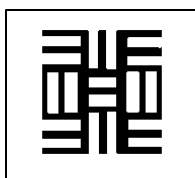
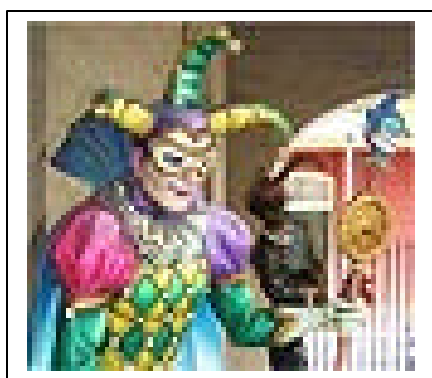


National Education Knowledge Industry Association



“Communicating Knowledge Use for a Change”

2006 NEKIA Communicators Institute
Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel
739 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70130
(504) 962-0500



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National Education Knowledge Industry Association

1718 Connecticut Avenue, NW Suite 700
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May 24, 2006

Dear NEKIA Communicators,

Welcome to the 2006 NEKIA Communicators Institute, “Communicating Knowledge Use for a Change”. For the fifth time since 2002, we will be convening some of the finest communicators in the education R&D arena to share ideas, examine critical issues, and advance the collective cause of our trade association.

We are pleased to be holding this year’s institute in New Orleans in conjunction with the Education Writers Association’s Annual Seminar. In selecting this venue, we wanted to support the recovery efforts in New Orleans as well as the fine work of EWA. Thanks to Max McConkey for suggesting such an appropriate place to hold our meeting.

You will see in this year’s agenda that we aim to begin the development of a new branding/communications strategy for the trade association. We would like to take full advantage of the collective wisdom of our group in this process. Our longtime communications consultant, Jay Diskey, will present a framework for developing the strategy in the opening session and then, in the morning of the second day, facilitate a work session. In between, we will have presentations and discussions on specific topics of relevance to the strategy. With our flexible, interactive format, there will be plenty of opportunity to share ideas and raise issues of immediate concern with your colleagues.

I would like to thank the members of the planning committee—Ann Kinder, Michelle Galley, Pat Hammer and John Waters—who provided great ideas and insights for this year’s gathering. We all look forward to a dynamic, entertaining, and productive time together.

Until then,

Jim Kohlmoos
President

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AGENDA

“Communicating Knowledge Use for a Change”
2006 NEKIA Communicators Institute
Agenda

Purpose

Develop a branding and communications strategy for knowledge use that the trade association and its members can use in individual and collective marketing, advocacy and recruitment efforts.

Objectives

- Gain better understanding of NEKIA’s knowledge use principles
- Develop key message points for communicating the principles to various audiences
- Develop strategies for imparting the message
- Share and examine effective approaches and practices

Wednesday, May 31st

All sessions of the Institute will be held in the “Toulouse A” meeting room, which is on the second floor mezzanine of the Astor Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Noon-1:30 p.m.	Working Lunch “Communicating Knowledge Use for a Change: Vision, Principles, and Our Task” Jim Kohlmoos and Jay Diskey
1:30-2:15	Presentation and Discussion “Building Your Brand” Ann Kinder
2:15-2:30	Break
2:30-2:45	Ideas that sizzle or fizzle
2:45-3:30	Presentation and Discussion “Using the Web for Communicating and Marketing” Michelle Galley
3:30-3:45	Break
3:45-4:00	Ideas that sizzle or fizzle
4:00-4:45	Panel Discussion “Managing and Structuring the Communications Function” Max McConkey and Ron Dietel

- 4:45-6:00** **Break**
- 6:00-8:00** **Working Dinner**
 “Media Relations and the Knowledge Use Concept”
 Sarah Sparks, Education Daily

Thursday, June 1st

- 8:00-9:00 a.m.** **Breakfast**
- 9:00-11:30** **Working Session**
 “Designing a Branding/Communications Strategy for Knowledge
 Use”
 Jay Diskey
- 11:30-Noon** **Closing, next steps, follow up**

Sarah Sparks

Sarah Sparks covers educational research and school innovation issues for *Education Daily* in Washington, D.C. She previously has worked for the *Waterbury Republican-American* in Connecticut and *The Times-Picayune* in New Orleans, and served internships for *The Wall Street Journal*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *New Orleans Magazine* and *Louisiana Life*. A Louisiana native, she now lives in Virginia.

Jay Diskey

Jay Diskey, a communications and public policy professional with extensive experience in the field of education, was recently named Executive Director of the School Division of the Association of American Publishers (AAP). A native of Fort Wayne, Indiana, Mr. Diskey holds a B.A. in philosophy and a master’s degree in journalism from Indiana University. Before joining AAP, he headed Diskey & Associates, his own public relations and public affairs consultancy specializing in policy areas of education and workforce development. Prior to that, he served as Communications Director for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and for Committee Chairman Congressman Bill Goodling (R-PA), and as Vice President of the education practice at Hager Sharp Inc., a Washington-based public relations firm. He was the communications planner and press aide to U.S. Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander, having been Alexander’s communications officer when he was President of the University of Tennessee. Mr. Diskey also has experience as a working journalist, at the Knoxville News-Sentinel and the Evansville Press.

PARTICIPANTS

INSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS

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NEKIA MEMBERS

NEKIA MEMBERS

Academy for Educational Development
Washington, DC

American Institutes for Research
Washington, DC

Center for Equity and Excellence in Education**
George Washington University
Washington, DC

Center for Policy Research in Education**
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA

Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing
UCLA, Los Angeles, CA

Center for Research in Human Development and Education**
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA

Center for Social Organization of Schools
The Johns Hopkins University
Baltimore, MD

CNAC's Education Center
The CNA Corporation
Alexandria, Virginia

The Collaborative for Teaching and Learning**
Louisville, KY

College of Continuing Education**
University of Oklahoma
Norman, Oklahoma

The Education Alliance**
Brown University
Providence, RI

Education Development Center
Newton, MA

Edvantia (formerly AEL)
Charleston, WV

International Council on Accreditation and School
Improvement
Decatur, GA

Learning Point Associates
Naperville, IL

Metro Center for Urban Education**
New York University
New York, NY

Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning
(McREL)
Aurora, CO

National Clearinghouse for Education Facilities**
Washington, DC

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL)
Portland, OR

Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL)
Honolulu, HI

PLATO Learning
Bloomington, MN

The Reading Recovery Council of North America**
Worthington, OH

RMC Research Corporation
Portsmouth, NH

SERRC**
Juneau, AK

SERVE
University of North Carolina
Greensboro, NC

Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL)
Austin, TX

WestEd
San Francisco, CA

WGBH Public Television
Boston, MA

**affiliate members

KNOWLEDGE USE MATERIALS

NEKIA Mission

NEKIA's mission is to advance the development and use of knowledge-based solutions to improve schools and help all students achieve. NEKIA believes that equity and excellence should be the foundation for improving teaching and learning, which must also be fully supported by the effective use of knowledge. The association's members are committed to creating new and better approaches to knowledge use to support education programs and policies at the federal, regional, state, tribal, and local levels.

NEKIA Principles

NEKIA's mission is supported by four core principles:

Useable Knowledge: Knowledge that is used to shape policy and practice should be derived from the best available empirical evidence, informed by sound professional judgment.

Key Stakeholders: The effective use of knowledge requires on-going collaboration among five stakeholder groups: educators, policymakers, researchers, developers and providers, and intermediaries.

- *Educators* should be involved in all phases of the knowledge development and utilization process.
- *Policymakers* need to develop the capacity to integrate knowledge about effective educational practice into the decision making apparatus.
- *Researchers* should focus on rigor, relevance, and replication in addressing practical questions of effectiveness.
- *Developers and Providers* should use the best available knowledge in developing and delivering their products and services.
- *Intermediaries* should facilitate productive collaborations and relationships among stakeholders, help interpret and disseminate findings, conduct applied research, and provide capacity-building assistance.

Cumulative Processes: Effective knowledge use depends upon exchanges of data and information among the stakeholders, and a continuous process of research, application and adaptation. As knowledge is used and adapted, new knowledge is created and applied in a cumulative, iterative fashion.

High Priority Policies: School improvement policies at the federal, state, and local levels should focus on the effective use of knowledge and create incentives to stimulate the demand for, and supply of, knowledge-based solutions.

Testimony submitted by:

**Carol Thomas, Chair
Board of Directors
National Education Knowledge Industry Association
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202/518-0847, www.nekia.org**

To

**The Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
March 31, 2006**

This testimony is submitted to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies by Carol Thomas as the 2006 Chair of the Board of Directors for the National Education Knowledge Industry Association (NEKIA) and the Executive Director of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL).

NEKIA appreciates the opportunity to present to the Subcommittee our appropriations proposal for FY 2007. As you may know, NEKIA is a non-profit, non-partisan trade association dedicated to expanding the use of research-based knowledge in policy and practice in K-12 education. We are a strong and dynamic community of highly successful education organizations and agencies, all of which are constantly looking for new and better ways to support high-quality education research, development, dissemination, technical assistance and evaluation at the federal, regional, state, tribal, and local levels.

Much of our collective work is focused on advancing knowledge use as a central organizing concept for school improvement and education reform. We firmly believe that the effective application, transfer and management of research-based knowledge can significantly enhance and accelerate the nationwide efforts to improve academic performance and close achievement gaps in k-12 education. Effective knowledge use also helps advance the national initiatives to transform education into an evidence-based field and enhance the proper implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act and the Education Sciences Reform Act.

