



May 2016

From the Global Body of Knowledge (GBOK) to a global capabilities framework

It is a key mission of the Global Alliance to find the standards that unite us while identifying the diversity among the many ways in which public relations and communication management are practised. Through this mission, the members of the Global Alliance hope to jointly raise the standards and to globalize our profession.

The Global Alliance has dedicated a multi-year, two-phased project to this endeavour, supported by a mandate given by its members at the Annual General Meeting 2014.

Under the stewardship of Jean Valin, an international team of volunteers first studied all existing professional qualifications and educational standards, identified overlaps and developed an aggregate document named 'Global Body of Knowledge' (GBOK) that is available on the GA website. This first phase thus concludes with a compilation of the current most prevalent knowledge and behavioural items as defined in national professional standards and in numerous workshops with association and industry leaders in all continents.

In a second phase, this GBOK document now forms the basis for further consultations with GA member associations and with public relations scholars under the stewardship of Anne Gregory and Johanna Fawkes at the University of Huddersfield. Responding to suggestions of GA-members, they will conceptually explore if the knowledge and behavioural items in public relations can be expanded into a global capabilities framework (with local flexibility) that may serve to raise the standards of public relations in the years to come.

This report summarizes the progress made in the first phase and provides an outlook on the second phase. Both phases of the project will also be presented at the Association Workshop 2016 and the World Public Relations Forum 2016 in Toronto.

As Chair of the Global Alliance, I wish to thank the stewards of this project for their most extraordinary dedication from which our profession will stand to benefit in many ways, years and countries. Also, thanks go out to the many national leaders who have contributed their input, opinions and perspectives. I invite all members of the Global Alliance to please continue being involved in this crucial global consultation. A global capabilities framework can become exactly as robust as we want it to be if we continue to work together.

Gregor Halff, Chair
Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management

Phase 1: Global Body of Knowledge

The GBOK evolved from the result of extensive analysis and examination of over 31 credential schemes, education frameworks and scholarly work in the area of communication management and public relations. This was essentially a benchmarking exercise. It was first developed in 2015 at the request of Global Alliance member organizations that wished to examine the possibility of setting a global standard for the practice of public relations and communication management.

During the first phase of the project, research identified that there is a high degree of matching across the credentialing, education frameworks and other research examined from Global Alliance organizations.

It allowed for the development of a first draft (V 1.0) list of knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours (KSABs) reflecting the content of current frameworks, many of which have been in existence for many years. This was presented to Global Alliance members at the association workshop in Milan in June of 2015 where over 40 leaders of public relations and communication management associations were present and offered comments.

A second draft (V 2.0) - the result of comments received at the inaugural presentation at the June 2015 Global Alliance leaders workshop- was further refined after initial reactions and sent for formal consultation with GA members and open for general discussion on many social media outlets. The consultation period was from July 2015 to May 2016.

Project leader Jean Valin, GA chair Gregor Halff and Immediate Past Chair Anne Gregory have conducted several briefings, webinars, and penned posts that were published on social media platforms during the consultation period.

Version 3, available as Appendix B, reflects the amalgamated comments of professional associations and leading professionals. It also provides in one place the necessary starting point needed to establish what capability/competency/ skills and knowledge frameworks are currently available.

The objective was to create a forward-looking competency and capability framework that captured contemporary KSABs and those that will be needed in the future. For example, a current hard trend is the commoditization of public relations tasks (think UBER and AirBnB) and just around the corner, the ability to interact with robotic tools that are able to auto-generate text.

A summary of comments received is at appendix A.

A majority of GA member associations support our continued efforts to define what public relations practitioners do across a variety of functional roles and list the comprehensive competencies required to practice public relations.

Several associations offered detailed suggestions and comments. Only a few expressed reservations about the need for this initiative in their country. One of our largest association members piloted the GBOK as part of their credential program and offered helpful suggestions. One of the largest PR agencies in the world expressed a desire to adopt the final version as a base for ongoing training within their agency.

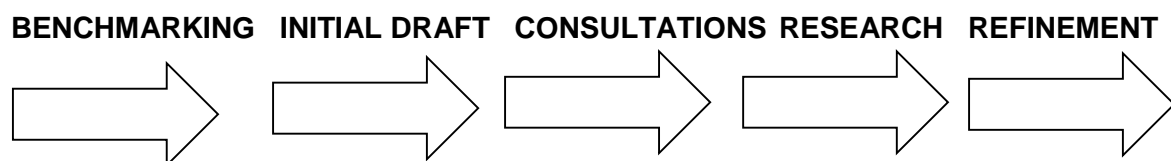
We also received advice from a leading expert in professional competencies who reviewed the GBOK work and offered several options to frame the GBOK within different conceptual frameworks

As comments came in, the project team and GA leaders started to realize that the work needed re-framing. The way the research had been conducted inevitably made it reflective of the past and current situation rather than being conceived as a new and fresh look at the capabilities of today's and tomorrow's modern professional. To keep faith with the existing frameworks and received comments and to provide as comprehensive overview as possible, the GBOK also became a large document – in this itself it meant that it lost its accessibility.

Through a research grant program offered at Huddersfield University in the UK, Anne Gregory developed a proposal involving eight partner universities from around the world to ensure its global relevance, explore alternative, accessible conceptual frameworks and consider how to re-cast the work within a new agreed conceptual framework that would allow scalability and flexibility.

The proposal was accepted and an expanded team has been assembled in early 2016 supported by a primary researcher, Dr. Johanna Fawkes.

Path followed and ahead



The Global Alliance and GBOK project leaders would like to express their gratitude to members of the project team that helped to analyse the comments and refine the current draft.

The team members are: Celia Sollows, Sheridan McVean (CPRS, Canada), Charlotte Sansom (CIPR, UK) and team leader Jean Valin (2004-2005 GA chair)

Current draft GBOK (version 3.0)

The concluding iteration of this underpinning first phase is now available at Appendix B.

It will serve as the base from which the next phase of research will begin. It can be used now as a checklist for associations wishing to re-calibrate their credential schemes or curriculum standards.

This version 3.0 represents the project team's effort to integrate and resolve some of the issues and suggestions made by GA members and others online to improve the current base document. However, it does not attempt to resolve the difficulties with the conceptual framework. This will be one of the challenges taken up by the expanded research partners in phase 2.

Current conceptual framework explained

In framing the GBOK, it was important to define how the elements interact, and against what backdrop of experience. Communication being the central element in the work of practitioners, three dimensions of communication: visual, written and oral are present across all KSA's. The Experiential element reflects the body of experience of the individual and applies to all KSA's and is central to the behaviours adopted by the practitioner.



From GBOK to a global capability framework

Not many professions or professional activities have attempted to describe a body of knowledge and list the capabilities required to practice on a global scale. The Global Alliance realizes that not every part of the world practices public relations in the same way and hence the necessary skills, abilities and knowledge to practice varies.

As the comments received indicate, the remaining challenges encountered relate to the conceptual framework chosen to create the GBOK.

This speaks to the need for a new approach; one that will allow flexibility while looking at the issues from a different perspective. A capability approach offers great potential to unravel the challenges we face in finalizing the GBOK.

A report on phase 2 outlines the next steps of this project.

Questions for GA leaders

1. **Question:** Does the revised GBOK draft capture your suggestions and comments?
2. Currently the conceptual framework suggests that certain core knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours (KSAB) would be mandatory or part of core skills anywhere in the world (foundation or core skills). This would effectively declare a minimum standard to practice. **Question:** Is this the right approach

Phase 2: A Capability Approach

1 INTRODUCTION

This report indicates the direction of future research into developing a capability framework for use by Global Alliance (GA) affiliated professional bodies and their members, world-wide.

2 THE BRIEF

To construct a conceptual framework that can be used globally; reflects cultural and regional variations in public relations as a profession; and is forward looking in its approach. It also needs to be acceptable to the global academic and practitioner communities.

3 CHOICES

Professions have developed a number of frameworks for understanding, benchmarking and setting standards for practice¹. Traditionally, these have tended to be descriptions of tasks – to ascertain professional expertise; or references to a body of knowledge – to assist with curriculum design. This is the **competency** approach and describes the skills, knowledge, attributes and/or behaviours of individual practitioners. As many professions find their core practice changing with technological, social and economic changes, these can become outdated.

More recently, attention has turned towards models of **competence**, which consider what is necessary to practice competently and then identify the constituent elements of that competence. The needs of the workplace or profession as a whole drive this approach. However, it can be hard to assess the degree to which, say, ethical awareness is embedded in everyday professional practice.

