Who has seen the future?

A report on public relations professional competencies

and innovative corporate approaches to external relations

Produced in July 2012

by the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management

with the support of Enel

Authors:

Jean Valin APR, Fellow CPRS, Principal, Valin Strategic Communications

Founding member and past chair of the Global Alliance

John Paluszek, APR, Fellow PRSA, Senior Counsel, Ketchum

Immediate past chair of the Global Alliance

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

Executive summary: the study's objectives and results

Objectives of the study

Business success and leadership in today's global society depend on a company's ability to anticipate, identify, prioritize and address the ever-changing expectations and demands of a broad spectrum of stakeholders and other "influentials."

The corporate communications function at this interface of business and society, whether it is called public relations (PR) or external relations (ER), must therefore achieve and maintain excellence if the company is to be sustainable and achieve premier status. Yet discovering excellence in external relations is a subjective exercise. What is deemed excellent in one context may be perceived as average in others. So what does such excellence look like across global contexts in 2012?

Enel, Italy's largest power company and Europe's second-ranked utility on the basis of installed capacity, has identified and is pursuing a visionary array of external relations capabilities and innovations. Enel, the main corporate sponsor of The Global Alliance (GA), has therefore asked the GA for help in identifying "who has seen the future of public relations" in managing a company like Enel? And, to generate answers, it has generously provided support for this study.

The study had two objectives:

1. *Examine the relevance of competencies measured by existing accreditation schemes from 16 organizations from around the world resulting in awarding the APR and ABC designations and test to what extent these examinations of professional credentials are relevant in a multi-national environment such as the one that exists at Enel. This could be one component of building excellence at Enel's Academy for its communications staff. For the GA, this generated a compelling question: Are these competencies sufficient to produce excellence in public relations?*

2. *Explore, through corporate case studies and in-depth interviews, "best practices": innovative approaches, methods and systems that help drive excellence in managing the public relations function.*

The results of the study

The findings of the study suggest that:

- Core competencies, as measured by the leading public relations associations studied, are virtually universal yet offer only a starting point in generating excellence. Public relations practitioners are faced with an ever-increasing list of competencies that go beyond "traditional" PR and very few competencies ever fall off "the list." Of course, ethical behavior continues to be the competency that supports all others.

- Companies that excel, or are seen to excel, in at least one area of PR have achieved this success by being disciplined and focused in aligning the goals of PR and communications with the company's financial and commercial goals.

- Formal methods, processes and systems of operation in public relations are valuable, but have limited impact. Focusing the company leadership's attention on a culture of transparency, empowerment, support and training, as well as respect and dialogue, is perhaps of even greater importance.

- As one would expect, there is no magic organizational structure or innovative approach to PR that would work for all organizations. The key is to apply the "generic principles-specific applications" paradigm to a particular context of operation.

- Hierarchy notwithstanding, a key to success is a harmonious organizational culture and recognition that the head of communications should have influence with other departments that affect the reputation of the organization, such as human resources, government relations, investor relations, marketing and community outreach.

- Measurement of the effectiveness of PR activities, particularly "share of voice" metrics, is now established as a necessary commitment in many organizations. PR departments have a wide berth in choosing which key performance indicators (KPIs) to use and aggregate towards such

measurement. Indeed, some companies are using KPI targets in compensation agreements for PR staff.

- Public relations departments' responsibilities and authority vary considerably depending on the culture of the organization and the degree to which it recognizes a need for "steering" and re-alignment with changing stakeholder expectations.

- Social media, which orient organizations one step closer to the "two-way symmetrical model" of communication, have been embraced by an increasing number of successful companies. They view use of social media as a key strategic instrument to engage with the stakeholder base as well as an early warning system for issues management. The old model of "pushing information out" no longer serves the needs of modern organizations. Equal attention to listening to and engaging with stakeholders are required to succeed. In fact, stakeholder engagement appears to be a central element of the modern public relations management models in companies interviewed for this project.

- Corporate social responsibility (CSR), also referred to as sustainable development, is often under the stewardship of the PR function and staff and is becoming an especially effective way to improve corporate reputations by demonstrating the constructive role of business in society. Companies interviewed demonstrated an arguably creative genius in undertaking a broad spectrum of programs that simultaneously pursue business and social progress.

Methodology

This study was customized to suit the purpose of Enel, its sponsor. It consisted of a two-part literature review based on the published work done by the Global Alliance on accreditation as well as a more detailed analysis of the proprietary information obtained by the GA in how competencies are actually measured by awarding organizations.

A second literature view was conducted to summarize the key findings of recent research work done in the last few years in the area of professional public relations competencies.

Finally, an interview guide was constructed to verify the extent to which the seven competencies measured across the GA member organizations are relevant to the public relations operations of selected multi-national companies. Another key objective of the interviews was to learn from the best about company innovations, methods and systems put in place to deliver excellence in PR management. Specific areas of interest were suggested by the sponsor to be included in this benchmarking exercise.

The companies that participated in this study were selected after careful analysis and discussion with Enel to maximize their relevance to the Enel work environment. The study findings may well be relevant and of interest to PR/corporate communications directors across many industry sectors. At its eighth World Public Relations Forum in Melbourne in November 2012 and beyond, the GA will promote the study to all corporate relations departments and practitioners as a new service to the global public relations profession.

Company selection criteria

Enel selected the following criteria for companies to participate:

- Service companies with at least one unit/subsidiary in the energy sector

- Ideally 30.000 employees or more

- Multinational operations

- An earned respected reputation among its most significant stakeholders

- Known for a unique area of excellence in external/public relations

- Takes an Anglo Saxon approach (including communication and public affairs)

- Experience in the introduction of new technologies and in the management of public acceptance

- Strong commitment to government affairs and lobbying

- Listed on stock exchange and/or sustainability Indexes

Five multi-national companies were targeted for their own recognized excellence in at least one significant aspect of public relations work as evidenced by their strong reputation and the number of awards they have received for their PR efforts. In-depth interviews were conducted with the head of communications in each of the five selected companies.

An additional four companies were examined by means of a condensed case study describing a particular single initiative or program that may be relevant to the pursuit of excellence at Enel.

Two questionnaires were developed, each designed to probe deeper into company practices and unique management tools. The first focused on the first objective of this study (relevance of accreditation competencies) while the second questionnaire was customized based on the responses to the first and allowed for further analysis of the first and second (exploration of "best practices" that help drive excellence in PR) objectives of the study. Finally, in-depth interviews were conducted with senior executives at each company to explore the company's PR/communications innovations, build a relationship with those companies and learn even more about unique characteristics and methods they employ to achieve excellence. Answers were provided in confidence, as were internal documents, with the proviso that researchers will discuss in general terms the manner in which results were achieved and to better understand in-house methods and systems.

All the information describing each company's methods, systems and areas of practice has been vetted by the respective companies.

The report's conclusions and recommendations draw from the analysis of all these streams of research and are the result of the consensus opinions and/or interviews conducted by the four senior practitioners involved in the project:

- Jean Valin, APR, Fellow CPRS, principal of Valin Strategic Communications and a founding member and past chair of the Global Alliance

- John Paluszek, APR, Fellow PRSA, senior counsel, Ketchum and past chair of the Global Alliance

- Toni Muzi Falconi, founder of Methodos and past chair of the Global Alliance

- Mateus Furlanetto, director at ABERJE (Brazil) and board member of the Global Alliance

Part I:
Relevance of public relations competencies tested in professional accreditation programs

Since its inception in 2000 the Global Alliance has pioneered the development of global standards for the public relations profession. Within that commitment, the Alliance's first such standard was its Global Protocol on Ethics in Public Relations. Shortly thereafter, it undertook research mainly among its member associations to identify a common set of competencies used to assess practitioners' credentials for the awarding of professional/membership designations, i.e. "accredited" or "certified."

This groundbreaking research, involving 16 public relations professional associations around the world, was thorough, lengthy and – significantly – successful. (See Appendix, "The Global Alliance: committed to developing public relations standards"). The outcome: identification of core competencies examined in the accreditation/certification programs of the participating member associations.

Those core competencies are:

1. *Research, plan, implement and evaluate communications programs and projects.*

2. *Apply public relations/communication theories, models and practices.*

3. *Apply public relations/communication strategies to business goals and objectives.*

4. *Manage issues and crisis communications.*

5. *Uphold professional standards and practice ethical behavior.*

6. *Demonstrate communication skills (written, oral, presentation, negotiation, etc.).*

7. *Effectively manage organizational communication resources (human, financial, technological, etc.).*

As the first of its two objectives, this study examined the relevance of this set of professional competencies to excellence in public relations practice – as it were, "on the ground" – at the selected multi-national companies cooperating in the study. The degree of such relevance is presented in Part II followed by a detailed report of the findings on the second study objective – current and anticipated "best practices" for driving excellence in corporate external relations.

Part II:

Does the rubber hit the road? Innovative external relations management in five selected multi-national companies

Analysis of objective 1: relevance of accreditation competencies

One of the objectives of this study was to examine to what extent the seven competencies used in awarding professional credentials around the world are relevant to a multi-national company with an extensive public relations staff.

Selected companies were asked to describe to what extent the seven core competencies are "very important," "important" or "of less importance" in the day-to-day reality of multinational PR/communications work.

The answers from the 16 companies indicated they valued six of the seven competencies as very important or important.

The seventh – application of theories of PR – was seen as relatively unimportant in day-to-day PR/communications practice. As one respondent put it, "I assume the staff knows this already."

- Consistently all respondents saw the ability to uphold professional standards and practice ethical behavior as the top competency

- Other core competencies that scored "high" or "very important" are:

  1. Research, plan, implement and evaluate communications programs and projects

  2. Manage issues and crisis communications

  3. Effectively manage organizational communication resources

- Those competencies receiving a "medium" or "important" score are:

  1. Apply public relations/communications strategies to business goals and objectives

  2. Demonstrate communication skills in written, oral, presentation, negotiation, etc

- One area, as noted earlier, received a unanimously "low" score: apply public relations/communication management theories, models and practices

Analysis of objective 2: best practices in creating PR excellence

Case histories of innovations that drive excellence in managing the public relations function in nine selected companies

In reporting the highlights from each corporate case study, insights were included in more than one of the categories below if they exemplified multiple categories of innovations.

