Public Relation is the management of communication and relationships between an organization and its publics. It is also the selling of ideas, policies, products and services through often uncontrolled media and two-way communication that complement or replace the controlled media and often one-way communication of advertising.

– Doorley and García

This definition is built on the seminal, 10-word definition by Grunig and Hunt—“the management of communication between an organization and its publics.”

Corporate and organizational communication: The centralized management of communication on behalf of the organization; the function is a critical contributor to an organization’s reputation—and thereby its competitiveness, productivity, and financial success. It is a subset of public relations.

– Doorley and García

This book on public relations and corporate and organizational communication is grounded on the simple premise that everything communicators do should be respectful of, if not geared toward, the long-term interests of the organization. Organizations that manage their reputations well benefit not just in so-called soft, feel-good ways, but in quantifiable, bottom-line ways as well. Organizations that ignore the reputational effects of their actions pay the consequences over the long term, as the rash of business scandals since 2002 has shown. And the consequences range from soft, embarrassing ones to dissolution of the organization.

This book is unique because:

• It covers each of the major disciplines in the field of corporate and organizational communication, bridging real-world practice with communication theory and history.
• It covers the field from the perspective of reputation management, and provides a new framework for managing reputation into the future.
• Each chapter was written by someone who has practiced the craft successfully at a high level.
• The authors cite personal experiences, including both successes and failures.
• Each of the chapters includes some history and theory, real-world, how-to information, and the perspective of a practitioner other than the chapter’s author. Each chapter concludes with best practices, resources for further study, and questions for further discussion.
It is our hope that this book will help advance the practice of public relations and corporate and organizational communication by helping practitioners and students become more knowledgeable about the history, theory, and practice of their craft. Ours is not a primer—for example, we do not show readers how to write a press release. Our book presumes a basic knowledge of communication theory and practice appropriate to professional communicators, executives, and students at the advanced undergraduate or graduate levels. There are good basic public relations and communication texts on the market. What we have tried to produce is a how-to book, based on solid academic principles and written by leaders from the communication professions—a book that addresses communication problems and opportunities in a thoughtful, thoroughgoing, practical way.

This book is a team project. John and Fred have collaborated on the entire book, and have shared responsibility for drafting individual chapters. John has taken the lead in drafting the chapters on “Reputation Management,” “Media Relations,” and “Community Relations,” and has done much of the liaison and editing work with outside authors. Fred has taken the lead in drafting the chapters on “Communication Ethics,” “Investor Relations,” “Issues Management,” “Crisis Management,” and “Challenges and Opportunities.” John wrote the proposal for the book and secured the agreement with the publisher.

We have also sought the help of several prominent practitioners whose perspectives and experiences complement ours. These contributions come in two forms: authorship or co-authorship of individual chapters, and contributions of sidebars or case studies within chapters.

To keep clear who wrote what, the chapters written by John and Fred have no author attribution at the beginning of the chapter; each chapter written by a contributor begins with the contributor’s byline.

ILLUSTRATIONS

When we were working on the first edition, we thought it would be nice to retain a student, and, long story short, we found Julie Osborn, a graduate student in the Center for Advanced Digital Applications Program in New York University’s School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Lucky us! Julie’s work, though Jules Pfeiffer-like, is original, sometimes humorous, always engaging. Since our first edition was published in 2007, Julie has earned her graduate degree and landed a job with George Lukas (the StarWars Lukas). Lucky George! It was Julie who conceived Mr. ProCom and Ms. ProCom. But then the question became: which person to use with which chapter? Being quite the serious professional communicators ourselves, we pondered the media relations challenges, the looming issues to manage. Should we prepare a crisis communication contingency plan? In the end, we decided to have Ms. ProCom adorn the cover of each of the 14 chapters of the first edition and all 15 of this edition. Why? Perhaps because we have a few more male contributors in our book than female; perhaps because women communicators now have a population edge in the
PR profession, or perhaps because Fred and John found Ms. ProCom to be better company. In any case, we show them working together here—teamwork, it is called, which entails picking each other up every now and then. And if any of this is upsetting to anyone anywhere—well, we simply have no comment!

**STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK**

Chapter 1 includes “The Ten Precepts of Reputation Management,” with the tenth stipulating that reputation should be managed like any other asset—that is, in a strategic way. The rest of the chapter includes a new, copyrighted framework for implementing comprehensive reputation management. It is remarkable, but very few organizations approach reputation management in a comprehensive way, as they would any other asset; in fact, most organizations do not know what their reputations are worth. Corporate communication professionals should make it their business to understand the value of reputation, and ways to support, enhance, and measure it. Chapter 1 also includes a discussion of the Pushmi-Pullyu syndrome, whose schizophrenic tug has been felt by every communication professional.

Chapter 2 focuses on ethics. The subject is up front in the book, right where it belongs. The ethical practice of communication is neither an oxymoron nor an afterthought, but should be an integral part of practicing the craft. And it has a tangible effect on reputation. Failure to keep ethical issues always in mind can cause predictable, negative consequences. At New York University’s Center for Marketing, whose students are working professionals, Fred used to teach communication ethics in the fall semester and crisis communication in the spring semester. Students invariably wanted to discuss the same case studies in both semesters; they noticed a meaningful overlap in companies with ethical challenges and crises. That led some students to note: “Better pay attention during fall or you’ll be quite busy in the spring.” This chapter includes general principles of communication ethics, the normative standards of behavior embodied in the codes of ethics of major professional organizations, accounts of recent scandals in communication ethics, and two historical sidebars showing that such ethical issues have been part of professional communication for many, many years.

Chapters 3–13 are organized according to the corporate and organizational communication disciplines (for example, media relations, organizational communication, and government relations), or around issues or functions that protect reputation (such as corporate responsibility, issues management, and crisis communication).

Chapter 14 is a new chapter on Public Relations Consulting. We are honored to have Lou Capozzi as the author of this chapter, and the reader will quickly appreciate why we say that. Each of the first 14 chapters begins with a true anecdote that reflects the essence of the chapter.

Chapter 15 looks ahead, and frames criteria for the successful practice of public relations and corporate and organizational communication in the future. It also
describes ways to enhance the credibility of the communication function among senior leaders. It provides a framework for thinking strategically about the impact of communication, and on assuring that all the organizational communication functions are aligned not only with each other but also with the bigger enterprise.

We hope that students and professional communicators will find the personal, anecdotal approach an interesting and informative complement to other books in the field, most of which take a third-person, definitional approach. This book should also be helpful to people—from managers to CEOs—who supervise or work with professional communicators. Communication is not rocket science, but it is not easy either, and it can make or break an organization, perhaps faster than any other function.

Today, those who communicate on behalf of institutions have greater power than ever before, because communication media are both more powerful and more widespread than ever. And professional communicators are under greater pressure to use their power in the right and responsible way to meet the pressing requirements of laws and regulations, corporate and organizational governance, and a more vigilant society. Paradoxically, pressures to compromise the forthrightness standard are also becoming greater in this increasingly competitive and fast-paced world.

In order for organizations to build solid, sustainable reputations and avoid the kinds of scandals that have recently affected so many of them, organizational communication, like organizational performance, must be proficient and ethical, because communication and performance are major components of reputation. An organization must speak with all its constituencies with one voice that is highly trained and true. It is our hope that those with a stake in corporate and organizational communication, as well as students and aspiring communicators, will find in this book sound, ethical communication principles and practices that they can believe in and adhere to over the long term.

**YOU SAY COMMUNICATIONS ... WE SAY COMMUNICATION**

This is a stylistic point, of course, but some logic can be brought to the discussion. Most academics label their disciplines and their courses as singular. They are professors of communication, and they teach organizational communication, intercultural communication, and so on. On the other hand, practitioners most often use the plural, and they work in departments of corporate communications, employee communications, and so on. We’re afraid the academics have it. Communication covers the entire spectrum. It is a discipline, like art or language, and is therefore singular. And to label it and think of it as singular is to help elevate what is too often perceived as tactical—for example, issuing press releases and publishing newsletters. Most unabridged dictionaries make only a few exceptions to the use of
communication as singular. They refer to the various means of sending messages as plural, so that radio, television, telephones, and the Internet are communications media. And they refer to multiple messages as communications. In the 1980s, when Fred headed “communications” for a large investment bank, he was often approached by bankers who wanted to add a phone extension or install a computer. “Communications” sounds like the phone company.

This book will go with logic, and the unabridged dictionaries, and use communication. We will use the plural only in referring to the media, and to the titles of practitioners and the names of their departments, because that is how practitioners usually refer to themselves. Everywhere else, it will be communication.

John Doorley and Helio Fred Garcia