Public Affairs Director: James Conkle
AM Drive-Time Host: Bob Byrnes
Mid-Day Drive Host: Meagan Reed
PM Drive-Time Host: Marg Johnson
Programs:
Consumer Network (Sun., 9:30-10:30 AM)
Profile: Consumer
Guest Contact: Anna Hensholf
Profile: Saturday, Time: 10:00-11:00 AM
Profile: General Interest, Format: Talk, Interview
Guest Contact: Mary Ann Meyers
The Race Question (Sun., 7:00-7:30 AM)
Profile: Minority Affairs, Format: Talk, Commentary
Host: Lew Thompson
Host: Derek Simons

Figure 8.5 Media directories give valuable information about the programming of a broadcast station and who to reach if you want to get on a talk show. Complete addresses and phone numbers also facilitate the distribution of news releases and PSAs. (Courtesy of Bacon’s Information, Inc., Chicago.)

ing about 8 million viewers on a daily basis. Jenny Jones, the nearest competitor, gets about 4.6 million viewers. Love with Regis and Kathie Lee is third in the ratings with about 4.3 million viewers.

The talk show gained new prominence during the 1992 presidential elections when all of the candidates suddenly discovered the concept of “access media.” Ross
GETTING ON A TV TALK SHOW

Publicists constantly work to get their clients on a television talk show. Here’s some advice from the producers of some shows:

- “It’s important to know the host you’re pitching and the show you’re pitching. If you haven’t seen the show, how do you know that you have a client who’d be great?” (David Armour, the Ricki Lake show)
- “If you think a client has an idea that will play on a national scale or has a solution to a problem that is nagging society, let me know.” (Lucy Spiegel, The Today Show on NBC)
- Send a picture and biography in advance. “I can’t book old people.” (Andrew Scher, the Montel Williams Show)
- Give verbal, upbeat pitches. “If you’re excited, we will be too.” (Glenda Shaw, the Rolonda show)
- “Call us, don’t bother writing.” (Paul Faulhaber, the Gordon Elliott show)
- “Guests should be interesting for at least 20 minutes.” (Katie Thomson, the Larry King Live show)


Perot announced his candidacy on Larry King Live, CNN’s highest rated program, and Bill Clinton headed for the Arsenio Hall Show to play his saxophone and talk. George Bush took the more conservative route and appeared on CBS This Morning.

The advantage of talk shows, as the candidates realized, was the opportunity to tell their views directly to the American public without the filter of journalists and editors interpreting and deciding what was newsworthy. Another advantage was the opportunity to be on the air for longer than the traditional 30-second sound bite in a network program.

You may never work for a presidential candidate or have the opportunity to book a guest on the Oprah Winfrey Show, but you should be aware of such shows and their ability to reach large audiences. Talk shows on local radio and television stations, as well as a proliferation of cable channels, provide excellent placement opportunities for organizational spokespersons talking on any number of topics.

Here are some questions you might ask when thinking about placement on a talk show:

- Is the topic newsworthy? Do you have a new angle on something in the news?
- Is the topic timely? Can you tie the idea to some lifestyle or cultural trend?
- Is the information useful to the viewers? How to ideas may be welcomed.
- Does your spokesperson have viewer appeal? A celebrity may be acceptable, but there must be a logical tie-in to your organization and to the topic to be discussed. A professional athlete might be plausible talking about running shoes but out of place in a discussion about the economy.
- Can the spokesperson stay on track? It is easy for celebrities to get involved in discussions of their personal affairs.
• Can you keep the speaker from stressing the commercial angle? Most talk show hosts will allow a brief mention of a brand name or sponsor identification. If your speaker gets too commercial, the entire interview may be deleted—and your organization may land on the list of those who can’t come back.

When you know the answers to these questions, you will be ready to look for a booking—or several. Here are some tips that should help:

• Be sure that your speaker fits the program. If he or she isn’t a fast thinker, avoid shows full of rapid exchanges and loaded questions.
• Be sure that you know the requirements of the program and the abilities of your spokesperson.
• Plan to use visuals if possible. Charts, diagrams, samples and videotapes may help the producer decide.
• Deal with only one person on the program. But you may certainly approach producers of other programs on the same station.
• Be careful about exclusivity. Some stations will refuse to book a guest who appears on a competing station. Find out before you commit. By committing to one station, you may miss an opportunity to get on others.
• Plan variations so that you can offer the same person to different shows or different stations without giving the same thing to each.
• Prepare your speaker (see Chapter 16).
After you’ve done your homework on the format of a radio or television talk-show, you will contact the show’s producer or associate producer. If it is a network or nationally syndicated show, the contact person may have the title of talent coordinator or talent executive. Whatever the title, these people are known in the broadcasting industry as bookers because they are responsible for booking a constant supply of timely guests for a show.

You can place a phone call briefly outlining the qualifications of your proposed speaker and why the person would be a timely guest, or you can write a one-page pitch letter that convinces the producer to book the guest. As mentioned previously, the more you know about the format and the audience of the show, the better you can tailor a persuasive pitch.

In general, talk shows book guests three to four weeks ahead of time. Unless a topic or a person is extremely timely or controversial, it is rare for a person to be booked on one or two days’ notice. Keep this in mind as you plan talk show appearances as part of an overall public relations plan.

The booker may request additional information, video clips of your spokesperson’s performance on other programs or a personal interview to assess the candidate’s personality. Remember that talk shows are looking for entertainment value, not necessarily news value.

The proliferation of talk shows in the 1990s has intensified the competition for fresh feature ideas, and producers rely more and more heavily on ideas pitched by individual publicists, corporate public relations departments and public relations firms.

There also are firms that specialize in booking talk show guests. One such firm is Media Relations of Bloomington, Minnesota, which handles everyone from Elvis channeled sex-book authors to corporate executives. The firm packages concepts, including a guest, a proposed segment topic and a question list for the interviewer.

Public Service Programs

In addition to interview or talk shows, many stations regularly produce features devoted to special interests of the community. Among the subjects covered are education; gardening; home repair; problems of the elderly, children, or minorities; foreign-language or ethnic topics; human interest stories; religion, political forums; documentaries; homemaking; recreation; and entertainment.

You book a guest on one of these programs the same way as for a talk show or an interview program. A review of the local weekly television schedule and broadcast directories will show what might be available.

Magazine Shows

Magazine shows are excellent outlets for topical feature stories. Depending on the program, they can be human interest features or in-depth investigative stories on some contemporary issue such as the high cost of medical care or the plight of the homeless in major cities.
Network magazine shows such as 60 Minutes, 2020, PrimeTime Live and Dateline NBC tend to concentrate on investigative reporting. Dateline NBC, for example, had to apologize to General Motors for rigging a video sequence showing gasoline tanks on GM trucks exploding after an impact.

On the local level, there are more human interest magazine shows. A sampling of magazine shows in one large city featured such subjects as a 1-pound baby who survived, a treatment for anorexia nervosa, a couple who started a successful cookie company, remedies for back pain, tips on dog training, a black-belt karate expert, blue-collar job stress and the work habits of a successful author.

Most, if not all, of these features came about as the result of someone making a pitch to the show’s producers. The objective of the segment, at least from the perspective of the people featured, is exposure and the generation of new business. The tips on dog training, for example, featured a local breeder who also operated a dog obedience school. The karate expert ran a martial arts academy.

Entertainment Programs

A national organization concerned with a social or health issue can propose an episode involving that issue in a dramatic or comedy series. You can assist the program producer by supplying technical information. Such programs do not make overt sales pitches, but the message is inherent in the story line.

In a popular soap opera, for example, a leading female character has to deal with breast cancer. This enables millions of women to get the American Cancer Society’s information even though they don’t take the time to read the society’s brochure. Other popular network series have dealt with such issues as battered wives, alcohol abuse, AIDS, racism, depression, suicide and a host of other social ills.

Community Calendars

Civic clubs and other community groups can publicize upcoming events by sending short announcements to local broadcast outlets. Radio stations, in particular, operate community calendars as a service to their listeners.

To be used, however, the event must be open to the public and of general interest. A meeting of the local automobile dealers’ association doesn’t qualify, but a forum on the global economy sponsored by the local chapter of the World Affairs Council would be acceptable.

Radio stations serving specialized audiences have variations on the community calendar. For example, a classical radio station might have an “arts calendar” that would list upcoming plays, musicals and art shows. By the same token, a rock music station might have a “concert calendar” to list all the upcoming rock concerts.

You write a calendar announcement in much the same way as you write a radio news release. The announcement should be to the point. It should give the name of the event, the sponsoring organization, the date and time, location, cost and a telephone number listeners can call for more information.

Here’s an example of a typical announcement for a community calendar:

* 10 seconds: The Amadeus (ah-ma-day-us) Quartet will perform at Mills College on Sunday, May 11. Phone area code 510, 793-7043.
• **20 seconds:** The Amadeus (ah-ma-day-us) Quartet will perform at the Mills College auditorium on Sunday, May 11, at 3:30 p.m. The program for this Chamber Music Concert will include compositions by Mozart, Britten and Beethoven (hay-toe-ven). For information, phone area code 510, 793-7043.

• **10 seconds:** The Amadeus (ah-ma-day-us) Quartet will perform at the Mills College auditorium on Sunday, May 11, at 3:30 p.m. In its thirty-fourth year with the same personnel, the Amadeus Quartet offers the widest active repertory among the world’s string quartets. Their program for this Coleman Chamber Music Concert will include compositions by Mozart, Britten and Beethoven (hay-toe-ven). For information, phone area code 510, 793-7043.

Community calendar items should be sent to the station via mail or fax at least three weeks in advance.

**Editorials**

Many radio and television stations regularly broadcast editorials on topics of public interest. They are usually delivered by a representative of the station’s management and aired as part of the news program. The editorial is clearly identified as a statement of opinion.

Statements of support, from either newspapers or broadcast stations, can be a valuable aid to your organization if the objective is to influence public opinion and generate community support. For example, you might propose an editorial against a new state tax on the grounds that it will discourage business development.

On a less controversial level, many stations are routinely asked to air editorials supporting the programs of community organizations. Thus, the station encourages everyone to participate in the United Way campaign or give donations to the local food bank.

If you are seeking editorial endorsement from a station, write a persuasive letter to the general manager, outlining the reasons for your point of view and explaining why the station should do an editorial. A personal interview with the station manager, if possible, may also be beneficial.

By contrast, if the station airs an editorial that your organization disagrees with, it is appropriate to let the station know that you have a rebuttal. The station may offer you free-speech time or may include your comments in a future editorial.

**Free-speech Messages**

Free-speech messages are guest editorials. They are expressions of opinion presented by an individual or a group on a topic of general public interest. The topic must be timely and relate to a contemporary issue. For example, an individual or a group may wish to record a free-speech message about the city council’s lack of support for public libraries or make a statement about the necessity of passing legislation to provide universal health insurance.

There is no automatic right to deliver a free-speech message. The radio or television station reserves the right to review the message for libel or slander, as well as the choice of words. The station also decides when to air the message and how many times.
If you want to record a free-speech message, you usually contact the station’s public service director. One approach is to write a letter outlining the topic and its importance to the station’s audience. If your proposal is accepted, the next step is to record the message at the station. Free-speech messages are usually short, ranging from 30 to 90 seconds.

Radio Promotions

Public relations representatives for nonprofit organizations, record companies, concert promoters and community events committees often generate publicity and exposure through radio promotions.

Promotions are beneficial to both the station and the outside organization. For example, a concert promoter may arrange with a radio station’s disc jockey to award tickets to every tenth listener who calls the station and correctly answers a trivia question on the air. Prize giveaways tend to increase the number of listeners, and the concert promoter gets publicity.

A nonprofit group sponsoring a fund-raising festival may make arrangements for a radio station (or a television station) to cosponsor the event as part of the station’s own promotional activities. This means that the station will actively promote the festival on the air through public service announcements and disc jockey chatter between songs.

The arrangements may also call for a popular disc jockey to broadcast live from the festival and give away T-shirts with the station’s logo on it. This too is good promotion for the station and often attracts people to the fund-raising event because the disc jockey is a well-known personality. It is a win-win situation for both the station and the nonprofit group.

If you are handling an event or a cause that is suitable for this type of promotion, you contact the director of promotions for the radio or television station. If the station is interested, you negotiate the terms of the sponsorship. For example, the station may promise to air a specified number of announcements for the event in return for being listed in the organization’s news releases, programs and print advertising as a sponsor of the event. Such terms are spelled out in a standard contract, often supplied by the radio or television station.

Stations will not necessarily promote or cosponsor your event just because it is worthy. They must be convinced that their involvement will benefit the station in terms of greater public exposure, increased audience and improved market position.

Creative Publicity

Organizations that have a creative idea can often get publicity by providing newscasters and disc jockeys with something unusual to talk about.

A public relations firm for Burger King, for example, came up with the idea of introducing the fast-food chain’s new Breakfast Buddy sandwich by delivering the sandwiches to morning radio DJs live on the air.

The announcers were asked to sample them and ask listeners to call in and win a free phone call to their “best buddy” anywhere in the United States. One delivery resulted in a ten-minute interview on one major New York show; in all, the promotion secured time on 150 stations and more than 391 minutes of announcer endorsements.
The California Strawberry Advisory Board also garnered a great deal of broadcast publicity by sending television weather reporters a crate of strawberries on the first day of spring. Weather reporters like unusual situations to begin or end a weather report, and the strawberries were a good tie-in to the first day of spring.

Feature Films and Videos

Television stations and especially cable systems require a vast amount of programming to fill their schedules. Short features of two or three minutes and full-length productions that run 20 minutes or more are often used to fill gaps in the programming day. Many of these fillers are produced and distributed by businesses, nonprofit organizations, trade associations and professional groups. For maximum acceptability, they must be relatively free of commercial hype and must concentrate on informing or educating the viewing audience.

Some typical features available for use by television stations and cable systems are:

- *Waltzing Matilda*, a 32-minute travelogue on Australia, sponsored by the Australian Tourist Commission.
- *Oil over the Andes*, a 27-minute account of the building of an oil pipeline, sponsored by the Occidental Petroleum Company.
- *Noah Was an Amateur*, a 27-minute history of boat building, sponsored by the National Association of Engine and Boat Manufacturers.

Getting such films and videos distributed requires some method of informing the broadcast stations of their availability. You can handle this yourself by writing to media outlets and having them fill out an order card, but it is more efficient to use a distribution service. These organizations can distribute your materials by mail or satellite, depending on the preferences of the TV stations or cable systems that order them. In addition, these distribution services have an established program that can place your films and videos with schools, clubs, special interest groups and civic groups.

Product Placement

Television dramatic and comedy series are good vehicles for promoting a company's products and services. It is not a coincidence that all the cars used in a detective show will be of one make or that a transition shot will show a United Airlines jet taking off.

Such product placements, or plugs, as some people call them, are often negotiated by product publicists and the television production company. Rogers & Cowan, a major entertainment public relations firm, is one such company that specializes in placing its clients' products in movies and television shows.

One client, Giorgio Armani, launched a line of fashion eyewear through product placement. Rogers & Cowan arranged for the character Miles Silverberg, the station manager on *Murphy Brown*, played by Grant Shaud, to wear the glasses.

Hotels and resorts also get high visibility by doing trade-offs with a television series. Hyatt Regency, for example, provided lodging for the cast and crew of *The Cosby Show* while they were filming an episode in Atlanta. The deal saved the show
about $50,000 in hotel expenses, and the Hyatt got considerable visibility as the location for the episode. If the hotel chain had placed a 30-second ad on The Cosby Show, it would have cost $380,000.

You should always be alert to opportunities for publicity on television and cable programs. If the company's product or service lends itself to a particular program, contact the show's producer directly or through an agent who specializes in matching company products with the show's needs.

SUMMARY

1. The broadcast media are important channels of communication, but using them requires thinking in terms of sound and visual elements.
2. Radio releases are similar to press releases, but they require more concise writing and different wording.
3. Audiotapes are more effective than written releases because they contain material that is ready to use with little or no cost.
4. Public service announcements (PSAs) are short broadcast announcements used by nonprofit groups and public agencies.
5. Television is an excellent medium of communication because it combines the elements of sight, sound, motion and color.
6. Television news releases must contain both sound and visual elements such as graphics, slides or videotape. A TV release can consist of a written script plus the accompanying graphics, but it will be more acceptable if it is on videotape.
7. Video news releases (VNRs) are now the standard in the industry and are widely used by TV stations and cable systems.
8. VNRs require professional preparation and high technical quality. To be used, they must be newsworthy and timely. Satellite distribution is the most cost-effective method.
9. A good, persuasive query or pitch letter is used to get placements on news programs and talk shows.
10. Talk shows offer numerous opportunities for reaching mass and specialized audiences.
11. Organizations and groups can get exposure by making use of community calendars, free-speech messages, radio promotions and creative publicity ideas.

EXERCISES

1. Lysol has a new antibacterial kitchen cleanser on the market. This is not exactly earthshaking news. Your assignment is to suggest a VNR that would be newsworthy enough to get on the evening news. Come up with a news angle and
then develop a rough storyboard outlining the visual and audio elements. Use the two-column format: the visual description on the left and the audio portion on the right.

2. The United States Forest Service wants to alert summer campers to the dangers of forest fires and how to take care of campfires. Write a 20-, 30- and 60-second PSA for radio use. In addition, write a 30-second PSA for television using the correct format and suggesting visual material.

3. Your client is a book publisher who has just published a book about Japan’s economic strength and how the country is pulling ahead of the United States in global economic influence. The book’s author is Clyde V. Prestowitz, a professor of economics in the School of Business at Stanford University. The book’s title is *Trading Places: How We Allowed Japan to Take the Lead*. Write a persuasive pitch letter to the producer of ABC’s *Good Morning America*, suggesting that the author should be featured on this talk and interview show.

4. A company has just introduced a new line of exercise equipment that is compact and can be used in the home. The primary market is middle-aged men and women who want to get more exercise but are so busy that they can’t make it to a health club.

   Using various media directories, try to identify television interview or talk shows in Minneapolis, Milwaukee and Chicago that might be interested in having a spokesperson from the company talk about the value of exercise and demonstrate the equipment. For each show, indicate what type of show it is and why you selected it. Then suggest a good spokesperson. The company doesn’t have a big budget, so hiring a Hollywood celebrity or a famous professional athlete is not possible. Finally, draft a pitch letter that could be sent to the producers of the TV shows you’ve selected.

5. Write a critique of three television talk shows. At least one should be produced by the local station; the other two can be nationally syndicated or produced by a television network. The report should include the format of the show, the length of the segments, the type of topics covered and typical guests. You should also try to ascertain the primary audience for the show.

6. The local YMCA is engaged in a campaign to raise funds for sending inner-city children to summer camp. Write a 20-, 30- and 60-second PSA for use on the local radio station urging the public to make contributions.

7. Your public relations firm handles Perrier, the bottled water from France. What television entertainment programs might be good outlets for product placements in the show? Name some popular shows, and suggest how Perrier could be portrayed.

8. The local fire department is sponsoring a chili cook-off to raise funds for a new fire engine. Various community groups, including firefighters, will have booths serving various kinds of chili. There will also be a contest to declare the best chili recipe of the day. This is a community event, and you would like to have the local rock radio station cosponsor it. Write a persuasive pitch letter to the station’s director of promotions.
9. Creative publicity gimmicks can generate exposure on drive-time radio shows that feature popular DJs. Can you think of a product or a service that would lend itself to a publicity gimmick in such a way that DJs would mention it on the air?

10. Interview a professor on campus with expertise in some social issue or recent news event. Now write a radio news release using this professor as an “actuality.” See the sample on page 190.
UNIT 5

PENULISAN KAPI PERIKLANAN

Objektif Pembelajaran:
Selepas membaca unit ini dan bahan pembelajaran tambahan yang terdapat dalam unit tersebut anda akan;
1. Mengetahui beberapa fungsi periklanan.
2. Mengenalpasti kategori dan jenis periklanan.
3. Mengenalpasti pendekatan dan teknik asas penulisan kapi periklanan yang baik dan berkesan untuk media cetak, radio dan televisyen.
4. Mengenalpasti panduan asas dalam penyediaan kapi periklanan.

A. Pengenalan
Apakah dia periklanan? Definisi periklanan adalah berbagai-bagai bergantung kepada pengertian, pemahaman dan juga pengalaman yang dialami oleh sipentafsir. Walau bagaimanapun secara umumnya, periklanan dapat didefinisikan sebagai satu proses komunikasi yang memaparkan mesej mengenai sesuatu idea atau pendapat yang boleh mewujudkan tindakbalas terhadap mesej di kalangan sasaran. Tindakbalas tersebut boleh berakhir dengan wujudnya kesedaran, minat, rasa ingin tahu, keinginan untuk mencuba, keinginan menerima suatu, keinginan menerima ataupun bertindak untuk mengintegrasikan mesej dengan keperluan kehidupan sehari-hari di kalangan sasaran.

Dalam proses periklanan, setiap pengiklan mempunyai matlamat untuk menunjukkan mesej kepada sasaran menggunakan pendekatan pembujukan. Mesej periklanan dikemukakan dengan sokongan teks dan visual. Periklanan yang biasa dilakukan adalah dipaparkan kepada sasaran melalui media massa seperti media cetak dan media elektronik. Idea atau pendapat yang dikemukakan melalui periklanan adalah mengenai suatu barangan, perkhidmatan, isu semasa dan juga perkara-perkara lain yang dianggap betuju signifikan dalam kehidupan sasaran. Secara umumnya,
setiap proses periklanan akan memberi kesan kepada aspek-aspek sosial, ekonomi, politik dan juga teknologi.

Dari sudut sosial, kesan dari periklanan telah mendorong kepada perubahan gaya hidup sasaran yang menjadi pengguna barang dan perkhidmatan. Dari segi ekonomi pula, sebahagian sasaran atau pengguna perlu menyediakan atau mensyajikan sebahagian daripada pendapatan untuk memenuhi hasrat atau keinginan masing-masing kesan daripada pengaruh atau dorongan periklanan. Dari sudut politik pula, dasar-dasar atau peraturan-peraturan tertentu perlu diwujudkan bagi memastikan bahawa usaha periklanan dijalankan secara yang lebih beretika dan bukan hanya dilakukan secara sesuka hati sehingga boleh menjadikan pembangunan moral dan sosial masyarakat. Dari segi teknologi pula, para pengiklan akan berusaha untuk menggunakan teknologi terbaru dalam usaha untuk menarik tumpuan atau perhatian yang lebih di kalangan sasaran.

B. **Fungsi Periklanan**
Sebagai alat pemasaran, periklanan menjalankan fungsi-fungsi seperti di bawah:

1. Mengenai pasti keluaran dan membezakannya.
2. Menyampaikan maklumat tentang keluaran.
3. Menggalakkan pengguna baru mencuba keluaran baru dan mencadangka agar pengguna yang sedia ada terus membelinya.
4. Merangsgangkan edaran sesuatu keluaran.
5. Menambah penggunaan keluaran.
6. Membina kecenderungan dan kesetiaan terhadap jenama.

