



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE CODE : JLS 831

COURSE TITLE : CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

COURSE GUIDE

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COURSE TITLE: CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

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Introduction

JLS831 is a one-semester 3-credit unit course designed to equip you with knowledge of Corporate Communications, an umbrella term that describes sharing of knowledge, meaning and information *about* an organisation *with* its publics.

It is divided into five modules: the Integrated Communication Process, the Functions of Corporate Communications, The Audience of Corporate Communication; The Techniques of Corporate Communication; and Corporate Communication Campaigns. Each Module is further broken down into between 3 to 7 units depending on the scope of each Module. In all, you will go through 21 interesting Units!

Often, many students (sometimes, even professionals in the field) are confused on the meaning of Corporate Communications, how it is different from Public Relations or Public Affairs or even Marketing Communications and similar concepts/terms. If you carefully follow this Course Guide, you will readily distinguish these terms. In addition, you will have working knowledge of Corporate Communication; its components, functions and techniques.

What You Will Learn in this Course

The overall aim of **JLS831** is to enable the student understand the meaning, nature, components and importance of Corporate Communication to an organisation.

You may have learned in previous courses (such as *MAC 333 – PR in Commercial & Non-Commercial Organisations*; *MAC 425 – PR in Practice* and *MAC 432 – Integrated Marketing Communications*), aspects of how communication takes place within an organisation and between an organisation and its principal audiences (publics). Such background knowledge will enable you understand Corporate Communication more holistically.

The Course examines in detail how communication **about** the organisation is managed. **Public Relations** is the two-way mutually beneficial communication *between* an organisation and its strategic publics. **Corporate Communication** is that aspect of communication that focuses on the organisation (and not so much specifically about its products or services).

The Course provides answers to questions such as:

- What are the functional components of Corporate Communication?
- What are the audiences or publics of Corporate Communication?
- Which techniques are principally used in Corporate Communications?
- What is the Corporate Communication (planning and implementation) process?

Course Aims

The major of the Course is to enhance the students' knowledge of Corporate Communication and equip them with skills required in projecting an organisation's identity as a corporate entity towards enhancing the overall goals and objectives the organisation.

Course Objectives

At the end of the Course, you should be able to:

- Distinguish between Corporate Communication and related concepts such as Public Affairs, Relationship Management, Corporate Relations, External Relations, etc.
- Have working knowledge of Corporate Communication components and their limitations
- Apply (mix) the elements of Corporate Communication for the successful attainment of general corporate goals.

Working through this Course

The Course has been carefully graduated, starting with the general to the specifics. If you Endeavour to grasp the key points in the first two Modules, the remaining Modules should not be difficult for you to understand. You may study a Module per month or a Unit per week in order to effectively harness and retain the contents.

The self-assessment exercises at the end of each unit, will not add to your scores at the end of the Course, but they help you ascertain your knowledge-gain hence you should take them very seriously.

At the end of every unit, there is also a tutor-marked assignment which you must carry out. In doing your assignments, you are allowed to use information and materials contained in your textbooks, reading and study units as well as other references to broaden your viewpoint and provide a deeper understanding of the subject or topic.

Course Materials

Major components of the Course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study Units
3. Textbooks
4. Assignment File
5. Presentation

The above components will be provided by NOUN. In some cases, however, you may be required to obtain them from the bookshop. In case you have problem in obtaining your materials, you may contact your tutor.

Study Units

There are 21 study units in this course. These are:

Module 1

- Unit 1 The Integrated Communication Process (ICP)
- Unit 2 Definitions (Distinguishing Corporate Communication from Related Terms & Concepts)
- Unit 3 An Overview of Corporate Communication Components

Module 2

- Unit 1 External Audience (Publics)
- Unit 2 Internal Audience (Publics)
- Unit 3 The Media of Corporate Communication

Module 3

- Unit 1 Advertising
- Unit 2 Public Relations
- Unit 3 Leadership and Team Communication
- Unit 4 Branding

Module 4

- Unit 1 Research

- Unit 2 Analysis
- Unit 3 Budget
- Unit 4 Objectives

Module 5

- Unit 1 Strategy
- Unit 2 Tactics
- Unit 3 Implementation
- Unit 4 Control

Module 6

- Unit 1 Case Study: Organisational Communication
- Unit 2 Case Study: Management Communication
- Unit 3 Case Study: Corporate Crisis Management (Marketing Communications)

Each unit is accompanied by a one or several self-tests which are drawn from the materials you would have gone through. The tests are designed to keep you abreast of what you have studied through the course materials.

Textbooks & References

You will find at the end of each Unit recommended textbooks and references. Below is however a comprehensive list of textbooks and references for the Course:

Akinfeleye, R. *ed.* (2008). *Mass media and society: a multi-perspective approach*. Lagos: Dept. of Mass Communication, University of Lagos.

Bossidy, L. and Charan, R. (2002). *Execution: the discipline to get things done*. London: Random House Business Books.

Capon, Claire (2003). *Understanding organisation context*. London: Prentice-Hall

Colley Jr., J.L., Doyle, J.L., Logan, G.W., Stettinius, W. (2003). *Corporate governance*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Folayan, B.J. (2004). *Building Corporate Identity*. In Yusuf, F.A.O. and Folayan, B.J., Showcasing the Nigerian Finance and Banking Industry. Lagos: Famofay Ventures.
- Kaul, Asha. (2001). *Business Communication*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall India.
- Kotler, P. (2003). *Marketing Management – Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control*. 11th Edition, New York: Prentice-Hall.
- Oakland, John S. (2004). *Oakland on quality management*. Oxford: Butterworths-Heinemann.
- Ogundipe, Victor A. (1989). *Corporate image: The strategic imperative in the Nigerian banking sector*. Lagos: S&B Prints/Newswatch Communications Ltd.
- Onabajo, Olufemi *ed.* (2005). *Essentials of media relations*. Lagos: Concept Publishers
- Pickton, D. and Broderick, A. (2005). *Integrated marketing communications*. London: Prentice-Hall.
- Salu, Adekunle O. (1994). *Understanding public relations*. Lagos: Talkback Publishers.
- Yusuf, F.A.O. and Folayan, B.J. *eds.* (2004). *Showcasing the Nigerian Finance and Banking Industry*. Lagos: Famofay Ventures.

Presentation Schedule

The presentation schedule included in your course materials is to guide regarding dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and how you can attend tutorials. Keep in mind that you are required to submit all your assignments by the due dates. Keep pace with the schedule and ensure you do not fall behind in your work.

Assignment File

The Assignment File included in your Course Materials provides the details of the work you are expected to submit to your tutor for marking. The marks you obtain for these assignments will count towards the final mark you obtain in this course.

Assessment

There are two aspects of assessment in this Course: the tutor-marketed assignments *and* the written examination.

You are required to submit your assignments to your tutor for formal assessment as scheduled in the Assignment File. The work you submit to your tutor for assessment will count for 30 per cent of your total course mark. You will also be required to sit for a final examination at the end of the course. Your score in the works you submit to your tutor

represent 30 per cent while your score the final examination represents 70 per cent of your total course mark. Note that the Self-assessments questions are meant to refresh your memory on what you learnt in a particular unit and will not be graded. But the assignments at the end of each unit will be scored by your tutor.

Tutor-Marked Assignment

There are 21 tutor-marked assignments in this course. When you have completed each assignment, send it to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline given for the assignment. If, however, you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is due, to discuss the possibility of an extension.

The best five (i.e. the highest five of the 21 scores) will be counted for you. The total marks for the best five (5) assignments will be 30 per cent of your total course work.

Final Examination and Grading

The *Final Examination* in JLS831 will be a written test of three-hour duration and carries 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of questions which reflect the type of self-testing, practice exercises and tutor-marked tasks you would have gone through. It is better for you to cover all areas of the Course to make a good success in the examination.

Once you are through with all the Units, run through them all over again. Then, run through the conclusions and summaries severally. Finally, practice again the self-assessment and tutor-marked questions in all the Units. The essence of having a Tutor is to guide you, so feel free to seek his or her advice from time to time.

Course Marking Scheme

Below is a highlight of how you will be scored for the Course:

Assessment	Marks
Assignment 1-21	21 assignments; best five marks of 20 count @ 10% (on the averages) = 30% of the course marks
Final Examination	70% of overall course marks
Total	100% of course marks

Course Overview

The table below is a summary of the Modules and Units for the Course, the number of weeks you should take to complete them and the number of assignments you are to do.

Course Modules and Units

Unit	Title of Work	Duration (Week)	Assessment (at the end of Unit)
	<i>Course Guide</i>		
	MODULE 1 –Introduction		
1	The Integrated Communication Process (ICP)	1	Assessment 1
2	Definitions (Distinguishing Corporate Communication from Related Terms & Concepts)	2	Assessment 2
3	An Overview of Corporate Communication Components	3	Assessment 3
	MODULE 2- The Audience of Corporate Communication		
1	External Audience (Publics)	4	Assessment 4
2	Internal Audience (Publics)	5	Assessment 5
3	The Media of Corporate Communication	6	Assessment 6
	MODULE 3- The Techniques of Corporate Communication		
1	Advertising	7	Assessment 7
2	Public Relations	8	Assessment 8
3	Leadership & Team Communication	9	Assessment 9
4	Branding	10	Assessment 10
	MODULE 4 – Managing Corporate Communication RABOSTICally (1)		
1	Research	11	Assessment 11
2	Analysis	12	Assessment 12
3	Budget	13	Assessment 13
4	Objectives	14	Assessment 14

MODULE 5 – Managing Corporate Communication RABOSTICally (2)			
1	Strategy	15	Assessment 15
2	Tactics	16	Assessment 16
3	Implementation	17	Assessment 17
4	Control	18	Assessment 18
MODULE 6 – Case Studies			
1	Case Study: Organisational Communication	19	Assessment 19
2	Case Study: Management Communication	20	Assessment 20
3	Case Study: Corporate Crisis Management (Marketing Communications)	21	Assessment

How to Get the Most from this Course

One of the great advantages you have as a student of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is that you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace and at a time and place that suit you best.

Well of course, you do not see your lecturer face-to-face as in traditional university education system. Nevertheless, you can still ‘interact’ with him or her if you diligently follow this Course Guide. Sometime along the line too, you will get to see your Tutor and ask him or her questions related to any aspect of this Course!

The study units tell you what to do from time to time and ask you questions a visible lecturer could have asked. The Reference List provides additional resources that you could learn more from about the Course. However, where you do not seem to understand specific topics or concepts, note them and be sure that you use the opportunity of the Tutorials to thrash it out with your Tutor.

The objectives of the course are to help you understand what you should be able to do on completion of the unit. Therefore, you should carefully understand the objectives before you go through each unit. Also, when you are through with each unit, go back and check whether or not you have achieved the course objectives.

Reading Section

Before you take off with Unit 1, do the following:

1. Read this Course Guide thoroughly
2. Organise a study schedule for yourself. There are probably other Courses you are studying alongside this Course. Leaf through the topics and sub-topics and allot appropriate time for each Unit using the Schedule provided earlier, as guide. In doing this, note the assignments you have to do and a lot adequate time so that you will not have to be 'carrying over' your assignments.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stick to it. There is hardly anything meaningful one can achieve in life without discipline. Self-discipline is a very important requirement every distant learner to succeed.
4. Keep the key contacts of your tutor once you are given: name, phone numbers, e-mail etc.
5. Leaf through the entire 21 topics (units) to give you a rough idea of what to expect in the entire course. This may take you one or more hours.
6. Work through the unit. Read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
7. Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for every unit is given in the 'Overview' at the beginning of each unit. You will find it helpful to read both the study unit you are working on and your set books on your desk at the same time.
8. Work through the unit. The content of the unit itself has been arranged to provide a sequence for you to follow.
9. At the end of the unit, go back to the objectives and be sure that you have achieved the objectives stated before you go to the next unit.
10. As soon as you submit your assignment to your tutor for marking, begin with the next unit. Do not wait until the tutor gives you back your assignments or scores before proceeding to the next unit.
11. When the tutor returns your assignment, go through it checking his or her comments, both on the tutor-marked assignment form and also on what is written on the assignment.
12. Review the entire units after completing the course (and your assignments) in preparation for the final examination. Be sure that you have achieved the unit objectives and course objectives.
13. The two greatest things you can do to write very well is to *read* and *study* what others have written (in newspapers, magazines, Internet, etc) and then write your own piece. Depending on your pre-existing skills, your first articles may not be outstanding. But work further; polish your skills, using the nuggets provided in the course and you will get better as a writer. It is not a bad idea if you send some of your best pieces to newspapers for publication, although this will not form part of your grades in this Course. After all, the course name

is *Journalism Publication*. It will sharpen your skills if you get your articles published because you will notice some differences in what you submitted for publication and what is actually published.

Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials

There are 12 hours of tutorials provided by NOUN in support of this Course. You will be notified of the dates, times and location of these tutorials. You will also be given the contact details of your tutor as soon as you are allocated to a tutorial group.

Your tutor will mark your assignments and comment on them. He or she will keep watch on your progress and will be ready to assist on any difficulties you might encounter e.g. when you do not understand any part of the study units or/and the self-tests or exercises or when you do not understand your tutor's comments on the assignments you had submitted.

Make up time to attend all tutorials. It is a great opportunity for you to clarify any areas you do not understand; where questions (most of which you should have noted during your studies) would be instantly answered. Don't forget also that you will get to interact with fellow students and the Tutor at the tutorials – another excellent way of learning. You will find it very helpful if you prepare questions list before attending tutorials and ask those questions during the tutorials.

Summary

JLS831 is prepared to give you a detailed grasp of what corporate communication entails.

If you follow this Course Guide and carefully study through the 21 units, you should be able to easily answer the following questions:

1. What is Corporate Communication all about and how is it different from similar concepts such as Public Affairs, External Relations, Relationship Management, and Marketing Communications?
2. What are the components of Corporate Communication?
3. What are the four principal techniques of Corporate Communication?

4. How can a Corporate Communication Manager combine the various components of Corporate Communication to solve his/her organisation's problems or contribute to its goals?

And if you can successfully answer the above questions, do your assignments well and on time and participate meaningfully in your tutorials (especially, asking your tutor to put you through where you do not seem to understand very well), then you are most likely to score a very good grade in the Course.

You will find the Course very interesting if you follow the instructions in this Guide. Enjoy yourself!

MAIN WORK

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JLS831 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION**MODULE 1 – INTRODUCTION*****UNIT 1 – THE INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION PROCESS*****1.0 Introduction**

Communication is basic to human existence, for without communication, human beings cannot co-exist peacefully. Without communication, there will be anarchy, confusion, misunderstanding and ceaseless conflicts.

Through communication, human beings are able to foster unity and understanding. Communication not only takes place between or among human beings, it also takes place between animals and plants, amongst plants, between equipment, among companies or organisations (corporate entities), hence the term ‘corporate communication’

2.0 Objectives

- The student should be able to offer meaningful definitions of communication at the end of the Course.
- He or she should be able to explain the process of communication and make scholarly analysis of the elements in common communication scenarios around.

3.0 Main Content**3.1 Meaning of Communication**

The word ‘communication’ is derived from the Latin verb *communicare*, which means ‘to share’ or ‘to make common’. It is the sharing of knowledge, information or meanings. Such meanings can be between inanimate objects (e.g. the electrical impulse shared by a computer laptop and a printer), between an inanimate object

and a living being (e.g. between a lady and her telephone set) and between/among living beings (e.g. a referee and players during a football match).

A broad and simple definition of communication is **“the act of making things common”** or simply **“the act of sharing knowledge.”**

Webster (1983, p.266) defines communication as **“a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviour”**.

There was a time that “sending of signals/information from a source to a receiver” became widely accepted as standard definition of the word ‘communication’. Not anymore. Such linear and narrow view of a fundamental concept is misleading and not quite helpful in understanding what communication is all about.

Communication has been rightly described as the most common habit of man. It is commonplace, not only among human beings, but also within and among other non-human living things. For instance birds communicate effectively and dogs remain some of the most communicative beings that exist. Even non-living things (e.g. robots in factories and computers in offices) do engage in communication.

Communication can take place between two human beings, among humans, between a human being and an organization or organisations; between an organisation and a person, between two organisations or among many organisations. Can you think of instances when an organization *communicates with* a person? A good example is when a company writes a letter of employment to an applicant. How about when an organisation *communicates with* another organisation? When a bank issues a press release to media organisation, that is, sharing of meaning between two organisations

3.2 Communication as Process

Most dictionaries define *process* as a phenomenon, which “shows a continuous change in time or a continuous operation or treatment.” It means a series of operation, procedure, changes in actions or events or things. The keyword in this definition is “continuous”- another word for “on-going”.

To cook a soup entails a process. You buy onions, pepper, tomatoes, and other ingredients, grind them, put them on the cooker, add the seasoning, and stir from time to time, and so on. There are more than a hundred ways (processes) to cook a soup. Here, we are not particular about the steps that have to be taken to cook a soup, but to note that soup making is a continuum.

We tend to assume that the process of cooking a soup starts with the Cook going to the market for shop for ingredients. It may be so; it depends on how we look at cooking a soup. If we look at soup-making from a larger perspective, the process actually ‘starts’ with the person who planted the tomatoes, the pepper etc., on to the person who sold them, to the person who bought them. We can only say the process starts at a particular point only for purposes of analysis. A process, in actual fact has no beginning and no end.

History bears testimony that men have long been aware of the phenomenon of process, although scientific attention to this was made only few decades ago. Almost 2,500 years ago, the Greek poet, Heraclitus, stated “ a man never steps into the same river twice.” Why? It is because the river waters move continuously.

Communication is not linear, but cyclical, hence it is a process. ‘Process’ has the following characteristics.

- i) *It does not have a beginning.* It is only when we look at it from a religious or philosophical angle that we can state that everything began at Creation

and that everything that existed after Creation was part of the process that began ever since. Even philosophers of religion assert that God has no beginning

- ii) *It does not have an end.* A process is not static or stationary. It is always evolving, changing, and active; hence we talk of a process being ‘cyclical’.
- iii) *It has components.* A process has parts that together interact continuously. Components or parts constitute a boundary, which governs the process. Together, this is called a system.
- iv) *In a process, there is no rigidly fixed order of events.*

Thus, Ahmed does not talk to John in the real communicative sense. Rather, Ahmed and John engage in communication.

3.3 The Integrated Communication Process.

Every communication process involves five principal elements: the Sender, the Message, the Media, the Receiver and the Feedback. Since communication is in form of a cycle, distinction between a Sender and a Receiver is only theoretical. In other words, the Sender can as well be the Receiver, depending on the perspective from which one examines the communication experience. Consider the following example:

Uzor: Kemi, you misled us, the professor is no where to be found

Kemi: But he told us to come in here 5 pm

Steve: It’s quite unusual of him; let us check him out in his office

Uzor: I thought Steve said he saw him earlier today?

In the above conversation, who are the Sender and the Receiver? It is very natural to say Uzor is the sender because he spoke first, the recorded text. He could be so regarded but it is only for analytical purpose. When you examine the conversation critically, you will discover that Steve or Kemi could have been the ‘sender’ of an earlier message which Uzor was responding to. (“...You misled us” suggests that Kemi had told Uzor something which he was responding to in the opening

sentence). In this case, Uzor, was the receiver. Similarly, Uzor thought Steve had indicated seeing the Professor earlier. Thus, Uzor and Kemi might have responded (decoded) earlier messages encoded by Steve. In other words, Steve could have been the sender whose words were cut out by the person who recorded the message.

Nevertheless, the Integrated Communication Process – Sender-Message-Medium-Receiver-Feedback is one of the simplest models of unraveling any communication situation. Communication assumes this basic model irrespective of where it is applied – in advertising, political campaign, public relations, rhetoric, etc., although it is common to find extensions of each element. For example, marketing communication professionals often add another element after the receiver – ‘of what effect’.

The Integrated Communication Process is the simplest effort to unbundle any communication problem. In the same way that you can dismember a car into various units and sub-units, look at each unit closely and see where the problem lies and then couple them back, you can split any communication situation into discreet parts, examine the parts closely and fix them back together for more optimal performance.

3.4 Self-Assessment Questions/Assignment

1. Explain the differences in the following two sentences bringing out the salient communication principles in them:
 - Dr. Igwe talks to his patients very often
 - Dr. Igwe talks with his patients very often
2. (a) Write a short critique of the following definition of communication:
“Communication is the act of transmitting a message from one person to another”

(b) Offer a better definition of communication (of your own or by any author or scholar)

4.0 Conclusion

Communication is a process by which information is exchanged or shared between or among individuals or organisations through a common system of symbols, signs, or behaviour.

It is a phenomenon that operates in a continuum – a continuous process among senders and receivers transacting information, knowledge, ideas and meanings.

The typical components of any communication experience are: Sender (encoder), Message, Channel, Receiver (decoder) and Feedback. This simple model can be used to study any communication situation, especially for theoretical purposes.

5.0 Summary

In this Unit, we have gone through the meaning and two important aspects of form of communication namely that communication is NOT linear or straight but circular. We also explained that all component elements in the communication process – Sender-Message-Receiver – Feedback are crucial and of equal importance; it all depends on the primary purpose of the communication.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

- Explain in not more than 100 words how communication is a *process*

7.0

References

References/Further Reading.

Kaul, Asha. (2001). Business Communication. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall India.

Kotler, P. (2003). Marketing Management – Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control. 11th Edition, New York: Prentice-Hall.

JLS831 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION**MODULE 1 – INTRODUCTION****UNIT 2: – DEFINITIONS****1.0 Introduction**

The term Corporate Communication is often used interchangeably with other related terms and concepts such as *Public Relations, Public Affairs, External Relations, Relationship Management, Corporate Identity Management, Marketing Public Relations* and *Branding*. A proper definition of Corporate Communication will highlight the relationship and differences between these terms/concepts and corporate communication.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the Unit, you should be able to:

- Offer a meaningful definition of Corporate Communication
- Distinguish Corporate Communication from related terms and concepts such as *Public Relations, Public Affairs, External Relations, Relationship Management, Corporate Identity Management, Marketing Public Relations* and *Branding*.

3.0 Main Course**3.1 An Overview of Public Relations**

The umbrella field for all forms of communication which attempts to create and/or sustain the goodwill persons or organisation that can impact on an organisation's performance or attainment of its goals is known as Public Relations (PR). It is a 'kind' of 'communication' for instance other 'kinds' of communication include political communication, development communication, business communication, journalism and cybernetic (telecommunication).

Due to its dynamic nature, the overall strategies of different organisations and the nature of their publics, various other names are often used interchangeably for PR. For instance, check out the names of PR Departments of the following leading organisation in Nigeria:

Chevron-Texaco	-	Public Affairs & Government Relations Department
Mobil Producing	-	External Relation Department
Intercontinental Bank	-	Corporate Relations Department
Central Bank of Nigeria	-	Corporate Affair Department
Fountain Trust Bank	-	Reputation Management Office
Globacom Ltd	-	Marketing Communication Department
EFCC	-	Information & Publicity Department

All of the above nomenclatures are generic terms from Public Relations. The diversity of names arose from particular emphasis or focus of the different establishments. We shall look at these other terms in greater detail shortly. For now, let us understand what PR is about.

3.2 Some Definitions of “PR:

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

- *Institute of Public Relations, London.*

“Public Relations is the Art and Social Success of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, correcting organisation leaders and implementing planned programme of action. While serve both the organisation’s and the public interest”.

- *International Public Relations Association (1978)*

“Public Relations is a destructive management function which helps to establish and maintain cores of communication, understanding, acceptance and corporation between and organisation and its publics.”

- *Rex Harlon*

The golden rule in Public Relations is “Know Thy Publics”. What is a ‘public’? It simply refers to a target audience that communication may be focused towards. In other words, they are the individuals or organisations whose activities or interest impact on reference or are themselves impacted upon by our reference. Such publics may individuals, groups, organisations or even a company’s employees. Any individual group or organisation whose activities directly or indirectly affect the achievement of an organisation goals and objectives constitute your publics. ‘Public in this sense conjures a technical meaning – apart from our social understanding of ‘Public’ or member of the public (i.e. everyone in the society).

3.2 Two illustrations of ‘Public’

(a) National Open University of Nigeria:

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Internal Public | - | Academic Staff |
| | - | Non –Academic Staff |
| | - | Current Student (already enrol) |
| | - | Contractors/Consultants |
| | - | Governing Council |
| | | |
| External Publics | - | Federal Ministry of Education |
| (or Mean Publics) | - | National Universities Commission |
| | - | Other Universities in Nigeria |
| | - | Mass media |
| | - | Labour Unions (Academic and non-academic) |

- Prospective Students
- (b) Central Bank of Nigeria
- Internal Public
- Board of Director
 - Members of Staff
 - CEOs of Subsidiaries e.g. NDIC
 - Federal Ministry of Finance
 - Commercial Banks
 - Microfinance Bank
 - Mass Media
 - Internal unilateral agencies of IMF, IDC
 - States and Local Government
 - Bank Customers
 - The National Assembly (Committees on banking, appropriation etc).

Publics vary in importance. Some publics tend to appear more important than the others. However, a good PR practitioner knows that all publics are important, and none should be underrated. Any hostile element in any public can destabilize the effective performance of the organisation; hence the PR Department works ahead to prevent such altercation and should ‘crisis’ occur in spite of efforts to prevent it, the PR Department swiftly ensures that the misunderstanding is resolved. For example, suppose a security guard who is supposed to open the gates of a commercial bank fail to come to office as at 1:00pm and no one else has the key to the gates, can you imagine the crisis the entire bank would be thrown into by someone supposed to be an ‘ordinary gateman? In PR, all publics are very important. The bigger an organisation becomes, the larger its publics tend to become.

We can now see that Public Relations derive from the act of “relating with (target) publics”.

Now, let us take a look at the key words in the definition of PR we offered earlier in this Unit.

Deliberate – Thus is an adjective that implies something being done ‘interstinally’, ‘carefully’ or on purpose’.

Sustained Effort – It is a continuous action, not one-off.

Mutual understanding – the effort must be two-way of benefit to all parties involved in the connection.

3.4 Definition of Corporate Communication

Corporate communication is communication that takes place with a business organisation or/and between a business organisation and its publics. It derives from the adjective “Corporate – something shared by a whole group, not just of a single member. The concept also has origins in “Corporations” – traditionally used for a large company or group of companies that is controlled together as a single organisation.

Originally, the term ‘corporation’ is used for only large business organisations. However today, it is also used for non-business conglomerates.

The non-business corporation as an ancient form originally used for towns, guilds and colonies of Rome and for the early middle ages also for universities, religion rulers and other so-called benevolent organisations performing civic services and thus subject to government licence and oversight. (Colly Jr, et.al, 2003). Examples: The muscovy Company in 1555, the Spanish Company in 1577 and the East India Company in 1601 which received history’s first recorded business charters of incorporation. During the reign of England’s Queen Elizabeth I. prior to the corporation, businesses were organized as proprietorships or partnership.

“Corporate Communication is the integrated approach to all communication produced by an organisation directed at all relevant target groups”.

- Blauw (1994)

“Corporate Communication consists of three main forms of communication – marketing communication, organisational communication and management communication”

- Van Riel (1995)

“Corporate Communications is the management of marketing and other business communication about the organisation to selected target advances”

- Pickton and Broderick (2005)

What are the distinctive features in the above information?

- Blauw use the term Corporation as an alternative term for Public Relations.
- Van Riel emphasized the components of Corporate Corporation.
- Pickton and Broderick specifies the boundary of Corporate Communication – it is communication that deals with matter relating to the organisation as an entity. A Corporation is an artificial invisible and intangible being that exists no the contemplation of the law. It is a creation of the law and has an existence of its own independent of its owners. It has its own identity. Communication about that organisation in that Corporate Corporation deals with.

Many disciplines have influenced the practice of Public Relations. Effective PR practice today covers the following areas:

- i. Marketing, including Sales Promotion and Advertising
- ii. Politics
- iii. Sociology
- iv. Management (human & Material)
- v. Logic
- vi. Communication (including journalism) and Rhetoric
- vii. Social research

Corporate Communication leans more towards the management of the image/reputation *of the organisation*.

Internally and externally, and less on the organisation’s services and products, although the date cannot be easily separated from the former.

3.5 An illustration:

Functional Structure of the Department of PR of an African Conglomerate

1. *Media Relations Unit* – ensures company gets good publicity/editorial coverage through professional support and personal relationship with editors and other journalists.
2. *Production Unit* – produces or coordinates the production of all materials for Communication: design, prints, packs, etc.
3. *Public Affairs & Community Relations Unit* – builds and maintains relations with the government and local publics. It usually handles lobbying (securing the understanding of legislators and policy makers).
4. *Marketing Communications Unit* – coordinates communication that helps to boost the acceptance of products and services e.g. product advertising, product exhibition, product launch, personal selling, telemarketing, etc.
5. *Corporate Communication Unit* – coordinates internal and external public communication (with employees, directors, shareholders, unions, sponsorships, donations, Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR; events management, exhibitions and trade shows, crises management, research analysis, building corporate identity/culture, corporate advertising (i.e. advertising the organisation), coordinating communication synergy with subsidiary groups anniversaries, ground breaking, commissioning ceremony, visits, special meetings, etc.

Note: The term Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is often used to describe the above-stated functional units. Sometimes too, the term Brand Communications is used as alternative term for Corporate Communications.

3.6 Definitions of Related Terms/Concepts

i) *Marketing Communications*

Communications with target audiences on all matters that affect marketing performance.

ii) *Marketing Communications Mix*

The range of activities/tools available to an organisation to communicate with its target audiences on all matters that affect marketing performance.

iii) *Integrated Marketing Communications Mix*

The process of integrating all elements of marketing communications mix (PR, Personal Selling, Advertising and Sales Promotion) across all customer contact points to achieve greater coherence.

iv) *External Relations*

Establishing and maintaining lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and cooperation between an organisation and its external publics (government, political parties, local communities, direct competitors, indirect competitors, statutory bodies, and the media.

v) *Public Affairs*

An umbrella term referring to corporate efforts to relate to the governmental environment – community relations, government programmes/policies, political education of employees on public policy. It also includes meaningful relations with government and political leaders. According to Joseph S. Nagelschmidt, it means “participating by business people in government – meaningful participation at the local level, state, national and international levels, depending on circumstances.”

vi) *Corporate Relations or Corporate Public Relations*

Can be used interchangeably with Corporate Communication. It has to do with those parts of PR not directly concerned with product marketing but with a broader business perspective.

vii) *Corporate Identity Management/Reputation Management*

“The seemingly intangible but powerful aggregation of effort which register a perception of creditability in the minds of a captive audience...I have come to think of it as the sum total of all deliberate efforts in the field of management geared toward the establishment of a set of perceptions in the target community.” (Ogundipe, 1989)

Reputation management is the planning and control of what an organisation is known for (not necessarily what it is). *Corporate image* is the impression of an organisation as perceived by its target audiences.

viii) *Corporate Personality*

The composite of an organisation’s traits, culture, characteristics, ‘spirit’ and values.

xi) *Corporate Relations Or Relationship Management Or Customer Contact Management Or Client Service*

Strategic and tactical tasks involved in building customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. It is the ‘personal’ communication an organisation and its customers.

3.7 Self-Assessment Questions

- i) Define Public Relations and explain they key words in your definition
- ii) Explain with examples the meaning of Internal and External Publics
- iii) Compare and contrast Blauw’s and Pickton/Brodrick’s definitions of Corporate Communication
- iv) List the functional units of the typical PR Department in a giant corporation.
- v) Write short notes on the following: Public Affairs, Corporate Relations, Reputation Management, Marketing communications mix.

4.0 Conclusion

Corporate communication, an aspect of Public Relations, is the management of marketing and business communication on matters relating to an organisation as an entity and less about its products and services.

Its three key components are organizational communication, management communication and marketing communication in that descending order of prioritization.

The typical Corporate Communication functions include: employee/director communication, sponsorships, events management, research and analysis of PR, crisis management, corporate adverts, subsidiary PR synergy, ground breaking, building organizational culture, plant tours and visits, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Note: *Corporate Communication or Corporate Communications is a matter of preference for words; they mean the same thing.*

5.0 Summary

Corporate Communication is a very important component of Public Relations in business and non-business corporations. Other components include: media, production. The golden rule is for the practitioner to know his or her publics and seek mutual understanding with them.

Marketing communication, external relations, public affairs, reputation management, branding can be used to enhance corporate communication. But they are not synonymous with corporate communication.

6.0 Tutor market Assignment

- i) Define and explain the term Corporate Communication in not more than 100 words.
- ii) Distinguish Corporate Communication *Reputation Management* and *Public Relations*.
- iii) If you were asked to rename the PR Department of the following organisations, which name would you choose and why?
 - Nigeria Police
 - Tantalizers fast food
 - Okitipupa Local Government
 - Oceanic Bank Plc
 - National Open University of Nigeria
 - Nestle Nigeria Plc
 - Nigeria Television Authority
 - Julius Berger
 - Independent National Electoral Commission

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 1 – INTRODUCTION

***UNIT 3 – AN OVERVIEW OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
COMPONENTS***

1.0 Introduction

What are the focal tasks of Corporate Communication practice? When we may someone possesses Corporate Communication analytical ability, what do we mean? You may recall that in Unit 2, we did say that Corporate Communication is a PR component that deals principally with managing the reputation and identity of the organisation itself. We said an organisation has a personality of its own, just

like an individual and that this personality impacts positively or negatively on its performance (or the performance of its products and services).

Managers of business have discovered that when an organisation has a good identity and sterling reputation, that organisation finds it easier to promote its goods and services. In fact, it finds it easy to launch new products and ensure good patronage – just attaching their highly reputed name to the new product. This technique, known as branding, is common in marketing communications today in Nigeria and around the world.

What are the components of Corporate Communication? In broad terms, what typical tasks does a typical Corporate Communication Department carry out?

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the three core tasks of Corporate Communication
- Analyze, interpret and proffer solutions to Corporate Communication issues and challenges.

3.0 Main Content

The most important submit of Corporate Communication, which should take roughly 50 per cent of the Department’s efforts is “Management Communication.” Organisational Communication should take about 30 per cent while Marketing Communication should take 20 per cent. Please note that this task ratio presumes that the organisation has a Marketing Communication Unit of its own distinct form the Corporate Communication Unit, all under the umbrella of a Public Relations or Public Communication Department. In other words, the 20 per cent task ratio for ‘Marketing Communication’ implies that marketing communication elements are also used for managing the image and identity of the organisation, not just its products and services.

3.1 Organisational Communication

Organisational Communication consists of communication geared at how the organisation surveys or scans its external environment so that that organisation can influence or adapt to circumstances in that environment.

Each organisation has a unique environment that has unique impacts on the organisation. Notes Capon (2002): “Individual organisations will all have their own distinctive view of the world surrounding them, leading them to interpret what is happening in the external environment potentially – correctly or incorrectly, depending on their own ability to understand the external factors affecting them.”

In other words, an organisation needs to understand accurately the *context* in which it operates. Mega corporations – even relatively smaller corporate giants – very rarely make profit in the short run. Even corporations that have existed profitably for decades need to continue to carefully analyze the ‘context’ of their operations on a long term basis by anticipating threats and opportunities.

Capon (2003) has recommended the PEST analysis for scanning the organisational environment. He uses the acronym PEST to represent: Political, Economic, Socio-cultural and Technological factors in the environment.

- i) **Political:** This includes how political administration and how rules and regulations imposed by government affect the organisation. It also covers political influences on an organisation regarding various trade associates and unions.
- ii) **Economic:** Impact of the stock market, banks, money market and trading blocks on business, and importantly information on competitors, such as competitive rivalry, threat of new entrants, threat of substitute products, the bargaining power of buyers and suppliers.
- iii) **Socio-cultural:** Changes in the age structure of populations, the manner in which people behave and the way in which the culture of a population or country changes and develops.

- iv) **Technological:** Information and communication technology and the application of technology by organisations.

The PEST influences can occur at three major levels, according to Capon(2003). This is known as the *LoNG dimension* to understand organisational environment – Local, National and Global (LoNG)

- i. The local level covers the immediate town city or region in which the organisation operates.
- ii. The national level is the home country in which an organisation identified its headquarters.
- iii. The global level is anything outside the local and national levels. Often, ‘global’ is used to describe what affects all parts of the world in similar and simultaneous way e.g. the economic melt-down. This is different from ‘international’, which describes issues that occur between nations.