Our notion of knowledge use is reflected in four principles that guide NEKIA's work:

Principle 1: Useable Knowledge. Knowledge that is used to shape policy and practice should be derived from the best available empirical evidence, informed by sound professional judgment.

Principle 2: Key Stakeholders. The effective use of knowledge requires on-going collaboration among five stakeholder groups: 1) *educators* should be involved in all phases of the knowledge development and utilization process, not just as recipients of

research, 2) *policymakers* need to develop the capacity to integrate knowledge into the decision making apparatus, 3) *researchers* should focus on rigor, relevance, and replication in addressing practical questions of effectiveness based on the needs of educators and policy makers, 4) *developers and providers* should use the best available knowledge in developing and delivering their products and services, and 5) *intermediaries* are needed to facilitate productive collaborations and relationships among stakeholders, help interpret and disseminate findings, conduct applied research, and provide capacity-building assistance.

Principle 3: Cumulative Processes. Effective knowledge use depends upon exchanges of data and information among the stakeholders, and a continuous process of research, application and adaptation. As knowledge is used and adapted, new knowledge is created and applied in a cumulative, iterative fashion.

Principle 4: High-Priority Policies. School improvement policies at the federal, state, and local levels should focus on the effective use of knowledge and create incentives to stimulate the demand for, and supply of, knowledge-based solutions.

These principles of effective knowledge use are manifest in many different ways and in wide varieties of locations across the country. One classic example is the knowledge-based assistance that the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) provided to a chronically low performing high school in Idaho. Over a five year period NWREL's R&D school improvement teams worked closely with Caldwell High School's faculty to translate research into effective interventions and address common instructional problems, including those related to reading and adolescent literacy. As a result, the high school has demonstrated substantial improvements in its school and classroom practices, resulting in dramatic and statistically significant growth in the reading achievement of ninth and tenth grade students. Seventy percent of the students are now proficient in reading, meeting the current benchmark for achieving adequate yearly progress.

Within this context of knowledge use, we have identified three serious national issues related to knowledge use that need to be urgently addressed. These issues include:

Increasing demand for knowledge-based solutions --- More than 24,000 U.S. public schools are not making adequate yearly progress and 10,000 schools are already designated in need of improvement under the No Child Left Behind Act. Many more schools are on the "cusp" and in need of additional support. To fulfill the promise of NCLB, much greater attention needs to be directed to delivering solutions to these schools in need.

Woefully inadequate federal investment in R&D --- While the No Child Left Behind Act clearly requires educators to use instructional practices and innovations supported by research, *the Department of Education spends less than one percent of its budget on research, development, and statistics.* Education is a \$745 billion industry representing an estimated 7.2 percent of the gross domestic product. However, only 0.03 percent is spent on research and development. That is only three cents for every hundred dollars spent on education. In comparison, other agency R&D budgets as a percentage of their discretionary spending are: Defense, 17 percent; NASA, 68 percent; Energy, 37 percent;

HHS, 42 percent; NSF, 74 percent; and Agriculture, 4.6 percent. *In other words, the Department of Education's research budget has been and remains among the smallest of any federal agency.* Without an increased investment in developing and testing research-based practices, schools and districts will continue to find it difficult to fulfill NCLB's mandate for using such practices.

Growing capacity crisis --- As stated in the recently released report by the non-partisan Center on Education Policy (CEP), there is a growing capacity crisis at the state and local levels to support schools in need of improvement. We agree with CEP's assessment that "...the Department and the Congress should (provide) more funding and ... other types of support to help strengthen states' and districts' capacity to assist schools identified for improvement. Many states and districts lack sufficient funds, staff, or expertise to help improve all identified schools..." .

Our appropriations proposal for FY 2007 thus calls for greater federal investments in what we refer to as knowledge use programs, i.e. those federal education programs that explicitly support knowledge use in school improvement or have a strong potential of doing so. We urge a stronger and more comprehensive federal effort to respond both to the greater demand for knowledge-based solutions and to the under-funded supply of well-tested practices and programs. Specifically we propose the following:

Fund the Comprehensive Assistance Centers at \$62 million, an increase of \$5 million over FY 2006.

The purpose of Title II of the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA) and specifically the newly reformed Comprehensive Centers program is to provide comprehensive technical assistance services to states, districts, tribes and schools in administering and implementing school reform efforts under No Child Left Behind. The focus of the Comprehensive Centers is to help schools and districts improve opportunities for all children to meet performance standards. This year 21 new centers are fully operational. Sixteen are regionally based and five are content based. The new centers encompass the scopes of work of the former Comprehensive Regional Assistance Centers, the Eisenhower Regional Mathematics and Science Consortia, and the Regional Technology in Education Consortia. *The Comprehensive Centers represent the link to state policymakers, and district and school leaders to implement research-based practices in local contexts.*

Fund the Comprehensive School Reform program at \$8 million for national activities, an increase of \$800,000 over FY 2006.

The Comprehensive School Reform program offers whole school reform models for the neediest schools. The Department's own PART evaluation indicates that this program works for turning around low performing schools. However, federal funding for the CSR state grants was eliminated last year. NEKIA seeks to preserve the national activities for the CSR models in order to continue the evaluation and dissemination of promising practices of these programs through the Quality Initiative projects and a national clearinghouse. *The CSR national activities serve as evaluation, dissemination and*

clearinghouse functions to ensure that low performing schools have access to scientifically based reform models that work.

Continue the investment in Improving Teacher Quality State Grants at \$2.9 billion for FY 2007.

The Improving Teacher Quality State Grants program provides funds to states and districts to meet their individual needs to build a strong education workforce. Programs to meet that end are based on scientifically based evidence. This program supports a variety of activities that are based on scientifically based evidence such as reforming the teacher/administrator certification or licensing requirements, teacher mentoring, alternative routes to certification, teacher recruitment and retention efforts, professional development and technical assistance to districts.

Research consistently shows that an effective teacher is the critical difference in student success.

Increase the investment in the Regional Education Laboratories (RELs) to \$79 million, a \$12 million increase from FY 2006.

The REL program has just completed the competition for new five year awards. Their scope of work has changed from the previous model, but they will continue to be the primary federal program that addresses the needs of educators and policy makers by turning research findings into programs that can be applied in local contexts. A 2000 Department of Education independent evaluation found that educators considered the labs among the most trusted institutions in the nation for research support and reported they were highly responsive to customers, that is, local educators. This commitment remains a key component of the REL mission. Regional governing boards—representing educators, parents, and businesses from each state of each lab region—will continue to advise the work of each lab. The labs have been level funded and subjected to across the board cuts for the past several years. The FY07 request reflects a cost of living adjustment from the FY2000 appropriation. *The Regional Educational Laboratories play a critical role in linking research to the needs of educators and policy makers by turning research findings into programs that can be applied in local contexts.*

Fund the Research, Development, and Dissemination account at \$179 million, an increase of \$16 million over FY 2006.

This account provides funds to support the Institute of Education Science's priority education research programs. This year, those priorities will include: reading and writing; mathematics and science education; teacher quality in reading and writing, and mathematics and science education; education leadership; education policy, finance, and systems; postdoctoral research training; interventions for struggling adolescent and adult readers; cognition and student learning; high school reform; and, postsecondary education. *Research and development programs at the Department of Education are less than one percent of the Department's funding.*

Fund the Smaller Learning Communities Program at \$ 93.5 million for FY 2007, level funding from last year.

This highly acclaimed program aims to increase the academic achievement in large high schools through the creation of smaller, more personalized learning environments. High schools enrolling more than 1,000 students can establish strategies, such as, small learning clusters, career academies, teacher-advisory mentoring, and other innovations designed to create more personalized instruction. *In spite of the President's proposal to eliminate this program, the smaller learning communities initiative has demonstrated promising results as part of much needed comprehensive changes in high school design.*

Support a line item for the National Research and Development Centers at \$27 million for FY2007, an increase of \$2.5 million.

The centers address enduring issues of national significance in education through sustained and focused research programs. They address specific topics such as early childhood development and learning, student learning and achievement, at-risk students, adult learning, and education policy. The research done by the R&D centers is used by regional labs to develop programs, strategies and assessment tools which in turn are adapted by technical assistance providers (including the Comprehensive Centers) to assist districts and schools. *The research centers have seen their funding halved over the past few years. We continue to seek an average of \$4 million per center that was the norm in FY 2004.*

Support the President's Request for \$200 million for the Title 1 School Improvement Fund

This use of Title 1 monies will fund school improvement activities for those schools and districts that have failed to meet AYP for at least two years. These grants to states will be primarily allocated to LEAs demonstrating the greatest need. The interventions will use scientifically based evidence to turn around low performing schools. *Schools in need of improvement need resources based on scientific evidence to implement school improvement plans, professional development, corrective actions and supplemental services.*

There are a number of additional federal programs that have a strong link to supporting effective knowledge use. We propose continued investments and support for these programs which include:

- Twenty-first Century Learning Centers
- Even Start
- Math Science Partnerships
- Parent Information Centers
- Reading First
- Special Education Research and Evaluation programs
- Statewide Data Systems
- Striving Readers
- Technology State Grants
- Title I formula grants

- Title V state innovation grants

We also support funding for the President's initiatives as outlined in this year's budget request: Math Now for Elementary and Middle Schools and a national Math Panel.

