Public Relations Management in Large & Innovative Multinational Corporations

A qualitative & comparative study of Shell, Coloplast & Company A

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ABSTRACT

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Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine the factors that affect PR in multinational corporations (MNCs) today, and to explore how the factors affect PR management in the selected MNCs.

Method: A qualitative research was conducted through semi-constructed interviews with PR managers at three multinational corporations. In addition to the primary data, a secondary data search was conducted.

Keywords: Public relations, relationship management in public relations, impact of public relations, measuring public relations, communication.

Conclusion: Both internal and external factors affect the PR management in large multinational corporations. The internal factors being sector, size, stage of organizational development and culture (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 24-25). The external factors, largely made up of the public also contain different sources of media. The participating companies all claimed to be largely affected by both internal and external factors; although different factors were more or less forth standing for the companies. The public was also identified as an external factor that plays a very important role as “the other party” in the two-way communication in PR programs, the companies clarified that the public affected both what and how the PR departments communicate.
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# TABLE OF CONTENT

Abstract............................................................................................................................................. i
Acknowledgement.............................................................................................................................. ii

1. INTRODUCTION.......................................................................................................................... 1
   1.1 Background .................................................................................................................................. 1
   1.2 Problem Discussion ................................................................................................................. 2
   1.3 Research Questions and Purpose ............................................................................................ 3
   1.3 Target Group ............................................................................................................................. 3
   1.4 Participating Company Backgrounds ....................................................................................... 4

2. LITERATURE REVIEW...................................................................................................................... 5
   2.1 Organizational Goals and Effectiveness .................................................................................. 7
   2.2 The Public in PR Context ........................................................................................................ 8
   2.3 PR Management & Strategy ................................................................................................... 10
   2.4 Factors Affecting PR ............................................................................................................... 11
   2.5 Integration of Departments within the Organization ............................................................. 12
   2.6 Need for Measuring the Impact of PR Program ..................................................................... 13

3. METHODOLOGY............................................................................................................................... 15
   3.1 Choice of Research Topic, Research Questions and Participating Companies .................... 15
   3.2 Research Method .................................................................................................................... 16
      3.2.1 Qualitative Interviews ....................................................................................................... 17
   3.3 Data Collection ......................................................................................................................... 18
      3.3.1 Primary Data ...................................................................................................................... 18
      3.3.2 Secondary Data .................................................................................................................. 18
   3.4 Data Analysis ............................................................................................................................ 19
   3.5 Validity, Reliability .................................................................................................................. 19
   3.6 Ethical Consideration & Access Negotiation ............................................................................ 19
   3.7 Limitations ................................................................................................................................ 20
4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS ............................................................................................................. 21
   4.1 Company A ......................................................................................................................... 21
   4.2 Coloplast ............................................................................................................................ 22
   4.3 Shell .................................................................................................................................. 24

5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS ............................................................................................. 26
   5.1 Organizational Goals and Effectiveness ............................................................................... 26
   5.2 The Public in PR context .................................................................................................... 26
   5.3 PR Management & Strategy ............................................................................................... 27
   5.4 Factors Affecting PR .......................................................................................................... 28
   5.5 Integration of Departments within the Organization ............................................................ 28
   5.6 Need for Measuring the Impact of PR Program .................................................................. 30

6. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH ......................................................................... 31
   6.1 Conclusion ........................................................................................................................... 31
   6.2 Future Research .................................................................................................................. 32

REFERENCES .................................................................................................................................. 33

APPENDIX A - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH ............................................................... 37

APPENDIX B – RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .................................................................................................................. 39

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: Model of analysis: Enactment of an organizations PR activities & factors affecting them, adapted from: Tench & Yeomans (2009) ................................................................. 6

Figure 2: Five Publics Model Based on Knowledge and Involvement, Hallahan (2000) .......... 9

Table 1: Internal and External Factors Affecting the PR Departments of Company A, Coloplast and Shell .................................................................................................................. 32
ABBREVIATIONS

[B2B] Business to Business
[B2C] Business to Consumer
[B2G] Business to Government
[CEO] Chief Executive Officer
[CFO] Chief Financial Officer
[CSR] Corporate Social Responsibility
[HR] Human Resources
[MNC] Multinational Corporations
[NGO] Non-governmental organization
[PA] Public Affairs
[PR] Public Relations
[SMART] Scan Map Act Rollout Track
1. INTRODUCTION

This section will give a brief background of the field of Public relations as well as of the companies of interest. The problem discussion, the purpose of the study and the research questions will be introduced and the target audience identified.

1.1 Background

Organizations today do not exist in isolation; they are part of a dynamic marketplace with various related entities. These entities include “persons, groups, organizations, institutions and societies” such as employees, suppliers, customers, shareholders or communities (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 855). The terms public and stakeholders are two terms often used interchangeably, they include the groups previously mentioned, thus, they refer to people who are impacted by the actions of an organization or groups with which an organization wishes to establish and maintain a relationship (Hallahan, 2000, pp. 501-502). These groups have either direct or indirect influential power on a company’s corporate existence, and as the power of stakeholders has drastically increased in the recent decades it has led to changing organizations. The fact that people are now more empowered than ever to make choices outside of their professional life which has led to significant changes taking places in the professional sphere as well. The Public Relations (PR) departments in an organization help develop and maintain a good relationship with the public as well as help the organization achieve its objectives (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 26).

The concept, history, and definition of PR are products of economic and political circumstances of its time and evolve according to the needs of these broader environments. The history of PR can be traced back to the 1770’s as it was first used in the United States in the service of politics (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 9). Since its beginnings PR has developed in different ways in different countries, for instance commercial interests drove the development of PR in the United States (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 10-11). The public and local government in particular facilitated that of the British, whereas industrialization, new form of technology, emergence of new form of media, urbanization, increasing level of literacy, and changing political environment brought about the development in Germany to mention a few countries where PR is well established today (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 4, 9-15). Culbertson and Ni (1996) along with educators and practitioners active in different countries devoted an entire book to comparing PR practices in different regions and countries suggesting that there are still important variances in the use of PR (Culbertson & Ni, 1996)

Despite the long historic background of PR, Hutton (1999, p.199) questions the development of the field and claims that the field of PR has not been able to bring together its different theories and ideas and therefore suffered from an identity crisis. He continues; “In terms of both theory and practice, public relations has failed to arrive at a broadly accepted definition of itself in terms of its fundamental purpose, its dominant metaphor, its scope, or its underlying dimensions” (Hutton, 1999, p. 199).
Many definitions of PR have been coined over the years and one of the major problems in reconciling the long list of definitions is that the PR theory can be rooted in different disciplinary fields, such as mass communication, speech communication, psychology, economics, and sociology (Øyvind & Ruler, 2007, p. 244). Within the disciplinary fields there are different schools of thought, like functionalistic, constructivist, feminist, or Marxist, some believe that this further adds to the confusion as it broadens the scope of PR, while others see it as strength of the field to build off of and use different theories rather than just one general theory. (Øyvind & Ruler, 2007, p. 244). The mentioned discussion about whether to expand or narrow the scope of PR is too extensive to discuss in full within this study, what can be said is that the distinct differences in definitions has led to inconsistent research when it comes to exploring what might be termed the fundamental “dimensions” of PR (Hutton, 1999, p. 204). Another problem is that many definitions either make no mention of the terms communication and relationships and when mentioned no substantial identification of these terms that are considered “core concepts” of PR is offered (Hutton, 1999, p. 202). In order to paint as broad and inclusive a picture possible for the diverse field of PR, the definition proposed by Harlow in an early study will be adopted as it tries to bring together different definitions of earlier scholars and have since been used by many researchers;

“Public relations is a distinctive management function which helps establish and maintain mutual lines of communication, understanding, acceptance and co-operation between an organization and its publics; involves the management of problems or issues helps management to keep informed on and responsive to public opinion; defines and emphasizes the responsibility of management to serve the public interest; helps management keep abreast of and effectively utilize change, serving as an early warning system to help anticipate trends; and uses research and sound and ethical communication techniques as its principal tools (Harlow, 1976, p. 36)”.

To further narrow the scope of the field of PR the relationship management perspective will be used in this study and within this perspective PR is defined as: “The management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends” (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994, p. 2)

1.2 Problem Discussion

There are many factors that can either enhance or restrain the success of an organizations PR department and its efforts. As the field of PR has advanced and developed it has had to live not only with the struggle of an identity crisis as mentioned in the previous section but also with a bad reputation. According to Hutton (1999, p.203) the stakeholder’s relations can represent a big threat to an organization’s PR effort as many of the stakeholders may feel reluctant to support its success. Some academics have also supported the argument that the public should recognize PR as biased in favor of commercial interest (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 6). The preconceived notions that exist among the public creates an uphill battle for
PR practitioners in their communication and relationship building efforts. Another issue for PR practitioners is the internal combat, the need to prove the importance of their department within their own organizations, as a result, many commercial research firms in the field of PR are trying to show that investment in marketing communication sells products; or, at least, sells more products than a comparable amount spent on advertising (Grunig J. E., 2006). As some PR departments have lost communication and relationship functions to other departments the need to emphasize the importance of a PR department has become even greater. Internal hindrances such as lack of support from within the organization tend to play as big a part as any external factors. Sector, size, stage of organizational development and culture are a couple of internal factors that are considered to be important in that they will affect PR and communication within the organization (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 24-25). In an attempt to find out more about these factors that are affecting PR and how PR can help firms be successful and achieve their goals this study aims to provide an answer to the research questions below.

1.3 Research Questions and Purpose

RQ.1 – What are the factors that affect PR management in the selected MNCs?

