

BLUEPRINT FOR
PUBLIC RELATIONS

BLUEPRINT FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

by

DWIGHT HILLIS PLACKARD

*Public-relations Counselor
Metro Associates*

and

CLIFTON BLACKMON

*Director of Publicity
Dallas Chamber of Commerce
Editor, Dallas Magazine*

IIPA LIBRARY



2715

FIRST EDITION

THIRD IMPRESSION

McGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.

New York: London

1947

BLUEPRINT FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS

COPYRIGHT, 1947, BY THE
MCGRAW-HILL BOOK COMPANY, INC.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*All rights reserved. This book, or
parts thereof, may not be reproduced
in any form without permission of
the publishers.*

To
PHILIP E. FOX

*whose wisdom, philosophy,
and principles are a credit
to the craft*

Preface

OUR social and economic skein, growing steadily more complex and involved, challenges the best in executive understanding and discernment, certainly in sound public-relations thinking and statesmanship. Unless a high degree of respectability and accomplishment is attained by those engaged in public-relations activities, the profession will fail its responsibility and will be destined to lose its right to retain its cherished position among the top professions.

PAUL HAASE

FROM now on, I think public relations is going to be the No. 1 item in the agenda of every top executive in this country," Bruce Barton declared recently in a letter to *Editor & Publisher*. Barton did not overstate the importance of public relations in the job ahead.

This manual on public relations, which also includes the practical application of publicity, has been prepared as a guide and code for those who are or who plan to be engaged in publicity and public-relations work. The authors claim little credit for originality. Credit for the principles and development of public relations belongs to the architects.

Particular attention has been given to the fundamental principles of publicity, the service phase of public relations. The success of both public relations and publicity depends

Preface

on the ability of the director to observe sound, established principles and apply the maxims which are the result of the embryonic stage through which the profession has but recently passed. This book is a blueprint.

The authors express grateful appreciation to George W. Sutton, Jr. for his important suggestions and contributions; to Lester Jordan, head of the School of Journalism, Southern Methodist University, for his invaluable and painstaking examination and criticism of the manuscript; to Allan P. Ames, of Ames & Norr, for his cooperation and assistance; to Hal S. Lewis, John M. Parsons, and Rex Laney for their many helpful suggestions; to Meno Schoenbach, Fay Griffith, and B. H. Scarpero, who gave a careful reading to the manuscript and assisted in the research; and for kind permission to quote from published material to Simon and Schuster, Inc. ("The Pulse of Democracy," by George Gallup and Saul Forbes Rae); D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc. ("Principles of Publicity," by Glenn C. Quiett and Ralph D. Casey), and Houghton Mifflin Company.

DWIGHT HILLIS PLACKARD
CLIFTON BLACKMON

DALLAS, TEX.,
December, 1946.

Contents

<i>PREFACE</i>	vii
<i>FOREWORD</i>	xi
I. THE FOUNDATION	1
From Ripple to Wave; On the Level; Definitions; Distinguishing Definitions; Purpose; Basic Requirements; Publicity Classified; News and the Power of the Press; The Element of Public Opinion; Scope; Planning the Organization.	
II. ORGANIZATION	31
Functional Divisions of Publicity; Mediums—the Avenues of Influence.	
III. THE PROFESSION	38
Qualifications and Requirements; Strictly Personal; Cultivating Publicity Sources; Professional Associations and Aids.	
IV. PRESS RELATIONS	59
The Job; Background Information; The Relation of Publicity to the Press; Practice; The Newspaper Story; Rules to be Observed.	
V. THE NEWSPAPER	84
Organization and Practice; General; Organization and Procedure.	
VI. BLUEPRINT FOR MINIMAX RELATIONS	100
Public Relations—the Keystone of Management Policy; Personal Contact; Build Your Public-relations Foundation at Home; How to Solve Your Problems through Minimax Relations; Company Officials; Employees; Supervisory and Executive Employees; Encouragement of Young Men of Supervisory Caliber for Supervisory Positions; Employees' Publications; Employee Handbooks; Employee Suggestion System; Annual Report to Employees; Recognizing Service and Achievement; Free Medical Consultation and Physical	

Contents

Examination; Free Legal Advice; A Motion Picture on the Company; Public-relations Guide Booklet; Security Considerations; Company Stockholders; Annual Report; Stockholder News Bulletin; Mimeographed News Bulletins; Stockholder Survey; Stockholder Issue of the Employee Publication; Letters; Open Houses; Customers; Advertising; Publicity; Publications; Bankers and Others of Financial Interest to the Company; Community; Suppliers; Courteous Reception Important; General Public; Negative vs. Positive Public Relations; Policies; Publicity Problems in the Light of Public Relations; Providing for Public Relations as a Task Force; Proposals and Plans; How to Prepare a Public-relations Plan for a Client; Public-relations Check-off List, Fees for Services; Termination of Contract; Clients and Personal Contact; Securing New Clients.