NEKIA has been very heartened by the continuing interest and support that Congress has shown in most of these knowledge use programs in the past. We are pleased that the President is demonstrating increased support for a number of these programs as well including, for the first time, support for the Regional Educational Laboratories. If we are to ensure even greater success for all our children, we must increase the federal investment in knowledge use efforts.

Thank you. We appreciate your consideration of our proposals.



For Release
June 28, 2005
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NEKIA Unveils New Principles for Knowledge Use in School Improvement

Principles support the launch of new era of improvement & innovation in education

WASHINGTON – The National Education Knowledge Industry Association (NEKIA) today unveiled a set of principles to guide the use of education knowledge in K-12 school improvement and to support the burgeoning education industry. The principles, which are unique in the field of education, are designed to boost the use of research-based knowledge in the classroom and create new collaborations between researchers, educators, and product developers.

“We believe that the effective use of knowledge should be a central organizing theme of school improvement policies and practices,” said NEKIA President Jim Kohlmoos. “It’s almost cliché to say that data and knowledge should shape policy and practice in education as they do in the fields of medicine and agriculture. Yet, one of the least understood concepts in education is the use of research-based knowledge in teaching and learning.”

In addition, given the heavy emphasis placed on scientifically based research by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the Education Sciences Reform Act, education knowledge is essential to sound policy and practice at all levels, Kohlmoos said.

To address this need, NEKIA over the past year conducted an extensive literature review and discussions with leading experts. The process demonstrated that current approaches to knowledge use in K-12 education are often hampered by a variety of conditions including:

- A serious disconnect among the research community, practitioners, developers, and policy makers.
- Inadequate capacity at the local and state levels to facilitate the effective use of knowledge in school improvement.
- A lack of cultural or institutional incentives to promote greater knowledge use.
- A lack of understanding of how knowledge can shape policy and practice.

In response to those impediments and flaws, NEKIA developed four principles upon which approaches to effective knowledge use should be based:

Principle 1: Useable Knowledge. Knowledge that is used to shape policy and practice should be derived from the best available empirical evidence, informed by sound professional judgment.

Principle 2: Key Stakeholders. The effective use of knowledge requires on-going collaboration among five stakeholder groups:

- **Educators** should be involved in all phases of the knowledge development and utilization process, not just as recipients of research.
- **Policymakers** need to develop the capacity to integrate knowledge into the decisionmaking apparatus.
- **Researchers** should focus on rigor, relevance, and replication in addressing practical questions of effectiveness based on the needs of educators and policy makers.
- **Developers and providers** should use the best available knowledge in developing and delivering their products and services.
- **Intermediaries** are needed to facilitate productive collaborations and relationships among stakeholders, help interpret and disseminate findings, conduct applied research, and provide capacity-building assistance.

Principle 3: Cumulative Processes. Effective knowledge use depends upon exchanges of data and information among the stakeholders, and a continuous process of research, application and adaptation. As knowledge is used and adapted, new knowledge is created and applied in a cumulative, iterative fashion.

Principle 4: High-Priority Policies. School improvement policies at the federal, state, and local levels should focus on the effective use of knowledge and create incentives to stimulate the demand for, and supply of, knowledge-based solutions.

NEKIA plans to continue its work in education knowledge use through policy development and communications activities such as interactive forums and publications.

“The nation is on the threshold of a new era of knowledge use in education, and NEKIA’s four principles will be instrumental in guiding us in this era,” said Chris Dwyer, chair of NEKIA’s board of directors and senior vice president of RMC Research. “This era will succeed as long as we have a robust knowledge marketplace with demand stimulated by increased federal investment and supply enhanced by a vigorous knowledge industry.”

###

About NEKIA:

Founded in 1997, NEKIA is a non-partisan, non-profit trade association representing the emerging knowledge industry. NEKIA’s mission is to advance the development and use of research-based knowledge for the improvement of all children. The association’s members are committed to finding new and better ways to support and expand high-quality education research, development, dissemination, technical assistance, and evaluation at the federal, regional, state, tribal, and local levels. For more information, please visit www.nekia.org

“A No Brainer? Knowledge Use as a Central Organizing Concept for School Improvement”

Amid the many ideas and initiatives that have emerged in K-12 school improvement over the past 30 years, perhaps one of the most self-evident, but least understood notions is the use of research-based knowledge in improving teaching and learning. Indeed it is now almost a cliché that data and knowledge can and should shape policy and practice in education as is done in other sectors like medicine and agriculture. It’s a no brainer. So what’s the problem?

Through an extensive literature review and a series of visioning discussions with leading experts during the past year, we at NEKIA have found that current approaches to knowledge use in K-12 education are frequently hampered by a number of impediments and flaws including:

- A serious disconnect among the research community, practitioners, developers and policy makers;
- Inadequate capacity at the local and state levels to facilitate the effective use of knowledge in school improvement
- A lack of cultural or institutional incentives to promote greater knowledge use.
- A lack of understanding of how knowledge can ultimately shape policy and practice

Clearly, in order to address the increasingly urgent demand for knowledge-based solutions to educational problems, new and better approaches to effective knowledge use are needed that can be sustained and expanded in significant ways over time. And, given the heavy emphasis placed on scientifically research by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA), education knowledge must be an essential factor in shaping policy and practice at all levels.

Consequently, it is our strong belief that effective knowledge use should be a central organizing theme of school improvement policies and practices across the country. Towards this end, NEKIA has developed four principles upon which approaches to effective knowledge use should be based.

1. **Useable Knowledge** --- Knowledge that is used to shape policy and practice should be derived from the best available empirical evidence and informed by sound professional judgment.
2. **Key Stakeholders** --- The effective use of knowledge in education requires the active participation of and the on-going collaboration among five key stakeholder groups:

- **Practitioners** should be involved in all phases of the knowledge development and utilization process, not just as recipients of research.
 - **Policymakers** need to develop the capacity for integrating knowledge into the policy making apparatus.
 - **Researchers** should focus on rigor, relevance, and replication in addressing practical questions of effectiveness based on the needs of practitioners and policy makers.
 - **Developers and Providers** need to use the best available knowledge in developing and delivering their products and services.
 - **Intermediaries** are needed to facilitate productive collaborations and relationships among stakeholders, help interpret and disseminate findings, conduct applied research, and provide capacity-building assistance.
3. **Cumulative Process** --- Effective knowledge use depends upon dynamic on-going exchanges of data and information among the stakeholders and involves a continuous process of research, application and adaptation. As knowledge is used and adapted, new knowledge is created and applied in a cumulative, iterative fashion.
4. **High Priority Policy** --- School improvement policies at the federal, state, and local levels should focus priority attention on the effective use of knowledge and create incentives to stimulate greater demand for and increased supply of knowledge-based solutions.

We believe that we are on the threshold of a new era of knowledge use in education. In the years ahead we envision a robust “knowledge” market place with demand stimulated by increased federal investment and supply enhanced by a vigorous knowledge industry. In columns we will explore ways to foster education knowledge at the local, state, and federal levels, and discuss the exciting concept of “communities of knowledge.”

Jim Kohlmoos
President
National Education Knowledge Industry Association
June 20, 2005

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
FRAMEWORK:
PLANNING WORKSHEET**



Strategic Communications Framework Planning Worksheet

Step 1 – Establish Objectives

What needs to be achieved? What should be done? What would be beneficial to achieve? *Keep in mind that we will need to **Brand** to **Establish Recognition**, **Inform** to raise **Awareness**, **Educate** to enable **Understanding**, **Involve** to gain **Acceptance**, and **Motivate** to **Create Change**.*

Step 2 – Determine Audiences

Considering our objectives, what are our target audiences?

Step 3 – Develop Key Messages

Create messages for each audience. Messages must support our objectives.

Step 6 – Develop a Budget

The amount of time and resources invested in communications activities depends upon the objectives and strategies. Develop a preliminary budget to support the objectives and strategies. List possible funding sources.

Step 7 – Measure Success

Use these sample criteria to measure the impact of our messages and communications activities:

- *Relevance – Was the message appropriate and clear in purpose?*
- *Clarity – Was the message coherent and easily understood?*
- *Credibility – Was the message believable and trustworthy?*
- *Satisfaction – Was the audience satisfied with the communication?*
- *Change – Did the audience(s) act on the information? Did the communications activities lead to a greater demand for services or product?*

ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS

**THE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC RELATIONS
COMMISSION ON PR MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION**
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***GUIDELINES FOR
SETTING MEASURABLE
PUBLIC RELATIONS OBJECTIVES***

This document was drafted by Forrest W. Anderson of Golin/Harris International and Linda Hadley of Porter Novelli.

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And Members of the Institute for Public Relations
Commission on Public Relations Measurement and Evaluation

May, 1999

GUIDELINES FOR SETTING *MEASURABLE* PUBLIC RELATIONS OBJECTIVES

WHY SET *MEASURABLE* PR OBJECTIVES?

The goal of virtually all public relations (PR) is to help an organization achieve its “business or performance objectives.” How does PR do this? It begins by setting *measurable* objectives.

