



PUBLIC RELATIONS LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK

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PUBLIC RELATIONS
LEADERSHIP AND
ADVANCED CAMPAIGN
ANALYSIS | PREL460

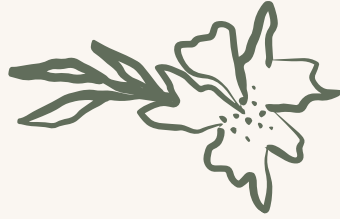


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LEADERSHIP INTRO

What even is leadership? A word that is used so often across many different spheres, yet it is hard to define. Is it a system? A person? A relationship? A title? A role? A process? A combination of all of these? Leadership has over 1,400 definitions, so it is safe to say it is a compilation of these things, plus many more. Leadership is a process, and it takes time to be put into place and be effective. It requires a system to uphold standards and last over time. To be most effective, a relationship should be established. In general, this phenomenon is something that takes a person or group of people and raises them up for their skills, gifts, talents, ability to produce positive change, influence areas, and have a clear vision with goals.

Leaders are people, and people are imperfect. Being a leader does not mean having everything figured out, but having a clear sense of direction and being able to convince others that direction is worth following. Leadership is something that begins intrinsically within us, through spiritual formation, wisdom, personal authenticity, and ethics (Sinclair, 2024). Humans are constantly developing, which goes to show that leadership requires growth. Being stagnant and complacent doesn't contribute to an effective leader.

Leaders aren't always popular or favored. In fact, there are many leaders that people don't like. Those who are in charge of promoting or creating leaders have different standards and definitions of leadership, so it is very nuanced. Leaders can have the highest title in the room, but they can also have the lowest title. Leadership is across all different realms, and isn't a cookie-cutter definition, role, or title. Leadership can be found in many spaces, spheres, and locations. It can involve many things such as making decisions, creating vision, motivating followers, and more.

LEADERSHIP INTRO

Overall, leaders are people who see room for improvement, can rally people together, strategically plan and set goals for the vision while putting others first. They are proud of the work they are doing and motivate their followers to come on board and support them to advance that mission. Leaders have a clear sense of direction and require goals to move forward in that direction.

Leaders see room for improvement. They are gifted with an eye and desire for growth in a variety of areas. Leaders are not stagnant and want to move forward. Leaders have the ability to see troubled areas along with areas of opportunity. With their eye for improvement, they are able to create specific steps to reach those opportunities.

Leaders can rally people together. Leaders must have followers. Followers are those who believe in the leaders mission. A leader must convince followers that their direction and goals are worth followers investing their time, resources, and gifts in. Leaders must be able to rally people together to create a sense of synergy to move forward.

Leaders strategically plan and set goals for their vision. Leaders will not operate most effectively when they only have a vision. Working with their team members to create practical steps to move forward and achieve their vision is crucial and necessary.

(Effective) leaders put others first. Leaders are able to go further when they are willing to be selfless and are willing to do the things they ask their followers to do. (Effective) leaders are concerned about the well-being of their followers just as much as their own well-being. It is important to note that not all leaders are like this, but leaders are most effective this way because it enhances the team dynamic in an incredibly positive way.

PUBLIC RELATIONS LEADERSHIP

What is public relations? Public relations is “a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics” (PRSA). Public relations cares about both the organization and the publics that are essential to their success. Public relations is truly about “connecting people, inspiring movements, and leading change” (Sinclair, 2). An established relationship is critical to achieve the goals of public relations which include “positively and genuinely motivating, inspiring, and empowering others to achieve vision, goals, and future-changing outcomes” (Sinclair, 2). Public relations is not an individual process. Instead, it requires a team of people who are wanting to see change and influence take place.

An effective public relations leader demonstrates essential components such as integrity, humility, vision, awareness, and understanding. These leadership traits are absolutely crucial to having a strong, effective leader within public relations. When looking at the public relations industry specifically, it is even more imperative to have a leader who exemplifies these strengths because they are not only representing themselves, but their organization and their publics. Being aware of these leadership attributes is essential to the success and advancement of the mission of an organization. These will ensure needs will be met, goals will be reached, and growth will be attained.

Integrity is a central part to public relations. Ensuring people are being honest and transparent about what they are speaking about is a necessity in this field. Being confident in trusting those in the field in what they say, but also who they truly are goes incredibly far. An effective leader is someone who has their thoughts, words, and actions in alignment with one another in the public and private sphere.

