

Strategic Stakeholder Relations

A PUBLIC RELATIONS PERSPECTIVE



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Using *Strategic Public Relations* to engage appropriately with your organisation's various **stakeholders / publics**, ensuring appropriate messaging is conveyed in a timely manner.

Case Studies

Mayland | Cheras Sentral

- Strata-title property.
- New majority stakeholder, big plans.
- Redevelopment.
- 10+ years of inaction and frustration.
- Internal + External stakeholder relations needed.
- Community seeks progress.

Peugeot

- Launch of new and improved model.
- History of issues – car.
- History of issues – licensee.
- Internal communication challenges.

Definitions



Public Relations



Stakeholders



Messaging

Six Blindfolds

[Cragun & Sweetman | 2016]

Why do we tend to marginalise some stakeholders by default through our communication efforts?

Arrogance

Believing Problems
Don't Exist

Dismissing Others
Successes

Negative Feedback
Not Acknowledged
Here

Inability to Know
What We Want

We Know What's
Best for the
Stakeholder

Relevance

- Always be seen to be the one leading the communication effort. [Samsung v's AAM]
- Stakeholders are smart; they will find out regardless (a growing lesson from crisis management). [VW]
- And don't cover-up or sweep under the carpet. [VW]

The Result?

- Engagement [Peugeot | KPM]
- Messaging [Samsung]
- Consistency
- Conversion [Mayland | Samsung]



Why Public Relations?

Because it Works

- Proven
 - Effective
 - Diverse
 - Tailor-made solution/s
-
- Provides a sense of “community through communication” by reaching out to stakeholders (perception | caring). [Mayland | KPM]

Stakeholders

Members
Owners
Employees / Associates
Funders

INTERNAL

Media
Industry
Neighbours
Community
Environment
Government
Civil Society Organisations

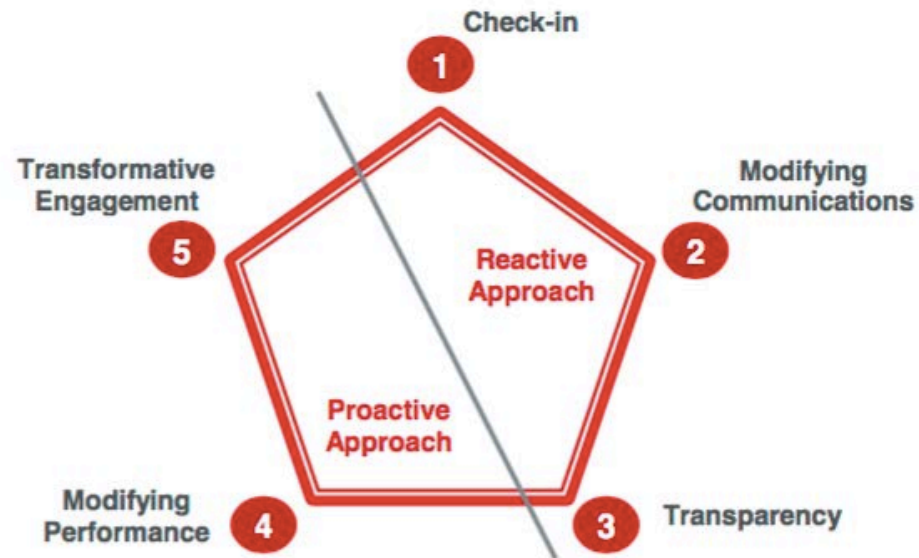
EXTERNAL



How?

Level of Ambition | Purpose

- Check-in
- Modifying Communications
- Transparency
- **Modifying Performance**
- **Transformative Engagement**



Hypothetical Case Study

Developer wanting to build new tower project in a mature housing neighbourhood.

Best Practice: From The Developer?

- [1] Inform neighbourhood of development.
 - [2] Engage with neighbourhood by having forum.
 - [3] Highlight full plans and how will impact neighbourhood.
 - [4] Engage with residents and involve their suggestions.
 - [5] Work with community to address concerns and act upon them.
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- Potential Responses: From Concerned Residents Committee?

