



## Semester-long PR campaign

Using principles of PR outlined in *Media and Journalism: New Approach to Theory and Practice*, this exercise will provide you with experience in producing an effective campaign designed for specific purposes.

Your lecturer will divide the class into groups of four to five students for this exercise. Each group will be assigned a sector. Suggestions for suitable sectors are:

- Public sector
- Local business
- Entertainment
- Community organisations
- Science/medical research

You are members of a PR consultancy company rather than staff members of an organisation. You should assume that you have been contracted as consultants to undertake PR activities for a particular purpose. The group will decide the exact nature of the activity.

The group is expected to operate democratically, with each member contributing equally to discussion, decision-making and implementation. Teamwork can be challenging, but it is a reality of public relations practice. Ways of accommodating group dynamics have to be tested and implemented for this project to succeed both as a university assignment and as valid professional preparation.

Your work will involve:

- deciding upon both broad and specific objectives for your campaign;
- researching your sector to find out the key issues, audiences and individuals;
- preparing a range of written material that will include at least one media alert and one media release, as well as objectives, background information, mailing lists and other items that may be relevant; and
- presenting your campaign in a lively and informative way to fellow students, in a 10-minute session.

While it will be up to each team to determine exactly what your PR campaigns will be about, it is advisable to keep it as specific as possible to ensure it is contained within reasonable limits. The nature of your campaigns will most likely, therefore, revolve around a single significant event.

Of necessity the actual campaign will be fictional, however it must be based upon real information about your sector and must be the kind of campaign that would be feasible within this sector. This will mean researching previous real PR campaigns.

Ensure that your campaign is genuinely public relations. Sometimes PR overlaps with advertising or event management, but your primary role is to work on recognisable PR even if there are other elements involved as well. For example, if you are doing the PR for a big public youth rock music event, you don't need to organise the event itself, only its publicity.