¹ (Gregory, 2008; Stan Lester, 2014)

Limitations with both approaches have led professions to look towards **capability** approaches for more dynamic, fluid and future-looking frameworks. This approach is outlined below.

4 CAPABILITY APPROACHES

Capability approaches extend the notion of competence and contextualize it. They describe the abilities required by a profession or possessed by a practitioner. Capability approaches emphasise potential or opportunities to achieve or acquire competences – so are more dynamic than competences. Capability is contextualised – allowing for consideration of access to resources, such as education, technology or social status and other variables not always included in competency approaches.

Capabilities are generic and underpin competences. They can be used to define the core practices of a profession, but should be limited to those that are irreducible.

Capability frameworks emerging from global sustainability policy development² encourage the widest possible participation in both creating and evaluating the set of capabilities. These can therefore be prioritised according to the value they represent to the individual or group.

In addition to researching the well-being of individuals and groups in poverty or other need, this approach has also been used to research education³, nursing⁴ and midwifery⁵ provision and professional standards across national boundaries. There are also capability studies of leadership, management and communication technology.

A second strand of capability framing has begun to influence thinking on professional standards for use by professional bodies and their members at national and European levels (see below).

4.1 CAPABILITY APPROACHES TO PROFESSIONS

The capability approach encourages professional maturity⁶ because it facilitates more fluid, dynamic engagement with broader issues of professionalism such as the capacity to reflect critically or apply independent judgement in complex situations. More relevant to professional development than *knowledge* of codes is the *capacity to apply* ethical guidance in decision-making. “An advantage of the capability approach is that is generally perceived as an open model, supporting continuous development: there is a spectrum of capability as opposed to either a threshold of ‘capable or not capable’ or a neat scale of progressively increasing capacity” (Lester, 2014:38).

² (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1999)

³ (Walker & Unterhalter, 2007)

⁴ (O'Connell, Gardner, Coyer, Gardner, & Coyer, 2014)

⁵ ((McCarthy, Kelley, Verani, St. Louis, & Riley, 2014)

⁶ (Stan Lester, 2014)

Lester proposes a model of competences (not competencies) based on work with engineering, land conservation and other professions, some aspects of which are applicable across professions. For example, the capabilities of assessing, deciding, doing and reviewing will be familiar to most students and practitioners of strategic communications.

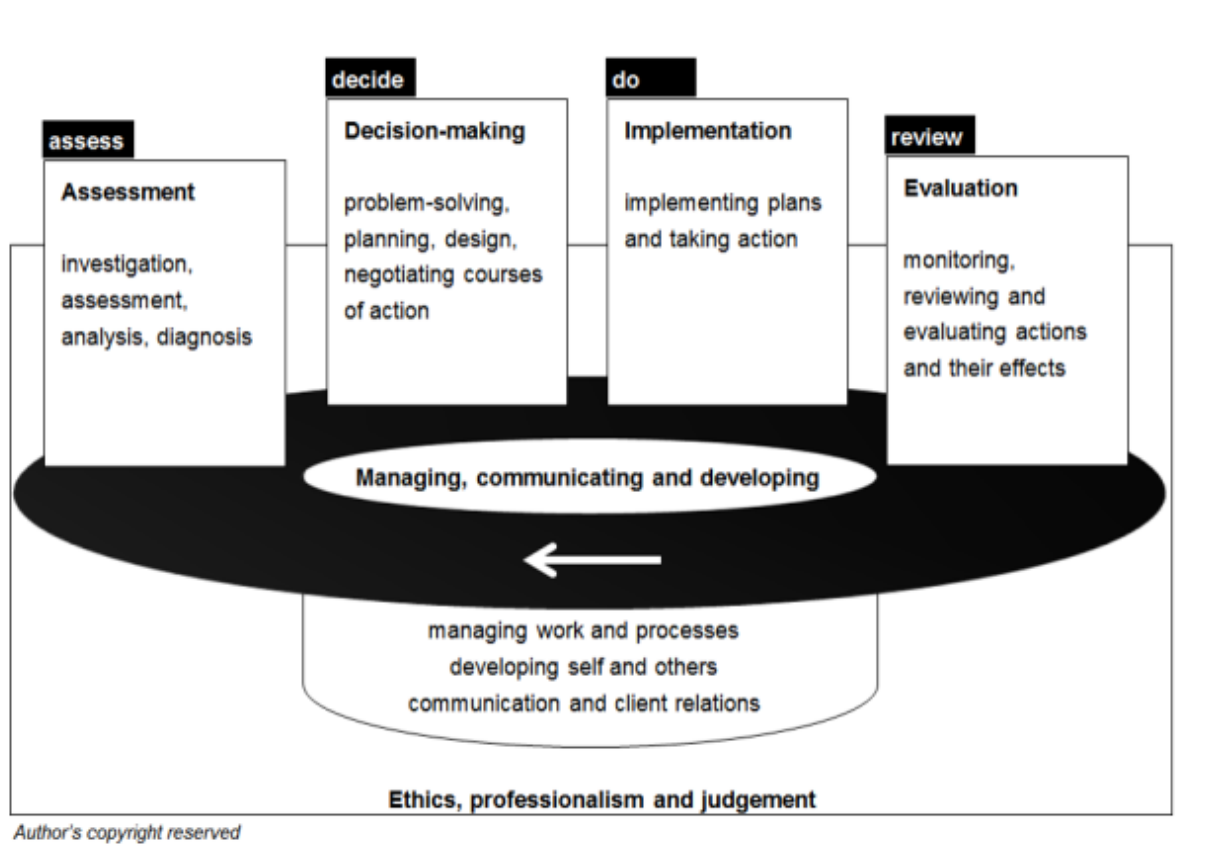


Fig 1: Lester's Core Capability Model (2014a)

4.2 EXAMPLES OF THE CAPABILITY APPROACH IN PRACTICE

While we cannot predict exactly what the final GA capability framework will look like, there are examples of other professions who have adopted this approach, such as the UK's Engineering Council⁷. The Council has used this approach to structure its qualifications and member development. The key capabilities they identified at the outset were: **Knowledge and understanding; Design and development of processes, systems, services and products; Responsibility, management or leadership; Communication and inter-personal skills; and Professional commitment.** These elements were then 'unpacked' to illustrate what is meant by each term and how an engineer can demonstrate competence in each area.

⁷ (Council, 2013)

Another professional body, the Institute of Conservation took a similar approach, generating a column of domains which covered specific aspects of the profession, professional responsibility and development and generic aspects of being professional, each of which was then detailed in documentation, as follows:

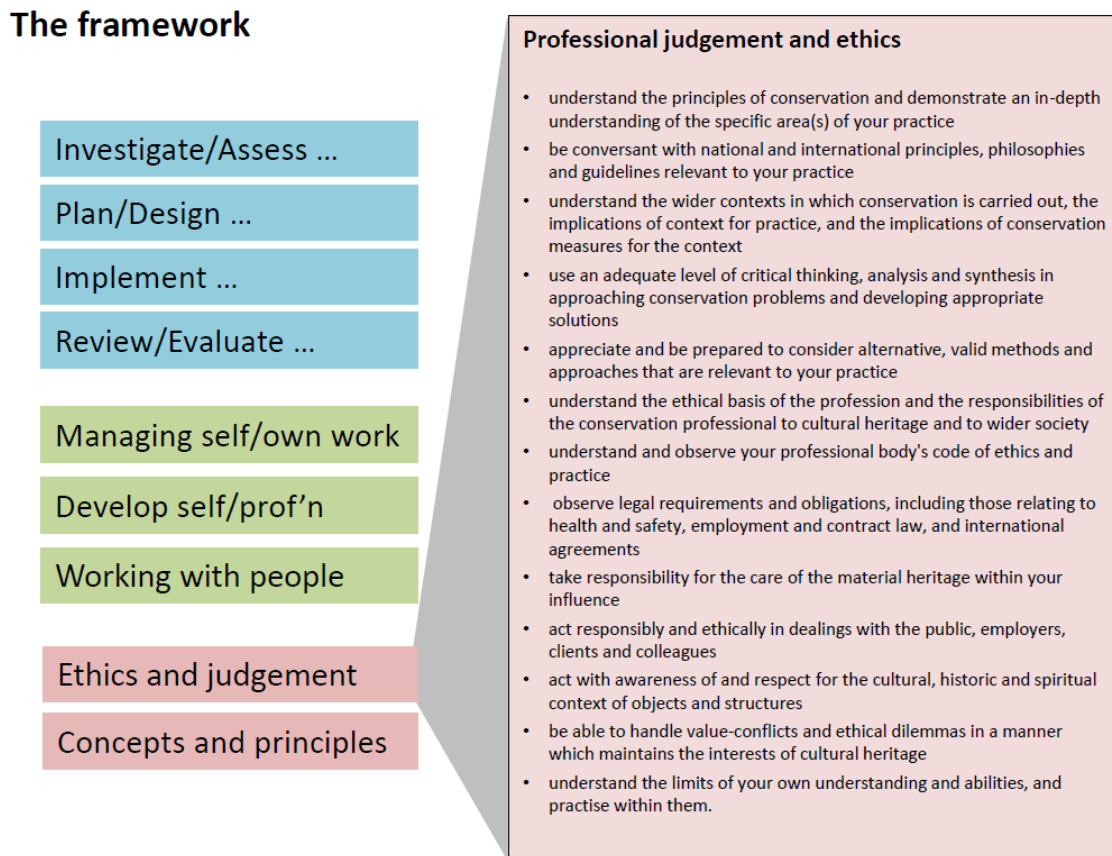


Fig.2 Lester (2016, p. 25)