Strategic fundamentals of PR and communication management

Philips

At Philips the communications team is approximately 150 employees worldwide. The team's organization is a matrix with geographical markets on one axis and company sector of activity on the other. The largest group/sector is the headquarters sector where all corporate functions are concentrated. The teams in each sector and geographical market are relatively small, often with only a few people. The Philips brand has a higher unaided recall where their consumer products enjoy more market penetration. However, approximately 70 percent of Phillips's business is business-to-business (B2B) which requires a different public relations focus and tactics with more attention being paid to "influentials." All staff share five core Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with additional indicators based on sectors and markets objectives. Philips developed a key PR business information technology application called "GroupCom" to ensure alignment and focus of all "touches" with stakeholders and publics. All events, contacts, tactics and media calls are logged daily in this database that is accessible to all PR staff worldwide.

A key emphasis at Phillips has been to change the culture so that staff focuses their activity on being strategic and aligned with corporate goals. A shift to two–way communication and dialogue with all stakeholders also was implemented in the past few years, which in some cases meant letting staff go and replacing them with others who understood and could engage successfully in this two-way communication. The management philosophy has been defined as "freedom within boundaries."

Allianz

The company operates in 70 countries and serves more than 76 million customers.

Allianz has approximately 450 people working in corporate communications. The head of group communications coordinates the company's one-voice-strategy through a Communications Steering Committee consisting of the heads of government relations, investor relations, marketing, economics, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and human resources as well as the CEO's office. This broad sphere of influence exemplifies the culture of the organization that has only a few simple rules and favors empowering staff, coaching and supporting them while demanding a high level of accountability and reporting on outcomes.

The company manages issues in five topic areas that drive the agenda of the company. The Communications Steering Committee hears reports from five topic leaders who manage internally to steer the company through dialogue and engagement with stakeholders on these topics.

The Communications Steering Committee achieves Allianz's "One Voice" messaging by overseeing major initiatives and ensuring alignment of messages to objectives as well as in their tone. The customer is at the center of the company which therefore focuses communication activities on customer related communication that goes well beyond product communications.

Indeed, everything is measured by a "share of voice" measurement system and includes targets set for organizational entities within the Allianz family with results sent to CEO's of the entities as well as to the lead communication managers.

The company's unique "capability program" is an in-house training program for communicators. It is worth noting that the company views all of the staff at Allianz as possible spokespersons or communicators in their own way as long as they receive training and obtain sign off from their superiors. The capability program actually begins at the recruitment stage and migrates to an optional training program consisting of several modules that result in credits noted in the Allianz communicator's training "passport" culminating in a "certified communicator" designation. While the training is optional, it becomes mandatory if one seeks to apply for a new position within the company.

Enel

Enel is Italy's largest power company and one of Europe's main utilities listed on stock exchanges. It is an integrated player, active in the power and gas sector and operating in 40 countries worldwide with more than 97,000 MW of net installed capacity and has approximately 61 million customers for its electricity and gas.

Enel has begun a re-organization of the company with the aim of consolidating the international expansion of the last 10 years and achieving the level of integration of a true multinational company. The project, called "One Company," includes the creation of a lean holding structure and organizing the staff functions in corporate structures at the divisions/countries level. The external relations (ER) group has followed this generic path of governance and has replicated the division of responsibility in its own model of operations.

The ER group has a staff of approximately 450 people worldwide with 45 of the group considered leaders or heads of functions/divisions. The group has a vision to be the best in the world in terms of areas of practice, governance and management of the public relations function. It is developing a set of core competencies for all staff and a continuous learning approach by creating an "Enel External Relations Academy" focusing on global alignment of communications/public relation's competencies in its workforce worldwide.

The group enjoys a strong base of skilled knowledge workers; an array of resources that includes in-house studios, manuals and publications; a strong internal communications program, and a desire to place stakeholders at the center of its operations.

One of its innovations is a clear and deliberate focus on transparent advocacy work with stakeholder groups in what Enel describes as "mega communities," a stakeholder management framework based on proprietary software developed by the company to support the development of large infrastructure projects such as construction of major power stations. Moreover, it has deployed a series of initiatives to consolidate practices inside the external relations professional family and already has produced a booklet outlining its approach to advocacy that makes it clear that it abides by a set of five key values: respect, attention to people, focus on results, ethics and social responsibility. Other similar handbooks or guidelines are being prepared under the re-design being implemented by the "One Company" project. Enel has included zero tolerance of corruption within its code of ethics, and a strategic sustainability plan provides several levels of control and enforcement in order to conduct its affairs in complete transparency and with respect for its stakeholders.

Novo Nordisk

The company's reputation is in large part the result of its efforts to adopt CSR principles based on its own unique culture it often describes as "the Novo Nordisk way." The company was one of the first to adopt the triple bottom line reporting doctrine for its annual reports. Novo Nordisk is the parent company of other separate organizational entities such as Novo Enzymes which operate with similar branding elements but at arms' length from the parent company.

True to its "Novo Nordisk way," the company's corporate culture is a determining factor in how it operates and in its matrix hierarchy for communications. There is a committee structure for major communications elements such as branding and marketing, and standing operating procedures for more routine projects.

The senior head of communications also is responsible for other corporate governance areas. The head of global stakeholder engagement has most of the more common public relations responsibilities and manages other functions through the communications committee structure and a collegial corporate culture. Novo Nordisk's communications group is not particularly large (52 employees) but it works collaboratively with other groups such as the global public affairs network (200 employees) and with corporate communications (29 employees) as well as with community relations (120 employees).

Major projects such as the annual report are managed through a committee with active participation from all groups.

Executive mandated committees include a health policy committee, sustainability committee and visual identity committee. All have active participation from the communications team.

Petrobras

The company is a Brazilian publicly-traded energy company established in 1953. The majority shareholder of this joint-stock company is the Brazilian government. The company operates in an integrated fashion in several energy segments: exploration, production, refining, trade and transportation of oil, natural gas, petrochemicals, oil products, electricity, biofuels and other sources of renewable energy.

The corporate communications area is responsible for several initiatives that reflect Petrobras' efforts to be the energy provider of choice with consumers and stakeholders. In general, the area focuses on developing the company`s corporate identity and on fostering an organizational culture that is consistent with its values.

The corporate communications department is comprised of these key areas: planning and management, regional communications, advertising and promotions, corporate social responsibility, sponsorship, international communications, and corporate and internal relations. Petrobras is particularly active in community relations through an extensive sponsorship program and social investments.

The area's strategic objectives include creating and consolidating the company's corporate image and strengthening the relationship of trust between Petrobras and its stakeholders. It also has developed a proprietary monitoring system - SISMICO - to track its corporate image and an innovative co-created community relationship program called "Petrobras Agenda 21."

Company insights on governance and reporting relationships

Philips

- The communications VP reports to the CEO. The communications group is approximately 150 strong and operates on all continents. The organizational model is a matrix with the headquarters group the largest. There are specialists for specific lines of business by markets.

- The group supports other departments that manage government relations, investor relations, marketing, community relations and CSR.

- All staff meet in person twice a year. An inner core of 15 top staffers has a 30-minute conference call every week and meets quarterly. Objectives are adjusted twice a year during these meetings. Management has developed a performance management tool which tracks more than a dozen core competencies in PR and management.

- CSR and marketing are a direct responsibility of the group. The group also supports other corporate functions such as investor relations and government relations.

Allianz

- The head of communications reports directly to the CEO. The group coordinates dialogue with stakeholders worldwide through two means:
    1. A one-voice-policy of global messaging through the leadership of the Communication Steering Committee (CSC) of which the heads of investor relations, governmental relations, economics, human resources and market management (marketing) plus the CEO's office and the head of the Allianz4Good (corporate responsibility) are regular members.

- The head of group communications is the functional head for all related corporate functions in subsidiaries and global business lines. A yearly target-setting process using share of voice targets is issued by the head of group communications to the CEOs of subsidiaries and global lines.

- The Communication Steering Committee meets every two weeks for one hour. Membership reflects all communications-related staff functions and includes senior level communications practitioners.

- The organization structure is not seen as important. The 38 heads of corporate communications functionally reporting to the head of group communications meet once a week by telephone and twice a year in person.

Enel

- The executive vice president (EVP) of external relations is the head of all holding company level communications activities and the head of communications in Italy where the company has its headquarters.

- Because of his unique ability to keep track of relevant facts and indicators both at the international and country level, the EVP holds group responsibility for government relations, public affairs and CSR in addition to all the traditional communications and marketing functions.

- Effective customer relations and communications is a key business goal; therefore particular attention is being paid to all "touch points" with the customer with the external relations group shaping the agenda.

- Managers and leaders from all of the groups' functions and companies (top 1000) meet face to face once a year, starting a full cascading process to send the messages on the strategy across all the organization. Therefore the external relations professional staff has a global meeting once a year and dedicated meetings at each geographic location.

- Weekly staff meetings and project specific meetings are scheduled as needed.

Novo Nordisk

- The company's approach to governance is in keeping with its corporate culture. The external relations function is spread across three groups.

- The most senior head of communications also is responsible for other corporate governance areas. The head of global stakeholder engagement has most of the more common public relations responsibilities and manages other functions through a committee structure and through a collegial corporate culture. This group is not particularly large (52 employees) but it works collaboratively with other groups such as the global public affairs network (200 employees) and with corporate communications (29 employees) as well as with the corporate community relations group (120 employees).

- The senior communications leaders are members of several business committees and their influence and advice is on an equal footing with other functions within the company. Of note, one of these committees is the visual identity committee.

- There are monthly bi-lateral meetings with direct reports where individual performance is discussed and also a bi-annual check-up against stated performance objectives. All of the staff is located in Denmark.