RQ.2 – How do the isolated factors affect PR management in these selected MNCs?

The purpose of this study is to examine the factors that affect PR in multinational corporations (MNCs) today, and to explore how the factors affect PR management in the selected MNCs. The hope is that this study will shed some light on contemporary PR management and their activities. The information will be collected through an investigation of how the participating companies have structured their PR efforts and how they have been working with the public.

1.3 Target Group

The management and PR departments of the studied companies is the primary audience for this study, they are the ones who will be able to use the results to learn more about the impact of the PR department and its efforts. The secondary purpose of this study is to meet up with the academic and university requirements for the MBA study master thesis. This automatically implies that another audience or target group of this study is the university authority who shall use the result of the study in qualifying the authors’ knowledge in the chosen field of study. On completion of the study, the final copy will be available to other students for future reference.
1.4 Participating Company Backgrounds

Company A is a large multinational corporation within the transportation industry. The company employs well over 50,000 employees and is a well-performing actor within its sector. Because the company operates in a sensitive sector the company has asked for its company name to be kept confidential and the company and its employees will therefore be anonymous throughout this study.

Coloplast is a Danish-owned multinational company established in 1957 by Elise Sbrensen, a nurse concerned about the post operational psychological difficulties of her ostomy-related patients (Houman, 2005, p. 42). Coloplast are part of a niche market, where there are few large competitors (Houman, 2005). They operate in the intimate healthcare industry on a global market with an estimated 4–5% annual market growth, same source shows that Coloplast is the global market leader, holding a market share of 35–40% and employ 8500 employees (Coloplast-Annual.Report, 2013). The company offers both services and products within ostomy care, continence care, surgical urology, wound care and skin care (Coloplast, The Coloplast History, 2014). Coloplast has three core values that lead the company; closeness, passion and respect and responsibility (Coloplast, Mission and values, 2014). This company will be interesting to research and interview, their field opts for great sensitivity in dealing with customers and calls for close relations, on their website they claim that: “Getting closer to our customers and understanding their needs is the guiding principle in everything we do. We all have a responsibility to listen and help respond to the needs of our customers.” (Coloplast, Mission and values, 2014).

Coloplast has received several awards in their industry because of its innovativeness and is ranked 12th by Forbes with a total innovative premium of 46.5% (Forbes.com, 2014). Their recent ranking “in front of large international competitors such as Johnson & Johnson and Smith & Nephew – in which more than 400 patient groups around the world evaluated 30 medtech companies’ ability to meet patient expectations” (Coloplast, News and Press, 2013) in addition to the several awards they have received in their industry (Forbes.com, 2014) this may be an indicator of how successful their PR activities could be.

Shell has its headquarters in the Netherlands but is a global company and employs over 90,000 people in more than 70 countries (Shell, About Shell, 2014). Shell is a group of companies working with energy and petrochemicals; they search for and extract crude oil and natural gas but also refine and produce petrochemical products (Shell, About Shell, 2014). The company invests a lot of time and money into research regarding innovation and new technology (Shell, About Shell, 2014). Shell General Business Principle is built from their core values, honesty, integrity and respect for people (Shell, About Shell, 2014). Shell will be an interesting contributor to this study as their business and sector is often battling bad publicity due to the inherent dangers of the field.
2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews some of the existing theories relevant to this study. The theories found in the contemporary field of PR will serve as the basic bedrock for this study because of their intellectual pedigree and their general implications for PR practice.

Before plunging into details of the existing concepts/theories, it is worth conceptualizing the central ideas of the concepts in a framework that can enhance the reader’s ability to understand the main idea of the study. This framework is a modification of Tench & Yeomans, (2009 p.179) framework for multi-project PR plans but was extended to include the different functions of the organization. The rationale for the modification of the framework is to ensure that it fits with this study. The conceptual framework will both be a guide for the collection of research material and the scaffolding that will be used to write up the case study (Fisher, 2010, p. 205).

Given that organizations are complex entities they are made up of different units such as a PR department, marketing, human resources (HR), etc. These units are responsible for the different activities that gears towards the accomplishment of the organization’s overall objective. The objectives can be of various form and nature but because the main subject of this study is to see how PR is managed in attempting to achieve relationship effectiveness with a group of people or an entity that has the capacity to determine the success or failure of an organization. These entities as presented in chapter one include “persons, groups, organizations, institutions and societies” such as employees, suppliers, customers, shareholders or communities (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 855). Hallahan (2000) shows that in order to reap the benefits that accrue from PR programs and activities, it is important to define all these entities/groups to which PR efforts are directed as publics before choosing the appropriate one to deal with as well as to recognize that they differ in their levels of activity (Hallahan, 2000, p. 501). In this study, the active public is selected as the appropriate group for this study. That is the public with high involvement and high knowledge about the company’s activity. The active public is further divided into two distinctive parts– the internal and the external (fig.1), and the factors affecting the PR activities to these groups are also identified. The internal factors include the culture, sector, size, stage of organizational development, current PR activities and procedure affects the organization’s ability of dealing with the public. There are also external factors such as media and social media. A further definition of these factors is presented in table 2.

The PR department as one part of an organization’s communication function cannot achieve organizational goals without the support and cooperation of the other related departments and functions within the organization. Most of the various and related departments or functions benefit from being integrated as such integration enhances the corporation’s chance of achieving overall goals. As studies have shown, integrating these separated departments in order to increase their cooperation with each other (Hutton, 1996). For instance the PR department which brings the interest of the general public into the discussion in order for the surrounding community to be given adequate attention, the marketing department is likely to
focus on the interest of the customer, the CSR department strives to give back to the society in one way or another and these different views should all be integrated for a more broad overview. A shared overview may reveal the similarities in the goals pursued and enhance cooperation which can lead to the accomplishment of creating and maintaining relationships with the public. Furthermore, the PR as a boundary-spanner helps to bring these other parties together (Grunig, 1992)

Organizations do not embark on any activity in vain; they always have a purpose for engaging in an activity. This implies that achieving goals and positive results is important to the top management of any organization. The increases in PR budgets in the last two decades have made the measuring of PR activities more important as CEO’s demand results (Yungwook, 2001). Figure 1 below shows the framework adapted for this study.

**Figure 1:** Model of analysis: Enactment of an organization’s PR activities & factors affecting them
*Adapted from: Tench & Yeomans(2009) p.179*
The remaining part of this chapter will henceforth explore these concepts and theories in more detail starting with organizational goals and effectiveness. It will later discuss the public, PR management, and factors affecting PR. The chapter concludes by presenting the need for measuring and evaluating PR programs. "These theories are important, they contain the basic assumption, they tell researchers what to look out for, what their first step should be and what to expect as the result of their action" (Whittington, 2001, s. 9).

2.1 Organizational Goals and Effectiveness

The concept of organizational effectiveness is often confused with that of organizational efficiency. This is mainly because efficiency is a valued characteristic of organizations and therefore often idolized in academic literature of economics, scientific management, operations research, management science as well as other related fields of study (Lowe & Soo, 1980, p. 63). Lowe & Soo’s (1980) study further clarifies that efficiency is defined in an economic sense and is used to refer to the ratio of inputs used to produce product or service outputs; and that effectiveness on a theoretical level questions the extent to which the given goals of the organization have been achieved. As it can be seen in the origin of this concept; the early research on organizations’ effectiveness began with a goal-centered orientation of effectiveness, which essentially sees organizations as formal, rational instruments, set up to attain specific, identifiable organizational goals (Lowe & Soo, 1980, p. 64). The use of the term effectiveness, as it has been defined in this study is the extents to which organizations are able to meet their goals (Grunig, 1998; Lowe & Soo, 1980).

These early theories of organization and effectiveness assumed that organizations acted as a closed system which could fulfill their missions and reach their goals without support from their environment. More recent research recognizes the limitations of the old theories (closed system) and advocates the need for a more open system. The open system perspective started by recognizing that organizations are not autonomous; they are influenced by their environment both in the goals organizations set and the extent to which they are able to meet them (Grunig & Grunig, 1998). As suggested by the more recent theories, organizations are dependent on their surroundings in order to meet their goals. Grunig & Hunt (1984) developed the first open systems theory of public relations. This theory would allow practitioners not only to understand what traditionally has accounted for public relations programs but to also forecast how such programs should change in response to evolving environmental conditions (Grunig, 1992, pp.72-73).

To be effective, organizations have to consider the well-fare of and build long-term relationships to the public that have consequences on organizational decisions, or upon whom those decisions have consequences (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, p. 144). And these often come from an effective PR department. Effective PR departments contribute to good decision making by providing information about strategic publics to the dominant coalition who make the final decisions in the organization (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, pp. 144-145). However, the PR department can be more effective if it is part of the organization’s strategic management
function. If the senior PR manager is recognized as one of the dominant coalition members he/she will help identify the stakeholders of the organization; he or she can then develop programs at the functional level of the PR department to build long-term relationships with these strategic publics. In this way, public relation communicates with the publics that are most likely to constrain or enhance the effectiveness of the organization (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, p. 145). Interestingly, among the paradigm of effective PR that increase organizational effectiveness, one study proposed integrating all of the organizations communication functions, by doing so the PR department enhances its ability to participate in strategic management (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, p. 146).

