

Student's Guide to International/Global Public Relations

Lessons from the Arthur W. Page Center for Ethics and Integrity in Public Communication

Rationale and Overview

As organizations have become globalized, international public relations has also become a major concern of practitioners. In particular, public relations practitioners face many challenges caused by cultural, political, and economical differences among nations and regions. Thus, it is essential for you to recognize the importance of international public relations and develop an understanding of other countries.

Module Instructions

Watch video clips from public relations practitioners on international/global public relations and then answer the following questions based on those clips. The remaining activities for this module involve reading two articles and answering the questions provided.

Learning Objectives

This module aims to facilitate understanding of the challenges and opportunities involved in international public relations. The lesson is designed to help you:

- Reflect on how your cultural perspectives impact how you think about communication;
- Determine the best ways to balance “thinking locally” and “thinking globally”;
- Contemplate how to apply general principles of good public relations in any setting.

Module Activity: Watch Video Clips

The following video clips are portions of interviews with public relations practitioners commenting on subjects related to international public relations. These video clips are available on the website of the Arthur W. Page Center for Integrity in Public Communication. First, please visit the Center's [website](#), and then go to the [Oral History Collection](#). On that page, you can see the [index](#) where you can easily access material within and across interviews organized by topic or issue. Among the various topics, please click [International/Global PR](#), and then you can access video clips of

interviews with:

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Jim Murphy | 4. Richard Edelman | 7. Jack Felton |
| 2. Peter Debreceeny | 5. Harold Burson | 8. Helen Ostrowski |
| 3. John Reed | 6. Jon Iwata | 9. John Reed on Global PR |

Module Activity: Video Clip Questions

The following discussion questions are designed to encourage critical thinking on international/global public relations. After watching the video clips, please answer the following questions.

1. Why is international public relations becoming important?
2. What are the benefits or opportunities when practicing international public relations?
3. What are the qualities a PR practitioner should have?
4. The greatest mistake made by practitioners in international public relations is implementing American standards in global settings. What are the problems caused by taking this action?
5. In terms of ethics, do you think we can apply Americanized codes of ethics in foreign markets because ethics is universally common, or do they need to be modified?

Module Activity: Reading and Questions

To be successful in the global marketplace, it is important to apply the generic principles of public relations differently, according to specific characteristics of the international market. Please select the [link](#) and read the article titled “International Public Relations: An American Perspective” from Khamis and Toth. After reading the article, please answer the following questions.

6. What are the nine principles for effective public relations practices.
7. Are these generic principles of excellence applicable anywhere?
8. What are the five contextual variables to be considered in the application of the nine principles?
9. From the video clips on the Page Center website, please find the cases that integrate those generic principles and specific variables strategically.

Module Activity: Second Reading and Additional Questions

Access the Public Relations Resource Center by selecting this [link](#). Under Referred Journal Articles, download Grunig's [article](#), "Paradigms of Global Relations in an Age of Digitalisation". Apply the generic principles of public relations to a historical case, as if it was happening today with the use of digital/social media available. Suggested historical cases may include Coca Cola in Belgium, the effect of the Exxon-Valdez spill on Canada, and the Bhopal disaster. Answer the following questions.

10. Are these generic principles practical? Explain why or why not.

11. How can they be applied?

Additional Readings

Ford, R. L. (2006). Understanding the implications of multiculturalism is critical for PR programming. *Public Relations Tactics*, 13(2), 6.

Grunig, J. E., Grunig, L. A., Sriramesh, K., Huang, Y., & Lyra, A. (1995). Models of public relations in an international setting. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 7(3), 163-186.

Zaharna, R. S. (2000). Intercultural communication and international public relations: Exploring parallels. *Communication Quarterly*, 48(3), 85-100.

Valentini, C. (2007) Global versus cultural approaches in public relationship management: The case of the European Union. *Journal of Communication Management*, 11(2), 117-133.

Additional Resources

Arthur W. Page Society Case Studies: Google: Entrance into the Chinese Market and Government Censorship ([link](#))

Arthur W. Page Society Case Studies: Euronext N.V.: The Fight for LIFFE ([link](#))

Regeester, M., & Larkin, J. (2005). Case Study: Coca-Cola, Lessons it might have learnt from history, *Risk Issues and Crisis Management in Public Relations*, 160-162. ([link](#))

Buffalo State University Case Studies: Exxon Valdez Oil Spill ([link](#))

Johnson, V., & Peppas, S. C. (2003). Crisis management in Belgium: the case of Coca-Cola,

Corporate Communications: An International Journal, 8(1), 18-22.

References

Grunig, J. (2009). Paradigms of global public relations in an age of digitalisation. *PRism* 6(2), 1-19.

Khamis, S., & Toth, E. L. (2009). International public relations: An American perspective.

Trípodos, 24, 31-40.