

Public relations is increasingly becoming an important part of management function.

Veena Gidwani tells you why PR is an attractive career option for those with the right mix of attitude and talent

WHAT IS PR?

Public Relations (PR) the communication discipline that helps organisations project themselves to their key target audiences, is increasingly becoming an important management function in today's highly com-

munication, Event management and a lot more. The PR industry employs about 8000 people today. The sustained year on year growth of the PR Industry has brought with it the need for more well-educated and trained PR professionals.

What makes PR an attractive career option?

- As a PR Practitioner, you play a vital role in building / enhancing the reputation / image of organisations. This exposes you to all facets of a business – manufacturing, technology, quality control, marketing, finance, human resources, training, social responsibility, legal etc. You are involved with constantly devising strategies to meet long term and short term communication needs.
- Since PR is all about Reputation Management, it ranks high on the agenda of Top Management. You interact with senior corporate executives, often at the top most levels at a relatively young age.
- A large dose of creativity is needed to make PR campaigns visible and impactful in today's competitive marketplace and cluttered media environment. This makes it necessary for you to think out of the box, keep abreast of changing trends, tastes, needs etc.
- PR exposes you to talented people across disciplines on a day-to-day basis – journalists, specialists like analysts, environmentalists, legal experts and many more.
- The PR industry offers opportunities for rapid growth to the young and talented. So with a couple of years of rigorous work experience and successful campaigns under your belt, you could be enjoying a responsible position, taking decisions that have long term impact and earning well too.

petitive business environment.

Corporates have realised the benefits of planned interaction with their customers, investors, employees, suppliers etc. Public relations helps them do this credibly, creatively and most effectively. PR is as an essential top management function with companies and organisations giving PR strategy and implementation as much importance as their financial or personnel policies.

GROWTH IN INDIA

The past decade has seen the PR profession in India grow rapidly with a large number of PR consultancies offering a host of services from Corporate and Brand PR to Investor Relations, Crisis Management, Internal Commu-

WHY A CAREER IN PR?

Public Relations as career can be challenging, exciting, stimulating, creative, demanding and above all very rewarding. Career opportunities exist both in PR Consultancies and in the Corporate Communications or Public Affairs departments of corporates. Working with Corporates would give you exposure to Brand and Corporate PR for the company, while working for a Public Relations Consultancy will give you exposure across industries.

PEOPLE

The people attracted to the world of PR vary from star-struck fashionistas to accounting majors. There is an amazing diversity of people, but for the most part, regardless of the industry or geography they are always



KICKSTART YOUR PR CAREER

“Public Relations is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.”

impressive.

Public relations officers can find employment in the corporate sector, public sector, government agencies, tourist agencies, hotels, banks and other financial institutions, private consultancy firms etc. Nowadays they can find work even with individuals like political figures, models and film stars who want their pictures, profiles and interviews published in magazines and need agents who can do the work for them so as to have an image in front of general public.

EDUCATION

One of the most refreshing elements of Public Relations is re-education. PR is a dynamic profession, it's always changing. This constant drive to map changing attitudes, behaviours and habits is invigorating. You simply never stop learning.

A bachelors degree in any discipline preferably with social sciences, liberal arts and humanities is a pre-requisite to do a course in this field. There are many institutes in Mumbai that offer diploma as well as post grad-

uate diploma courses in Public relations. Duration of most the courses is of one year. Apart from this there are also short term certificate courses. Most training programmes in Advertising also include public relations. Some institutes have entrance exams while others prefer admission on merit basis.

These courses mainly cover areas like public relations principles and techniques, public relations management and administration, including organisational development, writing, emphasising news releases, proposals, annual reports, scripts, speeches, and related items, visual communications, including desktop publishing and computer graphics, research, emphasising social science research and survey design and implementation.

SKILLS REQUIRED

While a career in PR brings excitement almost on a daily basis, it is a hard taskmaster. Long hours at work, research, reference work, patience, an ability to get along with people, tact, good writing skills are need-

INSTITUTES

School of Broadcasting & Communication, (Affiliated to Makhmal Chaturvedi National University of Journalism) Andhakshi Building, 37, Gilbert Hill Road, Near Bhavans College, Andheri (West), Mumbai - 400 058 India
PHONE: +91-22-2625 0608 / 09, Fax: +91-22-2625 0609.
WEBSITE: <http://www.sbc.ac.in>

COURSE(S) OFFERED: One month certificate course as well as a two year full-time Master's Degree In Journalism And Public Relations
ELIGIBILITY: Bachelors Degree from a recognised university.

K.C. College of Management Studies

K.C. College Building, Churchgate, Mumbai 400020
Course(s) Offered: Post Graduate Diploma In Public Relations
DURATION: One year
ELIGIBILITY: Graduation

Sophia College

Sophia College, Bhulabhai Desai Road, Mumbai 400026
Course(s) Offered: Post Graduate Diploma In Public Relations
DURATION: One year
ELIGIBILITY: Graduation

Xaviers Institute of Communication

St. Xaviers College Campus, Mahapalika Marg, Mumbai
Course(s) Offered: Post Graduate Diploma In Public Relations
DURATION: One year
ELIGIBILITY: Graduation

ed in large measure. PR is rewarding. Socially too, you can make a difference by promoting socially responsible causes, or influencing

legislation to improve health of the nation etc. And if you stick around long enough, it can be pretty rewarding financially as well.

The author is Chief Executive Officer, Madison Public Relations