VII. THE MECHANICS OF PUBLICITY	186
Developing the Plan; Preparation; The Fundamentals; Building Up News; Smashing Through with Pictures; Oddity in Photographs Boosts Publicity Value; Distributing Publicity Pictures; Arranging the Material; News Wire Services; Institutional Newspapers; Radio; Motion Pictures; Speeches; Miscellaneous Mediums; Stunts and Parades.	
VIII. INSTRUMENTS FOR PRECISION	237
Research, Surveys, and Measurement; Psychology.	
IX. THE CAMPAIGN	264
Strategy; Strategy (in the Light of Analysis); The Brief; Procedure, with the Brief as a Basis; Release Schedules; Clipping for Profit; The Critique.	
APPENDIX. THE WRAP-UP, A Final Word to the "Up-and-coming"	303
Do's and Don'ts; Press Terms; Examples.	
INDEX	341

Foreword

THOSE who would attempt to practice public relations professionally should first possess the necessary qualifications such as the proper viewpoint, special skills, and judgment—then translate all their activities into terms of public service.

JAMES B. ASWELL

MY WIFE, who views my various activities with an approval at times approaching complacency, complains that now and again she has difficulty in describing satisfactorily to newfound friends the precise nature of the occupation that keeps my brain from being a workshop for the devil.

“Public relations?” she reports they say in tones of uncomprehending surprise. “What does that mean? Does it mean he gets pieces in the paper? Does it mean he has a big expense account and entertains public officials? Aren’t public-relations people always being investigated by the government? What does he *do*?”

In the past I have endeavored at painstaking length to give my wife an explanation that would simultaneously inform and satisfy these persons. I shall no longer try to do that. In the future, I have instructed my wife, she is to recommend to these inquiring friends the purchase of a book entitled “Blueprint for Public Relations.” For this volume, which you now hold in your hands, sets forth in

Foreword

clear and unmistakable terms the kind of thing which all public-relations consultants worth their salt are at least attempting to accomplish.

One of the noteworthy aspects of this book is the emphasis it places on facts as the most effective ammunition available for use in any worth-while public-relations program. For a long time it has seemed to me that, in this age of wishful thinking and dreadful unthinking, nothing else in the world is quite so satisfactory as a plain, simple, incontrovertible fact. It is a marvelous thing for a man to be able to make a statement and then to add that the statement is true beyond any doubt, that its accuracy can be demonstrated by diagrams and measured by slide rules—that it is, Q.E.D., a fact.

It follows naturally that the discovery of a book that deals, in factual terms, with public relations as a profession based on the determination and dissemination of facts gives me considerable joy. "Blueprint for Public Relations" is such a book.

Implicit in nearly everything the authors have to say in this volume is a warning to the public-relations consultant, tyro or veteran, that he should (1) avoid fooling himself and (2) refrain from trying to fool the public. The first is more important than the second if only because it is more difficult to accomplish. Most of us deceive ourselves easily and often unless we are constantly on guard, whereas few of us following the profession of public relations could, if we would, deceive any substantial segment of the public for an appreciable length of time.

Numerous and mortal have been the sins committed in the name of public relations. As a profession, public relations only now is emerging from the shadowland of whoop-it-up quackery. Public relations nowadays is considered a good "field." But public relations is not, or should not be,

Foreword

looked upon as a "field." Ideally, it is a way of life for business and industry.

The authors of this book reveal in its text that they understand this. They know what they are talking about, and what they are talking about is important not alone to actual or potential public-relations consultants but to American businessmen as well. The technical knowledge possessed by the authors is of great significance, but even more significant are the practical ideas behind that knowledge.

They set out to present a blueprint that may be used as the basis for building an effective public-relations program. They have succeeded in that aim.

But they have done more than that. They have based their blueprint on the kind of thinking that must prevail in America if the sort of life most of us regard as good is to continue to exist. That may well turn out to be their most important service.

BOOTH MOONEY