



Image and Reputation of an Organization: Communication and Managerial Potential —Part II

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ABSTRACT

Scientific objective: The aim of the article is to investigate whether and under what conditions the current priority goal of the public relations practice—image can serve the assumptions of the PR theory included in the statement “PR function of organization management”. **Initial thesis:** The image as a communication medium, and at the same time a message must be characterized by very specific features in order to be used as a function in organization management. **Research methods:** literary knowledge and studies based on Polish and foreign language works, including my own, in the field of PR, communication and management. Due to the particular type of contacts, achievements in public and institutional communication (in the field of communication theory) and the instrumental aspect (of the possible communication aspects in terms of the interpretation of the topic) were useful. **Results and conclusions** are contained in two hypotheses of the article: (1) image/reputation may aid PR in managing the organization provided that the information value is fundamentally raised, including values required by the strategic management theory; (2) it would require a fundamental reorientation of PR practice in the field of the basic goal and professionalization of image management. **Cognitive value/originality:** The study presents a new scientific problem in terms of both goals and hypotheses. It identifies the phenomena, mechanisms, and processes shaping the informational value of the image/reputation, analyzes the directions of the needed reorientation of the public relations practice and the most important benefits that the use of image/reputation can bring in management processes. In its main message, it reflectively refers to the two most significant paradigms in public relations theory—“the theory of excellent public relations” (when one assumes the extent to which the image in its communicative expression can be used in improving the management of the organization, and thus in increasing the efficiency of the organization) and relational public relations (when

one proposes changing the image goal to a relational one as a way to increase the information potential of the image/reputation, and when one identifies direct strategic benefits of good relations with the stakeholders). Moreover, the indicated research problem is a concrete example of the interdisciplinarity of communication science (as a discipline bordering on, *inter alia*, economic sciences, and in this framework of management, marketing, and public relations).

KEYWORDS

communication, public relations, corporate reputation, image, strategic management