**Lecture # 1**

**Public Relation as a process**

You are now familiar with PR process models like Marston’s RACE model (Research, Action, Communication and Evaluation), Hendrix’s ROPE model (Research. Objective, Program, Evaluation) and Cutlip, Center and Broom’s four step process model (Defining PR problems. Planning and Programing, Taking Action and Communicating and Evaluation the Program)

**Research in Public Relation Process**

Research is the beginning of a PR process that seeks to bring about a specific objective. A successful research determines attitudes and behaviors of public in order to plan public relaton stratigies. Such research can be used to Generate mutual understanding and Understand and persuade public

**What is Research?**

**Systematic investigation intended to add available knowledge and also varifiable**

Use of standardized procedure in search of knowledge

**PR Research (words of some prominent figures in PR Industry)**

“We can’t manage what we don’t measure.”

David R. Drobis

Chairman, CEO, Ketchum Public Relations Worldwide.

“No Public Relations strategy can succeed without background and knowledge of a Situation.”

--- M. Tariq Bucha

President Pakistan Public Relations Society.

**Importance of Research in PR**

PR is all about persuasion, one cannot persuade public without knowing what exactly they think and in certain circumstances how they react . Research makes communication two-way by collecting information from publics rather than one-way, which is a simple dissemination of information. Research makes public relations activities strategic by ensuring that communication is specifically targeted to publics who want, need, or care about the information. Research allows us to *show results*, to measure impact, and to refocus our efforts based on those numbers. For example, if an initiative is not working with a certain public we can show that ineffectiveness statistically, and the communication can be redesigned or eliminated. Thus, we can direct funds toward more successful elements of the public relations initiative.

following grounds

* To know the public opinion
* Avoid Bias opinion
* Improved decision making
* Effective communication
* Way to correct the errors
* Method to collect the Facts
* Get Feed Back

**What Questions Need Answers.**

While conducting research there are certain important questions which n

* Who are our publics?
* What is our action / message?
* What channels of communication reach our publics?
* What should we do to keep in touch?
* How will this activity be understood by our publics?
* What will our publics say or do as a result of our efforts?
* What is their feeling about us?

For example:

Problem is about An Airline Loading

Who are our public : people who are frequently using d

**What Does Research Do?**

One important question is regarding the objects achieved by research. Following are few important support factors resulting from research.

* It supports audience.
* It supports media & trend analysis.
* It does message testing
* It does issue monitoring, forecasting & evaluating.
* It often provides essential data for effectively presenting information.

**Method of conducting Research**

Following are two main universally accepted methods of conducting research.

**Primary Research**

A type of research, wherein the research aims at acquiring new and original data by primary sources, is known as Primary Data. As the term ‘primary’ implies ‘first and foremost’ and when it is linked with research, it means an in-depth exploration of facts by the researcher himself and that too with the one to one communication with the people, who know about the subject.

It is a bit difficult to conduct primary research because it requires a lot of time, money, resources and some prior information about the subject. With a view to getting needed information, the researcher has to start from scratch. The research can be performed through interviews, questionnaires, observations, etc. phone directories , census

**Secondary Research**

The research which involves analysis, interpretation and summarization of primary research, is called secondary research. In finer terms, the research in which data is obtained from readily available sources is secondary. As the data available is already analysed and interpreted, the researcher only needs to figure out the data of his choice, i.e. the relevant information for the project.

In this type of research, the researcher uses information gathered by government agencies, associations, labour unions media sources and so on. The data assembled is primarily published in newsletters, magazines, pamphlets, newspapers, journals, reports, encyclopedias etc.

**Types of Research**

There are two types of Research

* Qualitative Research
* Quantitative Research

**Qualitative Research**

**Qualitative research** is research that is not accurately measured. This is because it is not possible to come up with an accurate number. Qualitative research focuses on the quality and opinions of something. For example, doing research to determine how someone feels about owning a dog. This is a matter of opinion rater then actual numerical values.

**Methods of Qualitative Research**

* In-depth interviews
* Focus groups
* Case studies
* Participant observation
* Monitoring toll-free (1-800 #) call transcripts
* Monitoring complaints by e-mail and letter

**Quantitative Research**

**Quantitative research** is research that can accurately be measured. For example, we can accurately measure how many dogs get adopted from shelters each year. A great way to remember quantitative research is to think of the word 'quantity,' which indicates how many.