	Political	Economic	Sociocultural	Technological
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Local government * Local offices of national government * Local associations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chambers of Commerce - Business Link 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Local bank branches * Local economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Communications technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mobile phones and faxes - Video conferencing - Internet and world wide web
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * National government * Devolution for Scotland and Wales * National bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employers’ bodies - Employees’ bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Central bank <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bank of England * Stock market <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - London 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Demographic Change * Social Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Organisations and the application of technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The personal computer - The banking and financial services industry
Global	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Alliances and agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UK and USA - UK and China - EU - Cold War - CIS - CBSS - Eastern Europe * International bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Commonwealth - NATO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Trading blocs and bodies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU - EFTA - OECD - NAFTA - ASEAN * World money markets * WTO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Cross-cultural issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language - Behaviour - Culture shock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Millennium bug

Fig. 1. *Capon's LoNGPEST Grid*

3.1.1 Managing Organisational Communication

The Corporate Communication Unit requires information within and outside the organization to perform its organizational communication function.

Internally sourced information will most often be drawn from the four key functional parts of the organisation, i.e. marketing, production, finance and human resource management. For instance, internal information will include customer survey reports, reports on staff skills, financial health of the organisation, sales reports, even information on capacity, capability and efficiency.

Externally sourced information will include industry statistics in journals, newspapers, TV and other publications, confidential reports on the economy, draft of bills and legislations, annual reports and accounts of publicly – quoted companies, especially competitors, official data of released by trade associations such as Manufacturers Association of Nigerian (MAN) and the Internet.

Once the internal and external data are obtained the Corporate Communication Unit now interprets influences that these bear or which they can potentially bear on the organisation. The LoNGPEST grid can be used for this purpose. For instance, you may determine whether the influence is political or economic; socio-cultural or technological or a combination of these factors. Next, you determine if these influences are Local, National or Global. Further, you analyze, the pattern of influences e.g. is Local affecting the Technological; Is Technological affecting the socio-cultural factors in the LoNGPEST grid?

Lastly, you now suggest how the organisation may react to the influences based on your interpretations – immediately (in the short run) and later (in the long run).

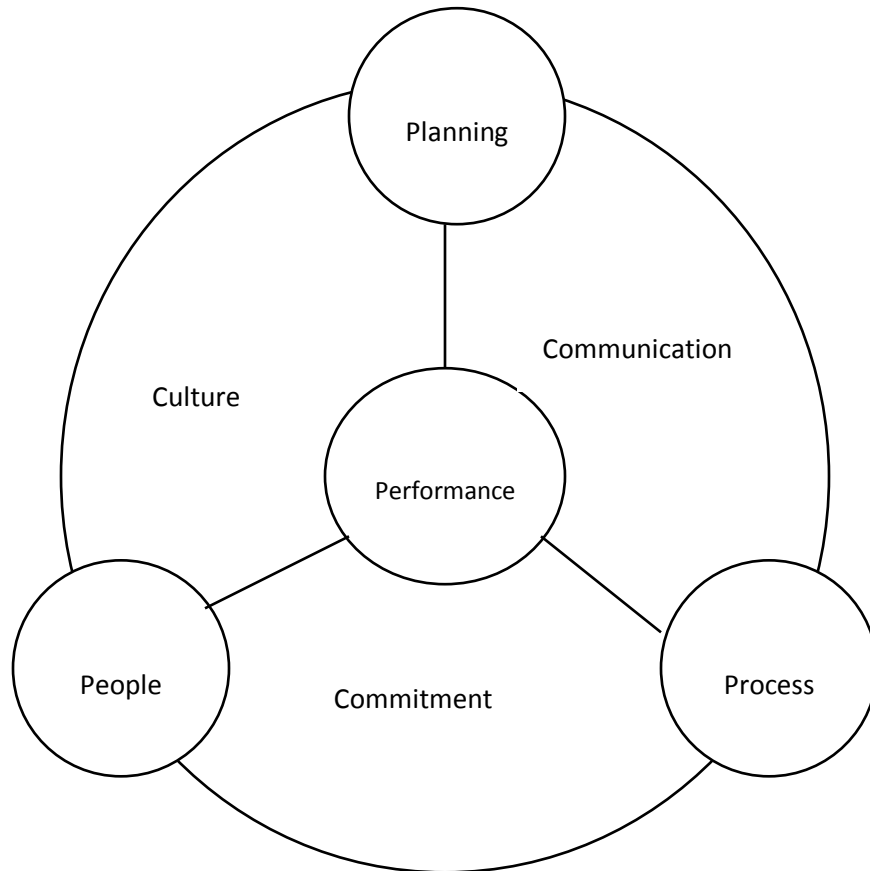
Organisation is very crucial to Corporate Success. Notes Bossidy and Charan (2003):

When companies failed to deliver on their promises, the most frequent explanation is that the CEO's strategy was wrong. But the strategy by itself is not often the cause. The strategies most often fail because they aren't well executed. Things that are supposed to happen don't happen. Either the organisations aren't capable of making them happen, or the leaders of the business environment, or both.

3.2 Management Communication

Management Communication deals essentially with communicating with the 'Internal Publics' of an organisation. It is the *communication aspect* of the Human Resources Management function. Typical HR functions cover skills development, recruitment, promotion, health and safety, appraisal, employee benefit, remuneration and training. Rarely can one find 'communication' listed as the HR function. This is because it is a Corporate Communication function. Yet, what links the people in an organisation together (and what links people with machines) is communication. Management communication essentially involves fostering commitment of employees and management staff to goals, planning, implementation and review (process and performance), sharing of information and ideas (communication) and building a corporate culture. (See Figure 2, *Oakland's Quality Management Model*).

Oakland's Management Communication Process



Research has confirmed that communication is an essential facet of people management – in terms of communication of the organisation's goals, vision, strategy and policies; of facts, information and data. Oakland (2004) has noted:

For business success, regular, two-way communication, particularly face-to-face with employees, is an important factor in establishing trust and a feeling of being valued. Two-way communication is

regarded as both a core management competency and as a key management responsibility.

Management responsibilities for effective communication include:

- Regular meeting with employees
- Strategic briefing of people on key issues in a language free of technical jargon
- Honest communication on all issues which affect the people
- Creation of an atmosphere in which team members can discuss company issues and give upward feedback
- Ensuring that issues from team members are fed back to senior managers and timely replies given.
- Nurturing the organisation's values, culture and persona
- Ensuring that meanings regarding customer and other external publics flow downward and outward the organisation

Oakland (2004) has proposed the PDCI Communication Process for management communication – Plan, Do, Check and Improve.

Plan

The Corporate Communication staff has to collaborate with the HR Director to assess the communication needs of the organisation. The assessment trickles down through the divisional directors, managers and the local management teams such that the overall communication plan aligns with overall policy and strategy.

Do

The Corporate Communication Unit creatively communicates ways to avoid executive gaps in policy and programme implementation. 'Build systems and things will work' has been found a defective assumption. It is not enough to craft dos and don'ts or build lofty values. How do you make people **do** what they should do? Communication plays a key role here.

This can be done through various media such as briefings, focus group discussions, meetings, e-mail, Internet/Intranet, open-door policies, conferences, campaigns, posters, appraisals, magazines, newsletters, videos, surveys, notice boards, simulations (demonstrations), video conferencing, etc. Rapidly-changing communications technology has necessitated similar changes in internal communications media usage and this should be noted. Archaic communication medium such as 'Suggestion Box', for instance, is neither any longer fashionable nor effective. The role of communication channels will be discussed shortly under 'Marketing Communications'.

Check

Building a personality or culture of an organisation involves constant reviews of adherence standards. It is not enough for the people to **do** what is expected of them once or a few times. Communication can contribute to sustaining the desired behaviour through frequent or strategic total quality reviews; execution gap surveys; individual-, divisional- and company-wide self-assessment, etc. According to Oakland (2004), "appraisal and staff survey data are analyzed to ensure that the communications process is continuing to deliver effective upward, downward and lateral communications. Reports are then made quarterly, six-monthly and/or annually to the chief executive and/or the most senior team on the effectiveness and relevance of the communication process. The people survey data are also used to ascertain employee perceptions and to keep in touch with current opinion."

Improve

This is the continuous improvement carried out through various review processes to sustain or step up 'current performance'. They are the actions you take consequent on the checks performed.

At the heart of people-communication in an organisation is 'channel'. People at all levels must be able to talk to each other and teams must be able to share meanings. Interpersonal channels are far more effective in

building enduring corporate culture and should be used as much as possible. Employees should be encouraged to be positive, loyal, responsible, committed and involved. New employees should be nurtured to accept, adopt or adapt the corporate culture. This is not to be done by handing him or her hand-out of 'Rules and Regulations'. Rather, it should be through honest, creative communication tactics. The most effective means of developing personnel commitment is to ensure that people know what is going on; otherwise they will feel left out, indifferent and gradually begin to resent, resist and then undermine corporate integrity and culture.

Sometimes, internal culture emerges as a result of internal structural arrangement and sometimes it is a result of the type of people employed by the organisation. For instance, 'culture shocks' can occur when two or more organisations merge or when sections within an organisation are merged. The persona of your organisation will often be built around people's name, personality, norms, personal morality, values and ethic, and innovation – especially those exhibited by team leaders and managers do usually mentor the large number of employees under them.

Many corporate communication managers in Nigeria rightly focus serious attention on the image of the CEO because his or her personal reputation affects that of the organisation. But this is often over-done – almost to the level of sycophancy. The crafting and maintenance of an identity for an organisation goes beyond making the CEO visible. More importantly, it is to interpret his or her vision, align it with overall corporate vision and make the entire management and staff key into it.

It is the job of Corporate Communication to ensure excellent Board-Management relationship. The Board, CEO and the top management must create a synergy to build sustainable corporate identity for the organisation. Notes Bossidy & Charan (2002):

You cannot have an execution culture without robust dialogue – one that brings reality to the surface through openness, candor and informality. Robust dialogue makes an organisation effective in gathering information,

understanding the information and reshaping it to produce decisions. It fosters creativity – most innovations and inventions are incubated through robust dialogue. Ultimately, it creates more competitive advantage and shareholder value.

3.3 Marketing Communications

Marketing communications, by definition, are communications with target audiences in all matters that affect marketing performance. You should have learned by heart now that Marketing has five elements known as ‘The Five Ps’ which constitute the ‘Marketing Mix’ – Product, Price, Place, *Promotion* and People. ‘Promotion’ stands for branding, advertising, publicity, sales support, packaging, display and personal selling. The ingredients are known as ‘Marketing Communications Mix’. Pickton and Brodrick define it as “the range of activities/tools available to an organisation to communicate with its target audience on all matters that affect marketing performance”. (Pickton & Brodrick, 2005). It is the sub-group of ‘Promotion’ which uses four elements – Public Relations, Advertising, Sales Promotions and Personal Selling. Under each of these four elements are various ‘ingredients’ and ‘recipes’ that make the final ‘meal’ tasty and satisfying. We shall look at them in Module 3 (Units 8, 9, 10 & 11) of this Course. The pertinent thing for you to note here is that these same marketing communications elements deployed to aid marketing as a whole are also used to aid ‘corporate communications’ at sub-unit level.

Marketing communications is the building block and networks that link organizational communication with management communication. In a Corporate Communication Department, the Marketing Communications sub-unit oversees the design and production of promotional tools such as business cards, display banners, brochures, flyers, press kits, house journals, etc. In some business corporations, the Marketing Communications constitute the Department, while Corporate Communication is subsumed as a Unit under it. This should not confuse you. It all depends on the business portfolio and strategy. A multinational insurance company would naturally give ‘corporate communication’ greater visibility than ‘marketing communications’ because

what determines its success is principally the integrity of the company, not the array of insurance products. Such a company would want to promote its integrity (years of experience, prompt payment of claims, utmost good faith, and honest ethical practices) streets ahead of its products (XYZ Life Plan, XYZ Motor Insurance, XYZ Fire Proof Plan, etc.) It would therefore be understandable that 'Marketing Communications' is under a broad Corporate Communication Department in such an organisation. Parastatals like National Communications Commission, Nigeria Television Authority, Nigeria Deposit Insurance Company should be expected to give Corporate Communication more visibility because of the nature of their functions. On the other hand, manufacturing companies such Cadbury, Nestle and Patterson Zochonis (PZ) would be expected to give Marketing Communications greater visibility than Corporate Communication in the structure of the Public Communication/Relations Department. It is a matter of organizational strategy and structure. The important thing is for the structure to suit strategy and objectives.

Whether it is the umbrella Department or a Unit or a Sub-unit, marketing communications should support organizational and management communication - i.e. advertising, PR sales promotion and personal selling principles and techniques should be deployed to sell the 'identity' of the organisation itself. Good examples are Cadbury's *Teachers' Awards*, *Cowbell's National Mathematics Competition for Secondary School Students* and De United Foods Company's *Indomie Heroes Awards*, which promote the identity/persona of the organisation through marketing communications.

Internal communications such as employee briefing, team meetings, staff birthdays, performance recognitions should have marketing communications inputs. House Journals must be professionally produced to solve specific problems intended; otherwise, it is a waste of money. Company products and services must be marketed and very well promoted. But the Public Relations Department should not be too busy trying to sell the company's products without trying to craft a persona for the organisation itself. In the long run, it is the persona so developed that will help the company to sell its products and services, not only the intrinsic qualities of the products.

3.4 Self-Assessment Questions

- i) What do you understand by the LoNGPEST Analysis?
- ii) Explain the acronym PDCI and describe with practical examples how it can aid management communication.
- iii) What is the basic difference between *product identity* and *corporate identity*?
- iv) Define the concepts – *Organizational Communication*, *Management Communication* and *Marketing Communications*

4.0 Conclusion

Corporate Communication is all communication geared towards nurturing an identity for an organisation; it helps to ensure good networks of communication to build value, culture, synergy all of which shape what the organisation is known for in line with overall corporate strategy.

The key component tasks of corporate communication are: *Organizational Communication* (communication with external publics) which should about 30 per cent of corporate communication effort; *Management Communication* (communication with internal publics) which should take about 50 per cent of communication effort (Pickton and Brodrick, 2005)) and *Marketing Communications* (the skillful and professional inputs which enhance the execution of organizational and management communication – roughly 20 per cent of corporate communication effort. (Pickton and Broderick, 2005).

5.0 Summary

In this Unit, we have made an overview of Corporate Communication – what it is and why it is important:

- i) What sells a product or service is not limited to the intrinsic values of those products and services, the identity, reputation and integrity of the owner of the product or service play fundamental roles.
- ii) An organisation requires long range and short range scanning of the context in which it thrives or can thrive best and makes adequate planning to position itself (people, products and services) to take the best advantage. This is known as Organizational Communication.
- iii) Within the company or organisation, synergy and vibrant communication must be built so that a desired *personality* and *reputation* can be built to support the overall strategic goals of the organisation. This is known as Management Communication.
- iv) Whether with external or internal publics, communication (including materials and ‘tools’ deployed) must be skillfully and creatively done. This is the role of Marketing Communications.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

1. Public Relations, Corporate Communication and Marketing Communications all mean the same thing – it is just a matter of ‘choice of words’. Discuss.
2. A delegation from the American Chamber of Commerce recently visited Nigeria and expressed interest to establish a vehicle spare-parts mega company in the country. In not more than 250 words, perform a LoNGPEST analysis for the company.

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MODULE 2 – THE AUDIENCES (PUBLICS) OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

UNIT 1 – THE EXTERNAL PUBLICS

1.0 Introduction

The soul of public relations (of which corporate communication is a part) is what is known as ‘publics’. A popular maxim in PR is ‘know thy publics’. Without a good understanding of what publics are and how to understand them, one can hardly ever be successful as corporate communication practitioners. In this Unit, we shall examine External Publics. Specifically, we shall know the external audiences or publics of corporate communication and why they are important for the attainment of corporate communication goals.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the Unit, you should be able to:

- Define and explain the External Audience
- Describe the various audiences under the External Environment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the roles of the various publics under the External Environment.

3.0 Main Content.

Do you remember that in Unit 2 we discussed the ‘publics’ of public relations? What did we say ‘publics’ meant? Well, we said publics are *individuals, groups, organisations or institutions whose activities directly or indirectly (can) affect the actualization of an organisation’s goals and objectives*. Please note that ‘publics’ do not have to be groups of people, even though they are often so. We also said, such publics (whom we can also refer to as ‘audiences’) may be broadly classified into External (Macro) and Internal (Micro) Publics. In this unit, we shall take a closer look at the external publics of corporate communication. Although

'external environment' and 'macro environment' are often used interchangeably in PR, they do not mean exactly the same thing. The *macro environment* is the entire wider environment in which and organisation operates. This includes internal factors (within the organisation) and external factors (outside the organisation). The *micro environment*, similarly, is not limited to factors within the organisation. It includes factors are derivable from the immediate surroundings of the organisation. What constitutes *macro* and *micro* is thus the angle and size of view of the person making the classification. 'Macro' is a term that represents 'broad' or 'big' while 'micro' describes something 'narrow' or 'small'.. For our purpose here, it is adequate to note that Corporate Communication has *external audience* (those outside the organisation) and *internal audience* (those inside the organisation)

3.1 What is External Public?

External publics are thus the publics outside the organisation with which the organisation have common interests. What they do can affect the organisation and what the organisation does can affect them positively or negatively, hence the need to create sustained mutually-beneficial understanding. They vary from organisation to organisation, depending on the nature, scope, objectives and goals of the organisation. Typically, they include the following:

i) Customers

There is a parlance that says 'in business, the customer is king.' It is largely true. A similar maxim in governance is 'in a democracy, the voter is king.' The end-user of a company's product determines the profit and other benefit such a company makes at the end of each financial year. Therefore, customers constitute a very important public of corporate communication. Customers in this sense extend beyond the consumer of a product. For Federal High Court, Abuja, for instance, the customers include lawyers, litigants and the police. Customers include past, present and potentials patronage. The primary role of corporate communication in this regard is to build brand loyalty (unlike marketing communications which tries to encourage or stimulate purchases). Marketing communications will typically present a company's products and services attractively so that

customers can like them and make purchases. Corporate communication will typically measure the degree of loyalty a customer has towards the company's products and services and develop action plans to ensure the customer remains loyal. The other side of the coin in this regard is for corporate communication to measure the company's degree of loyalty to its customers in order to retain the customer's patronage. Some supermarkets in the United Kingdom issue loyalty cards to their long-time customers and with those cards they get special discounts for anything they buy. One of the world's best known business leaders, Warren Buffet once asserted: *"If you lose dollars for the firm, I will understand. If you lose reputation for the firm, I will be ruthless."* Customer relationship management is a very important task of corporate communication because keeping a customer requires strategy and tactics. Often, what a consumer buys is not the product but the name and this is the challenge of corporate communication.

ii) Suppliers/Contractors/Consultants/Distributors

Often the Communication Unit work in conjunction with advertising agencies, printers, research consultants. These are generally referred to as the supplier/contractor/consultant publics. In addition, the suppliers, contractors and consultants to the organisation are a major target of corporate communication. For manufacturing organisations, the distributor relationship management is very important and should not be left entirely to the distribution department. The distribution department often is primarily concerned with ensuring that the goods get to distributors safely and on time. Corporate communication ensures that distributors are happy with doing business with the organisation, are treating customers well and are properly positioning the products, etc.

iii) Media

The media of external publics are radio, television, cable television, newspapers, magazines, billboards, house magazines, wire services, and Internet (These are generally known as the *mass media*). Publicity consultants who arrange publicity in the media also fall in this category of publics. It is important to note that media include also interpersonal media, not only mass communication media. Corporate communication's role is to ensure that the organisation is positively portrayed in these media. They also investigate the quality and characteristics of

the various media and advise management – how are the readers/viewers/listeners; what is the coverage; what is the cost-effectiveness of specific media, who are the journalists and what is their attitude to the organisation? etc. Relating with the media is not just regarding what is published; there must be personal relations management with the editors and other media personnel. Mass communication media have advantage of reaching wide spectra of people at the same time speedily. Ironically, this is the chief disadvantage of mass media: grouped audience. Corporate affairs must sift the audience and know the various audience characteristics. In addition, external interpersonal media should be used appropriately – tours, meetings, focus group discussions, courtesy visits, workshops, seminars, conferences, video conferencing, etc.

iv) Industry bodies

These are trade and professional bodies, e.g. Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Chartered Institute of Bankers, that are considered relevant to the organisation's interests. Market groups such as Consumer Protection Associations also fall into this category.

v) Competitors

Competition is an important area of business planning activity the corporate communication unit must take as a core function, working in tandem with other departments and units. Who are your competitors? What are their brands (and the strength and weaknesses of the brands? What is their market share and how much of the share will they hold in the near future and why? What is the style and vision of the CEO that just assumed leadership of a major competitor-organisation? Competition is readily recognizable in the private sector – in fact, it is the mainstay of free-market economy. An organisation that does not prepare very well to face existing and potential competitors is taking a serious risk. Even public utilities in the public sector which ignored competitive positioning over the years have suffered in reputation and profit. For instance, there was a time in Nigeria that the Nigeria Telecommunications (NITEL) had over-subscription and in fact had 'no' competitor. One had to lobby to get a telephone line and the organisation cared very little about how it treats its customers, much less competitors that did not exist. In 2000, the Federal Government granted licenses to more operators in the industry and NITEL has lost over 90 per cent of its

existing customers. In addition, the corporation missed out over 10 million subscribers that the new operators now boast of. Issues to consider by corporate planners are competitive rivalry (companies of almost equal market share battling to retain their shares sustain differentiation and maintain customer base), proactive measures for new entrants and threat of substitute products and services. We can now see that when a company produces an Institutional Advertisement (advert about what the organisation represents) it is supposed to convey a strategy meaning. If the management strategy is to differentiate rate, we should expect a corporate TV ad that states this, not one lofty, abstract poetic line.

vi) Government/Regulatory bodies

In a developing country such as Nigeria, the actions and inactions of the government (at local, state and federal levels) directly and indirectly impact on business. Government also controls regulatory bodies whose policies and programmes determine how things are done in the industry. Public relations can influence the abrogation of current laws and forestall the enactment of new ones that can negatively affect the attainment of set goals.

vii) Politicians, Pressure groups and Opinion Leaders

Opinion leaders are people outside the organisation whose views and opinions have profound influence on the organisation and its publics/services. In the sphere of business and social goods advocacy, there are people who have strong views and whose views constitute the voice of the industry. These are known as opinion leaders. As pointed out earlier, opinion leaders can be at micro and macro level, even at external public level. This explains a maxim that 'PR begins on the doorstep'. Good neighbourliness is perhaps one of the most elementary ingredient of PR. Some opinion leaders also exercise indirect influence – people adopt their own opinions on issues. Corporate relationship with politicians is very crucial to the survival of an organisation (although not all organisations have direct or indirect dealings with political affairs). Generally, any conglomerate or mega corporation must take political affairs seriously because policies and fortunes of the entire environment where it operates are markedly influenced by politics – who is the current governor or minister and who is likely to be the next governor or minister? Which laws are being proposed and how will they affect

the industry and the particular organisation? Who are the protagonists and antagonists etc? Often, an organisation cannot manage these challenges all alone; how does it form a communication synergy with other stakeholders to create suitable environment?

3.2 *A practical illustration: The Corporate Communication Policy of NICON Group of Companies*

Before privatization NICON had controlling shares in Niger Insurance PLC, NICON Hotels (owner of Nigeria's top hotel NICON Hilton Abuja), NICON Trustees, Assurance Bank, Nigeria Reinsurance Corporation and other investments in shares and stocks in blue chip companies. Some of the companies were severed before its sale to the present owners by the Federal Government. However, the new management led by Jimoh Ibrahim has re-positioned the company into a Group of Companies in order to re-solidify its asset and investment base. His vision is to emphasize investment into viable areas of business within and outside Nigeria. Within six months of its leadership, the Group now boasts of the following subsidiaries: NICON Investments, NICON Energy, NICON Sao Tome, NICON UK, NICON Academy, NICON Properties, NICON PFA, NICON Airways and NICON Hotels. (See 'Subsidiaries, below).

3.2.1 ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF THE NICON GROUP

Each company within the NICON Group is headed by a Chief Executive Officer and has autonomy in its administration. The CEOs report to the Group Managing Director, who reports to the Board of Directors. The NICON Insurance PLC, being the biggest subsidiary for now, has a distinct administrative structure in order to enable it fulfill its goals and maintain its leadership position. This arm has two CEOs (one in charge of LIFE and the other in charge of GENERAL business.) There are 12 Divisions: Legal & Administration; Corporate Affairs, Security & Protocol; Audit; Finance & Accounts, Information Technology; Marketing; Projects & Properties, Life & Pensions; Motor & General Accidents Division; Contractors All Risk Division; and Administration. NICON Insurance PLC currently has 51 branches in 36 states of the Federation. The mandate of the Branch & Acquisition Division is to develop additional 100 branches across the

country in order to provide room for the 1,000 new employees currently being recruited.

Five Chief Operating Officers have been appointed so far for NICON Insurance PLC and these divisions are being supervised by various COOs.

The following are the current COOs:

- Mike Torey (COO, Administration/HRM)
- A.M Maina (COO, Branch Development & Acquisition)
- P.T. Agboola (Senior Manager, Claims)
- Arobo Kalango (COO, Oil & Gas)
- Bayo Samuel (COO, South West Operations)

More COOs will still be appointed as the re-structuring and re-positioning continues to unfold. The Audit Department (headed by an Assistant General Manager) and Corporate Affairs Department (headed by a General Manager) report directly to the Group Managing Director's Directorate, although they have cross-functional functions to the relevant COOs. The two departments also service the Group. The **Office of the Group Managing Director** is coordinated by a Chief of Staff. There is a Lagos Office, which is being re-modeled to be a Group Lagos Office, where all companies within the Group will have offices because of the strategic business importance of Lagos.

The CEOs of the subsidiaries and the CEOs of the insurance arm constitute the highest management level of the group while for the NICON Insurance arm, Managers and above constitute the middle level management team while the GMD in council with the COOs constitute the higher management team for insurance. The CEOs of subsidiaries report to the GMD and to the Group Board. Each of the companies within the Group are to be grown within the next few months to have their boards and subsequently be turned over the public through sales of shares. Every member of the subsidiary will be returned to the market at the appropriate time, as they mature, for Nigerians to buy –through share purchase. The Nigeria market is big enough for challenges of competition,

and at the new NICON, we see competition as the fuel of our driving force. Every member in any sector of the economy shall strive to hold the first position. This is the challenge before the Chief Executive Officer of such member-companies and the entire workforce. At the new NICON, it is not the small that eats the big; it is the fast that eats the slow.

The management is determined to make the NICON privatization, a case study for institutions of international repute, such as the Harvard Business School.

We place priority on quality products and excellent service to our current and prospective clients.

The NICON Group holds various percentages of ownership in these companies; some 100%, some less. This is a deliberate attempt to make the companies competitive and profitable. Generally, apart from its over 40 per cent hold on total premiums generated on insurance in Nigeria, NICON Insurance also has substantial equity in Afribank and Union Bank PLC.

THE SUBSIDIARIES**NICON AIRWAYS LTD**

NICON Group of Companies Plc recently acquired one of Nigeria's airlines – EAS Airlines and it became NICON Airways. The company operate commercial, regular and charter operations in Nigeria with its two 737 Boeing aircraft. It planned to acquire six more aircraft of the same brand before the end of 2008 and commence operations in the West African sub-region as well as operate to-fro Europe and America.

NICON HOTELS LTD

NICON Hotels Ltd was one of the companies inherited from the old NICON Insurance Corporation. With its ownership of NICON Hilton Hotel (the number one hotel in Nigeria) severed from its sale to the new owners, NICON Insurance Corporation is left with only a two star hotel, Midway Inn, Makurdi. But the Jimoh Ibrahim management believes the Group can still invest profitably in hotel business. NICON Hotels Ltd currently has equity in Meidan Hotel and Apartments, Ajah, a five-star hotel now renamed NICON Hotels and hopes to acquire or/and brand many more hotels nationwide.

NICON SAO TOME & PRINCIPE

The government of the African Island, Sao Tome and Principe has approved NICON Insurance as the lead insurance company in the country. Finishing touches are being put in place to secure work and operations permit. NICON Sao Tome & Principe will soon take off formally.

NICON UNITED KINGDOM LTD

Prior to the acquisition of NICON Corporation by the current owners, the company only operated a branch office in the United Kingdom. The new Management has incorporated NICON UK Ltd as an independent subsidiary of the NICON Group, to operate in the United Kingdom as an Insurance firm.

NICON TRUSTEES LTD

The company was registered in 1987 to coordinate and manage shares, bonds and other investments in which NICON had stocks. This portfolio has been widened and the new NICON Trustees Ltd will operate as an independent stock company. The company is based in Lagos.

NICON INVESTMENT LTD

The direct investment portfolio has been removed from the schedule of NICON Trustees. This company is versioned to be a top player and income-yielding arm of the NICON Group. The move is strategic and would develop a huge financial base to back-up the Insurance arm of the group. The new NICON takes claims payment seriously and the secret of prompt claims payment is having huge cash backup through profitable investments.

NICON PROPERTIES LTD

The value of NICON's Properties is about forty billion naira as at date (2008). In order to properly manage these assets, NICON Properties has been incorporated. However, NICON's assets will be a very small percentage in the pool of businesses of the company. It is a full-scale into property business in Nigeria and abroad, especially in the area of real estate and mass housing schemes.

NICON ACADEMY

Formerly known as NICON College, this institution was set up in 1997 to train insurance employees (within and outside NICON). This schedule has been widened and the college is currently located in Jos, Plateau State. The college has chalets and other facilities as well as seven lecture halls. Each hall can accommodate 150 candidates at seating. The college will now undertake full range of financial training. In the near future the Academy will graduate into a Polytechnic or a University and the Group is looking at the possibility of affiliating it thereafter with an Ivy League university in the United States.

GROUP branding

- The NICON Group's image and brand policy is centrally aimed to strengthen 'NICON' as brand to sell the Group's products and services.
- The Corporate Affairs Department planned to position the brand as an identifiable product, service such that the buyer or clients can perceive its (or their) relevant unique values (intrinsic and extrinsic), which match their needs most closely.
- NICON name and logo/symbol were re-designed and re-presented to signify integrity and quality service easily distinguishable from similar services and products. The customers must be able to identify the company's products and services from a pool of similar services, identify and enjoy the specific benefit services that they offer, whether it is insurance, hotel, training, aviation or property.
- Despite the use of a common brand name, the Department planned strategically create distinct identities for our subsidiaries and sister companies, still strengthening the insurance brand which is our seed name and core business area.

NICON Insurance Brand

The following were projected in the Brand Book of the NICON Group (2008):

- “The Corporate Affairs Department shall position the NICON Insurance brand to retain its leadership position and strength in Nigerian insurance industry in the short run with our vision to make the insurance brand the one of the best in Africa and the World in the long run.
- The Corporate Affairs Department shall re-brand the insurance brand from the ‘parastatal image’ to a ‘private sector driven; profitable company, efficiency oriented outfit;
- The Corporate Affairs Department shall work in close concert with the Marketing Team to contribute to the Marketing Mix such that the Management Strategy of placing priority on Investments and Selective Underwriting (only profitable business is underwritten);
- The Corporate Affairs Department shall work with the Technical Department to create strong and unique products that are salient to the new NICON brand we are fostering;
- The core areas of our branding in the area of insurance are: brand awareness; brand loyalty and brand equity measurement.

Advertising & Public Relations

- Our golden rule in media strategy is “Know Thy Publics”. Who are our publics and who are our priority publics?
- Who do we want to reach and When?
- When we would be able to determine how and at what cost while also measuring our impact from time to time.

- PR being the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics, is very crucial in our branding. This is especially so for our insurance sub-group where business is done under utmost good faith. Insurance business is the transaction of integrity, which is what PR is all about.
- Every staff of NICON Insurance shall be position as a Public Relations man for the organization.
- Our core PR functions shall include advice and counseling; internal communications, lobbying, measuring and management of public opinion, publicity, social responsibility, developing and maintaining the corporate image and brand strength and managing our events; image crises management and other activities.
- Ethical considerations and sharp practices shall not be encouraged or condoned within the organization and in our relationship management with our publics.
- We shall not encourage sharp and unethical practices in insurance because this will adversely affect the integrity of our brand, our corporate image.
- We see advertising as just one element in the marketing communications mix and its use must conform to the ethical standards of the industry (the other elements being PR, sales promotion and personal selling).

Branding Sister Companies in the Group

- Branding policies of members of the NICON Group shall derive from the central brand book and policy for the NICON Group carefully tailored to the peculiarities of the industry in which they operate.
- There shall be Group Synergy in branding products and services of the NICON Group member companies in order to seek maximum benefits.”

3.2.3 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE CORPORATE AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

The Corporate Affairs Department of NICON Insurance was met by the new owners of NICON as a well-established Department with distinct functions, structures and very clear reporting lines. It had about 30 members of staff as at March 2006 with the main offices in Abuja (headed by a Deputy General Manager) and a regional office (headed by a Manager) in Lagos. The Department was located in the Managing Director's directorate, as should be and its main duties were:

- Advertising
- Public Relations, including media/publicity
- Lodgings/Accommodation and Protocols
- Promotions, e.g. trade fairs, exhibitions, etc.
- Printing that have to do with branding, e.g. letter heading papers, books, banners etc.
- Corporate gifts and Annual Reports. We have not been printing annual reports since privatization.
- Entertainment during management meetings (we have recently ceded this function to the Admin Department)
- Conferences and Seminars (professional training/courses not included)
- Government relations and public affairs
- Donations and sponsorships, especially those related to Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR.

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3.3 Self-assessment Questions

1. List and explain with practical examples the external publics of corporate communication.
2. List the top priority external publics (in your own view) of the following organisations:
 - Power Holding Company of Nigeria.
 - University of Lagos
 - MTN Communications (Nigeria) Ltd.
 - The Guardian Newspapers, Lagos.

4.0 Conclusion

Corporate communication publics or audiences can broadly be classified as 'external' (publics outside the organisation) and 'internal' (publics inside the organisation). Corporate communication planning and programmes must work out a seamless fusion of the two broad classes with each other and with overall strategic plan, goals and culture of the organisation.

5.0 Summary

External publics – customers, suppliers/consultants/distributors, media, industry bodies, competitors, government/regulatory agencies and politicians/pressure groups/opinion leaders – are very crucial to the planning and implementation of corporate communication objectives and goals.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

- a) Children teething syrup known as *Fine Pikin* was reported in the media to have caused the deaths of over 100 children nationwide. The CEO of the company said there was factor error during the manufacturing of the drug – supplier had sold to them an expired chemical used in preparing the

syrup. Now, the drug control agency has banned the drug and closed down the company's operations.

1. List and briefly explain the *external publics* that may have contributed to the above scenario.
 2. List and briefly explain the *external publics* that would be useful in resolving the problem.
- b) *"The external audience/publics of marketing communications and corporate communication are more or less the same. What distinguishes the two is the intent of the communicator."*

Discuss the above statement in not more than 200 words with illustrative examples of well-known organisations.

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 2 – THE AUDIENCES (PUBLICS) OF CORPORATE

COMMUNICATION

UNIT 2: – INTERNAL AUDIENCES (PUBLICS)

1.0 Introduction

The publics of corporate communications are like the two sides of a coin. Internal Audiences constitute the other side of the external public. Understanding Internal Publics is equally important (as understanding the External Publics) in corporate communication management. The Unit discusses the nature and role of Internal Publics.

2.0 Objectives:

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of Internal Audiences (Publics) of Corporate Communication and how they differ from External Audiences (Publics).
- Identify and prioritize internal publics of different organisations
- Explain the importance/role of the different components of the internal public of an organisation.

3.0 Main Content

Human Resource (HR) inputs are key to organizational success because without people, there can be no organizational activity. Although people in organisations tend to rate some employees and managers above the others (for instance, a senior finance manager could be regarded as more important than a driver), in reality everyone is important in an organisation; otherwise the employee who is thought to be unimportant should not have been hired. Once hired, everyone makes (or is expected to make) through his or her efforts, fundamental contributions to the organisation's activity. The development of 'intellectual

capital', the process through which people in organisations convert knowledge into assets, is one basic challenge facing corporate communication.

3.1 What is Internal Public of Corporate Communication?

Capon (2003) has aptly described what happens inside organisations:

One characteristic that all organisations share, irrespective of sector or activity is the fact that they take in resources, do something to them, then deliver outputs with higher value than the inputs had, as a direct result of processes to which they were subjected by the organisation (organisation resource conversion). A consumer appliance factory buys steel, passes it through its machines and the hands of its workers and sends out refrigerators that it sells for more than the cost of the steel and labour. A university recruits school or college leavers, submits them to several years' teaching, learning and assessments and passes out graduates who command higher salaries than they could have done without their educational experience.

After the HR people have employed the right managers and other personnel and everyone is up and running to meet set goals and targets, the most effective means of developing the right personnel commitment is communication. The following are the principal internal publics of Corporate Communication.

1. Employees

T.J. Larkin and S. Larkin (1994) recommend three 'best ways' to communicate change to employees:

- Communicating directly to supervisors (first line)
- Use of face-to-face communication
- Communicating relative performance of the local work area

Modern organizational communication should be without the complexity and jargon in written and spoken communication to facilitate comprehension.

