



10 Reasons Why P.R. Efforts May Not Work

Every day, someone tells me he or she has been “burned” by P.R. people. I’m out to change that by providing access to those P.R. agencies that will lay the right foundation for a great relationship and by educating the public (and P.R. people as well) on ways to make the process better.

Here are the top 10 reasons why P.R. may not work:

1. **The public doesn't understand the publicity process.** P.R. folks need to better educate people about how publicity works. The first thing many clients ask is "Can you get me on Oprah or the front page of the Wall Street Journal?" The answer might be “yes” – but the process to get to the “yes” may take months or years, and may first include a series of smaller placements, flexibility on the part of the client, and more.
2. **The scope of work is not detailed and agreed upon by both parties.** Typical example: Client signs an agreement to spend \$3,000 per month. Client expects to get 3 publicity placements per month. P.R. person expects to work 20 hours, regardless of the outcome. The inevitable disconnect leads to customer frustration and the feeling of being "burned".
3. **The client has not been properly trained on how to communicate with the media.** Proper training for interviews is crucial; otherwise, key messages can be misconstrued, and even negative stories can result.

4. **The client and the P.R. person or firm are not a good match.** Example: Client hears about a local P.R. person, meets and likes the P.R. person, and figures it's a good match. Or the client chooses the lowest price P.R. option. And the P.R. person, instead of referring the client to another practitioner who is a better fit, decides to take on the client – and the money.
5. **The client has not gotten results quickly enough and ends the relationship too soon.** We tell clients that unless they plan on conducting a campaign for a minimum of six months, we cannot work with them. And even that is a stretch. A year should really be the bare minimum to commit to P.R. The media works on its own timetable, which is usually much longer than ours.
6. **P.R. people don't explain the kind of publicity placements a client will most likely receive.** Every client wants a big profile of the company on the cover of a major magazine or newspaper. But if you look at the numbers, most stories include quotes from experts, stories about several companies tying into a trend, or hard news. Profiles are few and far between. Yet, instead of explaining this, P.R. people often tell potential clients what they want to hear, in order to get the business.
7. **Clients don't realize that what happens after you get the publicity coverage is sometimes more important than the actual placement.** My smartest client didn't care if he got a quote or a profile -- he just wanted to be included in major media. When it was time to get an agent and publisher for his book, he handed them a list of all his media placements, which clinched the deal. The agent and publisher figured that if all of the major media was willing to include him as a source, then he must have something important to say.
8. **Clients refuse to be flexible on their story angles.** One of my clients said to me, "We only want profiles." When the media wasn't interested, they refused to consider other story angles that the media was interested in. Now I make sure clients are willing to have us pitch 3 or 4 angles.

9. **Clients get upset when the media coverage is not 100% accurate, or they don't like the way the story came out.** One of my former clients said, "That TV segment on me was only a minute long." When I explained that length of time was impressive in TV Land, she refused to understand.

10. **Clients won't change their schedules for the media.** I tell all of my clients to drop everything if the media calls. I know it may be inconvenient, but the media waits for no one. If you want to be a "media darling," then you need to make yourself available at any time. Those who do will reap the best benefits and placements.

Want to find the right P.R. match for your business? Visit <http://theprsite.com>

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