

*Public  
Relations  
in  
Management*

WRIGHT &  
CHRISTIAN

*PUBLIC RELATIONS IN MANAGEMENT*

# Public Relations in Management

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# Preface

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James P. Selvage, a widely respected "public relations counsel," told a group of his contemporaries in a memorable address in New York a few months ago that American business, after passing through four distinct periods of growth, was now entering the fifth.

The first stage, said Mr. Selvage, was that of the production man, the builder and inventor who knew how to produce something that people could use. The second stage was that of the financier who brought together the collective capital to enable industry to grow. The third stage was the era of governmental regulation through the Sherman and Clayton acts to insure continued operation of industry in the public interest. The fourth stage was the one that brought the salesman into the ascendancy, the era of spreading markets and intense competition.

Of the fifth stage, Mr. Selvage had this to say: "I affirm with confidence that tomorrow belongs to the man who thinks in terms of the public—the public embracing his employees, his stockholders, his customers, his neighbors surrounding his factories, often the national body politic—and his government. These are the groups that are going to take a lot of pleasing in the years that are just around the corner. These are the publics about whose relations to industry modern business leadership is giving the most intense thought."

Mr. Selvage's words are quoted here because they express as well as anything the authors could devise the thought which motivated this book. The acceptance of this belief by thinking people is reflected in the increasing number of courses now being offered in leading universities to give the student a better appreciation of a subject whose importance is just beginning to dawn upon us.

Public relations, as noted in the closing chapter of this book, is so basically simple and so easily attainable that it is difficult to see why it is subject to such a wide variety of interpretations. One measure of its soundness lies in the fact that it has survived the many crimes which have been committed in its name, for the term has been used as an umbrella to cover everything from circus press-agentry to the manipulations of lobbies on Capitol Hill. In the public mind it is often confused with propaganda, promotion, and plain ballyhoo.

This book takes the view that public relations is primarily good business management, directed from the top but involving every person within or connected with an organization. Moreover, we hold that public relations can and should be planned on a long-term, constructive basis, the same as any other phase of sound business management.

This book has been prepared with a dual purpose in mind. It is designed to serve as a textbook for the student who hopes to make a career in the field. It is written also as a guide to the executive and supervisor in American business and industry whose decisions can contribute so much to the public relations of the cause or enterprise each represents.

The authors have been guided throughout by the twin principles of simplicity and practicality. It was recognized that a book aimed at supervisory and executive personnel must bear the same critical scrutiny that these key members of American industry apply to any other production or management suggestion. The suggestions contained in this book stem from a background of industrial experience and application.

Each of the authors is indebted to many people for the friendly advice and help in the preparation of this volume. Byron Christian wants to express his appreciation to the fellow members of the faculty of the U.S. Air Force Public Relations School, particularly to Col. William P. Nuckols, its first director, and to Maj. Jack Hewson and Capt. Marvin O. Alexander. He is also grateful for the help of Prof. H. P. Everest, Director of the University of Washington School of Journalism, and Prof. Vernon McKenzie, a member of the staff.

## PREFACE

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J. Handly Wright wants to thank the many members of the public relations profession, almost too numerous to mention, who cooperated by furnishing information, statistics, and case histories that are incorporated in this volume. For their patient reading and helpful suggestions he wants particularly to thank the members of his own staff—especially James E. McKee for his critical assistance on the chapter on Community Relations, Watt Dwyer and John Hawn for their careful checking and many helpful suggestions on the industrial relations references in the book, and Dan J. Forrestal for his over-all assistance in clarification and general presentation. Finally, to Miss Estelle Matthaei and to Miss Eva Stringer, secretaries and general assistants to Mr. Wright, for their work in typing, proofreading, and indexing the book, go the thanks of both authors.

Both authors also want to express publicly their appreciation to the many persons whose words are quoted at the head of each chapter and in the text of the book.

Throughout the book, the term “public relations” is used as a singular noun.

J. HANDLY WRIGHT  
BYRON H. CHRISTIAN

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