Selain pemasaran, periklanan juga mempunyai fungsi-fungsi lain, iaitu:

1. Fungsi komunikasi kerana semua bentuk periklanan melibatkan penyampaian sesuatu mesye kepada sasaran;
2. Fungsi pendidikan di mana sasaran mendapat maklumat baru daripada periklanan mengenai suatu barang, perkhidmatan dan isu, khususnya yang membi membawa kepada kehidupan mereka;

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3. Fungsi ekonomi iaitu dengan membangkitkan kesedaran sasaran terhadap keluaran, perkhidmatan dan idea. Periklanan dapat meningkatkan jualan dan dengan demikian memajukan perniagaan;

4. Fungsi sosial dengan menggalakkan peningkatan produktiviti kedua-dua pihak pengurusan dan pekerja bagi memenuhi segala janji periklanan yang telah dibuat kepada sasaran.

C. Pengkategorian Periklanan

Terdapat beberapa kaedah untuk memastikan sesuatu proses periklanan dapat dilakukan secara berkesan dan berjaya. Selain daripada aplikasi teknologi tinggi dan pelaburan yang banyak, periklanan perlulah dirancang berdasarkan pengkategorianannya yang bersesuaian untuk menjamin kejayaan. Pendekatan pengkategorian itu adalah sebagai berikut;

1. Pengkategorian Mengikut Sasaran,

Khalayak sasaran atau sasaran sahaja biasanya dirujuk sebagai sekumpulan individu yang menjadi tumpuan mesuatu iklan. Terdapat banyak pengkategorian sasaran. Dua pengkategorian yang utama ialah pengguna dan perniagaan.

   i. Periklanan Pengguna

Kebanyakan iklan yang terdapat di televisyen, radio, akhbar dan majalah ialah iklan pengguna. Iklan ini ditaja oleh pengilang sesuatu produk atau pengedar.

   ii. Periklanan Perniagaan

Periklanan perniagaan berlaku di kalangan kumpulan atau institusi perniagaan sahaja. Dalam konteks ini iklan yang terlibat lebih berupa periklanan untuk mendorong pelaburan, menjalankan fungsi sebagai pengedar atau agen pembekal dan selainnya. Iklan tersebut secara yang mudah dapat dilihat melalui iklan-iklan untuk kontraktor bagi tujuan menjalankan kerja-kerja yang ditenderkan kepada mereka.
2. **Pengkategorian Mengikut Kawasan Geografi.**
Periklanan berdasarkan kategori tersebut berlaku atau mengambil tempat berhampiran dengan kawasan atau lokasi di mana mesej periklanan dirujuk. Sebagai contoh periklanan yang dibuat oleh PLUS kebanyakannya di buat berhampiran dengan tempat operasi PLUS, iaitu di plaza-plaza tol atau di sepanjang lebuhraya di bawah penyenggaraan PLUS. Jenis-jenis periklanan mengikut kawasan geografi adalah sebagai berikut:

i. **Periklanan Antarabangsa.**
*Periklanan antarabangsa* merupakan periklanan yang ditujukan kepada pasaran asing, dan sebagai suatu bidang kajian, ianya telah berkembang dengan begitu cepat dan dianggap penting dalam zaman siber sekarang di mana rangkaian perniagaan dan jaringan pasaran sudah tidak terbatas kepada sesuatu wilayah, tetapi sebaliknya terbuka luas tanpa sempadan kerana dunia sudah menjadi perkampungan global.

ii. **Periklanan Nasional**
Periklanan kategori ini ditujukan kepada pelanggan di beberapa kawasan dalam sebuah negara. Periklanan nasional boleh ditonton melalui TV atau didengar melalui radio, khususnya semasa penyiaran suatu program yang disiarkan ke seluruh negara. Di Malaysia, sebilangan besar daripada periklanan kategori ini disiarkan semasa penyampaian berita nasional. Periklanan nasional pada kebiasaannya disiarkan melalui akhbar, majalah, radio dan TV yang edaran dan siarannya tersebar ke seluruh negara.

iii. **Periklanan Wilayah**
Banyak keluaran dijual hanya di sesuatu wilayah di sebuah negara. Wilayah itu mungkin meliputi beberapa buah negeri di dalam negara berkenaan. Oleh kerana itu periklanan wilayah turut juga dikenali sebagai periklanan kawasan yang hanya tertumpu di kawasan berkenaan sahaja.
iv. Periklanan Tempatan
Banyak pengiklan atau peniaga seperti pasar mini, ejen kereta dan restoran mempunyai pelanggan yang hanya tertumpu di suatu lokali tertentu sahaja. Contoh periklanan tempatan banyak di dapat di sesuatu kawasan perumahan yang dilengkapi dengan kawasan perbandaran (township) yang tersendiri. Sebagai contoh, penduduk kawasan perumahan yang dilengkapi dengan infrastruktur perniagaan, seperti pasar mini, bank, klinik, farmasi, restoran, dan selainnya sering terdedah kepada periklanan tempatan yang disediakan oleh pengusaha perniagaan setempat tersebut. Sasaran iklan adalah penduduk di persekitaran di mana perniagaan mengambil tempat untuk beroperasi.

3. Pengkategorian Mengikut Media.
Periklanan boleh dikategorikan berdasarkan jenis media yang digunakan. Penggunaan media adalah berdasarkan mesej yang akan disampaikan. Media periklanan merupakan saluran yang dibayar untuk menyampaikan mesej atau maklumat kepada sasaran. Antara media utama yang digunakan untuk periklanan ialah akhbar, majalah, radio, televisyen, mel terus, dan iklan luaran, seperti kain rentang, billboard (sama ada secara manual atau elektronik) dan selainnya. Walau bagaimanapun, secara umumnya periklanan media tersebut adalah terbagi kepada tiga yang utama, iaitu periklanan media cetak, periklanan media elektronik dan periklanan outdoor.

4. Pengkategorian Mengikut Fungsi atau Tujuan.
Satu cara lain untuk mengelaskan periklanan ialah berdasarkan objektif umum penaja. Sebagai contoh, sesetengah iklan bertujuan untuk memasarkan sesuatu produk; sesetengahnya pula bertujuan untuk membuat makluman atau pengumuman.

Periklanan produk dan periklanan bukan produk. Periklanan produk bertujuan untuk memasarkan orang dan perkidmatan. Periklanan bukan produk pula direka atau dibentuk untuk menjual idea, seperti idea mengenai
semangat kerjasama dan Malaysia Boleh! Periklanan bukan produk lebih kepada penonjolan imej dan identiti organisasi atau institusi.

Periklanan produk dan perikalan bukan produk yang berorientasikan komersial turut dikenali sebagai periklanan komersial. Sementara periklanan bukan komersial pula adalah dirujuk kepada periklanan yang dibayar bukan bertujuan komersial. Contoh periklanan bukan komersial ialah periklanan penjimatan air, periklanan pengurangan penggunaan gula dalam makanan dan juga periklanan lain yang lebih bermatalamat untuk meyemai semangat atau sifat berjimat, penjagaan kesihatan dan sebagainya. Kebanyakan daripada periklanan bukan komersial adalah dibayar oleh institusi kebajikan dan badan bukan kerajaan. Pengumuman awam (public service announcements - PSA) boleh juga dikatehorikan ke dalam periklanan bukan komersial.

D. Jenis Periklanan
Terdapat beberapa jenis periklanan. Antaranya adalah sebagai berikut:

1. Periklanan Perhubungan Awam (PR)

Dalam periklanan tersebut syarikat-syarikat yang terlibat secara jelas mengemukakan pandangan mereka untuk komited bersama-sama seluruh rakyat menyanyung tinggi segala kesejahteraan dan keharmonian yang telah disumbangkan oleh Malaysia kepada mereka. Sebagai balasan, syarikat dan rakyat jelata turut berteima kasih dengan keadaan itu dan Keranamu Malaysia mereka memeriahkan sambutan bulan, minggu dan Hari Kebangsaan pada tahun ini.

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2. **Periklanan Korporat**

Periklanan korporat digunakan untuk memupuk kesedaran syarikat, memberi kesan yang baik kepada komuniti kewangan, mempengaruhi pendapat orang ramai, dan merangsang kaktiviti yang sedia ada untuk lebih komited, setia dan produktif dalam menjalankan tugas masing-masing.

3. **Periklanan Identiti**

Periklanan identiti syarikat digunakan untuk memaklumkan mengenai perubahan nama dan juga logo syarikat. Periklanan jenis ini tidak kerap berlaku kerana perubahan nama dan juga logo hanya mengambil tempat apabila berlakunya sesuatu perubahan terhadap dasar pengurusan, perubahan orientasi kegiatan syarikat, perubahan pemilik saham, dan perubahan-perubahan lain yang mempunyai kesan signifikan terhadap operasi keseluruhan syarikat.

4. **Periklanan Pengambilan Pekerja**


Secara umumnya, di Malaysia periklanan PR turut dirujuk sebagai periklanan korporat dan juga periklanan identiti. Istilah periklanan institusi digunakan kerana periklanan yang terlibat adalah lebih berfokus kepada penonjolan imej dan juga tanggungjawab sosial dan kemasyarakatan yang ditunjukkan oleh institusi. Sebagai contoh, periklanan yang pernah dibuat oleh beberapa syarikat yang menyokong usaha kerajaan bagi menjayakan kemenangan *Belilah Barang Buatan Malaysia* (Iklan Kasut Buatan Gombak oleh Petronas) dan kemenangan *Malaysia Boleh* (Iklan Malaysia Terbang Tinggi oleh Penerbangan Malaysia).
E. Penulisan Kapi Periklanan

Setiap penulisan periklanan atau biasanya dikenali sebagai penulisan kapi periklanan mempunyai matlamat atau tujuan sama ada untuk mewujudkan kesedaran, minat, rasa ingin mencuba, usaha meailai prestasi, tindakan menerima suasai, tindakan menerimaguana atau tindakan mengintegrasidikalangan publik mengenai sesuatu idea (sama ada barangan, perkhidmatan, isu dan selainnya). Untuk setiap penulisan kapi periklanan, matlamatnyaialah berbeza bersesuaian dengan strategi penulisan yang dirancang berdasarkan;

1. Konsep idea (barangan atau perkhidmatan atau isu yang terlibat).
2. Fokus sasaran
3. Media komunikasi
4. Strategi mesej

Setiap periklanan institusi mempunyai mesej yang dibentuk untuk sasaran yang disalurkan melalui media yang dipilih berdasarkan idea yang diiklankan. Penulisan kapi periklanan itu pula mestilah mengandungi beberapa ciri yang berikut;

1. Penyampaian yang menarik dan tidak membosankan.
2. Mesej yang bersemangat, mesra dan meninggalkan kesan.
3. Penceritaan idea yang lengkap tanpa tokok-tambah Mesej disampaikan secara berterus-terang.
4. Fakta dikemukakan secara spesifik.
5. Tidak terlalu keterlaluan (propaganda yang berlebihan).
6. Maklumat dikemukakan secara kreatif.

F. Pendekatan Penulisan Kapi Periklanan

Pelbagai cara atau pendekatan yang digunakan oleh pengiklan dalam menyediakan kapi periklanan Dua kategori utama yang digunakan ialah pendekatan rayuan rational dan rayuan emosi. Rayuan rational ialah rayuan berdasarkan keperluan harian yang dianggap praktikal dan berguna kepada sasaran (khususnya dalam periklanan barangan atau perkhidmatan). Pendekatan
rayuan emosi pula adalah berkait-rapat dengan sentimen, keperluan psikologi, keperluan sosial dan emosi sasaran. Umumnya, kesemua penulisan kapi periklanan institusi adalah menggunakan pendekatan rayuan emosi. Bagi menastikan sesuatu penulisan kapi periklanan itu memberikan kesan yang positif di kalangan sasaran, kapi periklanan itu mestilah;

1. Mudah dibaca, iaitu dengan menggunakan perkataan dan ayat tuturan yang biasa.
2. Menggunakan perkataan yang ekonomik (tidak membazir dan bombastik).
3. Menggunakan ayat aktif.
5. Menggunakan ayat yang menggembirakan dan menakjubkan.
7. Merendah diri dan menggunakan ayat berdasarkan perspektif sasaran.
8. Membentuk satu tujuan.

G. Menghasilkan Kapi Periklanan yang Berkesan untuk Media Cetak
Berikut ialah antara teknik penyediaan kapi periklanan yang dianggap berkesan untuk diterbitkan dalam media cetak;

1. Menggunakan rekaletak (layout) yang mudah. Elakkan penyediaan periklanan pada halaman yang sesak atau tidak tersusun.
2. Setiap kapi periklanan yang mengandungi unsur visual perlu disokong dengan teks. Teks yang digunakan perluah sesuai dan ada keharmonian dengan unsur visual.
3. Teks yang panjang perluah dicetak secara yang kreatif dan mempunyai peranan untuk medidik atau memberi maklumat. Periklanan yang berfokus kepada idea atau isi yang kompleks perlu disokong dengan kapi periklanan yang mengandungi teks yang banyak.
4. Menggunakan tajuk periklanan yang positif yang boleh menimbulkan penjanaan emosi dan perasaan. Elakkan sama sekali penggunaan tajuk periklanan yang negatif atau yang boleh mewujudkan impresi yang buruk.
5. Menggabungkan ilustrasi atau unsur visual secara konsisten dan harmoni dengan taks agar dapat mewujudkan perhatian sasaran atau audiens.


7. Kapi periklanan yang menggabungkan perbandingan gambar foto yang menunjukkan keadaan sebelum dan selepas dianggap boleh memicu kesan yang lebih baik teks yang bergabung dengan hanya satu gambar foto. Jika boleh, tunjukkan perbandingan visual yang melibatkan dua gambar foto. Pembacanya kelak.

Pembacaan keseluruhan kapi periklanan hanya berlaku di kalangan pengiklan dan bukan hanya sasaran atau audiens. Oleh itu para pengiklan perlu memesan mesej yang sesuai dengan media dan konsep idea yang ingin diketengahkan atau ditonjolkan kepada sasaran.

H. Menghasilkan Kapi Periklanan yang Berkesan untuk Televisyen
Antara teknik penghasilan kapi periklanan yang berkesan untuk televisyen ialah:

1. Pembukaannya mesti tepat, berkaitan dan tidak dipaksa. Selain itu paparan scene mesti membolehkan peralihan yang licin dan konsisten dari satu babak kepada babak lain yang terdapat dalam periklanan.

2. Keadaan atau situasi yang terdapat dalam periklanan mesti relevan atau secocok dengan mesej atau idea.

3. Situasinya mesti hasilkan nilai dan minat kemanusiaan.

4. Audiens mesti dapat mengenali pasti dan memahami situasi yang terlibat.

5. Menurunkan penggunaan elemen benda atau objek untuk menyokong periklanan secara minimum.

6. Mewujudkan persembahan idea mengikut turutan yang senang dan mudah diikuti.

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7. Menggunakan sebutan perkataan dan ayat yang ringkas, realistik, dan bercorak perbualan.
8. Menggunakan perkataan yang ekonomi dan utamakan maklumat tontonan.
9. Menggunakan perkataan yang boleh mentafsirkan gambar dan memandu audiens untuk adegan atau scene yang seterusnya.
10. Menyelaraskan elemen audio dengan video secara harmoni.
12. Untuk lebih efektif, periklanan 60 saat sewajarnya mengandungi 101 hingga 110 patah perkataan (dalam Bahasa Inggeris) dan perlu disesuaikan jika menggunakan Bahasa Melayu.
13. Mesej periklanan sewajarnya berfokus kepada sesuatu yang baru.
14. Penggunaan voice over semestinya dilakukan secara yang sempurna, lancar dan menarik.
15. Elemen visual dan audio yang terlibat mestilah seimbang dan harmoni.

I. Menghasilkan Kapi Periklanan yang Berkesan untuk Radio

Perkataan dan ayat aktif hendaklah digunakan melebihi perkataan dan ayat pasif. Kapi periklanan yang digunakan mestilah sesuai dengan tempoh masa periklanan yang telah diperuntukkan. Empat jenis format periklanan radio yang asas ialah:

1. Format menggunakan muzik,
2. Gambaran kehidupan,
3. Pengumuman langsung, dan
4. Penunjolan personaliti.


1. Nyatakan nama pengiklan berkali-kali, sekurang-kurangnya tiga kali.
2. Sekiranya nama pengiklan mengelirukan, nama tersebut perlu dieja sekurang-kurangnya sekali.

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4. Penyampaian mesej yang mudah.

5. Memberi tumpuan kepada satu idea atau aspek periklanan yang penting. Tidak memasukkan terlalu banyak idea.

6. Memberi gambaran mesej dengan penggunaan perkataan yang sesuai.

7. Penggunaan bahasa deskriptif dan bunyi-bunyi semulajadi (seperti siren kereta bomba atau enjin motokar) untuk menguatkan gambaran.

8. Memberi keutamaan penggunaan perkataan dan ayat aktif lebih daripada perkataan dan ayat pasif.


10. Menyesuaikan kapi periklanan dengan masa yang diperuntukkan. Berdasarkan kajian dan tinjauan, penyiar pada kebiasaannya membaca lebih kurang 100 hingga 150 patah perkataan seminit (bergantung kepada orientasi idea periklanan yang hendak disampaikan). Antara amalan penggunaan perkataan dalam periklanan radio adalah sebagai berikut:

    - 25 patah perkataan = periklanan 10-20 saat
    - 45 patah perkataan = periklanan 20-40 saat
    - 70 patah perkataan = periklanan 30-60 saat
    - 140 patah perkataan = periklanan 60-125 saat

11. Mengenalpasti penggunaan kesan bunyi yang bersesuaian dengan mesej.

12. Penggunaan kesan bunyi perlu dijelaskan melalui perkataan.

13. Penyampaian periklanan radio mestilah mudah, kerana radio dianggap sebagai media yang baik untuk melahirkan kesedaran terhadap idea periklanan (penonjolan jenama atau pun identiti) di kalangan pendengar

menggunakan bahasa tempatan agar hasilnya lebih menyeluruh dan berkesan.

15. Persediaan untuk penyampaian periklanan radio perlu dilakukan bagi memastikan siarannya menarik dan berkesan. Alasan bahawa penyiaran periklanan radio lebih mudah dari penyiaran periklanan televisyen adalah salah, kerana kedua-dua kapi periklanan radio dan televisyen melibatkan komitmen manusia (melalui lakonan dan pengucapan natural yang hidup dan bukannya dibaca sambil lewa).

J. Kesimpulan
Periklanan pada kebiasaannya dianggap sebagai kaedah penonjolan identiti yang membolehkan sesuatu organisasi korporat yang menjual barang atau memberi perkhidmatan membuat publisiti kepada produk mereka. Selain itu periklanan institusi pula akan berjaya untuk menonjolkan penglibatan sesuatu institusi atau organisasi untuk memaklumkan atau memberitahu publik tentang tanggungjawab dan obligasi sosial atau kebajikan yang telah mereka laksanakan.

Perkembangan semasa telah menunjukkan bahawa terdapatnya persaingan di kalangan organisasi korporat khususnya, untuk menonjolkan publisiti penglibatan sosial dan kebajikan mereka terhadap masyarakat. Situasi ini secara tidak langsung menunjukkan bahawa periklanan telah mewujudkan suatu persaingan di kalangan organisasi korporat tersebut dan menimbulkan persoalan sama ada periklanan korporat atau institusi yang dilakukan itu sebenar-benarnya untuk tujuan yang ikhlas atau untuk meraih keuntungan atas nama obligasi sosial atau kebajikan? Apakah yang sebenarnya yang dimatlamatkan oleh sesuatu organisasi korporat melalui periklanan. Apakah untuk mengukuhkan kedudukan dan kepentingan ekonomi masing-masing atau untuk memelihara kepentingan sosial masyarakat pengguna atau pelanggan. Walau apapun isu yang ditimbulkan, tetapi yang jelas setiap periklanan, sama ada periklanan itu berorientasikan pasaran atau penonjol imej dan identiti -- melalui periklanan, sesuatu organisasi sebenarnya telah menyediakan ruang kepada audiens (pengguna dan pelanggan atau publik) untuk membuat penilaian terhadap prestasi organisasi,
Bahan Pembelajaran Tambahan

1. *Writing Advertising Copy* (m.s.262-293)

**Sumber:**

**Latihan**
Bagi mengukuhkan kefahaman, anda adalah digalakkan untuk;
1. Menelaah semula maklumat dalam Unit 5, dan
2. Mencuba semua latihan yang terdapat pada bahagian akhir bahan pembelajaran tambahan dalam Unit 5.
A student learning how to do research on the Internet asked the reference librarian helping him what a bold slash of color with a name, Web address and a slogan was. "It's an ad. We're seeing more and more of that," the librarian explained.

Well, everyone knows what an ad looks like, you might think. Wrong. Sometimes you have to look carefully. Product advertising used to be fairly easy to identify. That's not the case now. Ads and promotion pieces often blend into a confusing composite.

Generally advertising agencies prepare the direct sales ads for products and services. Promotional pieces may be done by ad agencies or by PR firms. However, mostly, as a PR writer, you are in the business of selling ideas. The result may look like editorials or features, or exactly like advertising.

The creative concepts you'll be developing and the copy you will be writing will be for print and electronic media, including the Internet.

Ads that promote ideas run the gamut in terms of content. Some, like the Ethyl Corporation ad in Example 13.1, address public policy issues. Sometimes ads like this are called advertorials. If they are presented through the broadcast or film media, they are often called infomercials. Other ads, like the one from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas in Example 13.2, simply present organizations as good corporate citizens. Such ads are often called institutional, identity or corporate-image ads.

Ads mistaken for features look just like their editorial counterpart. They have a story and art, often both pictures and graphics, like Example 13.3 and 13.4. The
Public Policy Ad

When a company wants support for its position on a public policy issue, one way to call attention to company concerns is to buy advertising putting forth its argument. Ethyl Corporation is stating its case against a decision by the Environmental Defense Fund to oppose a fuel additive produced by Ethyl Corporation. Source: Reprinted by permission of Ethyl Corporation.

Ethyl Corporation wants to remove millions of pounds of smog-related pollutants per year from the environment.

The Environmental Defense Fund prefers that we don’t.

Why That’s a Good Question...

Rather than pursuing the law and tactic to silence the public about Ethyl Corporation’s fuel additive HQER, the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) focuses on half truths and misrepresentations designed to scare the public. In their most recent ad campaign, they claim HQER is a health risk. They may be right, but with a twist of fate and a wave of a wand that sounds believable – or unfathomable. And there’s this new study that says we can’t all be right.

Here’s the real story...

HQER is an organic compound-based additive that reduces emissions, primarily reducing carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides — the two most common causes of smog. In the last six years, HQER has been used safely in Canada for 15 years with no reported health risks.