PUBLIC RELATIONS LEADERSHIP

Public relations and leadership are intertwined in many ways. Public relations and leadership are both most effective when trust is established. Having an existing relationship with those involved in either public relations or leadership creates a sense of security and confidence within the involved people.

The four domains of leadership strengths include executing, influencing, relationship building, and strategic thinking. These four domains are seen heavily in both leadership and public relations areas. In leadership, these domains work together to produce an effective leader. In public relations, these domains work together to advance the industry within our current model of public relations, two-way symmetrical.

The executing domain is known by the set goals. With a focus on achieving, accomplishing, working hard, and performing high, it is evident that proactivity and efficiency will be reached, while producing something great. The influencing domain places focus on communicating to the internally and externally. Effective communication is essential to achieving the goals set. This domain focuses on taking charge, speaking up and making sure others are heard. The relationship building domain does just what it states- it prioritizes relationships and individuals who make up the bigger picture of the group. Unity, collaboration, and teamwork are all essential to achieve tasks, and this domain does just that. Lastly, the strategic thinking domain focuses on what *could be*. “People who devote their time and talents to understand what is necessary to routinely put their team in the position to succeed. High-performing teams rely on people with strong Strategic Thinking themes to absorb and analyze information that informs better decisions” (Gallup). These domains are prevalent and necessary in public relations and leadership realms, ensuring that there is cohesion and a variety of skillsets highlighted to achieve the tasks and vision.

LEADERSHIP THEORY

Within leadership, there are many different theories. The first theory is *Charismatic leadership*. Charismatic leadership involves followers engaging in self-sacrificial behavior to “promote a collective identity, role model desirable behavior, establish high expectations and express confidence that followers can achieve them” (Wiley & Sons, 77). Charismatic leaders have large amounts of influence on their supporters and their followers view them as leaders who have “extraordinary abilities and qualities” (Wiley & Sons, 77). Followers emulate these leaders, taking on their goals, values, and beliefs.

There are both socialized and personalized charismatic leaders. Socialized charismatic leaders “transcend their own self-interests, empowering and developing their followers and articulating visions” (Wiley & Sons, 77). Personalized charismatic leaders, on the other hand, are “self-seeking and manipulate followers to achieve their own interests. They are authoritative narcissists, and their high need for power is partly driven by their low self-esteem” (Conger, 1999).

When relating these leadership theories to public relations, there are PR models that we can connect them to. Socialized charismatic leaders connects closely with the two-way symmetrical public relations model. In this two-way symmetrical model, “the organization engages in two-way communication to find common ground and mutual benefits” (Silfwer, 2024). As we see in socialized leaders, they care deeply about their followers interest and desire to develop those. Seeing the sense of care for the followers is a great way to connect this leadership theory with the two-way symmetrical public relations model. Personalized leaders, on the other hand, can relate closely to the Public Information PR Model. This model is for people who emphasize “one-way communication to disseminate information with little or no feedback from recipients.” Personalized leaders care only about themselves, not their followers and their needs.

LEADERSHIP THEORY

Another leadership theory is *Servant Leadership*. Servant leadership is “a style that focuses on the growth of those who are being simultaneously led and served” (Wiley & Sons, 81). Servant leaders first priority is that their followers are being cared for with their needs being met. This others-focused approach is characterized by different dimensions. These dimensions include *altruistic calling* which relates to the leaders desire and inner purpose to make a difference in the lives of others by their service. Another dimension is *agapao love* where leaders believe in viewing people as whole beings, not just for what they contribute or as a “means to an end” (Wiley & Sons, 81). *Forgiveness* is another dimension that speaks to the leaders ability to “let go of perceived wrongdoings and not carry past grudges to other situations” (Wiley & Sons, 81). Another dimension of this leadership theory is *covenantal relationship*. Covenantal relationship takes the relationship of the two into consideration, accepting individuals for who they are and viewing them as equal.

All of these dimensions that make up the servant leadership theory point directly to two-way symmetrical public relations model. Servant leaders care deeply for their publics, taking them into high levels of consideration and even viewing them as their highest priority. As leaders prioritize their followers and view them as equal to themselves, it is evident they believe in a two-way symmetrical model. The two-way symmetrical model is known to be the most ethical, establishing trust, collaboration, and true, genuine relationships between the two parties. “This model emphasizes open, transparent communication, wherein the organization and its stakeholders engage in a dialogue to understand each other’s perspectives, values, and concerns better” (Silfwer, 2024).

