



TEN COMMANDMENTS OF BUILDING A GOOD CORPORATE IMAGE

1.) *Be Honest and Truthful*

You must always strive for honesty and credibility, not only with external audiences, but also with internal. Every organization needs a devil's advocate or person who says "no, that won't work unless we do it a different way".

2.) *Believe in your Product or Service, and Make Sure it Delivers*

No public relations campaign can succeed if the product or service is inferior.

3.) *Be Proactive and Prepared*

Have media trained spokespeople ready before you need them. Position yourself as an expert to the media by sharing information that isn't always commercial, salesy or self-serving.

4.) *Be Respectful of Other People's Time.*

Especially reporters and editors on deadline. And remember that it's not necessarily newsworthy every time your company sneezes or signs a new contract.

5.) *KISS (Keep it Simple, Silly)*

Develop three simple-to-understand key messages and stick with them. The next time you encounter a fourth-grader, see if they understand. If so, you're in good shape.

6.) *Target Your Communications, and Make Them Two -way*

Joe Q. Public is no longer a target audience. Separate your publics into groups and give them the opportunity to give you feedback on your messages.

7.) *Keep Informed*

Public relations should be a management function, with direct access to the CEO. "We'll let you know when something happens" isn't acceptable, nor is an uninformed or mis-educated spokesperson.

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TEN COMMANDMENTS OF BUILDING A GOOD CORPORATE IMAGE (continued)

8.) Know Your Tools

Know the differences between public relations, advertising and marketing and use the proper tool for the job. A basic rule of thumb is that if the end result is to match goods or services to a customer need (a marketing function), advertising and public relations become tools for the marketing function. But if the desired objective is to advance the entire organization (a public relations function), marketing and advertising become public relations tools.

9.) Measure Appropriately

Accountability is expected throughout business—on the production line, in the accounting office and in the sales department. Communications results are just as important and also ultimately impact the bottom line. They include increased understanding, improved relationships, effective message delivery, earned respect, credibility with media, changed attitudes, competitive distinction and a fine-tuned image. But don't expect to track these kinds of results by just using a clipping service or other basic technique.

10.) Plan for Success.

Successful companies pull together their best thinkers to develop plans that are integrated and don't separate public relations and advertising plans from the other parts of their marketing activities. Instead, they view each as a necessary and vital building block of the brand-building process.

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