

Models of Public Relations

Press Agency/Publicity—One way with propaganda as its purpose.

Public Information—One way with dissemination of truthful information.

Two-way asymmetric—Scientific persuasion. Mutual understanding between sender (organization) and receiver (public[s]). Persuade the public to accept organization's point of view.

Two-way symmetric—Every attempt is made for each side to understand the other's point of view. (Develops mutual understanding.) If your public agrees with you, then you must find a way to communicate with the public and motivate it to act.

Public Relations Models [see asymmetrical models]

Grunig and Hunt developed four models of public relations: *press agency/publicity*, *public information*, *two-way asymmetric*, and *two-way symmetric*.

Each differs in the purpose and nature of communication.

- *Press agency/publicity* – is one-way communication with propaganda (one-sided arguments) as its purpose.
- *Public information* – The purpose of *public information*, also one-way, is the dissemination of truthful information.

- *Two-way asymmetric* – Scientific persuasion is the purpose of the *two-way asymmetric* model. Sender gets input from receiver (audience). Message might have to be changed to better inform.
Research should reveal what needs to be done to persuade target audience.
- *Two-way symmetric* – Further development of a mutual understanding is the intent of the *two-way symmetric* model. (Mutual benefits and understanding.) You ask target audience what must be said and how to motivate them to act.

In the *Two-way asymmetric* model, the communicator gets feedback from the public and then applies the latest communication and persuasion theories to persuade the public (audience) to accept the organization's point of view.

On the other hand, in the *Two-way symmetric* model, the communicator is the go between for the organization and its public, trying through all methods of communication to have each side understand each other's point of view. If persuasion takes place either way, it's because of information flowing both ways between the organization and the public (much more give and take because the sender and receiver are *not* adversarial).

Grunig and Hunt estimate that 15 percent of the organizations practice *Press agency/publicity*, 50 percent *public information*, 20 percent *Two-way asymmetric* and 15 percent *two-way symmetric*.