In fact, the Canadian government’s agency, Health Canada, has repeatedly evaluated HQER’s impact on health concluding as recently as 1994, “the combination of the hydrocarbons in HQER does not represent an added health risk to the Canadian population.”

The same analysis was conducted in 1994 by the New York Times article stating “the EPA believes that there is no reason to worry about HQER.”

However, the EDF without benefit of any scientific data, maintenance that HQER poses health risks in the absence of any scientific basis to the contrary. They were, in fact, the first to study the dangers of HQER, while quietly ignoring a 10-year study on HQER’s effects on health. The EPA finds HQER to be safe in Canada, the EDF finds the many environmental benefits of HQER. They even claim that HQER causes cancer despite the fact that cancer is caused by environmental factors.

OK, let’s cut to the chase. And the truth. The reality is that HQER is a necessary part of our daily lives. In 1986, the EDF concluded that exposure to HQER was much higher than that coming from the use of HQER did not warrant regulations to protect public health under the Clean Air Act.

And that’s raising cancer concerns? The EDF in November 1993, Ethyl has demonstrated that “the use of HQER’s poses no cancer hazard.”

And more, HQER does not contribute to the formation of NOx, carbon monoxide or nitrogen oxides and NOx, carbon monoxide or nitrogen oxides.

And even more, HQER is the most popular fuel additive in history. If HQER were used in all cars and light trucks in the U.S., according to estimates, the nation would benefit by up to 700 million pounds per year. Also, all other emissions could be reduced by up to 300 million pounds of carbon monoxide, 13 billion pounds of nitrogen oxides and 10 billion pounds of sulfur dioxide.

Finally, we’re a bit puzzled that the Environmental Defense Fund would suggest a product that is not only safe, but actually reduces pollutants and greenhouse gases.

Call a half-truth a half-truth and hang the truth, no wonder the EDF is hard to keep up with.

In the end, Ethyl Corporation’s HQER is an additive that is the right answer.

Ethyl Corporation
P.O. Box 3189
Richmond, Virginia 23228

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Corporate Image Ad

Managed care is now a very competitive environment, and one of the older companies, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, is trying to retain audience awareness of its company while positioning itself as offering flexibility, since many providers are criticized for not being flexible. Source: Reprinted by permission of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas.

ONE SIZE FITS ALL

DOESN'T FIT

ANY TEXAS BUSINESS

AT ALL.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas. Innovative managed care for the distinctive needs of Texas businesses large and small.

Just like the people who work them, not two Texas businesses are exactly alike. That's why they share the same Blue Cross network. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas. BlueChoice managed care, employers get a real choice in programs and coverage options. Employees get a real choice, too. Through our BlueChoice network, they'll have access to a large, statewide group of carefully selected doctors, hospitals and other health care providers. And both of you will receive the kind of service you'd expect from a fellow Texas company—one that's helped keep Texas in a healthy state since 1939. For more information, call your independent agent, or call Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas today.
"Feature" Ad

Although the line across the top of the page says "An Advertising Supplement to The Washington Post National Weekly Edition," this is likely to be accepted by readers as a feature story with graphics and a photo. An insert reinforces that perception by telling the reader this is a "special report." Features like this that appear as ads are common assignments for PR writers. Source: Reprinted by permission of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

1997 and Beyond

Hong Kong, the special economic zone of China, enjoys a thriving economy and a high standard of living due to its strategic location and political stability. The city is a major financial hub and a key player in global trade. Despite challenges such as the SARS epidemic and the Asian financial crisis, Hong Kong has maintained its status as a major international business center.

The proliferation of telecommunications and information technology has been a major driving force in Hong Kong's economic growth. With a well-developed infrastructure and a skilled workforce, the city continues to attract investments from around the world. The Hong Kong government has implemented policies to support innovation and entrepreneurship, fostering a dynamic and diverse economy.

Hong Kong's location on the southern coast of China gives it unparalleled access to both the Pacific and Indian Oceans. This strategic position, combined with its robust legal and financial systems, makes it an attractive destination for businesses seeking to expand into East Asia and the rest of the world.

This special report was produced as a part of the series "The Great Asian Century," which examines the economic and cultural transformation of the region. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council collaborated to create this report to highlight Hong Kong's contributions to the global economy.

For more information about Hong Kong's economic development, visit the Hong Kong Trade Development Council's website at www.hktdc.com.

This report was produced in collaboration with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). It was designed by the Hong Kong Design Centre's Design Education Development Group.
difference is that the ads are paid for, and although they are clearly designated as advertising, readers often don't notice that they are not editorial copy.

If you are in charge of a special event you may have a whole section inserted in a newspaper or magazine. These inserts also look like editorial material except for their dedication to a single topic.

Two of the most common types of ads you'll be doing are public service ads and house ads. No money is exchanged in the placement of these pieces, but the two qualify in every other way as advertising.

Public service ads are ads that are carried at no charge in the print and broadcast media. When they appear on radio and television, public service ads are called public service announcements (PSAs). United Way, Girl Scouts, the American Heart Association and a wide variety of similar organizations and causes benefit from such ads (see Example 13.5).
Public Service Ad

Public service messages like this one from CARE are run free by the media. When they are in print media, they are called public service ads, but they are called public service announcements (PSAs) when aired on radio and television. The media run these messages on a space- or time-available basis. Source: Created for CARE by McCann-Erickson Atlanta. Used with permission.

IN 1946 I RECEIVED SOMETHING FROM AMERICA THAT I CARRY WITH ME TO THIS DAY.

The worst war ever
was over. There
was nothing left.
Thousands of people
searching for lost
children. Thousands
of children, wandering
the streets. Mother and I lived in the basement
of aant
building. There
was nothing to eat. Nothing to
wash the clothes or cooking.

We gathered in the forest to keep us
alive. One day we heard there was a CARE
Package for us, "from a friend in America." We didn’t
know anybody in America. But we went
to pick it up. It was 50 lbs. of food,
hardly enough to live. When we opened it,
we were like reawakening from a coma. Inside
was bacon, flour, coffee, rice, sweet potatoes.

We were so happy! We didn’t know
what to do with it. We were supposed to send a
person in my heart. Because CARE
packs not just food. They
take care of our self-esteem. Today, with
people in 70 nations all over the globe, CARE is more
important than ever. They save lives every day
with food. But CARE also provides training and
hope and far too people learn to feed themselves.

CARE empowers people to regain control of their
own lives. And CARE allocates 95% of all its
expitations to relief and development programs.

I know the future of CARE is
a good one. I think CARE will
help to eliminate hunger. I give to CARE
because I’ve never forgotten.

IT'S TIME TO CARE AGAIN.

For more information, call FREE-CARE, 800-228-CARE. For local CARE, call the State of Georgia, 703-530-0242.

CARE and CARE Package are registered service marks of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).
House ads are advertising messages that appear in a firm's own publications. They may, for instance, urge employees to buy savings bonds or give blood or not to litter. Example 13.6 shows a house ad produced by National Geographic. Regardless of the sources or special purposes, ads always try to persuade.

**Advertising as a Persuasive Force**

Many people believe that advertising has the power to make people buy things they neither need nor want. If this were true, it would follow that advertising could be used by public relations professionals to make publics accept ideas they might otherwise reject. But advertisers will quickly tell you that advertising does not work that way.

Advertisers know that the power of advertising is limited to persuasion. It cannot coerce. Used skillfully, advertising may stimulate in an audience a predisposition to buy a product, use a service or accept an idea. Advertising has proved itself to be economically efficient at persuasion, because it works on the principle that you attract more bees with honey than with vinegar.

**Appeal**

The key element in a successful ad is the relevance of the appeal it has for the receiver of the message. This appeal should be as direct as possible. In writing ads, don't leave the appeal to inference. Spell it out. An appeal can be emotional, rational or a combination of the two.

Emotional appeals tug at the heart. They suggest that the receiver can become happier, healthier, prettier, sexier, more successful, more patriotic or richer in any number of other qualities if he or she behaves in a specific way. The number of emotional appeals open to the ad writer seems to be infinite. Rational appeals, on the other hand, appeal to the receiver's reason. Such appeals are likely to be based on economy, durability, profit, efficiency and performance among others.

Combination appeals use emotion first to get people to pay attention and then use rational appeals once the receivers are interested in the copy. The copy will usually close by returning to an appeal to the heart.

**Positioning**

A particular appeal works in concert with the marketing idea of “positioning the product.” The writer expresses the appeal creatively in an attempt to carve out a special niche for the advertiser in the minds of the public. For example, Hertz has been the dominant rental car firm for decades, with Avis in a distant second position. At some point, Avis decided to capitalize on its number two position and appeal to the public's inclination to root for the underdog. In this way, the “We Try Harder” idea was born.
House Ad

National Geographic used its own pages for a house ad that promotes its National Geographic Online service via CompuServe. Source: Used with permission of Beverly Joubert © National Geographic Society.

to a whole new world.
Viewed rationally, a Mirage is a Mirage, whether it has the Hertz logo or the Avis logo on it. If there is no significant difference in the rental fees and services offered by the two companies, why should you rent a Mirage from Avis rather than from Hertz? There is no rational reason. Avis makes an emotional appeal to the prospective customer by positioning itself in the public’s mind as number two. Everybody knows that number two has to try harder to be number one. Therefore, the suggestion is, you should rent the Mirage from Avis, because Avis tries harder. When employees bought the company, the slogan was modified to say “Owners Try Harder.”

This principle of positioning was aptly applied when a major city wanted to pass an enormous bond program to rebuild and improve an extensive portion of one of its oldest freeways. Each time they were asked, voters denied the bonds. On its last try, the city launched a “safety bond” program to finance the project. Positioning it as a safety project focused attention on its benefit rather than on its cost. The issue passed by a comfortable margin.

**Behavior**

Understanding what people think and do in different parts of society is critical to developing credible advertising. Good advertising writers are in touch with their publics. They understand that there may be a little bit (and perhaps a lot) of snob in all of us, because we like to relate to others and have others relate to us. Behaviorists spend a lot of time trying to understand our reference groups—organizations to which we belong or want to belong. We all want the comfort of belonging, of being accepted. For this reason, friends and family are important to us, and we seek their approval. We are also influenced by opinion leaders. Different segments of society have different opinion leaders, and each of us reacts to those leaders differently based on our own personality characteristics. For example, authoritarian types are particularly vulnerable to leaders who have status and authority.

If you are getting the idea that people don’t respond rationally to a lot of advertising copy, you are right. Most of the decisions we make are based on emotion, not reason. That is why good advertising copy is a complex blend of information (facts) and appeal (emotion). The best copywriters make unusual associations, see unique applications and react to innovations with excitement and enthusiasm.

**Basic Guidelines for Writing Advertising Copy**

Advertising copywriters are often believed to have a great deal more creative freedom than most other writers because they work under few artificial restraints. For example, you might view writing a news release as less creative than writing copy for an ad, because in the former case you must conform to news writing style. But there are rules and restraints on ad copywriting too.
Purpose
To begin with, you must have a clear understanding of what you want to accomplish with the ad. Do you want your public to support the bond issue? Do you want your shareholders to vote for the recapitalization of the company? You must know the single (never multiple) specific purpose for the ad. And everything you put in the ad should contribute to that purpose. In editing the ad, you'll need to delete as excess baggage any word, phrase, sentence, paragraph or visual that does not specifically further the purpose. The receiver should not have to wrestle with excess baggage in discerning the message you are trying to communicate.

Objective Facts
You'll be able to select a specific purpose for the ad only after carefully and thoroughly reviewing all the pertinent facts about the issue. You should review these facts not only from your side's point of view but also from that of your opposition. In fact, the latter review is just as important as the former. And both reviews have to be done with objectivity. Only then can you make an informed judgment about the strengths and weaknesses of your position and those of your competition. And only then should you attempt to derive a purpose calculated to capitalize on one of your strengths or to attack one of the opposition's weaknesses.

Objectivity is no less critical in enabling you to prove what you say if you are challenged in a court of law to prove the truth of claims made in your copy.

The Publics
You should review the facts and select a purpose for the ad with a full awareness of the uniqueness of your public. You need to know their wants, needs and values. This is where demographic and psychographic information assumes great importance. If the members of your public are blue collar, average less than a median income, have a ninth-grade education and suffer from a high rate of unemployment, you may have difficulty in persuading them to support a large bond program to build a junior college in the community. This doesn't mean you won't be successful in gaining their support, but it does mean that you will have to write credible messages that clearly demonstrate the rewards such support will bring.

Media
Before you write the copy, you must know which medium or media you are writing for. One of your first concerns, of course, is to meet the technical requirements of the medium. An ad prepared for a newspaper may not meet the requirements of a magazine, and it certainly won't meet those of radio or television. If you are writing ads for a medium with which you are unfamiliar, first check the technical requirements in the
The most recent issue of Standard Rate and Data Service (SRDS). SRDS will also provide you with deadline information, a list of key personnel and a wide variety of other data. SRDS is one of the bibles of the advertising business.

Beyond technical issues, you need to know a lot about the medium you will use. How credible is it? How evocative is it? How do people react to it? What audience does it reach? What audience does it seek? What is its editorial slant? What have other advertisers experienced who have used it in similar situations? These are important questions, and you must know—not just guess at—the answers. In some cases you may have to rely on word of mouth, but in other cases you will be able to gather a lot of information from the medium itself simply by writing or calling.

The Creative Approach

Never try to develop a creative approach or write a line of copy until after you have made the decisions specified above. These decisions are parts of what advertising professionals call a copy platform. A copy platform is a succinct document that spells out pertinent information about the public and contains a simple statement of creative strategy. For example, a creative-strategy statement for a little-known candidate running for senator against an incumbent might read like this:

To convince voters that Mr. X will represent the views of eastern Kentuckians better than Mr. Y,

This statement clearly expresses your purpose (strategy). The question then becomes: How will I do it? That’s where creativity comes in.

Let’s suppose that Mr. Y is noted for being absent from the Senate floor when important bills that may affect eastern Kentuckians are up for a vote. You could construct a series of ads in which Mr. X pledges to be in the Senate chamber during every important vote. The voters would probably want to hear this message, though they might consider the claim to be mere political rhetoric.

You could take the offensive and attack Mr. Y by showing his empty chair during a roll call. You could then support the point with a table, showing not only the bills on which Mr. Y did not cast votes but also the number and dates of his absences. In other words, you could provide a lot of solid, verifiable, convincing information that Mr. Y is not doing his job properly. Still another approach might be to show Mr. X, dressed in hunting garb and following some coonhounds on the scent. Mr. X would look up and explain that he and his “dawgs” were looking for Mr. Y. An obvious close would be a superimposed message like this:

Where is Mr. Y? Vote for Mr. X. You will always find him in the Senate.

Of these three approaches, the first is mundane. It is low on persuasiveness because there is nothing unique about its claim. The ad neither excites the emotions nor challenges the reason. The second ad is more creative, and it contains lots of convincing and damning information about Mr. Y. It is more likely to be persuasive. But the third approach, which is obviously best executed for television, is not only more
creative but it is also dramatically persuasive. How could a voter see that ad and remain free of resentment toward Mr. Y? And as resentment builds, voters will be more easily persuaded to vote for Mr. X. Emotion is the essence of good creativity in advertising.

**Visualization**

As you read the discussion on creative approaches, it may have occurred to you that creative strategy in advertising involves visual as well as verbal thinking. If so, you caught on to an essential difference between writing news copy and writing advertising copy. A good advertising copywriter always thinks in visual as well as verbal terms. The reason the hunting example just described is so dramatic is that the visual element graphically characterizes the verbal message. In the best advertising copy, the verbal content and the visual content harmonize perfectly so that each complements and extends the message of the other. See how visuals take the reader through the message in Example 13.7.

**Language**

It is axiomatic that, if you want to communicate with someone, you must use language that the other person will understand. Language has certain rules, and if they are not generally observed, communication may be impossible or the result unwanted. Thus, the common rules of grammar and syntax are the standard in advertising, as they are in other forms of writing. You can break a grammar rule for a purpose—for example, to achieve a specific effect not possible with traditional rules—but doing so should be the exception, not the rule.

Always choose the simple over the complex word. Your public might be able to read and comprehend at the college-graduate level, but people generally prefer to read copy that is two to four grade levels below their ability. And if you have any doubt about the educational level of your audience, you should gear your writing to about three grade levels lower than you believe it to be. Obviously, if you are writing an idea ad for your company that will appear in a highly specialized professional journal, you should use language appropriate to that public. This may mean using some professional jargon. If your ad is to appear in a general mass medium, however, simplify the language and avoid jargon.

Not only should you use simple words, you should also use short phrases, sentences and paragraphs. Sentences should average no longer than 12 to 15 words. Paragraphs should average about three to five sentences. Following these guidelines will improve your writing’s readability. If your message is easy to understand without being insulting to the intelligence, it will stand a better chance of being read than denser, more complex copy.

**Repetition**

Do you recall the outcome of Pavlov’s experiment with his dogs? As the number of repetitions mounted, the dogs began to associate the meat powder with the sound of
Art and Copy

In less skilled hands, 14 visuals in a one-page magazine ad might be viewed by some people as far too many, but each of these blends into and adds to the verbal message in the headline and copy block. That’s excellent ad creativity. Source: Used with permission from Continental Airlines, Inc., and Jack Unruh, illustrator.

Sure, others fly south to Latin America.
Of course, we do it over 345 times a week.

With flights to destinations throughout Mexico, Central and South America and the Caribbean, our service north of the border is as frequent as anything with wings. In addition to our own fleet, we fly through Breguet for flights to the Northern Hemisphere. We offer round-trip fares, and if you book in advance you can save. Ask your travel agent or Continental's 800 number. Continental.

For more information, call your travel agent or Continental at 800-233-4427.

Continental
More airlines for your money

For more info visit http://www.flycontinental.com

© 1980 Continental Airlines, Inc.

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the tuning fork. When the repetitions were plotted on a graph, a learning curve took shape. Finally, the curve leveled; that is, after a while additional repetitions did not cause the learning curve to go higher. Thus, repetition is an essential principle of learning. You can apply this principle to your message in two basic ways.

The repetition principle applies first to the actual writing of copy. The general rule is that you should repeat the essential point of your message at least three times in your ad. This does not mean that you have to repeat it verbatim, but only that you must repeat the idea. This is absolutely crucial in broadcast messages, because they are so fleeting.

The principle of repetition also applies to how frequently you repeat the message to your public and in what time frame. Generally, if you are introducing a new program or idea, you will have to present your message fairly frequently during the early stages of your program. As your audience becomes familiar with what you are promoting, you can reduce the number of presentations and space them out, while still maintaining a reasonable level of awareness.

When your program ends, the public will begin to forget at approximately the same rate at which it learned. Still, the public’s awareness about what you said will never drop back to zero. Hence, it will take less effort in a subsequent program to raise public awareness to former levels. This is a good argument for sustained programming, of course, since it suggests that sustaining awareness is more efficient than building or rebuilding it.

These general guidelines apply across all media and in all copywriting situations. Now let’s review some guidelines for specific media.

**Copywriting for Broadcast and Film Media**

Brevity, clear style and sharp technique are the hallmarks of good broadcast and film copywriting. Specific time frames vary among stations, but you will usually write for periods lasting 10 seconds (25 words), 20 seconds (45 words), 30 seconds (65 words), or 60 seconds (125 words). The actual word limits may vary a little from radio to television to film, but in any case you have to tell a complete story in just a few well-chosen words. This is seldom easy.

Because an audience’s attention is easily distracted, your copy must be simple, direct and provocative. Avoid clichés and slang. Be careful to make smooth transitions from one point to the next. Personalize the message by emphasizing “you” at every opportunity. People are more likely to respond personally to a message if they think it is directed to them. So try to write your copy as if it were a personal conversation between you and another person. Reward the audience for listening by sharing important information in an interesting way.

Keep the message credible by avoiding exaggerated claims; don’t make any claims that you wouldn’t make to your closest friend. Your persuasive appeal must be distinctive so that your audience will remember it when they see or hear it again.
You must capture the attention of your audience in the first few seconds or you will lose it completely. Be sure to register the name of the firm or organization, and let the audience know what you want it to do. A sense of urgency may help move the audience to action.

Radio, television and film have different technical capabilities, of course, but some styles of message presentation are common to all three media. One is the “slice of life,” which is a mini-drama that presents a situation anyone might experience. It provides the context for the message.

Another is the jingle approach, in which music and words are combined to make the message memorable, identifiable and entertaining. A humorous approach is appropriate in any of these media. This may include anything from a cartoon (television or film) to a joke (usually radio only) to a mini-sitcom (situation comedy). The difficulty with humor is in finding universal themes that will not go stale quickly. And remember, never make your audience the butt of the humor.

Another technique is the interview. Here an announcer talks with representative members of your public. Still another approach is the testimonial. If you use a testimonial approach, however, be sure to establish the credibility of the people testifying. Otherwise, the audience will tune out your message.

You can use sound effects with any or all of these approaches. And you can combine the techniques themselves in some fashion.

Television and film have the additional benefit of permitting visual demonstration. This may be done through live action, animation or a combination of the two. In writing for television or film, consider the visual aspect carefully.

Your choice of a copy approach will depend above all on your resources—that is, money and facilities. Be prepared for the frustration that comes when you have to reject a creative idea because you can’t afford to realize it. As you consider various techniques, you may want to review what others have done in similar situations. You won’t want to copy from them, but you should not hesitate to adapt ideas that have worked for others.

**Public Service Announcements**

If you write much advertising for broadcast media, it is likely to consist mostly of public service announcements (PSAs). To do PSAs well, you must decide first whether your primary purpose is to inform or to persuade. If it is mostly to inform, you’ll need to amass lots of information, sift it wisely and use it very selectively. You must be able to say a lot in a little time. If the purpose is to persuade, you’ll still need information, but you’ll put more emphasis on its interpretation. And you’ll arrange it so it has the maximum persuasive impact.

A variation on these two purposes is a “positioning” PSA. Think of the safety bond program described earlier. That was essentially an exercise in positioning or focusing people’s attention on safety rather than cost. A positioning PSA seeks to position an idea in some unique way against all other related ideas. Effective positioning can have a significant impact on what people understand, accept, reject or feel about.
something. It also may influence what they recall and how they associate it with other relevant information.

Whatever your purpose, PSAs for non-profit organizations can be created on elaborately produced videotapes, film with sound, some types of pictures with audio cassette, audio cassette only, or more recently, computer-generated pieces that may be on a CD-ROM. Many organizations' national headquarters provide their own PSAs in these forms, and they usually leave room for a tagline to be added at the local level. More often, however, PSAs are produced locally for local agencies. Since the agency is begging for the broadcast time—and occasionally for the production time, too—most PSA scriptwriters try to keep things simple (see Example 13.8).

For television PSAs, local agencies may provide film or video footage to be edited as the visual for the PSA. A station announcer or a local personality may volunteer services to do the audio. If the volunteer is a local personality, you should write the script to match as closely as possible that personality’s style of speaking.

