

Harbour-front Enhancement Committee

The Road to Effective PR Strategy

Introduction

1. This brief paper aims to propose a method to formulate an effective PR strategy for HEC, but not to provide a prescription as such, which should be the outcome of the forthcoming retreat of HEC.

Communication Process

2. To begin with, an effective PR strategy should be able to enhance the basic five components of a communication process to become effective, namely: (a) the sender; (b) the message; (c) the channel; (d) the receiver; and (e) the feedback loop.

Components of an Effective PR Strategy

3. Thus, an effective PR Strategy should be able to provide directions on:
 - (a) the content – of the message / image of HEC / stories from works of HEC;
 - (b) the context – in which the message is embedded within the societal situation (e.g. role of HEC in harbour planning of HK);
 - (c) the connection – to get HEC's messages through to target audiences;
 - (d) the commitment – to foster HEC's good faith and dedication in harbourfront enhancement; and

- (e) the cohesion – to consolidate assets / resources / expertise both within and beyond HEC.

Questions to be addressed in the Retreat

- 4. Before formulating the PR Strategy, reflections should be made among ourselves on the following questions:
 - (a) What is our Image?
 - (b) How do the media view us?
 - (c) How do the community view us?
 - (d) How do the stakeholders view us?
 - (e) Do we know what our image is?
 - (f) Do we care about our image?

Methods to reflect on the above questions

- 5. Some common mind tools can be used to facilitate our reflection on the above questions, such as:
 - (a) SWOT Analysis – to remind us the existing and preferred positioning of HEC through analyses of HEC's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats we are now facing;
 - (b) PEST Analysis – to help us to understand the political, economical, sociocultural, and technological situation HEC is now in, including both the opportunities and constraints we are facing;
 - (c) Stakeholder Analysis – including (i) identifying stakeholders with HEC; (ii) prioritizing stakeholders through the method of Power/Interest Grid; (iii) understanding the stakeholders; and then (iv) connecting with the stakeholders;

and / or

 - (d) The Six Thinking Hats – White Hat, Red Hat, Black Hat, Yellow Hat, Green Hat, and Blue Hat.

Expected Outcome from the retreat

6. Through the above methods, it is expected that an effective PR Strategy for HEC can be formulated, with the following contents being answered:
 - (a) Who are the **Target Audiences** – internal and external;
 - (b) What are the **Channels** – media and community networks;
 - (c) What is / are the **Message(s)** – and which to whom;
 - (d) How do these messages be conveyed – what are the **Means** (What vision? What mission? What goals? What objectives? What strategies? What tactics? What press events? What promotion and special events? What media tours? What event launches? etc.);
 - (e) How to connect with our stakeholders constructively – the **Stakeholder Management Plan**, including the key interests and issues, desired support, desired role, actions by HEC desired, messages needed, and communications taken;
 - (f) **When** do these messages be communicated – better coordination among HEC's events;
 - (g) What **Crisis Communication** plan – when things are not as smooth as expected; and
 - (h) How do all these efforts be realized – the **Institutional** set up.

Advice Sought

For comments from HEC members.

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