

What is a personal public relations campaign? Well, I believe to be successful in business, particularly a people focused business such as Network Marketing, You need to build effective "relationships" with your "public". Personal PR is essentially communication – it's communicating not only what you do and who you are, but the essence of you – your personality. So people will like you and want to have that "relationship" with you and your product!

This extract from the book 'Apprentice to Business ACE' gives you an overview of planning a public relations campaign to help influence potential customers, and the step-by-step method professional consultants use when working with major clients. This guide can be used for an effective personal PR campaign to help build a communication strategy around your success goals:

1. The situation. Take a snap shot of where you are now and explore the issue or opportunity that you want to communicate. Some examples could be: that you want to make No.1 sales director in your company - that you have a great story that you want to tell the media about - or that you're moving interstate and want to establish a new circle of contacts.

To give you an example, I recently released my book, and created a PR campaign to create awareness of it. So my "opportunity" was to generate some publicity and book sales, but also to reinforce my brand, my work, and to ultimately boost my bottom line profits.

2. Desired outcomes. What are your communication aims and objectives? We all know about goal setting, and it's the same with our communication plan. If we articulate what we're after, we're more likely to achieve it – but we need to be SMART about it. That is: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely. You need to write a detailed statement of what you really want to achieve: with as much information as possible.

So, for example, it could be: to achieve 50% extra sales by June 30 - to achieve three print articles in the media by April 1 - to hold a special presentation on November 1, 2008, attracting thirty prospects. These are detailed statements. They have a timeframe, they are very specific and articulate exactly what it is you're trying to achieve.

3. Research. What do I already know? What you would like to know? How are you going to learn it? What websites do you need to look up? Check out your competition! Maybe, something more formal like a survey or questionnaire will help you understand the situation better, and work out the best way to communicate your message. Perhaps survey people in the street to get some information to work with?

4. Audience. Who is your target public – your market? And how are you going to reach them? As an example, consider a personal PR campaign to attract 30 potential customers – who would you need to target? Perhaps professional men between the ages of 25-40? Or, women under 50 and living within a 10 km radius of the CBD? Really define whom you want to reach.

There are also influencers you need to include on your list. These are people or organizations that have an influence on your target audience. So, if your target market is men of a certain age, look at sporting organizations where they may be members, or business networking events that they may attend. The media is one of the strongest influencers and will help get to your target market, so you need to include them on this list. What magazines and websites does your target audience access? Where do they get their information?

5. Niche. What is your uniqueness or point of difference? What makes you stand apart from the rest? Develop your own strong personal brand. Concentrate on owning one thing in the mind of your target audience. Alan Pease is body language, Robert Kiyosaki is money, Volvo is safety and Kylie Minogue is the Princess of Pop. You need to differentiate yourself from the others. Spend some time really determining your unique characteristics and coming up with a Unique Shining Point that sets you apart.

6. Public Relations Strategies. Now it's time to let the world know who you are! Here you detail exactly how you are going to reach your target public with your message; how you are going to achieve the communication objective you've already set (those SMART goals).

There are many ways of communicating with a target public – here are a few:

• Publicity – it's important to understand what the media want if you are trying to gain free publicity. You need to realize that media is a business. It is the business of selling newspapers, television, Internet and radio programs. And to be successful and sell plenty of newspapers, the media need a good story. What makes a good story? For major media, it needs to be interesting, new, controversial, entertaining, sensational or exciting. You need to WOW them.

Your business or product may not be front-page news, but there are lots of other sections that may be suitable: the lifestyle pages, the beauty section, and the health supplement. And of course there are loads of industry and trade publications where information about you could be well placed.

So, send a media release any time you have something interesting happening. Follow it up with a phone call and build good relationships with journalists and editors.

Here are a few tips on how you can write your own media release and attract interest in you:

1. First and most important thing: have something interesting to say – include your Unique Shining Point.
2. Write a catchy headline with a short, punchy phrase.
3. Have a bright opening: start with your strongest point first.
4. For your content, include 5 Ws – What, When, Where, Who and Why.
5. Use memorable quotes.
6. Title it "Media Release" and always include