While the process and use of the framework will differ between engineers, conservationists and public relations professions, these examples illustrate how this approach encourages awareness of professional issues such as ethics and responsible decision-making in an integrated manner that contributes to the maturity of its members and the profession as a whole. It also shows how starting with the needs of the profession can shape the debate about its future.

5 DESIGNING A CAPABILITIES FRAMEWORK FOR THE GA

A capability approach is proposed as the conceptual framework for the Global Alliance because it is flexible and allows for cultural variables, as well as providing the opportunity to consider capabilities necessary for 21st century communication professions and professionals. A hybrid model, drawing on

the global design and ability to discriminate between capabilities of the Sen/Nussbaum approach and the pragmatic application of Lester's work, will address the requirements of the global profession, both as a whole and regionally.

A capabilities framework is built through collaboration and continuing reflection from all participants. It is a fluid, iterative process, lending itself to use in continuing professional development programmes.

A successful capabilities framework is outward looking, forward looking and in a dynamic engagement with its constituents and stakeholders.

The selection and prioritization of capabilities will define the current state and direction of the profession, as perceived by its leaders, so the first task is to agree on which capabilities most clearly represent public relations and communication management as a profession. These are likely to include generic professional capabilities, such as the capacity to exercise autonomy, to evaluate complex situations critically, to reflect on current developments in the field. This is where ethical awareness will feature. Then there are practice-based capabilities, which can be synthesised from existing literature, including the GBOK report. These need to be as generic as possible as a starting point, so that one does not need lists of capabilities to produce material for different platforms. Instead, there might be "capability to express complex meaning in a variety of platforms, traditional and digital"; or "the capacity to listen, distinguish and negotiate between different perspectives when recommending communication actions". The dimensions of the framework will emerge through the research project as proposed below.

The selected capabilities will then be assessed by different regional bodies, using our network of academic and professional bodies, allowing for the emergence of different priorities in different regions. This approach also encourages recognition of issues which may be impeding the development of potential, such as access to the internet, or education or other local issues affecting the profession and its practitioners in that region.

5.1 OUTCOMES

The exact nature of the final outcome is, naturally, unpredictable at this stage: it will emerge through research and global consultation around the core capabilities of public relations as a profession.

It will be in line with current developments around cross-national professional development and will reflect the varying priorities of affiliated bodies. The emphasis on capability rather than competency creates a built-in sense of the future and encourages insights into further development at all levels.

The project will seek to develop an app for use by professional bodies, employers and individual members to map their own capabilities and identify means for realizing their potential.

The capability approach will lead to the following outcomes over the two-year the project:

- a) Set of desired capabilities for the public relations profession/professional
- b) Regional variations on (a)
- c) Regional assessment of current (and future or desirable) capabilities
- d) Global and regional 'maps' showing congruence between desired goals and realities
- e) Action plans for closing the gaps between 'what is' and 'what could be', through resources, education and other appropriate mechanisms.

Beyond the project there is scope to revisit, review and map changes in all key aspects, regionally and globally.

5.2 TIMESCALE

A broad timescale is suggested as:

Task 1 June 2018 – Oct 2016

The first task will be to draw up and consult on the core capabilities (i.e. potential) in the field. This list will be drawn from a review of literature, from professional development generally, work on global standards, and public relations reports, such as the GBOK report, the ECOPSI project, CPRE, the Excellence project and other existing overviews of where public relations is as a profession and where it is going, both in terms of the overarching development of the field and the current and future demands for practitioner expertise.

The suggested list will be canvassed among member bodies, senior practitioners, academic partners and other interested stakeholders.

Task 2 Nov 2016 – April 2017

The suggested list of capabilities will then be surveyed across a variety of sectors and regions. Questions will be asked concerning the value placed on each aspect, current performance in that aspect and possible remedies for addressing any incongruence – either by revising the list, or suggesting further resources, such as training to address issues considered important but lacking in the area.

Task 3 May 2017 – Sept 2017

The results will be analysed and compared across regions to create a global map of ideals, current performance and suggestions for improvement or review, as appropriate.

These results will be analysed at the level of profession and practitioner so both can assess their current and desired status.

Task 3a – an app may be developed to facilitate this self-assessment.

Task 4 Oct 2017 – May 2018

A report summarising the findings and proposing a global capability framework (with regional variations, if necessary) will be submitted to the WPRF 2018. Other publications and recommendations will flow

from the research. As suggested above, there is scope for continuous review of capabilities, regionally and globally.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The GA board is recommended to adopt this approach and encourage members to participate in the research project conducted by the University of Huddersfield.

Professor Anne Gregory and Dr Johanna Fawkes, University of Huddersfield

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8 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- **Capability** approaches emphasise potential or opportunities to achieve or acquire competences – they include opportunities.
- **Competency** is the demonstrated ability to complete a task, skill, knowledge, attitude or behaviour
- **Competence** is the more generic ability to make professional judgements in a range of situations
- **Frameworks** provide overview of capabilities for a particular field or profession
- **Levels** can relate to length of service or scale of expertise, from novice to expert

Note: while **competency** and **competence** denote significantly different approaches, the terminology is so close as to confuse. This project will therefore use **capability** to indicate the broader, holistic approach.

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An initial literature review has surveyed a variety of fields, primarily outside communication, in order to evaluate the usefulness of the capability approach and understand its use by different sectors. A full literature review will follow.

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Appendix A

NB. This is a summary of comments received from GA members. ALL comments were considered during the drafting of the latest version of GBOK.

APRN (Indonesia)

Indonesia has established a Work Standard National Competency Indonesia (SKKNI), which is government legislation.

Indonesia PR levels of qualification consists of:

- junior-level public relations,
- mid-level public relations,
- public relations expert level, and
- public relations expert in managerial level.

Early Career or entry-level roles:

- GA already incorporates competency-related PR and social media channels, digital literacy and crisis communication that is not included in public relations junior and public relations associate in Indonesia.
- GBOK presents Indonesia with the need to upgrade or develop competencies of the junior-level PR and middle-level for Indonesia's readiness to compete in ASEAN and ASIA.
- It is expected that junior public relations and PR mid-level also have knowledge about crisis communications, especially in monitoring the critical issues of the company to be the first experience in the field of crisis communications.
- GBOK currently does not include Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), but should be included as it is a differentiator and is important in Indonesia.
- There is a need for Junior and Public Relations Associate to have knowledge about Investor Relations, Government PR and Environment PR to align with development of PR competence to compete at the level of ASEAN and ASIA.

Mid-career or senior roles:

- Companies in Indonesia are still putting PR practitioners only in the area of work that is technical.
- Public Relations division typically is under the control of other divisions such as Marketing, but that can be changed by: 1) dissemination of the role and function of PR in Indonesia; and 2) the importance of PR practitioners improving their competency to master both technical and managerial functions of public relations.
- We need to put special competence in PR Experts and Managerial regarding government relations.
- Another thing that needs to be enriched in the PR Expert and managerial competence is Crisis PR. Implementation of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the ASEAN+3 require PR to also think globally.
- We need PR for Hospitality Industry and Creative Industry so that it will be aligned with the development of industry in Indonesia. PR for Politics is required as Indonesia is the third largest democratic country in the world and the largest democratic country in Southeast Asia.

