

Eastern Illinois University

From the Selected Works of Charles G. Eberly

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Breathing Public Relations into your Chapter's Life

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BREATHING PUBLIC RELATIONS INTO YOUR CHAPTER'S LIFE

Order of Omega Leadership Conference

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Promotion-Overall plan for communicating information about a program and generating audience interest.

Advertising-Purchased media coverage of programs.

Publicity-Non-purchased media coverage of programs and informational materials distributed by the programming body.

PUBLIC RELATIONS IDEAS IN AREAS OF CHAPTER PROGRAMS

ALUMNI/AE

- Invite alumni/ae to present chapter meetings on interesting topics such as career opportunities, health and wellness, or academic excellence.
- Sponsor an alumni/ae meeting.
- Conduct a mock rush party together.
- Invite alumni/ae for a special dinner or program.
- Co-sponsor a philanthropy event.
- Honor the alumni/ae that serve as volunteers to the collegiate chapter.
- Visit an alumni/ae meeting.
- Work with the alumni office to keep alumni/ae records current.
- Contribute to national fraternity/sorority magazines.
- Sponsor a reception during Homecoming.
- Publish a chapter newsletter at least once a semester.

PARENTS

- Sponsor a Parent's Weekend.
- Have a reception for parents during the campus Parent's Weekend.
- Send them the chapter newsletter.
- Greet parents when they visit the house.
- Use hometown news release forms for special occasions (initiation, election of officers, etc.)

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES AND VISIBILITY

- Place personal ads in the newspaper to wish teams, organizations good luck on events.
- Display letters and/or banners at sport events... have an all Greek day at the football game
- Invite all students to programs on academic excellence, alcohol awareness, or other pertinent issues.
- Actively participate in campus activities, leadership positions, and honoraries.

- Foster campus spirit by saying "Alpha Beta Gamma backs..."
- Encourage a chapter letter and/or badge day on a regular basis.
- Sponsor a reception for all international students attending the university.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Participate in a trash pick-up in the community.
- Hold a chapter program at a nursing home.
- Participate in Adopt-A-Grandparent, big-sister programs.
- Sponsor needy children in the community.
- Assist with a community recycling program.
- Commit to an annual local philanthropy.

FACULTY/STAFF

- Invite professors to dinner.
- Sponsor a babysit night for faculty.
- Attend all classes and labs.
- Send the Greek Advisor notes, flowers and support during the year.
- Invite the Greek Advisor and Administrators to dinner at the house.
- Send holiday cards to the Greek Advisor and other administrators.
- Arrange for the Greek Advisor to meet with all national officers who visit the chapter.

PANHELLENIC/INTERFRATERNITY

- Send notes to other chapters on their Founders' Day.
- Hang congratulatory banners or signs wishing others good luck on finals, philanthropies, rush, etc.
- Send congratulatory notes for special occasions, holidays.
- Provide refreshments at a Panhellenic/IFC meeting.
- Hold officer roundtables.
- Support other chapter's philanthropies with a small donation.
- Host a Panhellenic/IFC sponsored blood drive.
- Run for executive positions, cabinet, and serve on committees of Panhellenic/Interfraternity Council.
- Be supportive of new chapters on campus.

IMAGE

IMAGE...what a recurring issue for thought and conversation. What is image? Every member contributes to image. Your image evolves as others see you. Images are formed by the messages one conveys, consciously or not. Impressions are quickly formed.

TIPS...individuals are important to image of the chapter. Capitalize on individual achievements and put your best foot forward. Be creative.

PROMOTION...Do what ever you can to get the word about your chapter at Eastern.

PRIDE...regardless of the message or awareness you seek, pride must be communicated. What gives you pride in being Greek? a member of Alpha Beta Gamma?

TOPICS FOR PRESS RELEASES

- University honors-scholastic or otherwise
- Initiation into campus honoraries, Order of Omega
- Awards received, local and national
- Mortgage burning ceremony
- House reopening-remodeling
- Event held with alumnae group
- Outstanding rush!!!
- Founder's Day
- Greek Week
- National and local philanthropies
- Election of officers
- Participation in Homecoming events
- Dean's List of members
- Participation in community service projects

100+ PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

ADS IN OR ON: Athletic programs
Class Schedule books
Greek Week booklets
Rush booklet
Yearbook
Newspaper
Student Directory
Homecoming booklet