According to Oakland (2004), employees of most organisations fall into four audience groups:

- Senior managers
- Middle Managers
- Supervisors
- Other Employees

Each of the above groups, Oakland states further, tends to have generally different attitudes to organizational processes. The average senior manager may perceive a new task to be an opportunity for both the organisation and him/her to benefit from while the middle managers may perceive the same task as yet another burden. The supervisors (first line of junior managers) may see the new task as another of those campaigns that would die or succeed. The other employees may not care as long as they will have jobs and get paid. The role of communication here is to knit a corporate fabric that will include all categories of people and drive them in the same direction, aiming at the same target.

“The key medium for motivating the employees and gaining their commitment to quality is face-to-face communication and visible management commitment. Much is written and spoken about leadership, but it is mainly about communication.” (Oakland, 2004).

Employee communication could be:

- *Verbal Communication:* Between individuals or groups using direct or indirect methods such as public address or recorded tape/video
- *Written Communication:* Notices, bulletins, reports, e-mail, memos.
- *Visual Communication:* Posters, films video, Internet, Intranet, demonstrations, displays, etc.
- *Examples:* Through the very way people conduct themselves and adhere to established working codes and procedures; through their effectiveness as communicators and ability to ‘sell’ good practices.

2. *The CEO/Board*

Whether in a private or public organisation, the image of the Chief Executive Officer tells directly on the persona of the organisation – whether that person is Managing Director of company, governor of a state, chairman of a local government, vice chancellor of a university or director-general of a parastatals. Unfortunately, rather than package an appropriate identity for the CEO and Board of Directors, many corporate affairs professionals in Nigeria tend to embark on just making the CEO visible in the media. Some even succumb to the pressures of publicity-crazy CEOs to embark on uncoordinated over-publicity of their CEOs. It is not about making the CEO known, but being known for the right things by people that matter.

Here is an illustration of how important CEOs are in corporate communication: A Burson-Marsteller CEO reputation study reported in *Business: the Ultimate Resource 2002*, showed that 94 per cent of analysts questioned said they would recommend a company's stock because of the *CEO's reputation*. Only 14 per cent said they had never heard of the CEOs from the ten largest US largest companies while 41 per cent said they had never heard of some of the European CEOs from companies of comparable size and global reach.

There should be two-way communication linking the Board and the management. For instance, in motivating managers and other key employees, the Board/CEO could give approval to increase allowances in order to motivate staffers. Consequently, people and machines will be networked through appropriate communication techniques, using the right communication tools so that the purpose of the incentive measures is achieved.

Bossidy and Charan (2002) illustrates this point lucidly with a hypothetical case:

One CEO is wrestling with this problem now: His Company has five businesses and the stock price has been static for the past years. Two years ago, he came from another company and he's done a good job of improving productivity but growth has been much less the aspirations. Unless its performance improves and the stock market rewards it with higher price/earning ratios, the company will have difficulty making many big acquisitions.

The CEO has laid out a five-year aspiration to inspire people to see what is possible. To flesh out his strategic plan, he's gotten his top hundred people together for two days to elicit ideas and get them fired up. He's now gotten each of his business units to think about new ways to create growth: new value propositions, new channels and new customs. He is changing benefits, behaviours, people and resource allocation. Now, he's creating an operating plan that has quarter-by-quarter action steps.

The above example describes why traditional communication barriers should be pulled down for all-inclusive, simple communication systems in the organisation. In Nigeria most corporate communication departments/units under-perform their roles concerning their boards. They probably assume that their only role is to publicize and distribute gifts to shareholders at the Annual General Meeting. In many cases, the board is not even visible until there is an Annual General Meeting. That is why we get to read in the press often how directors of boards occasionally get into trouble. There are more serious challenges for the corporate affairs people to ponder over than ensure the picture of the Board Members on the front page of the newspaper the next day. What happens when it is likely that the corporation will not produce acceptable financial results at the end of the year? What happens when the company has violated a civil or criminal law although it has not yet been sued? How do you handle a problematic director or chairman who controls reasonable shares but will not just key into the common goal of the board (has his/her own agenda)? How about political and personality clashes in the board which has a snow-ball effect? How does management secure the support of the Board for fantastic ideas to move the company when the Board seems to have completely different ideas?

3. Teams

“The creation and expression of knowledge takes place through social interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge, which takes the form of socialization, externalization, internalization and combination. When knowledge is explicit, it becomes ‘information’ which in turn has value as an input to human decision-making and capability. Tacit knowledge

(simply 'knowledge') remains intrinsic to individuals who have the capacity to act effectively in its use." –**John S. Oakland.**

Modern result-oriented organisations do not treat their employees just as individual employees. They often see them in teams (formal and informal task groups). (We shall discuss *Team and Leadership Communication* in greater detail in Module 3, Unit 3 of this Course.) When knowledge is shared, it maximizes performance and with learning innovation and improvement is encouraged. Teams, however, can only perform effectively when there is excellent intra- and inter-team communication. When team leaders are adequately trained to possess the required knowledge and skills to meet desired targets, communication is the greatest remaining attribute they need in order to hit the set target. Bossidy and Charan (2002) refer to it as 'coaching':

Coaching is the single most important part of expanding other's capabilities...It's the difference between giving orders and teaching people how to get things done. Good leaders regard every encounter as an opportunity to coach and the most effective way to coach is to observe a person in action and then provide specific useful feedback. When the leader discusses organizational issues in a group setting, everybody learns. Wrestling with challenging issues collectively, exploring pros and cons and alternatives and deciding which ones make sense increases people's capabilities both individually and collectively – if it's done with honesty and trust.

4. Internal Stakeholders

Stakeholders are individual or groups with an interest in an organisation. Internal stakeholders are employees, managers, directors, shareholders and local unions. Shareholders often act to influence the organisation to act in their best interests. They comprise of highly mixed categories of members of the public – some of whom are very influential and with access to facts, figures and the media. Effective communication with the internal stakeholder public should never be under-estimated. Perhaps the most challenging effort is how to design very effective two-way channels of communication with the shareholders. In big

corporations, labour unions are very active and vibrant. Two-way communication lines should also be open for this important public.

3.2 Self-assessment Questions

1. List and explain with practical examples the *internal publics* of corporate communication.
2. List the top priority *internal publics* (in your own view) of the following organisations:
 - i) Power Holding Company of Nigeria.
 - ii) University of Lagos
 - iii) MTN Communications (Nigeria) Ltd.
 - iv) The Guardian Newspapers, Lagos.

4.0 Conclusion

The Internal Publics of organisations are not limited to employees – three other publics – ‘CEO/Board’, ‘Teams’ and ‘Internal Stakeholders’ equally important.

The CEO/Board, Employees and Teams should be linked through effective communication techniques to drive corporate strategy and goals.

5.0 Summary

The four major internal audiences of corporate communication are: Employees, The CEO/Board, Teams and Internal Stakeholders (Local Unions and Shareholders).

When communication drives the CEO/Board, Teams and Employees into a web sustained by honest internally-derived dialogue towards implementing strategic corporate goals, success rate is much higher, all other things being equal.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

1. The heart of the working of a business is how the three processes of people, strategy and operations link together. Explain in not more than 250 words the audiences through which corporate communication can create this link. *List and briefly explain the internal publics that may have contributed to the above scenario.*
2. A children teething syrup known as *Fine Pikin* was reported in the media to have caused the deaths of over 100 children nationwide. The CEO of the company said there was factor error during the manufacturing of the drug – supplier had sold to them an expired chemical used in preparing the syrup. Now, the drug control agency has banned the drug and closed down the company's operations.

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

**MODULE 2 – THE AUDIENCES (PUBLICS) OF CORPORATE
COMMUNICATION**

UNIT 3: – MEDIA OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

1.0 Introduction

As in all spheres of Public Relations, 'the media' is very important in corporate communication. It is the means or channels through the corporate communication staff can reach its publics. To succeed, the corporate communication professional must have very good knowledge of the characteristics of the media available for him or her.

An organisation and its publics are like a big island surrounded by several small islands – some close by, others far away. Media is comparable to the bridges that link up these islands such that one can move to and fro the islands. Without the bridges, there is no way people on the islands can exchange information, knowledge, and ideas. In this Unit, we shall run through five principal things you must know about the media of corporate communication – i) what are the media resources for communicating with internal and external publics; ii) how does one plan these media (how do we know they will connect us well with our target audiences; iii) how do we budget for the media; iv) how should we handle media purchase considerations; and v) how do we know the media have fulfilled our expectations/goals?

2.0 Objectives:

After going through this Unit, you should be able to:

- List and explain the various kinds of media channels for reaching internal and external audiences of corporate communication and sharing information, knowledge, ideas and meaning with them.
- Also know the advantages and disadvantages of the various media channels.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Media Resources

There are a plethora of media resources available today for corporate relations practitioners to choose for interacting with their target audiences – thanks to

advances in communications technology. The dominantly used media in this regard are:

1. Newspapers
2. Newsletters
3. Brochures
4. Pamphlets
5. Magazines
6. Manuals
7. Books
8. Letters
9. Internet (Note that the Internet also now provides radio, TV, newspaper and magazine access)
10. Intranet (an Internet-based electronic service that enables employees and management to exchange information within an organisation; it operates like e-mail.
11. Memo
12. Inserts/Enclosures (specially packaged information inserted into magazines and newspapers)
13. House Journal (magazine produced by an organisation as a vehicle of communication with its external publics)
14. Printed and re-printed speeches
15. Bulletin Boards/Indoor display boards
16. Posters
17. Billboards
18. Meetings

19. Conferences

20. Tele-conferencing (also known as video conference; an e-media aided by satellite which enables meetings by participants separated by wide distance such that they can see and hear one another without physically being in contact.)

21. Television (free to air, cable and digital satellite)

22. Radio

23. Documentaries (circulated via CD ROM/DVD; offline media)

24. Websites and Internet media hosted by organisations; video text and teletext are for instance media resources on the Internet which provide electronic viewing of products on screen and ordering via telephone link)

25. Telephone handset (GSM)

26. Direct mailing/courier

27. Close Circuit Television (CCTV) – makes it possible to telecast live or by videotape and film to a large number of employees at the same time.

28. Short feature films

29. Wire services and news syndicates

30. Home videos

We have deliberately refrained from separating internal and external communication media as found in most textbooks because in practice, such separation does not exist. Virtually all the media listed above can be used for both internal and external publics, although it is true that some are more effective for internal publics while others are more suitable for external publics. For example, we can use meetings, conferences, CD/DVD, telephone handset and the Internet to interact with employees (internal public) as well as with newspaper editors (external public). The important thing is for the practitioner to know who he or she wants to reach and how best to reach them and the make the most impact.

While the 'power' of TV, radio, newspapers, magazines and outdoor media (billboards) remain traditionally 'strong', high costs and technology have led to the emergence of new and powerful media. The golden rule therefore remains, 'know thy publics'. If the practitioner knows who the audiences are, it will not be too difficult to make basic media considerations. If a text message will do a better job to communicate with a target audience, it will be uneconomical and inept to buy a full page space in a national newspaper for the same task, unless there are extraneous PR reasons to do so.

3.2 Media Planning

Pickton and Brodrick (2005) have listed nine (9) questions that determine media objectives:

- i) **Who** do we want to reach?
- ii) **When** do we want to reach them?
- iii) **Where** do we want to reach them?
- iv) **How** many do we need to reach?
- v) **How frequently** do we need to reach them?
- vi) **With what impact** and **effect**?
- vii) **What media** provide the best micro-environment and conditions for all the above?
- viii) **At what cost**?
- ix) Can we **improve** on it.

All nine questions above may be summarized into **reach, frequency** and **impact**.

Reach

Media reach is the number of members of the target audience who are exposed at least once to the communication during a specified period. Sometimes the terms 'coverage' or 'penetration' are used as alternatives to 'reach'. Usually,

reach is expressed in percentages although sometimes it is expressed in numbers. Thus, we can say 60 per cent of the target audience will be reached or 5,500 members of the target public will be reached.

Pickton and Brodrick note that “being exposed to a message is not the same as being affected by it (impact) and there is also a difference between ‘exposure to the message’ and ‘exposure to the media vehicle’”. A single advertisement may be placed in a magazine that is received by 30 per cent of a target audience. The medium (i.e. the magazine) may be received by 30 per cent but the actual advertisement may, in reality, be read by only 15 per cent of the same target audience.

When planning the media, we are primarily interested in our target audience, not the general population. Some clients insist that the advert agency should put their ad in XYZ Newspaper because “it is the most widely-read”, whereas a local evening newspaper more clearly reaches the targeted segment. Which of the two mediums connects the organisation the more with people for whom the advert is meant? Research and creativity help a lot in attaining satisfactory media reach. Where hard data are not available, it is worth the money for organisations to conduct researches into media reach. Where data are available, what to look are: circulation figures; readership, viewers’, listeners’ surveys and rating points. Circulation figures in Nigeria are shrouded in secrecy by most media organisations. Yet, independent researches have confirmed that frequency data being peddled are exaggerated. Even in advanced countries where more reliable statistics are available, professional media planners do not heavily rely on the statistics. Circulation figures are in fact regarded as a wide measure of reach by experts who prefer audience studies and media rating done by reputable research firms.

Concerning internal public media reach, this should not be difficult to determine. For instance, one can easily monitor who and who received e-messages from a control/or monitoring room. The same principles apply – giving an employee free in-house magazine is no evidence that he or she will read its contents.

Frequency

The measure of a number of times, on average, that a member of the target audience is 'exposed' to the media is known as 'frequency'. Some experts argue that reach should be 'exposure to the message,, not to the media'. However, a more realistic measure is exposure to media, which is technically referred to as Opportunities To See (OTS) for print media or Opportunities To Hear (OTH) for the broadcast media.

Frequency helps to enhance impact because research has proved that when people are repeatedly exposed to a message, impact tends to be higher than fewer exposures (other things being equal). At the same time, over-exposure will 'bore out' the viewer or reader.

Consider this: A Corporate Affairs Director intends to discourage late-coming among employees and turns out a beautiful, creative corporate ad. The media manager suggests that the ad be placed in electronic indoor boards inside the company's lifts. The Director thinks putting the ad in the company's in-house journal is better. In terms of reach and frequency, which is the better medium? Every member of staff goes in (resumption) and out (closing) via the lifts at least once every working day. Can you compare this exposure with how many times the same employees will likely read the in-house magazine and come across the ad? However, in terms of impact, it is possible that this may present another scenario. One way to increase frequency is to use multiple media, instead of one or few.

Impact

Impact measures the effects we get by using a particular medium. To what extent does the medium help to create the effect that we have in mind? Impact is difficult to measure, partly because several factors contribute to make a communication effort impacting. The copy attributes of an ad; the predisposition of the audience at the time of exposure (for instance, someone who just lost his son may not even notice an ad running on a TV) and of course the issue of frequency are some of these factors.

To overcome this challenge, advertisers measure 'media weight' – total score of points assigned to 'reach' and 'frequency'. It is assumed that the heavier the weight, the greater the impact should be. In more developed countries, there are

rating organisations whose tasks are to rate the media. For small media used for internal communications, impact is more easily measured. For instance, questionnaires can be distributed to determine this, before, during and after exposure. But most corporate communication units of organisations in Nigeria often do not bother to measure media impact, not even the media for communicating with internal publics (which can be done at much lower costs). They erroneously believe that there is exposure and that exposure logically translates into impact. This can be misleading, especially when exposure is not even reliably ascertained.

3.3 Media Budgeting

In theory, the PR Department could have worked out the reach, frequency (and hopefully the right impact) but in practice, the intervening variable is how much money is available to buy space and time?

It is from the overall budget for the whole communication task that appropriation is made for media. Again, what is appropriated may not be what is released by management (due to valid economic reasons). There are three major ways of budgeting:

- *Affordable Method*- what the organisation or the Department can afford;
- *Object-Task Method* – what is ideal or required based on the task to be executed.
- *Competitive-parity method* – what close competitors spend

Each of these methods has unique advantages and disadvantages. However, by far the objective-task method often produces better results, since it is derived from the corporate strategy blue print. Through creative and informed planning, it should be possible to apply a combination of the budget types.

For instance, a Corporate Communication Unit budgets N40 million for media and the company is able to release only N20 million for the tasks. This budget is possible if there is reliable data on reach, frequency and impact. For example, assume an advert is targeted at Oyo State Government officials and that these target public is more exposed to *Nigerian Tribune* and that a full page ad in *Tribune* costs N500,000. Let us assume further that we need three insertions to

achieve the desired reach, frequency and impact and that this translates to N1.5 million. But the management could only afford N500,000. We can do several things to attain the objective, still spending N500, 000:

- Do half-page ad published three times
- Re-design the copy to arrest the attention and prestige that a full page ad could have carried.
- Use the surplus derived from the above-stated to buy airtime on Oyo TV and Radio.
- Issue press release at no extra cost to the subject and assurance of it being published in several dailies.

What helped in the above scenario is knowledge, creativity and good understand of the task.

3.4 Media Buying

What really helped in resolving the aforementioned hypothetical example was 'media buying principles' applied. Media buying is the actual selection of particular media vehicles after determining the percentage ratio of each and considering their costs. For instance, a company may decide to spend N25 million on newspapers in Nigeria in a week; media buying considerations would indicate how much of this goes to *Punch, Guardian, Newswatch, Tell* and *Ikale News*.

What guides the practitioner, are economy, efficiency and effectedness. A central concept in media planning is CPT (Cost Per Thousand). It is a formula to determine cost effectiveness across media range and is calculated by dividing the cost of advertisement (or cost of item) by the number of members of the target audience reached.

For instance, if the task is to reach editors of five national dailies with a 'press kit' and it costs N1,000 per person per direct mail, the CPT is calculated thus:

$$\text{CPT} = \frac{5,000}{5} = \text{N}1,000$$

5

Pickton and Brodrick list the following media buying variables:

Broadcast media

- Broadcast area
- Multichannel
- Audience size/rating
- Broadcast time (time of the day)
- Length of spot (seconds)
- Number of spots (volume and frequency)
- How bought (audience ratings package, fixed time rates, run of week rates, specific spot rates)
- Sponsorship package
- Production package
- Production costs

Press

- Type of ad – display, semi-display, lineage, insert, etc.
- Position of ad
- Style of ad; colours, photographs, usage, bleed, etc.
- Volume (how many insertions/how much discount allowed)

Magazines

- Size of ad
- Volume/circulation
- Audience characteristics
- Availability of regional variation

- Print run
- Production cost

Internet

- Type (banner, banner link, logo and logo with link, etc.)
- Size of ad
- Number of ads ('sites')
- Owner of site
- Handling rates

Posters/Billboards

- Location
- Position
- Volume of traffic
- Type/ number of sites
- Size
- Quality of print
- Length of time
- Production cost

Direct Mail

- Size of mail-out
- Cost of mailing list
- Cost of maintaining the list

- Separation of mailing
- Quantity of material
- Weight of material and postage
- Production cost

3.5 Media Evaluation

Because the media gulps the bulk of corporate communications budget, it is only logical to evaluate media implementation and impact. The top management would certainly need to have justification for such huge financial commitments. The questions to ask are:

- Have media objectives been achieved?
- Have Reach, Frequency and Impact been actualized?
- Have the media performed as expected?
- Were the media the best selected?
- Was media-reach the best that could have been achieved?
- Was the balance of media allocations right?
- Did the secondary media fully support the primary medium?
- Have the media been bought well?
- Was media properly related to other corporate communication tasks?
- How did competitors feature in the media in the period of the campaign?

3.6 Self-assessment Questions

1. Define the following:

- Reach
 - CPT
 - Media Buying
 - Frequency
2. List seven (7) questions that could help evaluate the media in a corporate communication campaign

4.0 Conclusion

The media traditionally gulps a large chunk of corporate communication budget because media cost is usually high both when communicating with internal and external publics.

The five key areas of media in corporate communication are: media resources, media planning (reach, frequency and impact), media budgeting, media buying and media evaluation.

5.0 Summary

There are at least 30 vehicles through which corporate communication messages and ideas can reach and impact on its internal and external publics. Media planning involves determining the *reach* (members of the target audience who are exposed at least once to the communication during a specified period); *frequency* (number of times on average that a member of the target audience is exposed, and *impact* (the effect of the exposure).

Another key area in handling media in corporate communication is Media Budgeting. This could be based on affordable method, objective-task method and competitive-parity method.

Media buying is principally based on the type the medium among other variables. Evaluation of media is usually hinged on attainment of set objects regarding reach, frequency, impact, cost and competitive positioning.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

- i) List three factors affecting media buying concerning the following media types:
 - Broadcast Media
 - The Press
 - Posters & Billboards.
- ii) List the media resources available for corporate communication and explain any five of them
- iii) The Department of Corporate Communication of a bank intends to reach its 500 agents scattered across Nigeria. In not more than 100 words, advise the management on media resources to reach this public and justify your recommendation.

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 3 – TECHNIQUES OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

UNIT 1 – ADVERTISING

1.0 Introduction

In this Unit (and the next three units) we shall look at major techniques used in corporate communication, i.e. how we solve corporate communication challenges. It is important to note that creativity is the watch-word in PR generally (and by extension Corporate Communication). Even when one wants to adopt using these techniques, one still has to be creative to make the right impact. Good, impacting ideas, result-oriented use of media, and combination of techniques to attain the right mileage.

2.0 Objectives

By the time you are through with this Unit, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of advertising – what advertising contributes to the corporate communication mix.
- Explain the meanings and types of advertisements and the qualities of good advertisements.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Definitions

Advertising may be defined as ***“any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor.”***

(Philip Kotler, 1999).

Another definition of advertising is: ***“paid non-personal communication from an identified sponsor using mass media to persuade or influence an audience.”***

(Wells, W, 1992).

Crossier (1999) defines it as “communication via a recognizable advertisement placed in a definable advertising medium, guaranteeing delivery of an unmodified message to a specified audience in return for an agreed rate for the space or time used.”

Let’s look at the salient points in the above definitions:

- Kotler highlights key elements of advertising in his definition: i) it must be paid for (unlike publicity for instance); ii) the sponsor must be identified in the advert copy; iii) presentation covers not only goods but also ideas or services (the elements makes it a tool for corporate communication particularly); and iv) ‘non-personal’ means it is addressed to a heterogeneous group, not to a single individual.
- Wells add placement in mass media in their definition, but as we shall see, advertisement can now be placed in interpersonal media (thanks to new technologies which have narrowed the distinction between ‘mass’ and ‘interpersonal media’; there is now media

convergence, e.g. handphones (interpersonal communication tool) have mass media facilities (Internet, TV and radio). Many interpersonal media now carry advertisements.

- Crossier adds 'guarantee of delivery', 'unmodified message' and 'an agreed rate' to principally distinguish advertising from similar techniques used in PR such as publicity, product placement/positioning and special features.

There is no uniform opinion on the percentage share of 'advertising' in the marketing communications mix. Generally, in marketing communications, advertising takes a wider and more dominant role, sometimes gulping over 70 per cent of total marketing communications budget. The application of advertising in corporate communication is known as '*institutional advertising*' or '*corporate advertising*'. Unlike product ads, institutional ads promote the organisation, using basically the same general principles of advertising. Thus, its share of corporate communication budget is usually much less than it is in marketing communications.

The most important contribution of advertising technique to corporate communication is perhaps in the creativity of message and skillful presentation which aid persuasibility and understanding. Though the measurement of advertising impact is difficult to ascertain, there is consensus amongst professional communicators that advertising is a 'powerful force' in message transmission, delivery and impact. For example, a TV ad can use drama, demonstration and special effects to enhance the quality of presentation thereby increasing potential impact. Advertisements can help build the reputation of a brand and that of the owner of the brand, especially when interpreted with other campaign elements such as 'creativity' and 'effects'.

Note that 'advertisement' is the advert design, including the message communicated and that 'advertising' is the act of producing and transmitting advertisement, thus we have advertising agency which serves as a link between the advertiser and the public. An advertising agency designs and links up with the media which would eventually transmit the

advertisements. Examples of advertising are billboard posters, Television commercials (TVC), radio commercials (RVC).

3.2 Types of Advertisements

i) Full-display advertisements

These are advertisements that take advantage of full creative opportunities afforded by the press, i.e. the printed media. Full display ads permit the use of colour, graphics and text with little or no creative limitation. They are typically found in the main text of newspapers, magazines and journals placed Run of Page (ROP) and could cover an entire page or occupy less space. Some of such ads run over two pages (known as DPS – double page spread). When placed in special positions of pages, they attract additional charges. When broadcast, this kind of ad is known as ‘commercials’ and charges are made based on the duration of the ad.

ii) Semi-display advertisements

They are similar to full-display ads but have limitations in their design – often they contain no graphics. In Nigeria, ‘Public Notice’ ads were regarded as semi-display ads and used to cost more. Now, the distinction between public notices and product ads is hardly made by major print media.

iii) Classified advertisements

Also known as lineage/wordage ads, this form of ads are printed under specific headings or classifications and are usually brief and to-the-point. Some newspapers in Nigeria have incorporated display designs into traditional classified advert layouts. Classified ad space is charged based on counting of lines occupied (hence it is also known as ‘lineage advertisement’) or counting of the number of words used (hence ‘wordage advertisement’).

iv) Advertorials

These are advertisements that are made to look like editorial matter. This technique is particularly suitable for corporate messages in that it allows the message not to be overtly commercial in appearance or presentation. In Nigeria, the traditional term used for this kind of advertisements is ‘Supplement’ but the common terms now used for it are ‘advertorial’ or ‘special focus’ or ‘special report’. Advertising ethics require that advertorials be indicated as such, to distinguish it from other editorial matter.

v) *Informercials & Intermercials*

These are TV commercials designed to convey large amounts of information. They are the broadcast media equivalents of ‘advertorials’. Long commercials which contain more information than normal commercials are regarded as *informercials*. *Intermercial* is the Internet version of TV commercial which appears between viewing web pages.

vi) *Direct Response Ads*

These are advertisements that require the audience to respond to the ad, e.g. completion of forms or coupons, making telephone calls, sending an e-mail, etc.

vii) *Web Page/Home*

These are pages of information placed within websites on the Internet. They combine qualities of print ad and TV commercials in that they can display colour, graphics, video, text and animation.

viii) *Banner Ads and Bannerlinks*

These are forms of Internet Advertisement. Banner ads are advertisement banners which may contain the advertiser’s name, a graphic and a brief message. Banner ads are usually ‘enhanced’ to arrest the attention and interest of the web browser – flips, blinks, scrolls, drop-ins, drop-units, etc. *Bannerlink* is a banner and that has a link (‘hypertext’) to the advertiser’s domain website.

3.3 Qualities of Good Corporate Advertisements

Often, people assume that advertisements that are creative, mind-arresting or masterfully-designed are automatically 'good' advertisements. This is not necessarily the case. The more important things to bear in mind is the bottom line (sales) and pictures created in the minds of the audience (image) created by such institutional ads. Advertisements are only a part of several things that affect the perception of the audience. Emphasis should be on the ad achieving the intent of the advertiser not on beauty. Not all commercials are meant to stimulate direct purchases. Some are aimed at just creating awareness and when awareness is created by it, such an ad is deemed successful. If an ad is aimed at increasing trials and this is not achieved, then the effort is not successful. Some other ads are just to keep reminding the audience of the brand. Pickton and Broderick (2005) list the following qualities of good advertisements, generally-speaking;

Print Ads

1. Clear message; reader should be able to tell instantly what the ad is all about.
2. There is a benefit in the headline
3. Illustration should support the headline
4. Copy, especially the first line, should support or explain the copy or illustration
5. There must be a Unique Selling Point (USP) (or unique selling proposition) in the ad for the audience.
6. The entire copy must be easy-to-read
7. Design should be legible or readable
8. Advertiser/product should be clearly identified
9. Should avoid excess words or phrases – every word, graphic must play a vital role

10. Linkage with previous communications
11. Brand name/logo presence
12. Should be believable
13. Should attract the audience

Posters/Billboards

1. Easy to read at high speed
2. Striking and 'grabbing' visuals – pleasing to the eyes
3. Should provoke an action/reaction
4. Should be noticeable
5. Memorable (especially headline and illustration, and possibly text)
6. Message must link indirectly with information in previous or other ads in other media (harmony).
7. Unique Selling Point must be very identifiable.

Radio

1. Pleasing to the ears
2. Written and produced to make up for the sense of smell, touch and seeing i.e. try to make the listener see, smell and touch with the copy.
3. Should arrest attention (often by exciting the imagination of listeners).
4. The right diction that suits the target listener must be used.
5. A clear USP – the overall intent or benefit of the ad
6. A strong central idea (do not cram in too many things)
7. Should have accompanying 'mnemonics' – words, music and effects that register well in the audience's mind
8. Identifies the brand clearly

9. Message contains 'news' or sounds important
10. The commercial should be generally 'friendly' – humour, voice-over tone, etc.
11. Harmonize copy with ad messages in other forms of media
12. Make it memorable

Television and Cinema

1. The strongest most provocative idea should be the central message
2. The message must have a USP
3. Clear, explicitly-stated central message
4. Call to action (TV ad is expensive and is not out to just entertain).
5. Brand consistency (make it compatible with previous communication about the organisation).
6. Identification – e.g. logo, pay off/slogan, brand
7. Picture and sound quality should be very good
8. Use appropriate vocals and sound effects.
9. Make it memorable
10. Must not be overloaded (e.g. too many scenes, too many words, too many actions).
11. Use words as could be understood by the viewer
12. Make the concept, visuals and words logical
13. The opening shots must secure interest or attraction
14. Elicit viewer involvement as much as possible
15. The TV commercial should not be exaggerated (should be believable)

16. It should be possible to abridge the commercial to half its time or less (during the campaign) without losing anything vital. This saves the advertiser a lot of money.

3.4 Self-assessment Questions

1. Define *Institutional Advertising*
2. List with illustrative examples, well-known mediums in Nigeria and the various types of advertisements you have seen through them. E.g. *The Guardian*, display ads, AIT informercials, TVCs, etc.

4.0 Conclusion

- Institutional or Corporate Advertising applies advertising theory and principles towards building corporate identity/image for an organisation.
- All types of advertisements and advertising used to promote products and services can also be used to sell an organisation's corporate image.
- As much as possible, institutional advertising should not be one-way communication, but should have in-built feedback (direct or implied; immediate or delayed).

5.0 Summary

Advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor.

What distinguishes other advertising from corporate advertising is that the latter is to 'sell the image/identity of an organisation' while the former is to 'sell the specific attributes of products and services'. Informercials, Intermercials,

Advertorials, direct response ads, web page/home page ads and banner ads and forms of advertisements that can be used for corporate or institutional ads.

Qualities of good ads are best measured by the result/outcome/'effects' generated by the ads in the audience, not necessarily blind creativity. Ads/commercials should have clear message, be attractive, memorable, elicit response and should be believable.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

1. List and explain five (5) good qualities of ads to be run in the of following media: radio, TV, billboard and newspapers.
2. How can the advertiser know that an institutional ad is successful?
3. Cut out copies of five (5) of different institutional or corporate ads in any Nigerian newspaper or/and magazine.

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 3 – TECHNIQUES OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

UNIT 2 : – PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES

1.0 Introduction.

The title of this Unit – Public Relations Techniques – may appear a little confusing to you because as we pointed out in Unit 1, Corporate Communication is a sub-field of Public Relations. How come then that we have ‘Public Relations Techniques’ as a sub-unit in a Corporate Communication course?

We have used the term ‘public relations techniques’ here as an operation term to describe various techniques generally used in the PR profession. Advertising, Branding and Leadership/Team Communication are also discussed in this module, simply to give special emphasis on them; they use basically the same techniques. As a core component of PR, Corporate Communication employs the same basic techniques of PR. Recall that in Module 2, Unit 1, we said ‘techniques’ are ways we implement corporate communication tasks! The following are the major PR techniques used in corporate communication:

1. Publicity
2. Sponsorship and donations
3. Events
4. Lobbying
5. Merchandising & Packaging
6. Product Placement
7. Research

2.0 Objectives

When you are through with this Unit, you should be able to:

- Identify the PR techniques appropriate for different corporate communication challenges.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of such PR techniques.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Publicity

Publicity is a major tool for corporate communication, both for internal and external publics. Though traditionally regarded as one-way media system (hence the use of 'media relations' by some scholars and PR practitioners. Nkwocha (cited by Onabajo, 2005) lists eleven objectives of media relations thus:

Publicity Tools (External Publics)

(a) Press Conference

The organisation invites journalists to a conference to clarify or explain important issues concerning the organisation. Note that a press conference is supposed to be two-way communication; if an organisation would not take questions, then instead of calling a press conference, it can issue a press statement. In corporate communication, a member of the senior management is most suitable to address a press conference – the more senior the person is, the more important the subject matter is.

Some organisations call journalists who are familiar with the organisation for press conference instead of sending a blank invitation to the Editor. This has an advantage since the pre-existing relationship with the journalist is expected to create more 'understanding'. The 'new' journalist would have to be fully briefed. However, the rules and traditions of each media organisation may differ. Sometimes, it is better to let the Editor choose who will attend the conference. A fire accident in an oil and gas company may be better reported by a health and safety correspondent than an energy reporter, despite the latter's assumed familiarity with the beat.

(b) Press Statement/Press Release

This is a statement issued by an organisation stating facts or its position on an important matter or its position on an important issue of public interest, which is also of interest to the organisation. They are usually published in form of advertorials or advertisements. *Press Releases* are basically news reports written by an organisation for publication in the news media. They are usually written when a newsworthy event occurs in an organisation without a news reporter being present or when the organisation has made a breakthrough that is worthy publicizing. Therefore, a press release should have all the elements of news – timely, informative, etc. It must have news treatment complements such as having a headline (title), by line (name of writer), dateline (where the story is written), contacts (telephone, designations, e-mail, etc.). It must be signed with a date. If photographs would elaborate the news, it should accompany the release and photographs must have captions.

A press release should be written professionally such that the News Editor would be spared the burden of re-writing it, but only making minor editing. This is to the advantage of the organisation. Note also that broadcast media and print media have different styles and codes of writing news. Let your press release conform accordingly. After sending a release, the Department should follow up and after publication to say 'thank you' – publicity is two-way in corporate communication.

(c) The Exclusive Story

Sometimes, an organisation uses only one media organisation to disseminate important information rather than circulate it among all media. This entails the Corporate Communication Department inviting a journalist for personal exclusive briefing or a detailed release sent to him or her exclusively. This is known as the Exclusive Story. But it should be used with caution. Firstly, the media being used must be very influential among the public being targeted. Secondly, care must be taken that the Department is not identified as the

source of the 'leakage' because it can create misgivings among other reporters who cover the beat. The major advantage of exclusive stories over releases and statements is that it is usually given greater prominence by the media house. Most exclusive stories are 'page one' materials when properly released.

(d) Media Parley

This is a meeting arranged for journalists with the appropriate official of the organisation, (usually the CEO or Corporate Communication Director), usually in an informal setting, e.g. over breakfast, lunch, after a game of tennis, etc. Unlike a press conference, parleys are to build familiarity/rapport strategically with selected journalists. Such interaction is most usually held outside the organisation's premises and could be effectively used to establish sustained goodwill and favourable publicity, especially if it is followed up. A parley is not supposed to be one-off. The CEO should build up on such meetings and ensure there is genuine two-way communication. The Corporate Communication Director should however take caution in organizing parleys as some smart journalists do capitalize on it to bypass them for the CEO. This may be costly to the organisation because the CEO, who may not be a communication professional might not know how best to handle journalists and information.

(e) Media Tours

Media tours are like parleys, but it is more on enlightenment and the outcome is meant for publication, unlike parleys. Media tour is also a tool to 'reward' journalists who have been understanding or supportive, giving them escape from the rigours of the profession for a while. Besides, journalists often go home with hefty tour allowances and gifts after the tour, which creates goodwill.

(f) Press Kit

A press kit is a folder that contains assorted information about the organisation – anything from recent press statements, key contacts, brochure, short profiles of top staffs, photographs, etc. Such kits are usually helpful when reporters need information very quickly about issues and time may not permit communications with the organisation.

(g) Interviews/Feature Articles

Interviews are like exclusive stories except that they could take place with several journalists at the same time. Unlike “exclusives”, interviews are not always news-centred. They could be profiles, in-depth interviews or interviews for building up feature stories. The staff being interviewed must be properly prepared for the interview so that he or she knows “the boundaries” of what to say. Feature articles are detailed informative reports with more background facts and more stylish reporting than news.

(h) Documentaries

These are features meant for the broadcast media – radio and television. They are similar to feature articles in magazines and newspapers. A documentary may be an investigative report, a profile, an expose or a news analysis and could last ten, twenty or more minutes and in some cases run for an hour in an episode. It could also be run as a series.