2.2 The Public in PR Context

The public has been conceptualized as one of the most troublesome notions in the reality of contemporary PR, thereby giving rise to different views about the scope of the public and how an organization can be successful in dealing with them (Hallahan, 2000, p. 500). In an attempt to reduce the tension from the notion mentioned above, Hallahan (2000) approaches the public in PR context from a different perspective by filling the existing gap in other theories in a model he built from previous theories about publics in political science and extension of and refining of Grunig’s classification scheme for publics (Hallahan, 2000, p. 504). A further examination of this model reviewed that he maintained the view of Dewey and Blumer whose traditional definition of the public was most widely accepted in the early age of the concept. Thus, the public is a group of individuals that face similar problems, recognize that the problem exists, and try to do something about the problem (Dewey, 1927); or as a group of people who are confronted by an issue, divided in their ideas about how to meet the issue, and engaged in a constructive discussion about the issue (Blumer, 1947).

Hallahan (2000) suggested that one way to reconcile the problem of who is the public in PR context is to define all groups to which PR efforts are directed as publics before choosing the appropriate one to deal with as well as to recognize that they differ in their levels of activity (Hallahan, 2000, p. 501). In other words, for any reconciliation to be effective, organizations need to understand what interests its publics have and how they can react to it in an effective manner. Hallahan’s study differentiated the public depending on their level of involvement and knowledge about an organization’s activities. This argument of involvement follows the lines of other research which claims that the assumption that PR should treat every organizational-public in the same way requires careful scrutiny (Cancel, Cameron, Sallot, & Mitrook, 1997).

To clarify this issue of public a five-cell model was built to differentiate groups exhibiting different combinations of high/low involvement and high/low knowledge. In addition to the well-known four groups of public that organizations often consider in their relationships there is a group that exhibit virtually no knowledge nor involvement to the organization, the non-public (See fig.2) (Hallahan, 2000). Hence the five groups consist of active publics, aroused publics, aware publics, inactive publics and non-publics (Hallahan, 2000, p. 503).
Individuals who possess comparatively low levels of knowledge about an organization and exhibit low levels of involvement in operations were classified in the inactive group. They are the groups that mostly take the relationship effort of an organization for granted without much consideration; they might also take a despondent position that nothing can be done to alter the situation (Hallahan, 2000, p. 505). Aroused publics also have low levels of knowledge, but recognize a potential problem or issue (Rawlins, 2006). Their involvement can increase if prompted by factors such as personal experience; media reports or advertising about a situation involving others with whom they identify, discussions with friends, or exposure to issue creation efforts by organizers for social movements, special interest groups, or political parties (Hallahan, 2000, p. 505). In furtherance of the model, the aware publics is the next group that includes those who begin to recognize the problem (Sriramesh, Moghan, & Kwok Wei, 2007, p. 310) or might have general knowledge about a situation, even if its members might not be affected by it directly. Active publics on the other hand consist of individuals who share both high involvement and high knowledge of an organization and are ready to monitor situations and to organize, if required (Hallahan, 2000, p. 505). Lastly in his model, Hallahan (2000) added an additional group which is often neglected in the theories about the public and its classification because of their degree of involvement and knowledge about an organization’s activities; he called this group the non-publics, the default component in the model, is composed of individuals with no knowledge and no involvement whatsoever with an organization (Hallahan, 2000, p. 505). Hallahan’s active public is equivalent to Grunig’s typology of active public and is characterized by a willingness of an organization to listen and respond to the concern of the affected public. The active publics are most likely to be organized, with formal structures and leaders against the organization’s efforts as well as most likely to collaborate with the organization in support of its efforts. Organizations do not need to entice active publics to communicate with them. The public will come to them and will
create their own opportunities to communicate because of the dependency that exists between the two parties (Hallahan, 2000, p. 509).

2.3 PR Management & Strategy

As discussed in the introduction, what is lacking in many wide-spanning general theories of PR is the evidence of how PR management can enhance the organization’s relations to its public and lead to an increase in two-way communication (Grunig J. E., 2006) in a strategic manner. Furnishing the Edifice: Ongoing Research on Public Research as a Strategic Management Function” of Grunig, (2006) which both describes and prescribes the role of PR in strategic management and communication effectiveness provided valuable knowledge on how PR should be manage in the contemporary marketplace/society. Grunig acknowledged the shortcomings of his earlier work especially his model which describes different stages of PR. These include 1) press agentry, 2) public information, 3) two-way asymmetrical and 4) the two-way symmetrical (Grunig, 1984) as a response to the criticism of authors such as Cancel et al. (1997) it is a general theory that explains how the PR function should be structured and managed to provide the greatest value to organizations, publics, and society. Given the role of PR as a boundary-spanner, Grunig conceptualizes PR as a strategic management function rather than as a messaging, publicity, and media relations function. The first two parts of the model, press agentry and public information were both one-way solutions where PR was used as a way of communicating to the customer, often through mass media (Grunig’, 1992, p. 288). The two-way asymmetrical evolves as the name suggests into a two-way communication, more thought is also put into how to cause action from the public through PR (Grunig’, 1992, p. 18). Finally the two-way symmetrical model which just as the asymmetrical is research based on managing conflict and increase understanding among its public (Grunig’, 1992, p. 18). From the Grunig’s model, it can be said that for the management of PR to be successful, companies have to manage it strategically by adopting the two-way communication approach.

The field of PR and its strong focus on communication has evolved over time and shifted not only to two-way communication but towards handling the management of relationships. Just as the general field of marketing has undergone a paradigm shift to become more relationship based, where marketing is seen as “relationships, networks, and interaction” the tasks of PR has had to change (Gummesson, 1994, p. 5). Bruning & Ledingham, (2000) argued that with PRs strong roots in media had used mass communication as a means to reach its goals in the past (Bruning & Ledingham, 2000, p. 86) but today’s tasks are geared towards meeting both organizational and public goals through relationship building (Ledingham J. A., 2003). Just as Grunig’s strategic perspective of PR is seen as “a strategic management functions rather than as a messaging, publicity and media relations function” (Grunig 2006, p. 151) the relationship management also views PR as a management function. Within the relational perspective, PR is seen as “the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure
depends” (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994, p. 2). PR has taken on the role of building relationships and managing interdependence, good relations are claimed to make organizations more effective as they allow more freedom than do bad relations (Grunig’, 1992, p. 69).

This new view of PR has transferred efforts away from “manipulating public opinion with communication messages” towards becoming a managerial function that produces messages consistent with the strategy and behavior of the organization in order to build a unified image and help “initiate, build, nurture and maintain mutually beneficial organization-public relationships” (Bruning & Ledingham, 2000, p. 87). The ideal relationship between an organization and its public is defined as “the state that exists between an organization and its key publics that provides economic, social, political, and/or cultural benefits to all parties involved, and is characterized by mutual positive regard.” (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998, p. 62).

From an organizational standpoint the managerial process of relationship management can be tracked, tested, and evaluated with the use of the SMART model constructed by Bruning and Ledingham (Ledingham J. A., 2003). The acronym SMART stands for Scan, Map, Act, Rollout and Track which are the five activities related to managing relationships with the public. The initial activity Scan refers to obtaining an overview of the current situation that the organization is in with regards to its publics, Map has to do with planning a strategy that will establish goals and tactics, Act involves a pilot study to evaluate and refine the strategy, Rollout is the realization of the fine-tuned strategy, and finally Track is the usage of qualitative and quantitative research in order to assess how the strategy has influenced the various public (Bruning & Ledingham, 2000). The SMART model will be used as a comparative framework in evaluating how the PR departments carry out their PR efforts and if the model is used in reality.

2.4 Factors Affecting PR

From a managerial perspective there are many factors that affect PR in an organization. The organizations internal structure and where the function of PR resides in the company will significantly affect how the PR practitioners will be working. As mentioned earlier the debate as to what the contemporary managerial function of PR contributes is still of interest because of the blurred lines that often define PR in an organization. Sector, size, stage of organizational development and culture are a couple of internal factors that are considered to be important in that they will affect PR and communication within the organization (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 24-25).

The sector that the organization is in will help determine what programs are better suited for that particular market and the issue of growing markets that require “quick, reactive as well as proactive programmes” is raised as a special consideration for PR (Tench & Yeomans, 2009,
The size of the organization is important as a small company may have one person working with PR and large companies employ large PR departments, within the size aspect is the question whether or not PR activities and employees are in a position where their concerns are heard and their ideas can make a difference. Looking at the report from the European Communication Monitor the conclusions are speaking for PR as becoming an influential part of organizations (Zerfass, Moreno, Tench, Vercic, & Verhoeven, 2013). In European organizations 79.4% of recommendations made by the communication department are taken seriously by senior management and 75.7% of PR professionals also claim that they are invited to meetings regarding the organizations strategic planning (Zerfass, Moreno, Tench, Vercic, & Verhoeven, 2013, p. 87). The stage of organizational development will affect PR in that it sets the stage for the activities, depending on the maturity stage of the company different strategic activities will be relevant. In the startup stage emphasis will be put on marketing communication which can help grow the organization through sales where an organization in the maturity stage may have a vast agenda with PR spanning across CSR activities, investor relations, government contacts etc (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 25). The culture, which refers in large to the type of organization sets a tone for expectations and goals and in trying to meet set goals the PR practitioner will need to adjust the PR activities accordingly (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 26).

2.5 Integration of Departments within the Organization

Organizations are complex; they are made up of different units responsible for different tasks gearing towards the accomplishment of the joint goals of the organization such as communication, or relationship goals. Most often, these areas of responsibility do not always fit neatly into functional departments. For instance, internal communication can sometimes be argued to fit into PR, sometimes into marketing, and sometimes into HR. Interestingly, some departments seem to have more or less well-defined boundaries than others, and PR is a good example of this – creating room for continuous debate as to what the contemporary managerial function of PR should be (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 31). This debate is not new, the role of PR in management and its value to an organization have been debated for at least 100 years and has centered around the question of whether the role of PR is to support marketing or whether it serves a broader social and political function as the two unit works towards communicating the organizations activities to different sets of public (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, p. 141).