Measurable objectives in public relations do two things:

1. They **facilitate and support business objectives**, thus demonstrating that PR activities support the business or performance goals and are thereby “strategic”
2. They enable PR practitioners to show they have achieved what they set out to achieve, and thereby **demonstrate accountability**

The reason to state *measurable* objectives is that if you do not, you are likely to suffer the following consequences:

Where the process of goal setting and evaluation seems to have become perfunctory or sporadic over time, there seems to have been the greatest downsizing in [corporate communications] staff and activity. (Barlow 1993, 8)

Only one practitioner – a public affairs advisor for an oil company – said that his department has no written goals and objectives. He described a situation of great instability in which the business units of his organization are driving the goals of public affairs, while corporate public affairs is being downsized drastically. (Hon 1998, 118)

SETTING *MEASURABLE* PUBLIC RELATIONS OBJECTIVES

Link PR Objectives to Business and Organizational Objectives

Getting a clear understanding of an organization's business or performance goals is the PR practitioner's first step in setting measurable objectives for a communications program, yet it is probably the most often overlooked. When management asks what it is getting for its PR investment, it is asking for evidence that communications activities have advanced business goals. If public relations practitioners do not have a clear understanding of what these business goals are, public relations can succeed only by chance.

Business goals might include:

1. Increasing share price
2. Increasing sales
3. Increasing market share
4. Increasing productivity
5. Reducing employee turnover

How do we obtain this information? In the ideal world, senior PR staff has been at the table with the rest of senior management helping to set the organization's objectives. So senior PR staff knows. However, in some organizations, PR has not yet achieved this level of influence. If this is the case, other avenues for determining business goals are to engage senior managers in discussions of the organization's goals and the factors managers think will impact achieving these goals. Ask to see business plans and marketing plans. Talk with those involved in other communications disciplines about what their programs are designed to accomplish. Do your own research into industry issues and trends and your target audiences. Make this kind of situation analysis a routine element of program planning.

Of course, understanding the organization's business goals is easiest when the public relations practitioners who develop the communications plan take part in setting the organization's overall objectives as well.

To help ensure that PR objectives are linked to business objectives, ask the following questions:

1. What is management trying to achieve and what will help or hinder its success, from a communications perspective?
2. How are stakeholders likely to respond to management decisions?
3. What response would management like from target stakeholders?
4. How can PR programs help achieve these goals?
5. What is the most effective role for PR in relation to other communications disciplines? What can PR do more effectively than advertising, promotions, management consultants, etc.?

Answers to these questions will help identify business goals and guide PR efforts in the most productive directions.

Tying Objectives to Measures of Program Success

The foundation for effective program evaluation is setting objectives. Program evaluation is the process of measuring progress toward objectives. If the objectives are unclear, the evaluation will be weak. Further, the creation of objectives is critical to managing expectations for the program, especially where specific targets for outcomes are set (e.g., increase awareness by 20 percent).

Creating *Measurable* PR Objectives

In the case of objectives, wishing (or simply calling something an objective) won't make it so. An objective must:

1. Specify a desired outcome (increase awareness, improve relationships, build preference, adopt an attitude, generate sales leads, etc.)
2. Directly specify one or several target audiences
3. Be measurable, both conceptually and practically
4. Refer to “ends,” not “means.” If your objective outlines a means by which to do something, (often prefaced by the words “leverage” or “use”), you have a strategy, not an objective.
5. Include a time frame in which the objective is to be achieved, for example, by July 1.

In general, process goals, such as “get publicity,” “launch a product” or “create a brochure,” make poor objectives. They do not relate to broader organizational goals and are not measurable in any specific, concrete, or truly meaningful manner. (“I did it”/“I didn't do it.” does not count as measurable.) A useful way to replace these “process” objectives is to ask yourself, “What is the purpose of (insert objective).” The answer to this question is likely to move you closer to a clear, actionable objective.

Examples:

Publicizing A New Line of Women's Clothing

Let's suppose the purpose of "get publicity" is to help sell a new line of women's clothing. While PR cannot ensure sales, a sound publicity program can generate the awareness and possibly build the motivation necessary for sales to occur. So, "get publicity" could change into "increase awareness of our new line of women's clothing within the next six months among women in the top 10 ADIs, between the ages of 40 and 64, with household incomes of \$50,000 and up."

Note: By spelling out the proposed publicity campaign in this very precise manner, all five of the requirements we had listed above are covered, and the PR effort now becomes something that can be specifically measurable.

Informing Motorists About Changes Pertaining To A New Toll Road

When a privately financed and developed toll-road first opened in a given location, it turned out that traffic was far below that which had been anticipated by the developers. The business objective of the agency that was responsible for managing the toll road clearly was to increase traffic as quickly as possible. Research showed that potential users of the toll road -- residents of the nearby communities -- did not like the look of the existing toll structures and also were concerned about noise and air pollution. The toll road authority immediately took steps to improve the look of the road's toll structures and also erected barriers as a means of limiting and controlling noise and air pollution. The toll road authority set for itself an objective of seeking to increase traffic to 30,000 cars per week day within a six month time frame. The communications program that was developed and put into place, was directly linked to that objective -- that is, within a six month period of time, the aim was to educate and inform a large enough proportion of residents of neighboring communities about the changes that had taken place, that

would eventually lead to an increased number of motorists considering the possible use of the new toll way, as an alternate means of travel.

Note: By linking the public education program to the business plan, by adhering to the exact same time frame of six months, and by targeting community residents, a set of measurable communications objectives was put into effect.

Restoring the Reputation of A Distributor Of Computer Products

A distributor of computer products and services had achieved an enviable reputation among those in the financial community and in the business press, chiefly through the successful marketing of its products to four very specific audience segments.

In an effort to expand its market share, the company made a dramatic foray into a sales channel in which it was not at all well known. The venture failed, and this unexpected turn of events had an extremely negative impact on the manufacturer's overall reputation on Wall Street. Even though the company was continuing to experience success in market areas in which it had dominated in the past, the unsuccessful venture left financial analysts and those in the media with the impression that perhaps the firm was no longer as successful an organization as it had been perceived to be in the past.

The organization's management regrouped after the failed venture and began to not only meet, but also exceed, its sales goals among the other four target audience segments to which it had been selling its products and services in the past.

What management needed from the communications program was to increase the number of financial analysts with positive attitudes toward the company. Specific media placement and financial community targets were set and a one-year time schedule was implemented.

Note: The PR objectives that were set were very specific, very measurable, and were clearly tied to the organization's business objectives.

Determining The Value Of A Corporate 'Event' Sponsorship Program

For years, a manufacturer and distributor of cellular phones had actively been involved in sponsoring and promoting a local golf tournament, which received national exposure one particular weekend each year. Although the company knew that linking its name to the tourney was generating a good deal of goodwill, the firm's business officers challenged the PR people to link the publicity effort to the sale of cellular phones to golf enthusiasts.

In this case, a long-term PR effort with only limited "business" objectives, suddenly was given a new mission: link the PR to possible sales. To do so, the PR professionals commissioned research "around" the golf tournament -- conducting research with a sample of golf enthusiasts who were familiar with and likely to watch the tourney, either in person or on television, *prior to* the holding of the event to determine their interest in and possible purchase of cellular phone products, followed by a follow-up poll *immediately following* the event, to determine what impact, if any, the company's sponsorship might have had in possibly generating sales interest. The *before-and-after* impact of the company's publicity and promotional efforts relating to the golf tourney also were measured.

Note: As in the previous examples, the target audience was clearly defined in advance and the data that were collected were quite specific, and directly relevant to the organization's business objectives.

Should A New Product Be Promoted With Ads, Publicity or Both?

A distributor of meat products was planning to distribute a brand new product during a given period of time, but the marketing staff was not certain if it would be more effective to promote and publicize the product only with paid advertising, only with “free” publicity, or with a combination of both.

In an effort to resolve the dilemma, the company’s advertising and public relations departments both were asked to develop materials to be used in the promotional effort. In setting their objectives for their efforts, both departments clearly recognized that they ultimately would be judged not just on how much “exposure” they achieved through their communications dissemination efforts, but also by whether or not what they did actually “moved” product.

To precisely document and measure the effectiveness of their efforts, the departments identified four somewhat similar communities, then introduced the new product in the first community using advertising techniques only ... introduced the product in the second community using publicity techniques only ... introduced it in the third community using a combination of both ... and introduced it in a fourth community with no advertising or PR support at all -- in an effort to set up a “control” group.

Before and after research was designed and carried out in all four communities, to precisely measure consumer knowledge of and attitudes toward the company and its various meat products *prior to* the new product launch, and two weeks after the launch.

Note: This particular effort gave the company’s marketing managers precisely what they needed: hard, measurable data pertaining to which approach worked best, which the company could then use for its marketing and communications efforts overall.

Developing A 'View' Book For Use In Student Recruitment

The public relations officer of an academic institution was asked to prepare a booklet that could be used by the college to more effectively market and promote the institution to a certain segment of its prospective students.

Loads of materials about the college already existed -- including a catalogue, various brochures that described different curricular offerings, and fact sheets that offered background information about different degree and non-degree programs. The new booklet was deemed necessary to enable the school to reach one special segment of the population with which the college had had only limited success in the past: representatives of a certain racial and ethnic minority group.

In planning for the development of the new promotional booklet, the PR department focused on such issues as the book's eventual distribution to the audience that was being targeted ... the desired receptivity to and interest in the contents of the book on the part of that segment of the public ... and on the ultimate value that the book might generate for the school, by resulting in increased inquiries, possible applications (and eventual enrollments) by those in the target audience population.