The visual part of the PSA could be a set of 35mm slides supplied to the station, with a script to be read by a station announcer. If the script has too many words to permit good delivery, it is likely to be thrown away. You should realize how little control you really have over whether your message will be broadcast. Your best assurance is to write an infallible script.

PSAs are more likely to be read live on radio than on television. Scripts, without a cassette, are sent to the local station. If the script is no good, local announcers will often improvise, but if improvisation does not work, the script will be thrown out. To guard against this, listen to the announcers who might read your PSA, study their styles and write for their rate of delivery. If you are in doubt, under-write—that is, use fewer words.

Some people, of course, wonder about the value of PSAs, asking whether they really have any effect on audiences. It is unquestionable that PSAs can help in establishing and sustaining an organization’s identity among various types of audiences. However, their ability to affect behavior is quite limited. Mostly they affect only the behavior of individuals who enjoy a higher-than-average socioeconomic status.

**Copywriting for Television and Film**

When writing copy for television or film, imagine how your ad will look as well as how it will sound. This will help make the message stronger and more persuasive. Remember that you have to think visually and verbally.

Divide your paper down the middle so that you have two equal columns. Label the left column “description” and the right column “script.” In the right column, begin to write the words and sounds you want your audience to hear. Concentrate on the single, basic idea of the message, and remember to promise your audience some reward—a benefit that is both explained and supported.

Now go back and polish what you have written. Pare away unneeded words, phrases and sentences. Get the verbal message into what you consider finished form. Then have someone read the script aloud to you. Make sure the reader doesn’t study
Public Service Announcement for Television

The 10-second PSA, done by Brogan and Partners of Southfield, Michigan, for the Michigan Department of Health, AIDS Prevention Program, delivers a message like a karate punch—swift and hard. It uses finished art—hence, it is called a presentation storyboard—to show the sequential development of non-verbal and verbal content. (V/O means voice-over.) Source: Reprinted by permission of Brogan and Partners.

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MALE V/O: Oh, she has daddy’s smile...

FEMALE V/O: and her grandmama’s eyes...

V/O: and her mother’s AIDS.

Don’t share a bed with someone who shares a needle.
the message beforehand, but reads it "cold." Listening to your copy being read aloud by someone else will help you to spot parts that need to be corrected, eliminated or rearranged.

Now repeat the process, this time working down the left side and describing the visuals that are to accompany the verbal message. But make certain that the visual images you call for match and interpret their verbal counterparts. In some cases, you may be working from a prepared television script sheet, like the one in Example 13.9.

Remember that television and film are visual media and that one of their strengths is action. Avoid static scenes. If the image does not move, the audience will shift its attention to something more interesting. You must pay attention to the visual, but don’t become so carried away with it that you forget the message you want to convey.

In television, it is common to carry the above process a step further and create a storyboard. Example 13.8 illustrates this idea. The storyboard depicts graphically what you have described down the left side of your script sheet. Although an artist is often assigned the job of making a storyboard, many copywriters find it is helpful to make their own, using stick figures to properly sequence the visuals. They often write their copy under each frame so they can better judge its unity. Internet ads must be carefully planned also, since these involve color, movement and sound.

**Copywriting for Radio**

Approach copywriting for radio as you would that for television and film—by dividing your paper and labeling the columns to make a script sheet. That is simple enough, but writing really good radio copy is more difficult than writing for television or film. In television and film, you have visual images to help you convey your message. In radio you have only the visual theater of the mind. Although this is a vast territory, it is one in which many copywriters get lost.

Begin to write your copy in the right-hand column. You’ll have to search especially hard for just the right words to evoke the images you want to paint in the public’s collective mind. That is, you’ll have to imagine exactly what you want the public to see. Language can be your best ally or your worst enemy. It will be the latter if you use uncommon words, especially those that have regional or local usages. Be wary of these. Also be cautious about using dialects.

Once you have written the message in the right-hand column, have someone read it "cold" so you can listen for semantic traps. Verify that the mental images you evoke unfold in a logical, easy-to-follow sequence, or you’ll lose your listeners. You’ll need to build excitement and drama, but be sure to drive home the message by repeating it at least three times in the script.

With the verbal content completed, work in the left-hand column providing complete cues regarding music, volume changes, announcers, sound effects and similar production concerns. Check your descriptions against the verbal messages in the right-hand column to make sure they match (see Example 13.10).
Blank Television Script Sheet

This blank television script sheet may be helpful to writers as they try to conceptualize how words and visuals fit together to form a cohesive, effective message. Review the message in Example 13.8 to see how well it fits this model.

CLIENT:
TITLE:

TIME:
DATE:
WRITER:
Public Service Announcement for Radio

The National Institute of Mental Health Panic Disorder Education Program produced its “Freight Train” PSA in 30- and 60-second versions. The two are identical except for the segment in which a female announcer reads the copy. Source: NIMH Panic Disorder Education Program, Radio Public Service Announcements, Spring/Summer 1994. Used with permission.

"FREIGHT TRAIN": 30 SECONDS

**MUSIC:** Ominous and Foreboding Music

**SFX:** Distant Train Horn

**MALE V/O:** “It’s coming again.”

"In seconds it will be here."

"Your heart pounds."

"You can’t breathe."

"You’re terrified."

**SFX:** Train Horn Getting Louder and Swiftly Closing In.

**MALE V/O:** "You’re sure you’re about to die."

**SFX:** Pounding Heartbeat

**FEMALE ANNCR:**

For people with Panic Disorder, this is how it feels to have a panic attack.

Find out how you can get help.

Call 1-800-64-PANIC. 1-800-64-PANIC. Panic Disorder.

It’s real. It’s treatable.

A public service message from this station and the National Institute of Mental Health.

FADE OUT

"FREIGHT TRAIN": 60 SECONDS

**MUSIC:** Ominous and Foreboding Music

**SFX:** Distant Train Horn

**MALE V/O:** “It’s coming again.”

"In seconds it will be here."

"Your heart pounds."

"You can’t breathe."

"You’re terrified."

(continued)
Although most commercials are prerecorded, some are read live. If you distribute your ad to stations in script form to be read live, make sure the words are simple to pronounce and flow smoothly, so the announcers will not foul up the announcement by mispronouncing them. Placing the wrong inflection on a word or phrase can distort the message by giving copy elements the wrong emphasis. The safest step is to prerecord your spots. This applies to television and film as well.

**Copywriting for Print Media**

Some general guidelines apply to ad copywriting for the print media. These guidelines turn on the concepts of attention, interest, desire, credibility and action, sometimes referred to as AIDCA. Let's look at each of these concepts separately.

**Attention**

It is axiomatic that, to communicate a message to a public, you must first command attention. Two elements of a print ad perform the attention-getting function: the headline and the visual design. Although some argue the point, most great copywriters believe that the headline is the single most important element in an ad, period. The headline is the element most often responsible for stopping readers and luring them into the ad. A terrific visual may do this too, but it is the headline that makes the greatest and most lasting impact. Of course, the visual elements should be harmonious with the headline and its content. A good headline offers a promise to the reader. More often than not, it spells out a benefit to the reader as well. And it does this provocatively so that the reader will pay attention.
The visual, in addition to gaining attention, helps to amplify the content of the headline. Thus, the headline and the visual express the same message in different ways. Remember the principle of repetition mentioned earlier in this chapter? Showing the message is a way of repeating what the headline says. Whether verbally or visually, however, the message must convey—powerfully but simply—some benefit to the reader. Ads with the greatest attention-getting value are those that speak to the reader’s self-interest.

The use of color can help gain attention. When you buy advertising space, however, remember that the use of color costs extra. This may affect your budget, so check the costs before you commit yourself to using color. Though color generally increases attention, it does not necessarily increase readership or retention of your message.

**Interest**

Remember that, by offering a benefit, the headline stops the reader. Thus, the next phase is to heighten the reader’s interest. You can do this by making sure that the first sentence or paragraph of the copy flows naturally from the headline and expands on the headline’s promise. For example, suppose your company is launching a recapitalization program. The success of this program will depend on whether a majority of stockholders support the program. Many stockholders, if not most, don’t really understand recapitalization, so they are not necessarily apt to return a ballot. Your task is to make the program appealing enough so that they will want to find out more about the benefits to them of supporting the issue. An attention-getting headline in this case might be:

**HOW TO INCREASE YOUR INVESTMENT IN [NAME OF COMPANY] BY 36%**

That headline would attract the attention of any investor. The task now is to get the reader to understand the how-to. That becomes the function of your copy, especially the first sentence or first paragraph. This must tie in directly to the headline itself. Thus, the first paragraph of your copy might read,

Each of your shares in [name of company] will increase from $50 to $68 if you support the recapitalization program recommended by the board of directors.

If you owned stock in this company and you received this message, you would pay attention to it, because you would recognize how much money you could make by merely marking a “yes” on your ballot. The headline and first paragraph would speak your language. It would clearly be in your self-interest to pay attention to what the company was saying to you. That is the essence of “interest” in good advertising copy.

**Desire**

Once you have developed self-interest, the next step is to talk about why the idea is desirable. You can do this by filling in details of the plan in subsequent paragraphs:
Describe what the plan is, why it is needed, how it will benefit the company and its shareholders and when it will go into effect, and supply other supporting bits of information. This part of the copy promotes the idea that the suggested action is a desirable thing to do.

### Credibility

Even if your message is provocative, your public may not believe it. The cardinal rule in this regard is to be as specific as you can. Note the specifics in the preceding headline. The line did not say “about 36%”; it said “36%” specifically. And the first paragraph of the copy did not equivocate on the dollar increase per share. It was very specific: “from $50 to $68.” There is no room in this instance for misunderstanding the message. Never leave to inference what you want the reader to know. All your copy should reflect that same degree of specificity. If you hedges your claim, the reader will spot it immediately and begin to discount what you say. So be specific, concrete and direct. You will more likely be believed, even if the reader decides against your point of view.

It also pays to remember that truth is sometimes stranger than fiction and more difficult to believe. This can be a major problem when you are asking readers to accept something that defies common experience—even if it is entirely truthful.

### Action

Action is the “bottom line” in advertising. You are paying for the space in which to present your message. Therefore, it makes sense for you to ask the reader to do something. Action is not as important in some idea ads (especially ones that simply want to convey a positive image of the firm) as it is for product ads. But in some idea ads, such as the preceding example, you want your readers to take an action—in this case, to support the recapitalization program. It would be at least a partial waste of the firm’s money if you did not ask the reader to do something specific. For example, you might close the ad by saying that a ballot will be in the mail tomorrow and asking the reader to mark it and return it immediately in the postage-paid envelope. That kind of close to the ad would leave no doubt as to what course of action you want the reader to take (see Example 13.11).

Now that we have reviewed these points about copywriting for print media, let’s look at each print medium separately.

### Copywriting for Newspapers

Newspaper advertising falls into two categories: display and classified. Display advertising is the advertising that does not appear in the classified portion of the paper.

For display advertising, words and visuals must provide a unified message, as audio and video do in television commercials. Newspapers are read hurriedly and have a fairly brief life. So it’s a waste to use words and visuals just because they look or sound good. If they don’t have a purpose in the ad, they should be deleted—Readers won’t
Cooperative Ad

A cooperative effort often gives a message more credibility and authority. Notice that this ad follows the guidelines by telling you what the problem is and how you are involved in it and then tells you what to do, including giving you a phone number to call. The cooperative agencies include two U.S. government entities and two advertising councils that take on public service projects. Notice that the U.S. Ad Council is identified as a public service of the publication that published this ad, American Express's Departures magazine.

Source: Reprinted by permission of the Advertising Council.
read “fat” ads, because they don’t have the time. Although newspapers are known as a mass rather than a class (or selective) medium, they can saturate a specific geographic market more thoroughly than magazines, radio or television. And even though a newspaper is mass in appeal, some segmentation of audiences typically occurs through features and special sections, such as the sports or business section.

**Display** Display advertising is especially good at promoting an immediate demand for products or services or achieving the acceptance of ideas. It works if you have a unified concept to convey designed along the lines of the earlier AIDCA discussion. The size of the space you buy will determine the proportions and sizes of the headline, copy, visuals, logos and other elements of the ad.

How much space to buy is a critical decision, for it determines how much competition for readers’ attention there will be on the page where your ad appears. If you buy a full page, there will be no competing message on the page. If you buy a half page, there are likely to be two or three other competing messages—in addition to the editorial matter—all clamoring for the reader’s attention. The smaller the space you buy, the greater is the competition for attention on the page.

Most newspaper ads are for local firms and are addressed to local readers. A good copywriter takes advantage of the research information about both the medium and its market and tries to tailor a message that will “fit” the market. Of course, national advertisers who use newspapers ordinarily can’t tailor their ads to this degree. They might run the same ad simultaneously in newspapers all across the country. Remember, though: If you have the opportunity, write your ad with the local market in mind.

**Classified** Most classified advertising sections contain excellent examples of creativity in the use of a limited number of words. Classifieds are also big business on the Internet. Ads in these sections are not for garage sales alone. Classified ads are used extensively by real estate firms and transportation- and recreation-related firms. A professional copywriter for an agency is likely to prepare hundreds of classified ads for clients. The technique employed here is simply to determine how many words you can get into a specific space. Deduct from this count the number of words that you must include—such as the firm’s name, address and telephone number—and compose your message with the number of words left. Read the classified columns before you begin writing, to help you appreciate the ingenuity of others and to learn the accepted abbreviations in that market. In the process, you’ll also find out what your competitors are doing.

**Copywriting for Magazines**

Magazine audiences are highly specialized. Specific magazines appeal to particular types of people, regardless of where they live. Magazine advertising copy should ex-
ploit this specificity in magazine audiences. Both demographic and psychographic information are relevant here.

Although magazine readers do not necessarily devote immense amounts of time to reading magazines at a single sitting, they usually put them aside for rereading as their time and interests dictate. When writing ad copy for a particular magazine, you may want to get in touch with the sales-promotion department for specialized information on the readership.

In writing your magazine ad, you should know its size and placement before you actually begin. Magazine space is ordinarily sold by the page or by the fraction or multiple of a page. It is possible to buy a special position for your ad, but you’ll have to pay a premium for it, and that can run up the cost in a hurry. Be aware that most magazines allow, and even expect, a higher level of reproduction quality than newspapers exhibit, especially in the use of color and highly creative visual materials.

Look at several issues of the specific magazine your ad will appear in before you begin writing, so you can get a feel for its character and the tone of its advertising content. Then check the editorial bent of the magazine. These inspections may cue you to use or avoid a particular approach.

Like those in newspaper ads, the verbal and visual elements in magazine ads should be complementary, not disjointed.

Public Service Ads Both newspapers and magazines run public service ads for non-profit organizations and causes (see Example 13.5). If you are preparing one of these ads for use by these media, observe all the rules that apply to ads you would buy. Remember, you are asking these media to give your message a free ride. If you want your ad run, play by the rules. Be as helpful as you can. You’re not buying. You’re asking—and hoping.

House Ads Newspapers and magazines run house ads on a space-available basis. Although no money exchanges hands, the promotion department of the medium is often given a budget for this purpose. It is then the department’s responsibility to prepare various house ads and to have them available to run on demand. Some house ads, however, are scheduled as if they were paid ads. These usually promote the magazine or newspaper as a good medium in which firms can reach a market or an audience (see Example 13.6). Or they may promote subscriptions (particularly in newspapers) or the use of the classified ad section. Even though these are house ads, they are written and prepared just as other ads are.

Copywriting for Direct Response and Direct Advertising

The severest test of your ability as a copywriter is whether you can write effective direct-response or direct-advertising copy.

Copy that is designed to promote direct action by the audience is called direct-response copy. It is the type of message that urges people to take immediate action such
as mailing in a coupon, calling an 800-number, entering a sweepstakes or figuratively raising their hands and saying, “Hey, we’re interested.”

Direct-response copy can appear in most any medium. The key is not the type of medium in which the message appears, but the type of message conveyed. If it urges the audience to do something now, it is direct-response copy. For example, a commercial on television from Publishers Clearinghouse touts its subscriptions and provides an incentive by offering fabulous sweepstakes prizes. All you have to do is to call a toll-free number, but you have to call now.

Direct-advertising copy appears in written, printed or processed form and is sent via a controlled method of circulation to individuals. There are three types of direct advertising.

**Direct Mail** This covers all forms of mailed direct advertising, except mail order. It includes letters, postcards, booklets, broadsides, brochures, circulars, catalogs and stuffers, among others.

**Mail Order** Mail-order copy is responsible for the entire “selling” job. It may appear in a variety of forms, from catalogs such as L. L. Bean to a letter urging the recipient to give to the Disabled American Veterans.

**Unmailed Direct Advertising** Unmailed direct-advertising copy differs from direct mail and mail order only in its method of distribution. It includes promotional pieces that may be delivered to a person’s home or may be picked up in a store, showroom, fair or exhibit or at any other site allowing promotional efforts.

All forms of direct-advertising copy are especially difficult to write effectively because you have to create the medium as well as the message. You don’t have the support of a preselected audience from the standard media.

Each message has to stand alone and produce results. In fact, success is carefully measured by the number of responses generated. These can be in any number of forms—for example, coupons, orders or queries—and the response rate measures precisely how much action you have generated with your writing. Once you have designed and written a successful ad that has proved itself, you are not likely to change it very much in the future.

Obviously, the overall design of coupons, order forms and related material has to be very good, so that people can respond easily.

Not all direct-response or direct-advertising copy consists of “single shot” messages. Some types are developed to attract people before additional information is given to them. Hence, copywriters may be involved in a wide range of writing tasks related to subsequent messages in other forms. Whatever the form of the campaign, copywriters have a big job. They must produce a large volume of carefully selected words, and their firms depend heavily on them to move people not only to accept an idea but to demonstrate acceptance in the form of a response.
Copywriting for Out-of-Home Media

The term out-of-home media refers to a variety of media—outdoor, transit, skywriting and the like. The key feature they share is that readers go to them rather than the other way around. This characteristic imposes severe constraints on what you can say and how you can say it. Each out-of-home medium is unique, but the general guidelines for outdoor media apply to all.

There are two basic kinds of outdoor billboards: the poster panel and the painted bulletin. Poster panels, which are printed on large printing presses, are a standard size: 12 feet 3 inches by 24 feet 6 inches. Three sizes of messages can fit onto these panels. A 24-sheet poster measures 8 feet 8 inches by 19 feet 6 inches; a 30-sheet poster measures 9 feet 7 inches by 21 feet 7 inches; and a 30-sheet bleed panel measures 10 feet 5 inches by 22 feet 8 inches. The 24-sheet poster panel has been the standard in the medium for decades, but currently the 30-sheet panel is replacing it.

The "sheet" unit of measurement has its roots in the time when it took 24 or 30 sheets of paper to cover a panel. Printing presses are larger today, so most panels can be covered with from 10 to 15 sheets.

Many advertisers use poster panels routinely, changing their messages monthly or several times a year and advertising in many markets simultaneously. Once the cost of designing and producing the panel is absorbed, the costs become incrementally smaller as additional sites or markets are used.

The painted bulletin, as the name indicates, is painted by hand. It goes on a board measuring 14 feet by 48 feet. An advertiser will use "paints" only when cultivating one or a very few markets and when the message will not be changed within a year. Usually an advertiser will not use more than two or three painted bulletins, or "paints," in a specific market, depending on the size of the market.

Outdoor advertising—called outdoor for short—is remarkably cost-effective when you need to saturate a market with an idea. The price of an outdoor campaign is based on what are called showings. A 100-show is a campaign in which enough panels, including some illuminated for night viewing, are set up to provide 100 percent coverage of the outdoor market for a 30-day period. Studies show that it is not unusual for a 100-show to produce a high level of message repetition—an average of 25 or more per month. A 50-show, thus, would involve half the coverage and repetition of a 100-showing.

Copywriting is especially difficult for outdoor. Because your message may be seen for only a second or two, it has to be especially simple and compelling to register with the viewer. As a general rule, you can't use more than about eight words, including the firm's name, and expect the message to punch through (see Example 13.12). There should be no more than three verbal and visual elements in the message. Hence, you must restrain yourself in both your verbal and visual thinking if you expect to write a good outdoor message.
Simplicity is the hallmark of good outdoor. If your message is complex, don't use outdoor. But if you can reduce your message to just a few words, and if you can employ bold, even garish, visuals, you will be able to do a lot with a little.

Although ads for subways, taxis and similar media have different size specifications, the same guidelines apply to them as to outdoor.

**Copywriting for Sales Promotion**

Point-of-purchase advertising, samples, contests, advertising specialties and cooperative advertising are sales-promotion pieces, as are coupons, booklets, brochures and mailers. (See Chapter 16 for brochures and Web pages.)

Point-of-purchase advertising is advertising displayed with a product, service or idea and specifically designed to inspire the customer to buy on impulse. Most point-of-purchase advertising is strong on emotional impact, particularly symbolism, and ties in with other existing promotional materials to create additional recognition. Another promotional device is the sample, a free product sent out along with descriptive literature. The copy accompanying a sample often tries to inspire a sense of obligation in prospective customers by urging them to accept the “gift.”
Contests are designed to offer customers something extra and to maintain their awareness of the idea through participation and anticipation. Advertising specialties can be anything with the corporate logo on it, but generally they are useful objects, like ice scrapers for windshields, or things with high visibility that will be remembered.

In cooperative advertising, the retail outlet appeals for direct sales while receiving support from the manufacturer. When the manufacturer’s logo appears alongside the retailer’s in a local firm’s advertising for a product or service, this is usually a tipoff that the ad is a cooperative one, with the retailer and manufacturer sharing in the cost of space, time or position.

**Conclusions**

- Most advertising copy that PR people write involves promoting ideas.
- These idea ads are in print and electronic media and take many forms, some looking like traditional ads or commercials and some looking like editorial matter.
- Advertising uses persuasion. It cannot coerce.
- Successful persuasion is based on the right appeal, proper positioning and an understanding of how people will respond to the appeal.
- Basic requirements for advertising copywriting include an understanding of the ad’s purpose, a careful review of the objective facts to be conveyed, an awareness of the public to be addressed, and a thoughtful decision as to the media to be used. Internal requirements are a creative approach, visualization, precise language and repetition.
- Television and film media are dynamic, so movement must be integrated into messages for these media, and the verbal and visual elements of the ad must be complementary.
- Internet advertising also involves color, movement and sound.
- Copy for radio is written for the ear, not the eye. Words and sounds must be especially well chosen for radio ads so that the public can “see” the message.
- Although newspapers and magazines are static media, messages placed there must be dynamic and move people to act. Stages of audience response that must be addressed in developing these ads include attention, interest, desire, credibility and action. The headline is the most important element.
- Direct-mail messages are difficult to execute effectively because the message must also be the medium.
- The audience goes to out-of-home media, rather than vice versa, so time is short and simplicity in both words and visuals is crucial. The total message is limited to eight words and three elements.
- Writing copy for sales promotions often involves writing for a variety of media and methods. It is a good idea to review the descriptions and illustrations in this chapter before writing any sales promotion materials.
Exercises

1. Write five different headlines for ads addressed to shareholders, explaining the recapitalization program discussed in this chapter.

