

Worksheet A

A. Pre-reading

Students can discuss this in pairs, groups or as a whole class. Put students' ideas on the board and refer back to them once they have finished reading the text.

B. Vocabulary

Ask students to try this initially without referring to the text or using a dictionary. You can then allow them to do either or both of these if they have difficulty in answering any of the questions.

Key: 1. A; 2. A; 3. A; 4. B; 5. A; 6. B

C. Comprehension check

Tell students to underline or highlight the words and expressions in the text that they used to decide on their answers.

Key: 1. T. "**Equally**, companies may become actively involved in local community activities, such as raising money for local schools and hospitals." [Community relations, lines 7-9]

2. F. "Employee relations normally includes communications with retirees, who **perhaps** benefit from the organization's pension plan." [Employee relations, lines 3-5] i.e. this is not always the case.

3. F. The text says "... retirees can also be viewed as customers." [Employee relations, line 7], which means that they should be **treated as** customers and not that they **are** customers.

4. F. "Research has shown that good communication procedures inside a company can enhance **employee motivation**." [Employee relations, lines 9-11]. 'Employee motivation' is not the same as pay, although the former can be affected by the latter.

5. T. "Although they cannot reveal company secrets, organizations **can** share information ..." [Industrial relations, lines 3-4]. This implies that it is possible.

6. T. "Crisis or issues management may be used **either** in a continuing issue **or** to handle a one-off crisis." [Issues management, lines 5-7]

D. Discussion

Many corporate websites have a page where they explain the different ways in which their employees are involved in their local communities, and these should provide a useful source of ideas and opinions.

Students can discuss this in groups or as a class.

For stronger students, the discussion could take the form of a debate, with one side putting forward arguments in favour of company involvement in the community (e.g. they 'give something back'; it

benefits the community; it motivate employees and helps develop their people skills; etc.), and the other side giving the arguments against (e.g. it is dangerous to give large companies too much power; it's a way for companies to get cheap publicity; companies would benefit the community more by paying more tax; etc.).

It would be good to enable them to find some of these arguments themselves, perhaps by researching them on the internet, in which case you would need to set up this activity in the previous lesson.

Worksheet B

A. Pre-listening 1: Vocabulary

Get students to check each other's answers. If they disagree or can't make all the matches, tell them to look at the words in context and then (if necessary) use a dictionary, rather than giving them the correct answers yourself.

Key: 1. c; 2. f; 3. l; 4. a; 5. d; 6. h; 7. b; 8. e; 9. g

All the words and expressions in this activity have general relevance for marketing, so encourage students to note them down in their personal vocabulary notebooks.

B. Listening

This activity helps students to practise listening for gist and note-taking. Review their notes after they have listened to the conversation for the first time.

C. Comprehension check

This task helps students to practise listening for detail. Encourage students to try to fill in as many of the gaps as they can from memory before they listen for a second time.

Key: 1. magazines; 2. blogs; 3. inviting; 4. closure; 5. broadcast; 6. point of view; 7. enquiries; 8. interviews; 9. networking; 10. crisis; 11. recall; 12. takeovers; 13. health; 14. restrict

D. Project

Get students to work in groups and set a time in a future lesson for them to present their PR strategies in the form of a class presentation. Alternatively, you could set this as a writing task.

If students have difficulty in coming up with ideas for products, brainstorm with the whole class before you begin this activity.

You could extend this activity into a role-play, with one group of students playing the role of the PR department members and the other group playing members of the (hostile) lobby group.

A Pre-reading

What does a company's PR (Public Relations) department do? What groups and individuals does it communicate with? Discuss and note down some examples in the text box below. Then read the text and compare your answers.

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The scope of public relations

Public relations covers many aspects of communications between organizations and the outside world. Here are some examples:

Community relations

This is the relationship between the organization and the community within which it operates. A multinational company, for instance, will work with communities in many different ways. Companies may work closely with communities (including local government representatives) to alleviate problems such as noise from late-night deliveries. Equally, companies may become actively involved in local community activities, such as raising money for local schools and hospitals. This builds a strong link between the organization and the community. In many parts of the world, organizations have become the largest employer within a community and also the centre of that community.

Customer relations

In markets where there is a lot of competition, companies try to build longer-term relationships with their customers. Customer relations can include the development of loyalty card systems, meet-and-greet policies in hotels and stores, and how the company responds to complaints.

Employee relations

This is the relationship between the organization and its employees, on both a person-to-person and group basis. 'Employee relations' normally includes communications with retirees, who perhaps benefit from the organization's pension plan. It can be argued that for a for-profit organization (depending on the nature of the business) retirees can also be viewed as customers. Employee relations is often considered as the core component of

communications within a company. Research has shown that good communication procedures inside a company can enhance employee motivation.