Another current debate regards the relationship between PR and CSR. It has been made clear that the two fields, through their similarities and common objectives, have a possible joint effectiveness as both seek to enhance the quality of the relationship between an organization and its key stakeholders (Clark, 2000, p. 376). The role that communication has in building quality relationships is an important one; however, one that is largely unrecognized by CSR researchers. Communication managers have the ability to scan the political, social, and historical environment regarding a myriad of issues; likewise, business competitiveness rests
on knowing who will be affected by a company’s decisions (Clark, 2000, p. 377). Therefore, it is critical that these disciplines acknowledge their similarities and work toward combining their efforts. As already mentioned the fields complement each other and “public, or social, responsibility has become a major reason for an organization to have a public relations function” (Clark, 2000, p. 368). The connection between PR and other departments and how it is to be used in effective communication and relationship management, and social responsibility is still developing (Clark, 2000).

The subjective view of Grunig and Grunig, however, sees benefits in blurred functional lines and advocates that participants from different disciplines in such integrated organizations identify different important problems as well as different solutions (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, p. 145). Marketing for instance would see the problem concerning specific ‘marketing mix’ processes, as most important (Morgan, Vorhies, & Mason, 2009), manufacturing would see production of products as more important, HR on the other hand emphasizes the problem of employee commitment and engagement (Becker & Huselid, 2006), whereas finance sees the problem of acquiring resources. The majority of studies conducted so far argue that it is not only possible but highly desirable to have all functions of the firm "integrated" in the majority of situations; thusly, marketing-communications functions must be placed under the organizational authority of marketing or communications generally referred to as "corporate communications" or "public relations" (Hutton, 1996). The value of PR, therefore, is that it brings a different set of problem-definitions and possible solutions into the strategic management arena. In particular, it brings the problems of publics into decision making – publics that make up the environment of the organization (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, p. 146). PR serves as a boundary-spanning unit, thus, it helps to manage the internal communication and relationships; thereafter, serving as the entire organization’s communicator to external stakeholders (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 26-27).

2.6 Need for Measuring the Impact of PR Program

About two decades ago, the decision makers of large corporations told their PR managers that it was time for them to show how successful communication through PR programs contribute to the organization’s bottom-line, otherwise their department would suffer from a “negative budget adjustment” (Grunig, 1992, p.65). During that time the field had seen a period of increased PR budgets and the top management wanted to see results. The top management curiosity about the effect of PR programs/activities is significant, not because they lack the resource to foster the department but because of the need for accountability. As soon as this demand came to the attention of PR managers, several answers, without theoretical grounds, emerged; such as the PR increases profits, PR gains support in the society, PR increases employee morale, productivity, and so on (Grunig, 1992). These kinds of answers are equivalent to counting press clippings or articles, putting them in a pile, finding a procedure for coding and categorizing the material that is covered in those clippings, entering the data into a computer, and coming up with some tallies (Lindenmann, 1998). When they do so, they have only taken an elementary first step by measuring the term result of PR activity in the
very complex and involved process of seeking to measure and evaluate effectiveness of PR (Lindenmann, 1998). It is unfortunate that most PR practitioners do the same thing at different points in time and assume that they are measuring the effectiveness or outcome of the PR activities.

The contribution of PR to the bottom-line requires a logical, theoretical argument to connect communication objectives to broader organizational goals. The lack of such theories has created a huge gap and made the evaluation of PR programs one of the hottest topics at professional meetings and seminars, and in professional publications during the last few decades (Grunig, 1992). It is part of the responsibility of PR research to provide practitioners with information on how publics perceive an organization’s PR efforts and how these perceptions change (‘Hon, 1998).

The Ketchum Public Relations Research and Measurement Department which is the largest research group within the PR industry (Ketchum, 2014) identified three levels of measuring PR effectiveness (Lindenmann, 1998). The first level measures the amount of exposure an organization receives from the media, the total number of placements, total number of impressions, and the likelihood of reaching the targeted audience. The second level for measuring the effectiveness is the intermediate level for measuring PR outgrowths. At this stage, organizations measure whether or not the targeted audience has actually received the message directed to them; it further measures whether the public paid attention to, understood, and retained the message. The third level of measurement in PR effectiveness shows opinion or attitude changes, shift in views, and how people act when it comes to an organization’s products or services. (Lindenmann, 1998). This third level measurement is the most important in this study as it aims to measure how PR contributes to relationships. In accordance with (Lindenmann, 1998; Ledingham, 2003) claims that due to the new direction that PR is taking “the appropriate unit of measurement of public relations impact is the organization public relationship.” He further mentions that successful PR will result in “mutual understanding and benefit” between the company and its publics (Ledingham J. A., 2003).

Evaluation is a necessary component of sophisticated PR practice. That is, with evaluation of data, practitioners can plan and manage communication programs more effectively (Broom & Dozier, 1990). Another important function of measuring PR activities is that practitioners can demonstrate, either directly or indirectly, what role PR has in organizational goal achievement (‘Hon, 1998).
3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology used for carrying out this study. The chapter starts by giving the reason behind the choice of research company, topic and research questions. The used research method will be explained as well as primary and secondary data followed by a discussion regarding validity and reliability before concluding with ethical considerations and limitations.

3.1 Choice of Research Topic, Research Questions and Participating Companies

The topic of PR was found especially interesting as it has been heavily debated. As mentioned the field has struggled, first with reconciling and creating a common ground for PR practitioners and later with living with a bad reputation and proving itself useful and worthy of its position within the company. The recent surge in public involvement has however offered an opportunity for PR to show its importance for a company’s success.

Proceeding with the study, the phrasing of a research question is a stage that requires a considerable amount of time. A research question is a question to which it is possible, at least in theory, to find an answer to (Fisher, 2010, pp. 37-38). During the brainstorming section of this study, several options for possible research questions were presented but at the end of the second seminar, the current research questions; RQ.1 – What are the factors that affect PR management in the selected MNCs? RQ.2 – How do the isolated factors affect PR management in these selected MNCs? Were isolated and accepted as the best option as they give the best possibility of achieving the objective of this study.

The rationale behind choosing the participating companies (Company A, Coloplast, and Shell) is simple. First and foremost an interest was sparked when reading an article of how a large multinational company handled a matter of one of its employees. Said company was contacted and the original intent was to conduct a single unit case study with only one large company, which showed great interest in participating early on in the process. However several delayed answers from the company caused the authors to fear that another delay would jeopardize the study. Due to the time constraints it became imperative to change the scope of the study. Other companies with similar capacity were contacted in order to carry out the study. The companies were picked from lists ranking well performing companies. A total of 35 companies were selected randomly from Fortune 500 (Fortune.com, 2014) and Forbes most innovative companies (Forbes.com, 2014) and were contacted between the 28th and the 30th of April 2014 via email. By May 5th all the requests to research had been granted and the three participating companies had been chosen. The companies had the characteristics that were sought after, they are large and innovative multinational companies that do well in their sector. Finally, the presented companies responded positively and showed a great interest in the study.
In addition to the above discussion, “choosing a study sample is an important step in any research project since it is rarely practical, efficient or ethical to study whole populations” (Marshall, 1996, p. 522). Just as in the case of quantitative sampling, sampling for qualitative research is an area of considerable confusion for researchers. This largely relates to misunderstanding about the aims of the qualitative approach. Marshall (1996) explains that there are three broad approaches to selecting a sample for a qualitative study – the convenience sampling, judgment sampling and the theoretical sampling. He further highlighted that the selection of sampling method depends upon the aim of the study. For this study, the judgment sampling which is also known as purposeful sampling was chosen as the most appropriate sampling technique to achieve the aim of this study. In this technique, the researcher actively selects the most productive sample (that is, those who have a good knowledge of the topic) to answer the research question (Marshall, 1996); the other two sampling techniques convenience and theoretical sampling are not considered further in this study.

As mentioned the three respondents were chosen because they were considered to be in the position best suited to speak for the PR department in question. Access to the respondents was granted either immediately by the PR department or through the help of company headquarters which referred the authors to the PR-practitioners. For instance, the contact with Shell was established through the corporate website (shell.com) via an email to Shell headquarters in Netherlands. The PR respondent then contacted the authors saying that she had been recommended to participate in the study on behalf of Shell. In the case of the other two companies the appropriate respondent was contacted immediately. The three respondents offered continuous email communication and in the two cases where a phone interview was held a specific time slot was allotted for the interview.

3.2 Research Method

Fisher’s “Researching and writing a dissertation: an essential guide for business students” (2010) and Yin’s “Case Study Research Design and Methods” (1994) have both been used to direct the process of this study and have been referred to for guidance during the duration of the study. Given the purpose of this study which is to gain an understanding of the current situation that PR is found in at different companies, it has been deemed most suitable for the study to be handled as a case study. Case studies are said to be more appropriate when the research is designed to gain an “in-depth understanding” (Fisher, 2007, p. 59), when a phenomena within a “real-life context” is being studied and “a “how” or “why” question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control” (Yin, 1994, pp. 1-9). In a case study, the researcher gives a narrative account of the subject of their study (Fisher, 2010, p. 204). As this case study involves several companies and not just one it is a multiple case-study and the unit of analysis is the PR departments of the three companies. This is referred to as a type 3 study; a holistic (single unit of analysis) multiple-case design (Yin, 1994, p. 39). The research method used to conduct this study has been given a considerable amount of attention and has been carefully chosen (Fisher, 2010, p.
71). This decision has led to an increased sense of confidence in this project and has also made the processes of finding things out more clear (Fisher, 2010, p. 169).