LEADERSHIP THEORY

The last leadership theory to take note of is *Authentic Leadership*. Authentic leadership is “a pattern of leader behavior that draws on and promotes both positive psychological capabilities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers fostering positive self-development (Wiley & Sons, 82). Authentic leadership is distinct from the rest in the ways it emphasizes the leaders personality, character, and motives more than the others. Leaders “sometimes use impression management tactics and mislead followers about their abilities, intentions and the benefits of their visions” (Conger, 1999). While many leaders default to manipulation to get their followers to respond in the ways they want, authentic leadership is the opposite and capitalizes on the leaders authenticity when leading.

This theory is another example of the two-way symmetrical public relations leadership model. Placing emphasis on truthful, transparent , and open communication while valuing the publics (as equal) and hearing their insights is what makes this model up. Authentic leaders walk in integrity- their thoughts, words, and actions are all in alignment with one another in private and public spheres. This is an incredibly important leadership theory because it paves the way for a mutually beneficial relationship. Understanding where your leader stands makes for a more positive, efficient, and productive work environment while also giving you the opportunity and open space to be authentic yourself. Understanding everyone has different gifts, skillsets, and leadership styles is highlighted through the authentic leadership theory and two-way symmetrical public relations model.

CASE STUDY

Martha Stewart is known for being an incredible entrepreneur. Changing the way people across the globe host others, decorate, bake and more, she has built a successful brand. She created her brand (made up of books and shows) from scratch, and overtime, reached millions of people. Her company, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, went public in 1999 and shortly after, she became a self-made billionaire. She even found her name among the world's wealthiest and most powerful business leaders on the Forbes billionaires list.

Where did all of this begin? It actually started out as a small home-based catering business that she founded with a friend as her partner. The business began to see success, but the pair split after disagreements. This did not stop Martha though. Years later, Martha decided to write a book called, “Entertaining”, which sold over 625,000 copies. A dream was born. She released more books, appeared on popular TV shows, and launched the *Martha Stewart Living magazine*.

From cooking recipes, decoration instructions, craft ideas, homemaking guides, and more, Martha was known to be a true expert in these areas and inspired millions of people. Her passion for this was growing, and she wanted to own her entire brand. She ended up buying everything out so she was the sole owner. “Three years following the formation of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Stewart listed the company on the New York Stock Exchange. This allowed her many fans and followers across the country to actually own a piece of Martha's media powerhouse. On the day the company went public in 1999, Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia's stock opened at \$18 per share. The price soared from day one, and that growth made Martha's 96% stake in the company worth more than a billion dollars” (Cassell, 2024).

CASE STUDY

Stewart was convicted of obstruction of justice, making false statements, and conspiracy for lying to investigators about her sale of shares of ImClone Systems in 2001. She sold shares a day before the company announced a negative Food and Drug Administration ruling about one of its cancer drugs that prompted a massive sell-off in the stock. She served five months in a federal correctional facility following her conviction in 2004. On December 28, 2001, the FDA confirmed it rejected ImClone's application for the approval of its cancer drug, causing the company's stock to drop 16 percent. The sale prevented Stewart from suffering more than \$45,000 in losses.

Stewart was sentenced to five months in prison, five months of home confinement and two years of supervised probation after being found guilty in the fraud case. After her sentencing, she told everyone outside the courthouse she "will be back," adding, "I'm used to all kinds of hard work, as you know, and I'm not afraid. I'm not afraid whatsoever."

When investigators questioned her on the trade in early 2002, she and her stockbroker, Peter Bacanovic, answered that they had no insider info that prompted the sale. However, federal prosecutors later accused Stewart (who was once a stockbroker herself) and Bacanovic of acting on non-public knowledge when they made the trade — and then lying about it to the feds.

What is Stewart up to now? She has kept her company intact, wrote a book and debuted two new television shows within less than a year of her release from prison in March 2005 — and hasn't slowed down since.