2. Select one of the five headlines you have just written, and write three alternative lead sentences or paragraphs for it.

3. Write a double truck (two facing pages) ad for Business Week for the following situation: Your client is an industrial park. It has a lot of undeveloped land, plenty of water and power and the resources to build high-tech facilities for firms relocating to your area. In fact, state and local taxes will be waived in perpetuity for any firm locating in the state. This is, of course, a big incentive for firms to move to the area. You are free to expand on this information using a local situation.

4. Write a television commercial for the circumstances described in Exercise 3.

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UNIT 6

PENULISAN KORPORAT UNTUK AUDIENS KHASUS

Objektif Pembelajaran;
Selepas membaca unit ini dan bahan pembelajaran tambahan yang terdapat dalam unit tersebut anda akan;
1. Mengetahui konsep dan definisi surat berita.
2. Mengenali kriteria dan fungsi surat berita.
3. Mengetahui teknik asas penulisan surat berita.
4. Memahami kaedah perancangan dan teknik asas merekabentuk brosur.

A. Pengenalan
Perbincangan dalam modul ini adalah tertumpu kepada penulisan korporat untuk audiens terpilih dengan berfokus kepada penulisan surat berita, brosur, risalah dan majalah organisasi. Kempen-empat jenis hasil penulisan tersebut dianggap mempunyai audiens yang khusus. Secara umumnya, surat berita dan hasil penulisan lain yang diterbitkan oleh organisasi adalah berfungsi sebagai media publisiti yang digunakan oleh organisasi untuk menyalurkan maklumat secara bertulis dan bercetak, dari organisasi kepada ahli-ahli di dalam organisasi atau pelanggan perkhidmatan khusus yang ditawarkan oleh organisasi. Contoh terbaik pelanggan perkhidmatan khusus organisasi ialah mereka yang memegang keahlian ked kredit dan juga keahlian ked diskau.

Pada masa sekarang, penggunaan surat berita sebagai alat penyebaran maklumat adalah semakin meluas, khususnya di kalangan organisasi korporat. Selain surat berita, brosur, risalah dan penerbitan majalah khusus oleh organisasi hampir mempunyai fungsi yang sama tetapi mempunyai matlamat akhir yang tertentu. Tumpuan perbincangan dalam unit ini adalah tertumpu kepada kriteria
yang terdapat pada surat berita, fungsi surat berita dan teknik penghasilan surat berita yang dianggap berkesan. Selain itu turut dirumuskan beberapa aspek penghasilan dan juga keistimewaan yang terdapat pada surat berita.

Perbincangan mengenai penulisan brosur pula dibahagikan kepada beberapa topik. Umumnya, terdapat berbagai istilah yang digunakan untuk brosur, seperti booklets, leaflets, flyers, pamphlets, dan sebagainya. Walau bagaimanapun kesemua bahan bertulis tersebut mempunyai perbezaan dari segi fungsi. Tumpuan perbincangan adalah berfokus kepada perancangan dan cara penghasilan brosur dengan tumpuan kepada teknik pembentukan maklumat dan kaedah rekabentuk brosur.


B. Penulisan Surat Berita

Surat berita telah mengalami perubahan fungsi. Pada masa dahulu, surat berita adalah digunakan di dalam organisasi sebagai alat untuk berkomunikasi di kalangan pekerja dan ahli pengurusan organisasi. Pada masa sekarang, surat berita bukan sahaja diedarkan ‘di kalangan ahli atau kakitangan biasa organisasi, tetapi juga kepada golongan profesional ataupun pihak yang berminat dengan kegiatan sesebuah organisasi walaupun berada di luar organisasi. Terdapat beberapa kriteria yang penting yang perlu diberi perhatian semasa penghasilan surat berita yang baik, iaitu;
1. Penulisan mestilah memenuhi permintaan dan keperluan pembaca.

2. Maklumat penulisan yang disampaikan mestilah unik supaya pembaca memberi perhatian kepada maklumat.

3. Pengedaran surat berita mestilah efisien dan dapat dibaca oleh audiens secara berterusan.

4. Surat berita mestilah dapat memberikan maklumat yang tidak dapat diberikan oleh media yang lain.

5. Perlunya ada kakitangan yang berpengalaman dan berkemahiran untuk menghasilkan surat berita secara berterusan.

6. Penerbitan surat berita mestilah dihasilkan secara bersiri di mana frekuensi penghasilannya adalah konsisten dan sentiasa selaras dengan maklumat yang disampaikan mengikut peredaran masa.

C. **Fungsi Surat Berita**

Tujuan utama penulisan surat berita ialah untuk membolehkan setiap ahli dalam sesuatu organisasi berkomunikasi dan berkongsi maklumat serta pengalaman. Dalam sebuah organisasi yang sentiasa berkembang dan mengalami perubahan, adalah sukar untuk pihak pengurus untuk menyampaikan maklumat mengenai dasar dan polisi organisasi secara bersama dengan setiap individu ahli. Oleh itu melalui surat berita, maklumat pengurusan boleh disampaikan secara terus kepada ahli tanpa sebarang seketak atau pengampangan. Setiap kemajuan dan perubahan yang dialami oleh organisasi akan dapat disampaikan secara konsisten melalui surat berita, lebih-lebih lagi jika penerbitan surat berita berkenaan dilakukan mengikut siri dan frekuensi penerbitan yang telah ditetapkan.

Selain berfungsi untuk menyalurkan maklumat mengenai dasar dan peraturan organisasi, surat berita turut berperanan untuk memberi ingatan kepada semua ahli organisasi mengenai aktiviti yang boleh disertai oleh ahli, khususnya aktiviti-aktiviti pembangunan sosial, sukan dan juga aktiviti kemasyarakatan yang lain.
Bagi sesebuah organisasi, surat berita yang diterbitkan boleh memainkan peranan sebagai alat atau mekanisme komunikasi dalam. Segala aktiviti pengurusan dan aktiviti lain yang dilaksanakan oleh sebahagian kecil ahli organisasi akan dipublisitikan secara merata kepada semua ahli organisasi (atau pelanggan organisasi bagi surat berita langganan) untuk mengetahui maklumat terkini mengenai aktiviti organisasi dan/atau aktiviti sebahagian ahli-ahlinya. Proses publisiti tersebut mendorong kepada kewujudan rasa setia ahli kepada organisasi kerana adanya penghargaan yang diberikan oleh organisasi terhadap segala aktiviti yang mereka jalankan.

Sebagai contoh, maklumat atau berita mengenai seseorang pekerja organisasi yang diberi penghargaan (recognition) oleh negara kerana berjaya melakukan suatu aktiviti di bawah program Malaysia Boleh akan pastinya menonjolkan nama baik sesebuah organisasi. Maklumat mengenai kejayaan yang diterbitkan di dalam surat berita, pastinya akan mendorong ahli atau pekerja lain di dalam organisasi untuk lebih berusaha bagi meningkatkan sumbangan mereka kepada organisasi. Selain itu surat berita juga digunakan untuk mendorong ahli di sesebuah organisasi menanam minat dan sikap terhadap kepentingan hubungan komuniti atau kemasyarakatan. Situasi ini boleh ditunjukkan melalui berita mengenai aktiviti gotong-royong, menderma darah dan selainnya diterbitkan melalui surat berita. Kesemua berita mengenai aktiviti kemasyarakatan tersebut boleh mempengaruhi kejayaan sesebuah organisasi untuk meraih rasa hormat publik kepada organisasi.

Pemilihan isi kandungan surat berita secara cermat dan secara seimbang akan dapat memperlihatkan reputasi pengurusan organisasi. Secara umumnya, surat berita yang diterbitkan adalah bertujuan untuk menyampaikan pengalaman dan pendapat ahli organisasi (sama ada pihak pengurusan atau kakitangan lain) yang bersesuaian dengan topik yang telah ditentukan. Di samping mempromosikan identiti serta unit sesuatu kumpulan di dalam organisasi, penulisan surat berita juga berfokus kepada kejayaan dan pencapaian yang dialami oleh ahli-ahlinya.
Sebagai contoh, maklumat mengenai penglibatan ahli organisasi dalam persidangan atau seminar di peringkat nasional atau antarabangsa akan dimasukkan di dalam surat berita bagi mewujudkan publisiti mengenai penglibatan organisasi (melalui ahli yang menyertai persidangan dan selainnya) di dalam sesuatu kegiatan, khususnya yang berkaitan dengan pembangunan organisasi. Publisiti tersebut bukan sahaja menonjolkan keaktifan organisasi di dalam pembangunan itu semasa, tetapi juga sebagai suatu penonjolan imej sebuah organisasi yang mempunyai tanggungjawab korporat kepada kaktusanganya.

Berita mengenai penghargaan organisasi kepada ahli akan mendorong ahli lain untuk lebih berusaha dan menghormati organisasi. Sekiranya organisasi tersebut adalah sebuah organisasi yang tidak memerintah keuntungan (non-profit organization), maka penghargaan ini bukan sahaja menggalakkan lebih banyak sukarelawan di kalangan ahli untuk melibatkan diri, malah akan dapat meyakinkan publik terhadap organisasi dan juga potensi projek atau aktiviti yang dilaksanakan.


Di dalam penghasilan surat berita, tiada cara yang terbaik untuk menyediakannya. Cara penulisan boleh dalam bentuk formal mahupun tidak formal, tetapi apa yang difokuskan ialah minat dan tumpuan kumpulan pembaca. Terdapat surat berita yang dihasilkan melalui komputer -- ditaip,

D. Teknik Penulisan Surat Berita
Bagi sesuatu organisasi, surat berita dianggap akan dapat memenuhi keperluan maklumat pembaca, sama ada di kalangan ahli ataupun pelanggan organisasi. Di dalam pengurusan organisasi, surat berita juga dianggap sebagai pengganti peranan memo, surat pekeliling, dan juga papan boletin atau kenyataan. Pada masa sekarang, surat berita turut dijadikan alat untuk menyampaikan maklumat yang padat kepada sasaran yang telah ditetapkan oleh pihak pengurusan. Bagi menjayakan tujuan tersebut, surat berita perlu dihasilkan secara yang terancang dan berstruktur. Antara teknik asas penulisan surat berita yang dianggap berkesan, ialah;

1. Penulisan adalah berfokus kepada maklumat yang terkini dan ia membebankan pembaca dengan maklumat yang terperinci dan menyeluruh mengenai sesuatu topik atau idea. Situasi ini merupakan suatu kelebihan kepada surat berita berbanding dengan media lain seperti televiision dan majalah yang lebih menekankan aspek material berbanding dengan maklumat yang disampaikan, kerana orientasi surat berita adalah maklumat, sementara orientasi media elektronik adalah berteraskan kepada publisiti yang lebih bermatlamatkan keuntungan.

3. Pengedaran -- Dalam mengedarkan surat berita, nama dan alamat pelanggan adalah penting. Pengedaran surat berita merupakan satu prosedur yang mungkin melibatkan kos yang tinggi. Oleh kerana itu, sistem pengedaran surat berita haruslah sentiasa diberi perhatian agar maklumat berterusan daripada organisasi kepada kakitangan dan juga pelanggannya dapat dilakukan secara berterusan.

4. Penulisan surat berita perlu berdasarkan pengetahuan dan juga kemahiran yang tinggi. Surat berita secara umumnya diedarkan secara percuma. Oleh itu penerima surat berita tidak mempunyai sebarang obligasi kewangan, sama ada untuk membaca surat berita yang diterima atau sebaliknya. Situasi tersebut berbeza sama sekali dengan bahan bacaan lain yang mungkin terpaksa dibeli oleh pembaca kerana pembaca mempunyai obligasi kewangan yang perlu ditunaikan iaitu dengan membaca bahan bacaan yang telah dibeli. Oleh itu dalam situasi surat berita, penulis perluah menghasilkan satu surat berita secara yang lebih teliti dan perlu lebih sensitif terhadap keperluan pembaca. Penyediaan dan penghuraian fakta perlu dilakukan secara berpengetahuan dan berkemahiran agar persembahan fakta dapat dilakukan dengan lebih menarik. Bagi tujuan tersebut pengetahuan dan kemahiran merekabentuk dan merekaletak surat berita dengan menggunakan kesesuaian teks dan juga unsur grafik adalah amat diperlukan.


7. Dari segi format pula adalah dифіркован bawah format yang paling sesuai untuk surat berita ialah menggunakan ukuran saiz kertas 8.5x11 inci, iaitu saiz A4. Saiz tersebut dianggap aman sesuai kerana mudah untuk disimpan di dalam fail dan juga kabinet dokumen. Berdasarkan kajian, didapati bahawa sekitaranya surat berita tersebut mengandungi maklumat grafik seperti gambar dan graf, maka saiz 11x17 inci (2xA4) adalah lebih sesuai, kerana surat berita tersebut boleh dipersahabakan dalam bentuk format berlipat. Selain saiz kertas, cara atau kaedah memaparkan maklumat juga diberi perhatian iaitu sama ada secara melintang atau menegak mengikut kesesuaian dan kandungan maklumat. Walau bagaimanapun, pemilihan dan penentuan format dan saiz kertas adalah juga bergantung kepada peruntukan yang disediakan atau dimiliki.

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8. Penyediaan surat berita yang berkesan turut dipengaruhi oleh topik untuk setiap siri keluaran atau penerbitan. Antara perkara yang perlu diberi perhatian semasa memilih topik untuk surat berita, ialah:
   i. Frekuensi dan kos penyediaan.
   ii. Topik yang berbeza untuk situasi yang berbeza.
   iii. Topik berdasarkan format dan juga aplikasi grafik.

Sekiranya frekuensi penerbitan adalah kerap, maka topik yang dipilih adalah topik semasa yang lebih hampir dengan kehidupan atau dunia pekerjaan pembaca. Situasi yang berbeza adalah lebih terarah kepada situasi pengurusan pejabat. Sekiranya organisasi mengalami perubahan struktur pengurusan, maka secara tidak langsung perubahan tersebut turut mempengaruhi perubahan kepada aspek-aspek lain termasuk dasar penerbitan dan selainnya. Oleh itu situasi organisasi turut memberi kesan kepada pemilihan dan orientasi penentuan topik dalam surat berita. Begitu juga dengan penggunaan format dan aplikasi grafik. Sekiranya surat berita banyak memasukkan unsur-unsur grafik maka topik yang dipilih pada kebiasaannya adalah lebih ringkas dan mudah kerana pemahaman terhadap topik berkenaan akan diperolehi secara yang lebih menyeluruh melalui unsur grafik yang digunakan.

9. Surat berita yang menarik akan mudah untuk mendapat perhatian pembaca terhadap mesej yang hendak disampaikan. Dalam menghasilkan surat berita yang efektif, objektif penerbitannya haruslah ditentukan terlebih dahulu. Segala persoalan mengenai adakah surat berita yang dihasilkan itu bertujuan untuk menarik minat orang ramai terhadap suatu organisasi ataupun adakah ia lanya sekadar memberi maklumat penting, perlulah terlebih dahulu dijawab. Sekiranya objektif penerbitan adalah untuk menarik perhatian orang ramai, maka penggunaan grafik perlulah lebih banyak digunakan berbanding dengan objektif yang hanya tertumpu bagi melaporkan sesuatu isu sahaja.

Selain daripada pendekatan merekakat (layout) surat berita, cara pengedaramannya juga turut mempengaruhi gaya atau stail rekabentuknya.
Sekiranya surat berita dielekankan secara pos, maka alamat, dan label surat perlulah disertakan. Oleh itu, kaedah dan peraturan pos haruslah diketahui supaya surat berita yang dielekankan sampai kepada sasaran atau audiens dalam tempoh yang dijangkaan.


11. Sebagai seorang penulis surat berita, seseorang itu haruslah mengetahui budaya, peraturan, aspek perundangan dan perlembagaan negara dan juga negara luar (khususnya bagi penulis surat berita untuk organisasi multinational) supaya kandungan surat berita yang ditulis tidak menimbulkan rasa tersinggung pembaca yang berada di negara lain. Keadaan atau masalah menyinying perasaan pembaca tersebut boleh berlaku akibat faktor tidak memahami budaya dan aspek-aspek lain. Dalam situasi tersebut penulis-penulis surat berita perlulah meningkatkan kemahiran komunikasi antara budaya mereka.

E. Kesimpulan
Sebagai rumusan, dapat dinyatakan bahawa surat berita merupakan suatu alat penyelaran maklumat yang begitu berkesan bagi sesuatu organisasi. Keberkesanan tersebut adalah disebabkan oleh beberapa kriteria yang terdapat
pada surat berita berkenaan. Bagai memastikan sesuatu surat berita tersebut menepati kriteria dan fungsinya, setiap penulis dan mereka yang terlibat dalam penerbitan surat berita, perluah memberi perhatian kepada perkara-perkara berikut;

1. Penerbitannya mesti memenuhi keperluan pembaca.
2. Maklumat yang disampaikan mestilah unik supaya pembaca memberi perhatian yang lebih.
3. Surat berita yang diedarkan mestilah konsisten.
4. Maklumat yang ditonjolkan dalam surat berita perluah tidak terdapat di dalam media yang lain.
5. Penghasilan surat berita perlu dilakukan oleh kakitangan khusus agar format dan gaya pemberitaan seimbang dan konsisten.
6. Surat berita yang diterbitkan mestilah secara bersiri di mana frekuensi penghasilannya sentiasa selaras dengan maklumat yang disampaikan mengikut peredaran masa dan isu yang terlibat.

Selain daripada enam aspek di atas yang perlu diberi perhatian dalam penerbitan surat berita, perlu juga diketahui bahawa kepentingan peranan surat berita di dalam sesebuah organisasi adalah disebabkan oleh keistimewaan yang terdapat pada surat berita itu sendiri. Dapat dirumuskan bahawa nara keistimewaan tersebut, ialah;

1. Proses penghasilan surat berita adalah lebih cepat, sama ada dari segi mendapatkan sumber verbal mahupun bukan verbal.
2. Pengubahsuaian boleh dilakukan terhadap format, layout, grafik dan lain-lain aspek surat berita yang melibatkan implikasi kos yang rendah. Membolehkan seseorang penulis atau mereka yang terlibat dalam penerbitan surat berita untuk mengawal maklumat sesuai dengan kehendak organisasi dan kepentingan semasa dan juga kepentingan pembaca, khususnya sebelum surat berita itu dicetak dan diedarkan.
Bahan Pembelajaran Tambahan

1. *Leaflets and Brochures (m.s.306-328)*

**Sumber:**


2. *Newsletters and Magazines (m.s.329-350)*

**Sumber:**


Latihan

Bagi mengukuhkan kefahaman, anda adalah digalakkan untuk:

1. Menelaah semula maklumat dalam Unit 6, dan
Brochures and Web Pages

Brochures are a term most people are familiar with. The problem is, it doesn't mean the same thing to everyone. This chapter will clarify usage, at least for this text. Web pages are something new to this text, but everyone knows what they are. And, for the most part, all agree about the term. The reason Web pages are grouped here with brochures is that in terms of content and, to some extent, layout and graphics, these are more like interactive brochures than they are like anything else that a PR writer does.

Public relations people write lots of copy for brochures. But if you ask them to tell you what a brochure is, you'll get a rainbow of explanations. That's because the term can mean booklets, flyers, circulars, leaflets, pamphlets or tracts. The difference between a brochure and these other pieces is sometimes a judgment call, so here are some quick guidelines for you to consider.

When the term brochure is used in its narrow sense, it signifies a printed piece of six or more pages, published only once and distributed to special publics for a single purpose. Brochures aren't serial publications like newsletters.

A booklet is basically a piece of at least eight pages, stitched on the spine. It often is small enough to fit into a pocket or small purse. Flyers and circulars are usually single-sheet pieces printed on one side that may be mailed, often in bulk, or distributed directly, like those you may find stuck on your car's windshield in a parking lot.

A leaflet is similar but it is usually folded, although not stapled or trimmed. A pamphlet is also folded and usually has more pages. A tract is a pamphlet or booklet whose content promotes a political or religious point of view.
These differences are pretty nominal. What these pieces have in common is more important, including:

- Message statements are always singular.
- Their purposes are to persuade, inform and educate.
- They are published only once, but multiple printings of some are common.
- They must attract and hold their own audiences.
- Because they aren’t parts of other media, they are their own delivery systems.
- They must have clear writing and be visually attractive.

Although the term brochure will be used in the remainder of this chapter, the principles will apply to all the types of pieces discussed above. The creation of a brochure is a complex process that includes six basic steps:

1. Clearly define its purpose.
2. Develop an organizing concept for it.
3. Write the content.
4. Design the presentation of information, including format and the use of type, visuals, paper, space and color.
5. Produce the brochure, including the selection of a method of reproduction.
6. Distribute the brochure.

**Purpose**

Before you do anything else, the first step is to define the purpose of the brochure. What is it that you really want to do? That sounds simple, and it is. But it can be tricky. That’s because people often begin with a general rather than a specific idea of what they want to do. If you force yourself to write a single declarative sentence that describes the purpose, then you can move ahead with relative ease. If you can’t reduce the purpose to a simple sentence, you need to think about it some more. You can also define purpose by developing a basic message strategy. A message strategy simply defines the key idea that you want to convey to your audience.

Real estate agents use brochures to show property and to describe the advantages of owning it. Sometimes realtors use a brochure to “sell” the services of the company, rather than specific properties offered by the firm. Those reflect very different purposes. Many professional public relations people receive at least one brochure a week describing a seminar that has been designed to help improve their skills, yet a different purpose. Public relations professional groups publish brochures offering members as speakers to interested groups. “Selling” talent is selling a service from which others can benefit. Other brochures may promote membership, affiliation or participation. These serve all different purposes.

Still other brochures sell intangibles, by describing the worth of an idea—for example, those designed to get support (usually financial) for foundations. One mental health foundation sends out brochures “selling” its publications and audiovisual ma-
terials at prices that barely cover mailing costs. The foundation "sells" ideas for sound mental health but offers the materials to educate the public about its mission.

Brochures can be informational and educational in the strict sense, too. The Hogg Foundation for Mental Health publishes a list of publications and reports on mental health. Typically it offers a booklet that provides content summaries of each publication, complete with order forms in the back. A person seriously into the study of mental health issues would find this an invaluable resource.

Informational brochures about subjects like a suicide prevention hotline, accident or crime deterrence are often produced as a community service. A druggist may dispense, along with prescriptions, a brochure on how to prevent poisoning accidents and what to do if an accident occurs. Such informational brochures perform a service and generate goodwill for those who distribute them.

**Persuade**

Brochures always try to persuade. In that sense, brochures try to "sell" or publicize a product, service or idea. You may find it useful to review Chapter 13, "Writing Advertising Copy," because advertising copy is common to a majority of brochures. Brochure copy, however, is usually much longer and more descriptive.

