

Comparison of Selected PR Ethics Codes

	Arthur Page Society	Council of PR Firms	Global Alliance	IABC	NIRI	PRSA
Honesty	Tell the truth. Let the public know what's happening and provide an accurate picture of the company's character, ideals and practices.	Assure clients, the public and media, employees, and business partners and vendors the highest level of professionalism and ethical conduct in every relationship with a Council member.	Adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of clients and employers.	Refrain from taking part in any undertaking which the communicator considers to be unethical.	Maintain personal integrity and credibility by practicing investor relations in accordance with the highest legal and ethical standards.	Adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth in advancing the interests of those you represent and in communicating with the public.
				Be honest not only with others but also, and most importantly, with yourselves as individuals. Seek the truth and speak that truth first to yourself.		Be honest and accurate in all communications.
				Do not guarantee results that are beyond the power of the practitioner to deliver.		Avoid deceptive practices.



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Advocacy/ Expertise	Manage for tomorrow. Anticipate public reaction and eliminate practices that create difficulties. Generate goodwill.	Apply your fullest capability to achieve each client's business objectives.	Serve client and employer interests by acting as responsible advocates and by providing a voice in the market place of ideas, facts and viewpoints to aid informed public debate.	Be sensitive to cultural values and beliefs and engage in fair and balanced communication activities that foster and encourage mutual understanding.	Honor the obligation to serve the interest of shareholders and other stakeholders.	Serve the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for those you represent.
	Support each employee's capacity to be an honest, knowledgeable ambassador to customers, friends, share owners and public officials.		Accurately define what public relations activities can and cannot accomplish.	Understand and support the principles of free speech, freedom of assembly, and access to an open marketplace of ideas; and, act accordingly.		Provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts and viewpoints to aid informed public debate.



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	<p>Conduct public relations as if the whole company depends on it. Corporate relations is a management function. No corporate strategy should be implemented without considering its impact on the public. Be a policy maker capable of handling a wide range of corporate communications activities.</p>		<p>Encourage members to acquire and responsibly use specialized knowledge and experience to build understanding and client/employer credibility. Actively promote and advance the profession through continued professional development, research, and education.</p>			<p>Acquire and responsibly use specialized knowledge and experience. Build mutual understanding, credibility, and relationships among a wide array of institutions and audiences.</p>



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Independence					Exercise independent professional judgment in the conduct of your duties and responsibilities on behalf of your company or client.	Provide objective counsel to those you represent.
						Be accountable for your actions.
Loyalty	Listen to the customer. Understand what the public wants and needs. Keep top decision makers and other employees informed about public reaction to company products, policies and practices.		Insist that members are faithful to those they represent, while honoring their obligations to serve the interests of society and support the right of free expression.			Be faithful to those you represent, while honoring your obligation to serve the public interest.



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Fairness		Charge a fair price for PR services.	Conduct business with integrity and observe the principles and spirit of the Code in such a way that personal reputation and that of your employer and the public relations profession in general is protected.			Deal fairly with clients, employers, competitors, peers, vendors, the media, and the general public.



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Free Flow of information		Maintain total accuracy and truthfulness in communicating with the public and media.		Uphold the credibility and dignity of the profession by practicing honest, candid and timely communication and by fostering the free flow of essential information in accord with the public interest.	Provide analysts, institutional and individual investors and the media fair access to corporate information.	Preserve the integrity of the process of communication.
		Information that is found to be misleading or erroneous will be promptly corrected.		Disseminate accurate information and promptly correct any erroneous communication for which you may be responsible.		Act promptly to correct erroneous communications for which you are responsible.
		The sources of communications and sponsors of activities will not be concealed.		Obey laws and public policies governing professional activities and be sensitive to the spirit of all laws and regulations and, should any law or public policy be violated, for whatever reason, act promptly to correct the situation.		Preserve the free flow of unprejudiced information when giving or receiving gifts by ensuring that gifts are nominal, legal and infrequent.



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						Respect all opinions and support the right of free expression.
Competition		Refrain from recruiting employees of your clients.		Give credit for unique expressions borrowed from others and identify the sources and purposes of all information disseminated to the public.		Follow ethical hiring practices designed to respect free and open competition without deliberately undermining a competitor.
		Handle relationships with business partners and vendors in a businesslike manner, and give credit for ideas and services provided by others.				Preserve intellectual property rights in the marketplace.