As the study builds off of previous knowledge and an extensive literature review a deductive approach was used and the study was carried out through the use of a qualitative research method, semi-structured interviews, which will be explained further in the next section.

### 3.2.1 Qualitative Interviews

According to Hon & Brunner (2000, p.315), a research of this nature (exploratory/open) uses qualitative in-depth and open interviewing techniques. Exploratory research may also involve the use of various forms of other research methods: such as observation, documents, etc. (Fisher, 2010). Qualitative, in-depth and open interviewing techniques are chosen to be the most appropriate for this study following Hon & Brunner, 2000 who did a similar study and it is also a commonly used method in master level research into business and organizations (Fisher, 2010, p. 182). The rationale for this is simple and straightforward – it is when the researcher does not know what kind of answer they will get from the respondent that this method is used (Fisher, 2010, p. 181). A semi-structured interview (Appendix A) with 26 open-ended interview questions operationalized (Appendix B) from the theoretical concepts presented in chapter two was put together and sent to the appropriate authority at the companies. Sending the questions before the interview was meant to give the respondents time to get familiar with the questions beforehand. However, the goal for the chosen approach is that the interviewer can engage in an informal conversation with the respondent about a particular area of interest (Fisher, 2010, p. 175), thus, the interviewer does not attempt to fit the interviewee answers and experiences into a predetermined frame but rather let the interviewer steer the conversation a little bit by picking up on the points raised by the interviewees and the interviewer encourages interviewees to expound more on specific points (Fisher, 2010; Hon & Brunner, 2000). The respondent answers will generally lead the direction of the interview (Fisher, 2010) by doing so, the respondent can provide answers that exceed the interviewers’ expectation and this can contribute to and enhance the researched area.

As is the case of all research methods, case study and qualitative interviewing has its limitations. The most common uncertainty feature of qualitative research when compared with quantitative research is that there is no commonly accepted way of analyzing a case study – this is something that the case study researcher has to work out by themselves. Thus the preparation for data collection is not as complex as the matter of how to analyze the material after it has been collected (Fisher, 2010, p. 205).
3.3 Data Collection

3.3.1 Primary Data

Primary data, which is data specifically collected by the researchers for the study in which it is used (Sekaran, 2003, p. 219). Primary data was gathered through a qualitative method in this study. The qualitative method as mentioned was semi-structured interviews with open ended questions with the PR departments of the participating companies. The semi-structured interviews were chosen to allow for more in-depth answers and a better understanding of how the companies work with PR. The prepared interview questions were open-ended, without a set of answers to choose from to encourage elaboration from the interviewee.

With the exception of one respondent who preferred to provide her answers via e-mail, the rest of the interviews were conducted over the telephone because it was the most time efficient option. Even though, telephone interviewing can reduce rapport, it has provided the advantage of being able to reach more geographically long distance respondents (Hon & Brunner, 2000). The time for the interviews differed and ranged from 30-45 minutes. Because of the qualitative nature of the study, the reaction of the respondents toward each question differed for each individual; this was why the authors endeavored to respect each respondent’s ethical conditions. The telephone interview with Company A was conducted on May 8th at 8.30am and Coloplast was interviewed on May 19th at 11am. Both companies were sent the questions ahead of time. Shell agreed to participate by email and received the questions on May 2nd, the questions were returned on May 15th. In order to build a stronger case and get a chance to compare a larger collection of data further research into secondary data has been conducted.

3.3.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data, which is data collected in previous studies or for other purposes than this particular study was used in order to gain knowledge about the field and to create a theoretical framework (Sekaran, 2003, p. 59). The framework and applicable theories were then used to help explain and evaluate the collected primary data. The secondary data about the field of PR and its theories was collected from textbooks and peer reviewed articles published in academic journals. The Web of Science database on Mälardalen University’s library website and Google scholar was used to find scientific articles. The main search phrase used was “public relations” but other search words such as “public in public relations” and “effective public relations” were also used to reach more in-depth articles. A literature review helped extracting relevant literature with useful information and theories for the study. Background information on the participating organizations was found on respective company’s corporate website. Secondary data about the companies and their PR efforts was also collected through the website, press releases and other articles about the companies as well as their social media accounts such as YouTube channels, Facebook pages etc. As is recommended the use of secondary data was conducted with caution and from a critical standpoint.
3.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of qualitative case study data is often the most difficult part as there are no “fixed formulas or “cookbook recipes” to follow (Yin, 1994, p. 102). Different approaches were adopted in analyzing the collected data – the approaches had to be different because the methods used in collecting the data also differed (i.e. – telephone and email). The main points of the data collected via telephone interviews were elaborated further immediately after the interview while the conversation was still fresh in mind, this was to ensure that no important information was lost later on. As for the data collected via email, it was analyzed thematically, which involves reviewing the answers provided and continuously comparing them to related theories (Lindlof, 1994). Analyzing qualitative materials as in this case required a concerted use of connoisseurship and criticism. Connoisseurship involves recognizing values or significance in something that seem unremarkable by most people, whereas criticism involves teasing out and explaining that significance (Fisher, 2010, p. 198).

In order to avoid or minimize the bias of subjectivity during data analysis both authors analyzed the data independent of one another before discussing the impacts of gathered data.

3.5 Validity, Reliability

The validity of a study is the degree to which the study measures what it is intended to measure (‘Fisher, 2007, p. 295). In this study the correlation between the theories and the interview questions is of high importance for the validity. Construct validity has been especially important for the building of a framework in this study. Construct validity refers mainly to the data collection phase and the use of multiple sources in order to create valid measures for the concepts that are being studied (Yin, 1994, pp. 33-34) External validity which is the extent to which the findings can be generalized is also relevant to this study (Yin, 1994, p. 36). As the study is qualitative and consist of data from three companies one should be careful to draw conclusions about larger groups of companies or an entire sector based on the conclusions drawn in this thesis as those conclusions are based off of only three companies. This study is aiming to give more insight into chosen companies and give ideas for further research rather than generalizing findings for entire sectors. A study’s reliability, also referred to as accuracy in measurement refers to how easily the study can be replicated with the same results by other researchers (Sekaran, 2003, pp. 203-204). For this study to have high reliability the steps taken have had to be accurately recorded and documented in such a way that the steps taken can be retraced. For that reason the questions used in this study are attached in Appendix A.

3.6 Ethical Consideration & Access Negotiation

Due to market sensitive issues anonymity and confidentiality has been employed in the case of Company A. As called for by anonymity the real company name as well as the employee name will be excluded from this study and replaced with different names (‘Fisher, 2007, p.
69). Confidentiality goes hand in hand with anonymity as it prohibits exposure of sources (‘Fisher, 2007, p. 69). The participating companies had the right to not answer questions deemed sensitive and Coloplast exercised this right in one instance.

3.7 Limitations
As this was an in depth study of only three companies the answers cannot be readily generalized to entire markets, a larger study or several smaller case studies would be able to further strengthen the external validity of claims made in this study. As an extension of this research future researchers could add another dimension by looking at how the public welcomes or distant themselves from PR efforts made by participating companies. The telephone interviews could unfortunately not be recorded and the authors had to rely on taking careful notes during the interviews. Another important limitation that is worth mentioning here “is that the data represent the involved respondents’ perceptions only. Future research might include triangulation of methods (e.g., interviews combined with focus groups and observation) to further substantiate the findings suggested by this study (Hon & Brunner, 2000, p. 316).

The study experienced a setback as the company that at the outset of the project committed to participate dropped out. The study was meant to be a one-company case study and part of the design and method had to change as the original plan fell through.
4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This chapter includes the findings which are answers obtained through interviews with participating company representatives and information found in secondary data.

4.1 Company A

PR in Company A was described based on the roles they play in the organization; the first role is to promote the image of the company to the public, in particular stakeholders and politicians. The second role is reactive and monitors development in the media and the community; finally its third role is a traditional proactive PR role where the department works with social media and various events (Manager-1, 2014). The PR department of Company A is a global function with 25 PR-practitioners active in different regions where the company has offices (Manager-1, 2014). The different regions have distinct responsibilities within their area and a specific PR department works mostly with the region in which it is located (Manager-1, 2014). The particular region interviewed has three employees; according to a benchmark comparison the company has small PR departments considering how large the company is (Manager-1, 2014). Due to the small PR departments Company A employs PR consultants to help with certain tasks. Company A is considering their PR departments to be very cost-efficient, largely due to what they are able to do with their relatively small PR departments (Manager-1, 2014).

The company’s PR department works closely with HR and product development on a daily basis (Manager-1, 2014). The surrounding departments are structured in a similar way as the PR department with self-managed smaller regional groups a “matrix organization” (Manager-1, 2014). The PR department of Company A has a senior position that is part of the company’s top management, and the respondent feels that the PR department is certainly given top management’s attention (Manager-1, 2014).

According to the respondent at Company A the main factor affecting their PR department is the sector in which the company operates. Since the company is a business to business (B2B) and a business to government (B2G) company the PR department does not have a “front-office” role the way PR departments in business to consumer (B2C) markets might have (Manager-1, 2014).