Your purpose, of course, influences not only the way you write copy for the brochure but also the design you evolve, the visuals you include and, perhaps, the way you reproduce it. If your intent is mostly persuasive, your copy will lean heavily on adjectives, similes and metaphors intended to tug the emotional heartstrings of readers. Although factual information has its place in persuasive efforts, the copy appeal is mostly emotional.

**Inform and Educate**

If your purpose is primarily to inform or educate, the copy you write will contain lots of factual information, perhaps replete with tables and graphs. This kind of copy appeals to the cognitive behavior of readers. It is a good idea to review the basic persuasive strategies in Chapter 3, one of which is cognitive strategy. This does not suggest that you should use only cognitive strategy in brochures.

But writing copy that informs and educates is more fact-intensive and descriptive than is copy intended only to persuade. You should remember, however, that even the purest of information can have a persuasive impact.

**Concept**

Once the purpose of a brochure is settled, you’re ready to take the second step, which is to define a concept for it. An effective concept is one that helps you to organize words, visuals, color and space so they work well together to tell your story in a way that gets and holds the attention of your readers. How does that work? Begin by
referring back to Chapter 13 on advertising copy, especially the portions dealing with
creative treatments.

First you need a simple message statement. That statement becomes the basis
for a creative concept. The concept has to include some symbolism for conveying the
message. Then you need a headline that capsulizes the message. The visual must com-
plement, not compete with, the message. The remaining pages explain the offer, give
the reader response options that are easy to complete and urge the reader to send or
to call for further information or to take an action (see Example 16.1).

A good concept takes a key idea and interprets it, shapes it and, in turn, is
shaped by it, and follows through with the production of a fully coordinated message
that blends all the elements into a cohesive unit so that the whole is a sum greater than
its parts.

**Purpose and Object**

Although the purpose is to persuade, inform or educate your readers, those broad
purposes usually aren’t enough to give you the firm direction you need for an effective
brochure. You have to combine them with an object or application. Persuasion is usu-
ally the dominant purpose of a brochure, but some may educate or inform.

The guideline is: Begin with a general purpose—persuasion, information or
education, and then extend it to the specific—object or an application.

The Farmers Insurance Group, like most insurance companies, was very con-
cerned about the rising number of young people killed or maimed annually in auto-
mobile accidents because of driving and drinking. FIG wanted to educate young
people about the risks they take when they drink and drive. The general purpose was
primarily to educate. The object was to offer advice on how to break the drinking and
driving cycle. So the concept evolved into “young drivers at risk.” The six-page, 8 by
10-inch color brochure used a magazine design treatment to convey stories about how
individuals can make a difference, comments about the rites of passage, the impact of
fantasy and a first-person account of how “A Drunk Driver Changed My Life.” The
last page carried a signed statement from the chairman of the board and chief operat-
ing officer of the Farmers Insurance Group. Remember to proceed from the general
to the specific.

**Uniqueness** Not only must you have a well-refined concept for the brochure,
but you also want it to stand out from all others that readers may see. You want it
to be memorable. That means that you must be concerned with making your bro-
chure different. The struggle to be unusual can lead you into some bad decisions, so
be careful.

**Cleverness** Inexperienced writers too often depend on cleverness to make a bro-
chure stand out. Being clever is desirable, of course, but cleverness can be a slippery
concept. Cleverness may turn out to be terribly trite, as in the case of a brochure
for an electronics discount retailer that shouted “You’ve shopped the rest. Now shop
the best.”
Brochure Concepts

These two brochures are representative pieces from the profit and non-profit sectors. The holiday invitation brochure from a five-star hotel is elegant in its luxurious eye-catching appeal. A hard-gloss stock magnificently transmits the colors selected. Every one of the eight panels supports the purpose. The copy is clearly written and provides all of the information necessary for an appropriate response. Source: The Worthington.

New Year's Eve at Reflections:

An ideal setting for a New Year's Eve celebration, Reflections offers a special dinner and entertainment from 8:30 PM to 12:30 AM. For reservations, please call 555-1234 ext. 5678.

Holiday Traditions:

The holiday season at The Worthington will be memorable, with events planned to celebrate the season. From special holiday packages to festive decorations, guests will be able to enjoy the spirit of the holidays at The Worthington.

Thanksgiving Brunch:

A traditional Thanksgiving day feast is offered at The Worthington. Enjoy classic dishes with a modern twist. Reservations are required.

Christmas Day Brunch:

Christmas Brunch is a special occasion at The Worthington. Guests can enjoy a delicious meal with family and friends. For reservations, please call 555-1234 ext. 5678.

New Year's Eve at Reflections:

A special dinner and entertainment will be offered on New Year's Eve at Reflections. For reservations, please call 555-1234 ext. 5678.

New Year's Eve Advance Reservations:

For more information or to make reservations, please contact The Worthington's Events Department at 555-1234 ext. 5678.
Brochures for non-profit organizations should not look expensive because the organizations are always out asking for donations. But, that is not an excuse for them to be poorly designed or unattractive. This six panel piece is one of a family of brochures from the AIDS Interfaith Network. This is an appeal for volunteers of all kinds, as detailed inside; and there is a response opportunity, too. Both of these brochures do what they are supposed to do well. Source: AIDS Interfaith Network. Used with permission.

Volunteer!!

CARE TEAM
AIDS Interfaith Network helps meet the health and social needs of people living with/affected by AIDS. You can help us...

RELIEF TEAM
AIDS Interfaith Network provides care to those patients who are not able to work or whose income is too low to cover their medical expenses.

RELIEF TEAM MEMBERS provide care to those patients who are not able to work or whose income is too low to cover their medical expenses.

VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINS
AIDS Interfaith Network chaplains provide compassionate, personal care to help patients cope with the many challenges of AIDS.

CHAIRPERSON TEAM
AIDS Interfaith Network helps meet the health and social needs of people living with/affected by AIDS. Volunteering is a fulfilling way to help.

SPONSORSHIP TEAM
AIDS Interfaith Network provides compassionate, personal care to help patients cope with the many challenges of AIDS.

OFFICE ASSISTANTS
AIDS Interfaith Network provides compassionate, personal care to help patients cope with the many challenges of AIDS.

WELLNESS SPEAKERS
AIDS Interfaith Network provides compassionate, personal care to help patients cope with the many challenges of AIDS.

COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS
AIDS Interfaith Network provides compassionate, personal care to help patients cope with the many challenges of AIDS.

Our Mission
Making people of faith in our community feel safe, respected, loved, and useful.

Genuine cleverness takes something familiar to readers and gives it a new and different twist. Suppose you're creating a brochure to "sell" the idea that writing, designing, and producing a brochure is really an exercise in packaging information. Talking about packaging information is fairly routine. So you might give it a different twist and call it giving shape to information. Giving shape to information also is more descriptive of what you're actually doing as you prepare a brochure.

Puffery In their zeal to be unique, writers may stretch the truth. It is true that the Federal Trade Commission allows the use of puffery in language as an essential part of promoting goods, services and ideas. Even if puff words like best, greatest, lowest,
continued

Care Teams & Relief Teams

RESPONSIBILITIES include:
- Participating in case conferences
- Providing support and feedback
- Assisting with scheduling

TIME:
- Call in: 9 am
- Team meetings: 3 pm

TRAINING:
- 20-hour training

Wellness Speakers

RESPONSIBILITIES include:
- Providing information to groups
- Participating in speaker training

TIME:
- Call in: 9 am
- Team meetings: 3 pm

Speakers Bureau

RESPONSIBILITIES include:
- Providing information to groups
- Participating in speaker training
- Providing information to groups

TIME:
- Call in: 9 am
- Team meetings: 3 pm

Office Assistants

TIME:
- Call in: 9 am
- Team meetings: 3 pm

Committees

TIME:
- Call in: 9 am
- Team meetings: 3 pm

Chaplaincy

RESPONSIBILITIES include:
- Providing pastoral care
- Participating in training

TIME:
- Call in: 9 am
- Team meetings: 3 pm

To Volunteer

riches and so on are sanctioned, they often are viewed skeptically by many readers. Readers usually recognize puffery for what it is: truth stretched to the point of unbelief. Puffery can help to create a memorable brochure, but it may be remembered for the wrong reasons.

Suppose the Rose Petal, a chain of 21 high-quality cleaners, has given you the job of developing a small brochure, claiming that the Rose Petal gives customers the cleanest clothes in town. The brochure will be clipped to the plastic bags that cover the cleaned clothing. The story can be told by describing the care Rose Petal’s professional staff gives to clothing, including comments about special chemicals they use and so on, but it is best to avoid an exaggerated claim like “cleanest.” In the absence of an objective measure, “cleanest” is a red flag that may inhibit credibility.

The guideline to use is: Avoid puffery.

Validity Puffery aside, you naturally want to put your best foot forward. But your best foot must stand firmly on the accuracy of what you say. You must be careful in collecting information about the subject of the brochure. If you’re writing a brochure that encourages prospective clients to lease space in a new office building, make
certain, for example, that each office indeed does have its own thermostat control before you claim that in your copy. If a firm rents space and installs computer components that need special temperature control—and there is no thermostat—you can be challenged for misrepresentation in the brochure you produced.

Brochures about financial matters are especially hazardous—investments in particular. You must carefully spell out all the financial considerations and review the copy with both an accountant and an attorney before going into production. The underlying reason in cases like this is the same as with the new office building. People should be assured of getting their money’s worth.

A professional organization’s foundation offered a brochure detailing for potential contributors the benefits of membership in the foundation. The group’s attorney was adamant that the mechanism for providing these benefits be in place before the publication went to press. Colleges and universities now do more careful reviews of their catalogs and brochures after being told by counsel of cases in which institutions were taken to court for promising more than they could deliver. The same caution extends to college and university Web pages.

Suppose that you’re promoting contributions to a local philanthropic group and claim that “all your dollars remain in the community.” Keeping contributions at home is a powerful appeal to many potential donors, but if you’re using a professional fund raiser, the claim might be perceived as misleading because of the sometimes-inflated commissions that go to fund raisers.

Brochures that inform and educate are much easier to write than ones intended to create or sustain an image. Image is often nebulous. Informing and educating are more concrete. Accuracy is critical. So is completeness. But before we move on to the third step, we need to discuss desktop publishing.

**Using a Desktop Publishing System**

First of all, review the desktop publishing comments in Chapter 15. This section supplements that information and generally applies more to brochures than to newsletters. The Macintosh, introduced by Apple in 1984, set off a revolution that is still in progress. The Mac integrated for the first time typesetting, digitized imaging and page design in an icon-based operating system. Rapid improvements in this technology inspired many third-party vendors to develop software for the system. “Windows” software is now competing aggressively with Macintosh. The Mac revolution gave people with little or no typographic, design or printing background control over the production system so they no longer had to rely as extensively on experts as they once did. That’s why some people say that the Macintosh is directly responsible for a glut of badly designed printed pieces. Non-experts now try to operate in what formerly was the province of professionals.

Although it is known as desktop publishing, it is more accurate to describe it as page processing. That’s because you can now put together pages and documents at your computer, depending on the software you have and the kind of system configuration.
used. With sufficient RAM, a good scanner and a laser printer, you can produce very
satisfactory camera-ready pages. If you use a lot of four-color process, you need to be
sure you buy a system that can produce four-color separations. This will save you a
good bit of money.

Desktop publishing and page processing are not for amateurs. Doing it well
takes lots of practice and patience. To save your patience, follow this rule: Always do a
fairly detailed pencil dummy of your brochure before you begin to work with a com-
puter system. Your inclination may be to ignore this rule. If you do, you'll soon find
out why you shouldn't.

**Giving Shape to Information**

You may not realize it at first, but the overall task in producing a brochure simply is
giving shape to information. You do that by what and how you write, illustrate and
display it.

Notice that writing is the third basic step in creating a brochure. And you
should take it only after you're thoroughly convinced that the purpose is clear and you
have a well-understood concept that helps you to organize and shape the information
that goes into the brochure.

**Rules**

The rules of good grammar, punctuation and spelling apply to all brochures as they
do to other media. Fractured grammar wreaks havoc with the language in a brochure
as it does in a news release or a feature story. Reader reaction also may be even
more virulent to mistakes in brochures. That's because of the specialized audiences
of brochures.

Suppose you're 21 years old and in good physical condition, but you find your-
self in the office of a urologist. You're there because in the last three days you've had
some severe back pain. You wonder if you have a kidney infection or if something is
wrong with your back. As you try to relax in the waiting room, you pick up a brochure
on kidney diseases. You begin to read it carefully and in the third paragraph you dis-
cover a subject-verb disagreement that results in confusion about the number of causes
of kidney infections. The earth doesn't open and swallow you but your anxiety level
does go up. You begin to wonder if you can really trust a physician who would produce
such writing. Your skepticism may lead you to cancel the appointment and see another
physician or, at least, to get a second opinion.

**Accuracy**

Accuracy is essential. Most brochures have lots of information. To be able to write
good brochure copy, you must first be a good reporter. Gather, sort, evaluate and
synthesize facts carefully. Check and double-check information you're unsure about. Learn as much about the topic as you can. This is necessary because it is when you are writing about something that stretches your knowledge to its limits that you make mistakes. If you aren't careful, you may not even realize you've made a mistake.

In a sense, when you produce a brochure you're making a contract with readers. They expect to be able to depend on you. Accuracy is one of the key elements of good brochure copy.

Active Voice

Use the active voice. There will be times when passive voice seems to better fit the context of what you're saying. So it is permissible to use the passive voice, but a general guideline is to avoid it when you can.

Style

Every piece of writing should conform to a specific style. Your organization may have its own. Use it. If a client has a style that is unique to that organization, you should use that style. If neither your organization nor your client has a standard style, adopt one. If you must adopt one, consult the Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual for help. AP style is used widely, but often with adaptations. The particular style you use or adopt is not an issue, but being consistent is. That's what style is all about—consistency. Don't use Mr. or Ms. in one place and not in other places. Such inconsistencies in style nag subconsciously at readers. They may not overtly recognize such glitches in your writing, but they "know" something is wrong. They just can't place it. Adopt a style and use it.

Tone

Good brochure copy has a clear, distinct tone. It may be light or heavy or formal or informal in treatment. The tone should be appropriate to the brochure's purpose and subject matter. It may have a liltin quality or it could be a dirge. It really depends on what you're trying to do. It may walk slowly or run across the reader's consciousness. It might jump, crawl or turn cartwheels. For example, think about writing brochure copy for a funeral home. Death is not easy to talk about. Getting people to plan for their own death is a special challenge. You walk slowly, carefully. You might begin by talking about consideration for others who must handle funeral arrangements—physical and financial. Few people want to inflict inconvenience or financial obligations on those they love. Your persuasive appeal and tone have to be personal but not too emotional or maudlin.
Thinking visually as you write brochure copy is as important as it is when writing advertising copy. The proven is exactly the same. Because of space limitations in an ad, however, you may be able to use only one visual. Brochures usually have more space, so you can use more visuals. But it is a mistake to use visuals just because you can. The general rule for using visuals in brochures is: Use a visual to substitute for a paragraph or a section of copy. If you can say it visually, do it. If you can't, write it.

That raises a question: Do you visualize, then write? No. Write first. Write as much as is necessary to tell the story. Then go back and examine each new idea to see if it can be conveyed visually—photographic or drawn art. If it can be shown, use a visual. In effect, what you write governs the extent to which you use visuals. And don't forget to use charts and graphs. Done well, they can simplify complex information so it can be understood at a glance.

There are two types of visuals. One is line art. This is art with no gradations of tone. For example, a pen-and-ink drawing is all black and white. There are no grays. The other type is screened or halftone art. Art that must show gradations of tone must be screened. For example, a photograph must be screened before it can be printed. This is done by filtering the picture through a screen that breaks up the image into dots. Screens are designated by their relative coarseness. An 85-line screen means that the screen will break up an image into a dot pattern that has 85 rows of dots vertically and horizontally per square inch. That computes to 7,225 dots per square inch. By comparison, a 200-line screen has 40,000 dots per square inch. This is a much finer screen. Most of the art you'll use in a brochure will likely be screened at about 150 or higher, because coarser screens simply can't reproduce subtle gradations of tone.

Only your imagination and budget limit your sources of visuals. The most common is clip art. Clip art can be literally clipped from any printed source (but you can't use it without written permission). Clip art can also come from a variety of digital sources. There are many sources that provide clip art on DOS- and Macintosh-formatted disks or on CD-ROMs. You are free to use this art without additional payment or permission. If you have a scanner, you may clip from a printed source, scan it to convert it to a digital format and then edit it to suit your needs (but you must get written permission to use it).

The problem with clip art is that it is rare to find exactly the art needed to convey an idea quickly, precisely and accurately. That's because it was created for some other purpose or it is generic art. The alternative is to hire photographers and production artists to execute the unique art that you want. This is, of course, the most expensive method of getting visuals, but it is usually the most satisfactory.

Writing brochure copy is, in a sense, an exercise in integrating words and visuals to their highest degree, more so than even in the best magazines. That's because magazines operate with fixed formats. The format of a brochure is controlled by you, so you have much more flexibility in creating a fully integrated message. In effect, you let the
content of what you say dictate the format in which you say it. All of which brings us to the fourth step in producing brochures.

**Designing Brochures**

The fourth step in creating a brochure is designing. It includes several major elements: format, type, paper, space and color. Each of these elements may be worthy of a complete book. What follows are selected comments intended to give you a general sense of direction. They are not, and can’t be, definitive in such limited space.

**Format**

First of all, a brochure format should complement the content and the method of distribution. Suppose the purpose of a new brochure you’re assigned to write for a bank client is to promote the use of the bank’s electronic banking (paperless) system. You also find out that the brochure will be inserted with monthly statements to customers. The content of the brochure will not demand much space and the brochure must fit into statement envelopes. With those two pieces of information, you can begin to shape the message to a complementary format.

Because an 8.5-by-11-inch sheet of paper will fold to fit easily into a regular business envelope, you can begin with that size of paper. Now you must decide whether it will be done in a flyer format (one wide column printed on one side) or in a folded-page format. Since the sheet must be folded to fit into the statement envelope, it makes sense to design the format as a six-page folder where each page measures 3.756-by-8.5 inches.

Consult Example 16.2 and look at 2A and 2B. The first folding option, 2A, is called a gatefold. When opening back page one so you can see the second page, it is much like opening a swinging gate—thus the name. Accordion fold is the name applied to 2B because it folds and unfolds like the bellows of an accordion. Folder options 1A and 1B, called four-page folds, do not work well for this project because its page dimensions don’t fit well into the statement envelope. Folder options 3A, 3B and 3C are referred to as eight-page folds. Folder options 4A and 4B represent standard 12-page folds. Folder options 5A and 5B represent 16-page folds. Folder options 3, 4 and 5 usually are used with much larger paper stocks, like 17-by-22 inches.

A different kind of project might call for something other than a folder-type brochure. For example, if you’re doing a recruiting piece for your university, you may end up with a 36-page, 8.5-by-11-inch booklet in full color. If that’s the case, you’ll work with an 8.5-by-11-inch format and adjust the number of pages to those needed to display the content fully. The key thing to remember about these larger formats is that the number of pages must always be in multiples of 4-, 8-, 12- or 16-page flats. A flat is the number of pages on one side of an uncut large sheet of paper stock. Which one you use will depend on the press sizes available from your printer and the number...
of pages in the brochure. Look at Example 16.3 for illustrations of the most common flats. Booklets like these usually are stapled along the spine, but some are pasted.

**Type**

Review the section on type in Chapter 15. In addition to the points made there, consider these ideas. Typography is an important design element in brochures. Although
Most Common Page Flats for Large Paper Stock

The actual size of a brochure is determined by its content. Selection of a printing flat illustrated below is based on the number of pages in a brochure and the size of the printing press on which it will be reproduced. Flats are always done in multiples of 4, 8, 12 or 16 pages.

Four page folder
Work and turn

Eight page form
Work and tumble
two parallel folds

Sixteen page form
Work and turn
three right angle folds

Twelve page form
Work and turn
two parallel (accordion)
one right angle fold
you need to stay with traditional text faces in brochures, as you do in newsletters, you have a good bit more flexibility regarding display type.

You will find that your use of decorative or specialty type fonts is much greater in brochures than in newsletters, and even more than in some magazines. However, there isn’t a suggestion that you use a myriad of display faces. Choose one and stay with it. If your software offers families of fonts, you can use these family variations to their best advantage in brochures. You also can do special things with type, like using a large initial character to begin each new section in the brochure. You can also use rules around blocks of type (but don’t overdo this) and screens and tint blocks to give variety, yet consistency, to the overall look of the brochure. Here are some typographic guidelines to remember:

1. Use subhead lines to break up long copy blocks. This gives air to copy blocks.
2. Put about twice the space above a subhead as below it.
3. Experiment with additional leading between lines. This also gives air but don’t overdo it. Spacing between lines generally should not exceed the point size of the type being spaced. The problem is that some font faces are denser and bolder than others. Only trial and error can lead you to a good, readable design.
4. Avoid using uneven left margins unless fitting copy around art.
5. Don’t tilt type at odd angles. If you must tilt it, keep it to no greater than 15 degrees.
6. Don’t run type vertically. It kills readability.
7. Select type faces—text and display—that are legible and appropriate.
8. Avoid sans serif faces for text.
9. Generally, don’t try to wrap text around odd shapes.

**Paper**

The paper stock on which your brochure is printed can add a lot to the impact of your message. If it is printed on inappropriate stock, your message loses some of its impact. Printing stock can be a baffling topic and one far too complex to explain fully here. The best advice is to work closely with a printing expert who can guide you properly. However, there are some basic things about paper that you should know before you talk to a paper authority.

Paper has a *grain*. That means that the fibers run in a specific direction. Knowing about grain is important because paper folds better, cleaner with the grain, and paper is stiffer in the direction of the grain. Paper is also designated by its *basis weight*. A 70-pound paper is 500 sheets (a ream) of paper 25-by-38 inches. That size, by the way, is the standard of U.S. book papers, which includes coated, text, offset, opaque and so on. The basis weight of typical business letterheads is 20 pounds, meaning 500 sheets of 17-by-22 inches. Cover stocks come from different sizes of basis weights.
Curl refers to the degree to which paper tends to buckle because it has excess moisture. This usually isn’t a problem except when you use a cover stock that is coated on one side only. Paper-ink affinity refers to the speed with which ink dries on the printed stock. If the paper is very porous, as is newsprint, the ink is absorbed and dries quickly but the images are not as sharply defined as on better stock that dries more slowly. Gas and electric driers often are used on many paper stocks to speed the drying process.

Paper color can affect color reproduction of lighter tints. Type is generally easier to read on a soft (yellowish) white stock, but four-color process reproduces more accurately on neutral white stock. Brilliance also can be a factor. It affects contrast, brilliance, snap and sparkle of the printed content. Opacity refers to the show-through of printing from the other side of the paper or from a sheet under it. Papers with higher basis weights usually are more opaque than those with lower basis weights. Smoothness is a very important quality. If you’re printing letterpress or gravure, you need a smooth surface for the best results. Smoothness seems not to matter much when printing offset.

