

# In-house vs. external counsel

- In-house PR:
  - Dedicated department or unit
  - Informal team
- External counsel:
  - Specialised or generalist agency

# Establishing a PR dept

- Position on chart & relation to top management often related to origin
- Example: from low-level communication support function to integral part of management team

Cutlip, Center & Broom

# Retaining outside counsel

- May also begin in unexpected ways
- Success in follow-up may lead to continuing & expanding relationship
- May pay monthly retainer fee + special projects (agreed hourly or fixed fee)
- May have very close client-agency relationship
- Risk of friction (availability, charges)

# PR starts with top management

- Organisation's reputation derives substantial part from behaviour of senior officials
  - PR staff provide counsel & communication support
- Examples: Perrier, Exxon, TWA, Johnson & Johnson, Texaco
- PR credibility starts with management's integrity & socially responsible actions

# Conditions for long-term success

- Commitment to & participation in PR
- Retention of competent PR counsel
- Incorporation of PR perspectives in policy making
- Two-way communication with both internal & external publics
- Coordination of what is done with what is said
- Clearly defined goals & objectives

*Perhaps in more than any other relationship among senior executives in a company, the chemistry that exists between the CEO and the senior public relations executive is most critical. If things are working as they should, the public relations person is given the unique opportunity to become the CEO's "loyal opposition," the one who, behind closed doors, can say, "If you do this, you are making a huge mistake."*

Former head of PR at J&J

# Staff role

- PR = staff function that advises & supports line managers who have responsibility & authority to run the organisation
- Line-staff management model
  - Line functions include product- and profit-producing functions (engineering, production, marketing)
  - Staff functions advise & assist line executives (finance, legal, HR, PR)

# What management can expect from PR staff

- Loyalty
- Counsel on PR aspects of decisions
- Skill in articulating principles & in enhancing public understanding of the organisation
- Inspiration to help all members do their best
- Influence in restraining other members from saying or doing anything detrimental to organisation's welfare
- Character – honesty, trustworthiness, discretion

# What PR can expect from line management

- Positive PR leadership
- Support of approved communication policy
- Strategic plans embracing all policies & programmes
- Adequate budget to do the job, including funds for adequate public opinion research, analysis & programme evaluation
- Reasonable availability for consultation & for public appearances