

Public Relations: Time To Fix It!

By Robert A. Kelly

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Is it broken? It will be if (1) you buy public relations services, then rely on tactics alone, and (2) fail to insist on a visible modification in target audience behaviors as a conclusive measure of PR success.

Ask a CEO. Most will tell you “I want end-game behaviors that convince me I’m getting my public relations money’s worth.” Which is exactly why I wrote *Get Your Public Relations Money’s Worth: 66 Ways to be Sure Your PR Program achieves Your Organization’s Objectives*.

The new 25-page publication was prepared for business, association, non-profit and public entity managements seeking a direct connection between the money they’re spending on public relations and the achievement of their objectives. It will help them finally to see beyond tactics and insist on the end-game perception and behavior changes they paid for up front.

Our CEOs almost always want us to modify somebody's behavior, but too often we focus almost exclusively on the communications tactics we HOPE will reach the target audience. Now, we must actively track how well our tactics are altering the perception of our target audience, then monitor the degree to which audience behaviors have moved in our direction.

Thus, the secret to powering up public relations in the years ahead will lie not in selecting tactics or strategies, but in monitoring how well the employer/client's key audience behaviors track the behavior modification goals set at the beginning of the program.

end

Bob Kelly, public relations counselor, was director of public relations for Pepsi-Cola Co.; AGM-Public Relations, Texaco Inc.; VP-Public Relations, Olin Corp.; VP-Public Relations, Newport News Shipbuilding & Drydock Co.; director of communications, U.S. Department of the Interior, and deputy assistant press secretary, The White House.
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