

ISTBER

HND2

JOURNALISM

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LESSON 5

**EDITORIAL WRITING**

### Writing an Editorial

The following steps have to be observed:

1. Pick a significant topic that has a current news angle and would interest readers.
2. Collect information and facts; include objective reporting; do research
3. State your opinion briefly in the fashion of a thesis statement
4. Explain the issue objectively as a reporter would and tell why this situation is important
5. Give opposing viewpoint first its quotations and facts
6. Refute (reject) the other side and develop your case using facts, details, figures; quotations. Pick apart the other side's logic.
7. Concede a point of the opposition\_\_ they must have some good points you can acknowledge that would make you look rational.
8. Repeat key phrases to reinforce an idea into the reader's minds.
9. Give a realistic solution(s) to the problem that goes beyond common knowledge. Encourage critical thinking and pro-active reaction.
10. Wrap it up in a concluding punch that restates your opening remark (thesis statement).
11. Keep it to 500 words; make every word count; never USE "I"

**LESSON 6**  
**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**  
**PUBLIC RELATIONS (PR)**

The concept of public relations as a distant branch of communications is comparatively recent, though the practice is of course ancient. Any organization wants to present itself to the public in the best possible light. Today public relations embraces all the visual and practical aspects of a company's public "image" and also controls the relations between the company and the press and television, where a company takes its public relations seriously and where the department has direct access to the highest decision-making strata of the company at the board level, public relations may be very useful. In the case where the department is a minor outpost, a front-line attack by a rival company will leave the company vulnerable since in the view of many journalists, public relations officers are mere whitewashing agents paid to disguise what is really happening.

Therefore in a period of competitiveness, the public relations officer must work out the best way of introducing his/her company or organization usefully to the media. This may be by means of handouts, circulars or printed publicity material. This can be done through special events such as press conferences or receptions or on a more personal level by introducing the company's executives to journalists, sometimes over lunch.

The public relations officer has to determine what is the best and most cost-effective method of communicating in the company's interests. The other function of public relations departments is to answer queries from the press and television. This is more important than the previously mentioned approaches. If a public relations department earns a reputation for finding the answers to press queries swiftly, effectively and accurately and presenting them in a form that is usable by the media, then what the department says is likely to be believed, trusted and used. If, on the other hand a public relations department treats press and television inquiries as tedious interruptions in the day's work, then the department will earn a reputation for awkwardness and must not be surprised if journalists are constantly trying to get in touch with the company bosses direct.