Industrial relations

This can be viewed in two ways. First is the relationship between different companies operating within the same industry. Although they cannot reveal company secrets, organizations can share information that will benefit the industry as a whole, through special forums and/or through trade/professional organizations. Second, this can be the relationship between the company and the various trade unions and professional organizations that represent its employees in negotiations.

Issues management

This is also known as crisis management, and is a major component of public relations. Organizations prepare plans in case of a crisis or major issue. This can relate to human resources (such as strikes), or to products (faulty goods or contaminated food). Crisis or issues management may be used either in a continuing issue or to handle a one-off crisis. For example, an organization may have a continuing crisis that it needs to handle over the longer term, such as a need to defend attacks on the organization by determined campaigners. Various chemical, food and oil companies have for years had to handle continuing crisis management issues regarding their operations, both at home or abroad. The second major category covers one-off incidents. These range from a major disaster (oil rig fire or plane crash) to mismanagement of the business (for example the closure of the energy giant ENRON in the United States).

Adapted from *Foundations of Marketing* by Jonathan Groucutt, pp. 244-5 © Palgrave Macmillan 2005

Worksheet A: Level 1 (Intermediate)

B Vocabulary

Match the words and expressions from the text with their correct definition: A or B.

1. *to alleviate problems*
A. to make the effects of problems less serious
B. to remove any problems
2. *meet-and-greet policies*
A. the way in which customers are supposed to be welcomed
B. the way in which customers' complaints are dealt with
3. *retirees*
A. people who have retired from a company
B. people who have been asked to retire from a company
4. *a for-profit organization*
A. a profitable company
B. a company that aims to make a profit
5. *the core component*
A. the most important part/aspect
B. the smallest part/aspect
6. *(to) enhance employee motivation*
A. to make employees motivated
B. to make employees more motivated than they already are

C Comprehension check

Mark each of these statements about the text as true (T) or false (F).

1. Companies don't just solve specific problems affecting the community (such as noisy deliveries), but can also help out more generally.
2. Companies only communicate with retirees who are receiving a company pension.
3. Companies should treat retirees well, because they may also be customers of the company's products or services.
4. Research shows that companies with good internal communications pay employees more.
5. It's possible for companies to share information without giving away company secrets.
6. Issue management involves managing immediate one-off crises and longer-term issues.

D Discussion

Read this sentence from the text again.

In many parts of the world, organizations have become the largest employer within a community and also the centre of that community.

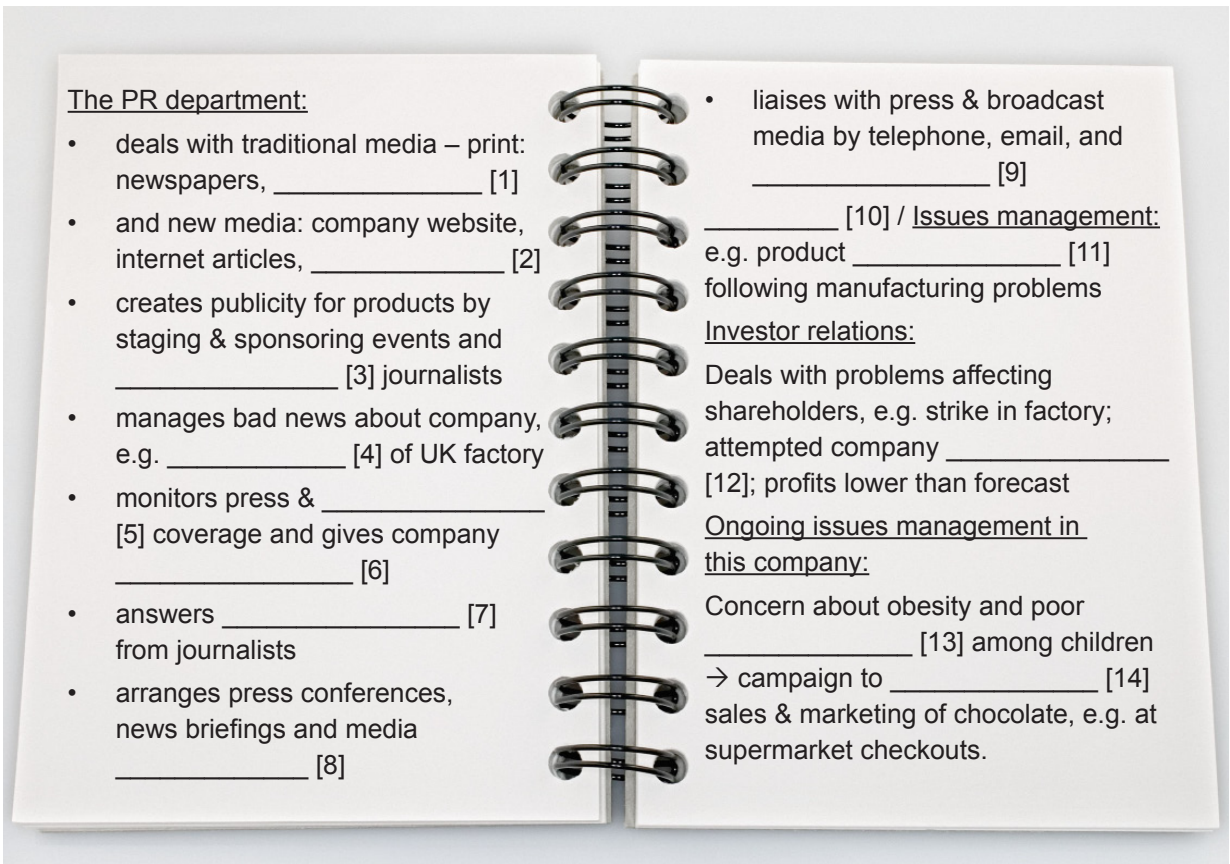
Can you think of (or find) examples of companies playing a big role in their local communities? Do you think it is a good thing? Why? Why not?

