

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. Comprehension check

Get students to check each other's answers. If they disagree or can't do 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. A; 2. B; 3. A; 4. A; 5. B; 6. B

C. Vocabulary: Opposites

Ask students to underline the words they find in the text as quickly as they can. Explain that noting down opposites is a good way of learning and expanding vocabulary, and that it's a good idea for them to note down opposites in their personal vocabulary notebooks.

Key:

1. to alleviate; 2. core; 3. to enhance; 4. to refrain from (doing something); 5. to benefit; 6. one-off; 7. mismanagement

D. Discussion

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

Students can discuss this in groups or as a whole 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.

E. Webquest

Searching under "PR" and "crisis management" or "product recall" should give lots of examples. Famous recent ones include:

- the Perrier product recall:
<http://www.nytimes.com/1990/02/10/us/perrier-recalls-its-water-in-us-after-benzene-is-found-in-bottles.html>
- the Toyota product recall:
<http://pressroom.toyota.com/pr/tms/toyota/toyota-consumer-safety-advisory-102572.aspx>
- the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico:
<http://www.bp.com/extendedsectiongenericarticle.do?categoryId=40&contentId=7061813>

Explain that they need to look at several different sites – and not just the website of the company involved – in order to arrive at a balanced view of the PR strategy and how successful it was.

Worksheet B

A. Pre-listening

Write students' suggestions on the board before they start listening in order to make it easier to compare their ideas with the ones in the recording.

B. Comprehension check

Give stronger students an opportunity to try answering the questions **before** they listen again. Check answers with the whole class. Use the listening transcript to clarify any answers, as necessary. If students are using the transcript, get them to underline or highlight the words and expressions they used to decide on their answers.

Key:

1. T. "Also, these days, they get involved in new media as well ..." [Carla, paragraph 3]
2. F. "The PR department does play a role in marketing. ... sometimes we can create publicity for our products by staging or sponsoring events ..." [Carla, paragraph 5]
3. T. "The PR department had to monitor press and broadcast coverage of the story and, ... give the company's point of view." [Carla, paragraph 7]
4. T. "Most of the people in the department used to be journalists, ..." [Carla, paragraph 11]
5. T. "... when a big problem or crisis does happen, it's essential that the company has the resources within the Press Office to manage it." [Carla,

paragraph 13]

6. F. "... we have to communicate with our shareholders, as well as our employees and the general public." [Carla, paragraph 17]

7. F. "... concern about obesity and poor health in children. ... has led to various organizations campaigning to restrict the selling and marketing of confectionery." [Carla, paragraph 19]

8. F. "We **sponsor** campaigns for children to do more sport ..." [Carla, paragraph 21]

C. Vocabulary: Collocations

Students can work individually or in pairs, then check their answers with the whole class. Rather than giving them the correct answers, encourage them to use learner's dictionaries to check and, if necessary, revise their answers.

When they have completed this activity, encourage students to note down these expressions in their personal vocabulary notebooks.

Key:

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

D. Discussion

This marketing strategy, sometimes known as "cause-related" marketing, is quite controversial. A good example of this strategy is the UK confectioner Cadbury's "Get Active!" scheme.

You could encourage students to do some research on this ahead of the discussion. One approach is to compare a company's claims with the criticisms made, e.g. <http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/news/article-4575595-cadbury-rebuked-over-promotion.do> and <http://www.foodanddrinkeurope.com/Products-Marketing/Cadbury-slammed-for-school-sports-schemes>

E. Project

Get students to work in groups. Check what products they have chosen before they go ahead with the detailed planning of their campaign. If there is time, you could suggest that they research how similar products are marketed, but also encourage them to come up with their own ideas.

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 individuals and their various publics. Here are some examples:

Community relations

This is the relationship between the organization and the community within which it operates. A multinational corporation, for instance, will operate within several, often very different, community environments. 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 fundraising for local schools and hospitals, building a strong link between the organization and the community. In many parts of the world, organizations have become not only the largest employer within a community, but also the centre of that community.

Customer relations

In increasingly competitive markets, companies seek 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 complaints are handled.