The PR department of Company A prefers two-way communication and follows a general management strategy that can be adapted depending on the public and the situation (Manager-1, 2014). Company A is currently engaged in an array of PR activities such as meetings, events, trade shows and seminars. These activities are not considered to be pure marketing but establish the company’s role as a “thought leader” in the field (Manager-1, 2014). The activities are chosen on a regional level but some events are both regional and global, trade conferences are considered to be very important and are given a large monetary investment (Manager-1, 2014). Company A is also active on social media and can be followed on YouTube, Twitter and Facebook. The company encourages involvement through a global competition for students. The YouTube channels display new products and events, but also
information about the company. The Facebook page, as explained, is meant to be a place where the public can voice their concerns or tell their stories about the company.

The respondent at Company A considers identifying the stakeholders an easy task. First and foremost politicians are an important group; the trade press representatives are also an important group for Company A (Manager-1, 2014). The mainstream press however has fallen down the ladder of importance with the birth and growth of social media (Manager-1, 2014). The external public affects both the messages and the activities of Company A as they tailor both the message and the event to reach the target audience. When events are arranged with customers they are involved in the process of planning the event and it is important that the activity is “pitched” in a way that suits the customer (Manager-1, 2014). Much of the communication with the public is made through meetings and conferences; when working with stakeholders a two-way communication is preferred (Manager-1, 2014). As one way of allowing a two-way communication the corporate website offers a survey on how the company is behaving when it comes to employees and environmental factors. A special email address for issues about the company’s perceived performance is also available on Company As website; these efforts show that the company welcomes feedback from the public.

As for organizational goals, Company A sets annual objectives, the objectives and goals are set in agreement of the Director of PR in the region and higher management (Manager-1, 2014). The goals are then continuously monitored. Every two weeks discussions are held regarding the regional process with the Directors of all company regions (Manager-1, 2014). The global Director has monthly check-ins and performs larger assessments mid-year and at the end of each year (Manager-1, 2014).

4.2 Coloplast

The PR or Public Affairs (PA) as the respondent termed it was described at Coloplast as a tool that the organization uses to influence its stakeholders/public. The department has several roles such as employer branding and external communications with the shareholders to mention a few (Manager-2, 2014). “The PA department is involved in more or less all activities one can call the PA” (Manager-2, 2014). It has its distinct roles slightly different from the other departments. Coloplast as a global corporation with its headquarters in Denmark has its PA unit suited in the corporate communications department at the headquarters. Based on the nature of the company's industry, the headquarters guides the overall PA activities of the company's subsidiaries worldwide. The local department however has no specific structure. The department is structured as a corporate communications department similar to other companies in the medical device industry (Manager-2, 2014).

The marketing department is one function that is closely related to the PR department. The marketing function plays almost the same role as the PR function does in that they help communicating the company's products to the public (customers). The sales department is also related to the PR department since their personnel deals directly and closely with customers and also has a similar role to that of PR. Another function mentioned was the
health care management department (Manager-2, 2014). Despite the close connection and resemblance between cooperating departments the respondent highlighted that no particular function of the ones mentioned can be said to be structured with respect to the PR department.

The factors related to the sector depended on the nature of the company's industry which was said to differ from other industries such as the pharmaceutical industry. The external factors like health care buying systems, public procurement centre – tender was very specific to the industry (Manager-2, 2014). Tender is the way in which the company competes for a sale with other competitors. The company with the best alternative deal will be accepted by the buyer while the others loose. Based on the industry and the way that the sector competes for clients the respondent claimed; “positioning ourselves as a company in the market, how to influence these tender and other factors is always our biggest challenge” (Manager-2, 2014)

Another external factor that affects Coloplast is the media, it shapes the PR messages and activities therefore increasing the need to look for the best media opportunities available. The company's PR department is affected in a positive way by the PR companies that they work with, in that the PR consulting firms help them get better access to politicians that often have great influence on them as a company (Manager-2, 2014).

Most of the PA activities are done in-house while others are outsourced to PR consulting firms as mentioned the activities are especially outsourced when dealing with politicians. Coloplast keep good relationships with the external organizations that can help them achieve PR effectiveness. For instance as said they often work with PR companies to increase their success such as getting better access to the politicians which might be difficult to reach for their PR department (Manager-2, 2014).

Coloplast does not have major goals for relationship building; instead their goals are often in terms of market conditions. Their PR department is mostly concerned with free market conditions that ensure that all users have adequate access to their product. According to the respondent, they monitor the fulfillment of their goals on a continuous basis through “monthly meetings by the managers, on a yearly basis for PA effectiveness, with an annual business plan process and also planning for the next year” (Manager-2, 2014).

“Because the company is a global company, the stakeholders are identified on a geographical/region basis through stakeholder maps; a stakeholder’s map is the overview of the stakeholders, how they perceive the company and its products” (Manager-2, 2014). These stakeholders include the customers, shareholders, politicians (governments), and sometimes the competitors.

According to the respondent, there is no specific approach to the management of PR. One of their main tasks for managing PR is by accessing feedback from a particular public and adjusts its strategy accordingly. Given the sensitivity of the company's business, the company's PR activities could not be fully disclosed; however, the company is most often involved in dialogue with its strategic public (Manager-2, 2014).

The respondent had not heard of the term SMART nor had they used it in the past. Coloplast uses a procedure that is similar to the SMART method but that is not referred to as SMART. The procedure used at Coloplast is called “communications package”. The communications
package is a plan that guides the PR department on how the activities are to be done. This procedure/package is “consolidated in a narrative manner” (Manager-2, 2014).

Some PR activities especially long-term activities are chosen on a proactive basis. By professionalizing the sales and marketing organization and the innovation processes, while making significant efficiency improvements, especially in the production processes the PA department are able to achieve its goal. Other activities depend on the trend in the marketplace and cause the department to be reactive. The company is active in social media with a Facebook page and a YouTube channel with information (ColoplastCorp, 2014). Coloplast’s Facebook page offers stories about employees and projects; it also works as a forum and allows discussion. One instance that shows Coloplast’s intent to create relations was on October 21st, 2013 when the company provided funds for building material and volunteer to work side by side with future habitat homeowners to construct simple, decent, affordable homes for hard working, low-income individuals in one of its operating environment – Southern Nevada (Coloplast-press-release-2, 2013). This gesture is a way to strengthen its relationship with the public. However “It is difficult to state exactly how effective these PA can be; the measurement and judgment of the PR effectiveness is an on-going process in a more subjective manner – it is subjective in the sense that PR is not an exact science” (Manager-2, 2014). Furthermore, “it is difficult to say if the PA is cost effective or not because the PA department does not emphasize effectiveness on a cost effective basis instead it is interested in effectiveness on a need basis and will always like to do more. If it is based on being cost effective, the competitors might take over the market (Manager-2, 2014)”

4.3 Shell

Shell’s respondent speaking for corporate communications laid great emphasis on creating and maintaining the company reputation (Manager-3, 2014). The role of PR in regard to Shell’s reputation is very important as their internal and external actions have immediate impact on the company reputation, share price and their license to operate (Manager-3, 2014). A wide variety of factors affect the PR department at Shell which is divided over the company’s different businesses, dedicating a communications team to each group (Manager-3, 2014). There are five groups; Projects & Technology, Downstream, Upstream Americas, Upstream International and Corporate Communications and the communication teams work with the group they are assigned to (Manager-3, 2014). The 35 practitioners at Shell’s PR department in the Netherlands are divided into eight groups; NAM(joint venture), Pernis/Moerdijk(refinery), Technology centers, Internal Communications, NGO & Stakeholder Relations, Social Investment, Media Relations and a campaign team (Manager-3, 2014). The media relations group includes social media, a branch that was started up in 2012 (Manager-3, 2014). Shell work closely with the Upstream, Downstream and Projects & Technology functions of Shell businesses (Manager-3, 2014). Shell carries out PR activities in-house but they also work with external agencies on global contracts (Manager-3, 2014).
The main strategy for PR at Shell is to: “[B]uild a positive and distinct corporate brand and reputation for Shell through communication and engagements.” (Manager-3, 2014). Due to the importance of reputation Shell focus on involvement in activities that emphasize the advanced energy technologies that Shell use and show how the company takes an innovative approach in helping to build a sustainable energy future (Manager-3, 2014). In an attempt to promote transparency in the countries where Shell operates the company publishes the annual amounts that are paid to the government in taxes, fees etc. (Shell, Payments to governments, 2014) The reason for the transparency is according to Shell “to ensure that the billions of dollars the energy industry pays in tax benefits society as a whole.” (Shell, Payments to governments, 2014). Being a global company Shell sometimes runs into problems operating in politically unstable nations, in such events Shell abides by international law and honors sanctions declared by the international community. (Shell, Politically sensitive regions, 2014). Shell refers to the same set of business principles when an ethical situation arises in any of the regions in which the company is active. (Shell, Politically sensitive regions, 2014) Shell wants to engage in activities that help them show their strive towards becoming the most competitive and innovative energy company in the world (Manager-3, 2014). The activities deemed most important to Shell are communication and engagement, for 2014 their Innovation campaign is used as an umbrella theme (Manager-3, 2014).

Shell is very active online and on social media, the company can be followed on YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Google+ and Flickr. On YouTube the company advertises its products but also offers information from the company’s top management with videos of both the CEO (Ben van Beurden) and CFO (Simon Henry) discussing company results and strategy. Other Shell employees are also interviewed and can be seen talking about their experience at the company. Shell also encourages involvement through its YouTube channel with a worldwide competition for students (Shell YouTube, 2014). Shell’s Facebook page has over 5 million likes and shares news stories and information about different ongoing projects. On Facebook the public is able to comment on any content put on the page by the company and it seems that the company uses this page as a means of encouraging dialogue as this quote is found on its page: “As we move forward, we are fine tuning our listening skills to learn more and improve our relationship with you.” (facebook.com/Shell, 2014) Shell also has a customer feedback survey on their website where the public can voice their opinions.