Petrobras

- The executive manager of corporate communications reports to the chairman and has a seat on the Corporate Functions Committee, the Corporate Social Responsibility Commission and the Brand Commission. The executive manager also participates in the strategic planning and balanced scorecard work of the company.

- The corporate communications area functions in two macro processes: communications and branding. It has the necessary human, physical and technological resources and processes to manage and operate the communications chain in all of its dimensions.

- The institutional communications staff is comprised of about 270 employees and also relies on the support of external consultants. The management meetings of international communications staff are divided into two formats, both occurring on a monthly basis: the strategic meeting and the management meeting. In the former, the participants are the managers of the areas cited above, with the focus relating to the company's communications decisions concerning the strategic plan and the business plan. The management meeting, in turn, involves the institutional communications sector managers and coordinators and deals with subjects related to the area's management projects and day-to-day issues. Each management also holds periodic meetings with its teams, with the scheduling arranged according to the workflow in each area.

- The company has an integrated management model for communications. This model integrates internal and external communications, global and local communications, institutional and marketing communications and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Company insights into areas of practice and management

Philips

- Stakeholder management and social media: This area is not yet a dominant element of its work but there has been a clear shift towards social media as a strategy to engage stakeholders. All employees in the department can participate in social media within specified guidelines. There is dedicated staff to oversee and frame this effort.

- Internal communications: There is an internal blog, "The Voice of Phillips," which is in Facebook style with a light social touch to allow employees to learn about each other. The full internal communications group meets twice a year. The leaders (15) meet at least quarterly and have a weekly teleconference call.

- Public opinion research: A survey is conducted every two years to monitor awareness, recall of key campaigns and opinions about the company.

- Outreach to NGOs: The interaction with NGOs is aligned with the relative importance of each to Phillips's strategic business objectives.

- CSR: The "Philips cares" program is focused on volunteerism with groups that Philips has determined are of key strategic importance.

Allianz

- Social media management: One person manages social media centrally with approximately 100 online spokespeople throughout the company.

- Community relations: The "Allianz4Good" program has minimum standards that must be met before applicant projects can be considered.

- Crisis management: A crisis handbook is in every senior manager's briefcase. A crisis can be declared by any senior head using a pre-determined code word. There are regular tabletop exercises and a key group of managers meets regularly to ensure readiness.

- Public opinion research: An annual survey of employees and the general public is conducted. A survey of investors and analysts takes place quarterly. Customer feedback is surveyed periodically (call center performance) and feedback from a wide variety of sources is tracked. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are used depending on the need.

- Outreach to NGOs: The company engages regularly and consistently with stakeholder groups that matter to its business. Pro bono or volunteer work with certain groups is encouraged and preferred as a CSR activity.

- Measurement: The core of the program is based on the "One Voice" and net share of voice systems measured by an outside research institute. An engagement survey also is conducted. Internal communications effectiveness also is measured.

- CSR: The company supports a variety of causes that can strategically affect its business. For example, they support research on the carbon footprint of man-made activities. The company also prefers that its employees volunteer their time to stakeholder groups with whom they have an ongoing relationship.

- Reporting: Four areas constitute the base of all annual reporting: employee report, customers report, society report and financial report. Some of these areas are already incorporated into the company's traditional annual report; others are stand-alone.

Enel

- Stakeholder management: This is becoming a dominant part of Enel's communications work. Consumer associations have a particularly important relationship with the company because Italian law requires a conciliation procedure and the disclosure of satisfaction results as a base for adjusting the rates consumers pay. The company has made engagement with consumers a priority. NGOs at both global and country levels are important actors in the energy sector. Its actions manifest themselves in global areas such as global warming as well as in infrastructure projects. The company has developed custom software to track the evolution of stakeholder positions.

- Internal communication: The Enel Group has a complex internal media system with a variety of tools including Enel Radio, Enel TV, the global Enel Intranet and the global house organ (Enel Together) that it uses to communicate key strategic information as well as to raise awareness for major events such as International Safety Week, Environment Day and others. The company has also developed "Enel in my pocket," a simple guide containing the company's key messages: the elevator speech, top line messages, and quick facts and data about the company. The vice president has a blog for this purpose. Given the need to communicate to staff across borders and continents, a centralized internal communication unit can spread the word quickly to all staff on topics ranging from organizational change to data and key company strategies.

- CSR: Enel has published a sustainability report since 2003 and has developed a strategic sustainability plan focused on maintaining close relationships with all its stakeholders: not only shareholders, bond holders, staff members, customers and suppliers, but also institutions, communities and future generations. For the seventh year running, Enel was admitted in 2012 into the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) and the selective Dow Jones Sustainability World Index, both for companies leading in the field of sustainability. Since January 2011, Enel also

has participated in the Global Compact LEAD, a program launched by the United Nations Global Compact that brings together the top 56 companies in economic, social and environmental sustainability. The company has launched an annual think thank event called "Sustainability Day" and is involved in worldwide projects to improve access to electricity.

- Social media: Specific senior communication staff members are dedicated to engage publics through social media. They make use of approved company lines to respond to questions raised and pass along comments and feedback received to the respective areas of the company. A social media dashboard is presented to management on a regular basis.

- Media relations: The standard package of in-house capabilities is in place. Qualitative and quantitative surveys are conducted regularly with journalists. The media relations offices worldwide are the single contact point with the media and carefully deal with all communication, including price sensitive communication, coordinated across the countries that host the many different stock markets – ranging from Santiago del Chile to Moscow – on which Enel companies are listed.

- Public opinion research: The brand's equity is measured in a general population survey each month. Customer satisfaction surveys take place every three months and service standards are regulated and measured against performance. The Company follows the methodology published by the Reputation Institute. Panelists are sent an annual survey instrument.

- Open reporting: In addition to all its financial and social reporting obligations, Enel has decided to embrace the sharing of corporate data within the spirit of the "Open Data" movement that is spreading throughout the United States and the United Kingdom. Through the website data.enel.com the company shares data sets regarding Enel, organizing information into two groups: economic and financial data, and sustainability data. Content can be downloaded in multiple formats such as Excel, CSV and XML or with Google Fusion to enable the re-processing and visualization with Google applications.

Novo Nordisk

- Stakeholder management: This area of practice is the driver for almost everything the company does. It is quite structured in terms of process. The company analyses trends continuously and discusses health care business strategies with stakeholders. Emphasis is on dialogue throughout its contact with stakeholders. Relationships are built and maintained with a focus on the long term. Every three years, the company conducts a scenario analysis and tracks the learning curve of stakeholders vis-a-vis a particular issue.

- Social media: The company is active in social media on issues involving health care. Responsibility for participating in social media spheres is co-owned by several units within the organizational structure. A set of engagement principles was developed under which staff members are authorized to engage with stakeholders and publics. The company's presence is well known in certain specialized health care spheres.

- Public opinion research: The company conducts an annual survey to measure trust and reputation issues in Denmark and 12 to 14 other countries. The company also subscribes to several syndicated surveys through which it can track and compare progress in areas such as whether it is an "employer of choice," for example.

- CSR: The company is recognized as a leader in CSR and has received several awards in this category. It was one of the first companies to adhere to the UN Global Compact. It encourages its staff to volunteer in the health care areas where the company is active and sees this level of involvement as a reputational strength for the company. It is very vocal and active in issues related to access to care.

- Reporting: The company was one of the first to adopt the "triple bottom line" structure for its annual report. In its reports on its social performance, it lists several strategies it selected for maximum impact on society, be it for patients, employees or the environment.

Petrobras

- Community relations: The "Petrobras Agenda 21" program consists of a diagnostic exercise co-created with the community whereby the company invites the community to build an agenda related to social and environmental issues in several cities in Brazil. Once completed the company delivers the agenda to the community and local governments.

- Public opinion research: The company has developed its own proprietary system called "SISMICO" to monitor its corporate image and to track the evolution of public opinion and the image of the company through specific attributes that aggregate to a general indicator. Specific publics or stakeholders are surveyed or contacted at regular intervals in order to track movement over time. Six key categories of stakeholders have been surveyed: employees, suppliers, communities, investors, NGOs and the media, each with specific indicators as well as a general performance indicator. Qualitative research complements this program to better understand stakeholders' insights and expectations about the company. Petrobras also uses materiality test methodology provided by GRI guidelines for sustainability reporting to bring the outside in. It is a way to compare how the company and the public perceive what is "material" to the public.

- Social media: In addition to the company's website, Petrobras also creates profiles for the main social media, such as the corporate blog called "Petrobras – Facts and Data;" its official channels on YouTube, Twitter, Flickr and Slideshare, and its fan pages on Facebook and on Google+. It also uses apps and social games in digital campaigns and promotions. There is an internal team in institutional communications responsible for the planning and management of these channels, which also counts on the support of external suppliers who do constant monitoring on the social networks, following the conversations about Petrobras and about themes in which it is interested. All of its social media strategies seek to meet the objectives of Petrobras' business and of its reputation, contributing to establishing and developing

relationships with its stakeholders, acting in an integrated way with the company's overall global communication strategy.

- Stakeholder management: This area is becoming a dominant element of Petrobas's communication work. The driver of communication is shifting from mass communication to direct communication and stakeholder engagement. The challenge is to engage the stakeholders through dialogue and find new ways to interact with them. One of the management functions within the corporate communications area is called relationship management, which focuses on managing and integrating the relationship with different stakeholders.

- Measurement: "Metricom" is a proprietary, customized system for the evaluation and measurement of the efficacy of corporate communications programs such as press relations, sponsorship, corporate relationship, advertising, events, use of digital media, etc.

- Sponsorship: The company has a longtime, large and very active sponsorship program on different themes related to Petrobras's businesses as well as in the areas of culture, sports, environment and social development. The projects are chosen by a public screening process involving Brazilian experts from all sectors of the civil society. It is a democratic program, open to whoever wants to present a project that is eligible for sponsorship.

