



# What is PR?

PR - or Public Relations, to give it its unabbreviated title - is the collected efforts behind a reputation.

The Chartered Institute of Public Relations (**CIPR**) defines public relations as being about reputation - the result of what you do, what you say and what others say about you.

**“Public Relations is the discipline which looks after reputation, with the aim of earning understanding and support and influencing opinion and behaviour. It is the planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain goodwill and mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics.”**

- Chartered Institute of Public Relations

Individuals and organisations alike - no matter what their business interests and activities - rely on their reputation for success. Their audiences - community, customers, suppliers, investors, regulators and journalists - will all have an opinion, and they can all have powerful impact and influence.

They can inform the perceptions of others, and they will use their own perceptions in their decision-making processes.

Reputation can be your USP - the thing that makes you stand out from the crowd and sets you apart from your competitors. Reputation can be your best asset and can give you a competitive edge. Reputation can also help establish and build good relationships with your stakeholders.

Effective PR can help manage and protect your reputation.

The most effective public relations is achieved through a **planned and sustained** effort, ensuring what you are trying to communicate is clear, concise and consistent. Honesty, transparency and accessibility are fundamental to building relationships and protecting reputation.

## The **CIPR**'s definition of Public Relations

Public Relations is Terms

The following terms are used in the definition of PR:

- **'Organisation'** can be a government body, a business, a profession, a public service or a body concerned with health, culture, education - indeed any corporate or voluntary body large or small
- **'Publics'** are audiences that are important to the organisation. They include customers - existing and potential; employees and management; investors; media; government; suppliers; opinion-formers
- **'Understanding'** is a two-way process. To be effective, an organisation needs to listen to the opinions of those with whom it deals and not solely provide information. Issuing a barrage of propaganda is not enough in today's open society.