(i) House Magazines

An organisation can produce its own news magazine to report its activities, especially if the organisation is a conglomerate. Copies of the magazine are then circulated to principal publics of the organisation, including the mass media. Such magazines, which should be professionally-produced like standard magazines, are known as house journals or house magazines. They usually contain news and educative contents; it is not an opportunity by the Corporate Communication Director to please the CEO or seek his favour by

spotlighting him unduly. House magazines are published periodically (monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly).

(j) Inserts/Enclosures

Special features, speeches, photo-shots produced by the organisation are put loosely (usually for a fee) in trade journals or newspapers/magazines as inserts. The materials are not attached to the publication – they are merely inserted.

(k) Diaries/Calendars

Calendars still constitute very good publicity tools but diaries are becoming old-fashioned because of rapid changes in technology. Most people prefer electronic diaries to keep records and remind them of events. The display-effect still makes the calendar very important.

Publicity Tools (Internal)

(a) Publications

The organisation can produce different kinds of publication created principally to foster a two-way communication with the internal publics, e.g. in-house magazine, newsletter, books, newspaper. They are produced to solve specific communication challenges and must be two-way: the publisher reports and analyzes events and information to achieve its aims and objectives and the reader (in modern corporate communication magazines) is given opportunity to also write back (through the publication) his or her impressions on the issues published.

(b) Inserts and Enclosures

The CEO's speech, citations/photographs of awards given by external publics, press cuttings and other information could be inserted in in-house publications for employees and shareholders as inserts and enclosures.

(c) Bulletin Boards

Bulletin Boards (information boards) can be placed strategically in company premises as tools of communicating with the internal publics. Stakeholders such as unions, members of staff should be encouraged to have such boards at their disposal to talk back to management (although the Corporate Communication Department should exercise some forms of gatekeeping of information intended for publication before there are pasted). Bulletin boards are veritable tools for multi-network communication. Effort should be made to ensure that information on the board does not stay long to prevent it getting it stale. (People do not read Notice Boards when they know there is nothing new on it).

(d) Teleconferencing/CCTV

Big organisations now use satellite-enhanced video networking to hold meetings with their internal publics who may be separated by distance through a system known as video conferencing. Close Circuit Television (CCTV) makes live video telecast possible within the organisation on a smaller scale.

(e) Displays

Loose handbills, roll-up banners, small display boards can be placed strategically within the organisation to convey information, ideas and knowledge in attractive, creative ways.

3.2 Sponsorships

Sponsorship is a contribution to an activity by an organisation in cash or kind with the expectation of achieving direct or indirect benefit for the particular public. This technique has been found to be effective tool in building reputations for organisations, excellent for competitive positioning and for influencing partners, company staff, civil officials and government regulators.

For example, organisations such as Heineken and Nike have earned marketing leverage by constantly sponsoring big football events over the years because the sponsorships has helped them in some respects to 'silence' direct competitors. A sponsor usually forbids direct competitors from also co-sponsoring, which is rarely possible with direct advertisements. The issue of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become volatile, especially in developing countries where big corporations do not have a tradition of giving back to the communities where they derive wealth. Examples of sponsorships include: scholarship awards, project funding, all- or part-expenses-paid trips, funding of cultural festivals and investigations or researches.

Whatever the item sponsored, the principal thing is that it must fulfill specific corporate or marketing objectives of the sponsor in the short or long run. Sponsorships are often used as tools to promote brands or make brands more visible. Unlike in developed countries, sponsorship does not attract huge support in Nigeria (when compared to direct advertising). A multinational organisation such as Cocacola, which employs corporate marketing over and above product marketing communications, spends much more money on sponsorships than on product ads. Apart from the hospitality/goodwill generated from the sponsorship, this tool offers additional benefits such as face-to-face interactions, knowing key contacts among publics and opportunities for long term branding. The organisation can use photographs and reports generated from the sponsorship to further promote its goodwill before other publics.

Smaller organisations do organise *fundraising* for worthy causes when they cannot afford to sponsor or donate. It leads to the same goodwill.

The major negative sides of sponsorship are that some situations when a sponsor has a negative image (for instance when the American owner of *Vicks Lemon Blue*

candy professed to be a worshipper of satan, it negatively impacted the image of the agency in Nigeria). Similar, when the Nigeria Football Federation was accused of corrupt practices, the image of its sponsors, *Glo* (a major communications company in Nigeria) was called to question. Also when there are too many sponsors ('sponsorship clutter') maximum value-for-money benefit is rare. But it is difficult to evaluate the benefit of sponsorships. In poor countries, the potential for this tool for corporate communication practice is huge.

3.3 Lobbying

Lobbying is a term traditionally used for communication aimed at gaining favourable representation or support of people in government. This can be to encourage a government action that advances the organisation's objectives or sometimes to discourage other actions depending on the interests of the organisation.

Organisations which operate in highly-regulated environment such as safety and health spend time and money on lobbying to fulfill corporate goals. According to Pickton and Brodrick (2005): "Lobbying need not be confined to government lobbying. It can be applied to any organisation or individual that might be identified as having a potential effect on the organisation doing the lobbying. Professional and trade bodies might be lobbied or particular specialists, experts or celebrities."

3.4 Events

Corporate organisations no longer wait for events to happen to position and promote their identities; they create such events – both for internal and external publics. Some of these events may be staged as 'stunts' to generate publicity or serious occasions to promote corporate integrity/corporate culture: Public Lecture, Christmas Carol, Mass Street Trek in Aid of the Less Privileged, Book fair, Reality Shows (such as *Gulder* Ultimate Search in Nigeria). The golden rule here is that the events should have clear focus and measurable corporate benefits.

When creatively applied, events can give huge publicity mileage at moderate cost. A very excellent example is the "Orange Man" stunt staged by Insight Communications for *Pepsi* in Nigeria in the late 1980s. Three men dyed in orange colours head-to-toe walked through the streets of Lagos. The massive curiosity

and publicity generated for *mirinda soft drink* from the event could not have been matched in dollars by a product launch in a hall.

3.5 Merchandizing & Packaging

Merchandizing is basically a sales promotion element in the marketing communications mix. The idea can be borrowed for corporate promotions. It describes activities intended to ensure that products are easily available and prominently and attractively displayed at point of sale. The 'form' of presentation tells the consumer something about the maker of the product (brand personality). The outward appearance must complement what is inside. Consider the CEO of a reputable organisation who appears at a public function badly dressed! Every opportunity that the public has to assess an organisation should be used to say something about the organisation – call cards, models, key-holders, vehicles. Packaging, in addition to making a product distinct, also creates intangible values in the customers' minds. A good corporate affairs director, therefore, will ensure that everything about the organisation – buildings, letter heading sheets, reception, dress-sense of employees etc. – are packaged to enhance the corporate image of the organisation.

Folayan (2004), notes:

Corporate identity defines a company to itself as well as to the outside world. It speaks through the company's logo, through its smiling security personnel and cashiers, via its approach to business, business value and culture and the quality of its products and services. It reflects in the appearances and dispositions of staff, relationship with the environment and presentations in the media. Anything that helps the public to form pictures in their head about the particular organisation is crucial in building corporate identity.

3.6 Research

As Folayan (2004) has noted, "the starting point in building corporate identity is research; basically to know the pictures-in-the-heads of the strategic stakeholders about the organisation's products and esteem and from the findings determine the next lines of action." Research is also needed for evaluating

current campaigns embarked upon by the Department. We shall look at various methods of conducting research in Unit 11.

3.7 Propaganda

Many people assume that propaganda is not an acceptable PR (corporate communication) technique. This is not true. What is ethically forbidden in PR regarding propaganda is *black propaganda*. To some extent, *grey propaganda* is allowed and *white propaganda* is very much allowed – and in fact very popularly used.

O'Donnell (1979) defines propaganda as “the deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions and direct behaviour to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist. Propaganda dates back to 1622 when the Roman Catholic Church set up the ‘*sacra congregation de propaganda fide*’. It was the branch of the church responsible for propagating the faith. In this original meaning, propaganda, though truthful, was also covert: it persuaded people without seeming to do so – and its sole objective was to convert the target audience.

Black Propaganda

When persuasion becomes deceptive, frightening, unscrupulous and false, it is referred to as ‘Black Propaganda’. In its true form, black propaganda is “deliberate and strategic transmission of lies” (Baran & Davis, 2003), usually against the interest of the receiver but in favour of the source. Black propaganda uses the MASID Formula: **Manipulation** (clever and deceitful use of truth and untruth); **Action-oriented** (the propagandist wants the audience to take an action); **Selfish** (propagandist conceals part of the truth that favours the opponent or distorts and releases only the aspect that favours it (the propagandist)); **Intentional** (the message and its delivery is planned and predetermined); **Deceptive** (the sole aim is to deceive the target audience). Black propaganda is often applied in military communications especially in period of war and crises. Some of its popular techniques are: crooked intelligence, name calling, word games, false connections, bandwagon, use of fear, censorship, stereotypes and brainwashing.

White Propaganda

White propaganda is propaganda of the truth. Here, the propagandists truthfully states its origin and uses more gentle methods of persuasion. White propaganda is commonly used by publicists of western nations. It has the following characteristics:

- i) Contains more truth and sometimes wholly truthful
- ii) Aims at serving a specific agenda
- iii) Source usually identified or identifiable (unlike in black propaganda)
- iv) Uses partisan presentation format by projecting only one side (the propagandist's side).
- v) Involves little or not manipulations – you just release *your own* side of the issue.
- vi) Does not deliberately present falsehood.

Common techniques of white propaganda are: **transfer** (for instance, blaming a staff instead of the CEO to protect the CEO's image); **diversion** or **red-herring** (shifting attention to less important areas of an issue); **oversimplification** (opposite of exaggeration in black propaganda); **common man/plainfolk** (acting as if you are just like the audience when you are really not); **testimonial** (quotations in and out of context) and **slogans**.

Grey Propaganda

Grey propaganda is a mixture of the truth with carefully-selected lies. Lamprecht (2002) explains how grey propaganda works:

You disseminate a story, which contains verifiable facts. Then you weave into it credible-sounding lies which the opposition can't verify. Those reading or hearing it tend to believe it because they can verify part of the story.

Grey propaganda has the following characteristics:

- i) The message contains some truth
- ii) It is often two-way (unlike black propaganda)
- iii) The source is usually hidden and when revealed, it is often 'transferred'.
- iv) Presents a misleading information in a less insidious manner as done in black propaganda
- v) Usually evokes emotion/the mind, using illogicalities and false premises.
- vi) The intention is much hidden than in black propaganda.

Common techniques of grey propaganda include, *diplomacy, restricted information or selective factuality, unavailability of facts, repetition, using opinion as fact, glittering generality, transfer, faulty logic, slogans, exaggeration, faulty sampling, association and disinformation (deliberate inaccuracy in information dissemination).*

What distinguish the three techniques of propaganda are the *intent, intensity* and *method/style*. We use the three techniques in everyday communication but professionally in corporate communication and PR, 'white' is more acceptable and 'grey' is not encouraged, but used all the same. 'Black' is forbidden.

3.8 Self-Assessment Questions

1. List and briefly explain 15 (fifteen) tools/techniques of 'publicity' used in corporate communication.
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of sponsorship in building corporate image?

4.0 Conclusion

Publicity, sponsorships/donations, events management, lobbying, merchandizing/packaging, research and propaganda are the principal PR techniques applied in corporate communication.

The application of these tools should be largely determined by the set corporate objectives.

5.0 Summary

Publicity is traditionally the widest schedule of Corporate Communication tasks in an organisation. Even when an organisation engages in other kinds of techniques such as sponsorship, events, propaganda and tours, they are invariably expected to be publicized.

The use of black propaganda technique has been increasing in the past few years but only white and grey propaganda are allowed in corporate communication.

For publicity, dominant tools are: press conferences, press releases/statements, press kits, exclusive stories, interviews, features, documentaries, house magazines, inserts and enclosures, bulletin boards, teleconferencing and displays, most of which can be used for both internal and external communications.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

1. You are the Corporate Communications Director of an organisation into the manufacturing of biscuits. The management has a strategic goal of communicating the integrity of the manufacturer and Corporate Social Responsibility in its locality. You have been given N10million based on the affordable budget method to spend. Explain how you would spend

the money, justifying why you choose the techniques you are recommending.

2. Write out the slogans of the following organisations and explain the identity they convey (if any):
 - Oceanic Bank
 - Zenith Bank
 - Globacom
 - MTN Nigeria
 - Zain
 - Nigeria Television Authority, NTA
 - Nestle Nigeria

3. Obtain any press release/press statement by an organisation in Nigeria. Identify and describe propaganda techniques used in the statement.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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JLS 613	–	CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
MODULE 3	–	THE AUDIENCES (PUBLICS) OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
<i>UNIT 3:</i>	–	<i>TEAM COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP</i>

1.0 Introduction

As we learnt in Module 2, management communication has ‘teams’ as one of its key internal publics. Today’s organisations no longer see their employees as individuals but as groups, units, teams and groups of teams. The team is one efficient way to tackle process management because it enables organisations to tackle issues which are very often beyond the capability of any one individual or even department and creates greater diversity of knowledge.

2.0 Objective

After this Unit, you are expected to be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of kinds of ‘team’ and how team communications enhance overall corporate communication.
- Explain how a leader can effectively communicate and inspire vibrant communication among employees.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Nature of Teams

Teams boost morale and enhance high quality of decisions and implementation. Oakland (2005) points out:

Much of what has been taught previously in management has perhaps led to a culture in the West of independence, with little sharing of ideas and information. Knowledge is very much like organic manure – if it is spread around it will fertilize and encourage growth, if it is kept closed in, it will eventually fester and become useless.

3.2 The Basis of Teams

There are two basic types of teams in an organisation: the *formal* and *informal* teams. A formal team is a group of employees established by management on ad-hoc, temporary or permanent basis to carry out specific tasks. It could be a committee or a team. An informal team is a group formed by employees who voluntarily come together to carry out specific tasks or build cooperative spirit towards improving their performance. This is also known as *kaizen teian team*. *Kaizen teian* is a Japanese system for generating and implementing employee ideas. Suggestions are usually small-scale ones, in the worker's own area and are easy and cheap to implement. Members meet voluntarily, regularly in normal working time under the leadership of a 'supervisor' and the group identifies, analyzes work-related problems, solves them or recommend solutions to management. Under this arrangement, a leader is the employee that heads a team. Oakland (2005) has distinguished task functions from team and individual functions:

Task functions:

- *Defining the task* (the team designs the general functions of members individually and collectively)
- *Making a plan* (the team plots how the roles and tasks would be carried out in the short and long run)
- *Allocating work and resources* (the team allocates the general functions and goals to members of the team and back them up with resources to carry out their roles)

- *Controlling quality and tempo of work* (the team ensures quality control)
- *Checking performance against the plan* (the team evaluates its performance)
- *Adjusting the plan* (the team re-strategizes if need be based on performance).

Team functions:

- *Setting standards* (the team collective set quality control standards)
- *Maintaining discipline* (the team enforces its own rules)
- *Building team spirit* (the team members try to be 'the brothers' keeper')
- *Encouraging, motivating, giving a sense of purpose* (the team members give helping hands to members to ensure that overall targets are reached)
- *Appointing sub-leaders* (the team creates its own leadership structure)
- *Ensuring communication within group* (the team members share ideas and information)
- *Training the group* (the team tries to reproduce every memner)

Individual functions:

- *Attending to personal problems* (ensures he or she is available to contribute its quota to group success)
- *Praising individuals* (motivates others)
- *Giving status* (respects those jointly appointed leaders even though they may be colleagues or juniors)
- *Recognizing and using individual abilities* (makes his or her talents available for the group's success)

- *Training the individual* (trains his or her colleagues to do what he or she (the trainer) is able to do better or what he or she (the trainer) is assigned to do for the group)

Irrespective of the kind of teams, the role of communication is basically the same. These include, ensuring vibrant communication and availability of information within and between groups, including giving 'new' information to the group. Team leaders and members should be trained in the art of communication – encouraging, expressing views and feelings, listening, facilitating participation, seeking support etc. It is assumed that the Human Resources (HR) unit would have taken into consideration various characteristics of people in building formal teams but in this does not completely eliminate conflicts within groups, since people differ in personality, ability and character. Effective communication can help reduce frictions within and between groups.

There can be no leadership when there is no sense of followership. But the team leader has a major role to play in also building up followership. John C. Maxwell has identified the following key factors as helpful in building followership:

1. *The importance of the task.* If the issue is very critical to the success of the programme being embarked upon by the department, then the team leader needs to lay emphasis on it.
2. *The demands of the work.* Sometimes work load of a member may be more demanding than the other's. The person whose load is heavier should be monitored to see that he or she is coping.
3. *The newness of the work.* Has that member done the work previously or he or she is doing it for the first time? Has the organisation or department done anything close to that before? If it is not so, there is need for follow-up.
4. *The responsibility of the worker.* There are some team members that the leader is so conversant of their abilities and limitations. For instance, team members that have a history of being pushed to do a task (even though the outcome is always excellent) still have to be 'pushed'.

As much as possible the members of team should work to become winners through cooperation, not rivalry. The spirit of rivalry makes team members to see

one another as enemies, instead of friends. In such teams, members think more about themselves and become suspicious of others. But where there is cooperative spirit, members concentrate on others and are very supportive of others. Their attitude is 'we will win if I am good and others are good'; 'Our skills determine our success levels'. Competitive attitudes kill initiatives because members would not want to make an input that let others take the glory. The members of such team prefer small victories and want to take personal credits.

Good leaders understand those they lead. They are not intimidated by the potentials of the people that they lead. Rather, they work to bring out those potentials. This point is well-illustrated by the following example by Maxwell:

"The board of my organisation has always been my focus when developing leaders. In 1989, one half of my board members were brand new, and the group faced major decisions on a \$35million relocation project. I was concerned. Could decisions of such magnitude be made by rookies? However, my fears subsided at the next board retreat when I discovered that every new board member had been mentored by former, experienced members. The old board was now benefitting. The new members had come into their positions already running with the rest of us. It was that I realized an important lesson: *Leaders create and inspire new leaders by instilling faith in their leadership ability and helping them develop and hone leadership skills they don't know they possess.* (Maxwell, 1993:11).

3.3 The FIRO-B Theory

Propounded by William Schutz in the 1950s, this theory predicts areas of probable tension and compatibility between individuals. The FIRO-B is a team building tool which can aid in the creation of a positive environment in which people can achieve set results. It involves the use of a questionnaire which estimates via scores the levels of behaviour with which the individual is comfortable. An average team member would demonstrate one of three tendencies: to be *included* in what is going on; to *control* what is going on; to be *excluded* or *distanced* from what is going on in the group. What the member expects from other members is described as 'wanted behaviour' while what he or she does about how others behave is described as 'expressed behaviour'. Higher scores are given to people who make efforts to include other people in their

activities or tell them what to do or make efforts to become close to people (express friendly open feelings). Higher scores are also given those who want people to include them in activities being carried out by their colleagues; who want others to tell them what to do and who want others to come close and express friendliness.

The Corporate Communication Unit should be able to carry out a FIRO-B test on team dynamics on its own or through the engagement of consultants and evolve proactive measures. For example, when a team member has a feeling of wanting to belong or to be involved and this is not done, what results is a feeling of alienation and this will definitely reduce output or quality of output. If a member is not lively or relaxed, he or she may end up being tense or suspicious. In such a situation, communication will help members unlearn negative communications that sour relationships or dampen personal satisfaction or reduce productivity. Creatively designed messages can be placed in in-house journals or notice boards address these areas, for instance. Thus, at different stages, the typical team is either becoming **aware** of values, ideas, information, etc. that could help him or her to be a better team-player, or he/she is **accepting, adopting, adapting** or **acting** them. (Another method of investing team synergy is Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, MBTI. This is based on an individual's preferences on four scales – giving and receiving 'energy'; gathering information; making decisions; handling the outer world. Extroverts like to give 'energy' while Introverts like to 'receive'. Those who are analytical tend to like taking decisions, etc.)

3.4 Maxwell's Qualities of a dream team

World-renowned management expert John C. Maxwell proposes 10 qualities of a 'dream team' (*Becoming a Person of Influence*, 1995: Thomas Nelson Publishers, New York):

1. The members care for one another (teams that do not bond cannot build).

2. The team members know what is important (someone who does not know what is important to the team not only fails to contribute meaningfully to the team, he or she prevents the team from achieving success).
3. The team members communicate with one another
4. The team members grow together (it is the team leader's responsibility to orchestrate the team's growth).
5. There is a team fit (there is attitude of partnership; every member respects and trusts the other member).
6. The team members place their individual rights beneath the best interest of the team (individualism wins trophies but teamwork wins pennants)
7. Each team member plays a special role (usually his or her greatest strength)
8. An effective team has a good bench (if a member is sick, weak or not living up to expectation, someone can come in without disrupting group norms and synergy).
9. Team members know exactly where the team stands (they have organizational sense; can put their performance in context of what the organisation is aiming at)
10. Team members are willing to pay the price (they are ready to make sacrifices for the group's overall success).

3.5 Communication and Leadership

A leader is someone who is heading to a destination and knows how to make people go with him or her to that destination. The **BEST** way to lead, according to Maxwell is to **Believe** in the people being led; **Encourage** the people being led; **Share** with the people being led and **Trust** the people being led. The most fundamental communication task of a leader is in knowing how to communicate the fundamentals. Renowned management expert, Peter Drucker says one of the most critical problems of the workplace today is that there is a lack of understanding between the employer and the employee as to what the

employee is to do. Often employees are made to feel they are vaguely responsible for everything. It paralyses them. Instead, we need to make clear to them what they are and are not responsible for, so that they can focus their efforts appropriately. Not only are they to know their job descriptions, they are supposed to know the priorities amongst those schedules.

A good leader:

- i) Leads by example (is a model for others)
- ii) Guides the led to do what he or she (the leader) does (mentors)
- iii) Ensures that the led does it right (monitors)
- iv) Assists and rewards good efforts (motivates)
- v) Gives room for others to take over from him or her (multiplies)

The five-point qualities of a good leader above agree with Oakland's '**DRIVE**' Framework for continuous improvement in teams (Oakland, 2005):

Define the problem by defining the task and success criteria.

Review the information by presenting known data and action plan for further data.

Investigate the problem by documenting proposals for improvement and developing action plans.

Verify the solution proposed.

Evaluate the change by looking at the task execution again or measuring the benefit derived from the effort

3.6 Self-Assessment Questions.

1. List the 10 qualities of good teams as enunciated by John C. Maxwell
2. Explain the differences between *accepting*, *adopting* and *adapting* recommended communication behaviour.

4.0 Conclusion

Employees of organisations in contemporary management produce best results as formal or informal groups, known as teams. When two or more persons team-up there is necessity for skilled communication to create a synergy or chemistry to make them result-oriented to common goals.

When effective communication is nurtured within and between groups, organizational culture is nurtured and corporate personality develops.

5.0 Summary

There are basically two forms of teams – formal (officially created by management) and informal (voluntarily created by employees) in organisations and both have common goals of helping to achieve corporate goals.

The senior management performs **task functions**: *defining the task; making a plan; allocating work and resources; controlling quality and tempo of work; checking performance against the plan; and adjusting the plan.*

Teams (drawn from senior, middle level and lower levels of employees as the case may be, perform **team functions**: *setting standards; maintaining discipline; building team spirit; encouraging, motivating, giving a sense of purpose; appointing sub-leaders; ensuring communication within group and training the group.*

Individual employees (those being led in teams) perform **individual functions**: *attending to personal problems; praising individuals; giving status; recognizing and using individual abilities; training the individual.*

The FIRO-B Theory helps to measure group synergy potentials through five As – Awareness, Acceptance, Adoption, Adaptation and Acting of existing or new attitudes and behaviours.

A good leader is someone who can DRIVE his or her followers – *Define* the problem, *Review* it, *Investigate* it, *Verify* it and *Evaluate* it.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignments

1. Write short notes on the following:
 - a) FIRO-B Theory
 - b) Oakland's D.R.I.V.E. framework
2. Would you recommend communication that focuses on individual employees or one that focuses on teams? Explain your position.
3. Identify a formal and informal group in any organisation known to you. Describe briefly how communication takes place in both groups.

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 3 – TECHNIQUES OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

UNIT 4: – BRANDING

1.0 Introduction

You must have heard the word ‘branding’ in recent times – thanks to the Rebranding Nigeria Project of the Yar Adua Administration in Nigeria. As a term or concept, branding is not entirely new. Its use in popular use as a marketing communications term is only in the past decade. However, its theory, principles and practice have been used in marketing communications for so many decades.

Branding is central to corporate communications because it concerns the totality of marketing communications. It has to do with advertising, sales, image, publicity, promotion and virtually all the elements of marketing. Yet, it is different from ‘marketing’.

2.0 Objectives

You should be able to do the following after going through and understanding the Unit contents:

- Describe the components of a brand
- Demonstrate ability to develop corporate identity programmes
- Measure how good a brand is

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Definitions

Pickton & Broderick (2005) offer the following definitions:

Brand – the totality of what the consumer takes into consideration before making a purchase decision.

Branding – strategy to differentiate products and companies and to build economic value for both the consumer and the brand owner.

Image and Brand Management – the strategic and tactical tasks involved in the ‘non-personal’ communication between an organisation and its audiences; recognizing this should be complementary to customer audience relationship management.

Publics of organisations place values on the organisations and their products. Although the symbol, name, quality of wrapping of a product help consumers to identify and even distinguish a product, the totality of the image held by the consumer goes beyond the aforesaid. The satisfaction derived from the product (e.g. the taste), even the price contributes to how the consumer rates the product. The growth of branding has been traced by Kotler (1994) to post America Civil War era. Cattle roamed vast lands with no fences or partitions and the ranchers had difficulty knowing their own cattle. So, each rancher developed simple symbols that he placed on his cattle as a form of identification. Thus, the cattle were ‘branded’. Branding has gone beyond just signs however. The aim of branding, according to Pickton & Broderick (2005) is “to create impressions that differentiate products and companies by saying that one is not just different from the rest, but in some respect, it is better than the rest.”

More Definitions of Branding

- “A bundle of intrinsic and extrinsic offerings blending both functional and psychological benefits.” – **Gardner & Levy, 1955.**

- “A successful brand is an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant unique added values which match their needs most closely. Furthermore, its success results from being able to sustain these added values in the face of competition.” - **de Chematony and McDonald, 1998.**

- “A name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller’s goods from those of other sellers.” – **Dibb et al. 1994**

- A brand is a distinguishing name and/or symbol (such as logo, trademark, or pack design) intended to identify the goods and services of either one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate those goods or services from those of competitors. – **Aaker, 1991**

- Designed to enable customers to identify products or services which promise specific benefits. - **Wilson et al. 1995.**

3.2 Components of a brand

Although generally, we know that ‘everything’ about a product (in our case an organisation) add up to give it a reputation and value, we can still underpin specific components that make up a brand. These are:

(a) The name of the organisation:

Carry out this little experiment. Pour contents of a bottle of *Coca cola* into a glass cup. Pour another drink of *zobo* (a local drink that looks like *Coca cola*) into another glass cup. Now, empty the contents of the glass cup that has

zobo into an empty bottle labeled “Coca-Cola” and the contents of the other cup inside an empty bottle labeled “Nigerian Zobo”. What you have done is to put coke inside a *zobo* bottle. Invite two or three little children and ask them, which of the drinks they want without letting them know about the swap. You are likely to find out that all the kids will prefer the bottle of *zobo*, having been attracted by the name ‘Coca Cola’. The name is part of the brand that can be spoken. It consists of words or/and numbers. The name of an organisation is sometimes the name its products bear (e.g. coca cola). But it is also common for organisations to name the organisation and the product separately, e.g. Nigerian Breweries Plc/Gulder. There is certainly something in a name beyond the letters and the sound of the letters when pronounced. That ‘something’ is a brand component.

(b) Brand logo:

The logo is that part of the brand that is symbolic – picture, drawing, alphabet even words – visually presented to help the audience see the organisation as different or distinct. Some logos attempt to convey further information about what that organisation stands for. For instance, the picture of a human head super-imposed on a tennis racket and ball suggests that the organisation is probably into sports. The physical appearance of an organisation – its letter heading paper, signboard, the painting of its walls etc. all add up to its brand.

(c) User Satisfaction:

This is the aspect of the brand that is not ‘seen’ but very crucial – the product performance. What degree of satisfaction did the customer derive from previous use (association) with the brand? If you have been reading *The Guardian* for three years, the totality of the satisfaction you derived reading the newspaper over those years contributes to the value of the product. For the organisation, such value might vary a bit. You might want to look at the utility of all the products to estimate the corporate brand. In the case of the *The Guardian* for example, it appears the product is a stronger brand than the organisation, i.e. *The Guardian* as a brand has positively impacted on the

brand of *The Guardian Press*, the owner of *The Guardian*. In other situations, the corporate brand positively impacts on the product brand, e.g. Cadbury Nigeria Ltd. When people who have experienced Cadbury's products come across a new product with the name and logo of Cadbury, they may be more willing to try it out simply because it has Cadbury insignia.

(d) Gratification:

Some publics put values on brands principally for the gratifications they benefit from doing so. Why would someone want to work with First Bank PLC for N100,000 a month rather than with Okokomaiko PLC, for N150,000 a month? This is probably for the prestige of working with Nigeria's oldest bank. When people of quality associate with an organisation, some publics think highly of such organisations simply for that reason, not because of its name, logo and the quality of service they offer. Beliefs of customers and audiences can also be factored under 'gratification'. What a Muslim thinks about Foursquare Gospel Church, might be different from what a Catholic (Christian) thinks about the same organisation simply because their belief systems were strong intervening variables.

(e) Cost:

In Nigeria, cost is commonly used to rate brands. It is generally believed that strong and good brands cost more.

(f) Deeds:

The good that men and women did lives much after them. It is the same for corporate organisations. A good that an organisation does (irrespective of their products' performances) helps it to build enduring corporate identity and reputation.

(g) Cognitive qualities of the organisation:

Advertising, reality shows and sponsorships are sometimes embarked upon by organisations just to make people ‘remember’ their names. Names that are difficult to call and slogans that are abstract will accompany low cognition and will contribute little or nothing to an organisation’s reputation.

3.3 Managing Brand Equity

Brand equity is the value of the brand’s name, symbols, associations and reputation to all target audiences who interact with it. It is not the same thing as ‘brand identity’ – the things that convey distinct personality on the brand. Brand equity results from a combination of brand identity and brand image. When brand equity is expressed in financial terms, it becomes the brand value. Below are five approaches to measuring brand equity (Adapted from Cooper and Simons, 1997):

Proposer	Factors Measured
David Aaker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness 2. Brand association/differentiation (e.g. personality, perceived value) 3. Perceived quality and market leadership 4. Loyalty 5. Market behaviour measures (e.g. share/distribution)
Millward Brown Brand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presence (e.g. familiarity) 2. Relevance to consumer needs
Total Research Equitrend	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Salience 2. Perceived quality 3. User satisfaction
Young & Rubicam Brand Asset Valuator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Differentiation 2. Relevance 3. Strength (prominence and relative dominance of the brand) 4. Esteem and Knowledge (stature)
Cooper & Simons TBWA Simons Palmer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brand quality reflects the distinctiveness and relevance of its brand associations, the esteem and perceived popularity and leadership. 2. Brand quantity covers awareness, penetration, loyalty, satisfaction ratings, sales shares (consumer measures) 3. Brand future reflects its potential for organic growth (e.g. potential to boost trial distribution), its ‘fitness’ for the changing marketplace (e.g. new legislation, technologies,

	consumer patterns and trade structures) and brand extendibility (e.g. new launches).
Interbrand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brand weight (market share within its category) 2. Brand breadth (appeal across customer groupings) 3. Brand depth (customer loyalty to the brand) 4. Brand length (potential extensions of the brand)

What is being 'managed' in branding is not just the product and the organisation which owns the product but also the *image* of the product and the organisation. In other words, a product (like *magi*, *bournvita* or *Complete Sports Newspaper*) is made of two things – a percentage of material that make up the product and a percentage of the image of that product. For a completely new product made by a completely new company, advertising can help conjure an image to make purchasing decision. However, for a new product manufactured by an old company, the reputation of the company will certainly contribute to the value of the brand in the perception of the public.

Through various research methods (many of which we shall discuss in the next unit, (Module 4, Unit 1 – Research), we can measure the weight, breadth, depth and length (the worth) of an organisation, as a brand. Thus, while the market price of *Complete Sports Newspaper* is N50:00k, the worth of the *Complete Sports* brand is much more than this. It is even worth than the assets and liabilities of the company, which is the accountant's yardstick of measurement. In today's business, the reputation of organisations is becoming very important in the market success of any product or service. Now, people buy the reputation, not really the product. For instance, why would a motorist buy fuel from *Texaco Oil* rather than from *Bayo Petrol* when both companies sell exactly the same petrol supplied to them by the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation? They do so most often because they are buying something much more than petrol. We can know their buying motives by studying them and asking them of their attitude to the product, the staff, etc.

3.4 Building Corporate Loyalty

Brand loyalty is the degree of loyalty a customer has towards a brand in favouring it over other alternatives. (Pickton & Broderick, 2005). The fact that a customer patronizes a particular product repeatedly is not necessarily an evidence of brand loyalty. For example, in the case of a monopoly such as National Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), the consumer has little or not alternative.

Corporate communication professionals define brand loyalty as a continuum of a ladder. At the bottom of the ladder are those who have not used the brand before known as *Prospect*. Prospect (potential publics) should be taken as serious as actual users because the average human being processes buying decisions before making purchases. The next scale of the ladder is occupied by those referred to as *Trialists* (or customers). For a bank, a customer who just opened an account with a bank is thus a bank customer. Next on the ladder is the *Repeat Purchaser* (who may also be called a Client). The difference between a trialist and a repeat purchaser is in the consistency. A repeat purchaser is the customer who has come again and again. The *Brand loyalist* (also known as Brand Advocate) is atop the ladder. He or she is the client who not only prefers the brand but *insists* on it. He or she would not take anything less. The goal of corporate communication is to grow the publics of organisations along this continuum. More importantly, an organisation should have an idea what percentage within each public is at what stage of the ladder. If a *trialist* is assumed to be an *advocate*, it is an over-estimation of the brand. A brand has the same symmetrical shape like a product: people initially want to try the brand out in the first few months of its appearance and the purchase continues to grow if the trialist enjoys the brand until (for many reasons) may now want to disengage all things being the same (unless the organisation or product is 'rebranded'). A new brand could experience huge patronage at the initial stage of its existence. But it could be that 90 per cent of the patronage came from trialists and this is not something to cheer about so much as sales could suddenly drop. The task of corporate communication here is to 'make the customer try again and again'. The organisation would naturally not add anything to the product or change the label. But it could run more TV commercials to stimulate purchase decisions. It could also train its cashiers to smile more and offer incentives like giving a shopper's pack to anyone who buys up to an amount of money, etc. All of these are corporate communication techniques.

3.5 Self- Assessment

1. Define the term *Branding*. Evaluate the similarities between corporate and product branding.
2. Discuss any two popular methods of measuring brand equity.

4.0 Conclusion

A brand is the totality of what the consumer takes into consideration before making a purchase decision. It incorporates the promotional aspect of marketing (Promotion) and all the other 'P' elements of the marketing mix the Price, Place and Product and People, hence it is not really an alternative term for *marketing communications* or *corporate communication*.

Branding is bigger than both marketing communications and corporate communications and even bigger than the 'Promotion' element in the marketing mix of which marketing communications and corporate communication are sub-elements. We may describe branding as the communication components of all the Ps of Marketing.

5.0 Summary

A brand is a name, term, design, symbol, value or any other feature (intrinsic or extrinsic) that identifies goods, services or organisation and differentiates them from others.

To determine the worth of a brand (brand equity) we can measure the *brand weight* (market share within its category); *brand breadth* (appeal across customer groupings); *brand depth* (customer loyalty to the brand) and *brand length* (potential extensions of the brand).

Components of brands are: the name of the organisation, the name of its products, the logo/slogan, user satisfaction, gratification, cost, deeds and cognition. Corporate communication develops the publics of an organisation from the time they are prospects through the period they are 'trialists', then 'clients' and 'advocates' and has specific communication plans and programmes for all stages simultaneously.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

1. In not more than 250 words, evaluate the country, Nigeria, as a *brand*.
2. Write short notes on a well-known organisation selected by you from the manufacturing or service sector in Nigeria along the following sub-heads:
 - Name
 - Logo
 - Slogan
 - Product(s) or service(s)
 - Brand Width
 - Brand Length
 - Brand Breadth
 - Brand Depth

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 4 – MANAGING CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

RABOSTICally

UNIT 1: – RESEARCH

1.0 Introduction

This Module will take you through EIGHT (8) steps involved in corporate communications tasks. These are:

- **Research**
- Analysis
- Budget
- Objectives
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Implementation

- Control

We can represent this with the acronym, RABOSTIC (Pickton & Broderick, 2005).