There are four sponsorship programs:

1. Petrobras Citizenship and Development Program: projects related to income generation and work opportunities, education for professional qualification and the defense of the rights of children and adolescents.

2. Petrobras Environmental Program: projects related to the management of surface and underground water bodies, the recovery or conservation of coastal species and their marine and freshwater environments, carbon fixation and emissions avoidance.

3. Petrobras Cultural Program: projects related to preservation and memory, production and dissemination, and training and education for the arts. It is the largest cultural

sponsorship program in Brazil. The company sponsors projects in cinema, performing arts, visual arts, music, literature, digital culture and cultural heritage projects related to Brazilian culture and way of life.

4. Petrobras Sports and Citizenship Program: projects related to sports in four main ways: social and human development through sports, the development of high-level athletes, the encouragement of interaction and the practice of a healthier life, and recalling the history of Brazilian sports.

5. Media relations: Agência Petrobras de Notícias (The Petrobras News Agency) is a dedicated space where journalists can get texts, images, videos and information from Petrobras.

Company insights on communication innovations

Philips

- "Groupcom" is a database that integrates all contacts with all members of the public or media. It is a key tool to align activities. Everyone in the department has access to it and must document every planned meeting, event or media contact. It was built in-house and took eight months to complete. Prior to the availability of that tool management did not know all that was going on and could not ensure alignment with key business objectives.

Allianz

- Allianz's internal university is a key strategy to ensure that competencies and appropriate behaviors are learned and re-enforced. There is a full-fledged capability building process from recruiting of staff through development and education up to the final certification and

assessment through the Certified Communicator program. The candidates who pass this certification are entitled to the Allianz Communicators Passport that allows them to apply for any senior communications position in Allianz Group. The capability program (Allianz University) is probably a best practice worldwide as is its target-setting process for top management (linked to 25 percent of their compensation). Finally, its issue management also is innovative, allowing all operative activities of the Allianz Group to be clustered in five work streams that allow management to drive five core issues throughout a very complex and diverse company working in more than 70 countries and serving more than 76 million customers.

Enel

- Enel has developed a stakeholder management model (the Mega Community) to apply in its large infrastructure projects, where there is the need to manage engagement with stakeholders focusing on a single project that has great impact on a large territory. It is a comprehensive framework, served by software that monitors stakeholder positions and tracks data gathered by the teams engaging with stakeholders in documenting meetings, position papers and events. The overall output of this stakeholder management methodology is solid and fact-based information for top management decision-making.

- Enel is one of the first companies to put in place an open data policy that publishes to the web (data.enel.com) economic and financial data and other information concerning corporate sustainability. This initiative gives greater credibility to the company's desire to maintain dialogue with citizens, institutions and local authorities.

Novo Nordisk

- Novo Nordisk was a pioneer and an example to follow in CSR. The concept of CSR is deeply engrained in the company's history and values. However, the company raised the bar when, as a result of a crisis, it saw the long term potential of a continuous and systematic effort to relate to health care stakeholders. The company also has hard-wired innovation by making it a department in its organizational structure.

Petrobras

- In addition to its proprietary image monitoring system, SISMICO, the company has its own corporate university, Petrobras University, which is responsible for training and developing its employees. Within the Management School at Petrobras University, there is a communication program that covers several courses and techniques such as branding, internal communication, digital communication, promotional marketing, measurement and community relations. The program also addresses topics such as communication management, reputation management, investor relations, global communication, CSR, sustainability and governance.

- Communication professionals hired by the company can attend a general program in corporate communications. Through this program they learn the practices, systems, policies and guidelines of corporate communications at Petrobras.

There also are long-term programs offered by Petrobras University. An 18-month training program focusing on all the major disciplines of communication management, called Communication 2020, aims to support Petrobras´s Vision 2020 to be "one of the five largest integrated energy companies and the preferred choice among its stakeholders." The company also invests in training programs outside Petrobras University. The communications team can take short-term or long-term training programs

promoted by institutions inside or outside the country. The program can be a one-day course, a congress or workshop, an executive program, an MBA or master's degree.

Company insights on use of consultants

Philips

Outside consultants are used for strategic and tactical purposes as well as to provide goods and services for various projects. Philips "One Voice" measurement system is outsourced. There also are PR consultants for the various business lines such as health care.

Allianz

The company does a lot of in-house work with only minimal project contractors for design, printing, etc. The main area that is outsourced is the "One Voice" media analysis and share-of-voice measurement system.

Enel

Consultants are brought in for a wide range of functions including monitoring government legislative agendas, media analysis, advertising campaigns such as selling bonds and customer initiatives and to prepare major internal events and external PR initiatives.

Novo Nordisk

The company subscribes to the Dow Jones Monitor index. It is a member of the Reputation Institute and subscribes to some of its syndicated studies. Consultants are brought in on projects for such disciplines as writing, design and support for project execution.

Petrobras

Petrobras regularly counts on the participation of external consultants in the development of communication and brand projects. Among these consultants are advertising, digital communications and PR agencies, and research institutes. In relation to syndicated research, Petrobras uses studies such as the Global Rep Track Pulse, developed by the Reputation Institute with focus on the measuring of the corporate reputation, and the Sustainability Monitor, elaborated by Market Analysis with focus on the evaluation of the company's sustainability and social responsibility perceptions. These studies produce data that allow the comparison of the company's reputation and image in specific rankings.

Company insights on communication support systems

Philips

- There is a "war room" set up for handling crises. This is a physical location where staff is dispatched to work more effectively together to monitor the crisis and respond as needed.
- The measurement system provides detailed analysis of perception and opinions offered in a variety of media. This is measured through a "share of voice" approach with a "net promoter score" that can be labeled either negative, neutral or promoter.

Allianz

- The company has correlated media work and internal engagement and communication and tracks performance using the Net Promoter Score (NPS) system that is used to gauge the loyalty of a firm's customer relationships. Databases are used to generate targets to be met for share-of-voice results by organizational entities.

- There is a facility to handle crisis situations as well as a crisis response manual.

Enel

- There is a "hot room" for crisis management; extensive studios for producing audio, video, multi-media and web castings, and video conferencing capability to reach key company operating centers.

- Various databases have been built to track stakeholder positions, media coverage, social media and reputation indicators.

- Brand equity is systematically measured through dedicated annual research initiatives, and are reported in an annual publication (Enel, "Its Publics and The Reference Scenario").

Novo Nordisk

- The company has several in-house facilities and capabilities: a TV studio and production entity, photography services, video conferencing and a live link for media interviews.

- There is a crisis "hot room" to manage issues and provide co-ordination during a crisis.

- The company has developed web conferencing capabilities.

- Several databases have been developed to track and log media relations metrics as well as stakeholder positions.

Petrobras

- **PMO – Project Management Office**: The Corporate Communications Department's PMO is responsible for setting the project management model guidelines through the incorporation of best practices based on the PMI (Project Management Institute) approach. The PMO also is in charge of implementing performance indicators for projects and training activities and of ensuring the project managers' commitment. Customized for the Corporate Communications Department at Petrobras, the internal PMO works with internal consultants that help the corporate communications staff to manage selected projects.

- In terms of internal organization, the PMO has several roles, including planning and controlling the implementation of the communication project portfolio; defining, providing and disseminating standards, systems, tools, and templates to be used in project management; providing specialized support; acting as a project portfolio articulator, consolidating information and directing efforts in the strategic direction set by the company's Integrated Communications Plan; and increasing standardization among the various projects. The systems include a database to maintain a history of the projects and lessons learned. This system also is used to develop standards, provide training, evaluate schedules and identify risks and critical factors for success.

- The Stakeholder Definition and Classification project is focused on mapping the main stakeholders of Petrobras. It was developed in 2008 and has been updated annually since then. Thirteen categories of stakeholders have been mapped and described: clients, employees, dealers, suppliers, consumers, communities, competitors, media, investors, partners, civil society organizations, government and the scientific and academic community, with additional segmentation within each group. The company keeps this database updated and makes use of it in its strategic planning.

Other company insights

Philips

- Philips encourages staff to be members of professional associations such as the Dutch PR Association. A competency profile is developed for each communications staff member with a view to bolster any area that may require additional training. Staff will suggest areas in which they would like to develop or expand their own areas of expertise.

Allianz

- The company's unique "Capability Program" is an in-house training program for communicators. It is worth noting that the company views all of the staff at Allianz as possible spokespersons or communicators in their own way as long as they receive training and obtain sign off from their superiors. The capability program actually begins at the recruitment stage and migrates to an optional training program consisting of several modules with credits earned noted in the Allianz communicator's "training passport" and ultimately culminating in a "Certified Communicator" designation. While the training is optional, it is mandatory to obtain high marks in the training program to apply for a promotion within the company.

Enel

- In the last decade, Enel has put in place training and development aimed at improving the managerial, leadership and team building skills of external relations staff. The logical extension of this will be the launch of the Enel Academy dedicated to external relations competencies. Moreover, in the last few years, the company launched "OLTRE," a module

aimed at facilitating teamwork and exchanging best practices among external relations professionals in more than 40 countries. The aim of the company is to guarantee a global standard in competencies held by its ER professionals and ensure a shared approach to the development of the company's reputation all over the world.

- Enel encourages employees to be active in professional associations as part of their training programs. It makes a point of telling employees that it would like them to be visible and participating fully in these associations as Enel employees.

Novo Nordisk

- The company encourages its communication staff to join professional associations and be active as volunteers within their professional association or in business associations particularly those dealing with health care.

- The company has developed an in-house capability to train and develop staff and has a partnership with Cambridge University enabling some of its communications staff to complete the Cambridge executive leadership program. There are eight communications modules in Novo Nordisk's training program including two particularly relevant to external communications: stakeholder engagement and public affairs. A mandatory part of all training is a business ethics course.

Petrobras

- Petrobras encourages its communication managers to participate and engage in communications professional and trade associations. Managers actively participate in 10 different associations.

