
Competency Profile of PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
National Institute of Corrections

September 1993
Longmont, Colorado

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

... represents correctional agencies in disseminating information and establishing positive relations with the public and media.

Duties



A	Manage Public Information	A-1 Respond to questions from the public	A-2 Identify information sources	A-3 Research and acquire information	A-4 Organize information	A-5 Evaluate/determine appropriateness for release
B	Manage Media	B- 1 Develop and maintain rapport with media	B-2 Coordinate emergency/crisis procedures	B-3 Respond promptly to media inquiries	B-4 Serve as spokesperson	B-5 Write media releases
C	Promote the Agency	C- 1 Assess positive and negative aspects of agency	C-2 Develop a community relations improvement plan	C-3 Establish and maintain contacts	C-4 Coordinate community projects	C-5 Develop/deliver education programs
D	Develop Communication Resources	D-1 Develop/distribute newsletter	D-2 Develop information packets	D-3 Create annual reports, pamphlets, and fact sheets	D-4 Photograph events	D-5 Write articles for publication
E	Perform Administrative Functions	E-1 Develop policies and procedures	E-2 Supervise staff	E-3 Participate in agency meetings	E-4 Update staff on significant issues	E-5 Train agency staff

Graphics Composition by Charlotte Bentley

National Institute of Corrections Academy

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Tasks

A-6 Prepare internal information summaries	A-7 Disseminate information packets	A-8 Respond to legislative inquiries	A-9 Exchange information with other agencies	A-10 Maintain background information files	A-11 Collect and circulate newsclippings	
B-6 Coordinate media visits	B-7 Conduct media conferences	B-8 Monitor compliance with agency guidelines	B-9 Obtain media releases from staff/media/inmates	B-10 Coordinate/conduct media tours	B-11 Maintain media contact logs	B-12 Maintain media directory
C-6 Manage speakers' bureau	C-7 Coordinate events/open houses	C-8 Participate in conferences, fairs, career days	C-9 Coordinate/conduct tours of agency	C-10 Distribute promotional articles		
D-6 Produce videos, slide presentations, overheads	D-7 Create displays	D-8 Write agency history/overview publications	D-9 Maintain photo file			
E-6 Maintain files	E-7 Participate in training/professional development					

DACUM Facilitators
from the
National Institute of Corrections
Academy

Ida Halasz, Ph.D.
and
Ali Loret de Mola

Traits & Attributes

Forward-thinking
Credible
Ethical
Persuasive
Organized
Positive
Dependable
Flexible
Articulate
Literate
Tolerates ambiguity
Resourceful

Resources & Equipment

Resources:

NIC library services
Telephone & media
Media directories
Agency policy & procedures guides
Statutes/case law
Dictionary
Newspaper/magazines
T.V./radio

Equipment:

Audio/visual
Office equipment supplies
Computers
Communication equipment/
radio/pagers/telephone
Camera

Knowledge & Skills

Knowledge of:

Current agency overview
Agency vision/mission/goals statement
Agency policies & procedures
Agency organizational structure
Human resource development
Criminal justice system
Public information policy/law
Media operations/procedures
Community organizations
Legislation
Printing/graphics

Skills in:

Oral communication/
public speaking
Organization/coordination
Public relations
Supervision
Technical writing
Training
Leadership
Computer usage
Interpersonal communication
Public speaking

EDUCATION

Varies, including:

Associate Arts, with experience
in media
B.A. degree, plus experience
Experience in public relations

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Panel Members

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National Institute of Corrections
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