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER/MAGAZINE

BANNERS

BOOKMARKS

BUMPER STICKERS

CAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLASSIFIED ADS

"CROWD WANTED" FLYERS

DIRECT MAIL

DOOR KNOB FLYERS

FACULTY/STAFF NEWSLETTER

FLYERS

in orientation packets

on pizza boxes

on windshields

stapled together so they stick out from bulletin boards

FORTUNE COOKIES

FOOD

FREE TICKETS

HANG POSTERS

on a clothesline

inside bathroom stalls

on gym lockers

on trash cans

next to cash registers

above the drinking fountain

outdoors

HELIUM BALLOONS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BILLBOARDS

BROCHURES

BUTTONS

CHALK ADS ON SIDEWALK

CONTESTS

DECORATED CARS

DISPLAY CASES

ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARDS

FLYERS TO LOOK LIKE MONEY

from bulletin boards

FOOTPRINTS LEADING TO EVENT

FREE SAMPLES

FRIENDS (word of mouth)

IMPRINTED ANYTHING

folders, cups, mugs,
clothes, ID holders,
key rings, pens,

LETTERS TO STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
MAILERS
MESSAGES (attached to candy)
MULTIPLE COLOR COPIES OF SAME FLYER
ODD-SHAPED POSTERS
PENNANTS
PHONE-A-THON (call people about event)
RESIDENCE HALLS
SOLICITATION TABLE
STUFFED RAGGEDY ANN (LARGE, ON CAMPUS WITH A SIGN)
T-SHIRTS

MAILBOX STUFFING
MANNEQUIN WEARING A SIGN
MOBILES
NEON SIGNS
ONE-WORD NEWSPAPER ADS
PLACEMATS
PRINTED INVITATIONS
GREEK NEWSLETTERS
STICKERS
TABLE TENTS

SEVEN RULES FOR SUCCESSFUL PUBLICITY

1. Weber's Law: There is never enough publicity. For every full house there are a few promotions that were not effective.
2. Good publicity helps, bad publicity hurts. Stay away from images, thoughts, words that will keep people from attending your event.
3. Sell the sizzle, not the steak. That's an old advertising adage, and it's still true. The facts are important, however, the colorful, enticing, words spark interest.
4. Push the "Hot" buttons. What do rushees want? Friendship, fun, scholarship, excitement, something new. Find your hook and use it to reel rushees in.
5. Build enthusiasm. You planned an event because you thought it was going to be special. Stimulate your sisters to spread the excitement. The simple truth is, word-of-mouth is the strongest publicity on the campus. DO NOT LEAVE IT IN YOUR CHAPTER HOUSE.
6. Be creative. People become "blind" to same types of publicity and advertising. Grab their attention.
7. Lead them by the hand. Call rushees and offer them a ride to the party, do that last promo blitz on campus. Full page ads in the paper are sure eye catchers.

PRESS RELEASE DELIVERY GUIDELINES

1. Ask for the person you want by name. This shows you did your homework.
2. Don't over sell your material. Put all of the effort you can into preparation.
3. Make sure you or other follow-up contacts are clearly identified on the material.
4. Be certain that the phone numbers listed on the press release are correct and that someone knowledgeable will be there to answer calls.
5. Learn the deadline requirements of the news media. Monday morning is traditionally the time when there is the least news breaking and the release has the best chance of being picked up. Routine news stories should normally be in the hands of editors of afternoon papers and radio and television stations by 9:00 am. News for morning papers or broadcasts should be on editors desks by 6:00 pm preceding the day of publication. Sunday news should reach Sunday editors before noon on Friday, or earlier for special departments. These are typical deadlines, check with your own editor as to his/her requirements.

Adapted from: What Happens in Public Relations (1981)

PREPARATION OF PRESS RELEASES

1. Keep releases direct and factual. Supplemental information can be provided on a separate "fact sheet" included with the release.
2. The information included should be appropriate to the medium to which it is sent. Do not bother editors with material you know they cannot use.
3. The contact person's name, agency, or organization name, address and telephone number should be given in case the editor has any questions. Normally this information is placed at the top of the release as a heading.
4. A release line should also be included at the top of the page indicating the date for release. If the release is distributed in advance, the release line should read, "Hold for release...".
5. The standard format for most press releases calls for the use of 8 1/2" x 11" paper, double-spaced copy, wide margins, and copy typed on only one side of the page.
6. Releases which run more than one page in length should carry a page number at the center top of each page beginning with the second. Also, each page should end with a complete sentence in case the pages are separated. To indicate that the material is continued on another page, "MORE" is generally typed in the center at the bottom of the page. Usually -30- is typed in the center at the bottom of the last page of a release to indicate the end of the copy.
7. When photographs are included with a release, they should always include the caption line glued to the bottom of the border with rubber cement. The name, address, and telephone number of the contact should appear on the back of the photo.

