

Maxwell School Center for CAREER DEVELOPMENT

YOUR GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS & PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

OVERVIEW

Public relations today is regarded as a subdivision of marketing along with advertising. However, a public relations assignment differs from an advertising assignment in that the PR firm utilizes free opportunities for media exposure, disseminating or creating newsworthy publicity of interest to radio, television and the press instead of producing ads or commercials and purchasing media time or space. While some clients have both public relations and advertising strategies in place, non-profit organizations rely heavily on public relations specialists to promote issues and events because they rarely have much of an advertising budget.

Public diplomacy is a field that has grown out of a need for public relations professionals who can effectively communicate with diverse national and international audiences. Cross-cultural communication presents complex challenges and public diplomacy is evolving fast to meet client needs. Developing political climates and technological environments mean that the real and virtual landscapes in which public diplomacy practitioners operate, and the tools available to them, are changing. Public diplomacy professionals are expected to skillfully craft an organization's messages, convey its vision and explain its actions.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Public relations specialists build, maintain, and promote the reputation and image of individuals, organizations, products, issues and events. PR specialists also study the attitudes and opinions of various publics or markets. Problems are identified and efforts are made to improve relations between a client and its publics.

Public diplomacy practitioners employ many of these same skills in their work for the U.S. government and foreign governments, NGOs, INGOs, IGOs, IFIs, and BDOs. Public diplomacy professionals maintain contact with people who influence public opinion. They also manage people, programs, budgets and resources. There are PD practitioners in the fields of education, public affairs, public relations, and international relations

TYPES OF JOBS

- Financial management
- Diplomatic courier
- Public diplomacy officer
- Publicist
- Media liaison
- Spokesperson
- Copywriter / speech writer
- Community manager
- Social media specialist

QUALIFICATIONS + SKILLS

- Ability to regroup quickly when faced with sudden changes in events
- Ability to speak comfortably and professionally with upper level management and media
- Ability to meet tight deadlines
- Presentation, design, writing and editing skills
- Data analysis
- Language fluency

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SAMPLE EMPLOYERS

- **U.S. Government:** U.S. Department of State, Under Secretary for Bureau of Public Affairs, Under Secretary for Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, USAID Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Department of Education-International Affairs Office, Department of Justice- Office of Public Affairs, Department of Commerce - International Trade Administration
- **NGOs, NSAs, IFIs, Business:** ACCION, AMIDEAST, Amnesty International, Arthur W. Page Society, Council of Public Relations Firms, FHI 360, Global Public Policy Institute, Human Rights Watch, Institute for International Education, InterAction, International Association of Business Communicators, International Crisis Group, IREX, Oxfam International, Public Relations Society of America, Vital Voices
- **Development Project Organizations/Firms:** Abt Associates, Bearing Point, Booz Allen Hamilton, Chemonics
- **PR, Public Affairs, Advocacy Consulting Firms:** APCO Worldwide, Bliss Integrated Communication, Burson-Marsteller, Prosek Partners, Fleishman-Hillard, Golin Harris International, Hill & Knowlton, Ketchum, Inc., Ogilvy PR, MSLGROUP, MWW PR, Solomon McCown & Company, The Global Consulting Group, Timmons & Co., Weber Shandwick
- **Associations, Lobbies, Professional Organizations:** Alliance to Save Energy, American Petroleum Institute, National Mining Association
- **Conflict Resolution Organizations:** Development Alternatives Incorporated, Deloitte, Fellowship for Reconciliation, IBM Consulting, Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, Institute for World Affairs, Intermedia, InterNews, Kettering Foundation, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Search for Common Ground, Seeds of Peace

SAMPLE MAXWELL CLASSES

- Negotiation: Theory and Practice
- Issues in Public Diplomacy
- Social Media in the Public Sector
- Law, Politics and the Media
- Political Leadership
- Governance and Global Civil Society
- Seminar on U.S.-Latin American Relations

RESOURCES

- PublicDiplomacy.org
- Institute for Public Relations
- USC Center on Public Diplomacy
- Public Relations Society of America

RELATED CAREER GUIDES

- Government Relations and Lobbying
- Consulting
- Corporate Social Responsibility and Social Enterprise

PRO TIP: Campus activities promoting university-wide events and helping with a fund raising campaign may well win you points, since entry level jobs often involve telemarketing, organizing mailings, preparing news releases, assembling press kits, drafting articles and talking points, and arranging logistics.