Supplemental insights from case studies of individual company communications programs

Excellence in corporate external relations is evolving continually in many dimensions and in many business sectors. During their research for this study, the authors have not only conducted in-depth interviews and analyses of the comprehensive strategy and implementation with selected leading companies, but also have encountered examples of additional individual programs that merit attention.

In this section, we present four "concentrated case histories" of such programs. Each illustrates a commitment to strategic communications – long term or short term – that contributes to the achievement of priority corporate objectives: stakeholder engagement; issue-oriented counsel from other sectors of society; coordination with other corporate functions; and advanced government relations.

These brief case histories, supplementing the more in-depth studies in this document, are offered as premier examples of the rapidly expanding universe of corporate external relations powering contemporary business in society.

Dow Chemical Company

Bringing the Outside In: Sustainability External Advisory Council

Company Background

Dow Chemical Company is a multinational leader in specialty chemicals, delivering products and services to sectors such as electronics, water, energy and coatings. It operates in about 160 countries employing some 50,000 people.

Sustainability External Advisory Council (SEAC)

This council brings to Dow a diverse, independent, outside-in perspective on environment, health and safety, and sustainability – representing a major influence on the company's approach to climate change and development of 2015 sustainability goals. The council is composed of thought leaders from around the world representing non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academia and the business community.

SEAC addresses four interrelated factors affecting Dow's success:

- Corporate success factors: The council provides insights relating to overall corporate strategy, e.g. energy policies and next-generation goals. It identifies stakeholder concerns, attitudes and perceptions in that context.

- Business/portfolio success factors: Independent external thought leaders and Dow business leaders (plastics, auto products, etc.) reflect on a broad range of stakeholder interests providing informed public feedback on issues, challenges and opportunities.

- Public affairs and stakeholder engagement: The council provides a valuable sounding board on the general interface between Dow and the external world. Council members' familiarity and links with the "outside world" facilitate engagement in a broader stakeholder dialogue.

- Trends and externalities: Council members deliver an independent, informed perspective on current and emerging global developments and challenges that helps the company plan for a sustainable future – including the UN Millennium Development Goals, the increasing importance of freshwater as a limited resource and the implications of growth in emerging economies such as China.

The Dow SEAC has, over time, proven to be a valuable element in the company's significant progress in its sustainability as a corporate enterprise in both traditional and emerging societal contexts. One of this study's co-authors attended a Dow SEAC two-and-a-half-day dialogue (in Leipzig) and can attest to the company's commitment to weigh carefully the council's recommendations and prudently adjust policy and performance accordingly.

Pratt & Whitney

Coordinating social media and government relations for a major company "win"

Company background

Pratt & Whitney, a United Technologies Corp. company, is a world leader in the design, manufacture and service of aircraft engines, industrial gas turbines and space propulsion systems. The company has approximately 35,000 employees who service more than 11,000 customers in 198 countries.

A coordinated campaign in direct support of a major company "win"

The Pratt & Whitney/UTC Communications team is directly connected with the company's top management and its strategic objectives and business goals. Many examples of the resulting contribution to the company's success – and management's understanding and appreciation of such communications contributions – are on record. This is one very significant example:

- Communications objective

Support the P&W/UTC F-35 fighter engine program, the U.S. Defense Department and President Barack Obama by eliminating Congressional funding for the unnecessary competitor "reserve" F136 extra engine.

- Strategy

For maximum effect on Capitol Hill, integrate new/social media tools into the traditional communications campaign; promote success of the current P&W engine while using independent third parties to position the proposed competitor extra engine as the prime example of wasteful spending.

- Campaign communications tactics

    o   Apply e-communications: web and social media

    o   Media/third party influencers

    o   Targeted advertising

    o   Internal audiences (employees, retirees, investors)

    o   Supplier engagement

    o   Airshows, tradeshows, events

    o   "Grassroots"/ "Grasstops"

- Results and impact

    o   Blog, Twitter, Facebook, iPod and iPad use generated about 20,000 supportive letters to Congress.

    o   "Third Party" groups – Citizens Against Government Waste, Taxpayers for Common Sense, Project on Government Oversight, etc. – weighed in effectively.

    o   Advertising stirred emotions and produced support: "I love this ad so much I keep it on my desk" is what one supportive soldier communicated to Norm Dicks, U.S. Congressman.

- Outcome

From a news release of April 25, 2011:

"Department of Defense announces termination of JSF F136 Extra Engine"

Louis R. Chenevert, UTC Chairman and CEO –

"Being the sole engine provider for the Joint Striker … means $2 billion a year for the next 20 years …

that's $40 billion dollars … and that's a real impact from communications."

Dave Hess, Pratt & Whitney President –

"It is hard for me to imagine if there has been another time in the history of Pratt & Whitney where the

communications team has played such a vital role in the future of the company."

Natura

Government relations: professionalism/transparency in relations management

Company Background

Natura is the leading Brazilian manufacturer and marketer of cosmetics, fragrances and personal hygiene products. Founded in 1969, it now has some 800,000 direct sales consultants in Latin America and Europe. Its business philosophy is based on the belief that there is compatibility in addressing economic prosperity, environmental preservation and human needs.

Government relations: professionalism/transparency in relations management

Natura's government relations program is based largely on its system of ranking federal officials on these criteria:

- Relationship to projects/actions that impact the company's business and agenda

- Influence among other government leaders

- Personal/professional reputation – record of corruption, illegal acts

- Relationship with Natura – associations in the company's and public interest

- Alignment between government officials' ideology and Natura's values

Natura analyses these evaluations and generates a general (and, where warranted, a segmented) summary by issue (such as biodiversity) and by region.

The ranking system is a basis for an annual determination of relationships with various government officials. The company believes this system facilitates dialogue and delivery of the company point of view that builds forthright relationships between business and government.

The Coca-Cola Company

Stakeholder engagement commitment enhances sustainability report

Company background

The Coca-Cola system includes the company, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, USA, and some 300 bottling partners worldwide. The system operates in 200 countries and markets more than 500 brands and 3,500 beverage products.

Stakeholder engagement commitment enhances sustainability report

Reaching Out, Listening Up

Consistent with its strategic external communications policies, Coca-Cola shaped its 2011-2012 Sustainability Report largely by interacting with the wide range of people who will use it including non-government organizations (NGOs), media, consumers, shareowners, associates, bottling partners, suppliers, government partners, students and customers.

CERES, a national coalition of investors, environmental organizations and other public interest groups, was especially helpful by coordinating a dialogue with representatives of "sustainability stakeholders" ranging from the Environmental Defense Fund to the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility.

The company already has addressed several of the group's reporting recommendations in its current reporting cycle and will repeat the process annually. The reporting advances undertaken in this cycle include achieving a better content balance regarding successes versus challenges, providing context and strategy on key external trends affecting the company, increasing verification and engagement and improving interactivity/better use of website capabilities.

Engagement, partnering and sustainability initiatives –

This type of "cyclical sustainability reporting" is integral to the company's long term, strategic sustainability operating commitment to socially responsible performance at the interface of business and society: identifying many ways to integrate the pursuit of business success and benefits to society.

A Coca-Cola signature sustainability program is its application of a core competency – expertise in fluidics – not only to water management in its operations but also in support of communities around the world. Its rationale: "Communities and ecosystems need plenty of clean, accessible water to thrive, and so does our business… As demand for water increases and water stress intensifies, the communities that host our facilities may face serious health and economic challenges, and we may face challenges to our growth." The company's water stewardship to mitigate water-related risks, developed and implemented in partnership with Coca-Cola bottlers, NGOs and other community organizations, consists of reducing water use ratio, recycling water and replenishing water used.

Similarly, Coca-Cola has undertaken sustainability external relations with stakeholders in operational advances such as sustainable packaging (for example, it plans to use "PlantBottle" packaging in every bottle it sells by 2020), reduced carbon emissions and increased energy efficiency and development of sustainable agriculture programs. It also is fostering sustainable communities through economic development, philanthropy and the creation of economic and social opportunities.

Coca-Cola's Reporting Commitment

The company is candid about its sustainability reporting and policies: "Reporting of sustainability strategies and programs at The Coca-Cola Company continues to be a work in progress…we recognize the need to report quantifiable metrics and targets, in particular how they relate to our environmental, social and economic impact. Using external standards such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) helps us ask questions within our organization that are important to improve our performance."

Part III:
Supplemental insights from recent PR/communications competencies research

Recent research on competencies

In research for this project The Global Alliance reviewed a number of ongoing or recently completed research reports that examined various aspects of PR/communications competencies most valued by employers, practitioners and/or academics.

The findings of these and previously published research undertakings also were used to inspire the preparation of the interview guide for the selected companies were interviewed for this study.

Here is a synopsis of studies that have particular relevance to Enel's goals for a corporation's external relations team that also may resonate with other multinational corporations.

European Communication Monitor

www.communicationmonitor.eu/ECM2011-Results-ChartVersion.pdf

Published by the European Public Relations Education and Research Association; authored by Prof. Dr. Ansgar Zerfass, Professor of Communication Management, University of Leipzig, Germany; Ass. Prof. Dr. Piet Verhoeven, Associate Professor of Communication Science, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands; Prof. Dr. Ralph Tench, Professor of Communication, Leeds Metropolitan University, United Kingdom; Prof. Dr. Angeles Moreno, Professor of Public Relations and Communication Management, University Rey Juan Carlos, Madrid; Prof. Dr. Dejan Vercic, Professor of Public Relations and Communication Management, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

This annual study is the most comprehensive analysis of communication management and public relations worldwide with 2,209 participating professionals from 43 countries. The main findings of the 2011 study as it relates to the purpose of this study are:

- Internal communication and online channels keep growing.

  In accordance with previous surveys, the respondents predict a changing relevance of the various disciplines within the broad range of strategic communication. Corporate communication (communication focused on the whole institution or organization) will keep its leading role. Next to this, marketing and consumer communications are thought to reach equal importance with internal and change communication in three years' time. Moreover, CSR and sustainability communications will continue their upswing.

- Two disciplines to watch are international communication and personal coaching.

