

APPENDIX VI

The Chief Executive as an Image Maker*

Wole Adamolekun and Tayo Ekundayo

Most organisations recognise the wonders they believe public relations can muster for the enhancement of a positive image for their products and services. This belief is demonstrated by the setting up of public relations departments and units in their establishments. Ironically, the public relations man often wonders if indeed his services are needed in the first place, given the obvious contradictions in organisational preferences and style as they relate to public relations. If he is lucky, he is invited to crucial meetings whenever management finds it convenient. On the other occasions, he is just not invited.

Whenever a particular management decision backfires, it is the public relations person that is asked how such a bad report on the organisation managed to get such a generous media attention despite the fact that he was not privy to the decision. The public relations person's lot is to find solution to the problem that might not have arisen were he to have been consulted when the decision was being taken. Most views expressed in several PR publications so far are those of the state-of-the-art of America, Britain and other developed economies of the world. If one may

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ask, who needs public relations in Nigeria? Who is a public relations practitioner in Nigeria? What is the attitude of employers to public relations? What functions are given to public relations department in organisations? How well trained are the public relations personnel? Whose image are to be projected – corporate or individual? Is public relations interchangeable with journalism? There would be no direct attempt to respond to these posers because they are best pondered over by all concerned – public relations persons, the management or organisation with which they work, and indeed the publics they are interested in as practitioners.

The chief executive officer is the modern bluechip company's helmsman with all the trappings of a multibillion naira worth of business, who surrounds himself with posh and generously furnished office. He is cultivated, urbane, graceful with expensive tastes in personal appearance. Characteristically too, most of these sprawling businesses are owned by young men and women who are single proprietors and perhaps with a sprinkle of friends, just for some effects.

In circumstances where the ownership structure is not the usual single proprietorship, a new CEO makes haste to reorganise the personnel as soon as he assumes office to reflect his preferences and bias for specific staffers. Only in well-established and long standing business organisations with several shareholders and government agencies do these practices get slightly played down. In this boardroom politics of hiring strategic staff members, the position of public relations manager is high on the agenda. This is an indication of the crucial role public relations plays in the corporate image-making.

Public relations is about people, organisations and how they interact as one party tries to cultivate positive interest of others in his products and services such that income and other benefits can be earned from the enterprise. Simple as this appears to be, the complex nature of these services and goods coupled with the intricate and rather difficult task of understanding human beings

make the job of image-making and projection a big challenge that would continue to generate interest as diverse as the target publics.

In spite of the widely acknowledged need for effective public relations in organisations, many could be said to barely tolerate the profession because there is a lot of misconceptions both from within and without. In-house, the public relations executive is treated as a buffer who would protect the organisation from unwanted publicity in the media; and to his media colleagues, he is a shield between the pressman and his valued news – head or tail he loses. The successful public relations executive is that person who is creative, knowledgeable, impressionable, dynamic and has the support of his organisation as well as the ears of his colleagues in the media.

In the recent past, organisations that have enjoyed considerable acceptance by their various publics have been those where the chief executive officers understand the dynamics of public relations. He does not only accord public relations its rightful place in the organisation, he goes further to show the way by supporting innovative and far-sighted ideas which are only accepted based on merit. In other words, a certain degree of full participation and democratisation is allowed for all public relations campaigns within the organisation. The CEO is the person to make public relations work in any given organisation since he directs what is to be done. Image-making has to do with the entire spectrum of an organisation's communication mechanism which is best articulated and executed under the direct supervision of the CEO. In any organisation where this sensitive and crucial function is passed to other executives, things rarely get done as the other executives would still need to get clearance from the CEO and the board. Oftentimes, these approving bodies may not agree with the suggested campaign programmes and so much time is lost such that when concessions are finally made, it is too late to carry on. As Sam Black puts it: "Who could be better

than the Chairman (Chief Executive) himself to explain the company's policy to the press, radio and television, or to the stockholders and others likely to be interested?"

While the upcoming public relations executives would readily submit to this trend of allowing the CEO to lead the way, many of the old hands in the profession can hardly agree to such an arrangement. The latter approach is the surest way to be marginalised and become totally irrelevant to the organisation. However, there is a danger in whichever choice is made – if the CEO directs public relations activities with public relations reporting directly to him, other executives who are probably more senior would wish to curtail this unlimited access to the CEO to check a possible erosion of their powers! On the other hand, an indirect or outright control of the image-making machinery by a non-CEO would result in confused and generally weak public relations campaigns. In the end, both public relations executive and the management of the organisation would be the worse for it. All said, the CEO is the preferred person to be entrusted with such a responsibility provided he recognises his limitations and holds professionalism and quality counselling as crucial to successful image-making programme.