Note: By specifically defining all of the functions that the new book was intended to fulfill, by focusing not only on its contents, but also on its possible means of distribution, the likelihood of it being received, understood and effectively used by those in the target audience group, and the ultimate purpose of the booklet as a means of motivating those in a particular sector to possibly consider applying to the school, the college public relations officer was able to set -- in advance -- very specific measurable objectives that the book's creation was intended to meet.

Be Realistic

Be *realistic* when you develop PR program objectives. A common problem for PR program goal-setters is the temptation to over-promise or to fix on objectives like “drive consumer sales” or “build awareness of the product” without much attention to whether there is anything in the program that could achieve such an objective.

Proper attention to program evaluation can help ensure that objectives are realistic. Consider, for example, a \$50,000 recipe service campaign. If the objective were to build national awareness of the food product featured in the recipe campaign, the most likely means to measure success would be a national survey to track consumer awareness of the product and the campaign. (Build awareness; measure change in awareness.) This kind of evaluation is unlikely to show measurable increases in national awareness simply because we are designating some 200 million people as our target audience. It might be better to promise something that can be achieved with \$50,000, such as building the brand’s visibility among key food reporters and editors, a much more limited -- and realistic -- target audience.

Other ways to be realistic include checking industry benchmarks, comparing notes with colleagues who have done similar projects and reviewing secondary literature. One place to look for comparative benchmarks is in the award application archives of PRSA and CIPRA.

Hopefully, the attached form will help you articulate good PR program objectives.

Business Objectives

1. Who is target audience?
2. What does the organization want target to do?
3. By when must this be accomplished?

How can PR help achieve business objective ?

State how PR can help as objectives:

Objective Test:

1. Is it measurable?
2. Is it an end, not a means?
3. Is it realistic?
4. Time frame?

Revise objective to improve and pass test

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Prioritizing Stakeholders for Public Relations

by

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Prioritizing Stakeholders for Public Relations

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Purpose of the White Paper

By reviewing the literature in stakeholder theory, stakeholder management, and public relations, this paper arrives at a model that prioritizes stakeholders through a four-step process:

1. Identifying all potential stakeholders according to their relationship to the organization;
2. Prioritizing stakeholders by attributes;
3. Prioritizing stakeholders by relationship to the situation;
4. Prioritizing the publics according to the communication strategy.

What readers will find in this report

Studies in stakeholder theory, stakeholder management, and public relations provide many different ways of identifying key stakeholders or publics. At the heart of these attempts is the question, “How much attention does each stakeholder group deserve or require?”

Since it is impossible that all stakeholders will have the same interests in and demands on the firm, one scholar specifies that stakeholder management be about “managing potential conflict stemming from diverging interests.”¹ Once organizations have identified their stakeholders, there is a struggle for attention: who to give it to, who to give more to, and who to not give it to at all. Sacrificing the needs of one stakeholder for the needs of the other is a dilemma with which many organizations struggle. When these conflicts arise it is important to the success of the organization that it has prioritized each stakeholder according to the situation.

By synthesizing research in stakeholder management and public relations, this paper will clarify the difference between a stakeholder and a public, then provide a model that moves from the broadest attempts at identifying all stakeholders, to the more specific need of identifying key publics for communication strategies. The model is situational, and priority of stakeholders and publics will change according to the situation.

Defining Stakeholders and Publics

The terms *stakeholder* and *public* are often used interchangeably, but they shouldn’t be. Stakeholders have been identified in the business literature according to their relationships to *organizations*. Publics, in the public relations and other mass media literature, are often identified according to their relationship to *messages*.

1

¹ Winn, M.I. 2001. “Building Stakeholder Theory with a Decision Modeling Methodology,” *Business & Society*, 40: 133-166.

Stakeholders. The most quoted definition of a stakeholder in business literature is that given by Freeman, who says a stakeholder is “any group or individual who is affected by or can affect the achievement of an organization’s objectives.”² This is what Freeman refers to as the wide sense of a stakeholder; however, he also spoke of the narrow sense of a stakeholder when he described it as, “any identifiable group or individual on which the organization is dependent for its continued survival.”³ The definition has been expanded to include groups who have interests in the corporation, regardless of the corporation’s interest in them.⁴ Others have narrowed the definition to those who contribute to the financial bottom line of the organization.⁵

Several scholars have criticized that the theory does not make clear who is a stakeholder and who is not.⁶ These scholars claim that stakeholder theory focuses heavily on the importance of meeting the needs of all stakeholders, but does not tell anyone who the stakeholders actually are or how to identify them. It is because of this uncertainty that so many different, yet similar, definitions of who and what a stakeholder is have arisen. Stakeholder management must move toward a “names and faces” orientation, with specific identification of and communication with stakeholders, to avoid the anxiety of facing an infinite number of persons who have interest in, or are affected by the organization.⁷ Employees, customers, shareholders, communities and suppliers are those most commonly classified as stakeholders within an organization

Publics. “Publics” is the term used for stakeholders in the public relations literature. Because the public relations profession evolved from journalism, the term has frequently been related to the recipients of messages from organizations. These publics, or more accurately, “audiences,” become segmented into more homogenous subsets that help communicators choose appropriate channels for reaching them. For example, publics can be employees, shareholders, political leaders, consumers, etc. These publics are often segmented even further by demographics, geographics, or psychographics. However, research in public relations has recently turned to the value of the relationships these publics have with organizations. This emphasis has encouraged adaptation of the term “stakeholder” in both practice and scholarship.

James Grunig has differentiated the terms “stakeholder” and “public” in the following way: organizations choose stakeholders by their marketing strategies, recruiting, and investment plans, but “publics arise on their own and choose the organization for attention.”⁸ Grunig relied on John Dewey’s writings to develop a definition of a public: that it is a group of people who

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² Freeman, R. E. 1984. *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*. Boston: Pitman Publishing.

³ Freeman, R.E., & Reed, D.L. 1983. “Stockholders and stakeholders: A new perspective on corporate governance.” *California Management Review*, 25(3): 88-106.

⁴ Preston, L.E., & Sapienza, H.J. (1990). Stakeholder management and corporate performance. *The Journal of Behavioral Economics*, 19(4), 361-375.

⁵ Post, J.E., Preston, L.E., & Sachs, S. (2002). Managing the extended enterprise: The new stakeholder view. *California Management Review*, 45(1), 6-28.

⁶ Dunham, L., Freeman, R. E., & Liedtka, J. (2001). The soft underbelly of stakeholder theory: The role of community. Darden School Working Paper No. 01-22; Preston, L.E., & Sapienza, H.J. (1990). Stakeholder management and corporate performance. *The Journal of Behavioral Economics*, 19(4), 361-375; Jennings, M. M. (1999). “Stakeholder theory: Letting anyone who’s interested run the business—no investment required.” Conference paper presented at *Corporate Governance: Ethics Across the Board*, Houston, TX, April 6. http://www.stthom.edu/cbes/marianne_jennings.html.

⁷ Dunham et al. 2001; Sternberg, E. 2001. “The Stakeholder Concept: A Mistaken Doctrine.” Foundation for Business Responsibilities.

⁸ Grunig, J. E. & Repper, F. C. 1992. “Strategic Management, Publics, and Issues,” In J. E. Grunig (Ed.), *Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management* Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: 117-157.: 128.

face a similar problem, recognize the problem, and organize themselves to do something about it.⁹ Therefore, publics organize from the ranks of stakeholders when they recognize an issue and decide to do something about it.

First Step: Identifying Stakeholders

Several scholars in stakeholder theory, including Freeman, have attempted to identify stakeholders using systematic criteria. However, the focus has been on the attributes of the stakeholders in their relation to the organization.¹⁰ In the model presented here, the organization should attempt to identify *all* stakeholders before narrowing them by their attributes.

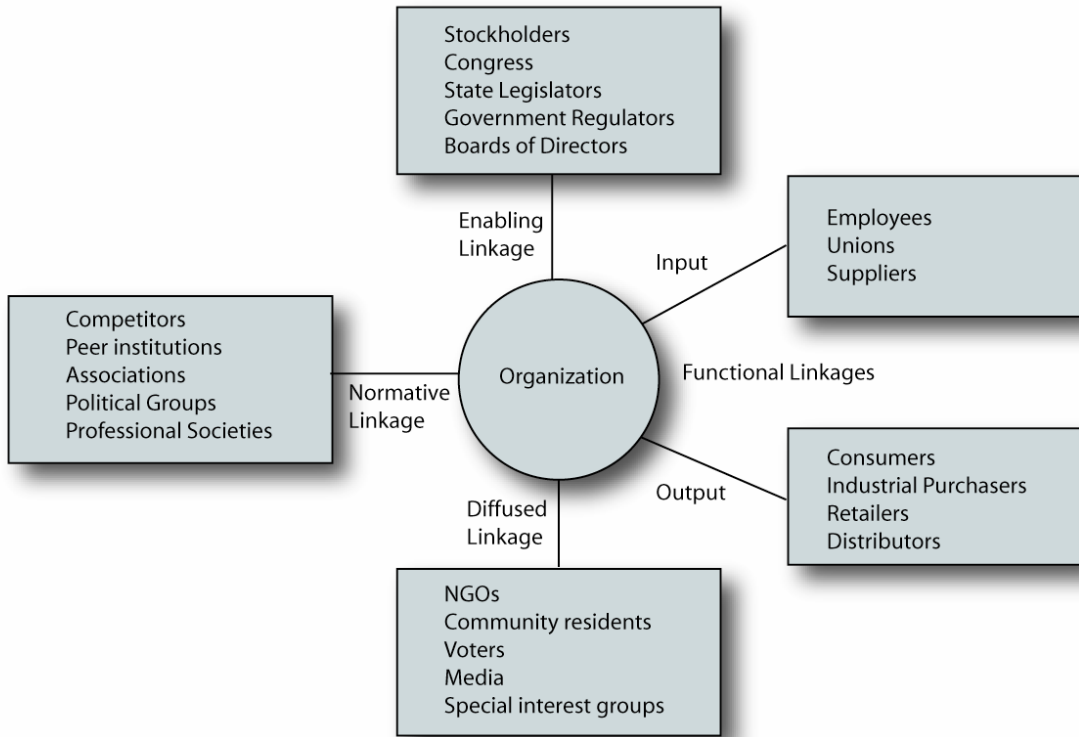
In the public relations literature, there has been little effort to identify stakeholders according to the relationship with the organization. Some stakeholder segmentations are as simple as internal versus external publics. Perhaps the best effort to identify all stakeholders from the public relations literature is the linkage model developed by Grunig and Hunt. This model has four linkages that identify stakeholder relationships to an organization: enabling linkages, functional linkages, diffused linkages, and normative linkages.¹¹