CPRP (Argentina)

Early Career or entry-level roles:

DK1 - Consider different theories and models (not only the dominant but the alternatives ones)

EK5 - Consider different historical approaches and points of view (not only official American version but alternative ones)

ASA1 - Not only communication theory but especially PR theory

Add:

BK5 - Unethical practices

CK3 - Differences between crisis scenarios and conflict scenarios

DK4 - Social sciences theories

EK7 - The social role of public relations

SA - Flexibility with the constant changes

Mid-career or senior roles:

DK1 - Consider different theories and models (not only the dominant but the alternatives ones)

EK5 - Consider different historical approaches and points of view (not only official American version but alternative ones)

Add:

BK5 - Unethical practices

CK3 - Differences between crisis scenarios and conflict scenarios

DK4 - Social sciences theories

EK7 - The social role of public relations

SSA - Flexibility with the constant changes

SACP (Sweden)

We have doubts in the Swedish board concerning the certifications, and we don't believe it's the right way for the profession. These comments are from informal discussions with some of the board members regarding the document.

Our main conclusions are that diversity among communicators are good; it is positive with communicators with different competences, for example a degree in political science, psychology, business or economics combined with vocational courses, or an academic postgraduate in communications.

Furthermore, higher education (academic) has to follow detailed requirements; the core in the education design is based on analysis, generic knowledge, and critical and independent thinking. Therefore, it is difficult to set demands to the universities.

UNIVERSIDAD de San Martín de Porres (Peru)
From: Marita Solórzano Castro

The Universidad de San Martín de Porres is a private university located in Lima.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universidad_de_San_Mart%C3%ADn_de_Porres)

Early Career or entry-level roles:

- In Latin America we have to specify the second language needed for succeeding in PR should be English because the majority of PR information is written in English.
- English allows students and professionals the access to first hand information (FSA3), that is essential for obtaining the required Knowledge in Public Relations. Only in that way discussions about the profession with Latin American academics and professionals could take place. In this sense, also Latin- American Theorists have to translate their productions to English. I guess that people involved in Public Relations would like to know what has been done all these years at this part of the world.
- At the same time, Anglophone professionals must think to translate their written productions into Spanish as there is a good market for the profession in this part of the world, at least in Perú. We have to take in account that globalization is about inclusion.
- If we want real globalization, we need massive access to information, for example, in Spanish. If not, the effort would be limited because money is required for learning another language, and we are referring not only to professionals but also about students, and the future is there.

Mid-career or senior roles:

- It is very important for mid-career or senior roles to have some pedagogical skills because young professionals want to learn from senior professionals that are excellent at work and it happens that sometimes these professionals do not have the ability to share their knowledge and expertise.

CPRS (Canada)

CPRS provided additional detailed comments so the following provides just an overview of their comments.

Early Career or entry-level roles:

The seven competency areas for entry level are knowledge of:

1. Research, planning, implementation, and evaluation
 2. Ethics and law
 3. Crisis communication management
 4. Communication models and theories
 5. History of and current issues in public relations
 6. Business literacy
 7. Media and social channels, use of technology
- In general there is a need for greater differentiation between expectations for entry level and mid-level and the competencies identified do not adequately address the significant and fundamental differences in depth of practitioner's knowledge, skills and abilities between new career entrants and mid-level practitioners.
 - Typically for the entry-level role (with 1 year or less in experience) we expect basic knowledge of all areas of the field. However, in Canada, entry level public relations staff are typically (not always) supervised by a more seasoned practitioner and they continue to develop their KSAB's over time.

Just because an entry-level person may be need to perform beyond an entry level role does not mean that we should expect that level of performance.

- There is duplication in the individual KSABs, with the same area mentioned multiple times in different contexts. There is also duplication of expectations between entry-level and mid-level practitioners. As an example, audience/stakeholder analysis (and activities associated with this type of work) is effectively referenced six times for entry level (EAK5, EAK6, EASA1, EASA2, ECSA2, ECSA6) and four times for mid-level (MASSA1, MASSA 5, MASSA6, MDSSA1). We suggest the KSABs could be refined to remove the duplication and provide some expectation about how audience analysis expectations shift as one advances from entry level to mid-level in their career.
- Generally there are activities identified as entry level that we view as more suitable for mid-level practitioners. This includes, for example, management of information and knowledge, and management of communication. A number of necessary skills and abilities also fall into this category including, for example, ability to build and maintain relationships with key audiences and stakeholders; demonstrated understanding of local, regional national laws; ability to manage issues; and ability to manage programs and resources.

Mid-career or senior roles:

The core competencies are:

1. Research, planning, implementation, and evaluation
 2. Applying professionalism ethics and law
 3. Managing Issues and Crisis Communication
 4. Understanding communication models, theories and history of the profession
 5. Leading the public relations function
 6. Managing relationships
- As indicated previously we feel this needs to be generally refined to reduce redundancy and create better definition between entry level and mid-level expectations.
 - Is the focus too strongly focused on the consulting sector, could there be a stronger balance with corporate sector work?
 - If we were to add an advanced level at a future point in time some of the elements identified as mid-level could move to that category and additions could relate to areas such as navigating a business through challenging economic times, negotiating contracts, and so on.
 - For references to the legal arena, we should specify public relations law.
 - Models and theories are already mentioned for entry-level, so what is different here? Is the thinking that application is different than knowledge about models and theories?
 - Is “managing the PR function” better than “leading the function”? “Managing” is a better fit with the PR literature (e.g., roles in PR by Broom and Dozier).

DPRG (Germany)

The following are key points in English based on the original German language document.

- Is the intention of the GBOK project to show a possible (and desired?) trajectory of the public relations profession toward becoming a field that encompasses ever more sub-disciplines (and bodies of knowledge) and that moves closer to the core of organizations and of management discourse? Or is the project and its document intended to define the smallest common denominator across the current state of the profession, and in doing so preserve the delineation between PR and other functions like IR, marketing and public affairs.
- While the current GBOK document seems to support the former, DPRG expresses a preference for the latter.

- DPRG expresses doubts about the current document’s split between just two levels of seniority and instead suggests that today’s professional reality has both greater depth (i.e. multiple, distinct levels of seniority) as well as scope (i.e. differentiation of the roles in sub-disciplines).
- More specifically, the items constituting the entry level seem arbitrary, with, for example, crisis communication and issues management included, but political communication or reputation not mentioned. In the eyes of DPRG, these inconsistencies invite the question what the overarching frame of reference has been or could be in a next step of the project.
- DPRG would welcome a further discussion about the future of the profession, a framework and a reflection of both in a – yet to be developed - document.
- Elements that should be prominently included in such a future-oriented document include: technological literacy, general management and value chain management, financial communication & investor relations, corporate brand management, employer branding, compliance and governance, CSR and content management.
- Meanwhile, the ‘abilities and personal traits’ in the current document are deemed too generic and arbitrary to be included in a future-oriented document.

PART TWO: Summary of comments provided via the Global Alliance website

The Global Alliance website encouraged discussion between participants who shared their comments about the GBOK initial findings online via the website.

In summarizing the website conversations for this document, the comments were grouped into the following four general topic areas:

- 1. Adding additional specialties;*
- 2. Using methods of analysis other than KSABs;*
- 3. Replacing “entry level” and “mid-career and senior roles” with outcomes or other alternatives; and*
- 4. Competency frameworks/models used by other organizations.*

Participants’ comments were grouped into these four topic areas for the purpose of this document after their comments were provided.

1. Adding additional specialties

Sean Trainor: “PR career paths can follow a specialist route.” The current GBOK needs to recognize other PR specialties beyond Government and Public Affairs.

Sean Williams: Employee/ Internal Communication needs to be included.

Andy Green: I would add Brand Strategy and Brand Story telling or corporate narrative skills.

Pamela Mounter: Can more be made of the importance of internal communication? Can something around coaching senior management be included?

2. Using methods of analysis other than KSABs

Steven Shepperson-Smith: I wonder if you should have started with roles in the industry as described by Cutlip, Center & Broom and Viera & Grantham. Also, there seems to be an assumption that PR is

the same everywhere (what I would call the international view) rather than done very differently across the world.

Judy Gombita: Have you considered examining the global standards ‘vertically’ (by role/department/industry), rather than horizontally by education and experience?

Jean Valin (in response to Judy): We analyzed what our members wanted us to compare to the benchmark. One of these was the ECOPSI framework, which had some functional lines of practice and specific skills to perform.