CASE STUDY

This study relates to public relations because many publics were effected. With the millions of fans of Martha Stewart, there was a large element of trust lost. Fans weren't sure if they should continue supporting her (and many didn't). Barefoot Contessa, also known as Ina Garten is another large popular voice in the hospitality and baking sphere. Stewart says, "When I was sent off to Alderson Prison, she stopped talking to me, I found that extremely distressing and extremely unfriendly" (Ash, 2024). Not only did many of Stewart's fans stop supporting her, but even one of her close friends did.

Martha Stewart may have lost a lot of fans, but it did not stop her overall goals. After her release from prison, Martha Stewart involved herself in a variety of projects, including magazines, a short-lived reality television show, and branded items sold by flower shops, KB Homes, and Macy's. While she was banned from acting as director of the company for five years, Stewart continues to control about 50 percent of Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia stock and about 90 percent of voting stock. While it often takes many years for businesspeople to regain trust after corporate misconduct, Martha Stewart remains a beloved household icon for thousands of loyal fans.

Stewart doesn't believe she did anything wrong. When the scandal first became public, Stewart began a campaign to detach herself from the events. However, she could not escape questions about the insider trading scandal. Even in a regular weekly cooking segment on CBS's "The Early Show," the host asked about the scandal, but Stewart responded: "I want to focus on my salad..." Her refusal to testify made many wonder whether she really was innocent. Steven Fink, president of Lexicon Communications, questioned Stewart's choice of avoiding to face the questions: "Someone as culturally prominent as Stewart would be expected to address the public and she has not really done that, resulting, rightly or wrongly, in the perception that she has something to hide."

CASE STUDY

This case has many consequences, however, they aren't all negative. The comeback of Martha Stewart is one for many to look up to and learn from. Today, she still has millions of followers and incredible brand deals. While there is some great things happening in her life today, Stewart will never be perceived as innocent, credible, and trustworthy as she was before the insider trading scandal.

A leadership theory that relates to this scenario is *Charismatic Leadership*. "Charismatic leadership is characterized by leaders who articulate an inspirational vision of a desirable future that motivates followers to sacrifice their self-interests and devote exceptional effort to the causes advocated by the leader" (Wiley & Sons, 77). Martha Stewart branded herself on providing tips and steps for a desirable future for all when it came to decorating, gardening, cooking, homesteading, and more. Even if people had been stuck in their own ways when it came to these areas, Martha was able to convince them that her ways were worth following to the point where many fans gave up their own ways to learn from her.

I do not agree with the ways Stewart chose to go about this scandal. Instead of giving a statement apologizing, she chose not to own up to her mistakes or ever talk about it in public. With such a large platform, giving some sort of explanation would show care and thoughtfulness to her fans. Remaining silent implies she has something to hide or that she isn't willing to apologize and take ownership of her own actions. To make this situation smoother, I would recommend Martha release some sort of apology or address letting her fans know that she is sorry, she made a mistake, but wants to move on. This would ensure two-way communication is taking place. I applaud her for the ways she didn't let this situation have the end say, but do believe her supporters would have been much more appreciative with a statement letting them know she is considering them.

CONNECTING STATEMENT

Through this handbook, defining leadership, defining public relations, considering ways leadership and public relations intertwine, going through relevant leadership theories, and a real-life case study, the importance for effective leadership and public relations is made known. Leadership and public relations can look like a lot of different things, with many definitions. However, through the handbook, we see what works within leadership and PR, and what does not.

There is such high importance for leadership in public relations. As public relations professionals continue to serve their publics in mutually beneficial relationships, leadership must be present. Having a leader who walks in integrity, truth, transparency, authenticity, and socialized charisma while serving those around them are all indicators that the mission and goals that are set are being advanced.

Within public relations specifically, leadership is crucial because those within public relations are representing the organization *and* their key publics. Having an effective leader in these roles creates a sense of reliability and trust between everyone involved. Having a group of leaders who are strong in the four domains- executing, influencing, relationship building, and strategic thinking- creates a sense of unity and confidence in how things are managed and advanced.

Leadership in public relations ensures solid mission, vision, and goals while considering the needs of publics. Being able to effectively do both simultaneously sets both leaders and public relations professionals apart in positive ways. In reality, "Public relations is a strategic function of leadership. A thorough, research-based understanding of your publics and the communication environment in which you operate will strengthen your ability to build relationships and communicate with those publics" These are not two separate fields, instead, they co-exist with one another.

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