Worksheet B: Level 1 (Intermediate)

C Comprehension check

Look at Tim's notes and fill in the gaps using the words in the box.

- blogs
- broadcast
- closure
- point of view
- enquiries
- recall
- health
- inviting
- interviews
- magazines
- networking
- takeovers
- crisis
- restrict



D Project

Imagine you are in charge of marketing a product or service that some people or groups think is undesirable (perhaps because it's unhealthy, dangerous or it damages the environment). Choose a specific product or service, then work out a PR strategy to respond to the arguments against it.

Listening transcript: Level 1 (Intermediate)

Tim, a business studies student who is working as an intern in the marketing department of a large chocolate manufacturing company, is talking to Carla, the marketing manager, about public relations.

Carla: Tim, I've arranged for you to spend time in our PR department.

Tim: Great. What sort of things are they responsible for?

Carla: Well, they have the Press Office, which manages our company's communication with the media: newspapers, magazines, TV and radio. Also, these days, they get involved in new media as well: our company website, internet articles about the company and blogs that refer to the company.

Tim: So, do you mean they deal with advertisements for the company's products in the media?

Carla: No, advertising is handled by marketing. The PR department does play a role in marketing. For example, as well as traditional advertising, sometimes we can create publicity for our products by staging or sponsoring events and we invite journalists to attend. But the Press Office is more concerned with managing news about the company as a whole than just the products we make.

Tim: In what ways?

Carla: Well, you remember last year we had to close one of our factories in the UK. Obviously this caused a lot of negative publicity for the company. The PR department had to monitor press and broadcast coverage of the story and, wherever possible, give the company's point of view.

Tim: How do they do that?

Carla: As well as monitoring coverage, they answer enquiries from journalists. But they don't just react to the news, they have to create it as well. In other words, they have to be *proactive* as well as *reactive*.

Tim: But how can they get the journalists' attention?

Carla: Well, there are various ways. They write press releases and news articles. And they arrange press conferences, news briefings and media interviews. But they also make sure they have lots of regular personal contact with journalists. So, they liaise with the press and broadcast media on an everyday basis via telephone, email and networking. Most of the people in the department used to be journalists, so they have a lot of personal contacts.

Tim: OK. I understand why you need to have a PR department to deal with a big issue like the factory closures last year. But surely that kind of crisis doesn't happen very often.

Carla: Well, fortunately no; you're right, it doesn't. But when a big problem or crisis does happen, it's essential that the company has the resources within the Press Office to manage it. That's why crisis management – or 'issues management' as it's sometimes called – is so important. Think of all the things that could go wrong for a company like ours.

Tim: You mean things like when there's a problem with a chocolate product because something has gone wrong with the manufacturing process, and you have to recall it?

Carla: Yes, exactly. When that sort of thing happens, it can be extremely damaging for a company's reputation, so the PR department has to act fast and manage how the product recall is made public. But there are all sorts of other things that can go wrong.

Tim: For example?

Carla: Well, we might have a problem that will affect our shareholders. For example, we could have a strike in one of our factories. Or another company might try to take us over. Or our profits might not be as high as our forecast. In these cases, we have to communicate with our shareholders, as well as our employees and the general public. In fact, this is so important that the department has a separate team who manage investor relations. And then there are more general publicity issues that affect our customers and sometimes the government. We call this 'issues management'.

Listening transcript: Level 1 (Intermediate)

Tim: What sort of general issues?

Carla: Well, you know that there is a lot of public concern about obesity and poor health in children. This has led to various organizations campaigning to restrict the selling and marketing of confectionery. For instance, they want to stop us from displaying our chocolate bars next to the checkout tills in supermarkets. So, we have to try to put our point of view in a positive way and create a responsible image.

Tim: How can you do that?

Carla: There are different ways. We sponsor campaigns for children to do more sport and generally be more active. And we have publicity which presents our chocolate products as an occasional treat rather than something you have a lot of every day. If we do this, the government may be less likely to impose restrictions on us.