**Methods of Quantitative Data Collection**

* Internet-based surveys
* Telephone surveys
* Mail surveys
* Content analysis (usually of media coverage)
* Comment cards and feedback forms
* Warranty cards (usually demographic information on buyers)
* Frequent shopper program tracking (purchasing data)

## Mixed Methods/Triangulation

Clearly, both quantitative and qualitative research have complementary and unique strengths. These two research methodologies should be used in conjunction whenever possible in public relations management so that both publics and issues can be fully understood. Using both of these research methods together is called mixed method research, and scholars generally agree that mixing methods yields the most reliable research results.Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998). It is best to combine as many methods as is feasible to understand important issues. Combining multiple focus groups from various cities with interviews of important leaders and a quantitative survey of publics is an example of mixed method research because it includes both quantitative and qualitative methodology. Using two or more methods of study is sometimes called triangulation, meaning using multiple research methods to triangulate upon the underlying truth of how publics view an issue.See Stacks (2002); Hickson (2003).

**How research can help you promote your business**

Many public relations practitioners count communication and strategy as the most valuable skills in their field. But in practice, one cannot put those skills to good use without a foundation of research and information gathering. It’s important to know a client’s needs, target market, and available resources in order to draw up a good PR plan. For example, before submitting a story to a magazine, you have to know its readership and editorial standards to make sure your piece will fit in.

Here are some of the ways that research can help improve PR practice:

* *Knowing your client* – When you present your PR plan to a client, you should be prepared to justify your ideas – why you chose a certain medium or publication, how you came up with the tagline, or how you think a certain step will contribute to the overall plan. If your plan is substantiated by research, you shouldn’t have trouble answering such questions.
* *Finding your market –*One of the first things you need to know when promoting a product or service is who your market is. Are you selling the product to teens or adults, males or females, students or professionals? Market research involves more than demographics – you have to analyze the behavior, lifestyle, and preferences of your audience. Knowing your target market will help you determine what your message is and how to design it in a way that your audience can understand and appreciate.
* Choosing your media – When you’ve put your message together, the next step is to choose a medium for sending it. You need research to find out which media your client can afford, and which ones will bring in the most returns in the shortest time. If you’re looking into field sales or promotion, you also need research to stay updated on industry events that can be useful for your PR campaign. It also involves a bit of market research, because you have to know which medium is preferred by your target market. You wouldn’t run a news release if your research shows that your audience doesn’t read newspapers.
* *Finally: Making your pitch*. If you want to promote your business in the media, you will have to pitch your story to editors, producers, or reporters. In most cases, other PR firms or businesses will be competing for the space or airtime. Your pitch has to be well-planned and well-researched for it to stand out from the other pitches. Look up the magazine’s reader profile and editorial policy, or find out the ratings of the station or program you are pitching to. Be prepared to answer questions about your client’s business. This can make you appear more knowledgeable and responsible, and helps build credibility for both your firm and your client.

**How To Use Research?**

It is imperative and pertinent to determine what the possible ways to use research with advantage are.

Basically 6 ways.

* To formulate strategy.
* To measure success.
* To test messages.
* To size up competition.
* To get publicity.
* To control opinion.

**Phases of Research during PR Campaign**

**Phase: 1 Pre-Campaign**

How well was previous research conducted?

Which strategies was produced the best results ?

**Phase:2 During Campaign**

**Planning Phase Of Research**

In order to get positive results from research it is essential to plan it properly as below:

• Issue forecasting.

• Learning about publics.

• Prioritize publics by Issues.

• Interpreting behavior of publics.

• Planning media use.

• Considering Possible Outcomes.

**Phase 3: After Campaign**

**Using Research for Final Evaluation.**

For final evaluation research can provide major help and support.

* Complete the goal results,& interpret their significance to the specific objectives set ,to the organization’s overall objectives & mission.
* Evaluate the impact of actions taken on your publics to see what their attitudes are now.
* Determine how the organization’s overall objective and mission have been affected.