This first Unit in the Module (Unit 1) examines RESEARCH.

2.0 Objectives

You should be able to do the following after going through and understanding the contents of this Unit:

- State the importance of research in corporate communication
- Demonstrate ability to carry out basic corporate communication research and apply their results meaningfully.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 What is research?

Research simply means ‘to investigate’ – to search or to ‘search again’. The tasks of Public Relations (from which Corporate Relations derives) is often summarized in the acronym R.A.C.E. **R**esearch, **A**ction, **C**ommunication and **E**valuation. RABOSTIC is a more detailed exposition of the RACE concept. As we said in Unit 1, communication is the sharing of *knowledge, information, ideas and meanings*. Research helps us to have *knowledge* of problem (known in research as ‘phenomenon’). Without research, without being *informed*, there can be no knowledge. *Understanding*, the outcome of research is *meaning* which is the essence of communication.

3.2 Types of research

One of several ways of classifying research is by *purpose* and *method*.

By Purpose

By purpose, there are four major types of research: *Basic research, Applied research, Evaluation research, and Action research*.

Basic research

This kind of investigation is to provide the theory which may lead to finding solutions to particular problems. Example: 'Causes of low patronage in spite of customer motivation programmes' is an example of basic research.

Applied research

Applied research is concerned with testing whether a theory or popular opinion exists in reality. It establishes relationships. Example: 'Influence of peer group membership on perception of the Guinness Plc by its publics'.

Evaluation Research

Here, the researcher collects and analyzes data from the field to guide decision-making on specific issues. For example, a Corporate Affairs Unit advised the management of its organisation to revert to people-managers at its Telephone Exchange Room. The company had several months back changed to automated answering machines at its telephone exchange to make information management faster. However, many clients felt being 'treated like a machine' and reduced their calls. The Unit can conduct an evaluative research titled: 'How effective has Automatic Answering System been to enhancing corporate objectives'.

Action Research

This is an ad-hoc research carried out on a small scale to solve common problems using the scientific approach. It is different from applied research in that it is not testing theories or any existing body of knowledge, but is only done to solve specific problems. We encounter problems in the day-to-day management of corporate relations and to solve these problems, we cannot work through assumptions. At the same time, we may not have the time, resources and funds to carry out applied research. We can do an action research essentially to find an immediate solution to the problem. Example: '*Perception of the CEO by Senior Managers*'. Instead of assuming that the CEO is very popular among senior managers, we can conduct a simple action research to give a more reliable information of the issue. Another example of action research is when a short questionnaire is distributed to employees to assess their knowledge before and after an in-house workshop to test their levels of understanding of the training.

A good Corporate Communication Unit should be able to perform action research as the need arises in day-to-day management while other types of research may be given to experts.

By Method

Using 'method', we can classify research into historical, descriptive, observational, correlational research and causal-comparative/ex-post facto research and quasi-experimental research. Research design has also produced two commonly used classifications of research: *quantitative versus qualitative*. Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture,, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting. Alternatively, quantitative study is an inquiry into a social or human problem, based on testing a theory composed of variables, measured with numbers and analyzed with statistical procedures, in order to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory hold true. (Cresswell, 1994).

Historical research

As the name implies, “historical research is concerned with past events which comprise evaluation and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts.” (Ofo, 1994). Here the research systematically collects data relating to past events based on data already available. Sources of historical data are first hand information/knowledge – for example, an eye-witness to first operations in the company’s factory (primary sources) and second-hand information – for example, someone who was told by the eye-witness telling the researcher. Relics of tools, buildings, equipment, recorded voices, etc. are good sources of historical research. Note that questionnaires are not used in historical research and that the method limits you to what already exists. A Corporate Affairs Unit can carry out a research about the entire organisation or aspects of its history. It can also use the historical approach to document its contributions to community development (using publications, photographs, etc.)

Descriptive research

This type of research involves collecting data in order to test hypothesized statements or research questions. Attitudinal and opinion studies constitute the bulk of corporate relations research because perception is the cardinal pillar on which PR rests. Perhaps the most common type of descriptive research is the **survey research**, in which the researcher collects data from a defined population to describe the present condition of the population using the variables under study. A variety of techniques and instruments are used in survey research but the most common are questionnaires, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Other examples of descriptive research are: **developmental studies** (to describe the nature and degree of growth, maturity and variations in behaviours amongst members of a group and progress made); **follow-up studies** (to review a situation after a period of time); **sociometric studies** (concerned with investigating the relationship that exist within a group, between and among groups); and **observational research** (the researcher observes with his or her five senses as witness to the event).

Descriptive research takes the following basic steps: clear statement of purpose of the study and the problem being investigated; selection of a suitable standard method of collecting data, including taking samples from a population; collection and analysis of data and interpretation of the findings.

Correlational research

This is a study that attempts to determine if a relationship exists between two or more variables and the extent of such a relationship. Statistical tests are used to determine such a relationship. Example: *To what extent does customer-referral help in building corporate image?* This is not a question we can give 'yes' or 'no' answer to. It requires correlation tests.

Causal-comparative study (ex-post facto research)

In this research, the aim is to determine the cause of a problem. A correlational study establishes associations/ relationships between two or more variables while a causal-comparative determines the cause. This is very difficult to do in corporate relations because it is a sub-field of the social sciences where all things are only assumed to be equal, but are not. There will always be intervening variables. For example, if we say referrals help in building corporate image, how do we eliminate other influences that help to build corporate image such as advertisements, quality or reliability of products? This is not to say that causal-comparative research is not possible. When properly carried out, such research is extremely valuable for corporate communication. When the cause of a problem or challenge is known, it becomes easy to know how to solve the problem including which communication technique to use.

In ex-post facto research, two groups who differ on identified independent variables are selected and compared. The researcher may identify the problem, state hypotheses but the most crucial element is the methodology: identification of population and proper sampling and establishment of categories for classifying the data. The two groups being compared must be truly comparable, almost identical. In internal communication, we can carry out an ex-post facto research on 'leadership communication skills of Team Leaders'. We can pick Team A and compare with Team B, for instance.

Experimental

As the name implies, this involves carrying out full-blown experiment. The purpose of true experimental research is to investigate the cause and effect relationships between variables. The research gives 'treatment' (causes variations) in one of the groups while noting the outcomes in the groups that is

not treated. In experimental research, extraneous variables that might contaminate the experiment are controlled. **Quasi experimental research** is used to describe experimental research in which the researcher cannot control or manipulate all the intervening variables. An example of experimental research is one in which we want to know the 'Communication Skills of Front Office Staff and Customer's Perception of the Organisation'. To use the experimental approach, we have to carry out a experiment as in 'laboratory' setting. We have to observe the Home Office Staff and Customers at work. But there are several intervening variables which we must control: if they know we are watching/evaluating them, they might act out behaviours that are not natural; customers may a history of relationship with those Front Office Staff upon which they base their judgments, not the on the communication experience we are observing; etc. Unless we are able to control the intervening factors, the experimental method will not be helpful. For instance, how can we carry out an experiment to test how effective a corporate ad is using the experimental method of research? If we take a sample of the population and expose the ad to them in a lab, have we eliminated or controlled all variables. Some people watch the ads in offices, some in their living rooms some in hotels, does it mean these situations do not affect their ability to assimilate the ads. Yet, experimental methods can be combined effectively with other methods to give excellent results. For instance, an advertising agency can test brand recall in an experimental setting and thereafter use the outcome of the experimental as a basis for a survey research on brand recall.

3.3 Essentials of Survey Research

Because survey research is commonly used in corporate communication, it is pertinent to look at it in more detail:

Selecting a sample from a population

Population is the entire group being studied. It could be employees or shareholders or journalists. Often the researcher does not have the time and resources to take the opinions of all members of the population. He therefore has to take a sample, i.e. a representative sample from that population. Sample size is the total number of the smaller unit picked to represent the population. When the researcher picks his or her sample with every member of the population having equal chance of being picked, it is called **simple random**

sampling. As we can see, simple random sampling is fraught with problems. If we follow the above procedure, you could end up picking the entire 10 employees from amongst those who work in the security department, leaving out other departments. To reduce this problem, the researcher can use a systematic order based on a list of the population to pick the 10 employees for the sample. This is known as **systematic random sampling.** You get a list of all employees (let us assume this is 1000). You then use a yardstick to determine who is 'lucky to be picked'. For instance, you can choose a sampling margin of 12 and throw up a dice to determine where to start. If the dice shows 6, that means you pick the employee whose name appears against No. 6 in the list of employees. You now count 12 steps to choose the next person, count another 12 until to get 10 employees, which is your sample size. For very large population, researchers use the 'random table' to determine who is picked.

Other sampling methods are: **stratified sampling** (you divide the population into sub-groups, each group containing subjects with similar characteristics before you pick representatives); **cluster sampling** (you select groups randomly, not individuals, e.g. schools, markets, classrooms, lawyers, doctors); **multi-stage sampling** (an extension of cluster sampling, involving selection of samples from samples in stages – e.g. to pick girls in Lagos Schools, from this pick 20 girls from every school, then pick 5 from every local education district, from the 5, pick 2 from each local education district for senior and junior classes); **quota sampling** (obtain a representative of the population in the right proportion they occur, e.g. to pick 6 from a population of 40 doctors and 60 lawyers, you will pick 4 doctors and 6 lawyers); **Purposive sampling** (researcher uses his or her own judgement in determining who to pick);

Constructing a Research Questionnaire

One of the commonest instruments used in survey research is the questionnaire. It is a compendium of questions given a respondent regarding the problem being investigated. Such questions may take one or any combination of the following format:

- Unstructured response or open-ended question: In this kind of question, the researcher does not suggest prompts (does not give alternatives to select) for answers. Do you like National Open University of Nigeria?

- Closed-ended questions: The researcher lists possible answers that the respondent could pick from.
- Rating scales or Scaled Responses: Respondents asked to express their opinion on an attitudinal statement. Examples are: 'The *Likert Type* (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.) *Thurstone Type* (Vund – Very Undesirable, Und – Undesirable, Des – Desirable, Vdes – Very desirable). *Bogardus Social Distance Scale* (the researcher is interested in the extent to which respondents hold a position, e.g. assuming the you as the researcher is interested in knowing the extent to which your colleagues in the office likes NOUN, you may ask five related questions: *Do you believe in the Nigerian educational system? Are you willing to permit your wife or son to take a distance learning course? Are you willing to permit people close to you to attend NOUN? Would you be willing to take a degree in NOUN? Would you choose NOUN if given simultaneous admission by three other Nigerian Federal Universities?* Here several questions increase in the closeness to primary information you are seeking.

Ofo (1994) lists five basic requirements a good questionnaire should have:

1. Each question should be clearly stated in a form very easy to understand.
2. Make sure that the alternative questions you present could answer the question
3. Avoid questions that involve calculations
4. Where multiple choice questions are asked, provide viable alternatives for their answers
5. Ask straight forward answers, not ambiguous questions.

Focus Group Discussion

Also known as *Focus Group Interviewing*, this method involves selecting a sample from a population, interviewing them, noting how they respond and the setting in which they respond. Although members of such a focus group are often small-size, rarely more than 10-15, it is the quality of discussion and not the number of

discussants that is of prime importance. The steps involved are formulation of research questions, identification of sampling frame, and identification of moderator, generation and pre-testing of interview guide, recruiting the sample, conducting the group, analysis and interpretation of data and writing the report.

3.4 Content Analysis

Corporate communication also involves another method known as Content Analysis. It is the systematic description of the content of some part of a publication. If the Corporate Affairs Unit in the Office of the Education Minister wants to do a study on Media Coverage of Strike Action by University Teachers in 1999, this can be easily done by doing a content analysis.

The researcher borrows the traditional techniques of sampling used in survey research by determining parameters such as population, sample size, sampling method, etc. Once the samples have been picked, the researcher will systematically examine the contents of the sample, using the same parameters. Variables being studied are converted to codes and subject to computer analysis.

3.5 Use of research in Corporate Communication

Research is the soul of corporate communication. It helps to track progress of the department against organizational goals, identify opportunities for improvement and measure performance against set standards. Through research, we can determine crucial data on brand strength, brand width, brand length etc. For internal communication (management communication) research can unravel leadership and team commitment, employee involvement.

After committing the organisation to huge expenses to carry out specific tasks, it makes sense to set aside a reasonable amount of money to see if the objectives of the tasks have been realized.

3.6 Self-Assessment

1. List the major types of research in corporate communication

4.0 Conclusion

Public relations (of which corporate communication is a major schedule) thrives on research. Without research, the practitioner is left with taking whimsical decisions and actions based on assumptions. Search for true knowledge again and again (re-research) is the pillar that holds and the sage that justifies corporate communication tasks, actions and budget.

5.0 Summary

The principal methods of research are: Quantitative Vs Qualitative Research; Basic, Applied, Evaluation and Action Research; Ex-post factor; historical, descriptive, experimental and correlational research.

Survey, Focus Group Discussion, In-depth Interviews and Content Analysis are the major research methods used in corporate communication.

Research is the first of eight (8) steps in carrying out corporate communication programmes represented by the acronym, RABOSTIC. The others are- Analysis, Budget, Objectives, Strategy, Tactics, Implementation and Control.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments

1. The organisation of which you are the Corporate Communication Director is to merge with two other organisations to form a mega corporation. However, the partners require knowing the worth of your organisation as a brand before taking final decision. Outline and explain how you would carry out the task, using Focus Group Discussion.
2. Illustrate with hypothetical examples, the following means of the following:
 - a. Systematic random sampling

- b. Correlational research
 - c. Focus Group Discussion
3. Construct an appropriate questionnaire for a survey research titled: 'Brand recall among University of Lagos Students'

7.0 References/Further Reading

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 4 – MANAGING CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

RABOSTICally

UNIT 2– ANALYSIS

1.0 Introduction

This Unit will take you through one of the remaining SEVEN (7) steps involved in corporate communications tasks RABOSTICally, i.e. ANALYSIS:

- Research
- **Analysis**
- Budget
- Objectives
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Implementation
- Control

The great philosopher, Socrates, once said that a life that is not examined is not worth living. Analysis is the categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing of data generated from research to obtain answers to questions. In itself, the huge volumes of tape recordings from Focus Group Discussions or returned questionnaires from a survey research are useless unless we can reduce them into intelligible and interpretable format in line with the questions that necessitated the study. Analysis requires you to EXAMINE, THINK (REFLECT), and INTERPRET (make meanings about) an issue.

2.0 Objectives

You should be able to do the following after going through and understanding the contents of this Unit:

- Be able to explain how crucial *analytical competence* is in corporate communication
- Demonstrate ability to analyze issues and situations

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Performing a SWOT Analysis

Before we take a more detailed look at analysis, let us quickly look at how to perform a SWOT Analysis. Really, SWOT analysis is a form of 'action research'. It is a formula you can quickly use to analyze any problem in corporate communication (as well as in business and social sciences). It entails asking four fundamental questions about the organisation/product:

What is its Strength?

What makes the organisation to stand out? Why is it successful? Why do customers throng to the organisation and ignore competitors?

What are its Weaknesses?

What are the things the organisation does badly or less effectively?

What handicaps does it have in doing well?

Which elements need strengthening?

Where are the complaints coming from?

What are the weak links in the processes of the organisation?

Do employees know and understand the goals of the company and the prioritization of those goals?

Do employees believe in these goals?

What are the signs of a coming trouble?

What are its Opportunities?

What situations in the industry can the organisation capitalize on to succeed?

What vacuum in the market is currently not filled?

Are there new markets?

Is there a new political leader favourably disposed to the organisation?

Is a strong competitor closing shop?

What are its Threats?

What might prevent the organisation from succeeding?

What barriers could reduce its efficiency and productivity?

Are competitors offering better deals?

Is there restlessness in the land?

Price fluctuations and agitations?

The above stated questions can be used to solve many day-to-day corporate communication challenges. For instance, one can perform a SWOT of members of staff of the corporate relations unit on relationship of the organisation with the media. It is a general technique that can find applications across diverse management functions and activities but is most ideal for the early stages of strategic planning. Full research can be conducted to find answers that may not readily be answered via SWOT analysis. (Some authors refer to it as the TOWS Analysis). It is very important to choose the right persons for a SWOT. The exercise should not be turned into a blame-laying exercise.

According to *Business: the Ultimate Result*, the advantages and disadvantages of SWOT include:

Advantages

1. A framework for identifying and analyzing strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats.
2. An impetus to analyze a situation and develop appropriate strategies and tactics.
3. A basis for assessing more capabilities and competences.
4. The evidence for, and cultural key to, change.
5. A stimulus to participation in a group experience.

Disadvantages

1. Generates long lists
2. Relies on description instead of analysis
3. Ignores prioritization
4. Not very helpful in the latter stages of the planning and implementation process.

3.2 Kinds of Analysis

Statisticians have numerous yardsticks with which they analyze and interpret data. Most of them would not be relevant for our purpose in this Course and Unit. However, some of these methods can be used for corporate communication analysis:

(a) Frequency Distributions

This kind of analysis is a type of *descriptive analysis*. For example if a Corporation did a survey of consumer preferences for its major products, it needs to describe in the population and the sample taken. Frequency distribution is the number of occurrences: How many of the customers were boys, girls, women, employed, unemployed, Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa, depending

on the research questions or problem statement. A very similar term used is 'segmentation'. Major types of segmentation are:

Demographic: E.g. age, sex, lifestage, type of residence, income, occupation, religion, ethnic origin, and nationality, etc.

Geographic: E.g. city, town, postcode, region, state, local government area, population, and climate, etc.

Geodemographic: E.g. combination of demographic and geographic.

Psychographic: E.g. e.g. values, motivations, attitudes, interest, opinions, and lifestyle, etc.

Behavioural: E.g. benefits sought, purchase occasion, purchase behaviour, usage and perceptions/beliefs.

Analysis of segments is also referred to as 'profile analysis' – looking at the similarities of the profiles of individuals or groups.

(b) Measures of Central Tendency and Variability

The simple word for this type of analysis is 'average'. To what extent do the views of respondents agree and to what extent do they disagree? The three main averages are the mean, median and the mode. The mean is the most used average – the most typical occurrence. The median is the mid-point in the distribution of responses/occurrences while the mode is the highest frequency. Unless the sample is very small, it is always necessary to calculate

central tendencies through tests by statisticians (to determine the exactness of similarities and differences, e.g. test of significance, regression analysis, coefficient analysis, etc.). All of these fall into what is known as *inferential statistics*. Many people are intimidated by data and graphs generated from computer after a study. But when the statistician makes sense out of them (by making inferences or drawing conclusions from the raw data) it becomes interesting. We easily pin-point where the problem lies and what now remains is what we could do about them.

A major oversight of corporate communication departments of organisations in Nigeria is that of using the 'mass marketing approach'. They do relatively little to research the variability and segmentations of their audiences but view them more or less as monoliths. For instance, most banks in Nigeria do not have detailed variables on their customers – their occupations, ages, education, tastes, income, education, nature of employment or business, etc. Consider a bank that knows that 60 per cent of those who have savings accounts with them are mothers who have between two to three children under the age of 20. When such a bank wants to introduce account products for children and school leavers, it may decide to start from the 60 per cent mothers within, thereby increasing its chances of success. The bank can go further to analyze the 'target audience', an audience it is aiming to reach, using the sample principle. If the civil servants located within 1,000 metres radius of the bank are less than 5 per cent of the population, and the bank aims to reach half of the population, instantly, it knows that it is a failed effort and would advise management to focus on another segment of the population. But most banks would just create a product and send out markets to sell it everywhere. They spend billions of naira to run corporate communication ads without being sure who they are talking to. It is largely due to lack of proper research and analysis of the audience and target audience.

3.3 Self-Assessment Test

Write short notes on the following:

- Mean, mode and median
- Kinds of analysis

- Segmentation

4.0 Conclusion

Analysis – making sense out of or interpreting findings to an effort to investigate a problem or phenomenon – is a crucial part of corporate communication task. It involves breaking the data into discrete parts and studying them with a view to make meanings out of them.

5.0 Summary

Analysis involves examining and interpreting of situations, especially the outcome of investigations about an issue or problem.

At the preliminary stage of planning, a method known as SWOT (examining Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) is common and often brings helpful results but in advanced stages of planning, a proper research with statistically-compliant methodologies is more helpful.

Analyses help to make sense out of the cacophony of information facing organisations and sort of give logic to findings.

The two major kinds of analysis in corporate communication are *descriptive analysis/Frequencies* and *inferences/measures of central tendencies and variations*. Analyses help to answer questions related to: What, Who, How, When and especially Why?

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

1. Explain with illustrations from the corporate communication world the advantages and disadvantages of SWOT Analysis.

1. Generate an analysis in not more than 100 words on the following report:

Employee understanding of the Mission Statement of Africa Corporation

Employees	Understands mission statement	Does not understand mission statement	Indifferent	Total
Junior Workers	50	150	20	220
Supervisors	30	30	20	80
Managers	10	20	5	35
Board of Directors	5	-	-	5

2. Produce 20 copies of the Questionnaire you constructed in your most recent Tutor-marked Assignment (Unit 1 of this Module) and distribute to 20 undergraduates of any Nigerian university. Analyze the returned questionnaires.

7.0 References/Further Reading

Kotler, P. (2003). Marketing Management – Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control. 11th Edition, New York: Prentice-Hall.

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JLS 613	–	CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
MODULE	–	MANAGING CORPORATE COMMUNICATION RABOSTICally
<i>UNIT 3</i>	–	<i>BUDGETING</i>

1.0 Introduction

This Unit will take you through one of the remaining SIX (6) steps involved of corporate communications tasks RABOSTICally, i.e. BUDGET:

- Research
- Analysis
- **Budget**

- Objectives
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Implementation
- Control

2.0 Objectives

You should be able to do the following after going through and understanding the contents of this Unit:

- Be able to make resource (money, men (people), minutes (time), and materials) decisions corporate communication
- Demonstrate ability to make the right resource allocation, particularly budgeting and appropriation of funds for corporate communication programmes and activities.

3.0 Introduction

Opinions differ amongst scholars and practitioners on whether Budgeting Consideration should come before 'Objectives' or whether it should be the other way round. Those who support the latter view believe that it is the objectives of a task that would or should guide funding decisions. Those who prefer the former argue that general budget for corporate communication should emerge from a budget pre-determined by the management of the organisation based on overall corporate goal and strategy. It is therefore from this that the Corporate Communication Unit or Department can make appropriations. Either method will achieve desired goals if properly done. Budget, Objectives, Strategy and Tactics (our next four Units in this Course deal with 'Planning', a very important element of public relations. Remember that in Unit 1, we describe Public Relations as "deliberate and systematic plan..." In corporate communications, planning is

everything. In this Unit, we shall look at the first of the four-legged component of planning, Budget.

3.1 Main Content

3.2 The four Ms of Budgeting (Men, Money, Materials and Minutes)

(a) Men

What is the nature of the human resources at your disposal to carry out corporate communication objectives? How experienced and knowledgeable are members of staff of the department in terms of their abilities to deliver the goals set?

It is not enough to create lofty objectives about an organisation's reputation management, the availability of human resources to actualize the goals are equally important. Some organisations prefer to plan and implement their corporate communication programmes in-house while others prefer to outsource them to communication agencies. We shall examine the challenge of 'Men', therefore, from the two perspectives.

Internal Staff

According Charan and Bossidy (2002), "the people process is more important than either the strategy or operations processes. After all, it is the people of an organisation who make judgements about how markets are changing, create strategies based on those judgments, and translate the strategies into operational realities. To put it simply and starkly: If you don't get the people process right, you will never fulfill the potential of your business."

Depending on the size of the organisation, a corporate communication unit or department should have competent staffs that are very knowledgeable in

- media relations
- arts and design

- publications
- creative writing
- human relations
- multi-media and e-media operations
- photography and video recording/editing
- research and monitoring

It is ideal to have a member or several members of staff to manage these portfolios.

The *media relations specialist* should have both theoretical and practical knowledge of the workings of the media. Preferably, he or she should have practised journalism for a reasonable period. He or she handles matters that have to do with building understanding with professional journalists.

The *arts and design specialist* is in charge of in-house artistic concepts and other designs such as institutional advertisement, complimentary cards, logos, letterheading sheets, in-house publications, etc.

The *publications specialist* handles all print productions, books, calendars, reports, brochures, banners etc.

Creative writers coordinate speeches, news features, interviews, books, etc. They also work hand-in-hand with the arts and design specialists to produce advertising editorial copies and advertorials.

The people in charge of *human relations* and the public relations experts in the corporate affairs unit. They manage the reputation of not only the top management staff and the organisation they also ensure that group communication network is not impeded. They ensure that all internal communication network schedules are implemented to the letter.

The *multi-media and e-media specialist* takes charge of Intranet, Internet, presentations and other communications technology related tasks for the department.

The *photography and video specialist* is in charge of photo and video documentations of the organisation.

Though often pushed to the background, the *research specialists* (most corporate relations offices in Nigeria do not even have them in their employ) is the most important staff of a public relations department and by extension, a corporate communications unit. He or she produces the 'raw material' which the other staff work on. And when the unit's programmes have been implemented, he or she goes back to work to evaluate performance again, and the process starts all over. Even when programmes are on-going, the research specialist works round the clock to monitor compliance to specifications.

It is not the current level or expertise of staffs alone that matter, it is pertinent to determine whether individuals can handle the jobs of tomorrow. It is not until there is a scolding from the top management or unforeseen image crises (when the damage would have been done) for the Department to start overhaul and evaluate its personnel.

People process is important because when it fails, the organisation loses not only money, but also reputation. The common practice in Nigeria is to appoint people who have media experience as public relations managers. This is can only be right when such a person has far more public relations training and experience. Media relations is often over-bloated in most corporate relations schedules in Nigeria probably because some CEOs just like to be publicized. It is the HR's schedule to employ the right people, motivate, train and re-train them. But the corporate communication unit

handles how organizational communication and corporate persona is built. It is not about communicating 'anything' to the public. Hence, all the other units are equally important and research is far more important. Even when the organisation has an elaborate research and planning department, the corporate communication unit ought to have at least a schedule officer on research and monitoring. Can you imagine how an organisation can build a community hospital at the cost of N120million and does not consider it important to monitor how that facility functions and more importantly, to find out if the objective of the company in putting up the structure is being realized?

Agencies

Putting the wrong person on the job is a high-risk in corporate relations management because it can lead to irredeemable disaster (the organisation may not get back the reputation it has lost, even if it spends all the money it can muster.). The right person must be on the right job and unless the organisation is big, it may not be able to hire the right caliber of people to man the various portfolios. This is the key reason for hiring agencies to support the Department. But then, hiring an agency is supposed to *complement* the effort of the department's employees. It is absurd for the Department to accept just any output from the agency for the reason that the Department does not have competent people.

Agencies can be used in a wide sense to cover consultancies from lobbyists, printers to event managers. In the long run, when carefully hired, such agencies enhance better results. Usually, what is out-sourced is often the implementation of the tasks. Nowadays, there are 'integrated agencies' which carry out different services under the same umbrella. Sometimes, this is good for brand salience. Nevertheless, better results come by going for the best for every task. Agency selection involves

defining client requirements, developing an agency pool list, reviewing credentials, short listing, issuing the brief, presentation evaluation (pitching) and final choice. Virtually any of the afore-stated human resource needs of a corporate communication department can be out-sourced.

(b) Materials

This covers the equipment and tools necessary for optimal performance of corporate communication tasks. It might be more economical to deal with rental agencies rather than acquire expensive equipment that are not regularly put to use. However, it is convenient and cost effective to acquire basic equipment to process activities to a reasonable level before handing them to agencies. Sometimes too, confidentiality is required in certain areas and it is best to handle such internally. Having materials budget in mind should come in early at the planning stage so that, if necessary, alternative programmes could be picked instead. For example, it could be a fantastic idea to take the next Annual General Meeting to Obudu Ranch, but will the organisation be able to go through the logistics? Will the effort justify the budget? Since materials are more often out sourced, quality management systems should be put in as a form of control.

(c) Minutes

Timing is important in making budgets for corporate communication programmes, especially because most of its activities are 'live' events. All the programmes deliberately planned and those that are unforeseen are graphically listed as calendar of events which are proactively executed. "Minutes...describe the activity schedule details of what is to be done, the interdependence of actions, the critical pathways (identification of potential bottlenecks), the status of the project, slippage and revised timings...the time periods could be expressed in days or weeks rather than months if TV or daily newspapers are used." (Pickton & Broadrick, 2005).

(d) Money

One of the unique things about corporate communication financial planning is that costing is done in terms of real and foreseen expenses. Some of the tasks embarked upon by the Department are expected (e.g. Annual General Meeting) hence the right funds can be appropriated for the task. Some other tasks are uncertain and still have to be budgeted for. How does one appropriate funds for bad press or shareholder revolt, for example? Such forecasts are determined through baselines (previous occurrences) or via simulations (you assume you are going through the situation being anticipated and estimate what it will cost you to survive in the circumstance, and then appropriate funds). When all the other Ms (Men, Minutes, Materials are determined, it is relatively easy to put the last M – Money.

In this regard, there is a rule – financial appropriation could be based on *affordable, task or competitive parity*, or a combination of these methods. Finally, unlike before when corporate communication is only a money gulper, today, many corporate communication departments are self-funding – they are able to generate income through creative portfolios and events.

3.3 Self-Assessment Question

1. Explain the Four Ms of budgeting in corporate communication and their importance.
2. Describe the functional offices in a Corporate Relations Office of a multinational manufacturing company.

4.0 Conclusion

The four components 'Ms' of corporate communication budget – men, materials, minutes and money are intertwined and all the elements must be properly and carefully apportioned to ensure success of programmes.

Whether the Ms are supplied internally or through external consultants known as agencies, all the Ms must be properly integrated.

5.0 Summary

The Four Ms of budgeting in corporate communication are Men (all categories of employees including professional specialists within and outside the Department); Materials (equipment and tools required to carry out activities and tasks); Minutes (time schedule for carrying out tasks and programmes) and Money (appropriation of funds for real, imagined and unforeseen situations).

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

1. "The Four Ms of corporate communication budgeting all amount to one M – Money." Critically discuss this statement in not more than 150 words.
2. List five (5) items that should be budgeted for in each of the four Ms of corporate communication budget. Example: **Money** - allowances for models; birthday gifts to editors; salaries and wages; cash prizes for staff of the month winners and monthly telephone recharge cards to traditional ruler of the village.

7.0 References/Further Reading

Onabajo, Olufemi *ed.* (2005). Essentials of media relations. Lagos: Concept Publishers

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 4 – MANAGING CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

RABOSTICally

UNIT 4 – OBJECTIVES

1.0 Introduction

This Unit will take you through one of the remaining FIVE (5) steps involved in corporate communications tasks RABOSTICally, i.e. STATING OBJECTIVES:

- Research
- Analysis
- Budget
- **Objectives**
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Implementation
- Control

2.0 Objectives

After this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the process of formulating objectives for corporate communication in an organisation (-adapt them from general objective of the organisation).
- Develop objectives for specific programmes and events within the general umbrella corporate communication objectives.

3.0 Main Content

Roger Haywood defines 'objective' as *a specific point which is to be reached; where possible a PR activity should be working to quantified objectives rather than broad aims.*"

An aim is the direction in which progress will be made while an objective is the

end product to be reached. It is the object in view, i.e. having an existence outside the mind or real as opposed to something subjective. *Business: The Ultimate Resource* defines it as “an end toward which effort is directed and on which resources are focused.” When an objective is in quantifiable form, it is regarded as a goal. Illustrations:

Aim: *To develop an action plan to improve the image of the organisation among shareholders.*

Objective: *To reach shareholders of the organisation with cost-effective programmes and through the programmes make them think more positively about the organisation.*

Goal: *To reach at least 70 per cent of shareholders of the organisation with cost effective programmes and through the programmes make their perception of the organisation improve by 30 per cent.*

3.1 Types of Objectives

According to Salu (1994), there are, broadly speaking, two types of objectives: the informational and motivational objectives.

Informational Objective

The primary aim of this kind of objective is simply to pass information about something to target publics, e.g. Chevron Nigeria Ltd announcing the availability of scholarship forms for Nigerian undergraduates.

Motivational Objective

Here the person setting the objective wants to attain something tangible as a result of the effort.

Generally, objectives create a better understanding of corporate planning at operational level. It also brings about a clear sense of direction a greater understanding in setting priorities and improves communication and motivation throughout the organisation. When we do not set objectives, we risk not knowing where we are going and we will probably not know what we have achieved. In addition, we will not be able to say if what we have achieved is good enough. Lack of objectives make every one or every team to work in different directions and this will eventually tell in the results of performance.

Benn (1978) has listed nine (9) determinants of a good objective as follow:

i) Form

The techniques, e.g. telephone calls, slide presentation, events, TV interview, etc., used to execute the objective.

ii) Purpose

E.g. to persuade, correct an impression, appreciate or to pass on an important information

iii) Source

The aspect or person in the organisation from which/whom the communication is coming out (e.g. production department, CEO, PR manager).

iv) Subject

What is the subject matter – community relations, profitability, customer services?

v) Audience

Who will receive the communication or who is to be directly communicated with? Which of the publics of the organisation is the particular effort targeted at?

vi) Professional

These are objectives adapted from the general objectives of public relations (i.e. sustained systematic effort to create mutually beneficial understanding between an organisation and its publics).

vii) Authorities

Government and other regulatory authorities can set objectives. For instance the NNPC specifically sets public affairs objectives for all oil companies in her joint venture operations.

vii) The budget

How much is available for the task often can determine the crafting of the objective. An objective to convince *all youths* in the community to participate in an organisation's vocational training programme may be reduced to 'convincing 50 per cent of the youths' if money and staff available cannot effectively reach all the youths.

viii) Time available

This is often a major determinant of objectives. The practitioner must attempt to do only what is doable within the time available. There is no point setting objectives which cannot be realized.

It is very pertinent to distinguish two more types of objectives:

- a) **general** objectives of the Corporate Communication Department; and
- b) **project**/programme objectives.

General Objectives are statements that guide the activities of the Corporate Communication Department (or that guide corporate communication practice in the organisation). Setting corporate objectives involves clarifying the strategic and policy requirements of the company and setting and agreeing on complementary operational objectives in relation to them.

According to *Business: The Ultimate Resource Book*, there are seven major things to do when setting general objectives:

1. *Develop and communicate the mission/vision statements of the organisation.*
Mission as we said earlier lays down the purpose for which the organisation exists and **Vision** tells the ultimate aim that the organisation aspires to attain.
2. *Identify corporate objectives from the mission/vision statement*
3. *Agree on the objectives for Senior Managers*
4. *Make sure objectives reach departments and individuals through a two-way process (bottom-up and top-down).*
5. *Agree on objectives with those who are to tackle them.* Objectives are not set by decree or fiat but by proposing or seeking ideas, by discussion, negotiation compromise and agreement.
6. *Identify appropriate performance measures – efficiency, effectiveness, cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness.*
7. *Set up procedures for reviewing performance.*

Below is an illustration of statement of general objectives derived from a mission and vision statements:

Objectives of Corporate Communication Dept of Iqbotako Oil PLC

- We will always tell the truth about our organisation
- To nurture corporate beliefs and values that will assist in achieving the general objectives of the organisation
- To keep employees fully informed about the decisions and activities of the organisation.
- We will tell the company what our organisation stands for and be responsible corporate citizens positively touching the lives of people around as much as possible.
- We will create vibrant open communication channels that could foster understanding between our organisation and its publics.
- We will adhere strictly to the ethics of Public Relations

Specific Task Objectives

These are objectives set against specific programmes and projects. For instance, 'creating vibrant open communication' could be carried out by sponsoring a radio and TV programme. A specific programme objective has to be drawn up for that programme. The most popular method of developing task objectives is in the SMARTT formula.

Developing SMARTT Objectives

Developing project or task objectives SMARTTly means considering:

1. How SPECIFIC the task to be achieved is.
2. How MEASURABLE the task or project is.
3. How ATTAINABLE the task or project is
4. How REASONABLE or realistic the task or project is.
5. Is the project TIMED?
6. Is the project or programme TARGETTED at a clear audience?

Thus, whatever task the corporate communication department wants to achieve, it must be made to pass through the fire of the six questions above. For instance, if you are advising the company to build a community health centre, you must first locate that objective within the general framework of aims and objectives of the company. If it passes the test, you now have to develop specific objectives for the project asking the SMARTT questions:

- What kind of health centre do you want to build? How many beds? What is the personnel? What kind of treatments will take place there? Etc.
- When the health centre is in place, how can we know that it is serving both the community's and company's interest? For instance, we can say by ensuring that 50 per cent of residents of the community use orthodox medical facilities and regard our organisation positively for making their health conditions better. This is a 'measurable objective' since we can

track patronage by number of visits to the health centre and attitude to company through focus group discussions, questionnaires or interviews, etc.