Again, one may wonder what would happen if a particular CEO is anti-public relations in terms of his carriage, belief and priorities. In modern business concerns, such CEOs are hard to come by, but many of them abound in government, quasi-government and one-man or one-family business.

Modern business exhibits competition, dynamism, creative product packaging and aggressive marketing strategies which can only be boosted by well-conceived public relations programmes. This is to be expected as the overriding factor in business is profit through good services to the customers.

Until recently, the business of running government was seen as a detached and impersonal affair that is self-sustaining and therefore need not be bothered about any conscious effort to solicit approval and support from those whom the policies and

programmes directly affect. Perhaps this is why the colonial feeling of "they-against-us" has persisted. This is why we have such vocabularies as "government work", "government property" and a general distancing attitude to issues people would normally have warmed up to. In other words, public relations has been largely neglected in the business of running a people's government in Nigeria.

One of the identifiable problems with the PR setups in the private sector is a situation in which the CEO and indeed the entire management see the PR personnel as errand boys to arrange parties, passages and such lowly jobs which do not require any skills. It is, therefore, not a surprise to find "a knowledgeable" person among many nitwits who are nevertheless 'excellent' in the perceived function assigned them by the employers. When this happens, two things may likely emerge, the star among the dregs is loaded with too much work to the extent that he achieves less spectacular success as he gets completely immersed in the pool of ignorance and inefficiency around him and fails today. How does one explain a CEO engaging a non-public relations practitioner to perform the duties of the man he has hired and he is paying so well?

The fundamental assumption of this essay is that CEOs would necessarily be competent, creative, innovative, dynamic and willing to experiment change. Such CEOs are therefore goal-oriented (sense of mission), clear-headed, humble, good trainers, talent hunters, good personality and a good leader of men through exemplary leadership and team spirit. Whenever such CEOs as fit the above description exist, the organisation is bound to make progress. The multinational conglomerates – oil companies, banking industry and the private sectors of Nigeria's economy are good examples of where PR and image-making have been allowed to function properly with all the logistic backup and management support. Undoubtedly, while the CEOs have made it possible in the private sector, the same cannot be said in government organisations where image-making is looked at with

suspicion, where practitioners are victims of petty jealousy and outright victimisation. It is claimed that too much visibility is not good for a government organ not to talk of the operatives. Given the current political, economic and social reforms government is carrying out, extensive and well-packaged public relations programme is the only way out. How would people give SAP, self-reliance, mass mobilisation, population control and other government programmes a chance if these programmes are not properly presented to them? Many of the new agencies have, no doubt, excelled in their PR activities, but this has to be complemented by others so that a well-rounded positive image of the government sector can evolve over time. Perhaps public relations practices have to be indigenised to fit out the circumstances. In other words, concerted efforts should be made to use acceptable communication strategies that would be understood by the target publics. This is why the CEOs need competent hands to package and deliver the goods for positive image-making.

APPENDIX VII

The Limits of Public Relations*

Olatunde Akande

Despite the vast media network available to President Ibrahim Babangida and Lagos State Governor, Sir Michael Otedola, they still suffer crisis of confidence and bad press. The one, because of many failed promises to return government to democratically elected representatives of the people, the other because of alleged failure to fulfill election promises.

The President, in spite of repeated assurances at many occasions that he does not harbour a 'hidden agenda', for which he has been so furiously accused, does not come across to many as credible. The media, especially the independent ones, continue to put out information which points to the contrary. Rather than believe their President, the figure that ought to inspire confidence in the people as the holder of the corporate conscience of the nation, the people choose to believe the independent media. The integrity of the President received an unfortunate and most damaging flail recently when a joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives, the nation's highest lawmaking bodies, berated him for his economic policies and warned him to keep to his promise of handing over power on August 27 or face chaos.

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That, to the discerning mind, is the high point of doubt. It has surpassed the simple question of doubt by common people who may be assumed to be uninformed. The doubt has got to the level of the most articulate segment of the society.

For Sir Michael Otedola, democratically-elected Governor barely a year ago (1992), few people will give him a pass mark in his governance of Lagos State. The wide gulf between the election promises of the Governor and the realities are so visible to the citizenry. In so many actions, Sir Michael Otedola has betrayed his well-crafted campaign line: *that Lagos may now excel*. How would Lagos excel when heaps of garbage now compete with motorists and pedestrians on its roads? How would it excel when potable water is a rarity in a state surrounded by water?