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Disclosure of information		The sources of communications and sponsors of activities will not be concealed.		Comply with all legal requirements for the disclosure of information affecting the welfare of others.	Recognize that the integrity of the capital markets is based on transparency of credible financial and non-financial corporate information, and to the best of your ability and knowledge, work to ensure that the company or client fully and fairly discloses this important information.	Investigate the truthfulness and accuracy of information released on behalf of those represented.
						Reveal the sponsors for causes and interests represented.
						Disclose financial interest (such as stock ownership) in a client's organization.



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Confidentiality		Respect client confidences and the privacy of client employees.		Protect confidential information.	Maintain the confidentiality of information acquired in the course of your work for your company or client.	Safeguard the confidences and privacy rights of present, former, and prospective clients and employees.
				Professional communicators do not use confidential information gained as a result of professional activities for personal benefit and do not represent conflicting or competing interests without written consent of those involved.	Do not use confidential information acquired in the course of your work for personal advantage or for the advantage of related parties.	Protect privileged, confidential or insider information gained from a client or organization.
						Immediately advise an appropriate authority if a member discovers that confidential information is being divulged by an employee of a client company or organization.



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Conflicts of Interest		Avoid representing any conflicting or competing client interests without the expressed approval of those concerned.		Do not accept undisclosed gifts or payments for professional services from anyone other than a client or employer.	Avoid even the appearance of professional impropriety in the conduct of investor relations responsibilities.	Avoid actions and circumstances that may appear to compromise good business judgment or create a conflict between personal and professional interests.
					Avoid any professional/business relationships that might affect, or be perceived to potentially affect, the ethical practice of investor relations.	Disclose promptly any existing or potential conflict of interest to affected clients or organizations.
						Encourage clients and customers to determine if a conflict exists after notifying all affected parties.
						Act in the best interests of the client or employer, even subordinating the member's personal interests.



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Enhancing The Profession	Remain calm, patient and good-humored. Lay the groundwork for public relations miracles with consistent, calm and reasoned attention to information and contacts. When a crisis arises, remember that cool heads communicate best.	Respect the personal rights of employees and former employees.	Acknowledge that there is an obligation to protect and enhance the profession.	Engage in communication that is not only legal but also ethical and sensitive to cultural values and beliefs	Discharge your responsibilities completely and competently by keeping abreast of the affairs of your company or client as well as the laws and regulations affecting the practice of investor relations.	Acknowledge that there is an obligation to protect and enhance the profession.
		Provide employees the necessary tools to serve their clients and opportunities to develop their professional skills.	Keep informed and educated about practices in the profession that ensure ethical conduct.	Engage in truthful, accurate and fair communication that facilitates respect and mutual understanding.	Represent yourself in a reputable and dignified manner that reflects the professional stature of investor relations.	Keep informed and educated about practices in the profession to ensure ethical conduct.
		Safeguard the privacy and protect the professional reputation of current and former employees.	Actively pursue personal professional development.			Advance the profession through continued professional development, research, and education.
						Accurately define what public relations activities can accomplish.



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Obligation To Code			Require that individual members observe the ethical recommendations and behavioral requirements of the Protocol.	Adhere to the articles of the IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators.	Report to appropriate company authorities if you suspect or recognize fraudulent or illegal acts within the company.	Counsel subordinates in proper ethical decision making.
			Counsel individual members in proper ethical decision-making generally and on a case-specific basis.			Require that subordinates adhere to the ethical requirements of the Code.
						Report ethical violations, whether committed by PRSA members or not, to the appropriate authority.
						Decline representation of clients or organizations that urge or require actions contrary to this Code.



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Enforcement of Code				Communication campaigns rather than negative sanctions.	Positive communication rather than negative sanctions.	Enforcement replaced by education.
				Members of IABC who are found guilty by an appropriate governmental agency or judicial body of violating laws and public policies governing their professional activities may have their membership terminated by the IABC executive board following procedures set forth in the association's bylaws.	Members of NIRI who are sanctioned by an appropriate governmental agency or judicial body for violating laws or regulations affecting their professional activities may, upon recommendation of the NIRI Ethics Council, have their membership terminated by the NIRI Board of Directors following procedures in the institute's bylaws.	The PRSA Board of Directors retains the right to bar from membership or expel from the Society any individual who has been or is sanctioned by a government agency or convicted in a court of law of an action that is in violation of the Code.