- Is the building of the health centre attainable?
- Is it realistic? Sometimes a project can be attainable but is not realistic in the light of prevailing circumstances. For instance, the stress of going through it could be too much before one attains the objective at the end of the day hence such a project is not realistic.
- When are we commissioning the health centre?
- Who are those going to benefit directly and indirectly from amongst our publics. 'The entire community' is not clear enough: teachers, farmers, nursing mothers, people above 70 years of age are better descriptions of proper targeting.

3.3 Self-Assessment Questions

1. Distinguish between Mission Statement, Vision Statement and Objectives
2. What are the seven steps to developing general corporate objectives?
3. Explain the process of writing project objectives SMARTly.

4.0 Conclusion

From Mission/Vision Statements, an organisation derives general corporate objectives and develops general and task/project objectives related to corporate strategy based on availability of resources.

A corporate organisation without objectives lacks direction, oneness of purpose and will neither be able to maximize results nor be able to measure its performance properly.

5.0 Summary

Objective is an end toward which effort is directed and of which resources are focused. This may be *general* (for the organisation/corporate communication department) or *task/project* (for particular projects embarked upon by a Corporate Communication Department).

What informs how an objective is crafted include: availability of fund, time, skills, purpose, source, know-how, general umbrella strategy and tactic and form.

To draw general objectives, we develop mission/vision statements, identify corporate objectives to realize the mission/vision, agree on the objectives with the senior managers, make sure the objectives reach departments and individuals, agree on objectives with those who are to tackle them, identify appropriate performance measures and set up procedures for reviewing performance.

To set specific project objectives, we are to do it SMARTTly: Make is Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Reasonable, Timed, Targetted.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignments

1. You are the head of corporate communication of an oil and gas company based in the heart of the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria where militants and community advocates had be causing mayhem over activities of oil and gas company. Your organisation was accused by the protesters as the chief culprit. You have recommended to management to develop self-employment projects as a way to reduce this resentment. However, the CEO and management want you to back your suggestion with objectives. Go ahead and write the objectives of the project.
2. Write out the Mission and Vision Statements of five multinational companies in Nigeria. Critique the missions and visions as a professional corporate communicator.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 5 – MANAGING CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

RABOSTICally

UNIT 1: – STRATEGY

1.0 Introduction

We are still learning the eight (8) steps of corporate communication task. This Unit will take you through one of the remaining FOUR (4) steps in executing corporate communication tasks RABOSTICally i.e. STRATEGY:

- Research
- Analysis
- Budget
- Objectives
- **Strategy**
- Tactics
- Implementation
- Control

You need to pay very particular attention to this Unit so that you can understand its contents very well.

2.0 Objectives

When you are through with this Unit, you should be able to:

- Develop and analyze corporate communication strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to develop specific programmes that are 'strategic'.

3.0 Main Content

You must have heard of strategic alliances; strategic partnership; Strategic Business Units, SUBs; strategic fit, strategic gap and so on. There are all derivatives of the word 'strategy'. If indeed PR is *systematic two-way communication*, strategy must be cardinal to its operations. Again, such strategy must be adapted from strategy of the organisation itself (not running across the general organizational strategy). Thus, it is not much exaggeration when top CEOs say 'I am only interested in the strategy and nothing else'. Best practices of PR and corporate communication essentially come through *good thinking*. If there is good thinking, there should be good product (a theme once used by the Toyota Group).

3.1 Meaning of Strategy

Strategy is simply *an action plan that business leaders can rely on to reach their business objectives*. Kerry Napuk, in *The Strategy-Led Business* (1996) describes strategic planning as "a total concept of the whole business involving a framework and process that guides its future." In strategizing, you look at your present situation, look three-five years forwards and position yourself *now* so that in three years' time you would have been able to achieve your set objectives.

The most important question Strategy asks is 'how'? This naturally leads to asking more questions – Where are you now? How did you get there? What are you

into? Where do you want to be in the future? How are you going to get there? Why are you doing it this way? How are the others doing it?

Someone can decide to construct a three-bedroom flat within six months. That is an objective. But that is not enough. He or she cannot just build anyhow. How is he or she going to start? From where does he or she even start and why? Some people begin to build a house by starting a savings scheme. Some start by buying enough cement anticipating that the price could skyrocket. Some others begin by moulding concrete blocks in tens and twenties. We have seen many people succeed building houses doing all of the above. This means that there is no one formula for strategy. However, when we look at these different builders, we will readily see that they all attained different levels of success, all things being equal. Some spent just one year while some others took ten years. The builder that took time (as a first step) to build a broad framework (how best can I build) would all things being equal attain better success. This is different from 'tactics' – the specific steps to carry out the framework – which we shall discuss in the next Unit. Strategy represents the foundation and pillars of the house. They determine how tall and wide the building can be. Tactics is about deciding how and where you put the doors, the windows, what kind of tiles, which kind of cement and why these? Strategy is more like 'Aims' while Tactics are like 'objectives' in *action form*. A football coach may decide to beat an opposing team by playing the '4-3-3 Strategy' (i.e. four defenders, three midfielders and three attackers). This is the strategy. In terms of tactics, he or she can play of attackers deep up front to hold the ball with a view to getting a penalty and one of the defenders to mark-out a dangerous attacker in the opponent's team via man-to-man marking. Thus, tactics always derive from strategy, and strategy from objectives.

3.2 The Importance of Strategy.

Strategy helps in corporate communication to:

- Understand the organisation's position in the market place – how it stands in the comity of organisations.
- Improve motivation and communication throughout the organisation
- Avoid mistakes and wastages

- Have sense of purpose (someone who plots how to get to where he is going is likely to be more confident, calculating and purposeful than someone who does not).
- Help to overcome expected difficulties
- Keep the organisation or department focused on realizing its objectives.

3.3 Attributes of Strategy

A good corporate communication strategy should have the following attributes:

1. It must be based on the objectives of the organisation and that of the department (focus).
2. It must be creative. It must be intuitively derived as much as possible. Sometimes it is possible to *adapt* what other organisations have done. But it is not good strategy to *adopt* what others have done hook-line-and-sinker.
3. It must be flexible. A good strategy can run into storms along the line. There must be flexibility room in a good strategy.
4. It should be challenging and must be realistic. Strategy should help the organisation to take a leap in its forward march, not numerous short steps.
5. It must be responsive – take account of competitors, the environment and be contextual.
6. It must be timed: strategies are usually rolling plans, e.g. five-year plans rolled over every three years, three-year plans rolled over every two years.

3.4 The Checklists (and Steps) To Developing Corporate Communication Strategy.

1. *Involve all managers and staff*

The planning process should not be restricted merely to contributions from senior representatives. All units of the Department should play a part and all staff will have a contribution to make as stakeholders.

2. *Where are you now?*

Analyze recent performance to identify the current position of the organisation in relation to its market and industry sector (for general corporate strategy). For *strategic fit*, analyze how the framework the Department had been using fit into the general organizational objectives. Regarding strategic plan for projects (to close *strategic gaps*), review how the Department had performed doing the same or similar framework previously. For example, in a strategic plan for the Annual General Meeting, review how the previous year's AGM went. 'Strategic gap' is the difference in position between where an organisation wants to be at a specific point in time in the future and where it would anticipate being at that time if it simply carried on with its current activities. (Pickton & Broderick, 2005).

3. *How did you get to where you are?*

You have to perform a SWOT test (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) on the Department and its projects. What did you get right? What did you get wrong? What does your success or failure owe to planning generally?

4. *Examine your Corporate Identity?*

It is not enough for your organisation to be known: everyone and every organisation are known for something. What are you known for? What kind of people do you have in your organisation and how do they

contribute to or impede performance? What kind of leadership do you have? What is your culture and value as an organisation?

5. *What does your organisation want to achieve?*

Examine the goals of your organisation and the strategy conceptualized to attain those goals. Let us assume the organisation has developed a strategy to develop more versions of a particular fruit drink in to increase its market share of the product from 10 to 15 per cent.

6. *Where does it want to go?*

You will now determine what 'corporate communications' can contribute to help the organisation achieve its 15 per cent market share objective. This is where 'intellectual capital' (skill, knowledge and thinking) is paramount. This can easily be done however by looking at the Techniques of Corporate Communications (Module 3) and adopting a combination that in your thinking will bring about the best results.

7. *Construct a framework*

After 1-6 above, you now have enough 'raw materials' to do some architecture – draw up a main frame, which is what strategy really is. Using 3.2 and 3.3 above and the result of your SWOT, now encapsulate in short, clear sentences *how* to get to your destination if you want to move in leaps. Remember that strategy has to be constructed and owned by those who will execute it, namely the line people. Staff people can help by collecting data making inputs and using analytical tools, but business leaders must be in charge of developing the substance of the strategic

plan. (Charan and Bossidy, 2004). In constructing branding strategies, your own talent and skill must come to play but you can still use broad frameworks. For instance, you can use one more following creative strategy alternatives proposed by Patti and Frazer (1999);

- Generic Strategy: This strategy is one in which there is not distinction made between brands.
- Pre-emptive Strategy: A generic claim is made but with some assertion that your brand is superior.
- Unique Selling Proposition (USP): Emphasizes the superiority of a brand based on a unique feature or benefit.
- Brand Image Strategy: Relies on the development of mental or psychological associations through the use of semiotic devices (signs, symbols, images) and associations. Brands are differentiated not on physical characteristics or claims of uniqueness as such but on the general image formed in the minds of people, especially the target people.
- Positioning Strategy: Attempts to build or occupy a mental niche in relation to identified competitors.
- Resonance Strategy: Attempts to develop synergy by evoking meanings, experiences, thoughts, associations and aspirations that are relevant and significant to the audience.
- Affective Strategy: Tries to generate involvement and emotions over strong 'selling' emphasis. Many GSM companies in Nigeria use this strategy.
- Informational Strategy: This approach primarily aims at passing across information.

8. *Communicate and seek feedback*

Communicating details of the emerging strategy through the organization for inputs, understanding and commitment. For instance seek the views of key members of staff on the strategy for areas of improvement.

9. *Measure, Adapt and Renew*

According to ***Business: the Ultimate Result*** (2004), “the end point of strategic action is the combination of product(s), market(s) and technologies that produce results that realize the vision.” The fourth element is ‘the people’ of course. Measurement is a key process that can indicate the levels of change and modification needed as the strategy adapts to changing technologies and market forces and evolves to embrace new opportunities.

3.5 **Strategic Business Units (SBUs)**

A Strategic Business Unit is a strategically significant and identifiable part of a larger organisation. It may be a particular section of an organisation (like Corporate Communications), a team or committee within the organisation or subsidiary or sister company. They are often created to fast track achievements of objectives, especially where going through the normal procedures or processes would not achieve the same level of results within the time frame. For example, in an organisation where the morale of the workers is very low and employees are resigning in droves, it might not bring optimum results to challenge the HR Department with more incentives and programmes. An ‘Employee SBU’ could be created where all stakeholders (all key managers and staff that could help boost workers’ morale put their talents and resources together to get the best results. In this illustration, the SBU does not take over the traditional functions of the HR. Rather, it complements them. As Charan and Bossidy (2004) have noted:

A robust strategy is not a compilation of numbers or what amounts to an astrological forecast when companies

extrapolate numbers year by year for the next ten years. Its substance and detail must come from the minds of the people who are closest to the action and who understand their markets, their resources, and their strengths and weaknesses.

Corporate-level strategy is the vehicle for allocating resources to all the business units. It defines the walls of the company: the businesses it wants to be in and the general scope of operations, including targets for each unit. Each unit will now develop its own strategy as 'SBUs', not just as one of the units that add up to form the organisation but as a component that adds values to the strategy created for corporate level strategy. *Strategic Partnering or Corporate alliance* is a collaborative process whereby two organisations adopt high level of purposeful cooperation to maintain a trading relationship over time, allowing them to achieve their corporate objectives more efficiently and more effectively than they could separately.

3.6 Self-Assessment Questions

1. Define *corporate communication strategy*? Explain key attributes of a good corporate strategy.
2. Distinguish corporate-level strategy and Strategic Business Unit (SBU) level strategy.

4.0 Conclusion

Strategy means *defining a business's direction and positioning it to move in that direction*. In corporate communication, it is a framework that guides the internal and external relations over a period of time that is not too short or too long – 3-5 years.

Objectives are merely lofty ideas unless fool-proof strategy is in place to see through.

5.0 Summary

Corporate communication strategy is *defining the problems, opportunities and challenges of internal and external communication of an organisation and positioning the organisation to move in the short term in a pre-determined direction towards resolving the problem, taking advantage of the opportunities and overcoming the challenges in a specified period of time.*

Strategy is important because it helps to create an understanding of the organisation's position in the market place; improve motivation and communication throughout the organisation; reduces mistakes and wastages; generates sense of organizational purpose; helps to overcome expected difficulties and keeps the organisation or department focused on realizing its objectives.

There are six (6) attributes of a good strategy: It must have focus; it must be creative; it must be flexible; it should be challenging but realistic; it must be responsive – take account of competitors, the environment and be contextual; and it must be timed (usually 3-5 years rolling plans).

Basic steps to developing a corporate communication strategy are: involve all managers and staff; find out where you are now; find out how you got to where you are; perform an corporate identity audit; examine what your organisation wants to achieve; examine what the department of corporate communication can do to help your organisation achieve its objectives; construct a framework; communicate effectively and seek a feedback; and measure, adopt and review everything you have done and continue to review periodically. List the steps involved in developing corporate communication strategy.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

Objectives of Corporate Communication Dept of Iqbotako Oil PLC

- We will always tell the truth about our organisation
- To nurture corporate beliefs and values that will assist in achieving the general objectives of the organisation
- To keep employees fully informed, being and important factor in the organisation's success
- We will tell the company what our organisation stands for and be responsible corporate citizens positively touching the lives of people around us much as possible.
- To create vibrant open communication channels that could foster understanding between our organisation and its publics.
- To adhere strictly to the ethics of Public Relations

Write a Corporate Communication Strategy based on the above-stated objectives.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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MODULE 5 – MANAGING CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

RABOSTICally

UNIT 2 – TACTICS

1.0 Introduction

In our effort to go through the RABOSTIC management of corporate communication, we have looked at five (5) key tasks, leaving THREE (3) steps outstanding – Tactics, Implementation and Control. In this Unit, we shall look at TACTICS.

- Research
- Analysis
- Budget
- Objectives
- Strategy
- **Tactics**
- Implementation
- Control

2.0 Objectives

When you are through with this Unit, you should be able to:

- Develop corporate communication tactics, including demonstrated ability to implement specific corporate communication strategies.
- Demonstrate ability to draw up tactics based on specified tactics.

3.0 Main Content

Some authors use 'strategy' and 'tactic' interchangeably. But it is best to see strategy as a broad framework towards an identified destination while tactic indicates specific plan to get to that destination. A strategist moves in leaps. A tactician moves in steps. The latter pays more attention to details and adaptation of known techniques, while the former builds a general theory from which theories can be abstracted. Strategies and tactics are therefore always in the same direction, the former preceding the latter. Visualize an architect's drawing of a building as the strategic plan and erection of blocks as the tactical plan.

We can illustrate this by looking at the management of a football team. The General Manager takes care of building a framework through which the team can win the League Cup (for instance buy better players, give more incentives and attract more supporters). The Coach develops tactics from this strategy (buying more popular attackers having realized that in the last season, the team had problems in that area, convert a midfielder to a winger and determines how much the incoming players are worth. If the team strategy was not to attract more supporters, the coach might not decide to buy 'popular' players. An organisation may have a strategy of 'using reality shows to improve corporate reputation'. Tacticians will take it further – What kind of reality show? For whom is the show meant? When is the best time to start? How much will it cost? Must we spend that much? Are competitors doing something close? How do we come and have competitive edge? It can therefore be seen that the distinction between strategy and tactic is not water-tight. A strategy is detailed enough to indicate the destination and the best way to get there (e.g. travelling from Lagos to Abuja by air to save overall management expenses could be a strategy). A strategist would not bother so much about which airlines to use, at what period of the day is best to travel to save the costs and whether to negotiate volume

discount for air-fares. Tactics would do that. It is more or less the creative interpretation of a strategy by the person who is to drive the strategy.

3.1 Tactical approaches in Corporate Communication

While strategies does not give room for frequent adjustments (only minor changes are usually made over 3-5 years to allow for flexibility) adaptability is the very essence of tactics. We can look at this in several complementary ways:

Structure:

The Corporate Affairs Department must build an organizational and management structure that will provide a platform to implement the strategy. Responsibilities have to be defined. Reporting processes and hierarchies have to be outlined. All of these should be linked with technologies. Some ideas and concepts can never thrive under some structures. Lopsided reporting lines can create an *execution gap*- the gap between what organisations want to achieve and the ability of the organisation to deliver it. A structure that has been in place for several years might not be suitable for implementing a brand new idea. When strategies change, it is very unlikely that tactics would remain the same. It might require building a new structure that will aid implementation. Some strategies work best in non-hierarchical organisations while others thrive best in hierarchical structures.

Skills & Talents:

It is also important to build organizational capabilities and competencies. The Group CEO of NICON Insurance PLC, several years ago, 'discovered' a young executive in the Accounting Department of the company by accident. He was giving routine motivational talk to employees when he found out that the young man who was an accounts clerk had generated insurance business worth N40million in the particular financial year. He immediately summoned him to his office, promoted him and transferred him to the Marketing Department. The management staff was unhappy for several reasons. The CEO did not follow the normal procedure – for appraisal forms were not completed and his immediate

supervisor should have been made to recommend him for pay rise. More importantly, according to them, the man studied accounting, not marketing. The CEO stood his ground and in 12 months, the young man generated over N150 million worth of business. Without creating an environment to develop skill and nurture talents; without stirring the intuitive abilities of people, strategy and implementation will be poorly linked. A commonly used method for boosting tactical inputs is '*brainstorming*'. It is a way of using many brains to storm a single problem creatively, working on the assumption that individuals can get to a better solution if they act collectively than if they act individually. The four basic rules of brainstorming are: ***Suspend Judgment*** (refrain from judging the ideas of others as they are articulated and shared); ***Record all ideas*** (write them out exactly as they are expressed no matter how stupid they are); ***Encourage 'piggy-backing'*** (let each idea spontaneously spark further ideas and build on the creativity of others); ***Think 'out of the box'*** (don't set gags or limitations that could stereotype or restrict people's ideas). A good example of thinking out of the box is exemplified by the Managing Director of Global Fleet Oil and Gas, Mr. Jimoh Ibrahim. Several years ago when petroleum marketers had problems making good profit due to irregular importation of (and scarcity of) fuel, most station owners could not make good profits, basically there was nothing extraordinary they could do when fuel was not available. But Jimoh Ibrahim thought outside the box. He began to build everyone of his station with an accompanying banking hall in the premises. Thus, without even selling fuel, he was making good money. This is an example of 'thinking outside the box'. Brainstorming is inclusive, efficient, synergistic and inspirational. It is productive and exciting. It makes employees have a sense of involvement, even if at the end of the day his or her views are not taken in. It awakens the dormant talents in people.

Staffing:

Similar to the preceding factor, staffing helps to determine the people process of strategy implementation. Before a project or programme goes 'on air', it is important to determine if the organisation has the right staff to drive the strategies developed. If the right people to implement the strategy are not within the Department, can they be found in other departments? Can they be found outside the organisation? Is it more economical or ideal to employ a new

employee, use a consultant or outsource to a reputable firm the particular function in which staffs are lacking? Is there a need to deploy or redeploy in order to enhance smooth implementation of the strategy?

Style:

One beautiful thing about tactics is that 'there is no one way to do things'. Leadership approach, creative approach and often techniques of communication is sometimes a matter of style. Style gives room for originality, which is very important in PR. But it can also create problems if not properly harnessed.

Systems:

The structure may become bottle-necked simply because practices and procedures are not linked to it. Highly intellectual staff and consultants come from the best business schools and highly-rated consulting firms but may fail because they are made to operate in an environment that kills instincts. How will the input and output systems help in transforming the strategy to reality? Are the controls linked with external systems effectively? How do you snap systemic managerial inertia?

Scenario Planning

This is tactical planning that uses possible future outcomes to improve the quality of decision making. According to Michael Porter, scenario building is “an internally consistent view of what the future might be, not a forecast but one possible future outcome.” (Cited by Ringland, 2004). Leaders stimulate debate about choices, develop strategy resilient against several futures, review plans in anticipation of the future, in much the same way as brainstorming. The major difference is that in scenario planning, you are simulating possible occurrences; you are imagining that if this happens, this is what you will do, and suppose it happens the other way, this is what you do. However, in brainstorming, you think aloud. Brainstorming gives you multiple choices to pick from. In scenario planning, you have made a choice, but you want to look at back-ups in case your strategy fails. In PR and corporate relations we have seen events that were completely unexpected happen and create enormous corporate crises. Scenario planning is a form of ‘environmental scanning’ that helps in contextualizing strategies.

Intrapreneuring

This involves getting people from other parts of the organisation to contribute time and resources to an innovation. It requires an inspiring vision, diplomacy, good business judgment and a contrite spirit to seek advice even when one is highly knowledgeable.

3.2 Kinds of Tacticians:

The new professional economy is placing an increasing premium on the mind, body and soul of the adventurer – the problem solver – on people who can conceive, organise, and lead expeditions that add value to society, business, and humanity. Christopher Hoenig (*Developing Exceptional Problem-Solving Skills, 2004*, cited by Capon (2003) has proposed six (6) exceptional problem-solving skills that management should possess:

i) ***Generate the Mindset (The Innovator):***

The 'innovator' focuses on moving from self-doubt to innovation by developing patented ideas and attitudes above all through seeking alternative view. An innovator's potent mind sets the stage for discovery because the combination of commitment and open-mindedness generates a wide range of opportunities.

ii) ***Know the Territory (The Discoverer):***

The 'discoverer' concentrates on moving from innovation to insight by asking the right questions and getting good, timely information. Better knowledge helps you define problems more effectively, choose the best routes and identify what is at stake. This brings understanding and insight. With more investigation, the implications of those problems become more apparent as a foundation for action.

iii) ***Build the Relationships (The Communicator):***

The 'communicator' deals with how to move from insight to community by cultivating quality interaction and so creates an ever-expanding circle of relationships based on service, loyalty and identity. Communicators develop the support and human context needed to create and implement change effectively. Through their mastery of relationship building, communicators connect potential journeys to their actual implications of real people. They help to determine whether a problem-solving effort is worthwhile, for whom and why. They now generate a core group that will tackle the journey and a network that will support the effort.

iv) ***Manage the Journeys (The Playmakers)***

The 'playmaker' focuses on moving from building a community to giving that community a sense of direction and choosing destinations. Fostering an understanding of the stages of any problem-solving journey helps people to set goals, define success, and develop effective plans. Playmakers take the attitude, knowledge and people brought into play by innovators, discoverers and communicators and shape the destinations, direction and strategies to make the journey a reality.

v) ***Create the Solutions (The Creator)***

The 'creator' shows how to move from leadership to power by designing, building and maintaining optimal solutions. Creators help to bring the best technology, people and tools together in complete, flexible solutions that will fit the problem. A creator take the requirements and goals of a playmaker, which define the journey and figures out what it will take to get the group to where they want to go. When there is more innovation and better knowledge, when there are richer relationships and better-defined problems, the solution design and construction are more focused.

vi) ***Deliver the Results (The Performer)***

The 'performer' concentrates on moving from power to sustainable advantage through intuitive and disciplined implementation, which allows you continually to exceed expectations. Performers can help to conquer complexity, friction, and scale with simplicity, discipline and a competitive edge of the playmaker and the solutions of the creator, and work to achieve full resolution of the problem. When all other roles are done well, the performer is able to focus completely on achieving full resolution and not on redesign, unplanned maintenance or changing requirements.

3.3 Self-Assessment

1. Explain the difference(s) between *Strategy* and *Tactics*
2. Explain the 'people-factors' in tactical planning.

4.0 Conclusion

Tactics are important in corporate communication because it personalizes strategy. It indicates the best out of several routes outlined to get to a destination.

5.0 Summary

Reviewing structures; building skills and letting talents thrive creativity; staffing the right people for the right jobs, style of leadership and management, rebuilding systems and processes, scenario planning and *intrapreneuring* are some of the tools to build tactics for driving strategies.

When tactics are lacking, it means strategies are not interpreted and properly positioned and this could lead to poor results and wide execution gaps.

6.0 Tutor-marked Question

1. “Many strategies fall apart because the right critical issues aren’t raised.” Discuss.
2. Describe the ‘system-factors’ in tactical planning.
3. Write a tactical plan for the ‘Strategy’ you prepared in Module 5 Unit 1 based on the outcome of a *brainstorming* session of three or four friends of yours.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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UNIT 3 – IMPLEMENTATION

1.0 Introduction

The last two stages in the RABOSTIC corporate communication management process are Implementation and Control. In this Unit, we shall look at IMPLEMENTATION.

- Research
- Analysis
- Budget
- Objectives
- Strategy
- Tactics
- **Implementation**
- Control

2.0 Objectives

When you are through with this Unit, you should be able to:.

- Implement corporate communication tactics and strategies.
- Fix problems and difficulties that usually and unexpectedly occur during execution of corporate communication programmes.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Basic tools and techniques of Implementation

Implementation is about the actual execution what has been strategically and tactically planned based on sound objectives. If research, analysis, budget, objectives and tactics are properly designed, implementation should not constitute serious problems. Implementation problems occur mostly because one or more of these aforementioned key steps in RABOSTIC planning was not properly done. And if any of these key stages was ill-conceived, it will tell at the Implementation and Control Stages. Thus, making implementation successful begins with these afore-stated elements.

Usually, from the strategies and tactics of corporate communication (when ideas, projects and programmes would have been thoroughly and critically analyzed against corporate objectives and the internal and external environmental conditions) the next remaining serious task execution. This may be monthly or quarterly basis and then weekly basis. Ideally, a Year Planner should be made to locate the programmes. Before this is done, wide consultation and research should be carried out to arrive at the best period or date most suitable. Some days are automatic – for instance a programme relating to Nigeria’s Independence Day ideally should hold on October 1st, the country’s Independence Day or thereabouts. Below are some major tools and techniques that can be used in corporate communication plan implementation.

Calendars/Year Planner

Programmes and activities are broken across years, months and weeks. Specific days and time are then carefully chosen for each event. Below is a hypothetical example:

Corporate Communication Programme of NOUN Group of Companies

JANUARY 2009		
DAY	PROJECT/PROGRAMME	ACTION/COMMENT

3	Visit to Omolayo Motherless Babies Home	GM/Tom
5	Noun News Editorial meeting	AGM/Kemi
5	Courtesy visit to VC by Gov. Eze	GM/Joan
5	Press Conference (Matriculation)	Joan
9	Inter-divisional visits	Kemi
11	Inauguration of LOC VC Tennis CUP	GM
11	Visit to Media Houses	GM/Haruna
15	Stakeholder-Interactive with VC	Osaretin
16	Team Leaders Workshop	Osaretin
17	Inauguration of Students Union	Joan
17	Monthly Reviews	GM/Kemi
17	Management Retreat Planning Meeting	GM
17	AIT/Interview (Education Today)	GM/Bala
18	Scholarship Committee Meeting	AGM/Haruna
18	Advert campaign Strategy meeting	Joan/Third World Media
19	Advert campaign Strategy meeting	Joan/Third World Media
20	Courtesy visit to VC by Pacelli School for the Blind	Bala
20	Interview with VC (Guardian/Punch)	Bala
21	VC hosts Vice Chancellors's Conference	GM/Osaretin
23	Final Editorial Meeting of NOUN News	AGM/Kemi
24	Media Parley with VC	GM/Haruna
29	Strategic Planning Review(Management)	GM
29	Opening of Course Writers Workshop	AGM/Osaretin
29	Business Luncheon with Editors	GM/Joan
29	Quarter Review and Preview	Entire Staff/Osaretin
29	Launch of NOUN Website	AGM/Prof. Simpson

Although the above outline of events and days did not indicate so much detail, a cursory look tells what the focus of the Department is for the month. And when put together with the remaining eleven months, the entire year's outlook of activities and programmes come out very clear and every one can run with his or her schedule. Usually, every programme or event is expected to have been RABOSTICally treated before dates are put on the Departmental Workplan Calendar. Every team member for each project/activity has details of the RABOSTIC schedule and plays his or her role towards meeting the specific

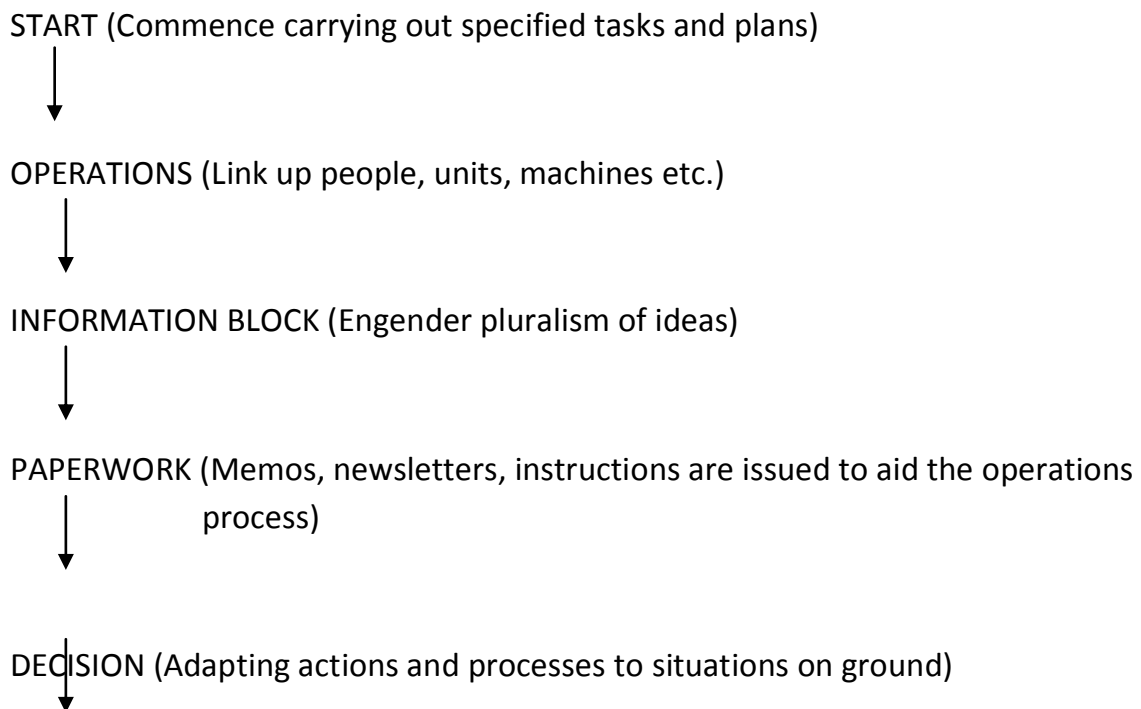
objectives. Thus, essentially, what the Workplan Calendar does is to serve as review/preview reminders.

Flow charting

This involves full understanding of the inputs and outputs and flow of a process to implement a strategy. Oakland (2004) notes:

In the systematic planning or detailed examination of any process, whether that of an administrative service delivery, manufacturing, or managerial activity, it is necessary to record the series of events and activities, stages and decisions, in a form that can be easily understood and communicated to all. If improvements are to be made, the facts relating to the existing method must be recorded first.

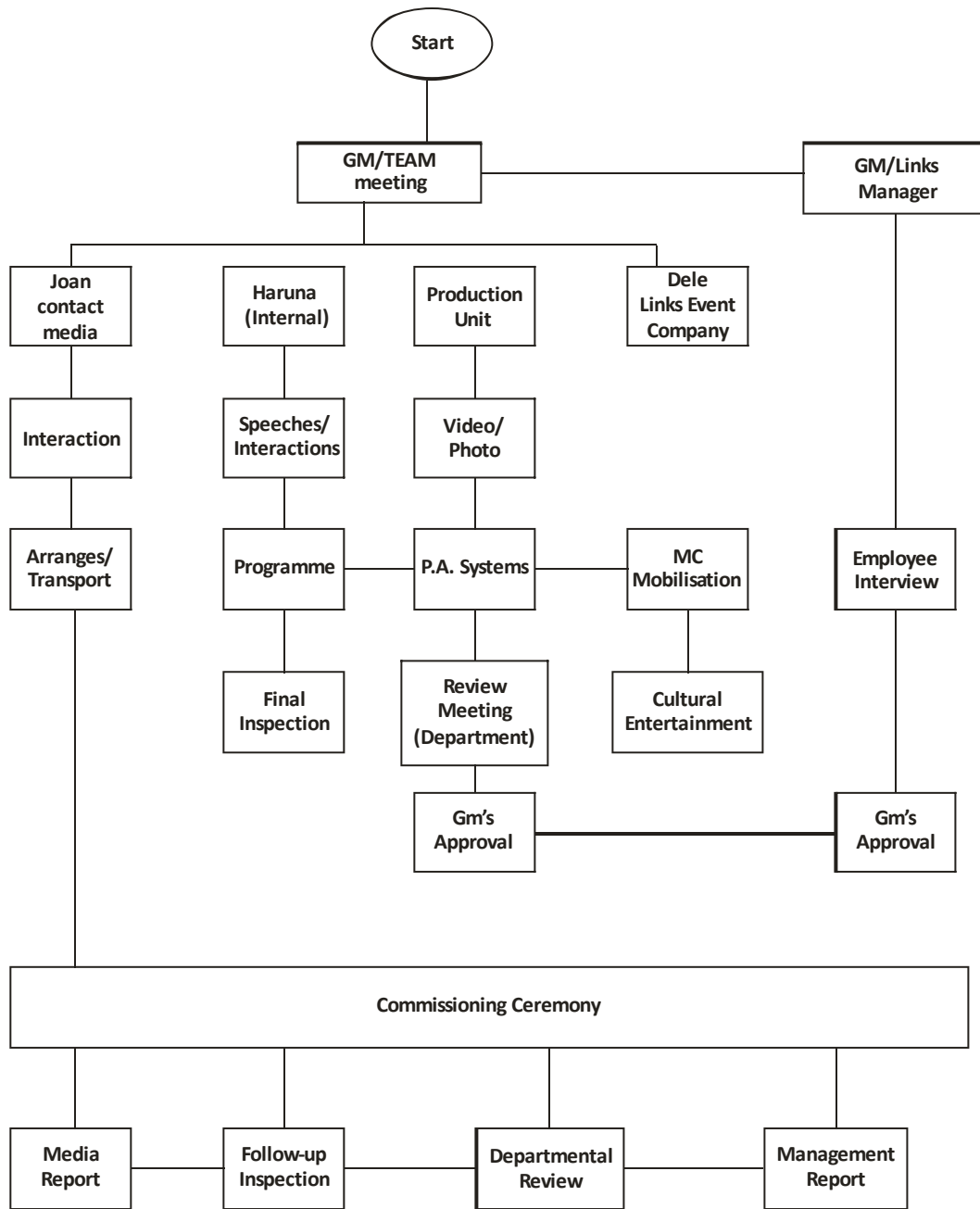
It provides more details than a Workplan Calendar and is more of a process management technique for each major task or regular function of the Department, 'Visit to Omolayo Motherless Babies' Home'. Below is a typical Flow Chart format:



END (Task achieved or not achieved; actions are evaluated)

Now, let us use adopt a hypothetical illustration that fits a corporate communication flow chart for a better understanding:

**Process Flow Chart About
Commissioning of a Community Centre**



From the above flow charts we can see how the management reviewed the process of carrying out a regular programme for optimal performance. The details that appear on a flowchart for an existing process must be obtained from direct observation of the process, not by imagining what is done or what should be done. (Oakland, 2004).

The major criticism against flow charts is that it is labourious to develop/draw without oversimplifying the process. Yet, it is helpful in that it presents a picture of the steps used in performing a task. The lines connect the steps to show the flow of the various tasks or steps. Flowcharts are thus excellent documentation for troubleshooting. It is very easy to pin-point problem areas in the process with a flow chart, especially now that chart flow template/software is readily able in the computer market.

Check sheet or tally charts

A check sheet is used in data gathering and is often the starting point in problem solving. It takes the following steps:

1. Select and agree on the exact event to be observed
2. Decide on the data collection time period
3. Design form for entries (should be large enough to hold expected information)
4. Collect data by filling the check sheet honestly.

Illustration: News mention of NOUN in The Guardian (Jan, 2010)

Date of Publication	Tally	Number of publications
12	1111	4
13	1	1
15	111	3
17	11	2
18	1	1
29	11	2
31	1	1

It is important to note that data are pieces of information that provide knowledge about the state of the process while number represents the counts.

