
Book review:

Hendrix, J. A. (2001). *Public relations cases* (5th Ed.) Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Reviewed by:
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Hendrix's *Public Relations Cases* provides a much welcomed addition to the stable of public relations texts given the surge in demand for, and interest in, the discipline of public relations across the corporate and educational sectors. The work provides a solid combination of strategic planning processes and case studies under major category headings. In covering media relations, internal communications, community relations, public affairs and government relations, investor and financial relations, consumer relations, international public relations, emergency public relations (crisis), and integrated marketing communications, the text encompasses a broad array of the core discipline areas.

From an educational perspective, it provides a much-needed tool to expose students to real world scenarios. Each case is presented within an accepted planning format, allowing students to follow the key planning stages, and gaining insight into dealing with a range of situations faced by the public relations professional. The activities at the end of each chapter encourage reflection on key issues for each topic area, a welcome addition that can be expanded on by the instructor. The readings on each subject matter are a real plus. Hendrix provides extensive referencing to key works in each discipline area providing a comprehensive review of current literature to date.

Despite the valuable contribution of this text, there are some significant shortfalls. Firstly, the cases presented have a distinct bent towards promotion campaigns in some form. While certainly a valuable part of the public relations

function, the absence of cases that apply to organisational level issues is apparent to the instructor and student alike. This may be a function of the use of cases that are "winners of the prestigious Silver Anvil Award contest" (p. vi) which, by necessity, rely on a campaign focus. The reader should bear this in mind. In addition, the book is based on the "underlying premise that public relations is mostly persuasion" (p. iv), which may be at odds with systems-based approaches to public relations where the adaptation of organisation and environment are central tenets. Other approaches to public relations are also ignored. By bearing this in mind, public relations cases that reflect other philosophical approaches can be used to supplement insights into contemporary public relations practice. The final comment relates to the overwhelming focus on Northern American examples and renews the call for cases that reflect a broader global view of the use and contribution of public relations.

To the credit of *Cases*, the inclusion of research, objective setting, and evaluation as integral parts of the public relations process is most welcome and plays an important role in the evolution of the public relations discipline. Planning concepts combined with the provision of case materials, allow students and others wishing to analyse public relations cases to critique campaign outcomes in reference to objectives based in research. Providing this resource across a range of practice areas makes this book an important resource.