Recently, a magazine published a full page photograph of the Governor, at a public function, sleeping! 'The photograph was humorously captioned. I took the photograph to a postgraduate PR class for the students' opinion on how they would manage the problem if they were the Governor's image-maker. Their reactions were as foolish and as reflective of the misconceptions of most government officials on image management. One of them said he was going to ban the magazine from further coverage of government activities. I told them that the only thing to do is to get the Governor to stop sleeping at public functions. Unfortunately, this is the attitude of government officials on public reactions, especially publicity. The reporter must see it only as the government sees it, the people must be fed on lies, even in glaring cases of non-performance.

Why has all the press apparatus of both executives failed to put them in good light with the people? This image gap in the personality of the two characters results from the traditional conception of most Nigerian governments to information exchange and the limitations of the public relations. Sir Michael, in fact went a little more adventurous in his search for good image among the people of his state. A while ago, he blazed the trail in government public image organisation, at least openly by

recruiting the services of a private public relations firm. Now, more than one year after, the condition of the image of the governor and his government has nosed-dived.

Sir Michael Otedola, like the President, has an answer for why the people who put him in power, now talk so disparagingly of him. He says he is not surprised that the people of his state are demanding more action from him, having been ruled by a military regime immediately before his own government. According to the Governor, a democratic government cannot move with the speed of the military, because it needs many consultations to do to maintain a balance among competing interests. Of course, the Governor did not fail to blame his "detractors" – that illusory tribe that has haunted every Nigerian government since independence. For the President, the blame is squarely on Nigerians who have a propensity to doubt their leaders. So their President, as he told a television interviewer recently, did not expect Nigerians to trust him, even as far back as August 27, 1985, when he seized power. The President also blamed a community of detractors who refused to see the good in the few theories in democracy, which he wanted to teach to the politicians before he left power.

We must allow our leaders to make apologies for their failures. But we must also assure ourselves that we can see beyond their smokescreen. President Babangida and Governor Otedola have failed in the management of their images because they have not passed the litmus test of public relations.

Public relations is performance and recognition; it thrives best in an atmosphere of free exchange of ideas. It takes its root from the basic principles of human freedom and, therefore, relies so heavily on truth, reason and willing acquiescence. It fails when there is deception, and succeeds when truth is its only raw material.

APPENDIX VIII

NIPR Code of Professional Practice Byelaw No. 1 of 1992*

The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations Practitioners Decree No. 16 of 1990 empowers the council of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations to determine what standard of knowledge and skills are to be attained by public relations practitioners. For high standards of practice, the institute must, from time to time, update its code of professional conduct. The decree empowers the council to make byelaws and other rules not inconsistent with this decree as to acts which constitute professional misconduct.

In pursuance of the provision of the decree, the council of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations hereby makes the following byelaws to be known as "The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations Code of Professional Conduct Byelaws. No. 1 of 1992."

1. Conduct Towards the Practice of Public Relations

A member shall

- 1.1 Have a positive duty to observe the highest standards in the practice of public relations, and to deal fairly and honestly

Adopted by Order of Council 21st January, 1992

with employers and clients (past and present), fellow members and professionals, the public relations profession, other professions, suppliers, intermediaries, the media of communications, employees and above all, the public.

- 1.2 Be aware of, understand and observe this code, any amendment to it, and any other codes which shall be incorporated into it, remain up to date with the content and recommendations of any guidance or practice papers issued by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations, and have a duty to conform to good practices expressed in such guidance or practice papers.
- 1.3 Uphold this code and cooperate with fellow members to enforce decisions on any matter arising from its application. A member who knowingly causes or allows his or her staff to act in a manner inconsistent with this code is party to such action and shall be deemed to be in a breach of this code. Staff employed by a member who act in a manner inconsistent with this code should be disciplined by the member.
- 1.4 All disputes within the institute must be resolved through the internal machinery of the institute – namely, the State Chapter Executive Committees, the Investigating Panel and the Tribunal.

A member shall not

- 1.5 Engage in any practice nor be seen to conduct him or herself in any manner detrimental to the reputation of the institute or the reputation and interest of the public relations profession.
- 1.6 Issue unauthorised statement about the institute to the media except the statement is authorised by the president
- 1.7 Circulate or disclose the content of any of the council's minutes of meetings without the approval of the council, the president or vice president.