3.2 SPC (Systematic Programme Chart) System

This is a systematic study of any process through answering the questions:

- Are we capable of doing the job correctly?
- Do we continue to do the job correctly?
- Have we done the job correctly?
- Could we do the job more consistently and on target?

It thus helps in ascertaining whether the process is capable of meeting the requirements. To know whether the process is meeting the requirements at any point in time and whether to make correct adjustment to the process or its inputs when it is not meeting requirements.

3.3 Total Quality Management (TQM)

TQM is a style of management that gives everyone in an organisation (or a department) responsibility for delivering quality to the final customer, quality being described as 'fitness for purpose' or as 'delighting the customer' (*Business: The Ultimate Resource, 2004*). TQM views each task in an organisation as fundamentally a 'customer satisfaction' process, such that each stage is defined to meet specific needs of clients, customers or publics. The goal of TQM is to improve the quality of the end product or service, decrease waste of resources, increase productivity, give competitive advantage (or at worst competitive parity) and motivate the workforce.

Quality management system may be defined as "an assembly of components, such as the management structure, responsibilities, processes and resources for implementing quality management. These components interact and are affected by being in the system, so the isolation and study of each one in detail will not necessarily lead to an understanding of the system as a whole." (Oakland, 2004). A good quality management system has two important requirements: *the customer's requirements* (for confidence in the ability of the organisation to deliver the desired produce or service consistently); and *the organisation's requirements* (both internally and externally including regulatory, and at

optimum cost, with efficient utilization of the resources available – material, human, technological, and information.

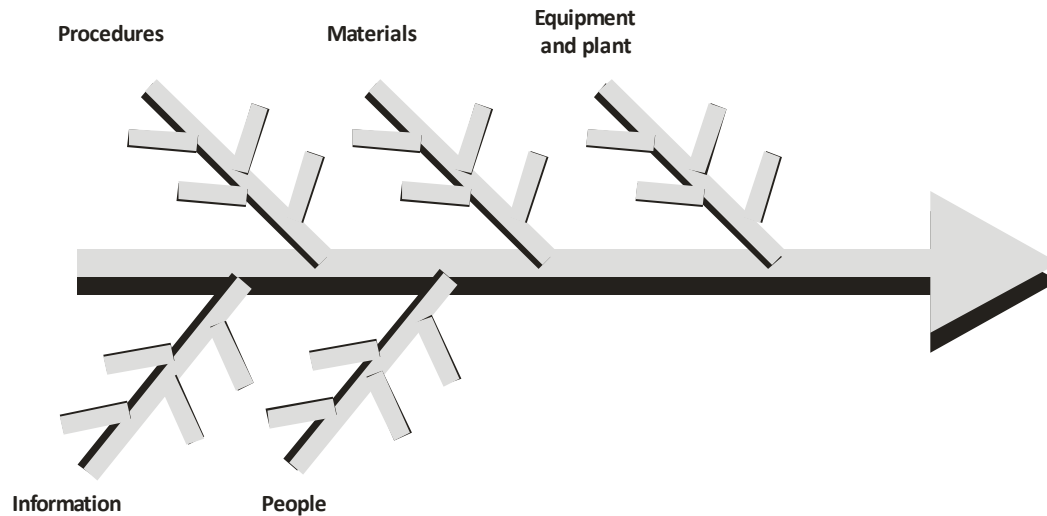
The TQM process takes the following format:

1. *Establish a planning team for TQM.* Note that TQM is neither a quick-fix technique nor a turn-around tactic. It often takes many years to entrench TQM principles. Therefore, the best materials should be harnessed and sustained.
2. *Have a vision.* Indicate after realistic evaluation where the organisation or department wants to be. Define the minimum standards.
3. *Audit current level of waste (against including current cost of waste)*
4. *Draw up your quality strategy*
5. *Draw up a management structure for change*
6. *Identify Opportunities and Priorities*
7. *Establish short and long term renewal systems*
8. *Launch the TQM policy.*

Note: **'Benchmarking'** is a kind of quality system management and we will discuss this more appropriately in the next unit (Unit 18) to round off the RABOSTIC model.

Cause and effect analysis and brainstorming

A cause and effect diagram (Ishakawa diagram) is a horizontal arrow with branches. The effect or incident being investigated is shown at the end of a horizontal arrow. Potential causes are shown as labeled arrows entering the main cause arrow. Each arrow may have other arrows entering it as the principal factors or causes are reduced to their subcauses and subsubcauses and variation.



Process decision programme chart (PDPC)

This is a decision programme chart for mapping out each event and contingency that can occur when progressing from a problem statement to its solution. It is used to anticipate the expected and plan for it, hence very used for corporate communication. The chart takes the following procedures:

1. Construct a tree diagram
2. Take one major branch of the tree diagram
3. Answer questions by branching off the original path in 'organization chart' manner..
4. Off to the side of each step, list actions or counter-measure that could be taken.
5. Continue the process until the branch is exhausted.
6. Repeat with other main branches.

3.4 Oakland's 'DRIVE' Framework

This model involves:

D – Define the problem

R – Review the information

I – Investigate the Problem

V – Verify the solution

E - Execute the change

Oakland (2004) gives the following detailed steps of the DRIVE process:

DEFINE

The primary task here is gaining understanding and agreement with groups of the task that it faces. Note that this is a review of the execution process not of strategy. The key steps are:

1. *Look at the task:* What is the brief? Is it understood? Is there agreement with it? Is it sufficiently explicit? Is it achievable?
2. *Understand the process:* What processes ‘contain’ the problem? What is wrong at present? Brainstorm – ideas for improvement. Do a rough flow chart to focus thinking.
3. *Prioritize.* Set boundaries. Make use of ranking. Review and gain agreement of the team in terms of what is ‘do-able’.
4. *Define the task:* Produce a written description of the process or problem area.
5. *Agree success criteria:* List possible success criteria: how will the team know when it has succeeded?

REVIEW

This stage is concerned with the following:

1. *Gather existing information:* Locate resources (verbal inputs, existing files, charts, quality records, etc.); Go and collect, ask, investigate.
2. *Structure Information:* Information may be but not in the right format

3. *Define gaps:* Is enough information available? What further information is needed? What equipment is affected? Is the product/service from one plant or area? How is the programme at fault?
4. *Plan further data collection:* Use any data already being collected; draw up check sheets; agree data collection task in the team – Who, What, How and When; Seek to consult others, where appropriate. Who actually has the information? Who really understands the process? This is a good opportunity to start to ‘extend the team’ in preparation for the Execute stage later on.

INVESTIGATE

This stage is concerned with analyzing all the data and prioritizing possible improvements:

1. *Implement data-collection action plan.* Check at an early stage that the plan is satisfying the requirements.
2. *Analyze data.* What picture is available data painting? What conclusions can we draw?
3. *Generate potential improvements.* Brainstorm improvements and discuss all possible solutions. Write down all suggestions.
4. *Agree propose improvements.* Prioritize. Decide what is achievable in what time scales. Work out best-solutions and develop a verifying plan of action.

VERIFY

Testing the plans and proposals before absolute field launch is important here:

1. *Implement action plan.* Possibly do a pilot
2. *Collect data.* Use questionnaire may be suitable.
3. *Analyze data.*

4. Verify that success criteria are met. Compare performance of new or changed process with success criteria from 'Define' stage. Make adjustments if success criteria are not being made.

EXECUTE

1. Develop implementation plan to gain commitment. Is there commitment from others? Consider all possible impacts? Actions? Timing? Selling required.
2. Receive appropriate paper work. Who should do this and why
3. Gain agreement to all facets of the execution plan from the process owner.
4. Implement the plan
5. Monitor progress. What is the extent of team involvement?
6. Responsibility.

Illustrating the DRIVE model with Corporate Affairs functions.

	Define	Review	Investigate	Verify	Execute
Visit to Omolayo Motherless Babies Home	OK	OK		OK	
Noun News Editorial meeting		OK	OK		
Courtesy visit to VC by Gov. Eze	OK	OK		OK	OK
Press Conference (Matriculation)		OK		OK	
Inter-divisional visits	OK			OK	OK
Inauguration of LOC VC		OK	OK		

Tennis CUP					
Visit to Media Houses		OK	OK	Ok	
Stakeholder-Interactive with VC		OK	OK		OK

3.6 Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain Oakland's DRIVE Model for filling execution gaps in implementation of corporate communication.
2. Explain any tools of implementation based on the Strategic and Tactical plan you developed in your Tutor-marked Assignment in Module 4, Unit 4.

4.0 Conclusion

Implementation problems occur mostly because one or more of these aforementioned key steps in RABOSTIC planning was not properly done. And if any of these key stages was ill-conceived, it will tell at the Implementation and Control Stages.

5.0 Summary:

Oakland's 'DRIVE' Framework involves:

D – Define the problem; R – Review the information; I – Investigate the Problem. V – Verify the solution; E - Execute the change

The tools and techniques that can be used for implementation include: Calendaring, Flow Charting, SPC System, Checklist, Total Quality System (TQM), Cause Effect and Analysis and Brainstorming and D.R.I.V.E.

6.0 Tutor-marked Question:

1. Compare and contrast the Calendarised system and DRIVE model in term of corporate communication.
2. Prepare an Implementation Plan for the opening of a Community Health Centre being sponsored by your organisation.

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 5 – MANAGING CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

RABOSTICally

UNIT 4 – CONTROL

1.0 Introduction

The last stage in the RABOSTIC corporate communication management process is Control. The aim of this Unit is to let you understand the corporate communication review and evaluation process.

- Research
- Analysis
- Budget
- Objectives
- Strategy
- Tactics
- Implementation
- **Control**

2.0 Objectives

When you are through with this Unit, you should be able to:

- Review and evaluate corporate communication policies, programmes and campaigns.
- Improve on present level of success or failure in the implementation process of tactics or strategies of corporate communication programmes.

3.0 Main Content

Implementation and control/evaluation are closely-related in today's management. In fact, separating the two is at best for emphasis or academic purpose because evaluation and review must be in-built (part of the process of implementation) to attain good results. You do not wait until the end of a football match to make changes that will make you win the match, because at that stage, the match is already won and lost. You can only go and prepare your team for another day (the traditional approach). The traditional approach of review waits until the end the year, the end of a promotional campaign, the end of a reality show, etc. to review performance. This approach to control requires management to wait 12 months to improve on performance and is therefore retrogressive. While it is true that major reviews are best carried out at the end of a programme when all costs would have been counted and impact measured, it does not take the place of daily reviews, weekly reports, month reviews, quarterly evaluation and half-year reports which helps to fix problems that may crop up in the implementation process.

Therefore, while *implementation* is about the actual execution what has been strategically and tactically planned based on sound objectives, *control* is a task that ensures self-efficacy – ability to do it again and in a better way. If there had been mistakes and oversights at the research, analysis, budget, objectives and tactics and implementation stages, controls would help mitigate the effects of such schisms, although some of them may not be apparent until the end of the programme.

3.1 Management Reviews

Depending on nature of service or scheduling of functions, management could hold reviews on daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly bases. But for a typical corporate communication department three kinds of reviews should be appropriate:

- *Weekly Previews & Reviews:* The Head of Department meets with management staff and team leaders to preview upcoming events and programmes and issues. All anchor persons must present a fool-proof assurance of preparedness for a total quality performance at such meetings. Thursdays could be very ideal for this kind of meeting because Friday (and probably the weekend) could be used to fix any problems still outstanding, leaving Monday-Wednesdays for implementation and following through.
- *Monthly Strategic Meeting:* This meeting should take place once a month by the HOD with his key team leaders. The meeting is to examine tactics and be sure things are going the way they had been planned. It also looks forwards to see if targets and programmes are realistic.
- *Quarterly Conference:* Where possible, the entire staff of Corporate Communication should meet once in three months to examine the Department's self-assessment scorecard. The last quarter's meeting should review performance for the entire year.

It is very important to note that meetings should be very short. Weekly meetings should not last more than one hour; Monthly strategic meeting should not last more than two hours and Quarterly Conference should also not last more than one hour. Long meetings are wastes of time and they occur mostly because of lack of managerial ability on the part of the person steering the meeting and because often such organisations lack vibrant communication; so everyone waits to get to the meetings before they talk. Hardly can such meetings generate any meaningful result.

There should be effective (two-way) communication channels amongst all employees, between employees and management, and within and between teams. Standards formats are set for reporting at meetings and advance copies

are forwarded as a rule ahead of the meetings (probably via the Intranet). Discussion should be qualitative and focused. More importantly, meetings are to build synergy and not to take over the jobs and tasks of team leaders and managers. Quarterly reviews help to keep plans up to date and reinforce synchronization. Let the staff also know how the company as a whole is doing, how other departments are going and what we need to do to contribute our quota. Charan and Bossidy (2002) illustrate this point masterfully:

The review itself is a basis to compare what the general manager has done in the first quarter plan. I might learn that we need to adjust the plan. May be he says to me, "I missed my sales in the first quarter because it's a slow season." I'd say, "Well, wait a minute, it was a slow season last year in the first quarter too. So what does that have to do with anything?" And perhaps he'll say, "But I know I'm going to pick up my sales in the second quarter. I'll be on plan by the end of the second or third quarter." Then I have to ask, "Let's assume you're not. That means I don't do anything about it until the fourth quarter after you don't make it in the third quarter. Well, let's not do that. Let's start doing something now as though you're not going to make the sales budget. If you do, all the better and you're ahead of your plan and that's great, but if you don't you're protected." Same thing with productivity: If someone says, "I didn't have a good first quarter, but I will have in the second." Again, I have to say, "Well, let's assume you don't. What are you going to do now about this?"

3.2 Self-assessment measures

It is very important to have common criteria to judge if corporate communication effort has been successful. That there are numerous phone-ins when the CEO featured live on network TV and those calls were generally positive is not necessarily indicative that the TV appearance has been successful. We have to go back to the objective set for the programme and use reliable measures to conclude that success or failure

has been made that this is the *extent* of success. A performance-measurement system goes through the following stages: Set up a Performance Measurement System Committee or Team; Identify the Process to be Measured: Identify the Activities to be Measured; Establish Performance Indicators; Collect Data; Analyze and Report Actual Performance; Compare Actual Performance and Indicators; Modify Process and Activity and Continue to Measure and Evaluate.

Yardsticks to measure performance (apart from general objectives) include: customer satisfaction, industry regulations and standards and previous performance (by the Department), etc. Most quality management approaches strongly emphasize measurement of some sort. We shall examine two popular self-assessment approaches: the European Excellence Model for Self-Assessment and Benchmarking.

3.2.1 The European Excellence Model for Self-Assessment

This model recognizes that processes are the means by which a company or organisation harnesses and releases the talents of its people to produce results (performance). It is built to review framework against which an organisation may face and measure itself, to examine any gaps. It has two broad components: *Enablers* and *Results*.

Enablers

These are the leaders, people, policy and strategy, partnerships and resources and processes. Standards score-points are assigned to each thus: leaders 10%, people 8%, policy and strategy 8%, partnerships and resources 9% and processes 14%. The enablers are assessed on the basis of the contribution of two factors: the degree of excellence of the *approach* and the degree of *deployment of the approach, assessment and review*. For instance, leaders would be assessed on ability to develop mission, vision and values, become personally involved in execution and motivate the people. Policy and strategy self-assessment should demonstrate understanding of the environments. Knowledge

competences of people and how developed these are also take specific point scores.

The Results

Score-points are also assigned scores: People results (9%), Customer results (20%), Society results (6%) and Key performance results (15%). Points are awarded for customer results based on results achieved for measurement of customer perception of the organisation's products, services and customer relationships and internal performance indicators relating to the organisation's customers. The common yardstick for people results, society results are results of people's and society's perception of the organisation and internal performance indicators relating to people and the society respectively. Key performance results will have score for financials and non-financials (for example and insurance marketing SBU making N3million when realistically it could make N10 million will earn about 5% score, being a third of the expected N10 which represents 15%.

The Enablers and Results compartments of the assessment process may be summarized in the RADAR system (see diagram RADAR system). (Oakland, 2004), i.e.:

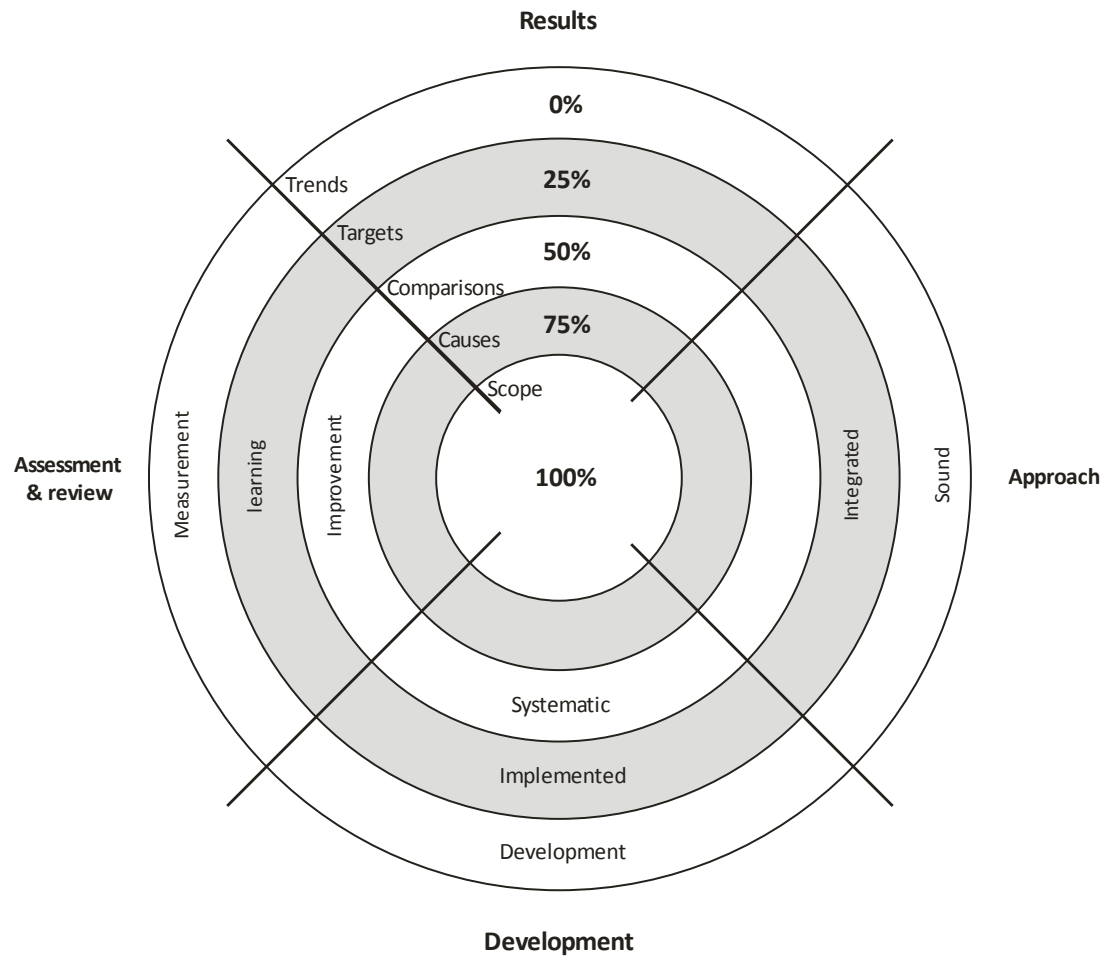
R – Results

A – Approach

D – Deployment

A – Assessment

R – Review



The RADAR 'screen'

Illustration: The RADAR 'screen' (Adapted from: John S. Oakland, *Oakland on Quality Management*, London: Heinemann, 2004:180.)

3.3 **Benchmarking**

Benchmarking is the practice of measuring and comparing key aspects of an organisation relative to customer expectations. Paul Spensley has identified five kinds of benchmarking:

Strategic benchmarking: Strategic action teams use benchmarking to drive continuous improvement and refine the overall business strategy.

Competitive benchmarking: For each major business driver, the competitive position is measured against the competition.

Customer benchmarking: Customer perception is all there is – customers never buy just a product. Customer benchmarking enables a business to understand the views of their customers about the organisation, relative to the competition.

Financial benchmarking: key performance measure and the establishment of rankings for each measure. Return on net assets (RONA) identifies which business drivers will deliver the greatest return on the investment needed.

Best practice benchmarking: the minimum process to meet the business driver requirements for time and cost to meet the required outputs.

Benchmarks should be set against objectives that had been SMARTTly set. It is very wrong and ultimately unhelpful to equate benchmarks with income targets. Below is an illustration of reasons for benchmarking:

Objectives	Without Benchmarking	With Benchmarking
Incoming competitor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internally focused - Evolutionary change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of competitiveness. - Ideas from proven practices
Industry best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few solutions - Frantic catch-up activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many options - Superior performance

Defining Customer requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on history or gut feeling - Perceptin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market reality - Superior performance
Establishing effective goals and objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacking external focus - Reactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credible, unarguable - Proactive
Developing true measures of productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pursuing pet projects - Strength and weaknesses understood - Route of least resistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solving real problems - Understanding outputs - Based on industry best practices.

3.4 Self-Assessment Questions

1. Explain the European Excellence Model of Self-Assessment (also known as the R.A.D.A.R. approach).
2. List the five types of benchmarking.

4.0 Conclusion

Implementation is about the actual execution what has been strategically and tactically planned based on sound objectives; *Control* is a task that ensures self-efficacy – ability to do it again and in a better way. If there had been mistakes and oversights at the research, analysis, budget, objectives and tactics and implementation stages, controls would help mitigate the effects of such schisms, although some of them may not be apparent until the end of the programme.

5.0 Summary

Traditional control, review and evaluation process in corporate communication are in form of regular or periodic meetings based on calendarised programmes and activities. This may be weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly.

Modern management views control as a continuous process that goes alongside implementation, although elaborate reviews could take place at the end of a campaign or project.

The impression that PR activity and effort cannot be measured (since it is goodwill that we sell principally) is incorrect; modern management experts favour evaluations and reviews that are obtained through measurement: *The European Excellence Model for Self-Assessment* (recognizes that processes are the means by which a company or organisation harnesses and releases the talents of its people to produce results (performance). It is built to review framework against which an organisation may face and measure itself, to examine any gaps. It has two broad components: *Enablers* and *Results*).

Benchmarking is the practice of measuring and comparing key aspects of an organisation relative to customer expectations. *Strategic benchmarking*: Strategic action teams use benchmarking to drive continuous improvement and refine the overall business strategy. *Competitive benchmarking*: For each major business driver, the competitive position is measured against the competition. *Customer benchmarking*: Customer benchmarking enables a business to understand the views of their customers about the organisation, relative to the competition and *Financial benchmarking*: Matches returns on assets (RONA) with returns on investments (RONI).

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

- (a) Explain the management scenarios under the following:
 - i) There is no benchmarking for incoming competitor in the organisation
 - ii) There is no benchmarking for best industry practices in the organisation
 - iii) There is benchmarking for establishing effective goals and objectives
 - iv) There is benchmarking for incoming competitors

- v) There is benchmarking for defining customer requirements.
- (b) You just received a memo from the CEO to evaluate the community relations programmes of your organisation in the past two years. Use the RADAR approach to outline how your write-up will be.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE – CASE STUDIES IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

UNIT 1– CASE STUDY: ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

1.0 Introduction

This Unit will refresh your understanding of the entire course with particular emphasis on *organizational* communication. In this Unit we will look at corporate communication from the practical point of view.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand *organizational* communication from the practical point of view – ‘see’ some of the concepts we have discussed from the beginning of this Course in ‘practice’.
- Interpret to a reasonable extent *organizational* communication challenges around you.

3.0 Main Content

In this case study, we will examine a case study in organizational communication as exemplified by one of America’s greatest business leaders Lee Iacocca.

3.1 Transformational Leadership in the Executive Office

By Carl P. Mann

On December 21, 1979, Congress passed the Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee Act. On August 15, 1983, Chrysler repaid the entire loan, seven years before it was due. Afterwards, rumours circulated about Lee Iacocca running for President. Whether or not Iacocca eventually runs for public office, these speculations showed the public’s opinion of his leadership in restoring Chrysler’s competitiveness.

Communication professionals should study Chrysler Corporation’s communications campaign to negotiate the Loan Guarantee Act, not only because it was successful, but because it illustrates important concepts of executive leadership.

A definition of executive leadership is being championed by the authors of In Search of Excellence, Passion for Excellence, Leaders, and Vanguard Management. It's derived from James MacGregor Burns writing that transformational leaders have the ability to share purpose with their followers and to use the power of that collective purpose to create change.

Borrowing from this definition, each of the previously mentioned books state that executive leadership begins with the same ability to establish shared purpose through communicating a compelling, meaningful, transforming vision. Unfortunately, none of the books describes the fundamental concepts involved in communicating a transforming vision. The communication theory of Otis M. Walter does,

According to Walter, transforming ideas area in situations where the need for change is intense. In his articles, "Toward An Analysis of Motivation", Walter describes five such motivational situation. The authorities who will emerge as leaders in these situations will be those who become best recognized for their ability to gratify the need for change. The two essential motivational situations are the difficult situation and the goad-oriented situation.

In the difficulty situation, the need for change arises as the result of confronting a significant problem. When people feel threatened by a problem, they must seek a solution. The worse the problems, and the more widespread it is, the greater the need for change. Something must be done.

In Speaking Intelligently, Walter suggests the following tactics for leading an audience to grasp the full significance of a problem. (1) Describe how the problem endangers the economic, social, or political well being of those experiencing it. (2) Illustrate how it makes important institutions in these areas operate less effectively, (3) Explain how it threatens the economic, social, or political well being of the immediate audience. (4) Explain how it violates their central beliefs

and ideas. (5) describe how the problem causes additional problems (6) Explain these problems' impact on the overall situation. (7) Show that the problems is widespread, or is growing (8) Make clear that the problem is recognized by credible source.

The second essential motivational situation is the goal-oriented situation. The goal is to find a workable solution to the problem. To convince an audience of the feasibility of a solution, Walter suggests the following tactics: (1) Describe the problem, explain the proposed solution then show how the solution will remove the problem. (2) Describe how the solution has worked in analogous situation (3) Enumerate the benefits to the audience of having solved the problem in the proposed manner. (4) Explain any additional benefit that solution will bring. (5) Indicate that well-qualified experts support the solution.

Walter's remaining three motivational situations are further elaborations of the difficulty and the goal-oriented situation. As such, the same principles of problem solving communication apply to each. The third situation is the barrier situation. Fourth is the threat situation. It arises when forces actively oppose the solution. Finally, there is the identification situation. This is the situation where people help others who have become involved in the previously mentioned crises.

From Walter's perspective, to be transforming, a leader's vision must comprise workable solutions to significant problems. The problems are drawn from the audience's social, political, and economical experience. The more significant the problem, the more compelling the vision's workable solution becomes. Only by offering workable solution to significant problems will a vision create sufficient purpose for others to rise above self-interest and act together to transform the situation.

These types of problem-solving communication can be seen clearly in Chrysler Corporation's campaign to pass the Loan Guarantee Act. By showing how the

Loan Guarantee Act was the most workable solution to its problem. Chrysler created sufficient purpose for the many disparate parties involved to work together, change the situation, and enable Chrysler to restore its competitiveness.

CHRYSLER'S DIFFICULTY SITUATION CREATES THE NEED FOR CHANGE

The worse the problem and the more widespread it is, the greater the need for change. Consequently, not wishing the Government to see its lack of competitiveness as an isolated case, Chrysler expanded the scope of the problem. "To anyone who would listen", writes Iacocca, "I continually stressed that Chrysler was not an isolated case. Instead, we were a microcosm of what was going wrong in America and a kind of test lab for everyone else". Unless something was done, it was predicted that Ford and GM would soon lose their competitiveness as well.

To show how widespread that problem would be, Chrysler reminded everyone that one hub in six in America was tied to the automotive industry, particularly those in the steel, iron, rubber, aluminum, glass, machines tools, plastics and electronic industries. Simultaneously, Chrysler explained the potential economic significance of its bankruptcy. Everyone was alerted to the potential loss of 130,000 people in its own payroll, another 150,000 who worked for its dealers, and the many additional thousands who indirectly owned their jobs for Chrysler. In all 600,000 jobs were at risk unless something could be done about Chrysler's competitiveness.

While expanding the scope of the problem, Chrysler attacked the cause. Government regulations were giving Chrysler's competitors an unfair advantage in the marketplace. This government-imposed advantage violated the central beliefs and ideals of the free enterprise system.

As proof, Chrysler argued that Federal safety, emission, and fuel regulations, which, because of vast differences in economics of scale as regressive taxes

adding \$260 to every Chrysler car produced compared to only \$340 for every GM car produced. This not only disadvantaged Chrysler in the marketplace, but robbed it of the financial resources needed to comply with government-mandated change.

Chrysler also indicted Federal price controls as making the marketplace itself operate ineffectively. Price controls in the 70s artificially held down the domestic price of gas at the same time that government foreign policy provoked Arab oil stoppages. All of this had the effect of turning the marketplace into an unpredictable seesaw between full-sized cars when OPEC was shipping oil to the U.S. and subcompacts when it wasn't.

These wild swings insured that only those automotive companies capable of carrying a full line of cars, even as they incurred the huge costs of retooling to meet government mandated change, would be able to successfully compete in the America marketplace. As the smallest of the big three, again, Chrysler was particularly encumbered by these government policies.

Chrysler also argued that government-mandated fleet mileage regulations were forcing the auto companies into making small, stripped-down, unprofitable cars. This further robbed Chrysler of the resources needed to comply with this, and the other, government-mandated change.

THE LOAN GUARANTEE CREATES A GOAL-ORIENTED SITUATION

While defining the problem and its causes, Chrysler created a goal-oriented situation by championing a loan guarantee as a better solution to its competitiveness problem than bankruptcy. Since government policy was causing the problem the government should feel obligated to help.

To convince Congress to pass the Loan Guarantee Act, Chrysler argued that loan guarantees had worked in the analogous situations of Conrail, Lockheed, and New York City.

Chrysler also pointed out additional benefits of the plan. Its \$1.2 billion request was considerably less than the estimated \$16 billion that its bankruptcy would cost the government in lost revenues, unemployment assistance, and welfare payments. Also, the \$1.2 billion equalled only a two-year cost of complying with Federal regulations.

Then too, Chrysler reminded Congress of the \$8billion deficit in automotive trade balance with Japan, and presented the loan guarantee as a more attractive alternative to reducing that deficit than protectionism.

With the 1980 election looming, it was immediately recognized that the majority of Chrysler workers, indeed the majority of all auto workers, as well as those in the industries dependent on the automotive industry, were mostly concentrated in the industrial states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois (163 electoral votes, more than the number needed to elect). The Carter administration became alarmed at what might happen to the rationally strong Democratic vote in these states if a Democratic administration allowed Chrysler to fold.

The Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee Act failed to help re-elect the Carter Administration, but it was a transforming idea for Chrysler. The Act authorized up to 1.5 billion in federal loan guarantees, but required as a condition of receiving this aid that Chrysler match these funds by raising approximately \$2 billion in non-federal guaranteed financing. Chrysler also had to submit for approval all financing and operating plans to the Chrysler Corporation Loan Guarantee Board prior to the issuance of the loans.

On the one hand, these conditions enabled the government to intrude upon traditional management prerogatives. On the other, they made the government part of the Chrysler team, thus motivating the government to act in Chrysler's best interest. This was the exact opposite of the situation that Chrysler said caused its problems. Instead of a government-imposed disadvantage in the market place, Chrysler now had a government-imposed advantage. Consequently, Chrysler was able to put the full weight of the U.S. Government into its effort to move recalcitrant lenders, suppliers, and workers into granting the necessary concessions.

For example, it took intense government pressure to convince banks with a stake in Chrysler to provide a \$500 million loan to Chrysler in the form of interest rate concessions. It also took intense government pressure to convince the UAW to agree to \$462 million in contract concession.

As can be seen in the following quote from New Deals, the Loan Guarantee transformed the relationship between the public sector and Chrysler Corporation. It enabled disparate organizations to rise above institutional self-interest and act together to obtain the larger goal of giving Chrysler the opportunity of restoring its competitiveness – a goal beneficial to all. “Chrysler stirred things up. The trauma of the firm's near collapse and the Herculean effort required to rescue it completed groups to cooperate in unaccustomed ways. Private managers, hired consultants, and federal bureaucrats together drafted and re-fired Chrysler's operation plans. The Secretary of the Treasury bargained with labour leaders and briefed rank and file delegates. A senior unionist joined the firm's board with small-town bankers”.

Additionally, as soon as the government became part of the team, Chrysler received regulatory relief from pollution requirements that were to take effect in 1981.

To influence further legislative action in its favour, Chrysler publicly proposed solutions that the government could use to offset the high interest rates which Chrysler additionally blamed for causing the longest car buying depression in 50 years. For example, Chrysler proposed a \$1,500 federal tax credit for everyone turning in a pre-1966 gas-guzzler and buying a new ~American-made car. Chrysler also suggested that the government influence the Fed to drop the prime rate by showing a resolve to finically reform. Resolve would be shown by taking \$15 billion out of the defense budget, taking \$15 billion out of social programmes, raisin g another \$15 billion with surtax on imported oil, and raising another \$15 billion by taxing gas at the pump an additional 15 cents.

3.2 Self-Assessment Questions

1. From the extract, what would you say are the communication skills of the CEO?
2. Identify the external publics that Mr. Iacocca successfully managed to attain the level of success described.

4.0 Conclusion

As Chrysler's case illustrates, transformations occur through communicating about significant problems and their solutions. By speaking out, Chrysler did not talk its way out of failing in the market-place. What Chrysler did was articulate arguments which transformed how people saw the situation. This new vision of the situation warranted a completely different course of action. To prevent bankruptcy, Chrysler still had to perform, but, through the Loan Guarantee, it created a situation in which it could perform. It created a situation that would not have existed if it had not spoken out about problem and solutions. Additionally, as Chrysler regained its competitiveness, Chrysler's chief spokesman, Lee Iacocca, gained credibility as a national leader in the area of industrial competitiveness.

According to Walter, credibility is the audience's judgement of the speaker's exclusive ability to solve stated problems. In *Speaking Intelligent*, he writes that there are patterns of credibility associated with problem-solving communications. These patterns establish a speaker's intelligence, character, and goodwill in the minds of his or her audience.

Intelligence is attributed to authorities who display a thorough knowledge of the problems and solutions they discuss. Character is attributed to those who are sincere in their viewpoints and have the courage to stand by their ideas. Goodwill is attributed when authorities identify themselves with the needs of their followers, submit their ideas to the followers' judgment, and have the ability to change their ideas when proven wrong.

In serving as chief spokesman, Iacocca displayed intelligence, character, and goodwill as he presented Chrysler's arguments, stood by them during debate, and awaited the general public's and Congress, judgment of Chrysler's case. These leadership traits became fully substantiated when Chrysler repaid its loan seven years before the loan was due. Coming at a time when all of America was concerned about national industrial competitiveness, rumours of Iacocca's running for the Presidency showed the full extent of his credibility in restoring Chrysler's competitiveness.

5.0 Summary

Chrysler Corporation's successful problem-solving campaign illustrates important concepts of executive leadership. First, vision is important. As Bennis and Nanus succinctly state, "Leaders are only as powerful as the ideas they can communicate". However, the power of an idea is conditional. "Even the best ideas", write Bennis and Nanus, "are only as good as their ability to attract attention in the social environment".

For that to happen most effectively, the vision has to gain purpose by comparing the inadequacies of the current situation what can be. This means that problems

must be presented, and the ways in which the vision will solve them must be described and shown to be workable.

Finally, communicating effectively about workable solutions to significant problems establishes a speaker's intelligence, character, and goodwill in the minds of the audience. Solving the problem substantiates these leadership traits. Once substantiated, they positively influence the audience's further evaluation of the speaker and his or her views. It's a reciprocal process. Credibility derives from effective problem-solving. It then feeds back into the process making the audience more willing to accept as valid any additional problem-solving communications from that speaker.

Through problem-solving communications, an executive's vision can be made significant and compelling enough for others to share sufficient purpose with him or her, such that everyone willingly works together to change the situation. Through successful problem-solving, an executive gains credibility and gets ability to solve additional stated problems.

To the extent that the authors of *In Search of Excellence*, *Passion for Excellence*, *Leaders*, and *Vanguard Management* are correct in stating that executive leadership begins with the ability to establish shared purpose through communicating a compelling, meaningful, transforming vision, the context and form of this leadership is problem-solving discourse. "the aim of speaking", writes Walter, "ought to be to direct us toward the solution of our problems with the greatest possible speed". If the preceding authors are correct, the aim of executive leadership ought to be no less.

