**ACTION PLAN GUIDELINES**  
COMMUNICATION 257—PUBLIC RELATIONS  
Mr. Pocock  
Spring 2018

**OBJECTIVES:**
1. To process and apply the information in the text book;
2. To practice public relations using a practical experience;
3. To practice critical writing and presentation skills.

**LENGTH:**
This is left to the discretion of the work team. Report fully, remembering less is more.

**PROCEDURES:**
1. The class will break into four or five (depending on final enrollment) Account Teams, forming your own Public Relations Firm. You will be asked to create a name and logo for your PR firm.

2. Our client this semester is the *Priority Health*. Check out their website. This is a health insurance company owned by Spectrum Health in Grand Rapids. Priority Health provides health insurance benefits to members throughout Michigan.

3. This client is retaining the services of your public relations agency to help them battle the current rise in opioid addition.
   A. Your primary goal is to position Priority Health as a leader in Michigan committed to finding solutions to the opioid epidemic.
   B. Your target audiences will likely be:
      1. The general population who would be likely to abuse opioids or know someone who does.
      2. Priority Health members who have been identified as large users of opioids.
      3. Physicians who prescribe opioids.
      4. Social service agencies who help treat addictions.
      5. Others (employers, churches, schools, etc.) who could reach those impacted by opioid abuse.
   C. Your geographic area will be Michigan.
   D. Your budget is to be determined by your agency (in consultation with your client if you choose) and must include agency fees.

4. Each team’s assignment is to develop a public relations campaign that will achieve the business goals of your client.

5. Begin meeting regularly with your Account Team. When you need more direction on your Action Plan, feel free to contact your primary client contact or me.

6. Each Agency is to create a unique strategy (*Action Plan*) targeted specific target audience(s). This *Action Plan* will be developed throughout the semester. The *Action Plan* may include several recommendations. Approach this as a “campaign,” not a “one-time event.”
PAGE TWO
ACTION PLAN GUIDELINES

7. Each Agency must fully develop at least three of their recommended tactics. For example, your Team may recommend the production of a promotional video, a direct mail campaign with one or more brochures, a Web site, a Facebook site, Twitter, a PowerPoint presentation, or a series of events. You do not need to fully develop all of those ideas, but you must fully develop at least three of them. These are called your “deliverables,” the items you actually “deliver” at the end of your assignment.

8. Complete Phase One of the Action Plan, including (but not limited to) the following components:
   A. Clearly define the problem/assignment. This can probably be done in a couple of paragraphs and usually is never more than one full page.
   B. Identify your target audience(s) as specifically as possible. This could likely be one sentence in length. You may have primary and secondary audience(s). Be complete, but don’t make this more difficult than it need be!
   C. Develop a written plan. Identify the overall goal, objectives, strategies, and tactics (as defined in the textbook) you plan to achieve. If you have a different planning model you would like to use, please discuss it with me to confirm it’s acceptable.
   D. Estimate a very rough budget to accomplish your objective. Be realistic but again, this shouldn’t require a great deal of time. Be realistic, but ballpark figures are more than acceptable. You may discuss budget parameters with me. And don’t forget to include the fees your agency will charge.
   E. Develop a calendar or time line to include all activities of your Project, including historical information (components already completed) and continuing through your evaluation of the project. This could literally be just a time line or you might want to use software to prepare a Gantt chart or some similar planning tool.

9. Complete a final Action Plan, including (but not limited to) the following components:
   A. A table of contents. This will list all the individual sections. If you submit a 3-ring binder, tabs can substitute for or be in addition to a table of contents.
   B. An executive summary. This is most likely only one page in length.
   C. A revision, if necessary, of all the sections previously submitted in Phase One. Revisions would be made based on the comments from the professor, the client and your classmates.
   D. Identify procedures to evaluate your Project. Remember goals and objectives must be measurable. How will you know if you’ve been successful once this campaign is completed? Establish a dashboard of what numbers you hope to achieve for each of the measurable you identify.

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E. Include an appendix with copies of your final tactical experiences (research summaries, fact sheets/media advisories, and news releases). Remember that the Action Plan is a team project but the Tactical Experiences are individual assignments. Therefore you will have each team member’s Tactical Experiences in the Appendix. The Appendix may also include other information such as printed materials about the client, copies of news stories about the client or information from other communities about similar programs.

F. Your deliverables. Those are the tactics you took through completion. Those deliverables might be a website or even storyboards of a website. They might be a mocked up brochure, a video or storyboards of a video, or a series of print ads. If you recommend an “event” and want to fully develop that idea, you would complete a manual/binder that includes step-by-step instructions on planning that event.

10. Prepare an oral presentation which your entire team will deliver to our client on the final night of class. Every member of the team does not have to participate in the presentation but all team members much participate in the question and answer period. You will have up to fifteen minutes to present with a maximum of an additional ten minutes for questions from the audience (your client and your classmates) and a panel of professional evaluators, including your client.

11. You must prepare at least two copies of your Action Plan and your deliverables: one to give your client and one for the professor to grade. You are strongly encouraged to make copies for yourself so you can use them as part of your portfolio when looking for jobs. You may want to make additional copies of your Executive Summary to use as a handout for those evaluators who do not receive a complete Action Plan.

12. This assignment will be graded using the following criteria:
   A. How complete is the information using the format suggested in points 8 and 9 of these guidelines?
   B. How responsive is this plan to your client’s primary goal?
   C. How credible/realistic/complete is your content?
   D. How unique/unusual/creative are your recommendations? Did you make your client exclaim “Wow!” or surprise your professor? Remember, much of public relations is thinking outside of the box.
   E. How professional is your written and oral presentation?
   F. Were you deliverables well done?

**DEADLINES:**
1. A copy and oral presentation of Phase One is due February 19, 2018.
2. Your oral presentation your and at least two copies of your final Action Plan and two sets of your deliverables are due April 22, 2018.