  Communication professionals predict a growth in importance above average, a stable trend since the 2009 edition of this survey.

- Several types of online instruments are expected to lead the media mix.

  Online communication (websites, e-mail, intranet) is ranked number one in the media mix, followed by media relations addressing online journalists and social media channels. Face-to-face communication keeps its position, while press relations targeting print journalists is thought to be less relevant through 2014.

- Need for a variety of new qualifications and focused training programs for PR/communications practitioners.

  In five years' time, the most relevant knowledge areas for communication managers will be the effects of traditional and new media, relationship building and communication technologies, followed by hands-on skills like public speaking/presenting and coaching. More than three of four respondents value these fields as important or very important.

  Qualification needs differ significantly between various types of organizations and regions. For example, cross-cultural and gender sensitivity is especially important in joint-stock companies, while global project management is notably more relevant in Western and Southern Europe.

  Quite surprisingly, competencies relevant in organizational settings – like power and coalition building, finances, budgeting and accounting as well as legal requirements – are mentioned only by every second practitioner.

  A comparison between the qualification needs identified and the training programs offered by organizations today reveal large gaps in every topic area. Approximately 40 per cent of all organizations run public speaking, presentation and coaching programs, but no other issue is dealt with by more than one out of five organizations. This leaves a broad range of possibilities for improvement.

PR GAP studies at the Annenberg Strategic Communication and Public Relations Center

The University of Southern California (USA) Annenberg School Strategic Communication and Public Relations Center recently published its seventh biennial Communication and Public Relations Generally Accepted Practices (GAP VII) study. This year's report is the largest and most comprehensive study querying the most senior communicators in public and private corporations, government agencies and NGOs in the United States.

The survey provides practitioners with information they can use to better manage the communication functions in their organizations; identifies "best practices" against which practitioners can benchmark their own organizations, and pinpoints trends to be aware of as they plan for tomorrow.

The GAP VII study, in which 620 senior communicators participated, was conducted in cooperation with the country's four leading professional PR associations: the Arthur W. Page Society, the Institute for Public Relations (IPR), the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

Key findings included:

- **Budgets are, for the most part, up.** Public corporations on average reported higher public relations/communications (PR/Comm) budgets than respondents did two years ago.

- **Measurement and evaluation are on the rise.** Corporations report an increase from 4 to 9 percent in the portion of their total budgets allocated to measurement and evaluation of PR/Comm programs. This pronounced rise speaks to widespread adoption of social media monitoring tools and increasing use of primary research in program planning and evaluation.

- **How you measure is linked to success.** While companies have distinctly different approaches to PR/Comm measurement, those measures tend to group into two categories: "outcomes" and "outputs." Companies utilizing outcomes measures such as influence on stakeholder attitudes and opinions, the bottom line, etc. are much more likely to say they have a good external reputation and are successful than are companies that rely on traditional PR output measures such as clips, impressions and advertising equivalency.

- **PR/COM has its seat at the table.** In nearly 60 percent of responding companies, PR/COM reports directly to the "C-Suite" (chairman, CEO, COO, etc.), reflecting today's increasingly transparent, communication-intensive environment.

- **Social media have become mainstream.** Seventy percent of PR/Comm departments report budgetary responsibility for social media monitoring and 66 percent for social media participation. This reflects a 17 percent and 13 percent growth, respectively, over two years ago. Further reflecting a shift to Web 2.0 communication is a rise in PR/Comm responsibility for search engine optimization (SEO). However, PR/Comm departments appear to be taking on increased social media responsibilities without additional budget.

- **Some social media tools are hotter than others.** The most widely used social media tools by corporations are social networking sites (i.e. Facebook is used by 5 percent of public companies), micro blogging (i.e. Twitter, also used by 53 percent of public companies), Search Engine Optimization (52 percent), and sharing and producing online videos. Meanwhile, the use of wikis and virtual worlds has become nearly extinct.

- **The PR/Comm field is expanding to include new functions.** In addition to growth in social media the PR/COM field is experiencing growth in the areas of internal communication (up from 47 to 58 percent of respondents having such responsibility over the last two years) and customer relations (up from 6 to 15 percent).

- **Marketing/product PR is in a state of decline.** While still a "core" function with 51 percent of corporate respondents having budgetary responsibility for it (versus 61 percent in 2009), there has been a substantial decrease in the emphasis on traditional marketing/product PR. This could be attributable to an increasing reliance on social media to promote products.

- **Agency-of-record relationships are vanishing.** Over the last 10 years, the use by client organizations of a single outside PR agency of record (AOR) has consistently decreased. In 2002, more than 50 percent of public corporations reported an AOR relationship. This number decreased continuously and has now shrunk to just over 15 percent. At the same time, the number of agencies used by corporations on an ongoing or project basis continues to increase. This is likely the result of a need for specialized and/or regionally focused agency services.

The GAP VII study report is available for free download at the USC Annenberg Strategic

Communication and Public Relation Center's (SCPRC) web site annenberg.usc.edu/gapstudy. The

same location hosts the GAP VII Insight Base, a comprehensive online catalog of detailed findings. This

is where PR/communications practitioners can gain insight into specific topics that are of interest to their

organizations.

Building Belief: The Arthur Page Society

http://www.awpagesociety.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Building-Belief_Executive-Summary.pdf

In the following monograph, *Building Belief*, the Arthur W. Page Society proposes a point of view on the future of enterprise communications, offered not as a finished construct, but as a hypothesis, intended to spark further research, exploration and refinement.

The Page Society's thinking has been shaped by the Society's research over the past five years, beginning with its 2007 publication, *The Authentic Enterprise*. The long-term goal of this new model is to offer practical guidance to chief communications officers—as well as other leaders responsible for communications, including chief marketing officers and chief human resources officers—in helping their organizations succeed in a radically different 21st century environment. Building Belief describes a model for chief communication officers (CCOs) within organizations.

The Model

Building Belief describes two important new dimensions of the CCO's role, each of which is grounded in the creation of shared belief:

1.The definition and activation of corporate character. Corporate character refers to the enterprise's unique identity, its differentiating purpose, mission and values. Management of corporate character involves *the integration of the organization's reputation and culture*. In an age of unprecedented transparency, "*how* we are is *who* we are," as one CCO interviewed for this study describes it.

The CCO has two responsibilities in managing corporate character: definition and activation.

Corporate character may be defined by history

 – imprinted by the founder of the enterprise, shaped and refined by decades of corporate life. It may also be recast by current management and employees in response to new realities, such as a long-term change in corporate strategy, a merger or spin-off or a significant crisis. In any case, the definition is foundational to the enterprise. It must include the enterprise's enduring purpose – what it exists uniquely to do in the world – as well as the values and principles that guide the daily decisions and behavior of everyone associated with it.

Activation is the never-ending work of ensuring that the enterprise behaves in a manner consistent with its stated character. The New Model proposes a framework for determining whether the company *looks like, sounds like, thinks like and performs like* its stated character. This framework has implications for new ways in which the CCO should collaborate with his or her C-suite peers – since dimensions of this

construct necessarily involve management responsibilities outside the domain of the CCO as it has traditionally been defined.

2. The building of advocacy at scale. Never have word-of-mouth and peer-to-peer influence been more ubiquitous or powerful. Billions of individuals now have the means to share their experiences, opinions and ideas – and to organize for action – at scale. They are revealing and generating unprecedented amounts of data about themselves. This has profound implications for CCOs and their functions. They must become adept at extracting actionable insights from what some are calling the "Big Data" era. But arguably the importance of this phenomenon has less to do with social networks and other technologies than with how and why individuals advocate. Simply put, they are motivated to do so when they have genuinely realized the value of their *decision* to buy from, work for, invest in or otherwise decide in favor of the enterprise.

(The converse is also true.)

Therefore, this aspect of the New Model differs from prevailing communications models in at least two important respects. First, it is aimed at how an enterprise engages *individuals*, in addition to audiences, publics or segments of populations. Second, its goal is not merely to shape the opinion, sentiment and perception of those individuals, but to spur them to action, continuing behavior and *advocacy*.

Unlocking the power of advocacy at scale requires an understanding of how people make decisions. The New Model draws on insights from the fields of behavioral and cognitive science. They suggest a pattern for the creation of authentic advocacy

This pattern begins with the building of

shared belief with decision-makers – customers, investors, employees, citizens. This is different from

raising awareness or delivering information.

That belief leads these constituents to

act – to make a purchase, accept a job, invest their money, support a policy, etc.

Those actions, when successful, give people

confidence in the decisions they have made, and turn actions into ongoing behaviors.

When those behaviors strengthen someone's feelings of agency and purpose, this can generate self-

motivated

advocacy – fueling a virtuous cycle, as these advocates build shared belief among new decision-

makers.

Implications for the CCO

The work described in Building Belief expands the roles of organizational communications.

The CCO must now be:

- **An integrator** – working across the C-suite to

  make the company "think like" and "perform like" its corporate character.

- **A systems designer** – not only systems of

  marketing and communications, but of how these relate to the company's operations and

  management systems.

- **A master of data analytics** – to understand

  customers, employees, investors, citizens and other stakeholders as individuals rather than publics,

  audiences and segments of populations.

- **A publisher and developer** – the same tools

  of information production that are in the hands of the masses are also available to the CCO, who

  can directly inform, empower and equip targeted individuals.

- **A student of behavioral science** – to inform

  the shaping of belief, action, behavior and advocacy.

- **A curator of corporate character** – to ensure

  that the company's communications and its people remain true to their core identity.

Source: The Arthur W. Page's Society, Building Belief, March 2012

The Page Society believes that this new model represents a contemporizing of Arthur W. Page's foundational tenets on public relations. That should not be surprising. The Page Philosophy and Page Principles hold renewed relevance in a world of newly empowered customers, investors, employees and a general public that demands authenticity of businesses and institutions as a prerequisite for establishing and maintaining a relationship with them.