3

⁹ Dewey, J. (1927). *The Public and Its Problems*. Chicago: Swallow.

¹⁰ Freeman, 1984; Savage, G.T., Nix, T.H., Whitehead, C.J., & Blair, J.D. 1991. "Strategies for Assessing and Managing Organizational Stakeholders." *Academy of Management Executive*, 19: 453-473; Harrison, J.S., & St. John, C.H. 1994. *Strategic Management of Organizations and Stakeholders*. St. Paul, MN: West Publishing Co; Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R., & Wood, D.J. 1997. "Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts." *Academy of Management Review*, 22: 853-886.

¹¹ Grunig, J. E., & Hunt, T. 1984. *Managing public relations*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Grunig & Hunt developed the model based on the work of: Esman, M. 1972. "The Elements of Institution Building." In J. W. Eaton (Ed), *Institution Building and Development*. Beverly Hills: Sage: 19-40; Evan, W. 1976. "An Organization-Set Model of Interorganizational Relations." In W. Evan (Ed), *Interorganizational Relations*. New York: Penguin: 78-90; Parsons, T. 1976. "Three Levels in the Hierarchical Structure of Organizations." In W. Evan (Ed.), *Interorganizational Relations* New York: Penguin: 69-78.



Model 1

Linkage Model

Modified from J. Grunig and T. Hunt, *Managing Public Relations*, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984, p. 141

- The *enabling linkages* identify stakeholders who have some control and authority over the organization, such as stockholders, board of directors, governmental legislators and regulators, etc. These stakeholders enable an organization to have resources and autonomy to operate. When enabling relationships falter, the resources can be withdrawn and the autonomy of the organization restricted.¹²
- *Functional linkages* are those that are essential to the function of the organization, and are divided between input functions that provide labor and resources to create products or services (such as employees and suppliers) and output functions that consume the products or services (such as consumers and retailers).
- *Normative linkages* are associations or groups with which the organization has a common interest. Stakeholders in the normative linkage share similar values, goals or problems and often include competitors that belong to industrial or professional associations.
- *Diffused linkages* are the most difficult to identify because they include stakeholders who do not have frequent interaction with the organization, but become involved based on the actions of the organization. These are the publics that often arise in times of a crisis. This linkage includes the media, the community, activists, and other special interest groups.

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¹² Rawlins, B. & Bowen, S. 2005. "Publics." *Encyclopedia of Public Relations*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage: 718-721.

Going through the linkage model should help the organization identify all its stakeholders. The diffused linkage stakeholders would be different according to the situation, but the enabling, functional, and normative linkage stakeholders are likely to be constant.

Second Step: Prioritizing Stakeholders According to Attributes

Much of the literature in stakeholder management prioritizes stakeholders based on their attributes. Harrison and St. John sorted stakeholders according to Freeman's original classification: stake in the organization and influence on behavior. Stake is broken down into three parts: those stakeholders who have ownership in the organization; those stakeholders who are economically dependent on the organization; and, those stakeholders who are not linked directly to an organization, but who are interested in seeing the organization act socially responsible. The authors also suggested classifying stakeholders by the extent to which an organization is dependent on them for survival and prosperity.¹³

Savage, Nix, Whitehead and Blair considered two attributes for identifying who is a stakeholder: a claim, and the ability to influence. This introduces the concepts of legitimacy and power as important attributes for recognizing stakeholders. They then broke down the stakeholders according to the level of support. The supportive stakeholder supports the actions and goals of the organization and is a low threat. The marginal stakeholder really has a minimal stake in the organization and isn't very threatening. The non-supportive stakeholder is a threat to the organization and is the least likely to cooperate. The mixed blessing stakeholder has a potential for great cooperation as well as threat for the organization.¹⁴

Mitchell, Agle, and Wood developed a more comprehensive model that included the attributes of power and legitimacy and added the attribute of urgency. Their model expanded the limited scope of the Savage et al. model by recognizing that legitimacy, power, and urgency were not either/or variables, but part of a mix that would help prioritize stakeholders. By combining these attributes, Mitchell et al. were also able to identify the dependent stakeholder, which was missing from the Savage et al. model. Dependency of stakeholders on organizations is just as important as their influence over organizations in the context of social responsibility. This model will be used primarily to establish priority according to attributes.¹⁵

Stakeholders have *power* when they can influence other parties to make decisions the party would not have otherwise made. Mitchell et al. relied on Etzioni's categorization of power: *coercive* power, based on the physical resources of force, violence, or restraint; *utilitarian* power, based on material or financial resources; and *normative* power, based on symbolic resources.¹⁶

Legitimacy is determined by whether the stakeholder has a legal, moral, or presumed claim that can influence the organization's behavior, direction, process or outcome. Stakeholders are risk-bearers who have "invested some form of capital, human or financial, something of value, in a firm."¹⁷ Mitchell et al. used the notion of risk to narrow stakeholders with a legitimate claim. These stakeholders are often dependent on the organization. The combination of power and legitimacy is authority.

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¹³ Harrison, J.S., & St. John, C.H. 1994.

¹⁴ Savage, G.T., Nix, T.H., Whitehead, C.J., & Blair, J.D. 1991.

¹⁵ Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R., & Wood, D.J. 1997

¹⁶ Etzioni, A. (1964). *Modern Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

¹⁷ Clarkson, M. 1994. "A Risk Based Model of Stakeholder Theory." *Proceedings of the Second Toronto Conference on Stakeholder Theory*. Centre for Corporate Social Performance & Ethics, University of Toronto: 5

Urgency exists under two conditions: “(1) when a relationship or claim is of a time-sensitive nature and (2) when that relationship or claim is important or critical to the stakeholder.”¹⁸ Urgency, then, requires organizations to respond to stakeholder claims in a timely fashion. Urgency alone may not predict the priority of a stakeholder, especially if the other two attributes are missing. However, this attribute does add a dimension that is particularly salient to the practice of public relations, because it is the urgent public that often attracts the attention of the media and other stakeholders.

Mitchell et al. used the combination of the three attributes to develop a prioritization strategy. Accordingly, latent stakeholders possess only one of the attributes; expectant stakeholders possess two attributes, and definitive stakeholders possess all three attributes. If individuals or groups do not possess any of the attributes, they are not considered stakeholders.

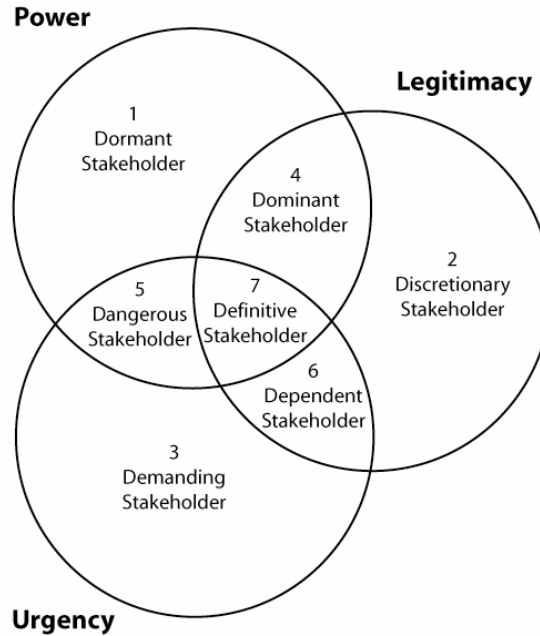
- The latent stakeholders have lower salience to an organization because they only have one attribute. They are identified as dormant, discretionary, and demanding.
 - The dormant stakeholder has power but no legitimacy or urgency in its claim. Therefore its power remains unused.
 - Discretionary stakeholders possess legitimacy, but no power to influence and no urgency in the claim, and therefore are reliant on the good will of the organization rather than through any other pressure.
 - The demanding stakeholder has urgency, but no legitimacy or power. These groups could be bothersome, but not dangerous.
- Expectant stakeholders possess two attributes and are organized into dominant, dependent, and dangerous stakeholders.
 - Dominant stakeholders have power and legitimacy, and because they can act on their claims, they receive much of management’s attention.
 - Dependent stakeholders have legitimacy and urgency. Organizations should be socially responsible to stakeholders that have a legitimate and urgent claim, and who depend on the organization to address and resolve the claim. The inclusion of a dependent relationship is important because it recognizes that stakeholder priority is not limited to influence over the organization.
 - Dangerous stakeholders have urgency and power, but lack legitimacy. Most of the time these stakeholders use formal channels to affect change, but may they become violent or coercive to achieve their claims. Social activist groups sometimes engage in forms of protests, boycotts, and (in extreme cases) damage to property and lives.
- The stakeholders who have all three attributes are definitive stakeholders and have the highest priority.

