

Tackling the Undervaluing of Public Relations

By Virgil Scudder

One thing that has often struck me in my 30-plus years as a public relations professional is how many PR pros fail to market their work. I've seen it in agencies, in the corporate world, and in non-profits.

As a result, PR is often undervalued by top management.

Reports to superiors should be concise, matter-of-fact, full of information, and provided on a regular basis. No bragging, back patting, or finger pointing. Just the facts.

What facts?

Lead with an update on current projects: goals, progress to date, what's ahead. Just an overview. If your management likes more details, put them in an attachment. Include statistics and comments. Break it down: mainstream media successes, social media, industry, internal, etc.

Follow with future plans and projects. Again, just a summary that includes strategic objectives, tactics, starting points and end points and, where appropriate, budgets.

Suggest activities and developments in the organization that can be exploited for favorable impressions on various constituencies.

And, finally, give a brief overview of external developments that might require a future response or provide an opportunity.

This kind of regular reporting will help convince management that your department or agency is valuable to the organization and deserves full support.