Paper is also graded by its primary uses. Although there are many grades, those that follow are the ones you’ll most likely use:

- Bond paper is typical business correspondence paper.
- Coated stock is what you will likely use when you must have the highest-quality reproduction.
- Text paper is noted for its interesting textures and colors. You’ll use it mostly for announcements, flyers and brochures.
- Book is a grade that is common for trade and textbooks.
- Offset stock is similar to coated and text papers but it is less moisture absorbent to compensate for the extra moisture present in offset printing.
- Cover papers have heavier basis weights and they are made to complement coated and text papers.

If all of this is baffling, remember the simple rule: When in doubt, consult an expert.

White Space

The term white space refers to the unused portion of the total space in your brochure. Good design and display of brochure content uses white space judiciously because it is, indeed, a design element, just like a piece of art.

The most important decision about the use of white space is how much margin you will use at the top and bottom of a page and on the left and right sides. There are no fixed rules to follow. A rule of thumb you may find useful is that the smaller the page size the smaller the margins can (not must) be. The reverse is also true. For example, if you are working with a page size of 8.5-by-11 inches, you might use three-quarters of an inch at the top and left and right sides and one inch at the bottom.
Should the bottom margin be wider? Yes, to compensate for the optical center (not the symmetrical center) of the page.

The next most important decision about white space is the line length of your text. Try for an optimal length that is plus or minus one to three picas from the results of the following formula:

\[ \text{Text type point size} \times 1.5 = \text{line length in picas} \]

If you’re using 12-point type, then the best line length for that size would be from 15 to 21 picas. If you stay within that framework, you’ll generally improve the readability of your brochure.

Another decision affecting the use of space is the space between columns of type, or gutter space. A space in points 1.5 times the point size of text type is about the minimum space to consider. For example, 12-point type should have no less than 18 points between columns.

The next consideration is the amount of space you’ll use to separate text from artwork. This can vary a good bit, but a general rule is to use the point size of text type as the minimum.

The final major consideration is whether you’ll bleed artwork. Bleeding refers to running artwork off the edge of the page. Always stop artwork at the margin or bleed it off the page. Never stop it between the margin and the edge.

One major rule to remember about white space is: Never trap white space inside the page design. The reader’s eye tends to fall into these “white holes” and it is hard to escape them. Always arrange your visuals, beads and copy blocks so there is white space opening to the outside of the design. This avoids the “white holes.”

**Color**

Color enhances the attractiveness of most any publication. Even so, don’t use color just to make things look better, because many messages don’t need color at all. Using it in those situations is simply a waste of money. But other messages not only need but demand color. If you’re creating a brochure for a new luxury hotel, you not only need color but four-color process to show the decor of the hotel. The same is true if you’re trying to raise funds to send underprivileged kids to summer camp in the mountains. How can you really show the thrill of a child catching a trout in the splendor of a mountain stream if you don’t use color? So color can be an important element in the success of many brochures.

There are four basic components of color that you need to think about when working with electronic images. First is pigment—red, yellow and blue—the primary colors that mix to produce all other colors. The second is light—red, green and blue—the color that you see on your computer or TV screen that comes from beaming three light sources at triads of red, green and blue phosphor pixels, which then causes the pixels to flow at different intensities. The third component is complementary—cyan, magenta and yellow—colors created by mixing two light sources such as in theater
lighting. A fourth component is print — cyan, magenta, yellow and black — colors, also referred to as process colors or CMYK (the K stands for black). In printing, these ink colors are mixed to create all other colors.¹

For electronic colors, the brightness of each pixel is determined by voltage. The range is from zero voltage or black to equal voltage or white. The range of brightness is greater than for ink on paper because the brightness of the ink we see depends on the amount of light reflected from the image to our eyes. Different surfaces and different inks affect brightness as does ambient light. Our eyes have rods that detect black and white and cones that see color, but not well in low light.² You need to know how different colors will show up on the screen because this affects the balance of the design and readability.

There are two broad kinds of color. One is called spot color. That's where you use a second color to supplement a basic ink color, usually black. If you use still another color, it will be called the third color. Spot color is fairly inexpensive, and with the creative use of screens and tint blocks you can get a rainbow of effects for a modest investment. Spot color also is not, in printing terms, close register — that is, it does not have to line up within thousandths of an inch.

The other kind of color is called four-color process. Photographic art is screened four separate times with special filters that sequentially block out all colors but yellow, red, blue and black (the primary colors). When they are printed properly one on top of the other, they produce the full range of colors visible to the human eye. Four-color process also is close-register printing, meaning that the dot patterns must align precisely or the picture is fuzzy. That is why four-color process color is more expensive than spot color. So check your budget carefully.

Reproduction

Unless you are relying on copying machines, you must prepare your brochure for reproduction, meaning you must choose between three types of printing: letterpress, offset or gravure. Each method has its own distinguishing quality and characteristics. Because of rapid technological improvements, differences in the final images produced by these methods are not as noticeable as they were just a few years ago. All three are capable of producing the same copy and art with satisfactory results.

Letterpress

Letterpress printing is the oldest of the three. It reproduces images from raised surfaces, working on the same principle as a rubber stamp. Letterpress is noted for its sharp, crisp printing and slight embossing (because paper is pressed into direct contact with the raised image to be printed).

Well-tooled letterpress printing plates are good for long press runs into the hundreds of thousands. Quantities of a half million or more will likely require a sec-
ond set of printing plates. Because there are so many press sizes, letterpress can be an
efficient choice, even for small, short-run brochures.

**Offset**

Offset or offset lithography prints from a flat surface. It works on the principle that oil
and water don’t mix. The image to be printed is burned into a light-sensitive printing
plate and developed with special chemicals. The developing process sensitizes the im-
age so that it will accept ink. The unsensitized area rejects ink. The image is transferred
to a rubber blanket that then offsets the image to paper. Thus, the printing plate never
comes into contact with the paper on which the image is offset or printed.

Offset printing is characterized by soft, smooth transitions of color and tones
and slight differences in color balance throughout a press run. It is a good method for
creating a mood piece, especially if soft contrast in tones is needed. Generally, offset
printing is less expensive than letterpress and gravure. It is also easy to work with if
you’re using a desktop system to produce camera-ready pages.

**Gravure**

Gravure is a printing system that transfers an image from recessed images on printing
plates—the opposite of the raised surface in letterpress. The image is etched into the
printing plate so that ink fills the individual dots (wells). A device called a doctor blade
moves across the surface and wipes away excess ink, leaving ink in the wells. When
paper comes into contact with the printing plate, it lifts the ink from the wells, thus
creating an image.

Gravure is known for the finest quality of color reproduction and is often used
in high-fashion printed pieces, which many years ago got it mentioned in the song
“Easter Parade.” It is also known for high-quality printing on a variety of surfaces like
transparent and flexible films, cartons and even vinyl floor covering. If you use gravure,
get ready for a budget shock, because it is more expensive than letterpress and offset.

**Distribution**

The way you distribute a brochure may influence its overall design. If it is to be mailed
in an envelope, its finished form must conform to the size of the envelope chosen. If it
is to be a selfailer, the back page or panel must be designed with a return address in
the upper left corner and a place in the center lower half for the addressee.

If you’re using a postage meter or stamps, postage must be affixed in the upper
right corner. If you’re using some sort of mail permit, this must be printed in the area
where postage normally appears. Be sure to check with the postmaster at the office
where the piece will be mailed to be sure that you know and conform to appropriate
regulations. In fact, you’d be wise to create a dummy of the brochure and take it to
the postmaster for inspection and guidance. It is a lot easier to prevent a mailing problem than to correct one.

Of course, if your brochure will be distributed from racks, as in waiting rooms of physicians, your concern is that the size will fit readily into such display racks and that the paper stock on which the brochure is printed is stiff enough to remain vertical when placed in racks.

**Web Pages**

Organizational sites in cyberspace on Internet’s World Wide Web are appropriately called home pages. These are the locations for obtaining information about the organization. The best ones offer a kaleidoscope of information and sometimes services as well. Public relations writers are involved in creating the concept of the page—it's design and content. They may be working with computer technicians to get the Web site in place.

Calling the Web page an interactive brochure does overlook a very basic difference. The brochure, as mentioned earlier, is a static piece, and usually there’s only one version. Updates generally call for redesign of the whole piece. While the basic format of a Web page stays the same, the elements may change frequently. How frequently depends on the type of organization and the kinds of information offered. However, audiences are not likely to return to a site frequently if the information remains the same.

Thus, designing the Web page means figuring out what information needs to be conveyed to audiences in a timely way and how you can keep people interested in returning. Web pages, like brochures, are about substance and image. You want a visually appealing sight. When Web sites include sound, you are adding another dimension. (Some brochures do have olfactory appeal, especially those from cosmetic makers and some food manufacturers, but sound with paper has so far been limited to greeting cards.)

The Web page, then, is a special challenge. Some considerations remain the same though. You have to think about your audience. Who is the likely visitor? What sort of information would the visitor be seeking? What would cause a return visit? Your purpose is to persuade, inform or educate.

Web sites, like brochures, are their own delivery systems. In this respect, Web pages are less predictable than brochures because you never know what sort of system someone might be using to download the information and print it. No telling what it might look like off the screen! Also, depending on their equipment, no telling how long it might take them to look at it, even on screen, especially if there are a lot of graphics. If they decide to print it, the process may take so long that they get discouraged and quit.
Nevertheless, Web sites do share with the brochure the need to be easy to read, simple to follow and visually attractive.

You follow something of the same steps in designing a Web site as you do a brochure too.

1. Clearly define its purpose. (A Web site that has instructions on how to explode a grape is curious, but without purpose.)
2. Develop an organizing concept for it.
3. Plan the content including what will be changing and how often and what will remain the same. Determine the number of pages. (Some have 100 or more.)
4. Design the presentation of the information: format, visuals, audio, movement, transitions from one section to another, space and color.
5. Although many software companies are releasing easy-to-use programs for creating home pages, it may be necessary to work with a technician to get the site up and running and to develop a plan for maintenance.

Maintenance includes checking for unauthorized changes. Web sites do get vandalized. "The problem is basically cyberspace vandals with digital spray cans," according to Computer Security Institute analyst Richard Power.6

It is important to view the Web as a new and different medium. One client of Web-site designer Digital Plant puts it succinctly: Universal Pictures vice president of publicity, Alan Sutton, says "A lot of people in film can take a press kit and cram it through a modine. They've [Digital Planet] impressed upon us the need for original content totally unique to the Web."7

Conclusions

- The term brochure, used in its narrow sense, means a printed piece of six or more pages, published once and distributed to special publics for a single purpose.
- Web pages are more like interactive brochures than like anything else a PR person writes.
- The term brochure is often used to refer to booklets, flyers, circulars, leaflets, pamphlets or tracts.
- Common elements of brochures are: (1) message statements are singular; (2) they attempt to persuade, inform and/or educate; (3) they are published only once; (4) they must attract and hold their own audiences; (5) they are their own delivery systems; and (6) they must have clear writing and be visually attractive.
- The general purpose of brochures is to persuade, inform or educate.
- An effective brochure can be developed only from a clear concept.
• An effective concept is one that links a broad purpose to an object or an
application.
• A good brochure is distinctive. It seeks cleverness by giving a new or different
twist to something that is familiar.
• The best brochures avoid puffery and build credibility by offering only valid
information.
• Although integrated computer systems are used commonly to produce bro-
chures, the term *page processing* is more accurate than desktop publishing.
• Writing and designing a brochure is the art of giving shape to information.
• The rules of grammar, spelling and punctuation apply to brochures as they do
to all other forms of public relations writing.
• Use the active voice. Strive for accuracy, consistent style and appropriate tone.
• Write first. Then design.
• Visuals should be used to substitute, when possible, for what is written, not just
to dress up a brochure. For best reproduction of visuals, art must be line art or
screened art.
• Good brochure design involves selecting the right format for the informa-
tion, using type wisely, finding the right paper on which the brochure will be
printed, using white space judiciously and using color creatively.
• Aside from brochures produced on all types of copying machines, brochures
will be printed by way of letterpress, offset or gravure.
• The method of distribution must be considered at the time the brochure is
being planned. Distribution can also affect the choice of paper stock on which
it is printed.
• Organizational sites in cyberspace on Internet's World Wide Web are appropri-
ately called home pages because they are locations for information about the
organization.
• The best ones are constantly changing kaleidoscopes of information.
• Some home pages are 100 pages or more.
• Web pages are about substance and image. They include information, visuals
and often sound.
• Web sites are their own delivery systems, but there's no telling how the user will
see the page. The final product depends on individual systems some of which
are slow to show graphics and if the material is downloaded, there's no control
over its printed appearance.
• Web page development includes these steps: define the purpose; develop an
organizing concept for it; plan the content including how much will be chang-
ing and how often; design the presentation including format, visuals, audio,
movement, transitions from one section to another, space and color; get tech-
nical help when you need it.
• Plan for careful maintenance because Web sites are subject to vandalization.
• Consider Web sites as a whole new medium.
Exercises

1. Select brochures of your choice from a bank and a hospital (or two other dissimilar organizations). Analyze the two brochures in terms of purpose, concept, writing style, clarity of information and design. Evaluate whether these brochures are attuned to their audiences and explain why you believe that is the case.
2. Get a copy of the recruiting brochure from your university. Do a readability analysis of the writing (refer back to Chapter 5). Is the readability level appropriate for the intended audience? Select three or four consecutive paragraphs and rewrite them to a ninth-grade level.
3. Develop a concept for a brochure to promote the department or field in which you are a major.

Notes

2 Ibid.

Selected Bibliography

The newsletter, newspaper or magazine that an organization publishes for the purpose of communicating directly to internal and external publics is a major communication tool.

Sponsored periodicals are designed for a specific audience, such as employees, or for a variety of groups that may include stockholders, community opinion leaders, government officials, suppliers or customers. They serve as effective channels of continuous information about the organization. They also have the advantage of reaching their audiences without the filtering process of mass media reporters and editors who, as noted in Part I, control the distribution of the message and its content.

This chapter gives a brief overview of sponsored periodicals, particularly those intended for employees. We will examine the editor’s role and the content, design, production and distribution of these publications.
THE EDITOR’S DUAL ROLE

Editing a sponsored publication has been described as something of a highwire act. You must produce a periodical that advances and promotes management’s organizational objectives. After all, management is the publisher of the periodical and is paying all the bills. Indeed, a weekly newsletter or a monthly magazine is the most expensive component of a communications budget for most organizations.

In addition, you have a responsibility to serve the interests of the employees or other constituents. Some public relations texts consider public relations personnel, including periodical editors, as “boundary spanners” who must continually make sure that the views of various publics are heard in the management suite.

There’s also the matter of editorial freedom. Many editors, particularly former newspaper reporters, think that they have the right to decide what stories will be covered and in what context. They resent management trying to use the publication as a propaganda tool and resist anything that smacks of editorial interference, including story ideas that support organizational objectives.

The dilemma many editors face is how to balance the needs of management, the interests of readers and their own editorial independence. Some never do solve the dilemma and stick to folk stories that please many and offend none. Actually, the balancing act can be done if the editor is able to understand that the needs of all three are interrelated.

Take company strategies and goals. These are usually based on broad concepts such as human resources, corporate image, business expansion, competitiveness, productivity, marketing and economic development. Communication goals should be based on corporate goals, so the editor may decide to support the goal of increased competitiveness by publishing at least six stories during the year about the organization’s market share and what factors are involved in making the organization more competitive.

These stories, if done well, should also interest employees because they are concerned about job security and making sure that the company remains competitive. If the company is successful, it could also mean bonuses and higher pay scales.

Even if management has set broad or specific goals for the year, it is usually the editor who decides how the periodical can support each goal. In this case, the editor can choose any number of journalistic treatments, including the angle of what’s in it for employees. The stories about competitiveness don’t have to be propaganda. They can be written with the same degree of objectivity as any article in an independent publication.

It is to management’s advantage if the story is objective. Liz MacKay, editor of an employee newsletter for a firm in Australia, says, “The paper’s power to influence staff members is in direct proportion to their confidence that it is keeping them honestly informed, rather than operating as an organ of management.”

Gary Kemper makes a similar point in the September 1991 issue of Communication World:

The task faced by those responsible for communication within an organization is very demanding. To produce a relevant, interesting employee publication, they must first cot-
In other words, you contribute to the success of management’s objectives by producing a highly credible publication that satisfies the reader’s need to know what the organization is doing and where it is headed.

A good example is Praxair News, the employee magazapaper (14- by 21-inch page format) of Praxair, Inc., of Danbury, CT (see Figure 12.1 on page 302). Mailed to 10,000 employees around the world, the periodical has several objectives:

- To inform employees about company activities and its business directions in innovative, easy-to-understand ways.
- To build the company’s image as an aggressive, on-the-move organization.
- To be a useful tool for salespeople to give to customers to illustrate Praxair’s products and services.
- To accomplish the above as attractively and economically as possible.

One measure of success is employee readership surveys. In one survey, 97 percent of the Praxair employees said they enjoyed reading the publication. And 80 percent rated the “look” of the newspaper “excellent.”

**CONTENT**

The content of sponsored periodicals, in broad terms, is news and information. That is why many of these periodicals are called newsletters—they are letters from management to various publubs that want news about the organization.

Civic and professional groups use newsletters to inform their members of upcoming meetings and events. Nonprofit organizations send donors and prospective contributors information about the agency’s programs and needs and recognize the efforts of current volunteers. Companies keep wholesalers informed about new product developments and offer ideas on how to market existing products. The list is practically endless.

The four-color magazine of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) in Western Australia (WA) is an example of the multi- audience publication. Landscape is sent to key groups who can influence the operations of the Department—government, industry, community opinion leaders, educators, the media, employees and other Western Australians with an active interest in the management of the natural environment.

As such, Landscape’s broad editorial goals are geared to the Department’s strategic plan. According to Ron Kauallak, director of corporate relations at CALM, this is: “to increase community awareness, understanding and support for CALM’s nature conservation and natural land management programs, services and
Figure 12.1 Praxair News is a four-color, six-page magpaper (14- by 21-
inch page format) that is sent to 10,000 employees worldwide. Extensive
graphics make the publication visually attractive and easy to read. (Courtesy
of Mary-Anne Ward, editor, Praxair, Inc., Danbury, CT)
policies, and to promote wider cooperation in the prevention and solution of conservation and land management problems in Western Australia."
To accomplish this goal, the 56-page quarterly generally follows a standard pattern:

- **Cover Story** Emphasizing CALM’s activities in the area of broad public interest.
- **Six or Seven Features** Articles covering CALM activities in nature conservation and wildlife management, forest resource management and management for tourism and recreation.
- **In Perspective** A column written by CALM’s chief executive, and letters to the editor.
- **Bush Telegraph** Short articles on natural history topics of interest.
- **Endangered** A one-page article on an endangered plant or animal and what CALM is doing to preserve it.
- **Urban Antics** A one-page article on a WA natural history topic aimed primarily at school children.

**Meeting Audience Interests**

Every sponsored periodical is unique, but there are some guidelines that can be applied. The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and Towers, Perrin, Forster & Crosby, a consulting firm, surveyed 40 companies and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEAS FOR NEWSLETTER STORIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Periodicals carry a variety of feature articles and news stories. Here are some ideas for your newsletter:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Feature a day in the life of an employee. Describe what the person does, and how his or her work ties into the organization’s goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Keep people up to date on late-breaking news affecting the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interview long-term employees or managers. Have them discuss how things have changed, and link the changes to the organization’s strategy and industry developments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Offer “how to” tips on writing memos, choosing a health plan or even selecting a child-care center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Show how the functions of each department affect the others. Follow a typical customer going through all the channels to show the importance of teamwork.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Profile customers. Describe how a customer problem was solved. Use quotes from the customer and the employee problem solver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interview 10 employees about their opinions on key issues or events. Use short quotes under pictures of the employees, along with their names and job titles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Communication Briefings, January 1996, p. 4.
45,000 employees to determine what topics employees were most interested in. The top five choices were (1) the organization's future plans, (2) personnel policies and procedures, (3) productivity improvement, (4) job-related information and (5) job advancement information. The last five choices on the 17-topic list were (1) personnel changes and promotions, (2) financial results, (3) advertising and promotion plans, (4) stories about other employees and (5) personal news such as birthdays and anniversaries.

It must be noted, however, that the range of high to low interest was from 95 percent to 57 percent—still more than half for the last choice. The study does indicate, however, that today's employees are more concerned about the health and direction of their companies than they are about the fact that someone in the accounting department just celebrated a wedding anniversary or won a bowling tournament.

Michael C. Brandon, director of internal communication for Northern Telecom, Nashville, puts it more bluntly. He wrote in IABC's Communication World (March 1995) that today's employee communications need to do more than make employees feel good. He continues:

Communicators can no longer permit bowling leagues, birthdays and baby showers to dominate the pages of the company newsletter. Instead, employee communication must deliver business information critical to the organization's success. The most critical information employees need is about the organization's objectives. If employees are to maximize effectiveness, management must strive for alignment between the organization's goals and the individual objectives of the employees.

A survey of employees at one corporation by Dallas consultant Tom Geddie (Communication World, January-February 1995) indicates that editors should always start with the assumption that employees want answers to the "what's-in-it-for-me" questions. The number one information concern for 30 percent of employees was the internal work environment and how their work was important to the company. Another 22 percent wanted to know about the company's financial health and the prospects for continued employment. Another 17 percent each were interested in information about improving the day-to-day work process and hearing about annual priorities and goals.

Despite such surveys, many publications still fail to take into account the needs of management and employees. In another study, conducted by the consulting firm of William M. Mercer, Inc., and Industry Week, more than 1,200 articles from the employee publications of 65 companies nationwide were analyzed. It was found that only a small percentage of the articles addressed management and employee concerns (Communication World, September 1991).

Such publications are prime candidates for elimination in these tight economic times. Organizations are increasingly killing off publications that don't contribute to organizational objectives or are not cost-effective. Communications consultant Cliff McGoan, for example, found that the three most expensive magazines in a 1988 survey had been eliminated by 1994. They were Raytheon Magazine ($135,000 per issue), Chevron World ($105,000 per issue) and AT&T Focus ($61,000 per issue).
Figure 12.2. Measure is a four-color, 32-page magazine that tackles a number of workplace issues for the 95,000 employees of Hewlett-Packard Company. This cover story, about safety in the workplace, uses pulp fiction artwork to attract attention. (Courtesy of Jay Coleman, editor, Hewlett-Packard Company, Palo Alto, CA.)
McGoon suggests (Communication World, October 1994) that today’s editors need to make their newsletters and magazines more cost-effective and relevant. Possible ways to do this include:

- Strive to cut down on printing costs by reducing the number of issues or number of pages of the present publication.
- Perform more desktop functions and final production preparation in-house.
- Consider selling advertising to offset costs.
- Use newspapers and magazines to supplement and complement newsletters distributed by E-mail.
- Tie your publication’s costs to the organization’s mission. For example, “We published six articles on team building and our reader surveys indicate 82 percent read them and improved their team-building skills.”