At Shell the public is found by creating a stakeholder list from analyzing each project and creating a communication plan (Manager-3, 2014). Among targeted stakeholders are staff, students, scholars, and E(nergy) C(onsumed) C(ustomers) (Manager-3, 2014). Shell builds off of close relations with their external parties.

Shell’s PR department also has stated goals that they work by and that is to focus on delivery, keeping up best practices by using set standards, increase the approach of human storytelling and building an active stakeholder engagement (Manager-3, 2014). The department in the Netherlands is focused on “active creation of platforms to get messaging across” (Manager-3, 2014). They also have taken an active stakeholder approach with a Social Investment Programme on community development projects (Manager-3, 2014).
5. **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This chapter will analyze and discuss the findings against the backdrop of the theories presented in chapter 2.

### 5.1 Organizational Goals and Effectiveness

According to (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 1994, p. 2) the definition of PR is a management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends. The companies have described PR in a slightly different way, a way that suits their organization and its objective. At Company A PR is described based on its roles in the organization. The first role is to help promote the image of the company to the public – the stakeholders, politicians, the second role is to reactively monitor development in the media, the community and also control rumors; finally, it plays a proactive role with work within social media and other forms of events. At Coloplast PR is a tool that the organization uses to influence its stakeholders/public, the department has several roles and “The PA department is involved in more or less all activities one can call the PA” (Manager-2, 2014). Shell’s definition is close to Coloplast where they see PR as a tool that they use to maintain their corporate reputation with the public. From these definitions, the three companies see PR as a tool to build and maintain reputation rather than creating mutually beneficial relationships, especially in the two later companies. Both Shell and Company A has set goals for their departments that are consistent with and strive towards the overall organizational goals of the company. The open system perspective recognizes that organizations are influenced by their environment both in the goals organizations set and the extent to which they are able to meet them (Grunig & Grunig, 1998). The notion of the companies’ dependency on their public is something that seems to be ingrained in all three companies as a part of their planning and execution as they often adapt strategies and activities to suit the intended public. The extent to which organizations are able to meet their set goals (Grunig, 1998; Lowe & Soo, 1980) will define their effectiveness. Unlike Company A and Shell, Coloplast has a different perspective on goals and their PR department is mainly concerned with ensuring that all users have access to their product.

### 5.2 The Public in PR context

The participating companies acknowledge the importance of the public on whom their continuing existence depends (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997, p. 855). PR and its objective is therefore mainly tailored towards these public that have exercised an influence on the organization. All three companies have a clear view of who their public is and what is even more important is the realization of the importance of differentiating the public and their interest. Cancel, et al. (1997) points out that any assumption that PR should not treat all public...
the same way should be carefully scrutinized. Company A addresses their public in the way best suited to reach the particular target audience in question. The public is often included in the process with Company A in order to best tailor activities and messages to suit the public; whether it is the media, a customer, or any other group (Manager-1, 2014). However, the media is no longer as important as it was in the past because of the availability of social media. Another important group to the company is the trade press (Manager-1, 2014). Coloplast's public includes customers, shareholders, politicians (government), and sometimes the competitors (Manager-2, 2014). At Shell the staff, students, scholars, and the E(nergy) C(onsumed) C(ustomers) (Manager-3, 2014) are the main groups that the PR activities are often tailored to. These companies did not direct their PR efforts to all groups of public; instead they focused on the group specific to certain activities and programs after recognizing that public differs in their levels of activity (Hallahan, 2000, p. 501). For instance, Coloplast identifies their stakeholders on a geographical or regional basis through stakeholder maps (Manager-2, 2014), in a similar way Shell identifies its public by creating a stakeholder list from analyzing each project and creating a communication plan (Manager-3, 2014). As suggested by the more recent theories, organizations are dependent on their surroundings in order to meet their goals. These organizations recognize that they are not autonomous; in that they are influenced by their environment both in the goals organizations set and the extent to which they are able to meet them (Grunig & Grunig, 1998).

5.3 PR Management & Strategy

The SMART-method as claimed by (Ledingham J. A., 2003) was not used by any of the three companies and both the respondent from Company A and Coloplast claimed that they had never heard of it. Despite no knowledge of SMART, Coloplast and Company A’s way of working both proactively and reactively corresponded to a great extent with the method. Even though it was not a conscious attempt to follow the theoretical guidelines the reactive role at Company A is similar to the Scan and Map aspects of SMART, their proactive role takes over to cover Act, Rollout and Track.

Just as Grunig. J. E (1984) presented the management of PR through his famous model of four types of PR (see chapter 2); companies and their management of PR functions differ from one another. The answers from the respondents justifies that these companies relate and communicate with their respective public in different ways. (Due to confidentiality Coloplast could not disclose the activities they were engaged in however they did confirm that they prefer a two-way communication.) Given the nature and the industry of Company A, conferences, trade fairs, as well as seminars are found to be the appropriate way for relating with the public most important to them. Company A’s approach slightly differs from that of Shell, where communication and engagement is the main strategy for reaching out to the public in order to build positive and distinctive corporate brand and reputation. Despite the different approaches used by the companies, all three are to some extent involved in a two-way symmetric communication which is identified by Grunig’s fourth part of his model, and
the companies can therefore be said to fit best in the two way symmetrical model (Grunig’, 1992, p. 18).

5.4 Factors Affecting PR

As has been covered in chapter 2 many factors may affect a PR department and its outcomes. The main factor affecting both Company A and Coloplast was the sector in which they operate, and just as Tench & Yeomans claims, the sector will determine what programs are better suited for a particular market (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, p. 24). Company A has had to therefore structure its department to fit its sector; since they are a B2B and B2G company they do not work as stringently with promoting themselves through a “front-office” as a B2C company may do (Manager-1, 2014). Coloplast is in a similar position where the rules of their sector involving tenders force them to pick strategies based on said market conditions (Manager-2, 2014). Internal factors such as size which contains the question of whether the PR department is given a position in which it can make a difference do not seem to be an inhibiting factor in this case for Company A, Coloplast or Shell (Tench & Yeomans, 2009). On the contrary Company A claims that they are “certainly” given adequate attention by top management (Manager-1, 2014). Furthermore they are fortunate enough to be part of the roughly three fourths of PR departments that are invited to meetings that regard strategic planning (Zerfass, Moreno, Tench, Vercic, & Verhoeven, 2013, p. 87). Company A also has a PR manager that has a permanent seat in a senior position of the company which according to Grunig and Grunig (1998, pp144-145) benefits the company as the PR-practitioner offers information about important publics which aids the company in making strategic decisions. This leads to Bruning & Ledingham (2000, p.87) who claims PR is becoming a managerial function that acts in consistency with the strategy of the organization in order to build a unified image. For Shell the unified image and the reputation of the company was the most important determinant of what role PR plays (Manager-3, 2014). Similarly Coloplast’s PR department plays the role of influencing the public (Manager-2, 2014). The PR department of Company A played three roles of which the first one was, just as in Shell’s case to promote the image of the company (Manager-1, 2014). In looking at the wide scope of activities that the three PR-departments engage in the companies would according to Tench & Yeomans fit in the mature or declining stage of organizational development where companies are often active in many different PR activities (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 24-25).

5.5 Integration of Departments within the Organization

According to the respondent at Company A, the departments are structured like many other global firms where the departments are divided into sub-units “a matrix organization” (Manager-1, 2014). Despite the differences found in the three companies in regards to size, and industry, they had the organizations complexity in common; all three companies are made up of entities that are further built from smaller units such as a PR department, marketing, and
human resources (HR), Projects & Technology, Downstream, Upstream Americas, Upstream International, etc. Even in the PR department, the organizations also have distinctive roles headed by various personnel’s. PR in Company A is a global function that is divided into different regions which is not fully integrated with other functions. This complexity becomes more apparent as each of the regions has their own distinct responsibilities. They most often work independently within their region and sometimes collaborate when the need arises. But each region has its own management, for instance how many employees are required to be effective in accomplishing the set goals as established at the global level at Company A. The complexity can be said to be more severe at Shell because the structure of their PR department has eight different sub-units working under one larger unit in the company. Sometimes, it might be difficult to make sure that these sub-units understand one another’s role and are able to cooperate to achieve organizational goals. Coloplast has gone about structuring their department differently with a more centralized PR department situated within corporate communications which is directed from the main headquarters (Manager-2, 2014).

The studied companies are made up of different units responsible for different tasks gearing towards the accomplishment of the joint goals of the organization. Managers of the various units decide which of the departments to cooperate more with in order to achieve the organization’s goal. There is no generally accepted standard that defines how organizations make these choices; it all depends on the goals that the units are pursuing. As pointed out by (Grunig & Grunig, 1998, p. 145) most organizations see the benefits of working together with blurred functional lines. At company A, the PR department is selective of the other functions they work more closely with, as mentioned in chapter four; they preferred working with HR and the Product development units. The rationale for working so close with the HR is simple; for instance to truly represent and bring the interest of the public such as the employees to the HR department that has professionals and practitioners that is trained to bring solutions to the employees day-to-day needs. Given the role of PR as a tool that helps to promote the image of the company to the public – the stakeholders, politicians, it is therefore important that it work very close to the product development as well. This is to enhance the ability of the PR in representing the interest of the public that uses the product. Also in making sure that the products are produced in a more environmentally friendly way that will not pose danger to the public that uses them. At Coloplast the PR department works closely with marketing and sales since they have similar tasks geared towards shared goals (Manager-2, 2014). Proceeding to Shell, a different choice of units for collaboration was identified. The Upstream, Downstream and Projects & Technology functions of Shell businesses (Manager-3, 2014).