Getting Started

To provide leadership in defining and activating corporate character, the CCO should:

1. Initiate	2. Apply	3. Partner	4. Examine
Initiate a cross-C-suite effort to **define or reaffirm the enterprise's corporate character**—ensuring the corporate character includes the enterprise's unique, enduring and differentiating purpose, mission and values.	Apply the **"Looks Like" framework** to assess whether the organization consistently enacts and expresses its corporate character.	Partner with appropriate leaders in the enterprise to **systematically address gaps and deepen strengths.**	**Examine measurement and listening instruments** and revise or augment as needed to provide ongoing feedback and sensing.

To assert leadership in building advocacy at scale, the CCO should:

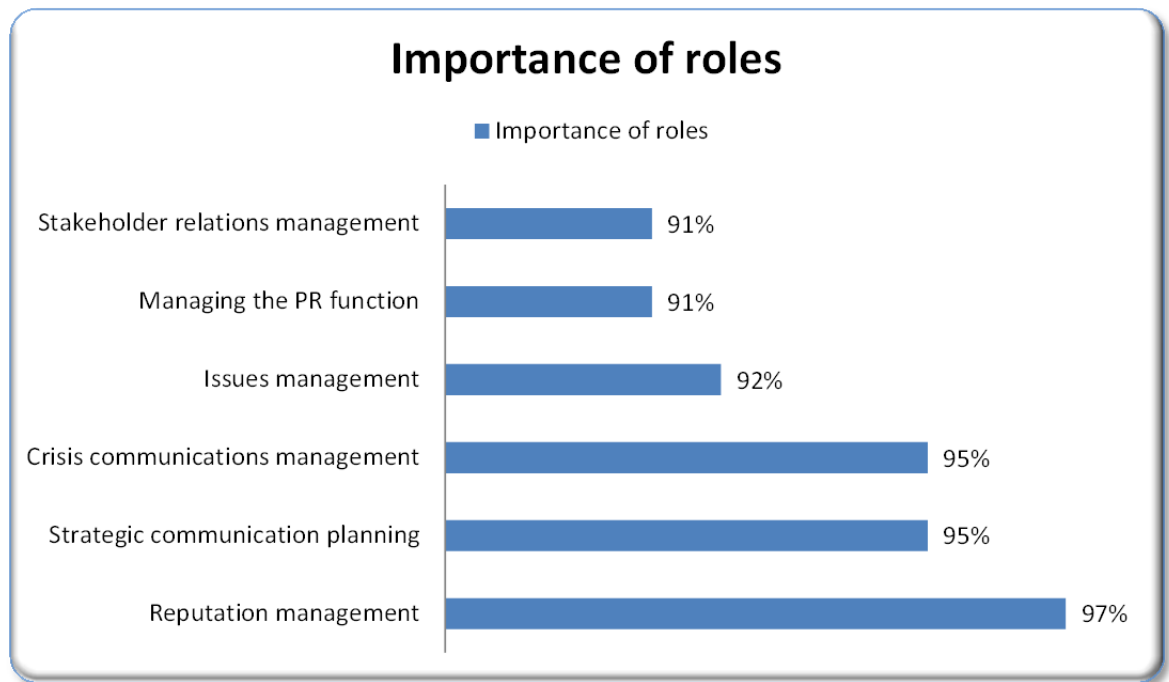| 1. Assess	2. Build	3. Establish	4. Engage
Assess communications strategy and programs against the authentic advocacy aspect of the model. • Ensure that programs are aimed at individuals, as well as publics and segments of populations. • Ensure the programs are aimed at spurring them to act and to advocate, in addition to shaping their perceptions and opinions.	**Build expertise and capabilities in data analytics** into communications planning and programs. • Work with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) to put into place the necessary tools and infrastructure to capture and accurately interpret enterprise and social data. • Use data to detect trends and sentiment and to understand stakeholders as unique individuals.	Establish the capacity to create **"owned media"**– information, knowledge, apps, etc.–and to distribute this content directly to targeted individuals through modern channels, including social networks and smart devices. • Leverage data to personalize and tailor communications and engagement to enhance relevance.	Engage the C-suite in establishing progressive **social business policies, programs and management systems.**

GAP analysis research on competencies

Colleen Killingsworth, MCM, APR, ABC, FCPRS, APR, Fellow CPRS, conducted a 2010 survey of executive perspectives on communication leader competencies and credentials as part of her Masters of Communications Management capstone research (unpublished) at McMaster University.

The goal of her study was to look at executives' understanding of the competence and credentials of their PR and communications managers. The research was focused on the management and leadership areas as a way to validate the direction that the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS) has taken towards offering curriculum standards to education institutions.

The co-authors of this Global Alliance report deemed Killingsworth's study important because of its focus on the variance of perceptions between managers and practitioners of the importance of various PR/communications professional competencies. Primary industries represented in this research were health care, energy, NGOs and manufacturing.

Importance of the roles and responsibilities of the communications manager:

Importance of roles

■ Importance of roles

Role	Percentage
Stakeholder relations management	91%
Managing the PR function	91%
Issues management	92%
Crisis communications management	95%
Strategic communication planning	95%
Reputation management	97%

The study then looked at a comparison of what executives value (importance level they place on certain competencies) and how their PR and communications managers demonstrate a working knowledge of those competencies.

There were significant variances between managers' perceptions of importance and specific competencies PR/communications practitioners identified as in need of attention in these three areas:

- Financial reporting and accounting

- Budgeting, managing team processes

- Negotiation

These results speak to the importance of business acumen among PR/communications professionals that has been documented by other research, and identified a real opportunity for programming and professional development around the business acumen skills.

The ideal communicator

The ideal senior communicator profile (copyright CK Communications - -reprinted with permission) was one outcome of this study:

With the ongoing call for transparency and corporate ethics, and the need to serve as a trusted advisor to senior management, senior communicators need to have a solid understanding of how businesses operate and make money, as well as a working knowledge of the organizations they represent. One participant stated: "It is just as important that we understand how a business runs, not just about communicating. Our job is to help companies be more successful."

According to Matha and Bohem (2008) "if communicators have a good understanding of how the company works, they will be able to counsel top management to provide value in the decision-making process."

Study participants agreed that senior communicators need to:

- *Understand financial reporting*

- *Disclosure policies*

- *Managing budgets*

- *Understanding how the budget of the communications office relates to the budgets of other departments and how it all feeds up to the financial health of the company*

Other competencies participants believed the ideal communicator should have included:

- *Good listening skills*

- *Good communication skills, written, verbal and visual*

- *Ability to synthesize and present communication concepts succinctly so senior management can make a decision*

- *Strategic thinker, communicator, striving to understand the bigger picture, ability to see things from a 30,000 foot level and from 360 degrees*

- *Able to build and leverage strategic partnerships to the advantage of the team.*

- *Leadership and management skills*

- *Coaching skills, a natural mentor*

- *Evaluation research*

- *Political acumen*

- *Good understanding of two-way communications, including social media*

- *Provide good service delivery*

- *Collaboration skills*

- *Sensitive to cultural diversity, understanding of how to communicate across cultures*

Attributes participants believed the ideal communicator should possess include:

- *Adaptable*

- *Diplomatic*

- *Passionate, has a vision*

- *Good work ethic, commitment*

- *Professional appearance*

- *Principles of influencer, 'you don't' have to be at the table, you have to BE the table"*

- *Highly credible, able to build trust*

- *Able to get along with people and build relationships, strong face-to-face communication style*

- *Self-confidence, have the courage of their convictions and are willing to step outside their comfort zone*

- *Thirst for knowledge, commitment to the life-long learning and professional development*

- *Integrity, conduct themselves in an ethical manner, being an honest broker*

- *Commitment to volunteerism and involvement in the community*

One participant in this study summed up the ideal as "a third of it for me is skills, a third is character, and a third is being strategic."

Summary: study findings and analysis

Corporate external relations has entered a new stage of development, now addressing – and to a degree, contributing to – epic changes in society and stakeholder expectations.

Initiatives such as the stakeholder management model, the application of social media and the evolving business model of corporate social responsibility/sustainable development all manifest this newest commitment to excellence in corporate external relations.

The role of the Chief Communications Officer (CCO) has changed significantly in the past decade, adapting to several forces that shape modern society. This trend of constant adaptation and evolution is likely to continue and possibly accelerate.

The once dominant model of persuasion using mostly one-way communication is still evident but what is somewhat surprising is that some of the world's largest multinationals are now shifting their model to align with stakeholder engagement objectives as the dominant aspect of their work. Under the global relationship governance model, organizations attempt to develop effective relationships with their publics in order to change themselves and their publics towards to adopt attitudes and opinions and most importantly behaviors that are consistent with the objectives of both parties and involving continued dialogue, involvement and engagement.

> The stakeholder relationship models are transforming corporate cultures and engagement strategies. Indeed, some companies see it as "the way" to conduct business with stakeholders and believe it is central to their business goals. This suggests that the two-way symmetrical model of practice is now in the process of being implemented in organizations.

The co-authors of this Global Alliance report found evidence that social media are both enablers of this transformation and a powerful public relations strategy now part of mainstream public relations work. Social media are not yet replacing traditional public relations activities but are an essential component of any PR campaign and corporate communication activities. The prevalent and ubiquitous use of social media is moving organizations closer to the two-way symmetrical model of practice. And when analyzing the GAP studies and the Arthur Page model, the co-authors found many consistent themes that support this shift to two-way communication.

This study also illustrates the many similarities between the selected corporate participants. Major companies are hungry for measurement techniques that include "one voice" measurement of traditional and social media, as well as reputation indexes and custom studies, particularly those offered by the Reputation Institute. Most multinationals manage the public relations function in a matrix or hybrid model of markets and business lines with strong central corporate functions.

Researchers seek the perfect way to measure public relations efforts and the practice is keen to have standards and to see a consensus on measurement emerge. The Global Alliance and the Institute for Public Relations Research in particular are engaged in an effort to come up with an effective global

standard in measurement which would guide the PR/communications industry. Failure to do so will lead to corporate entities developing their own disparate models.

