



"PR People – Stuck between the Business and the Stakeholders?"

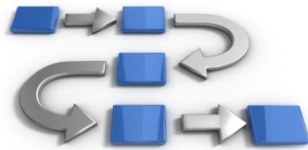
István Kutas, Corporate Communications Director, Telenor Hungary

„The combined crises in economics and trust left PR/Communication professionals in the unenviable position of seeking to counter a deficit in trust and confidence at precisely the time when the financial and human resources at their disposal were also at a deficit compared to past years.”

Professor Gerald Swerling:
Communications and Public Relations General Accepted Practises

The Impact of the Crisis

CEOs believe more strongly that PR/Communication contributes to:



Organisational success



Financial success



Sales

The Impact of the Crisis

- A greater degree of integration between **PR/Communication and other departments (e.g. HR)**
- A greater degree of integration among the **various communication functions** (advertising, PR/Com, customer service, etc.)
- **Senior management takes PR/Communication's recommendations more seriously**

The entire organization is expected to:



Have a better external reputation



Be more long term/strategic



Be more innovative



Be more proactive



Be more ethical

PR people have a ‘boundary-spanning’ role

- One of the primary goals of PR people is to leverage relationships.
- The job of PR people is to communicate with and build relationships with all the organisation’s publics/stakeholders.
- Being able to represent the views of the external publics, and their likely reactions to decisions, is a vital perspective that senior PR people can bring to strategic planning.
- In such a role, PR people are often ‘outsiders’ within the organization, but perceived as the ambassadors of the organization by external stakeholders.
- Senior PR people are expected to be ‘internal ambassadors’ as well which further complicates their role.

PR people

are (or should be) acutely aware of the environment in which the organisation operates.

can be seen to have a 'boundary-spanning' role.

operate on the edge of the organisation, bridging the gap between it and its external publics.

are also usually the internal communication managers within organisations and are supposed to convey the management's messages to internal audiences.

The role of a PR professional in the ‘system’

There is a complex role for senior PR people:

1. First, he/she is to keep senior management informed of what is happening in the **social environment**, which is peopled by its stakeholders, so that this is taken into account as decisions are made. The communication process is two-way.
2. Second, he/she is to **counsel** management on the implications of its decisions, taking into account the likely reaction of key publics who directly affect the well-being or otherwise of a company.
3. Third, he/she has to represent the management’s decisions towards his/her own department.
4. Fourth, he/she has to sell the organizational decisions/moves to the external audiences.

A key to success: the usage of specific metrics for PR/Communication measurement and evaluation:

- Influence on **corporate reputation**
- Influence on **corporate culture**
- Influence on **employee's attitude/morale**
- Influence on **share of voice**
- Influence on **stakeholder awareness/opinions**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!