Kevin Ruck: Practitioners expect professional qualifications to be focused on practice. I therefore welcome the differentiation between professional courses and degree programmes in the GBOK project.

Jean Valin (in response to Kevin): The plan is to ask more formally for employer input with a survey in the future.

3. Replacing “entry level” and “mid-career and senior roles” with outcomes or other alternatives

Heather Yaxley:

Time served seems a crude and again old-fashioned/ out-dated measure, so why the hierarchy so why the three “levels”? Can we develop a framework that allows for the continuity, variety and individuality of contemporary work/careers across the global practice in all sorts of organizations and as independent practitioners?

Methods of identifying competencies seem to rely on opinion rather than any ethnographic or other real world study. Methods to identify competencies seem to be questions and essays for the APR and CIPR (professional accreditation programs).

We have to guide against focusing on input rather than outcomes. We are interested in ways in which competency translates into effectiveness.

I urge the process of developing a global standards framework to stretch outside the boundaries of PR and look at other areas where issues will be raised and discussed by ourselves have been considered over longer periods and from different perspectives.

The potential impact of automated technology and the Uberisation of work require critical examination with any context of the future of public relation standards.

Jean Valin (in response to Heather):

Long-long learning should be in GBOK and we captured it in our behaviours section. Our intention is to revisit GBOK every few years.

We did our best to write the GBOK with outcomes in mind but we aren’t there yet.

Heather Yaxley (in response to Jean):

I dislike the entire concept of levels. What do these levels really mean? This approach is increasingly meaningless now when work, jobs and careers are less hierarchical than in the 20th century.

Life-long learning should not be in any section – my argument is that it is a philosophy that should be guiding the entire project.

Toni muxi falconi: I have a bias against any document that claims to define ‘standards’ of anything.

Anne Gregory:

Some member countries require professions/occupations to be registered in such a framework, or something similar is needed for this. Others want to have a benchmark for their own qualifications and as a measure for academic programs that they recognize. Some want to develop their professional development offering to equip members for the future.

A key issue is whether we try to do it exhaustively by minute description, or whether we make broad statements of purpose with a few defining areas of expertise. The right answer is, whatever is most helpful to us and others.

Maybe one approach is to have a points-based system that recognizes this (differences in PR experience) and the number of points you have determines your level.

It is absolutely right to recognize the modern way of working– flat, flexible, fleet of foot and increasingly with nebulous boundaries. So how can we capture that well?

There is another approach, which is to say let’s scrap all the past capability frameworks and focus completely on competencies or behaviours since they are knowledge and skills in action which are focused on achieving organizational objectives. But what about our wider social purpose outside organizational boundaries?

Pamela Mounter (in response to Anne): Can we look again at defining principles?

Anne Gregory (in response to Pamela): Yes we can, ethics codes are done this way.

Pamela Mounter (in response to Anne): I’d welcome defining principles such as ethics, the importance of the employee audience and acting on it, compiling a risk register, professional integrity, and personal integrity.

4. Competency frameworks/models used by other organizations

Heather Yaxley: The International Integrated Reporting Council is seeking feedback on an integrated reporting competency framework (deadline was 16 September 2015).

Here level is related to one’s involvement in IR rather than any occupational criteria as clearly competence in this area potentially relates to a range of disciplinary backgrounds. I found it useful to see the approach being adopted clearly set out in relation to being: outcomes based, integrated thinking embedded, linked with governance, whole business perspective.

Paul Seaman (in response to Heather): I would add that most of the knowledge area or skills or competencies (call them what you will) listed by Heather represent a very partial summary of basic attributes anybody in almost any profession or trade must possess today to succeed. In other words, they have little to do with PR per se.

PR is not and never will be a technocratic or bureaucratic trade reducible to a technical skills list examinable or measurable the way the article suggests. Ours is a much more creative industry than that. Hence, I suggest, there is something soul destroying at the heart of this academic exercise.

Heather Yaxley (in response to Paul): The tension between art and science, or management and creative sides of PR is definitely a challenge when looking to formalize or at least document competence. Partly that brings back to the purpose of such an exercise, which Jean says is not totally clear with reference to different expectations and requirements of various GA members. For me that is a major flaw, which is why I feel having clear and agreed principles, scope and purpose, would help in the development of any competency framework.

Paul Seaman (in response to Heather): In my view, the work of a proper profession is not led by clients. But it has the self-confidence and professionalism to tell clients what needs to be done to achieve great outcomes and to raise the level of expectation beyond what was originally asked for.

But while PR can never be a classic profession, the check-list-driven GBOK project reduces our usefulness to being assess by a list of banal - creativity limited – criteria. We can do better.

Marcus Vinicius Bonfim (from Sao Paulo, Brazil): I am studying ways to create a professional accreditation model for our country that serves three main purposes. First, to improve the quality of education and training in PR in Brazil. Secondly, to give the market (especially agencies and organizations) a clear, safe way to hire professionals according to their knowledge, skills and attitudes in areas or specific segments. And finally, that this process of accreditation helps colleagues create a genuine and strong identity to the market and recognition of Brazilian society, the need for work in PR in various market segments of the country, which calls for ethics, transparency, compliance and quality. I would love to exchange more ideas and information with PR practitioners around the world as Congratulations for the posts and reflections!

Appendix B

Revised GBOK document- May 2016

Final DRAFT Global Body of Knowledge (GBOK)

Version 3.0 May 2016



Introduction

In 2015 Global Alliance member organizations identified the opportunity to explore a global standard for the practice of public relations and communication management.

The intent of this initiative is to create a competency and capability framework that captures contemporary and future-proof Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Behaviours required for the practice of public relations.

In the rapidly evolving practice of public relations there are many different roles (from one person operation to a structured multi-layered environment), many levels of experience, and tremendous variety in terms of both the scope of work and the level of responsibility for practitioners.

Having said that, a review of existing documentation from GA member organizations support the view that there is significant consistency in existing credentialing schemes associated with the practice for entry-level practitioners with less than a year of experience, and mid-level practitioners who have been practicing for five years or more.

As a result, this first attempt at describing a the Global Body of Knowledge strives to describe expectations for practitioners in entry-level roles (with 1 year or less experience) and mid-career (with five years or more of experience).

This should be regarded as a first step in what can grow to become a more fulsome effort that could eventually also identify credentials for practitioners in more senior and leadership roles.

WORK TO DATE

Work began with the extensive analysis and examination of over 31 credential schemes, education frameworks and scholarly work in the area of communication management and public relations.

During the first phase of the project, research identified that there is a high degree of matching across the credentialing, education frameworks and other research examined from Global Alliance organizations. It allowed for the development of a first draft list of knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviours (KSABs) reflecting the content of current frameworks, many of which have been in existence for many years and regularly updated.

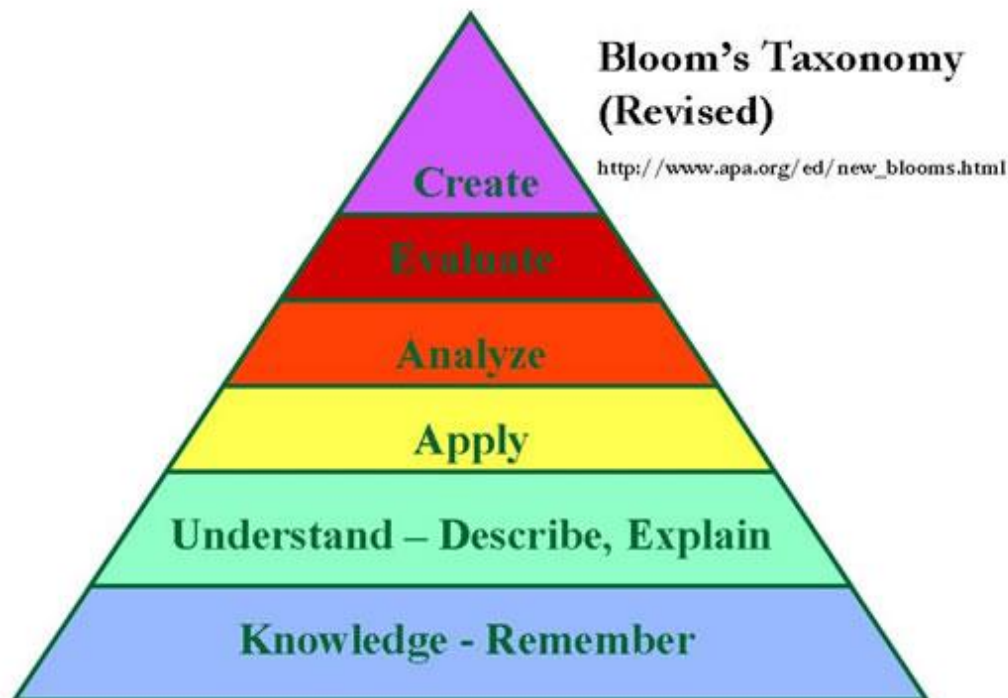
A second draft drew on additional input from the June 2015 Global Alliance leaders workshop where over 40 leaders of public relations and communication management associations offered comments.