This study also revealed some differences in the way in which various public relations and communications functions are managed. Some companies have a decentralized model with corporate committees to manage important aspects of the business such as branding and visual identity. Others prefer to have PR/communications centralized in corporate headquarters as a staff function. The use of information technology and software programs is primarily customized to suit the operating environment and the priorities and preferences of senior management at each company.

The Global Alliance's seven core competencies measured are no longer sufficient to meet the needs of modern business based on the findings of this research. Indeed, non-core competencies such as stakeholder management and measurement are fast becoming the norm and expectation in many organizations. The GA should consider issuing guidance to the administrators of the APR and ABC programs.

Excellence in public relations requires more than systems, methods and practices. It begins with an open and transparent culture and a co-operative approach to the stewardship of all corporate functions where the public relations senior staff are integrated into the decision-making process of the organization and truly act as the guardians of reputation. Focusing the leader's attention on a culture of openness, empowerment, support and training, respect and dialogue is perhaps of greater or at least equal importance.

Companies that excel, or are seen to excel, in at least one area of PR have achieved this success by introducing discipline in focusing on and aligning activities with business goals. One of the companies interviewed introduced a mandatory work planning and event-recording tool, an application program to facilitate the alignment of all "touches" with target publics.

Hierarchy notwithstanding, a key to PR/communications success is a harmonious relationship with other units in the organization and recognition that the head of communications should have influence with other departments that manage functions affecting the reputation of the organization such as government relations, investor relations, marketing and community outreach.

In one of the companies interviewed, almost all business decisions go through the head of communications for a sensitivity analysis. This is achieved not only because the head of the service is a member of the senior management committee but because the CEO believes that almost all decisions have a public relations implication and insists that the head of communications be consulted.

Measurement of the effectiveness of PR activities, particularly "share of voice," is now established as a key corporate result in many organizations. PR departments have a wide berth in choosing which Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to use and aggregate towards corporate results measurement. Indeed some companies are using KPI targets in PR as part of compensation-related agreements with PR/communications staff.

Corporate social responsibility, also referred to as sustainable development, is often under the stewardship of corporate external relations/public relations and is becoming an especially effective way to improve corporate reputation. Essentially, it has been described as "finding the balance between profitability and responsibility." Companies interviewed in this study represent their many counterparts in undertaking a broad spectrum of programs that integrate pursuit of business and social progress.

The Global Alliance believes this study, arguably the first of its kind, will be of interest to a spectrum of audiences – business executives, investors, employees, educators and their students, NGOs, community leaders and government officials. Clearly a sample of case histories cannot necessarily represent global businesses. Nevertheless, the case studies offer a basis – and perhaps even a portal via its producers, Enel and The Global Alliance For Public Relations and Communication Management – for ongoing documentation of the important progress being made at the interface of business and society.

In the spirit of the times, we invite participation in that mission.

Appendix

Global Alliance For Public Relations and Communication Management: Committed to developing public relations professional standards

Background on personal credentials and competency excellence

The Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management (GA) was formed in 2000 with a vision to unite the profession and, among other pursuits, explore world standards in public relations. The members of the GA are organizations and associations that advocate for and/or train PR professionals around the world. Representing more than 160,000 professionals around the globe, it is the largest professional body in public relations in the world.

The area of personal credentials or accreditation was one of the "world standards" that the GA decided to analyze as early as 2001.

In 2001, the Global Alliance commissioned and approved a report, prepared under the leadership of Margaret Moscardi from the Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa and other colleagues, on the accreditation programs of professional associations in member countries. The *Moscardi Report* (2001-2005) described, and commented on, the various professional credential programs in existence that assesses and attest to the necessary and desirable attributes of public relations and communications practitioners in GA member countries.

Among other things, the report found that a core group of countries was awarding an Accredited in Public Relations (APR) professional designation. Recently added to the *Moscardi Report* are details of the Accredited Business Communicator (ABC) program. The ABC program is administered by the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), which has 14,000 members in more than 70 countries. The *Moscardi Report* also found that several other programs exist that assess members' professional credentials for reasons other than accreditation, such as admission to membership. All programs said their goal is evaluating the knowledge, skills, abilities and ethical standards of public relations and communications specialists.

The GA Board requested further analysis of the various programs delivered by the professional associations identified in the *Moscardi Report* (revised March 2007). In particular, the GA sought information on the core competencies that credentialing programs seek to assess in awarding their respective professional designations and/or membership, and the different perspectives of each of the evaluation systems.

Having received the report in the Fall of 2007 and subsequently endorsing it at its 2008 annual meeting, the GA's ultimate goal was reached: to establish a common set of core competencies that are used to assess candidates in awarding professional/membership designations in public relations and communications among its member countries and associations.

It is important to note that there are literally dozens of PR and management skills and knowledge areas that are measured under these seven core competencies. The seven competencies were found to be universally measured and tested in awarding professional designations such as the APR or the ABC or,

as in the case of the CIPR in the UK, as a condition of obtaining the accredited member status, one way to set the bar high right at the outset of membership. Indeed more associations may be choosing to use the UK model to admit members and thereby recognize their professional competence. The GA study was accurate at the time the report was presented in 2008.

All other associations using credentials as a means to distinguish certain members from others offer their examination process as a voluntary offer after a member has joined and can demonstrate that he/she has practiced public relations for more than five years.

There are 15 associations offering the "Accredited in Public Relations" (APR) credential and one offering the "Accredited in Business Communication" (ABC) credentials. Those offering the APR credential are:

- Canadian Public Relations Society

- Institute of Public Relations in Malaysia

- Institute of Public Relations of Singapore

- Public Relations Institute of Australia

- Public Relations Institute of New Zealand

- Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa

- Universal Accreditation Board comprised of:

    o Agricultural Relations Council

    o Asociación de Relacionistas Profesionales de Puerto Rico

    o Florida Public Relations Association

    o Maine Public Relations Council

    o National School Public Relations Association

- o   Public Relations Society of America

- o   Religion Communicators Council

- o   Southern Public Relations Federation

- o   Texas Public Relations Association

The International Association of Business Communicators offers the "Accredited in Business Communication" (ABC) credential to its members.

A majority of the organizations that offer the APR or ABC also offer a senior designation such as the "Fellow" category. The GA report did not analyze the competencies required to reach that more senior level of credential. Typically it is awarded after analysis of an individual's career over 20 years or more and candidates must demonstrate that they have made significant contributions to the profession.

Behind the curtain of accreditation

Despite the comprehensiveness of the GA reports on credentials, not much was known before now about how the 16 associations that accredit individuals based on measurement of these competencies. The creation of a knowledge center or a community of practice section on a protected portion of the GA site provided some insights on the way into the ways the associations measure the seven competencies. Without revealing any secrets that might provide an unfair advantage to current and potential candidates, the following information can be gleaned which is important to the objectives of this report:

- All examination processes are extremely thorough in assessing the competencies. The process is indeed rigorous and challenging as demonstrated by the depth and breadth of questions and the sustained level of examination usually over a one-year period.

- Access to accreditation programs is limited to those who have at least five years of experience, and are members of their respective national associations or chapters of IABC.

- Candidates who successfully obtain their APR or ABC can present their professional competencies to a prospective or current employer with a high degree of confidence.

- Ethics, which several recent studies rated as very important, is a constant in all examination processes with hypothetical questions that are complex and based on "real life".

- The quality of writing and oral presentation also is tested in the process as well as the analytical considerations and thought processes of the candidates.

- Candidates' knowledge of current affairs also is tested in these examination processes, which ensure that holders of the APR or ABC are current in the ever-changing public relations environment.

- The typical accreditation process is a three-stage process. First a work sample is presented and judged by a panel of accredited professionals. This is a pass/fail stage. If the candidate is admitted to the next stage, he or she will proceed to a written examination that is usually time-limited. The questions are challenging and complex, thereby testing the candidate's ability to quickly analyze and prioritize competing issues and providing a plan of appropriate actions.

The last stage consists of an oral interview, again with a panel. This stage is designed to allow the candidate to demonstrate persuasiveness and his/her understanding of their public relations profession.

- Several associations which offer accreditation programs have set up maintenance programs whereby holders of a designation are invited (the process is voluntary in many cases) to demonstrate how their have kept up their training, readings or their involvement in the profession. A minimum number of credits often is required to maintain the currency of the designation.

- In addition to the seven core competencies, the GA's analysis of how the examinations are conducted revealed that several important areas appear to have gained momentum in recent years, in terms of focus and importance. These are:
    - Stakeholder relationships and management
    - Business skills such as the understanding of finance, HR and conflict resolution
    - Judgment and behaviors in the workplace
    - Social media skills and strategy

- There is evidence to suggest that current examinations include questions or components that ensure that the process stays current as these trends continue to evolve.

Acknowledgments

The co-authors and the Global Alliance for Public

Relations and Communications Management (GA)

wish to acknowledge the sponsorship provided by

Enel towards the general support of the GA and

more specifically towards the completion of this study.

We are also grateful for the advice and contributions of Mr. Toni Muzi Falconi, founder of Methodos,

a past chair of FERPI and past chair of the Global Alliance, and to Mr. Mateus Furlanetto, director at

ABERJE in Brazil and also a board member of the GA.

We also want to acknowledge the editing of this report by Dr. Judy VanSlyke Turk, APR, Fellow PRSA,

a professor at Virginia Commonwealth University. Without their support and efforts as well as those of

the GA Centre in Lugano, Switzerland, we could not have completed this project.

Contact information

The Global Alliance leadership is always interested in receiving suggestions for additional service to the global public relations community.

For suggestions and discussion, please contact:

Daniel Tisch, Global Alliance Chair, dtisch@argylecommunications.com
Anne Gregory, Global Alliance Chair-Elect, a.gregory@leedsmet.ac.uk
Bill Murray, Global Alliance Treasurer, william.murray@prsa.org
Catherine Arrow, Global Alliance Secretary, catherine.arrow@gmail.com
Nina Volles, Global Alliance Chief Administration Officer, nina.volles@usi.ch