

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
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# Nine ideas for...

## improving your school through public relations

**Public relations principles** are imbedded in your knowledge, skills and abilities as a professional educator. In the course of your work, you already use these ideas but may refer to them with different terminology. Here's how a public relations professional might phrase what you do:

**1****SUPPORT YOUR SCHOOL'S MISSION, VISION AND VALUES**

Help yourself, your peers, staff and leaders manage and achieve your school or organizational mission and vision while enhancing your reputation with internal and external audiences.

**2****LISTEN AND RESEARCH TO EXPLORE PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES**

Listen, browse secondary sources, and then as appropriate, engage in your own informal and formal primary research, such as quantitative surveys and qualitative focus groups.

**3****IDENTIFY AND TARGET YOUR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIENCES**

Pinpoint those you want to reach, such as students, parents, caregivers, faculty, staff, your peers at other schools, leaders in your building, district leadership and community partners.

**4****PLAN YOUR GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES**

Set goals. Reach them through SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, Time-limited). Attain your objectives through strategies like engagement, clarification, etc.

**5****CHOOSE EFFECTIVE TACTICS AND MESSAGING**

Involve and influence your target audiences through conversations, meetings, notes, printed materials, social media, etc. Combine multiple methods to increase frequency and exposure.

**6****IMPLEMENT YOUR PLANS**

Take into account the Seven C's of effective communication. Determine if your approach is: complete, concise, considered, clear, concrete, correct and courteous.

**7****FOSTER PRODUCTIVE, INTERACTIVE DIALOG**

Identify and build upon common interests, recognizing diffusion theory, i.e. awareness and interest in an idea, product or service precede its evaluation, trial and adoption.

**8****EVALUATE BEFORE, DURING AND AS YOU CONCLUDE**

Build formative evaluation into your approach including the research, analysis and implementation phases. Conduct a summative evaluation as the final phase of a project.

**9****BECOME "THE TABLE" AT WHICH YOUR STAKEHOLDERS GATHER**

You and your organization can become the mythical table at which stakeholder wish to have a seat thanks to your trusted relationships and your sensible, collaborative approach.