This third draft (V 3.0) reflects formal review and input from seven GA member organizations, and approximately a dozen people who commented on the draft document online between July and October 2015.

About the proposed GBOK

The document is organized in the following manner:

- **Knowledge** is the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject. A comprehensive list of knowledge (K) areas that is common to the two levels of practice described: entry level (officer or junior level in early career) and mid-career (experienced or senior professional and or manager). The knowledge elements (K) underpin the skills (S) and abilities (A) described in the diagram below.
- **Core or Foundation** skills and abilities that are seen as universal and essential to practice anywhere in the world. These are considered the essential elements of the GBOK.
- **Skills** are the proficiencies developed through training or experience.
- **Abilities** are the qualities of being able to do something. There is a fine line between skills and abilities. Most people would say the differentiator is whether the thing in question was learned or innate. Skills (S) and abilities (A) elements are necessary to offer excellence in practice.
- **Behaviours** (B) put abilities and skills into practice.
- The organization of the GBOK is a variation and adaption of Bloom's taxonomy of learning. The knowledge areas (K) are at the bottom of the pyramid and stand alone in our GBOK. The skills (S) and abilities (A) are part of the other elements of the pyramid. See Bloom's taxonomy diagram.
- Some KSAB statements have been kept broad by design to aid in adoption on a global scale. It is understood that organizations that would adopt the GBOK would be able to add specificity to statements when required in their country. Conversely, some KSAB statements are quite specific reflecting a perceived need to be clear and purposeful.



Based on an APA adaptation of Anderson, L.W. & Krathwohl, D.R. (Eds.) (2001)

The assessment tool (see chart below) can be used to assess an individual's proficiency in those areas.

The proficiency levels are used to describe an individual's capability with respect to each of the knowledge, skill and abilities (KSA) content areas described on GBOK.

The GBOK entry-level KSABs reflect levels 1-4.

The senior level reflects KSAs consistent with levels 4 and 5. The chart below is a standard assessment tool that is an application of Bloom's taxonomy.

Level 0	UNAWARE	To have exposure to or knowledge of:
		Have I ever heard of these topics at all?
		Have I only heard about these topics in a casual conversation?
Level 1	AWARE	To have experienced or been exposed to:
		Have I had some organized introduction or instruction on these topics?
		Have I used some of these topics in my work?
Level 2	READY	Can I tell myself what these topics really mean?
		To be able to participate in and contribute to:
		Do I know enough about these topics that I can comprehend what

		other people mean?
		Can I participate in give-and-take dialogue on these topics?
		Have I ever participated in an event when this topic was used?
		Did I contribute to the discussion or action surrounding this topic?
Level 3	CAPABLE	To be able to understand and explain:
		To whom could I explain these topics?
		What would I actually tell them?
		Have I ever actually explained any of these topics to someone else?
		Have I written something about these topics?
		Have I given a presentation where I explained these topics or needed these topics to explain about a workforce program activity?
Level 4	SKILLED	To be skilled in the practice or implementation of:
		Have I applied my knowledge in this area? How did I apply it?
		Was I able to improve my program by applying my knowledge in this area?
		Have I applied my knowledge more than once?
		Did I learn new things about this area by applying my knowledge?
Level 5	EXPERT	To be able to lead or innovate in:
		Have I ever lead a workforce program in this area?
		Have I taught someone else about these topics?
		Have I discovered new knowledge that has improved this area?

Vision

The Global Alliance members see an opportunity to strengthen and unify the profession globally through the consideration of a global body of knowledge that sets out a reference point or standard to practice communication and public relations around the world.

How can Professional bodies use the GBOK?

Professional bodies can use the GBOK both to support curriculum standards and a credential scheme checklist.

Credential schemes

A defined Body of Knowledge (BOK) is the core element of a credential scheme. It is a base or starting point from which examination processes and credential program entry criteria can be established. It also provides a comprehensive checklist for participants who can self-assess their readiness to enter the process, knowing that the examination process will verify competency in the KSABs described in the BOK. The GBOK is being proposed as a strategy to achieve the vision.

The Global Alliance does not offer a credential. GA member organizations can offer a credential based (or-re-based) on the GBOK. It would be up to GA member organizations to decide if they wish to adopt the GBOK, notify the GA of their intention to use the GBOK and, if further discussions reach a consensus, they could register their successful candidates in a global registry of qualified professionals.

Core and additional elements of GBOK

Given that in reality the profession has not developed in the same manner in all countries, it is proposed that for credentials and curriculum standard purposes, the foundation or core elements of the KSABs described in the GBOK be mandatory while the balance of the KSABs be applied using a weight factor set by national or local bodies offering a credential.

The weight assigned to KSAB elements could, for example, reflect the percentage of questions or evaluation processes found in a credential scheme.

Curriculum Standards

The KSABs proposed for entry-level positions or entry-level credentials can be used to describe undergraduate level learning outcomes that are at the core of curriculum development in universities and colleges.

The entry-level KSABs offer a way to describe what is expected in a first job in public relations or communication for a variety of roles.

Current Conceptual Framework

In framing the GBOK, it was important to define how the elements interact, and against what backdrop of experience. Communication being the central element in the work of practitioners, three dimensions of communication: visual, written and oral are present across all KSA's. The Experiential element reflects the body of experience of the individual and applies to all KSA's and is central to the behaviours adopted by the practitioner.



ENTRY LEVEL ROLES



Our research that involved reviewing existing credential documentation and consultation with member organizations identified two types of work - technical or managerial - and twelve roles typical of an entry level or early career in public relations:

TECHNICAL ROLES

Project, account or client management	Issue Management
Strategic planning	Crisis management
Public Relations program planning	Internal or employee communication
Project management	Special event, conferences and meetings
Media Relations	Community relations/Corporate Social Responsibility
Social media relations	Stakeholder relations
Internal communications	

Entry-level GBOK elements



(For ease of receiving comments during the consultation period elements of the GBOK are marked with a letter (e.g. K, S, A, B) and a number (e.g. K1). Objectives or categories of tasks and functions are indicated with a capital letter).

To excel in these roles, a Public Relations Professional should have...

Basic Knowledge (K) of:

A. Research, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

- K1 Measurement and evaluation approaches vis-a-vis objectives and outcomes
- K2 Uses of research and forecasting
- K3 Research methods and concepts
- K4 Proactive and reactive communications approaches
- K5 Stakeholder analysis, influential individuals or organizations
- K6 Cultural preferences of audiences
- K7 Planning and implementation techniques
- K8 Sequencing and rollout approaches
- K9 Evaluation methods
- K10 Best practices in public relations

B. Ethics and Law

- K1 Ethical principles, issues and framework
- K2 Codes of practice
- K3 Legal requirements and issues
- K4 Ethical and unethical behaviour, transparency, professionalism, governance, regulatory considerations

C. Crisis Communication Management

- K1 Identification and evolution of a crisis and its distinct stages
- K2 Communication approaches and need for constant and immediate communication
- K3 Difference between crisis and conflict scenarios

D. Communication Models and Theories

- K1 Communication models and public relations theories (dominant theories as well as alternatives)
- K2 Communication and persuasion concepts and strategies
- K3 Relationships and relationship-building techniques
- K4 Social science theories

E. History of and Current Issues in Public Relations

- K1 Societal trends and trends in modern engagement tools, transparent communications
- K2 The effect and impact of current and emerging technology on communications models
- K3 Multi-cultural and global issues
- K4 Various world social, political, economic and historical frameworks
- K5 Global public relations history, its origins and evolution
- K6 Public relations and other related disciplines such as publicity, advertising, marketing, government relations/public affairs, lobbying, investor relations, branding, and social networking
- K7 The social role of public relations

F. Business Literacy

- K1 Marketing
- K2 Financial literacy
- K2 The business case for diversity

- K3 Organizational change and development
- K4 Management concepts and theories, including value chain management
- K5 Organizational issues, internal and external, including business drivers for clients and employees
- K6 Second language skills and cultural awareness