Employee relations

This is the relationship between the organization and its employees, on both a one-to-one and one-to-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 internal communications. Research has indicated that good

internal communication procedures can enhance employee motivation.

Industrial relations

This can be viewed from two perspectives. First is the relationship between different companies operating within the same industrial or commercial sector. While they have to refrain from revealing company secrets, organizations can nevertheless share information that will benefit the industry as a whole, through special forums and/or through trade/professional bodies. Second, this can be the relationship between the organization and the various trade unions and professional bodies 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 a crisis or major issue arises. 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 as part of a continuing campaign or to handle a one-off specific crisis. For example, an organization may have an ongoing crisis that it needs to handle over the longer term, such as a need to counteract consistent attacks by determined campaigners. Various chemical, food and oil companies have for years had to deal with ongoing 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 collapse of the energy giant ENRON in the United States).

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

B Comprehension check

Which of the two ways of rewording the original sentence or expression from the article is best: A or B?

1. *Companies may work closely with communities ...*
 - A. It's possible that companies will work closely with communities ...
 - B. Companies are permitted to work closely with communities ...
2. *... on both a one-to-one and one-to-group basis.*
 - A. ... on both a head-to-head and communal basis.
 - B. ... on both an individual and collective basis.
3. *It can be argued that ...*
 - A. It is possible to think that ...
 - B. It is arguable whether ...
4. *... for a for-profit organization.*
 - A. ... for a company that aims to make a profit.
 - B. ... for a profitable company.
5. *... retirees can also be viewed as customers.*
 - A. ... retirees can be assumed to be customers as well as former employees.
 - B. ... retirees can be treated as if they were customers.
6. *... to counteract consistent attacks by determined campaigners.*
 - A. to block the heavy attacks coming from certain specific campaigners.
 - B. to defend the company against the regular attacks coming from strongly motivated campaigners.

C Vocabulary: Opposites

Find words/phrases in the text that mean the opposite of the ones in the list below. The paragraphs are given to help you.

1. intensify (*verb*) _____ (Community relations)
2. peripheral (*adjective*) _____ (Employee relations)
3. have an adverse effect on (*verb*) _____ (Employee relations)
4. choose to (do something) (*verb*) _____ (Industrial relations)
5. damage (*verb*) _____ (Industrial relations)
6. ongoing (*adjective*) _____ (Issues management)
7. management (*noun*) _____ (Issues management)

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?

E Webquest

Find a few examples of crisis management either from your own company or elsewhere in the world. What were the crises? What was the company's strategy for managing them? Were they successful?

A Pre-listening

What are the responsibilities of a company's PR department? Discuss and make some notes in the box below.

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

As you listen, make notes on Carla's explanation of the role of the PR department and then compare them with your own suggestions.

B Comprehension check

Listen to the recording again and decide whether these statements are true (T) or false (F).

1. The Press Office doesn't just work with traditional print and broadcast media.
2. The PR department has no role in marketing new products.
3. The Press Office had to counteract negative publicity following Carla's company's closure of their British factory.
4. People working in PR departments are often ex-journalists.
5. The PR department must always be ready to deal with a major crisis, even though they don't happen very often.
6. If there is a problem that affects shareholders, it is dealt with by a separate investor relations team within the PR department so that employees and the general public don't get to hear about it.
7. Some health campaign groups want to prohibit the selling and marketing of confectionery (e.g. chocolate) to children.
8. Carla's company has a publicity campaign which says that its products can help children to do more sport.

C Vocabulary: Collocations

Here are some expressions from the conversation between Carla and Tim. Match the verbs on the left (1-9) with the nouns and noun phrases (a-i) on the right. Then listen again to check your answers.

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| 1. to play | a. enquiries |
| 2. to stage | b. negative publicity |
| 3. to cause | c. a big issue |
| 4. to monitor | d. a role |
| 5. to answer | e. restrictions |
| 6. to deal with | f. a faulty product |
| 7. to recall | g. an event |
| 8. to put | h. a point of view |
| 9. to impose | i. media coverage |

D Discussion

Look at the statement in the box below.

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.

Do you think this kind of strategy will be successful? Why? Why not?

E 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.

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'.

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.