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

1. "Organisation communication is a management function and must be strategic and goal-oriented," Discuss the above statement with reference to the Iacocca example.
2. Check out news mention of CEOs in any three Nigerian national dailies and record if the information about them is positive, negative or neutral.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 6 – CASE STUDIES IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

UNIT 2– CASE STUDY: MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION

1.0 Introduction

This Unit is aimed at refreshing your understanding of the entire course with particular emphasis on *management* communication.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the Unit, you should be able to:

- Analyze practical scenarios of management communication
- Interpret to a reasonable extent *management* communication challenges around you.

3.0 Main content

In this case study, we will learn how to fuse all of the theories, concepts, paradigms and principles we have been discussing (Unit 1 – 18) into a strategic whole to solve corporate relations problems and challenges. Often, corporate communication challenges do not come in sub-entities e.g. internal-public problem, media relations problem, etc. You could have all of these publics militating against the objectives of the organisation and you have to attack them holistically, as you will find in the following case study.

THE CHALLENGES OF RE-BRANDING FROM PUBLICLY-OWNED TO PRIVATELY-OWNED ENTERPRISES: A CASE STUDY OF NICON INSURANCE PLC

By BOLU JOHN FOLAYAN, PhD

Executive Director/CEO, Development Communication Research Centre Ltd/Gte Lagos.

*A **brand** is the totality of what the consumer takes into consideration before making a purchase decision. Organisations and institutions initiate and implement communications programmes to create a personality for their products and services (and sometimes for the organisation itself) in order to ensure that the consumer almost always prefers such products and services as better alternatives to those offered by competitors. A brand therefore represents the reputation of an organisation and its products and services.*

Until the past decade, the means of marketing communications (sub-fields of the marketing task) in for-profit and not-for-profit organisations were inter-dependent but not integrated. Hitherto, it was common for organisations to have distinct advertising, public relations, public affairs, client-support and sales support departments as distinct functional units with each given varying degrees of attention and support by management, depending on the overall corporate strategy and goals of the organisation. (Pickton and Broderick, 2005).

Today, whatever its goals and objectives, organisations speak of “integrated marketing communications” or “brand management”, which Kotler (2003) defines as “a way of looking at the whole marketing process from the viewpoint of the

customer.” It involves the product, price, place and promotion (the latter covers the traditional communications portfolios such as advertising, public relations and customer service.)

NICON Insurance Corporation was established by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1971. Within 37 years of its existence, NICON, with 35 branches in Nigeria and a vibrant office in the UK, stood like a colossus in the Nigerian insurance industry, underwriting over 50 per cent of local insurance business. It also became the training ground for insurance practitioners at various levels in the country. In short, NICON personified the Nigerian insurance industry.

However, what gave NICON its big reputation was not essentially the professional skills of its staff or much of management wizardry. The organisation grew in leaps and bounds because it was a monopoly – the decree establishing NICON gave it sole authority to underwrite Federal Government business. (NICON News, 2002). Thus, it did not need to exert any serious marketing plan to get the business. In addition, the status of NICON as a government corporation (parastatal) did not allow for best practices of business management to flourish. For 37 years (prior to privatisation), NICON paid dividends to shareholders only once. In the five years preceding its sale to private owners in 2006, NICON declared straight losses in its annual statements of accounts. Its liabilities stood at about N15 billion and assets and N31 billion before sale. The state of financial health of the company did not reflect the huge business it controlled. According to the Nigerian Insurance Yearbook 1990, NICON share in the insurance industry from 1980 to 1989 were: 18.33%, 18.26%, 20.00%, 19.50%, 23.82%, 23.10%, 25.34%, 50.83%, 44.13%, and 47.10% respectively

In addition, before selling the company to Assurance Acquisition Limited, a private company owned by 39-year-old lawyer and business turn-around expert, Jimoh Ibrahim under its privatisation programme, the Federal Government had stripped the company of its major assets such as Niger Insurance, NICON Trustees, Nigeria Reinsurance Corporation, Assurance Bank and NICON-NOGA-HILTON (an Abuja-based five-star hotel. Apart from landed properties, the most tangible thing the company had at purchase was a well-known name.

THE NICON BRAND EQUITY BEFORE PRIVATISATION

Branding describes the values generated in the minds of people as a consequence of the sum total of marketing communications effort. Brand equity is the value of the brand's name, symbols, associations and reputation to all target audiences who interact with it. Several approaches are in use in evaluating brand equity:

Proposal	Factors measured
David Aaker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Brand associations/differentiations • (e.g. personality, perceived value) • Perceived quality and market leadership • Loyalty • Market behaviour measures • (e.g. share, distribution)
Millward Brown	
Brand Dynamic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence (e.g. familiarity) • Consumer needs • Product performance • Competitive advantage • Bonding (e.g. endorsement on key attributes)
Total Research	
Equitrend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salience • Perceived quality • User satisfaction
Young & Rubicam	
Brand Assent	

<p>valuator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiation + Relevance = Strength • Esteem and Knowledge = Stature • 'Strength' and 'stature' scores
<p>Cooper & Simons</p> <p>TBWA Simons</p> <p>Palmer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand quality reflects the distinctiveness • A brand's esteem and perceived popularity performance. • Brand quantity covers awareness, • Penetration, loyalty, satisfaction ratings, sales shares (consumer measures) • Brand future reflects its potential for organic growth, changing marketplace (e.g. new legislation, technologies, consumer patterns and trade structures) and brand extendibility (e.g. new launches) and brand extendibility (e.g. new launches)
<p>Interbrand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand weight • Brand breadth (relative market share within its category). • Brand depth • Brand length

The Millward Brown Brand Dynamic appears more suitable as a yardstick to measure the NICON brand because it examines the brand's strengths and weaknesses across some key customer factors.

Presence

Most of Nigerian insurance consumers are familiar with the name NICON Insurance. It had run various media and promotional campaigns coordinated by leading advertising consortia for decades hence the brand has a ubiquitous presence.

Relevance to Consumer Needs

NICON had over 25 insurance products and was the only insurance company with effective clout to underwrite marine, oil and gas and aviation policies. Its huge annual premium also positioned it to be able to meet the needs of customers which in the insurance industry are essentially ability and willingness to pay claims promptly.

Product Performance

The old management had to contend with political controls and could not run the organisation on profit motive. Risks that were not viable were underwritten; corporate sponsorship of no benefit to corporate goals was undertaken and the manning level was over-bloated because political consideration determined the quality and quantity of employees. All of these had negative effect on product performance. NICON was not delivering quality services but was still getting huge premiums because the law gave it monopolistic powers.

Competitive Advantage

Although there were over 145 other insurance companies in the country, NICON did not encounter stiff competition. Insurance giants such as IGI, AIICO and Cornerstone could give NICON a big fight but they had to contend with 'co-insurance' deals on plum accounts legally ceded to NICON.

REBRANDING STRATEGY UNDER PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

Private companies primarily thrive on profit-driven goals and objectives. The new owners of NICON, soon after taking over began total overhaul of the company. It quickly unbundled the companies into 10 subsidiaries and diversified sources of income from insurance to at least nine other sources. The subsidiaries are: NICON Investments, NICON Energy, NICON Sao Tome, NICON UK, NICON Academy, NICON Properties, NICON PFA, NICON Airways and NICON Hotels.

In addition, the new management began massive retirement and retrenchment of employees while also employing new competent hands to prepare for competition. The measures were inevitable. Apart from the poor financial position of the company, just before privatisation, the Federal Government deregulated the insurance industry and broke the exclusive rights of government accounts which NICON enjoyed since its existence. Premiums nose-dived by over 40 per cent. In an industry where business survives based on reputation, NICON began to lose business rapidly as the loss of accounts was assumed by the insuring public to sick financial status and not the sudden deregulation of the industry.

The new management however faced the challenges squarely. It adopted strict principles (such as 'no premium, no cover'. Sharp practices whereby sister parastatals did not pay premiums but got insurance covers were abolished. The Corporate Affairs Department was completely overhauled with 70 per cent of the staff laid off because they did not have mass communication training background. New hands were hired and mandated to re-focus from government relations and social responsibility to customer and brand building and loyalty; corporate personality and competitive environment. To transit from an company that operated as an extension of the Federal Ministry of Finance to a brand that would be a leader in its sector in Africa in a few years was symbolized with the creation of a new logo and new colours. The new management developed a new Brand Book with the following highlights:

SUMMARY OF IMAGE AND BRAND MANAGEMENT POLICY (AS AT 2008)

Group Brand

- *The NICON Group's image and brand policy is centrally aimed to strengthen 'NICON' as brand to sell the Group's products and services.*
- *We shall position the brand as an identifiable product, service such that the buyer or clients can perceive its (or their) relevant unique values (intrinsic and extrinsic), which match their needs most closely.*
- *We shall present the NICON name and logo/symbol to signify integrity and quality service easily distinguishable from similar services and products. Our customers must be able to identify our products and services from a pool of similar services, identify and enjoy the specific benefit services that they offer, whether it is insurance, hotel, training, aviation or property.*
- *Despite the use of a common brand name, we shall strategically create distinct identities for our subsidiaries and sister companies, still strengthening the insurance brand which is our seed name and core business area.*

NICON Insurance Brand

- *We shall position the NICON Insurance brand to retain its leadership position and strength in Nigerian insurance industry in the short run with our vision to make the insurance brand one of the best in Africa and the World in the long run.*
- *We shall re-brand the insurance brand from the 'parastatal image' to a 'private sector driven; profitable, efficiency-oriented outfit'.*
- *We shall work in close concert with the Marketing Team to contribute to the Marketing Mix such that the Management Strategy of placing priority on Investments and Selective Underwriting in insurance business (only profitable risk is underwritten);*
- *We shall work with the Technical Department to create strong and unique products that are salient to the new NICON brand we are fostering;*
- *The core areas of our branding in the area of insurance are: brand awareness; brand loyalty and brand equity measurement.*

Advertising & Public Relations

- *Our golden rule in media strategy is "Know Thy Publics". Who are our publics and who are our priority publics?*
- *Who do we want to reach and When?*
- *When we would be able to determine how and at what cost while also measuring our impact from time to time.*

- *PR being the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organization and its publics, is very crucial in our branding. This is especially so for our insurance sub-group where business is done under utmost good faith. Insurance business is the transaction of integrity, which is what PR is all about.*
- *Every staff of NICON Insurance shall be position as a Public Relations man for the organization.*
- *Our core PR functions shall include advice and counselling; internal communications, lobbying, measuring and management of public opinion, publicity, social responsibility, developing and maintaining the corporate image and brand strength and managing our events; image crises management and other activities.*
- *Ethical considerations and sharp practices shall not be encouraged or condoned within the organization and in our relationship management with our publics.*
- *We shall not encourage sharp and unethical practices in insurance because this will adversely affect the integrity of our brand, our corporate image.*
- *We see advertising as just one element in the marketing communications mix and its use must conform to the ethical standards of the industry (the other elements being PR, sales promotion and personal selling).*

Branding Sister Companies in the Group

- *Branding policies of members of the NICON Group shall derive from the central brand book and policy for the NICON Group carefully tailored to the peculiarities of the industry in which they operate.*
- *There shall be Group Synergy in branding products and services of the NICON Group member companies in order to seek maximum benefits.*

Source: Department of Corporate Affairs, NICON Insurance PLC, Abuja.

3.2 THE CHALLENGES OF RE-BUILDING THE NEW NICON BRAND

A waning brand usually experiences an erosion of brand equity. It loses reputation and appeal rapidly, even though it might be already a house name. The new management of NICON faced daunting challenges in implementing its new corporate strategy (and by extension the branding strategy) in four principal ways:

1. Internal Relations Problems

As soon as re-organisation began, various groups and factions emerged within the top management and the staff. The old members of staff were mostly loyal to the defunct management while the new members of staff were generally loyal to the new management. Because of the pay/incentive cuts and mass retirement, the morale of the 'new' staff was low. The Group Managing Director painted a picture of the scenario in his personal column in the re-designed house journal of the group, NICON News:

No amount of resistance can stop the winds of change taking place at NICON. We need it to blow away the remnants of indolence, scheduler protocols and lazy attitude to work; harness the left-over of experienced hands that are dedicated and ready to work and usher in creative minds and a result-oriented culture. (NICON News, 2007)

2. Political Challenges

Over its almost four decades of existence, NICON Insurance had produced rich, powerful and influential ex-staff who wielded enormous political influence in the society. Forces within the group took exceptions to the radical changes being introduced by the new management – after all, the Federal Government still owned 30 per cent of the company despite the sale. Then, the numerous staff who were retired and paid their gratuities promptly still felt 'offended'. This coalition of unhappy 'publics' mustered political confrontations and media wars which the new owners were ill-prepared to face.

3. Competition

With the deregulation of the insurance industry, NICON automatically lost over 60 per cent of its clients in the public sector. Without a vibrant marketing department, the company also lost plum accounts in the private sector due to aggressive competition from competitors. The new management had to introduce survival strategies by diversifying operations in property, airline and hotel business to serve as cushion for the insurance arm, a common practice in developed economies.

4. Personality of the GMD

The personality of the Group Managing Director, Jimoh Ibrahim constituted both positive and negative points in re-building the brand. His youthfulness and

reputation in turning around sick businesses initially generated enthusiasm that he would make the corporation better. His shrewd management style also helped to restore confidence in the brand and reassure policy-holders that the company would soon be able to play claims promptly. The Nigerian media seemed to have a soft spot for the lawyer-businessman and this may have contributed to his frequent positive mention in both electronic and print media. However, the fight-back by disgruntled staff (and ex-staff) and other vested interests led to a major dispute with the Federal Government. Lack of tactical handling by the GMD led to 'bad press' which culminated in the seizure of the company by the Federal Government. The GMD had too much overbearing involvement in the face-off that it became difficult to separate his own personality from that of the company. After a barrage of legal and media wars which lasted about a year while the company's operations were in limbo under an Interim Management Board, the new owners re-acquired the company through an out-of-court settlement.

3.3 BRANDING LESSONS FROM THE NICON-FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA SAGA

The NICON-Federal Government imbroglio was a contemporary illustration of the challenges of brand management. The following lessons could be drawn from the saga:

- **Brand management requires risk assessment.** *This will help in the actualization of a proactive management strategy. The new owners did not expect the barrages of attacks it faced. They depended on the legal interpretation of the transaction and ignored the political interpretations. In addition, the new owners over-rated the brand and its assessment of the risks associated with the brand was not properly done.*
- **Brand loyalty can be difficult to ascertain under a monopolistic environment.** *Most customers appear loyal under a monopolist because they do not have alternatives. Therefore, brand managers should seek truly inventive ways to measure brand equity and loyalty if their organisation is a monopoly by default or design.*
- **The power of regulators on brands should not be under-estimated.** *Although this varies with the nature of the industry, it is generally true for all industries. If the Central Bank of Nigeria makes a policy that impinges on operations of banks, it can devastate a hitherto popular brand (bank). A reputation that took four*

decades to build can crash in just one week through regulatory issues. The new owners of NICON not only under-estimated the powers of the National Insurance Commission, NAICOM, (the regulatory body of insurance business in the country), they chose to confront and combat the commission. When two elephants in the corporate world fight, it is the brand that suffers.

- **Media is accessible to everyone.** *A large section of the Lagos media had been celebrating Jimoh Ibrahim as a brilliant, creative, fearless and result-oriented businessman. Many editors perceived the seizure as sheer victimization of a hapless, hardworking young Nigerian. This sympathy however soon gave way for heavy media attacks as the Federal Government pushed its position through the media. With a fat cheque and good PR professionals any organisation can use the media. At the end of the day, Jimoh’s reputation also came also under heavy media bashing. The dominant view of the media at the peak of face-off was that NICON was financially in the red. This was a big blow to the brand’s reputation.*
- **‘Corporate Identity’, ‘Corporate Personality’ and ‘Corporate Name’ are not the same.** *Corporate personality is essentially the “soul, the persona, the spirit and culture of the organisation manifested in some way”. (Pickton and Broderick, 2005). It is the corporate traits, the sum total of its characteristics which can be both intellectual and behavioural. ‘Corporate Identity’ is the means by which corporate personality is projected, transmitted or communicated. ‘Corporate Name’ is a word by which a person or thing is called. NICON had a name that was well-known. But it is not enough being well-known – what are you well-known for? What does the name conjure? A good brand must have a memorable name – plus great personality and great value. Those who bear that name must not allow (by omission or commission) anything that can negatively impinge on the name. (Folayan, 2004). Corporate leaders and owners must brand their own names (their reputations) distinctly such that if one suffers, it does not affect the other but if one soars, it positively affects the other.*

3.4 Self-Assessment Question

1. List four challenges faced by the new NICON management in communicating with its external and internal publics/
2. The author lists five (5) lessons to learn from the NICON-Federal Government face-off. List and explain them

4.0 Conclusion

Contemporary corporate branding, especially of a publicly-owned company transiting to a privately-owned company (or a privately-owned company becoming a publicly-quoted company) requires more than the traditional brand management tools and techniques of advertising, public relations, personal selling, media management and customer relations. It requires effective use of advocacy communications, political communications, stakeholder relations and public opinion management. Research has confirmed that in most cases, what the consumer buys really is not the product or service but the brand: the main thing that reinforces his or her purchase decision is finding an answer to the question: “What is the brand name of the product or service?” or put in a better form: “What is **in** the name of the brand?”

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5.0 Summary

- Thirty-nine-year-old NICON Insurance PLC (formerly NICON Insurance Corporation) is one of Nigeria’s oldest and biggest insurance companies. Before privatization NICON had controlling shares in Niger Insurance PLC, NICON Hotels (owner of Nigeria’s top hotel NICON Hilton Abuja), NICON Trustees, Assurance Bank, Nigeria Reinsurance Corporation and other investments in shares and stocks in blue chip companies. Most of the companies were severed before its sale to the present owners by the Federal Government, as part of her privatization programme.
- The transition from public ownership to private ownership brought various challenges to the new owners. For instance, in almost four decades of business operations, the company declared dividends to its owners only once. Primarily therefore, the new owners of the company needed to change the perception of management from ‘public service’ to ‘profit making’; from ‘effectiveness’ to ‘efficiency’ (internal public relations) and to change customer and public perception (external public relations).
- However, the new management’s efforts at re-branding and re-positioning the company put it on head-on collision with the former owners who eventually seized back its ownership. The developments led to a

protracted reputational crisis for both the government and the new owners. Largely through corporate communication, the dispute was resolved and the company is now doing business with the Federal Government.

- The challenges of re-branding NICON Insurance Corporation from a bureaucratic/public service philosophy to profit-driven principles necessitated dynamism in reputational management – the overall objective of an organisation largely dictates the focus and strategy of corporate communication.

6.0 Tutor-marked assignment

1. You have read in this Unit how the NICON Group Managing Director and the corporate communication team handle the challenges they face after acquiring the company. Learning from the experience, in not more than 200 words, advise a new management team that is about to take over Nigeria Telecommunications on how to go about its corporate communications.
2. Do a little research. Ask 10 persons (adults) the simple question: “How do you perceive NICON Insurance PLC?” Now, compare the responses with the NICON Insurance brand objectives. Would you say from that research (though not scientific) that NICON’s corporate communication objectives are being realized?

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JLS 613 – CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

MODULE 6 – CASE STUDIES IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

UNIT 3– CASE STUDY: MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS CRISIS

MANAGEMENT

1.0 Introduction

Public relations (and by extension corporate communication) must be based on truth. Even after we have scanned the environments (publics) to prevent crises through proactive communication actions. Crisis cannot be totally prevented. It is always necessary to envisage that such crisis could occur and plan ahead to contain them when they do. And during the management of the crisis, the *actions or measures* we take to genuinely and honestly resolve the problem are more important than *publicity*. This explains why corporate communication must be a 'management function'. It is not a job for errand boys, but in which important decision must be taken. In such situations also, time is of the essence. The two cases reported here illustrate this key points. They stress the RABOSTIC elements of corporate communication

2.0 Objectives

At the end of the Unit, you should be able to:

- Use corporate communications techniques to resolve *crisis in management of typical organisation*.

- Interpret to a reasonable extent *crisis communication* challenges around you.

3.0 Main Content

THE FIRESTONE & JOHNSON CRISES

By Dennis Walcox et al. (*Public Relations Strategies and Tactics*. New York: Harper & Row)

When a corporation finds itself caught in a major crisis that threatens its reputation, its management and public relations department are put under severe stress. The way in which they handle the bad news demonstrates company philosophy and their state of preparedness.

One company reacts with candor, open communication and obvious concern for the public good. Another company tries to ride out the storm by brushing aside media and public questions, belligerently denying the existence of trouble, and creating the impression that it puts self-interest above public safety and welfare.

The forthright company emerges stronger in the public eye than before the crisis. The cover-up company harms its reputation so badly that it is damaged for years to come.

Two leading American corporations Johnson & Johnson, health product manufacturers and Firestone Tire & Rubber company – endure major crisis within a relatively short time of each other. The former earned praise for its handling of the problem, a public relations victory. The other suffered a public relations disaster. These two case studies explain why.

THE WRONG WAY TO HANDLE A CRISIS:

Firestone's Defective Radial Tyres

A year after Firestone began the manufacture and sale of its Radial 500 tyres – highly advertised and heavily publicized – the company's Director of Development sent a memo to top management in which he stated "we are making an inferior quality radial tyre, which will subject us to belt-edge separation at high mileage."

Other internal warnings followed. Dissatisfied customers in exceptionally high numbers returned their 500s to dealers. Retail and oil companies for which Firestone make versions of the 500 under their firms' 'brand names complained about reports from customers that the tyre tread separated from the steel-belt inner layer.

Reports of many accidents pointed to Radial 500 tyre defects as the cause. Prompted by those warnings, Firestone might have withdrawn the tyre from the market because of the indicated peril to motorists using it. The company did just the opposite. During the next five years, Firestone made and sold nearly 24 million Radial 500s at about \$50 each. Despite growing evidence to the contrary, the company praised the tyre as a good product.

Beginning of a morass

Then, slowly at first, the truth began to emerge. The Firestone denial of its product's dangerous shortcomings crumbled, piece by piece. Making a series of public relations blunders, the company was drawn deeper and deeper into a morass. Finally, after months of damaging revelations about its cavalier attitude and lack of candor, Firestone was forced by government and public pressure into a massive product recall of the Radial 500s, the largest recall in tyre history. This cost the company \$140 million. No one can calculate how much long-term damage was done to the old time company's reputation but clearly it was enormous.

Four years after Firestone began marketing the Radial 500, complaints about it accumulated at the Center for Auto Safety, a consumer organisation in Washington D.C. After challenging Firestone by letter about the complaints, the Center turned its research materials over to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. This Federal agency, which Firestone claimed had a grudge against it from previous episodes, investigated. Survey cards were mailed to 87,000 purchasers of new cars equipped with radial tyres, asking them to indicate the brand of tyres and list complaints about their performance. Only 5,400 purchases responded, a small percentage. Firestone came off much the worst of the tyre companies in these responses.

Here, Firestone made its most costly public relations error. Learning that the Federal agency was about to make the survey public, the company asked the United States District Court in Cleveland for a restraining order to prevent publication of the results. The company contented that the survey was flawed and would improperly harm its reputation. The court gained the order.

Instead of quieting the dispute, however, this attempt to suppress the findings had the opposite effect. People had never heard of the survey were alerted by news stories about the legal move. The public's curiosity and suspicion were aroused. Why, many asked, was Firestone trying to conceal the information?

Congressional Hearings

News of the suppression had repercussions in Congress. The House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations decided to hold public hearings on the safety of the Radial 500. Piles of Firestone documents obtained by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration were submitted. Firestone made another move that heightened public suspicion: The Traffic Safety Administration sent it a special order listing 27 questions, with request for a full, prompt response. Instead of being cooperative, the company sent a belligerent legalistic reply objecting to

most of the questions. Throughout the maneuvering, Firestone projected an image of greater concern for its financial self-interest than for the public safety.

The company compounded its difficulties still further by blaming owners of the Radial 500s for problems with the tyres. Firestone claimed that most of the blow-outs and tread separations reported Radial 500s resulted from neglect and misuse by motorists. It contended that owners had damaged the tyres by overloading them, hitting them against the curb, not keeping enough air in them, and driving too fast. This buck-passing by the manufacturer angered purchasers who had paid high prices for the tyres, only to find them defective. The firm forgot the maxim that a company can prosper only when it has satisfied customers.

Despite Firestone's court action, results of the Traffic Safety Administration survey reached the public anyway. The private Center for Auto Safety requested and received the survey through the Freedom of Information Act, then gave it to the news media.

The four days of Congressional Subcommittee hearings, heavily covered by the news media, were extremely harmful to the company. Serving as the corporation's spokesman, its combative chief counsel was caught by committee members in misstatements and contradictions. Other witnesses told grim stories of accidents in which the tyres were involved. Evidence showed conclusively that Firestone had prior knowledge of the unusually high number of complaints and of the tyre's defects.

Although the company had stated that manufacture of the Radial 500 had ended 18 months earlier, the subcommittee learned that in fact production had continued until shortly before the hearings. The company had complained about the news story indicating that 8 per cent of the 500s had been returned to dealers by dissatisfied customers. Evidence brought out during the investigation disclosed

that actually, the average return rate of the tyres over a six-year period was 17.5 per cent, far higher than that encountered by any other radial tyre.

Lawsuits

According to the evidence submitted by the prosecution, the defective tyres contributed to 41 deaths and injuries. Lawsuits by accident victims or their survivors piled up against the company, more than 250 were pending at one time. Firestone settled out of court for \$1.4 million in one case involving two deaths and a survivor who became a quadriplegic.

Firstly, the cumulative disclosures, public anger, and government pressure forced Firestone into the huge recall. It agreed to replace free some 7.5 million radial tyres purchased after September 1975 and to replace at half-price up to six million older ones.

As a final irony, a group of Firestone stockholders successfully filed a class action suit against the company, alleging that they had lost money because of the company's behaviour in the Radial 500 dispute. They contended Firestone had failed to disclose information about the tyre's defects and had not told stockholders about other alleged shortcomings in company operations. A Federal judge approved a \$3.2 million settlement that Firestone must pay the stockholders.

Lessons of the Firestone Case

Throughout the controversy, Firestone's public relations approach reminds the observer of putting out a fire by pouring gasoline on it.

By seeking a court order to suppress the Traffic Safety Administration report, Firestone cast itself in the role of self-serving censor with something to hide. A

much better course would have been to await publication, then respond with a well-prepared rebuttal pointing out the report's statistical weaknesses. Publicity about the court order led directly to the damaging Congressional hearings. Another foolish blunder was the attempt to blame customers for the product's defects. Customers antagonized in this manner often refuse to become repeat buyers.

Lack of candor and factual honesty, a belligerent attitude toward questions and criticism, a history of resistance to media inquiries, use of a spokesman lacking in public relations finesse, and an effort to blame its customers – all these created a public perception of Firestone as a selfish corporation determined to protect its profits even at the price of public safety.

THE RIGHT WAY TO MANAGE CRISIS

The Tylenol Cyanide Deaths

Johnson & Johnson had reason to be pleased with its pain-reliever product Tylenol. Medically-endorsed and vigorously publicized, the packaged aspirin free medication was sold over the counter in pharmacies, groceries and other stores in substantially greater amounts than its competitors. With \$400 million in annual sales, Tylenol controlled 37 per cent of the market and earned handsome profits. Manufacture of Tylenol was done by a Johnson & Johnson subsidiary, McNeil Consumer Products Company.

A Sudden Crisis

Then, one morning, the telephone rang in the office of Lawrence G. Foster, Johnson & Johnson's vice-president for public relations in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The news that phone-call brought was startling. A staff member of the Chicago Sun-Times reported that cyanide contained in Extra-Strength Tylenol capsules apparently had caused the deaths of some individuals in that city.

The reporter requested information about the manufacture of the medication. Eventually doctors determined that seven persons in Chicago had been killed by cyanide contained in Tylenol capsules. The news created fear in million of other Tylenol users.

As news of the mysterious poison deaths spread during early October 1982, millions of Americans with Tylenol on their medicine shelves wondered, "if I take a capsule, will it kill me?"

The corporate crisis caused by the frightening news was unpredictable and intense, with the company's reputation and financial well-being at stake. Events of the next 10 days subjected top management and the public relations department of Johnson & Johnson to an extreme test of communication skills and company philosophy. A few weeks later, when time permitted an appraisal, media executives and public relations experts alike gave the corporation high marks for the way it conducted itself.

The unanswered questions about the incident were bewildering. Had the poison been placed in the capsules during the manufacturing process, either by error or on purpose? Had a killer slipped the cyanide into Tylenol bottles during shipping or on store shelves? If the poison had been inserted intentionally, why? Did the killer have a grudge against Johnson & Johnson or against certain stores? Or was the poisoner a random killer proud of the power to destroy unknown humans? How many of the millions of Tylenol bottles on store shelves contained the fatal poison?

Johnson & Johnson was as mystified as the public was. Management sensed immediately that it faced an overpowering demand from the public for guidance and protection. As public relations director, Foster plunged into the baffling case with two strong assets: a plan for emergency action and a written set of corporate principles to guide him.

Almost the first thing Foster did was send an associate to Chicago aboard a company jet to collect first-hand information. "I learned long ago in the news business that there's no substitute for having someone on the scene whose information you can trust," he explained later. He set up a large bank of telephones to handle the mass of media inquiries he knew would come. To answer the phones, he brought to headquarters 50 public relations staff members from the corporation's subsidiaries. This quick action enabled reporters to reach the company without frustrating delays.

Open Policy

Without hesitation, during the first hours of the crisis, top management put into operation an open information policy. This was in keeping with the long-established written corporate credo, which declared that the company's first responsibility is to "those who use our products and service." The credo stated, "In a business society, every act of business has social consequences and may arouse public interest. Every time business hires, builds, sells, or buys, it is acting for the people as well as for itself, and it must be prepared to accept full responsibility."

The company's most urgent task was to get Tylenol capsules off store shelves and out of producers' homes. It halted Tylenol production, stopped distribution, and recalled supplies from retailers. To recover the capsules from consumers' homes, the company issued coupons with which consumers could exchange containers of capsules for an equal amount of Tylenol tablets, which were not subject to cyanide tampering. This exchange was publicized by full-page newspaper advertisements and news stories. Later, the company announced a toll-free number for information about the safety of Tylenol. Altogether, the company recalled 22 million bottles of Tylenol capsules. As Foster anticipated, the public relations department was besieged with inquiries from the media – 1,411 telephone calls during the first 10 days, a figure that rose to 2,500 before the story died down. Johnson & Johnson received 120,000 clippings of news stories about the crisis from its clipping service.

A seven-member management committee, of which the public relations director was a member, met twice daily at the height of the crisis to evaluate the situation. To unify management's response to the public, the President of the McNeil subsidiary served as the principal spokesman.

From the first, the company cooperated fully with Federal investigators, never waiting for them to pressure it to act. It offered a \$100,000 reward for capture of the perpetrator.

After testing 8 million recalled capsules, investigators determined that the cyanide had not entered the fatal capsules during the manufacturing process, but on store shelves. In fact, the exhaustive and costly testing found only eight tampered with bottles, in which 75 capsules contained cyanide. Two of those eight containers were discovered after publication of the first news stories about the tragedy.

While conducting the recall and debating a future course, Johnson & Johnson took numerous public opinion surveys. These showed, among other things that because of the intensive news coverage, more than 90 per cent of the public knew after the first week not to take Tylenol capsules in their homes and threw them away. Although the company was absolved of blame, the image of Tylenol was so critically damaged that its share of the market dropped from 37 per cent to 6 per cent within days after the news broke. Numerous marketing experts asserted that Tylenol a brand name was dead; that if the company decided to resume selling such a medication, it must change the brand name and image. Johnson & Johnson took a severe financial beating during the recall period – an after-tax loss of \$50 million for the recall and testing, as well as development of new tamper-resistant package.

Ignoring the doomsayers, Johnson & Johnson decided to gamble on restoring Tylenol to public acceptance. Polling and press reaction showed that widespread,

friendly news coverage had convinced much of the public that the product was safe and the tampering had been an isolated incident. Nevertheless, the connection between Tylenol and sudden death lingered, subconsciously in many instances.

Recovery campaign

Thus began the second phase of the Tylenol story, the comeback campaign. To prevent a re-occurrence, Johnson and Johnson designed a tamper-proof container for Tylenol capsules. It strongly endorsed Federal legislation making tampering a felony and regulations requiring tamper-proof packaging for a wide range of over-the-counter drugs. The company was the first to get such packaging into store shelves. Company representatives visited the offices of more than 160 members of congress to gain support for the regulations and legislation.

The public phase of Tylenol's recovery campaign opened with a 30-city video teleconference from New York six weeks after the deaths occurred. The corporation's public relations consultant firm set up this conference in three weeks, remarkably fast work for such an intricate event. The 30 cities had to be selected for convenience to the press nationally, suitable meeting transmission arrangements made and invitations issued.

Twenty-five hundred mailgram invitations were sent out; more than 500 media representatives attended. Two-way audio arrangements were made to Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles and Washington so that reporters there could ask questions of company executives in New York. Reporters in the other 25 cities could hear the questions and answers. During the 90-minute teleconference, James E. Burke, Chief Executive Officer, and other company officials spoke, the new packaging was shown, and the audience heard a video-taped statement by the head of the Food and Drug Administration. Samples of the safety packaging were distributed.

To induce the public to overcome its lingering psychological resistance, Burke announced two attractive offers. Former users who had thrown away their capsules were invited to call a toll-free number and request a free bottle in the new packaging. No proof of previous ownership was required. Advertisements in Sunday newspapers with 40 million combined circulation contained coupons entitling the bearer to a \$2.50 discount in the purchase of any Tylenol product. This permitted consumers to obtain small Tylenol packages free. The headline of the advertisement was, "Thank you, America."

The company also sent about 50 million capsules to physicians for free distribution to their patients, thus in effect demonstrating medical confidence in the safety of the product.

Use of the toll-free numbers by the public to obtain information and free bottles was immense; more than 325,000 calls were made. Burke also used the teleconference to thank the news media for the fair, responsible way in which they reported the cyanide deaths – the kind of public compliments reporters and editors rarely hear: "We were very much aware that the public welfare was at stake." Burke said, "The news media were the means by which we could rapidly disseminate warnings, allay mounting fears and put the crisis in perspective. Good reporting helped to reduce those tensions..."

"You the media, were the first to make the evaluation that our company and our product were also victims of this tragedy. You have treated us accordingly and we are appreciative." Johnson & Johnson followed up the teleconference with an intensive advertising and marketing campaign. Restoration of public confidence was so successful that, six months after the death story broke Tylenol had recaptured about 32 per cent of the 37 per cent of the market it had previously held, despite vigorous efforts by its competitors. As the months passed, nobody had been arrested and charged with implanting the poison.

3.1 Self-Assessment Questions

1. “Defective product, not lack of corporate communication knowledge, escalated the Firestone crisis.” Discuss.
2. Explain the roles of *interpersonal communication*, *media relations* and *tactics* in the Firestone and Johnson’s & Johnson’s cases.
3. Identify as many RABOSTIC elements as you can in the two cases discussed in this Unit.

4.0 Conclusion

Open communication was one key to Johnson & Johnson's success. It treated the news media as invaluable assets in warning the public and conducting the recall. The other key was the company's adherence to its longtime policy that the safety of its customers comes first.

5.0 Summary

In this Unit we have examined two case studies: one in which corporate communication was poorly planned and poorly executed and another in which, it was systematically planned and clinically executed. Of course, the latter was more successful.

The corporate marketing communications regarding *Firestone* was a disaster. The organisation was economical with the truth and obviously had to pay the price. But in the Johnson & Johnson fall-out, several specific steps were especially helpful. Establishment of additional telephone lines and expansion of the public relations staff gave reporters quick access to company representatives. Selection of skillful principal spokesmen provided the firm's statements with consistency.

The company's close cooperation with government investigators encouraged public confidence, a notable contrast with Firestone's fight against the government about the company's defective tyres.

Another less tangible but significant factor was evident in Johnson & Johnson's previous record of friendly dealing with the media. No memories of adversarial clashes lingered among editors and reporters that might cause them to suspect a company cover-up when the cyanide story broke or subconsciously inject a

negative tilt into their stories. Even in the earliest days of the crisis, when the company's innocence had not yet been established, press coverage was fair and even-handed. When the crunch came, Johnson & Johnson benefitted from its adherence to a long time constructive relationship with the media.

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

1. “Johnson & Johnson was only lucky that the problem with Tylenol was due to sabotage and not via manufacturing error. If it had been due to manufacturing defect, it would never have been able to revive the brand and product” To what extent do you agree or disagree with this view?
2. From the account of the two cases, underscore wherever the media featured (e.g. press conference, advertisement, etc.). What do you think Johnson & Johnson could have done better concerning its handling of media?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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