G. Media and Social Channels, use of Technology

- K1 Knowledge of distribution channels, audience preferences and limitation of channels
- K2 Knowledge of communication tools, including knowledge of social media, online advertising, behaviour tracking, legal and ethical considerations related to online communications
- K3 Media needs and requirements

Skills and Abilities

An entry-level professional should have these foundation skills, abilities and personal attributes:

Core or Foundation Skills and Abilities (FSA)

Writing, oral and visual communications abilities

- FSA1 Writing proficiency at the basic level
- FSA2 Writing ability at an advanced and specialized level, informative and persuasive writing
- FSA3 Mastery of language in written and oral communication in one language and preferably second language skills
- FSA4 Sensitive interpersonal communication
- FSA5 Public speaking and presentation
- FSA6 Digital and visual literacy, including ability to develop and manage content for multiple platforms

Abilities and Personal Attributes

- FSA7 Critical listening skills
- FSA8 Has global awareness and monitors global news and issues
- FSA9 Management of information and knowledge
- FSA10 Critical thinking, problem solving and negotiation
- FSA11 Management of communication
- FSA12 Technological and visual literacy

FSA13 Applying contextual, cross-cultural and diversity considerations

FSA14 Ability to set strategy and contribute to the strategic direction of the organization

FSA 15 Flexibility with constant changes

In addition, the following skills and abilities, although not considered essential and universal, are deemed necessary to practice and excel at the entry level:

A. Communication Models and Theories

SA1 Demonstrates familiarity with communication theory and its application including stakeholder prioritization, developing messages, spokesperson identification, establishing trust

SA2 Ability to build and maintain relationships with key audiences and stakeholders

B. History and Current Issues in Public Relations

SA1 Ability to identify current and emerging trends in technology and social media and its impact on communication objectives

SA2 Differentiates between public relations and advertising, marketing and other disciplines

C. Research, Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

SA1 Ability to apply theoretical and applied primary and secondary research, formal and informal, qualitative and quantitative methods

SA2 **Community identification.** Ability to identify and decide on population and sample techniques

SA3 Ability to design instruments for research

SA4 **Analytical skills.** Ability to conduct environmental scanning and stakeholder analysis Ability to understand and interpret data and results

SA5 **Forecasting.** Ability to use results of research, identify trends and link to communication objectives, set measurement targets, outcomes and other metrics

SA6 Ability to identify influencers and institutions, organizations and groups to support objectives

SA7 **Planning.** Ability to execute, prioritize and sequence communications to identified audiences

SA8 **Implementation.** Ability to plan events, production of documents, messages, platform and campaign rollouts

SA9 **Measurement.** Ability to determine if goals and objectives were met and the extent to which results and outcomes have been accomplished

D. Ethics and Law (see also section on Behaviours)

SA1 Ability to identify key ethical principles and elements of decision-making as well as barriers to ethical communication in public relations

SA2 Demonstrates an understanding of national, regional and local laws, as well as governance policies and procedures of organization or client

E. Organizational and Business Literacy

- SA1 Ability to identify and, if called upon, manage issues
- SA2 Demonstrates an understanding, and importance of, internal communications, client relations
- SA3 Ability to manage programs and resources

F. Media and Social Channels, Digital Literacy

- SA1 Ability to plan and use available channels to distribute communications and manage issues with media or individuals
- SA2 **Data Management.** Ability to analyse data, identify trends and engage audiences on social media
- SA3 **Digital literacy.** Demonstrates an understanding of limitations and possibilities of media and social channels
- SA4 Ability to curate content and provide insights on processing information

G. Crisis Communications

- SA1 Ability to monitor issues that are of critical importance to organization
- SA2 Demonstrates the ability to interpret and react quickly at the onset of a crisis
- SA3 Ability to support crisis communications, and understands importance of crisis relative to reputation

MID-CAREER



Our research that involved reviewing existing credential documentation and consultation with member organizations identified the following roles as typical of a more experienced professional.

More senior roles in public relations deal with:

Reputation management. Building and managing trust

Advanced environmental scanning issue and trend identification

Government relations, public affairs, political communication

Evaluative research

Evaluation and measurement

Issue identification

Management of people and resources

Regulatory compliance and governance

Financial, investor and media relations

Internal communications

Definition of values and guiding principles

Corporate brand management

To excel in these roles, a Public Relations Professional should have...

In Depth Knowledge (K) of:

A. Research, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

- K1 Measurement and evaluation approaches vis-a-vis objectives and outcomes
- K2 Uses of research and forecasting
- K3 Research methods and concepts
- K4 Proactive and reactive communications approaches
- K5 Stakeholder analysis, influential individuals or organizations
- K6 Cultural preferences of audiences
- K7 Planning and implementation techniques
- K8 Sequencing and rollout approaches
- K9 Evaluation methods
- K10 Best practices in public relations

B. Ethics and Law

- K1 Ethical principles, issues and framework
- K2 Codes of practice
- K3 Legal requirements and issues for public relations
- K4 Ethical and unethical behaviour, transparency, professionalism, governance, regulatory considerations

C. Crisis Communication Management

- K1 Identification and evolution of a crisis and its distinct stages
- K2 Communication approaches and need for constant and immediate communication
- K3 Difference between crisis and conflict scenarios

D. Communication Models and Theories

- K1 Communications models and public relations theories (dominant theories as well as alternatives)
- K2 Communications and persuasion concepts and strategies
- K3 Relationships and relationship-building techniques
- K4 Social science theories

E. History of and Current Issues in Public Relations

- K1 Societal trends and trends in modern engagement tools, transparent communications
- K2 The effect and impact of current and emerging technology on communications models
- K3 Multi-cultural and global issues
- K4 Various world social, political, economic and historical frameworks
- K5 Global public relations history, its origins and evolution
- K6 Public relations and other related disciplines such as publicity, advertising, marketing, public affairs, government relations/, financial communication, investor relations, branding, social networking
- K7 The role of public relations in society

F. Business Literacy

- K1 Marketing and finance
- K2 The business case for diversity
- K3 Organizational change and development
- K4 Management concepts and theories
- K5 Organizational issues, internal and external, including business drivers for clients and employees
- K6 Second language skills and cultural awareness

G. Media and Social Channels, use of Technology

- K1 Knowledge of distribution channels, audience preferences and limitation of channels
- K2 Knowledge of communication tools, including knowledge of social media online advertising, behaviour tracking, legal and ethical considerations related to online and traditional forms of communication
- K3 Media needs and requirements

Experienced professional mastery (at an advanced level) of the following:

Core and Foundation Skills and Abilities (SFSA)

Communications Abilities (writing, oral and visual)

- SFSA1 Writing ability at an advanced and specialized level, informative and persuasive writing. Ability to write for diverse applications and platforms. Visual communication skills
- SFSA2 Mastery of language in written and oral communication in one language and preferably second language skills
- SFSA3 Sensitive interpersonal communication, emotional intelligence
- SFSA4 Higher level of public speaking and presentation skills. Persuasive, clear and articulate
- SFSA5 Mentoring skills

Abilities and Personal Attributes

- SFSA5 Critical listening skills
- SFSA6 Has global awareness and tracks global news and issues
- SFSA7 Management of information
- SFSA8 Contextual awareness
- SFSA9 Leadership qualities. Innovation and flexibility
- SFSA10 Problem-solving, critical thinking and adaptability
- SFSA11 Strategic management of communication
- SFSA12 Technological and visual literacy
- SFSA13 Applying cross-cultural and diversity considerations
- SFSA14 Meeting facilitation skills
- SFSA 15 Flexibility with constant changes

The following mid-level skills and abilities (SSA), although not considered essential and universal, are deemed necessary to practice and excel at the more senior levels:

A. Research, Planning, Implementation and Evaluation

- SSA1 **Research:** Uses a variety of research tools to gather information about the employer or client, industry and relevant issues. Applies research findings
- SSA2 **Analytical skills:** Continuously analyzes the business environment that includes the employer or client, stakeholders, employees and suppliers. Investigates stakeholders' understanding of the product, organization and issues. Ability to filter and process large amount of data and to extract valuable information for decision-making. Objectively interprets data and has ability to gather key insights from data points