Mission Statement and Editorial Plan

The best editors, the ones who regularly win awards, seem to understand the purpose of their publication. One technique is to develop a concise, simple mission statement of 25 words or less. The statement should cover the publication’s general content, its audience and its strategic role.

Writing a mission statement is tough. Dallasite, an employee newsletter of Texas Instruments (TI), first started out with a somewhat broad mission statement: “The Dallasite will serve TI by reporting news about the corporation, its people and its goals.”

The advent of “bottom-line” economics in the 1990s, however, created a need for a more precise mission statement. It now reads, “We want the Dallasite to be a tool that helps employees understand TI’s goals and how they can help achieve those goals.”

Another example of a publication’s mission statement is Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1, which outlines the mission of Weyerhaeuser Today.

It’s also a good idea to prepare an annual editorial plan. Bobby Minter of Publication Productions in New York, says you need to map out what kind of articles and other material you will prepare for the entire year.

This enables you to develop story ideas that complement the organization’s objectives for the year. If team building and increased productivity has been given a high priority by top executives, feature stories in the organization’s publication should elaborate on and illustrate those themes throughout the year. This doesn’t mean, of course, that every article in a particular issue has to do this.

DESIGN

“The publication’s design should be compatible with its overall objectives,” Minter advises, adding that “content and design work together to achieve a unified communication.”

Consequently, periodicals have distinct “personalities” that reflect their organizations. Reebok International has an employee tabloid (magazine) that features
modern typefaces, cutaway photos of athletes in action, and brown as a dominant second color. Stories are set in large type, ragged right, surrounded by a lot of white space. The publication, in sum, projects ruggedness and the great outdoors.

On the other hand, One Lime Street, published by Lloyd's of London is a 24-page newsletter with simple headlines, pages jam-packed with small type, and mug shots. It's a rather conservative publication, again reflecting the nature of the financial and insurance business. 

Precise News, mentioned earlier, is more like USA Today in feel and layout. There is extensive use of four-color photos, second color to highlight pages, attractive graphs and charts and short, snappy stories. It gives the image that the company is modern, up-to-date and on the move—exactly the image the organization wants to project.

The sharp graphics and short stories also reflect that the newsletter goes to employees worldwide, and in many cases, English is their second language. The graph-
ics and illustrations clarify the written stories so that the average person—with no technical expertise—can readily understand what is being said. (See Figures 12.1 and 12.6 for illustrations of the publication.)

You need to remember that the key to good design is keeping pages simple and uncluttered. Readers should be able to count on a standard design that makes the periodical easy to follow and read. Not only is radically changing the design every issue time-consuming, it also leaves readers somewhat bewildered as to where to find regular features and articles.

**Format**

The most widely used format is the two- to four-page newsletter. This is the major communication vehicle of almost every organization, from the giant multinational conglomerate to the local garden club. Also popular are newsletters containing six to 12 pages.

Newsletters are relatively easy to produce, are cost-effective and can reach any number of small, specialized audiences. World processing programs such as WordPerfect and Microsoft Word make it possible for almost anyone to produce an attractive newsletter with mastheads, a two- or three-column format and clip art. (The use of desktop publishing software is discussed shortly.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TIPS FOR A READABLE PUBLICATION</strong></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A newsletter, newspaper or magazine should be attractive, well organized and easy to read. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Serif typefaces, with little appendages at the end of letters, are easier to read than sans serif faces. Most books, including this one, are set in serif type. The headlines and box text, however, are in sans serif type.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use italic type for emphasis sparingly, if at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eliminate complex screens. Shading behind a block of copy often makes the type difficult to read.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use uncoated (not glossy) paper. Newsletters should look more business-like and less like advertising material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use black ink for stories. If you use a second color, apply it as a highlight to frame a story, a quote (set in larger type) or an entire page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make photos and illustrations as large as possible. Whenever possible, use action-oriented photos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avoid reverse type (white type on dark background) in body copy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avoid using extensive color on low quality paper. Reproduction and clarity of images suffer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain continuity in the publication by using a minimum number of fonts and type families. A three-ring circus of type is poor design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good design is based on an understanding of composition, balance and form. A fancy desktop publishing program, in the hands of an amateur, doesn’t automatically produce good design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use news summaries and news briefs. These columns receive high readership.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A popular format for periodicals sent to large numbers of employees or members of an organization is the tabloid-style newspaper. This format allows a great deal of flexibility in design and can contain more news stories than a newsletter, which usually comes in an 8 1/2- by 11-inch page format. A smaller number of organizations have adopted the format of what is called a magazinette. It has a slightly larger format than the tabloid newspaper and lends itself to somewhat larger headlines and graphic elements.

The magazine format is used by a number of large organizations as the flagship publication. These periodicals are the most expensive to produce because they often are printed on glossy paper and include multiple displays of computer graphics and full-color photographs.

They tend to be the prestige piece of the organization and concentrate on in-depth stories about people and industry trends. Stories, unlike the shorter articles found in newsletters and newspapers, tend to be two or more pages in length.

A good example of an article, which won an IABC award in the features category, is from Hewlett-Packard's Measure magazine. It was a five-page article, with five color pictures, about the experience of HP employees adopting babies from Romania. The same issue of the magazine also contained a six-page article about how HP is responding to competitors through innovation.

Any number of formats can be used. It all depends on the purpose of the publication, the kind of messages you want to send and the nature of the audience. An added consideration is your budget.

**Layout**

Layout is a plan showing the arrangement of the material in the publication—the size and location of such items as stories, regularly appearing columns, headlines, photographs and artwork.

There is no exact rule for any of these items. The most important subjects should be placed on the front page of a newsletter or newspaper, and a story can be continued on latter pages.

You can place other important stories on subsequent pages by using a large display space with headlines and illustrations. Studies show that a story with a photo or a piece of artwork draws more reader attention than just black type. A rule of thumb is to place important stories on the inside right page of a publication because this is where people look first when they turn the page.

Newsletters and newspapers usually have a standardized two- or three-column framework, or template, that the editor uses to guide the placement of stories and illustrations. You can vary the layout by running a large headline across two or more columns.

You can also run body type across the width of two columns in a three-column publication. It is not wise to run body type across all three columns, however, because studies show that such long lines are extremely difficult to read in a newsletter. A line of type should never be more than 5 inches long.

The basic layout of a periodical should be the same from issue to issue, but each issue will vary, depending on the length of the articles, the availability of good illustrations and the relative importance of the stories.
THE ABC'S OF CUSTOMER HANDLING

The need for improved customer satisfaction was the main reason for NBC's decision to launch the "ABC's of Customer Handling" program. It was designed to help dealerships meet their customer satisfaction goals and achieve their sales targets. The program was widely praised as being a "great value".

"If it is well known that effective customer handling leads to increased repeat and referral business," said Kate Wilcox, Sales Operations Support Manager. "We feel confident that our dealers will find this program simple, in the point, and a valuable asset to their dealership and their employees."

Each Nissan dealer has access to a sample of the training materials, a Participant Guide and five audio tapes on "real world" situations between dealership employees and their customers. With the focus on "helpful tips and techniques", the Participant Guide provides local examples of how customers are handled, always in a positive manner.

INSIDE
- The ABC's of Customer Handling
- A Sales Manager's Tale
- Real Measure of a Test

Figure 12.4: Newsletters typically have an 8 1/2- by 11-inch page format, but they don't have to be dull. Dateline is published biweekly by Nissan North America for its employees and dealer network. (Courtesy of Richard S. Christopher, internal communications, Nissan, Cordova, CA.)

Keep the following ideas in mind as you do the layout for a publication:

- Use white space. Don't think you have to have stories or illustrations covering every single part of the page.
- Vary paragraph length. If your copy looks like the Great Wall of China, your readers will be intimidated. Make paragraphs seven lines long or less to create even more white space.
High Quality Creative
POWERFUL Text versatile Graphics

135 Typefaces

Figure 12.5 A wide variety of type and shadings are available on desktop publishing programs. If you shade a block of copy, however, keep the screen to 10 or 20 percent. (Courtesy of LaserMaster Corporation.)

• Break up longer stories with boldface subheads.
• Create bulleted lists. Any sentence containing a sequence of three or more items is a good list candidate. Listing also frees up more white space.
• Use only two or three typefaces to add consistency to your periodical. The variety comes in using different type sizes, not a different type family.
• Keep articles relatively short for maximum interest. If USA Today can summarize a world crisis in four paragraphs, you can cover the company picnic in the same amount of space.
• Inside pages should balance one another. If you use a strong graphic on one page, you should balance it with a larger headline or a graphic on the facing page.
• Use headlines that give information, not just labels such as “Company Picnic” or “New Vice President.” (See the section on headline writing.)

The traditional method of layout, which hasn’t changed for many people despite the computer revolution, is to work with blank dummy pages to mock up where the headlines, stories, and artwork will be placed. This requires a knowledge of copyfitting, headline writing, and photo sizing so that all your materials will fit the layout. (Copyfitting is discussed in Chapter 13.)

Once you have completed the mock-up, you take this and all your copy to a commercial printer, who will typeset the stories and headlines to your specifications. The printer will also “paste up” the finished materials according to the layout you have provided.

The other method of doing a layout is to prepare what is known as camera-ready art. This means that you do all the typesetting, sizing of photos and other procedures so that the printer only has to photograph your material to make a plate and put it on the offset press. This method is now known as desktop publishing.

Desktop Layout

The word “layout” is more accurate than “publishing” because desktop publishing software programs don’t “publish” anything; what they do is allow a person to provide a commercial printer with camera-ready layouts instead of dummy pages.

Desktop publishing is discussed in Chapter 13, but it’s worthwhile to mention it in the context of producing sponsored periodicals. This is particularly true since surveys of organizational editors show that almost 90 percent of them are now using desktop publishing systems to produce newsletters.

Even glossy corporate magazines are increasingly being produced with desktop systems. The Rechtel Corporation, for example, uses Quark XPress for layout and scans in photos and other artwork from a variety of sources. The result is a 24-page, award-winning magazine that makes bold use of computer graphics.

The biggest advantage of desktop publishing, according to several surveys, is keeping control over the stages of publication preparation, from the writing of copy to camera-ready output.

The computer software enables a person to draw an illustration and then crop to size, use different type fonts and sizes, vary column widths, shade or screen back graphics, add borders around copy, import graphics and photos from other sources and print out camera-ready pages for offset printing or to supply the copy on disk for laser printing in large quantities.

There is no doubt that desktop publishing has changed the old, traditional methods of producing a periodical. And thousands of novice graphic designers have
been empowered to produce more attractive newsletters. At the same time, experts caution that all the fancy equipment isn’t a substitute for well-trained, professional technicians and graphic designers who know what to do with the technology. Not everyone is a good designer, and one of the byproducts of desktop publishing is the “garbage dump document,” put out by people who know nothing about design or good writing and think nothing of using a dozen typefaces in a single newsletter.

There’s also the question of how you want to spend your time. You can write and edit the copy, take all the photos, design the periodical and prepare the camera-ready artwork—but that doesn’t leave much time for other public relations duties.

Bobby Minter makes a good suggestion: “If no one on your staff is a qualified designer with desktop experience, consider hiring a designer to develop the publication’s look and format and to be a consultant. You will get the benefits of the designer’s skill while keeping control over production.”

Illustrations

Photos and artwork were discussed extensively in Chapter 7. Many of the concepts presented there also apply to sponsored periodicals.

All publications need strong graphic elements to attract the television generation of readers. Photos must be tightly composed or cropped for impact, and a good photo should be used in as large a format as possible. A common criticism of sponsored periodicals is that they use tiny photos awash in a sea of type.

Computer-generated graphics and imported clip art are commonly used in periodicals. Clip art is available on floppy disks and CD-ROMs. In addition, if you see something in another publication or book, you can use an electronic handheld scanner to import it into your computer. (Be certain not to violate copyright laws, which were discussed in Chapter 2.) A better use of scanners is to import graphic designs commissioned by the organization.

Headlines

Writing good headlines takes practice. The headline is an important component of any story because it attracts readers. Headlines also serve as summaries for readers who want to know the basic facts but don’t have time to read the story. In today’s crowded information age, most of us are headline readers.

A title or a label may identify a particular feature of the publication—for example, a regular column by the president of the company could be labeled “President’s Corner.” For news stories, however, a sentence or capsule headline should be used. Here are a few examples from the American Express employee newspaper, Dateline International:

An era ends with the closing of TRS’s first operations center
American Express’s presence during Olympics is more than fun and games
New American dream defined by old values
The style used in these headlines is known as downstyle because only the first word and proper nouns are capitalized, just as in a sentence. A large number of newspapers and magazines now use this style.

A more traditional style is upper- and lowercase. In this style, all words except articles, short prepositions, and conjunctions have initial caps—for example, “New American Dream Defined by Old Values.”

Both styles are acceptable; it’s a matter of preference. All capital letters in a headline is not recommended because the words appear as blocks and individual letters lose their identifiable characteristics. If you want to emphasize something, it’s better to use a larger type size than to use all capital letters.

Headlines should be written in active voice. It makes the news seem more timely. Here is a headline written in passive voice: “Gift awarded to 4-H Club.” Notice how much better and more timely it sounds when you write the same headline with an active verb: “Chapter awards gift to local 4-H Club.”

Another way to get more information into a headline is to use what is called a kicker. A kicker is set in smaller type above or below the main headline. Here is an example:

Another delay
EPA hearing set for June 5

In writing headlines that require two or more lines, you should avoid splitting ideas between lines. Here is one humorous example:

Pastor Leaves for Good
Friday Services at Prison

You should also avoid ending lines with a preposition. Here is a sample of a poor headline and how it can be changed:

POOR: Fredericks plans to take 6-month leave
BETTER: Fredericks to take 6-month sabbatical

After writing a headline, it’s always a good idea to review it for context, use of the correct word and whether it conveys the wrong impression. Here are some poor headlines found in the nation’s newspapers by the Columbia Journalism Review:

- Auto tag fees to aid animals sitting in bank
- TV networks agree to police violence
- Humans have left Everglades dying of thirst
- Parking lot floods when man bursts
Chinese Visitors Pick Up Technology Tips

New Techniques Attract Four from Beijing

Four supervisors and engineers from Beijing Praxair Inc. learned last month how gas packaging, product distribution and marketing are done in the USA. When they completed their three-week, whirlwind tour of Praxair distributors, labs, technical center and plants, they returned to Praxair's joint venture in Beijing to apply their new knowledge to increasing production and standardizing packaging and distribution there.

"The Beijing Praxair facility is being equipped with the most up-to-date equipment and improved technical operations and procedures," said Jack Hercik, Praxair's packaged and specialty gas technical consultant. "This training will allow the managers and engineers to return to China and increase production and streamline packaging and distribution to supply a growing consumer base."

The four—Wang Ying Wu, cylinder filling supervisor; Huang Xing Wu, engineering services; Liu Al Ping, cylinder maintenance supervisor; and Zhang Hing, cylinder pressure engineer—spent a week at Gas Technologies in Marietta, Ohio, learning how a typical Praxair distributor conducts cylinder filling, marketing and distribution operations. The group spent the next two days at the Praxair Technology Center in Tomsquawna, N.J., where they were introduced to safety, compliance management and systems software.

Then it was on to Praxair's facility in Hazleton, Pa., to study cylinder and liquid container maintenance and repair. Last, they observed and had hands-on training in helium-transfill operations and instruction in proper soldering and brazing techniques at a Praxair site in Tampa, Fla.

"During our training in the States, we learned a lot of new things, especially about filling high-pressure mixed gases, filling control panels and cylinder maintenance systems," said Wang Ying Wu. "It is really helpful to Beijing Praxair's technical innovation and development, and we will apply the techniques learned in the States to our facilities in Beijing."

Figure 12.6 Headlines, composition and balance make stories a single, unified unit. This story, from the pages of Praxair News, uses a major headline and a secondary one to convey information at a glance. Notice that the two pictures are placed diagonally across from each other to provide balance. (Courtesy of Praxair, Inc., Danbury, CT.)
Writing headlines requires that you know the width of the space allocated for each headline. If you have a word processing software program, you simply set the margins and type the headline in the size you want it. If it doesn’t fit the space allocated to it in your mock-up or in the desktop publishing layout, you can easily enlarge or reduce it until it fits.

**DISTRIBUTION**

Sponsored periodicals, such as employee newsletters and newspapers, are usually distributed at the workplace. They can be placed in pickup bins throughout the organization, or they can be distributed with pay envelopes.

Although this is the least expensive form of distribution, many organizations don’t feel that it is very effective. Employees may not pick up the newsletter at all. Also, if it is distributed at work, productivity may suffer because people take time to read it instead of doing their work.

Many organizations feel that it is worth the expense of mailing the publication to an employee’s home. A side benefit is that members of the employee’s family also get a chance to read it. Corporate magazines are almost always distributed to homes, usually via second-class mail.

**E-mail**

Many organizations are moving to electronic newsletters. Employees receive the publication by E-mail, which is further discussed in Chapter 15. The editor, using a desktop publishing system, produces a simple newsletter that is transmitted to all employees on a computer network.

These E-mail newsletters are fast, efficient and inexpensive. However, they do have limitations. Most rely on a simple on-line format—text only, limited use of color, limited graphics, no photos or fancy design effects. This is because E-mail newsletters are received on a variety of computers, many with limited graphic capabilities.

In fact, they are simple bulletins. Headlines are one line, all caps, and the stories must be kept to one or two paragraphs. Mary Pretzer, president of Compact Training & Design in Loveland, Colorado, recommends that readers should be able to see two stories at a time on their computer screens.

* Nabisco E, Nabisco’s weekly electronic newsletter, uses 10 to 12 lines as the maximum story. The editor, Vic DePalo, says “You do lose readers if you put in a long, complex story.” Readers don’t mind scrolling between stories, but rapidly lose patience scrolling through a long story.

Since you have only about 10 lines, the writing style is more informal than in regular print publications. You can be more conversational and use less formal English than is expected in a print publication.

E-mail newsletters don’t replace print publications, which still have the advantage of photos and complex artwork, but they can supplement them. Most compa-
nies use E-mail to fill the information void between the monthly or even quarterly
issues of their newspapers and magazines. An organization’s website also provides
an opportunity for posting E-mail newsletters.

COSTS

The cost of producing a periodical varies considerably depending on such factors as
locations, use of color, number of pages, size, paper, circulation and use of outside
suppliers.

Cliff McGeen, in his survey of periodicals for IABC’s Communication World
(October 1994), came up with some figures. In the category of magazines, the two-
color Arco Spark with 20 pages cost $20,000 per issue for a press run of 50,000—
or 40 cents per copy. HP Measure, a four-color, 32-page magazine with a press run
of 95,000 cost $40,000 per issue—or 42 cents per copy. On the other hand, Beck-
man Instruments produced a four-color, 24-page magazine with a press run of
10,000 for $21,000 per issue—or $2.10 per copy.

In the area of magazinapers, Weyerhaeuser Today, a two-color, 12-page publication
with a press run of 60,000, costs $6,000 per issue—or 10 cents per copy.
Higher up on the scale is the Shell Canada magazinaper that is eight pages, four-
color, with a press run of 11,000 and costs $5,000 per issue—or 45 cents per copy.

Mead Corporation publishes a two-color, 12-page newsletter with a press run
of 12,500 for $4,000 per issue, or 32 cents per copy. It costs Anheuser-Busch the
same amount per issue to produce a two-color, 12-page newsletter with a 10,000
copy press run.

The high cost of paper, coupled with corporate belt tightening, has forced many
publications to downsize or reduce the number of issues. Many monthly publica-
tions, such as Praxar News, are now published 10 times a year instead of 12. Other
publications have converted from a magazine format to a newsletter or magazinaper
format.

SUMMARY

1. Sponsored periodicals—newsletters, newspapers, magazines—are a valuable
   way for an organization to communicate with its key publics.
2. An editor must serve the dual role of meeting management expectations and
   employee needs.
3. A publication’s format and content should reflect the organization’s goals and
   objectives.
4. Today’s employees want periodicals that address their concerns about the eco-
   nomic health of the organization and their job security.
5. Publications that merely report such information as the company teams’ bowling
   scores and don’t report business information critical to the organization’s
   success are prime candidates for elimination.
6. Every publication should have a mission statement, about 25 words in length, that shows how it helps the organization achieve success.

7. A periodical should have an editorial plan that reflects the organization's priorities for the year.

8. Periodicals differ in content and layout, according to how the organization wants to be perceived.

9. The newsletter is the most common organizational publication. Magazines, on the other hand, are often the flagship publication of the organization.

10. Desktop layout programs are now common. For best results, however, hire experienced artists and graphic designers.

11. Headlines should convey information, not just be labels.

12. Most periodicals are distributed at the workplace. A second method is by mail to the employee's home.

13. Most E-mail newsletters consist of simple on-line text. They are fast and cost-efficient, but they don't replace print periodicals.

14. E-mail newsletters require stories to be only 10 to 12 lines long; the entire story must appear on the screen at the same time.

EXERCISES

1. Collect several copies of an organization's newsletter, newspaper or magazine. Critique these publications from two perspectives. First, do content analysis. Given what you have read about what concerns employees and the organizational purpose of such publications, how does this publication measure up? Second, given the design guidelines in the chapter, how does the publication measure up? What changes would you recommend?

2. You have just been hired as editor of a new monthly employee newsletter for a chain of fast-food restaurants. Management's goals for the year are to (1) increase market share, (2) build teamwork, (3) improve customer service and (4) reduce overhead costs. Write a 25-word mission statement for the newsletter. Then prepare a 12-month editorial plan giving your ideas about the type and content of stories you would publish each month.

3. Writing headlines that are active and informative takes practice. Write a headline based on the following information. For your purposes, assume that one column is 3 inches wide and two columns are 6 inches wide. The headlines are being prepared for an employee newsletter:
   a. Lion Industries has just received a major contract from Macy's Department Stores to produce 50,000 shirts with the Macy's label in them. The $750,000 contract assures full employment at the Connecticut plant and will even necessitate the recruitment of another 50 workers.
   b. Thanks to high earnings last year, Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) has announced a 5 percent bonus for all of its 9,000 employees. According to
David Sears, president of AMD, the bonus payment will be made in the July payroll.

c. The FMC Corporation will have an awards banquet on May 15 to honor 35 workers who have made significant contributions to improving the company's productivity and reducing unnecessary costs. The workers' suggestions and ideas saved the company about $1 million in operating costs last year.

4. You are editor of a four-page newsletter for Community Hospital. The newsletter has a basic 8 1/2- by 11-inch format but measures 11 by 17 inches when opened up. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform community residents about hospital services and give tips on preventive health care. Prepare a dummy layout, showing the placement of possible stories in this newsletter. Indicate where headlines and photographs or other visual elements would be placed.
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