

T H I S I S P R



THE REALITIES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

3RD EDITION

DOUG NEWSOM & ALAN SCOTT

✓ THIRD
EDITION

This Is PR

The Realities of Public Relations

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This Is *PR*

**The Realities
of Public Relations**

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PREFACE

“Tell it like it is,” challenged a friend in PR practice. So in 1976, *This Is PR* was first published. Since then, the need for a basic, professional book that serves practitioners as a useful reference and colleges as a contemporary text has increased.

THIS IS PR, THIRD EDITION

Now that the Information Age is here, public relations is on the front line. Since that first edition, PR practice has changed significantly. Real evidence of change is the increasing demand for theory and research techniques. Reviewers of the first edition (1976) were wary, but demanded more of both by the second edition (1981). Research is growing in significance as PR practitioners increasingly find it necessary to measure results. An emphasis on theory is a natural outgrowth of the research emphasis.

Part 1 of *This Is PR* is devoted to discussing what PR is and isn't, how it began and what it is today. Part 2 includes research methods, both informal and formal. Part 3 is a careful look at publics and target audiences, because so much of PR planning depends on understanding audiences and responding to public opinion.

Communication is the topic of Part 4, including concepts and theories, channels and working with media people and other communication professionals. In Part 5 the case study approach is outlined from two points of view, the historical and the current. The PR campaign is included in this section, as are some professional examples. An entire chapter (13) is devoted to learning from the experiences of others. Cases have been grouped into three types: issues management and crisis PR, behavior change, and the PR/marketing mix.

In the final portion of the book (Part 6), two chapters look at the legal and moral environment for public relations practice. Standards for professional performance, the PRSA code, are in the appendix. The index has new entries, representing items that students called to our attention, as well as some omissions found by colleagues.

Deciding what to keep from the second edition was less of a problem than getting a handle on the real changes. For example, trying to find two people to agree on computer terms to include in the glossary proved impossible. We gave up on that and included only the language most commonly used.

IMAGES

PR looks formidable if the book is a tome, and both students and professionals are frustrated by unused (but paid for) chapters. *This Is PR* contains the essentials of PR information, prepared for a single course. (There is a PR writing book, but it is a separate text.)

PR people should be able to see themselves in various PR roles. Since a majority of PR students today are women, that is not possible if the language is sexist—if examples always use the masculine pronoun. And it is also difficult if all of the role models are male. *This Is PR* always has been a nonsexist text, in language and example.

PR research, as it is published in journals, is included to keep the text abreast, often ahead, of the field. Professionals and students frequently fail to see PR as a field for serious scholarship and this text represents an effort to improve that oversight. There is a real need for PR *scholars*.

CONTRIBUTORS AND CRITICS

Colleagues in the field as well as students from all over the nation have had an important part in changes in this third edition. Colleagues have been encouraged to send suggestions and students asked to write critiques. The response was important because, to borrow from computer terminology, we wanted the book to be “user friendly”—easy to use, easy to learn from, easy to teach from.

We are indebted to editor Rebecca Hayden, who has guided us through three editions and has been both an inspiration and a mentor.

Special thanks go to the reviewers who examined our changes for this third edition. Some have been with us since the first edition, and others joined us for the second. Enlisted especially to review this third edition are: Frank Wylie, APR, and former PRSA national president, who began making notes and sending them when he changed from the corporate world to academia as director of Public Affairs for California State University at Los Angeles; Linda Scanlan, APR, of Norfolk State University and PRSA Educator's Section officer and AEJMC PR Division officer as well as national PRSSA liaison; Bill Baxter, APR, of Marquette University and

1984–85 chair of PRSA Educator’s Section; William R. Berry of the State University of New York–Geneseo; Michael Hesse, APR, of the University of Alabama; and Frank Walsh, J.D., APR, of the University of Texas at Austin, who was especially helpful in reading the law chapter. We also appreciate the detailed notes on the law chapter in the second edition provided by Wayne Overbeck, J.D., California State University, Fullerton.

Finally, we are extremely grateful to Jim Haynes, APR, assistant dean of the College of Communication, University of Texas at Austin, who prepared the Instructor’s Supplement for this edition.

To our colleagues and our students, who have made us
better teachers and PR practitioners

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