- 1.8 Bring the institute, its officers or members to public ridicule.
- 1.9 Damage the professional reputation of the institute, the officers of the institute or its members.

2. Conduct Towards the Public, the Media and other Professionals

A member shall

- 2.1 Conduct his or her professional activities with proper regard to the public interest.
- 2.2 Have a positive duty at all times to respect the truth and shall not disseminate false or misleading information knowingly or recklessly, and take proper care to check all information to its dissemination.
- 2.3 When working in association with other professionals, identify and respect the codes of those professions.
- 2.4 Respect any statutory or regulatory codes laid down by any other authorities which are relevant to the actions of his or her employer or client, or taken on behalf of an employer or client.
- 2.5 Honour confidences received or given in the course of professional activity.
- 2.6 Neither offer nor give, or cause an employer or client to give any inducement to holders of public office or members of any statutory body or organisation who are not directors, executives or retained consultants, with intent to further the interests of the employer or client, if such action is inconsistent with the public interest.

3. Conduct Towards Employers and Clients

A member shall

- 3.1 Safeguard the confidences of both present and former

employers or client; shall not disclose or use these confidences to the disadvantage or prejudice of such employers or clients, or to the financial advantage of the member (unless the employer or client has released such information for public use or has given specific permission for disclosure), except upon the order of a court of law.

- 3.2 Be free to accept fee, commissions or other valuable considerations from persons other than an employer or client, if such considerations are disclosed to the employer or client.
- 3.3 Be free to negotiate or renegotiate with an employer or client terms that are a fair reflection of demands of the work involved and take into account factors other than hours worked and the experience involved. These factors which are also applied by other professional advisers shall have regard to all the circumstances of the specific situation and in particular to:
 - (a) the complexity of the issue, case, problem or assignment, and the difficulties associated with its completion.
 - (b) the professional or specialised skills required and the degree of responsibility involved.
 - (c) the amount of documentation necessary to be perused or prepared and its importance.
 - (d) the place and circumstances where the work is carried out in whole or in part.
 - (e) the scope, scale and value of the task and its importance as an activity issue or project to the employer or client.
- 3.4 Charge fees when a client calls for proposals for an assignment but the member was not retained to execute the proposal.

A member shall not

- 3.5 Misuse information regarding his or her employer's or client's business for financial or other gain.
- 3.6 Serve an employer or client under terms or conditions which might impair his or her independence, objectivity or integrity.
- 3.7 Represent conflicting interests but may request competing interest with the express consent of the parties concerned.
- 3.8 Guarantee the achievement of results which are beyond the member's direct capacity to achieve or prevent.

4. Conduct Towards Colleagues*A member shall*

- 4.1 Adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth, avoiding extravagant claims or unfair comparisons and giving credit for ideas and words borrowed from others.
- 4.2 Be free to represent his or her capabilities and service to any potential employer or client either on his or her own initiative, or at the behest of any client, provided in so doing he or she does not seek to break any existing contract or detract from the reputation or capabilities of any member already serving the employer or client.

A member shall not

- 4.3 Injure the professional reputation or practice of another member.

5. Interpreting the Code

- 5.1 In the interpretation of this code, the decisions of the Investigating Panel and Disciplinary Tribunal set up by the institute shall be final. A breach of the Code of Professional

Conduct Byelaws should be reported in writing to the chairman of the Investigating Panel of the institute. The panel and disciplinary tribunal will carry out their functions as provided by Decree 16 of 1990.

A breach of the code will earn reprimand, suspension or expulsion from the institute.

APPENDIX IX

Grading of Headships of Professional Units (Public Relations)

PSRU/C-16.1.17.4/11/43

Federal Civil Service Commission,
Management Services and Training Department,
Federal Secretariat, Phase II,
Ikoyi – Lagos.

