

A Career in Public Relations

Come explore a career that combines professionalism and precision with an outgoing personality and public involvement. Gain insight into public relations and determine whether or not a career in this field interests you.



Skills and Duties

Your primary responsibility as a public relations specialist will be to build and maintain positive relationships with the public while representing the company for whom you work.

Your duties may include:

- Conducting or attending meetings
- Creating presentations
- Conducting research
- Delivering speeches
- Setting up speaking engagements
- Maintaining contacts
- Answering questions

You will create:

- Press releases
- Speeches
- Newsletters
- Fact Sheets
- Reports

To become a successful public relations specialist you must be able to:

- Communicate effectively
- Learn quickly
- Work well under pressure
- Motivate others
- Resolve conflicts
- Multitask
- Pay attention to detail

Salary

There is a wide range of salaries within the public relations field. The industries that hire the greatest number of public relations specialists within the United States are advertising, business, education, and local government. Within these industries, a public relations specialist can expect a salary between \$42,000 and \$60,000 (Bureau 2006). The Bureau of Labor and Statistics lists the average salary for a public relations specialist at \$53,760 per year. Nile Easton, Senior Public Information Officer for Utah Department of Transportation, suggests looking into the private sector for jobs with salaries over \$100,000.

Job Outlook

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, there are not enough entry-level jobs within public relations to employ the number of new college graduates. To become more sought-after within the job market, a student must be willing to take an internship, often with little or no pay. There are, however, quite a few jobs available for those with previous experience. Public relations specialists will find that with five or more years of experience, the job opportunities dramatically increase. Employment in public relations, especially referring to management, "is expected to grow faster than average for all occupations through 2014" (Bureau 2007).

Requirements

To be considered for a career in public relations, you must have a degree in journalism, communications, public relations or a similar field. You must also have experience working with computer programs, such as:

- Graphics design software
- Database design software
- Web authoring software
- Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, etc.

All public relations specialists must have excellent writing skills and strong editing skills. Some jobs require experience in journalism. Not all jobs require journalistic writing, but knowledge of a professional writing style is helpful.

Recommendations

- Learn web design and graphics design.
- Create an impressive portfolio.
- Take a course in conflict management.
- Gain experience in journalism – consider writing for your school paper.
- Work as an intern. This is the most important thing you will do for your career in public relations.

Works cited

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