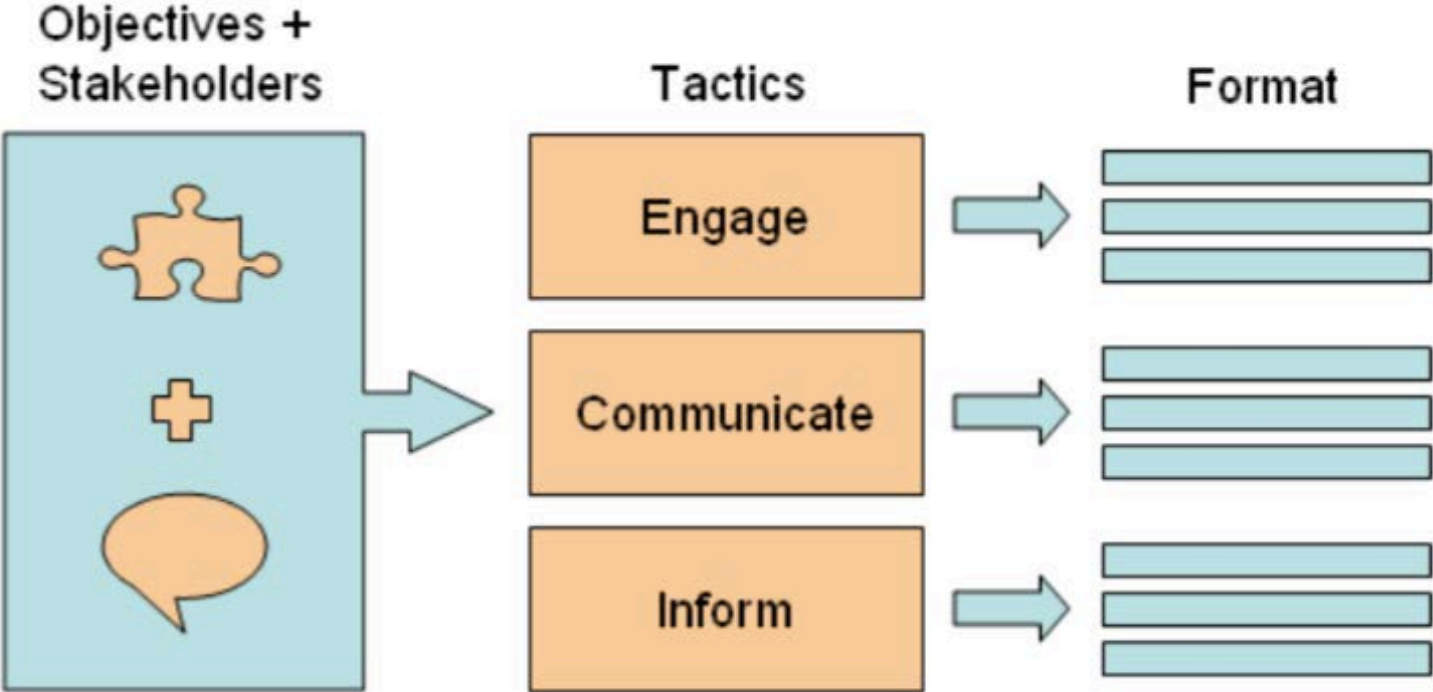
How to Engage (PR Perspective)

THE HOW

- Press Releases
- Profiles / Exclusives
- Events
- Forums
- Direct / Personal Contact
- Sharing Sessions
- Blogs / Newsletters
- Group-Chat

THE WHY

Preparation & Engagement



Mayland

- Press releases (media, community, shareholders).
- Reaching out | individual meetings (strata title owners, retailers).
- Stakeholder forum (retailers).

Peugeot

- Press releases (media, public)
- Placed articles (all stakeholders)
- Press Conference (media, public, customers)
- Newsletters (all staff, dealers network)
- Training (select staff)

Proactive Internal Communications

- Transparency is an **enabler**.
- Always start with internal communications; with your team on-board, its easier to get others on-board.
- When there is internal confusion, or discrepancy, this is when issues arise externally.
- Internal newsletters, blogs, forums, one-on-one discussions.
- **WARNING:** Scripting (call centres | social media).

Proactive PR & Messaging

- Getting the message right, and getting the right message.
- There is not just one message – messages are tailor-made for different stakeholders, and thus, are communicated through different channels. Not everyone needs to be communicated to equally.
- Prioritise, strategise, execute!
- **Do not** make the **mistake** of thinking one message for all will work – it will FAIL!

Building Content | The Digital Fortress

- Create online content, and a lot of it (while you control the narrative).
- Build your digital fortress before a crisis occurs.
- By proactively tell your brand story – you tell your own story instead of letting others tell it for you.
- You have the opportunity to create a large chunk of your own search results.
- To build that fortress, create and submit compelling and relevant content to blogs and websites.
- Reinforced, of course, by traditional PR!

Getting the Experts in

- Engaging with stakeholders is **strategic** and as such :
- Don't leave it to wannabe's / limited experience staff.



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References

- Abdullah & Aziz, “Managing Corporate Reputation, Stakeholder Relations & Corporate Responsibility”.
- Cragun & Sweetman, “Reinvention”.
- Lee & Kjaer, “Stakeholder Engagement”.
- Morris & Baddache, “Back to Basics: How to Make Stakeholder Engagement Meaningful”.
- Waters et al, “Engaging stakeholders Through Social Networking”.



Discussion

Question & Answer Opportunity