26 July, 1990

The Principal Secretary to the President,
The Inspector-General of Police,
The Secretary to the Federal Military Government,
The Honourable Ministers,
All Chief Executives of Extra-Ministerial Departments,

**GRADING OF THE HEADSHIPS OF PROFESSIONAL UNITS
(LEGAL, INFORMATION, ENGINEERING AND ALLIED
PROFESSIONS, INTERNAL AUDIT etc) IN MINISTERIAL AND
EXTRA-MINISTERIAL DEPARTMENTS ARISING FROM THE
ABOLITION OF THE FORMER POOL SYSTEM FOR SOME
CADRES UNDER THE CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS**

Further to my circular Ref: No: PSRU/C-16.1.17/198 of 20th September, 1989 on the above-mentioned subject, I wish to inform you that following the outcome of the job-evaluation exercise recently carried out by this office on the grading of the headships

of all the professional units located in ministries/extra-ministerial departments outside their erstwhile parent ministries/extra-ministerial departments arising from the new Civil Service Reforms, the Federal Civil Service Commission has approved as follows:

(a) Legal Unit

The post of the head of the Legal Unit in every ministry/extra-ministerial department should be placed on Salary Grade Level 16 and is designated *Legal Adviser*. He/She should be assisted by two to three other professional officers, the actual number being determined by each ministry/extra-ministerial department based in the volume of work.

(b) Public Relations Unit

The post of the head of the Public Relations Unit in every ministry/extra-ministerial department should be placed in salary grade level 15 and be designated *Assistant Director (Public Relations)*. He/she should be assisted by 2 to 3 other professional officers, the actual number being determined by each Ministry/extra-ministerial department based on the volume of work. The job description of the post is, as in Annex 1 to this circular.

(c) Internal Audit Unit

The post of the head of the Internal Audit Unit in every ministry/extra-ministerial department should be placed on salary grade level 15 and be designated *Assistant Director (Internal Audit)*. He/She should be assisted by 2 – 3 professional officers, the actual number being determined by the management based on the volume of work.

(d) The Engineering Unit

The staff of the Engineering Unit, namely, engineers, surveyors, architects, technicians, etc from the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing who are deployed to carry out maintenance and repairs works in government buildings and structures in locations

outside the ministry's headquarters should continue to enjoy their career prospects like their counterparts in the headquarters. If, however, in the future, any large ministries/extra-ministerial departments specifically require the service of these range of staff to be employed directly to work with them, such ministries/extra-ministerial departments are free to make their requests known to the government for consideration.

(e) The Library Unit

The Library unit has been accommodated as a section under the Records Branch, Research and Statistics Division of the Planning, Research, and Statistics Department. It should be headed by a Chief Librarian who should, like other professional officers in the department, be able to rise up to the post of Director, salary grade 1 to 17.

2. I wish to advise that the Legal Advisers still being catered for by the Federal Ministry of Justice and the Information Officers/Press Officers by the Federal Ministry of Information who have not complied with Section 111 Subsections 1 to 6 of the Schedule of the Civil Service (Re-organisation) Decree No. 43 of 1988 on the abolition of the former pool system should do so without further action.
3. It should be pointed out that the filling of the vacancies created as a result of the exercise dealt with in this circular should not be automatic. All the new positions in the various units should be filled through the normal promotion processes and by advertisement, in conformity with the spirit of the new civil service reforms.

SGN

Ason Bur,

Director-General (OMS&TD)

For: Chairman, Federal Civil Service Commission.

Annex 1

Job Description for the Post of Assistant Director (Public Relations)

Under the general direction of the Minister/Chief Executive

- (a) Functions as managerial head of the unit by:
- being responsible for supervision of staff in the unit;
 - assisting in staff training and staff welfare of the unit;
 - assisting in appointment, promotion and discipline of the staff of the unit;
 - preparing the annual budget for the unit;
 - attending departmental meeting;
 - holding regular meetings with the other staff members of the unit;
- (b) Formulating and articulating a dynamic strategy for achieving effective press and public relations functions of the ministry;
- (c) Overall responsibility for projecting the programmes, policies, plans and activities of the ministry through press releases and statements, press conferences, feature articles, pamphlets, brochures, posters, films and photos, journals and public lectures;
- (d) Monitoring of all shades of public opinion and reactions to the ministry's extra-ministerial department's plans, policies, projects and achievements by compiling summaries on daily basis, of all press comments in the news media about the ministry/extra-ministerial department and ensuring that clippings are cut and preserved as future reference materials;
- (e) Issuing rejoinders, where the need arises, on any adverse

- publications on the activities of the ministry/extra-ministerial department and answering press enquiries;
- (f) Organising and covering familiarisation tours and facility visits;
 - (g) Carrying out a post-campaign evaluation of the enlightenment programmes;
 - (h) Inserting in the mass media, all advertisements, jingles and announcements, for the ministry/extra-ministerial department;
 - (i) Installing and maintaining complaints and suggestion boxes; and
 - (j) Liaising with the Federal Ministry of Information and related government agencies.