- SSA3 **Strategic thinking and management:** Synthesizes relevant information to determine what is needed to position the client, organization, or issue appropriately in its market/environment, especially with regard to changing business, political, or cultural climates
- SSA4 **Planning:** Sets goals and objectives based on research findings. Distinguishes among goals, objectives, strategies and tactics. Distinguishes organizational/operational goals and strategies from communication goals and strategies. Aligns project goals with organizational mission and goals. Identifies specific desired PR outcomes. Establishes budget and strategic direction for communication in relation to organizational goals. Establishes communication metrics to evaluate success. Establishes rollout sequence.
- SSA5 **Audience Identification:** Differentiates among publics, markets, audiences and stakeholders. Identifies appropriate audiences and the opinions, beliefs, attitudes, cultures, and values of each. Assesses interests of influential institutions, groups and individuals. Identifies appropriate communication channels/vehicles for reaching target audiences. Identifies communities including those formed through technologies. Understands conflicting aims and areas of mutual interest of individual constituent groups (e.g., investors, governmental agencies, unions, consumers) with the organization
- SSA6 **Diversity:** Identifies and respects a range of differences among target audiences. Researches and addresses the cultural preferences and/or needs and barriers to communication of target audiences. Develops culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies and tactics. Works to be inclusive
- SSA7 **Implementation:** Understands sequence of events and communication actions. Develops timelines and budget. Assigns responsibilities. Executes planned strategies and tactics. Demonstrates project management skills
- SSA8 **Evaluation and measurement:** Determines if goals and objectives of public relations program were met and the extent to which the results or outcomes of public relations programs are supporting organizational goals. Uses evaluation results for future planning

B. Applying Professionalism, Ethics and Law

- SSA1 **Ethical behaviour:** Understands commonly accepted standards for professional behaviour. Recognizes ethical dilemmas. Identifies solutions to ethical dilemmas and demonstrates ethical conduct
- SSA2 **Democratic principles:** Understands free speech as a foundational principle for public relations in democratic societies. Distinguishes between political and corporate speech. Able to articulate conditions for libel, slander, defamation and defenses thereof. Understands impact of digital record on the status of public and private figures and organizations
- SSA3 **Privacy issues:** Understands prevailing laws regarding privacy identity protection, ethical implications and digital record keeping. Effectively advises organization on the strategic adoption and effective use of technology for listening to, communicating with and engaging priority publics

C. Managing Issues and Crisis Communications

- SSA1 **Issues and risk management:** Identifies potential or emerging issues that may impact and effect on the organization. Identifies potential risks to the organization or client. Analyzes probability and potential impact of risk. Ensures organization develops appropriate legal, ethical and reputational response plans. Designs and deploys and leads response to crisis

SSA2 **Crisis management:** Understands the roles and responsibilities of public relations at the pre-crisis, crisis, and post-crisis phases. Communicates the implications of each of these phases and understands the messaging needs of each. Looks beyond current organizational mindset and explores solutions

SSA3 **Counsel to management:** Understands the importance of providing counsel to the management team or client regarding issues, risks and crises. Looks beyond the current organizational mindset and explores solutions. Considers and accommodates all views on an issue or crisis. Factors views into communication strategy

D. Understanding Communication Models, Theories and History of the Profession

SSA1 **Communication/public relations models and theories:** Demonstrates familiarity with public relations and social science theories and research that guides planning, prioritizing stakeholders developing messages, selecting spokespeople, establishing credibility and trust

SSA2 **Barriers to communication:** Understands how different audiences interpret messages and messengers. Understands barriers that prevent changes to knowledge, attitude and behaviour. Understands how semantics, cultural norms, timing, context and related factors affect the communication results. Understands that greater transparency leads to greater trust

SSA3 **Knowledge of the field:** Defines public relations and differentiates among related concepts (e.g. publicity, advertising, marketing, propaganda, press agency, government relations/public affairs, investor relations, social networking, and branding). Identifies transformations in the practice and major trends in the development of public relations

E. Leading and managing the Public Relations Function

SSA1 **Values and character:** Understands the role that public relations play at the strategic level. Provides advice and counsel to management. Helps to shape the organization's values and character

SSA2 **Business literacy:** Understands and explains how employers/clients generate revenue and how their operations are conducted. Identifies relevant business drivers and how they affect the business. Understands how the public relations function contributes to the financial success of the organization and its 'license to operate'

SSA3 **Resource management:** Takes into account human, financial and organizational resources. Prepares, justifies and controls budgets for departments, programs, clients or agencies. Understands what information needs to be collected, evaluated, disseminated, and retained. Is able to obtain information using innovative methods and appropriately store it, so that it can be retrieved easily for future use

SSA4 **Organizational structure and resources:** Recognizes chain of command, including boards of directors, senior leadership, middle management, direct line supervision, line positions, and each level's distinctions. Knows how organizations are horizontally and vertically structured. Identifies which divisions within an organization need to be involved in any communication program. Understands and accommodates organizational governance imperatives. Recognizes the relationships among PR, legal, marketing, finance and IT, etc., as essential management functions

SSA5 **Problem solving and decision-making:** Approaches problems with sound reasoning and logic. Distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information. Evaluates opportunities for resolution. Devises appropriate courses of action based on context and facts. Makes sound, well-informed and objective decisions in a timely manner. Assesses the implications of these decisions

- SSA6 **Leadership skills:** Influences others to achieve desired goals. Motivates and inspires others, builds coalitions and communicates vision. Demonstrates influence in organizational changes in policy, procedures, staffing and structure, as appropriate
- SSA7 **Organizational skills:** Integrates multiple dimensions of a public relations campaign. Integrates internal and external components, so that there is a synergy among the messages

F. Managing Relationships

- SSA1 **Relationship building and engagement:** Understands consensus-building strategies and techniques to engage key stakeholders in decision-making. Ensures discussions allow key stakeholders the opportunity to express opinions. Recognizes need for affected parties and stakeholders to find mutually acceptable solutions. Utilizes persuasion, negotiation and coalition building
- SSA2 **Reputation management:** Understands need for maintaining individual and organizational credibility with and among key constituents. Recognizes value of reputation, image, public trust and corporate social responsibility
- SSA3 **Internal stakeholders:** Understands importance of internal relationships to the public relations function. Understands the importance of organizational culture and communicating key messages through appropriate channels. Uses mediated and non-mediated channels of communication for effective engagement. Prioritizes internal audiences
- SSA4 **Media relations:** Understands definitions, strengths, weaknesses and needs of different media. Understands the relationships among public relations professionals, journalists and media organizations. Builds effective relationships with media based on mutual respect and trust. Analyzes current events and trends for opportunities and threats. Identifies appropriate controlled and uncontrolled media channels and key influencers
- SSA5 **Networks:** Understands how to establish and enhance relationships with stakeholders (e.g., electronic communications, special events, face-to-face communication, networking, social networking, and word-of-mouth and third-party communication). Recognizes inter-connectedness among various stakeholders. Considers broad/global relationships

Behaviours

Having the knowledge to practice, as well as the skills and abilities deemed desirable to excel in the work environment is not sufficient unless one also demonstrates a set of behaviours- an attitude- that can make the difference in serving organizations, clients and society.

The following elements are seen as a recipe for success in the practice of public relations and communication management.

All professionals should exhibit the following behaviours:

B1. Integrity, accountability

Conducts professional activities in a lawful and principled manner. Functions as the conscience of the organization. Takes responsibility for own actions and those of employees under them. Adheres to commonly accepted standards of professional behavior and upholds codes of ethics of the Global Alliance and their member associations.

B2 Ethical conduct.

Acts to remedy unethical acts. Refuses to participate in unethical or deceptive actions.

B3. Judgment and Collaboration

Demonstrates sound judgment and works collegially. Understands the need for teamwork, collaboration and adaptability.

B4. Transparency

Conducts professional activities with transparency, avoids spin or deceptive communication

B5. Legal and contextual awareness

Awareness and knowledge of applicable international, national, regional and local laws regarding disclosure, privacy, and defamation of character, copyright, trademarks and fair use. Upholds these laws in an ethical manner.

B6. Influence, inclusiveness and leadership

Leads by example in managing people and issues. Demonstrates a values-based approach to deal with stakeholders, employees and clients. Shows respect for and accommodation for diverse points of view, ethnicity and cultural differences.

B7. Learning

In a rapidly changing profession commits to a program of lifelong learning and professional development. Contributes to the advancement of the profession by sharing knowledge and mentoring others

B8. Adaptability

Is able to change course quickly due to events and scale activities in response to changing circumstances

B9. Citizenship and Sustainability

Acts with due consideration to the environment and with awareness of sustainable practices. Shows leadership in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and related efforts to ensure organizations operate in an economic, social and environmentally sustainable manner.