An important tenet of this model is that each attribute is variable and not constant. In other words, any group can acquire (or lose) power, legitimacy, or urgency depending on the situation. Therefore, an expectant stakeholder group can become a definitive stakeholder if it

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¹⁸ Mitchell, R.K., Agle, B.R., & Wood, D.J. 1997

acquires the third attribute. A dangerous stakeholder group can acquire legitimacy, as has been the case with many nongovernmental organizations over the last few years. A dependent stakeholder group, such as a community affected by irresponsible corporate behavior, can acquire power by appealing to governmental agencies.



Model 2

Stakeholder Typology: One, Two, Three Attributes Present

From R. Mitchell, B. Agle, and D. Wood, "Toward a Theory of Stakeholder Identification and Salience: Defining the Principle of Who and What Really Counts," *Academy of Management Review*, 1997, p. 874.

One dimension of stakeholder attributes missing from Mitchell et al. is whether the stakeholder group is supportive or not. As previously noted, each of these groups could be supportive or threatening, and stakeholder strategies would be contingent on the level of support. A comprehensive model of stakeholder prioritization should also identify whether dominant, dependent, dangerous, or definitive stakeholders are supportive or threatening.

After synthesizing the Grunig and Hunt linkage model with the Mitchell et al. attribute model, a stakeholder priority hierarchy becomes apparent. The enabling and functional linkages are the most important for an organization to maintain long-term success. The enabling linkages are dominant stakeholders by definition, because groups such as stockholders and regulatory agencies have power over the organization and their interests are usually legitimate. If the issue affecting enabling stakeholders is urgent, then they become definitive stakeholders and would be given highest priority.

Functional input linkages, such as employees, suppliers, and unions, have a legitimate claim on the organization and high levels of involvement. They are economically dependent on

the organization, and as such, the power resides primarily with the organization. Therefore, the organization has a moral and legal responsibility to those stakeholders that also increases their priority. The relationship of employees is also critical to the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization.

Functional output stakeholders consume what the organization produces, and include consumers, distributors, and retailers. Companies know that long-term customer relations are necessary for financial success. Because these stakeholders have power, legitimacy, and economic influence, any issue that imminently affects their relationship gives them high priority. Savage, et al. considered consumers and employees as mixed blessing stakeholders because they can be supportive or non-supportive depending on the actions of the organization.

Normative linkages, such as competitors, have little direct power over the organization, but are considered a non-supportive threat by Savage, et al. Most organizations devise ways to eliminate competition rather than foster positive relations. The only time competitors become important for cooperative purposes is when the industry is facing an issue with economic or regulatory impact, in which the peer organizations develop a contingency compatible relationship until the issue is resolved. For example, chemical manufacturers may rally together to fight increased environmental standards that would damage their profitability.

Diffused stakeholders are the most problematic, because they do not have direct relationships with the organizations. Because these stakeholders are reactive to organizational actions, they are harder to predict and to recognize. Diffused stakeholders are usually situational and their relationship temporary. These stakeholders do not have a lot of power over the organization, and their legitimacy is sometimes suspect. What they have is urgency, making them a demanding stakeholder under the model proposed by Mitchell et al. If they also have a legitimate concern, they become dependent stakeholders and rise in priority. Because they lack the power and direct influence of other stakeholders, diffused stakeholders will attempt to affect the organization by working through members of the enabling or functional linkages.¹⁹

In these cases, the diffused stakeholders can shift from dependent stakeholders to definitive stakeholders by forming coalitions with other powerful and legitimate groups, namely the enabling and functional linkages. Activist groups ask consumers to boycott products, or NGO's ask government to increase regulations to prevent certain activities. Because of the appeal process of the diffused stakeholders, these groups can move quickly from latent to definitive stakeholders. For this reason, there is a need for further research on network analysis with these stakeholders. The author recognizes the importance of understanding the networks of the stakeholders to verify the third-party involvement of other key groups, but that analysis goes beyond the scope of this paper.

To sum, the enabling and functional linkages have the greatest priority as stakeholders because their power/dependency/influence relationship is frequent and critical to the regular operations of the organization. Normative linkages, as competitors, are constantly on the mind of the organization, but not as groups that have a stake in the operations of the organization. This only changes when the industry or profession is faced with a crisis that requires cooperative effort. The diffused linkages do not require as much attention and have a lesser priority, except when they react to an organization's action or policy. Urgency is the variable that increases the

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¹⁹ Rawlins, B. & Bowen, S. 2005.

priority of any of these stakeholders. However, this method of prioritizing does not answer the question of who will become the active groups in urgent situations.

Third Step: Prioritizing Stakeholders by Relationship to the Situation

J. E. Grunig developed the situational theory of publics to explain and predict why some publics are active and others are passive. He wrote, “stakeholders who are or become more aware and active can be described as publics.”²⁰ Within the stakeholder categories, situational theory can identify which publics will “communicate actively, passively, or not at all about organizational decisions that affect them.”²¹

Those publics who do not face a problem are *non-publics*, those who face the problem but do not recognize it as problematic are *latent publics*, those who recognize the problem are *aware publics*, and those who do something about the problem are *active publics*.²² He identified three variables that explain why certain people become active in certain situations. These variables— level of involvement, problem recognition, and constraint recognition—led to the development of the situational theory of public behavior. Grunig and other researchers have used situational theory to explain the effect of communication behavior on cognitions, attitudes, and behaviors.

Level of involvement is measured by the extent to which people connect themselves personally with the situation. However, people do not seek or process information unless they recognize the connection between them and a problem, which is the level of *problem recognition*. Whether people move beyond information processing to the information seeking behavior of active publics often depends on whether they think they can do something about the problem. Those who think that nothing can be done have high *constraint recognition* and are less compelled to become active in the resolution of the problem. Another consideration, *referent criteria*, is the guideline that people apply to new situations based on previous experiences with the issue or the organization involved.

Active publics are likely to have high levels of involvement and problem recognition, and lower levels of constraint recognition. Because they recognize how the problem affects them and they think they can do something about it, Grunig theorized that this public will actively seek information and act on that information. Aware publics will process information and might act, but are limited by lower levels of involvement and problem recognition, or higher levels of constraint recognition. Latent publics aren’t cognizant of how an issue involves them, or don’t see it as a problem. This public could become active or aware as information changes its cognitions about the issue.

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²⁰ Grunig, J. E. & Repper, F. C. 1992: 125

²¹ Grunig, J. E. 2005. “Situational Theory of Publics.” *Encyclopedia of Public Relations*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage: 778-780.

²² Grunig, J. E. 1983. “Communication Behaviors and Attitudes of Environmental Publics: Two Studies.” *Journalism Monographs*, 81.

	High Involvement	Low Involvement
Problem-Facing Behavior High Problem Recognition Low Constraint Recognition	<i>Active Public</i>	<i>Active/Aware Public</i>
Constrained Behavior High Problem Recognition High Constraint Recognition	<i>Aware/Active Public</i>	<i>Latent/Aware Public</i>
Routine Behavior Low Problem Recognition Low Constraint Recognition	<i>Active (Reinforcing) Public</i>	<i>None/Latent Public</i>
Fatalistic Behavior Low Problem Recognition High Constraint Recognition	<i>Latent Public</i>	<i>Non Public</i>

Model 3

Types of publics according to Grunig’s Situational Theory

Therefore, publics are defined by the similar levels of problem recognition, constraint recognition, and involvement for the same issues or problems.²³ Grunig tested the theory using problems that would create active and passive publics, and found four kinds of publics: all-issue publics, that are active on all issues; apathetic publics, that are inattentive to all issues; single-issue publics, that are active on a small subset of the issue that only concerns them; and hot-issue publics, that are active on a single issue that involves nearly everyone and that has received a lot of media attention.

Hallahan added to the theory of publics by expanding the latent and nonpublics into *inactive* and *aroused* publics.²⁴ He argued that it is incorrect to assume that the only publics organizations should deal with are those that are active and motivated participants. Inactive publics shouldn’t be overlooked. Hallahan defined *inactive publics* as groups of individuals with low levels of knowledge and involvement regarding an organization and its operations. These publics may not yet recognize the consequences of an organization’s behavior, may be satisfied with the relationship, or may be apathetic toward the organization. *Aroused publics* also have low levels of knowledge, but recognize a potential problem or issue. Their level of involvement is heightened, and they are more likely to begin seeking information.

