

Public relations (PR) officer: job description

What does a public relations officer do? Typical employers | Qualifications and training | Key skills

Public relations account executives are responsible for handling all aspects of planned publicity campaigns and PR activities.

Other tasks include:

- planning publicity strategies and campaigns
- writing and producing presentations and press releases
- dealing with enquiries from the public, the press, and related organisations
- organising and attending promotional events such as press conferences, open days, exhibitions, tours and visits
- speaking publicly at interviews, press conferences and presentations
- providing clients with information about new promotional opportunities and current PR campaigns progress
- analysing media coverage
- commissioning or undertaking relevant market research
- liaising with clients, managerial and journalistic staff about budgets, timescales and objectives

Depending on the employer, PR officers may also be required to carry out other, more general, marketing responsibilities. This can involve working on websites and social media and writing and/or producing presentations, reports, articles, leaflets, journals and brochures for both external and internal distribution.

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Typical employers of public relations officers

- Advertising or marketing agencies
- Consultancies
- Commercial and industrial organisations
- Private companies
- Retailers
- Manufacturers
- Charities
- Government organisations

Vacancies are advertised by careers services, specialist recruitment agencies and in national newspapers and trade publications including *Press Gazette* and *PR Week*. The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) publishes lists of voluntary placements and salaried graduate training schemes.

Many graduates enter the profession at a junior level or move into PR following a marketing, journalism or advertising career. Networking and speculative applications can also be useful techniques for finding opportunities, for which a portfolio of written work may be useful for highlighting relevant abilities.

Qualifications and training required

There are routes into PR for both university graduates and school leavers.

A degree in any subject is acceptable, although English, management, business or media studies, marketing or behavioural sciences may be preferred by some employers. A PR postgraduate qualification can also be helpful.

Work experience gained within the PR, marketing, fundraising, events promotion, or journalism trades may also be beneficial in your applications.

To find out how to get into PR via a school leaver route, visit the [PR section](#) and [media section of TARGETcareers](#), our website aimed at school leavers.

Key skills for public relations officers

- Excellent communication skills both orally and in writing
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Good IT skills
- Presentation skills
- Initiative
- Ability to prioritise and plan effectively
- Awareness of different media agendas
- Creativity

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