Integration of these departments is important in enhancing the companies joint efforts, the integration may lead to a greater chance of reaching organizational goals (Hutton’, 1996) and in all three cases there is integration between the PR departments and other departments within the company. PR is said to have a “boundary spanning role” (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 26-27) and in the case of Shell this is certainly true as they have organized their department in a way that each business unit has a PR/communication group, hence the PR practitioner groups at Shell work with all the business units within the company and can give a unified front to the public and environment which helps build their brand reputation. At
Company A and Coloplast there is also integration but with a different structure where the PR department works closely with the other units without being a part of their departments.

5.6 Need for Measuring the Impact of PR Program

Finally, evaluation is a necessary component of sophisticated PR practice. That is, with evaluation of data, practitioners can plan and manage communication programs more effectively (Broom & Dozier, 1990). As mentioned all three companies work to achieve set goals and in Company A’s case the follow up on these goals were very thorough with larger assessment at the halfway point of the year and at the end of the year and continuous checkups every other week to make sure the departments stay on track (Manager-1, 2014). By involving higher management in the goal setting and follow-ups Company A ensures that their PR departments are working towards goals that are consistent with the company’s goals. This involvement benefits both the organization and the PR departments as the PR practitioners can more easily demonstrate, either directly or indirectly, what role PR has in organizational goal achievement (Hon, 1998). Coloplast also monitors their fulfillments of goals continuously through both monthly meetings and on a yearly basis and just as in Company A’s case Coloplast involves higher management which helps integrate and involve the PR department in company goals. (Manager-2, 2014)
6. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

In this final chapter conclusions will be offered as well as suggestions for future research.

6.1 Conclusion

In searching for what factors affect the PR department and their profession many factors were mentioned, both internal and external (see Table 2, p.31). The internal factors being sector, size, stage of organizational development and culture (Tench & Yeomans, 2009, pp. 24-25). The external factors are largely made up of the public, but also contain different sources of media and outer company PR consultants. The participating companies all claimed to be largely affected by both internal and external factors although different factors were more or less prominent for the companies as they are active in different markets and deal with different public. The public was also identified as an external factor that seemed to play a very important role as “the other party” in the two-way communication in PR programs, the companies clarified that the public affected both what and how the PR departments communicate.

This last point touches upon the second research question as to how the factors affect PR and the public as well as the media play a big role in the design and execution of PR programs or campaigns as they have to be customized to fit the targeted public. Internal factors such as sector and size were the most important contributors in deciding how large the PR department is and also in what way it operates. As one company explained, their sector including B2G customers is handled in a different way than how a PR department might cultivate a B2C market. These differences have led to a certain way of operating within the organization and towards the public. It could be said in the case of this study that the external factors also affected the external part of PR, the part that is visible to the outside, while the internal factors of the company made the biggest difference within the company and the way in which the organization operates. Having to adjust and adapt to various internal and external factors on a daily basis has made PR into a field that is both reactive and proactive. Overall it seems as though the PR departments in our study play an essential part and are shown great respect within their organizations.
Table 1: Internal and external factors affecting the PR departments of Company A, Coloplast and Shell

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal factors</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Statements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sector</td>
<td>The sector help determine what programs are better suited for a particular market. (Tench &amp; Yeomans, 2009, p.24)</td>
<td>The sector was mentioned as one of the most important factors for two of the companies as it helped shape the department and the operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>The size of the organization may in part determine the size of the PR department. The size aspect also has to do with the influence of the department. (Tench &amp; Yeomans, 2009, p.24)</td>
<td>The size of the company did not necessarily determine the size of the PR-department. The PR departments had a good influence within the companies and could get their opinions heard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage of organizational development</td>
<td>The stage of development will allow for and put emphasis on different strategic activities. (Tench &amp; Yeomans, 2009, p.25)</td>
<td>The maturity level of all three companies allowed them to pursue a wide range of PR activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>The culture refers to what the climate is like at an organization and sets the tone for expectations and goals within the company. (Tench &amp; Yeomans, 2009, p.26)</td>
<td>Goals are set on an organizational level and follow-up and evaluation is done with higher management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>PR serves as a boundary spanning unit working with both internal and external communications. Integration allows PR to benefit the company to the fullest. (Tench &amp; Yeomans, 2009, p.26-27)</td>
<td>The companies had integrated their PR departments in the way that they worked very closely with other departments but the structure of the integration differed between companies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External factors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The public</td>
<td>Group of individuals that face similar problems, recognize that the problem exist, and try to do something about the problem. (Dewey, 1927)</td>
<td>The public was distinguished in an organized manner and played a big part in what activities the PR-department engaged in and how they engaged in them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>Includes regular media such as newspapers and TV but also social media</td>
<td>Media as well as the public helped shape activities as the PR-department had to adjust to the media. The social media was an important channel for feedback and the presence of the companies high.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR consultants</td>
<td>Company that offers services within the PR-field to other companies.</td>
<td>All three companies use PR consultants to some extent and for one company the companies played an important role in getting messages across where the company could not.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.2 Future Research

In general as the international and global presence of companies increase the need for future research into differences and similarities in PR on an international level will become more sought after. Based on the theoretical knowledge the authors have acquired there seems to be a need for more research across the fields in order to strengthen the integration and cooperation between company departments. Based on the answers of different structuring of PR departments in this study it seems the area of PR structures within companies is another interesting topic to research further.
REFERENCES


Rawlins, B. L. *Prioritizing Stakeholders for Public Relations*. Institute of Public Relations, Hawaii.


APPENDIX A - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH

SAMPLE OF PR-THESIS INTERVIEW PROTOCOL QUESTIONS
FROM A MANAGERIAL PERSPECTIVE

Part 1: Organization and background
1. Where is PR (corporate communications) situated within the organizational chart?
2. What other organizational functions are closely related to PR?
3. How are those functions that are closely related structured with respect to PR?
4. How do you describe and classify the role of public relations, marketing and other related functions with respect to enhancing communication effort?

Part 2: Influencing factors
5. What factors affect your department? Sector, size, stage of organizational development, budget and internal culture?
6. How are the PR messages and activities affected by external organizations/parties such as media, PR consultants or trade fairs?

Part 3: Goals and effectiveness
7. What goals do you have for building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders/public?
8. How is fulfillment of such goals monitored?
9. How do you identify who your stakeholders/publics are?
10. What are the relationships to outside organizations for PR effectiveness?

Part 4: PR Management Strategy
11. What management strategy is often used when communicating PR activities with the concerned public?
12. Are all PR activities carried out in-house or are some of them outsourced?
13. What methods or procedures are used in the PR department? (Does it in any way correspond to the SMART** method?)
14. Have you heard of the smart model before?

Part 5: PR activities & measurement technique
15. What are some of the public relation activities that you are currently engaged in?
16. How are these activities chosen, and which of them receive the most attention?
17. Which are the most important activities for achieving PR effectiveness?
18. How is PR effectiveness measured or judged?

** (SMART-model) = Scan, Map, Act, Rollout and Track
Extra questions if the time allows it

1. What is the structure of your PR department? How many employees? Who does what?
2. Is your department included as a part of the organization’s top management?
3. Do you feel that your department is given particular attention by top management?
4. What is the contribution of PR program to the relationships that are of most importance to your organization?
5. Which of the different departments do you think should receive a higher budget to allow the company to communicate with the publics/stakeholders more effectively?
6. How cost-effective is PR considered to be for your organization?
7. What are the similarities and differences between marketing and public relations within your organization?
8. Do you feel that the departments related to PR activities are given the opportunity to fulfill their roles?
## APPENDIX B – RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Interview questions related to the framework</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational goals and effectiveness</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Which are the most important activities for achieving PR effectiveness?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>How do you describe and classify the role of public relations, marketing and other related functions with respect to enhancing communication effort?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public, internal and external</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>How do you identify who your stakeholders/publics are?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal factors</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>What factors affect your department? Sector, size, stage of organizational development, budget and internal culture?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Where is PR (corporate communications) situated within the organizational chart?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExQ.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>What is the structure of your PR department? How many employees? Who does what?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExQ.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Is your department included as a part of the organization’s top management?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExQ.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you feel that your department is given particular attention by top management?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExQ.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Which of the different departments do you think should receive a higher budget to allow the company to communicate with the publics/stakeholders more effectively?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExQ.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do you feel that the departments related to PR activities are given the opportunity to fulfill their roles?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External factors</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>How are the PR messages and activities affected by external organizations/parties such as media, PR consultants or trade fairs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>What goals do you have for building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders/public?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>What are the relationships to outside organizations for PR effectiveness?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Are all PR activities carried out in-house or are some of them outsourced?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR department</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>What management strategy is often used when communicating PR activities with the concerned public?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>What methods or procedures are used in the PR department? (Does it in any way correspond to the SMART** method?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Have you heard of the smart model before?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>What are some of the public relation activities that you are currently engaged in?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>How are these activities chosen, and which of them receive the most attention?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other departments</td>
<td>ExQ7</td>
<td>What are the similarities and differences between marketing and public relations within your organization?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>What other organizational functions are closely related to PR?</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>How are those functions that are closely related structured with respect to PR?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for measuring the impact of PR</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>How is fulfillment of such goals monitored?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>How is PR effectiveness measured or judged?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ExQ4</td>
<td>What is the contribution of PR program to the relationships that are of most importance to your organization?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ExQ6</td>
<td>How cost-effective is PR considered to be for your organization?</td>
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