To summarize this step, active publics will have more priority over aware, aroused, and inactive publics because their urgency is greater. Whether stakeholders will become active publics can be predicted by whether the problem involves them, whether they recognize the

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²³ Grunig, J. E. & Repper, F. C. 1992: 139

²⁴ Hallahan, K. 2000. “Inactive Publics: The Forgotten Publics in Public Relations.” *Public Relations Review* 26(4): 499-515.

problem, and whether they think they can do anything about it. Publics in the diffused linkage are more likely to be single-issue publics or hot-issue publics, and their priority will diminish once the problem is resolved. Enabling and functional linkages are also likely to only become active on issues that involve them, but because the behavior of the organization has more of an impact on their power/dependency/influence relationship, they are also more likely to be multiple-issue publics.

Fourth Step: Prioritizing Publics By Communication Strategy

Definitive stakeholders who are also active publics become the obvious top priority publics. While it would be convenient if active publics were always definitive stakeholders, human nature precludes this from happening in a constant and predictable way. Therefore, an organization must develop strategies to help mediate issues with priority publics. These strategies will depend on whether the stakeholders are supportive or non-supportive and active or inactive. Therefore, you would develop strategies based on four groups: advocate stakeholders (active and supportive), dormant stakeholders (inactive and supportive), adversarial stakeholders (active and non-supportive), and apathetic stakeholders (inactive and non-supportive).

- *Advocate Stakeholders*: This is the group that you want involved in supportive actions such as third party endorsements, letter-writing campaigns, donations, investments, and attendance at functions. Messages should be action and behavior oriented.
- *Dormant Stakeholders*: This is a group that isn't ready to be involved. If inactivity is due to lack of knowledge, messages should focus on creating awareness and understanding of the issues that affect them. If the publics are aroused, but not active, then messages should address potential causes of apathy by reducing perceptions of constraints or using affective cues to increase emotional attachment.
- *Adversarial Stakeholders*: The initial response to this group is to be defensive. However, defensive messages won't work on this group, it will only entrench them in their position. Defensive messages are better intended for aroused publics who haven't decided whether they are supportive or not. Instead, organizations should use conflict resolution strategies that involve non-supportive stakeholders to seek win-win solutions.²⁵
- *Apathetic Stakeholders*: Again, the gut reaction to this group is to ignore it. But, if this group faces an issue but isn't aware of it or doesn't see its resonance yet, it may still move to an aroused, then aware, and then active public. A better strategy is to increase awareness of the issue with an invitation to collaborate with the organization on the issue before it becomes a problem or crisis. Since it would be difficult to get this group involved, most of the communication effort should be focused on increasing the salience of the issue and invitations for involvement.

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²⁵ See Plowman, K. D., Briggs, W. G., & Huang Y.H. 2001. "Public Relations and Conflict Resolution." In Robert Heath (Ed) *Handbook of Public Relations*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage: 301-310.

Once strategies have been developed that address the stakeholders, there is one last prioritization step. According to Laurie Wilson, there are three types of publics involved in communication strategies: key publics, intervening publics, and influentials.²⁶ *Key publics* are those whose participation and cooperation are required to accomplish organizational goals. In relation to the first two steps, they are the stakeholders who have the highest priority according to their power/dependency/influence attributes, the urgency of the issue, and their level of active involvement in the issue. In this model, the key publics are called *priority publics*. To communicate effectively with these stakeholders, an organization must understand them as much as possible. Priority publics can be profiled by their demographics, lifestyles and values, media preferences, cooperative networks, and self-interests. Effective strategies appeal to the self-interests of the priority publics and reach them through the most appropriate channels.

Because publics become active on issues that involve them, their self-interests must be addressed in any kind of stakeholder or public relations strategy. In order for a firm to effectively manage its stakeholder relations “the interests of key stakeholders must be integrated in the very purpose of the firm, and stakeholder relationships must be managed in a coherent and strategic fashion.”²⁷ Self-interests are not necessarily selfish interests but those interests that have intrinsic value for the survival of an entity, e.g. quality of life, needs of family and friends, and even economic well-being.²⁸ These self-interests motivate individuals and organizations to act and to change behavior.

The *intervening publics* pass information on to the priority publics and act as opinion leaders. Sometimes these publics, such as the media, are erroneously identified as priority publics. If an organization is satisfied when the message stops at a public, then it is a priority public. If the expectation is that the message will be disseminated to others, it is an intervening public. In most cases the media are intervening publics. Other influentials can be important intervening publics, such as doctors who pass information on to patients, and teachers who pass information on to students. The success of many campaigns is determined by the strength of relationships with intervening publics.

Influentials can be intervening publics, but they also affect the success of public relations efforts in other ways. Influentials can either support an organization’s efforts or work against them. Members of some publics will turn to opinion leaders to verify or refute messages coming from organizations. The opinion of these personal sources is much more influential than the public relations messages alone. Therefore, successful campaigns must also consider how messages will be interpreted by influentials that act as either intervening or supporting publics.

In summary, stakeholders that become active publics and that can influence the success of an organization, or can appeal to the other stakeholders with that influence, should become priority publics for communication strategies. Publics that are critical to getting the information to the priority publics, such as the media, need to be recognized as intervening publics and critical to the success of the communication strategy. Influential groups or individuals may not be stakeholders in the organization, but may be important in shaping or framing the way the

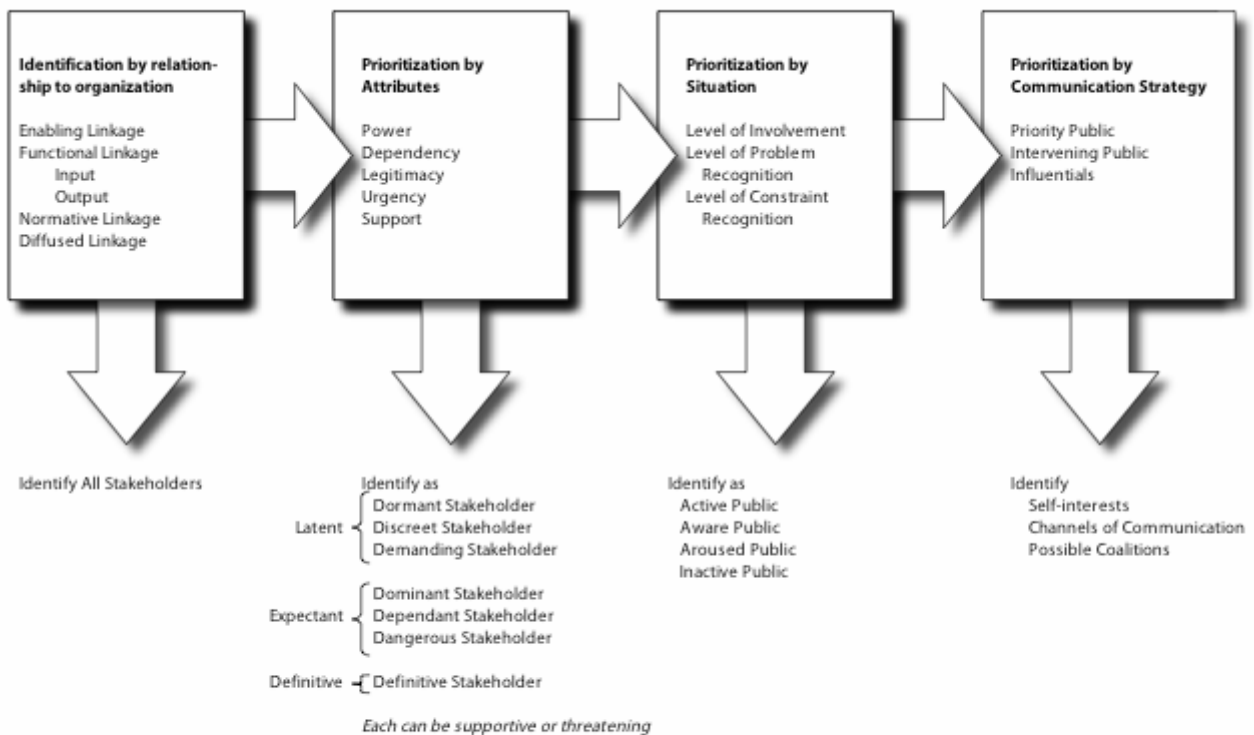
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²⁶ Wilson, L. 2005. *Strategic Program Planning for Effective Public Relations Campaigns*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt.

²⁷ Freeman, R. E. & McVea, J. 2001. “A Stakeholder Approach to Strategic Management” Darden Business School Working Paper No. 01-02.

²⁸ Wilson, L. 2005.

message is interpreted by the priority public, and therefore must be a part of the communication strategy.



Model 3
 Stakeholder Prioritization Model

Conclusion

The first three steps to stakeholder analysis, according to Harrison and St. John, are to identify stakeholders, classify them into meaningful groups, and prioritize them.²⁹ By combining the stakeholder relations and public relations literature, a more comprehensive process for prioritizing the stakeholder groups, particularly those that become active publics has been provided.

Developing positive relationships with stakeholders is a necessity for organizations. The traditional management tendency is “to respond to the *squeaky wheel stakeholder*.”³⁰ If the organization has not properly prioritized its stakeholders and their relationships, the squeaky wheel stakeholder may get more attention than is deserved. This model demonstrates that the squeaky wheel may not be the stakeholder with the greatest priority. By using the steps outlined in this paper, organizations can take a more systematic and comprehensive approach to prioritizing stakeholders.

²⁹ Harrison, J.S., & St. John, C.H. 1994.

³⁰ Savage, G.T., Nix, T.H., Whitehead, C.J., & Blair, J.D. 1991