Source: *Public Relations: The Profession and the Practice* (1983)

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAPTER EVALUATION

1. How well do the brothers/sisters get along with each other?
 - a. Super.
 - b. Good.
 - c. Okay, with some bickering.
 - d. Backstabbers.
2. How well respected are the Executive Officers?
 - a. Respected.
 - b. Most are respected.
 - c. Just the president.
 - d. Not at all.
3. Are the decisions they make supported by the chapter?
 - a. Always.
 - b. Quite often.
 - c. Sometimes.
 - d. When they make an intelligent decision.
4. Are the Membership Recruitment, Pledge Education, Scholarship, Alumni Relations, and Executive Committees functional, with chairs and members, meeting regularly.
 - a. Yes, all five are functional.
 - b. Four of five qualify.
 - c. Make that three of five.
 - d. Two or less.
5. Do they set goals and programs, then follow through with them?
 - a. Yes, and they keep a file for future use.
 - b. Programs but no goals.
 - c. Everything is passed on by word of mouth.
 - d. The "Simpsons" would be a typical program for us.
6. Do neighbors ever complain about noise levels or trash around the chapter house?
 - a. Never.
 - b. Have had one or two calls about noise.
 - c. Three or four calls.
 - d. Never stop complaining.
7. How involved are we with the community?
 - a. Always calling City Hall to see what can be done.
 - b. Doing things when called upon.
 - c. Doing one or two service projects a year.
 - d. We don't belong to the community, we are students!

- a. The chapter is well above the All Men's/Women's Average.
 - b. Chapter is at the all Men's/Women's Average.
 - c. Chapter is below the All Men's/Women's Average.
 - d. Parties and athletics come first.
16. How often do we visit nearby chapters?
- a. Three times a year.
 - b. Twice a year.
 - c. They visit us.
 - d. Why bother?
17. The last time another chapter visited us, they were received:
- a. Very well, had beds and food for them.
 - b. Didn't know they were coming, OK
 - c. Interrupted a party and asked them to leave.
 - d. No one visits us.
18. The last time your chapter visited another, was anything stolen or destroyed?
- a. No.
 - b. Yes.
19. When Chapter Consultants come to visit, do we make them feel at home?
- a. Always.
 - b. Sometimes.
 - c. If we like him/her.
 - d. We ask when he/she is leaving.
20. Do all of your reports and fees (treasurer's report, initiation record and fees, etc.) get to General Headquarters on time?
- a. Always.
 - b. Only a day late.
 - c. Most of the time.
 - d. Always late, if then.
21. When alumni/ae walk into the chapter house unexpectedly, do we greet them with a smile and a handshake?
- a. Always.
 - b. Most of the time.
 - c. No, shuffle them off on an officer.
 - d. Let them make the first move.
 - e. Only if they have a checkbook.
22. Are alumni/ae given advance notice (four to six weeks) of upcoming events of interest to them?
- a. Six weeks or more.
 - b. Four to six weeks.

EIGHT STEPS TO IMPROVING CHAPTER PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Review your chapter's policies, practices, and procedures. Are they consistent with sound community relations?
2. Consider especially the following areas: waste disposal; noise or traffic problems; maintenance of organizational facilities and grounds; advertising and signs; public behavior.
3. Develop a chapter public relations policy. Spell out specific public relations objectives. Base the policy on assessment of the chapter's needs, resources, and expertise, and on community needs and expectations.
4. Know your various publics.
5. Utilize all means to communicate with your publics. These may include: members, media, open houses, local clubs and organizations, local advertising, newsletters, brochures, etc..
6. Involve your organization in local organizations. This may be done by: encouraging members to join groups; lending facilities for meetings or activities; joining the Chamber of Commerce, etc.
7. Take the time to participate in events which help the members of your community. Philanthropy is an important aspect of community relations.
8. Evaluate your chapter public relations effort. Measure to determine the extent to which objectives have been achieved. Be prepared to develop new strategies if current programs fail to meet expectations.

QUOTES to do PR by:

"As I grow older, I pay less attention to what men say. I just watch what they do." Andrew Carnegie

"Write injuries in the dust, benefits in marble." Ben Franklin

"An organization's public image consists of the essential qualities attributed to it by its publics." Craig E. Aronoff and Otis W. Baskin

"What people say behind your back is your standing in the community in which you live." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

RESOURCES:

Effective Public Relations by Paula Jenkins-Williams, MIFCA-MAPCA
Hand-out booklet.
Promotion author unknown
200 Promotion Ideas to Get You Started by beth triplett
Enhancing Public Relations by Norman Allen, MIFCA/MAPCA 1991

*Please indicate by check if you'd like
release to go to parents and/or spouse's
newspaper.

EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Office of University Relations
Old Main - Room 109

MEDIA RELEASE INFORMATION FORM

(Please keep this form and use it when submitting press information to the office of University Relations. More copies of this form are available.)

Name: _____

Position: _____

Office Extension at Eastern: _____ Home Phone: _____

Desired Date for Release: _____

Do You Want Public Service Announcement to Radio Also? _____

(Use Reverse For Additional Data)

WHO?

WHAT?

WHEN?

WHERE?

WHY?

HOW?

COMMENTS FOR DIRECT QUOTATION: