

Teacher's Guide to Corporate Social Responsibility in Sport Public Relations

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Lessons from the Arthur W. Page Center for Ethics and Integrity in Public Communication

Rationale: Why Study Corporate Social Responsibility in Sport Public Relations?

If you Google *corporate social responsibility* (CSR), you will find a variety of descriptors from the environmentally conscious, to a mantra that encourages you to “do something good every day,” to a picture of Superman flying through the sky. Though the term is broadly defined, CSR has received increased attention, even in sport. It’s as common to see an athlete reading to underprivileged children as to see him/her scoring the winning goal. But what exactly is CSR in sport, and how does it translate into daily sport public relations?

Overview

This module includes four objectives that lead students from defining CSR in sport public relations to developing their own CSR program. The units are based on four objectives that can be used as a complete series or separately.

This guide includes discussion questions, teaching notes, student activities, and references for each objective. It also includes an optional long-term assignment; a student reflection paper that will effectively summarize the CSR teaching unit. The teaching module concludes with a list of additional resources.

Learning Objectives

This module will examine the role of CSR in sport public relations through four objectives. The following objectives also outline the four units of this module:

Objective 1: To define CSR and its role in sport public relations.

Objective 2: To understand the practice of CSR in sport public relations.

Objective 3: To examine the current practice of CSR in sport public relations.

Objective 4: To create a CSR program in sport public relations.

Module Format

The module's discussion of CSR in sport public relations is grounded in the public relations philosophy of Arthur W. Page. Speeches and interviews with influential public relations practitioners from the [Page Center Website](#) and other selected readings will be used to guide students' understanding of CSR and its application in the sports industry. Discussion questions are provided for each unit to cultivate critical thinking and provide points for discussion. Each objective also includes activities that can be used for grading or to aid in class discussion.

Module Activity: Optional Long-term Assignment for Comprehensive Module

At the beginning of the CSR in sport public relations unit, users can assign students a reflection paper that will examine the current professional CSR practice and compare it to the academic understanding of CSR. At the end of the unit, students can turn in the paper and present their findings to the class. This long-term assignment is part of the comprehensive teaching module.

Reflection Paper Requirements

Note: The following content in this section is written and prepared for the students.

For this assignment, you will examine how public relations professionals view CSR. To do so, you will interview a sports professional about his/her use of CSR in sport. You must interview a current sports public relations professional, and the interview must be conducted via telephone or face-to-face. You MAY NOT conduct the interview via email. You will present your paper to the class on the noted due date.

The following questions can serve as a guide for your interview.

1. What is your job title and job description?
2. How would you describe working in sports information?
3. What are the primary tasks that you perform?
4. What was your educational background, and how did it prepare you for this job?
5. How do you define corporate social responsibility in the sport profession?
6. Does your organization have a CSR philosophy or guiding principles? If so, what is it?

7. Who is in charge of these activities in your organization? If applicable, what other job duties does this person perform?
8. What activities comprise CSR in your organization?
9. How often are CSR activities conducted?
10. In your opinion, how important is CSR to your organization?
11. What do you consider the biggest advantage and challenge about CSR activities in sport?
12. What advice do you have for those interested in this aspect of a sports career?
13. Is there anything I should have asked but didn't?

Following the interview, prepare a 4 to 5 page reflection paper that summarizes the interview and compares it to the CSR readings/discussion presented in class. Specifically, your paper should include the following:

- Define current CSR practices in sport public relations, who is involved in those practices, what activities comprise CSR, and the level of importance of CSR in the organization.
- Identify the similarities and differences between current CSR practices. Make sure to include specific examples from the interview and class readings.

Remember the reflection paper is a formal paper and should have a clear introduction, conclusion, and reference page. Do not use a Q&A format. The reflection must be free of spelling, typographical, and grammatical/punctuation errors.

Opening Module Activity: Arthur W. Page

Before beginning the activities associated with the four learning objectives, the students will read the overview [Page Promoted Social Responsibility in the 1920s](#) and answer these questions. Also included in this teacher's guide are the answers to those questions.

1. Who is Arthur W. Page?
 - Arthur W. Page was the vice president of AT&T in the 1920s and is considered by many to be the founder of the modern day practice of corporate public relations. He was a noted educator, publisher and advisor to several U.S. presidents and was widely known for management based on the Page Principles

2. What are the Page Principles?

- The Page Principles were Page’s guidelines for ethical and effective communication with the public. The Principles identify how an organization should responsibly conduct daily business. He identified seven guiding principles: (1) tell the truth; (2) prove it with action; (3) listen to the customer; (4) manage for tomorrow; (5) conduct public relations as if the whole company depends on it; (6) realize a company’s true character is expressed by its people; and (7) remain calm, patient and good humored. Explain Page’s position on social responsibility.

3. Explain Page’s position on social responsibility.

- Although the concept of corporate social responsibility didn’t emerge until the 1930s and 40s, [David L. Remund’s scholarship](#) suggests that Arthur W. Page was advocating for CSR in the 20s; first as editor of *The World’s Work* and later as vice president of AT&T. Page focused on organizational action such as environmental protection, labor rights, consumer protection and education, child welfare, and corporate transparency. These precepts were then put into practice during Page’s years at AT&T and became known as the Page Principles, socially responsible guidelines to direct the business practices.

Module Activity: Objective 1 Unit

This assignment portion of the module is based on the first objective: To define CSR and its role in sport public relations.

Opening Activity for the Comprehensive Module and the Objective 1 Unit

What words come to mind when you hear the term *corporate social responsibility*?

- Note: Users can use the opening question as an activity to open class discussion. One method is to provide students note cards at the beginning of class. Students are directed to answer the opening question on the note card, but not to include their name. The note cards are then collected and re-distributed to students. Students share the words on the note card and discuss the relationship with CSR. Users can also note the similarities and differences among terms.

Directions and Discussion Questions for the Comprehensive Module Objective Unit 1

Students will read [Page's speech to the Continental Oil Company](#) and the article *Beyond the Game: Perceptions and Practices of Corporate Social Responsibility in the Professional Sport Industry* by Sheth and Babiak (2010). They will also watch the [interview with Peter Debreceeny](#) on an organization's code of ethics and answer the following questions.

1. How does Page define CSR?

- Page spoke about the need for business to go beyond producers and distributors and challenged them to also be good citizens. In a speech to the Continental Oil Company, Page said, "A corporation must be a good citizen in all kinds of ways besides a good producer and distributor." In his early writings with *The World's Work*, Page identified specific organizational issues that businesses must address: environmental protection, labor rights, consumer protection and education, child welfare, and corporate transparency. According to Remund (see [Page Promoted Social Responsibility in the 1920s](#)), Page spent the most time discussing corporate transparency. His Page's Principles support the need for organizational transparency: tell the truth, prove it with action, and manage for tomorrow.
- Page notes that once an organization is a good corporate citizen it should let others know of its efforts. He said, "So it is worth while to put some first-class effort on the somewhat nebulous job of being a good citizen. And having done this, it is just common sense to let your light shine where it can be seen." An organization determines how it should become a good corporate citizen, does so, and then tells others about its actions. Many organizations, however, have created an inverse process: tell others about the activities and then do them. The order that Page sets is an important one in terms of organizational transparency. You cannot in good faith tell of your good deeds if those deeds have yet to be accomplished.
- Note: Ask students if they can think of an example of an organization that publicized good deeds before actually implementing them.

2. How closely did Page's definition fit the words identified in the opening activity?

- One of the components students often miss about CSR is that it is not just an outward function. Many typical student responses deal with an organization's relationship with the

community and the environment. Page, however, suggests that being a good corporate citizen begins internally, with an organization's employees. Page noted in his principles that "a company's true character is expressed by its people." He suggests that an organization's quality of citizenship is shaped by the words and actions of its employees. Thus, it is important to include employees in CSR initiatives.

- CSR is also not defined by a single term. It is not simply giving to local charities or being environmentally aware. CSR is also not just having a strong code of ethics or obeying the law. Rather, it is a combination of organizational traits that result in corresponding action.
 - Note: Student terms often include ethics, law, environmental awareness, transparency, community development, and corporate philanthropy. Users can discuss how these terms characterize an organization as a "good citizen."
3. According to Debreceeny, can you build an effective CSR program on an organization's code of ethics? Explain why.
- An organization's code of ethics alone is not enough. Debreceeny said that a code isn't worth the piece the paper it is printed on without action. The key to effective CSR is the correspondence of organizational behavior with its code. An organization is effective when it knows who it is, has a clear set of values, and commits to live by these values.
 - In describing CSR Lenseen (2007) said that an organization cannot do anything; it is an inanimate object. Rather, an organization is the people who comprise the organization, who create and live by shared values. In the same way, written words on a page do not create an effective CSR model. It is the values and daily behaviors of those who comprise the organization.
4. In Debreceeny's interview, he refers to Marks and Spencer. What do Marks and Spencer mean when they say there is no plan B? How does this approach foster an effective CSR program?
- Marks and Spencer view CSR as a long-term business commitment that impacts every relationship, both internal and external to the organization. Everything that is said and done must be committed to this long-term emphasis. Communicating along is not enough. Effective CSR is part of the business core of an organization that impacts the organization's understanding and interaction with its environment.
5. Can CSR be considered a sport public relations function, and if so, how?

- The most difficult aspect of CSR is identifying the functional aspect of good corporate citizen. What do good corporate citizens do? This question is not only difficult to answer, but the answer constantly changes. Page said, “Failing to meet an ever-changing and sometimes whimsical definition of what is a good corporate To meet this demand, Page urged organizations to continually monitor the public’s expectations of the organization. It is here that CSR becomes a function of public relations.
 - Page suggests public relations is uniquely positioned to monitor the needs of the public and the performance of the organization. This view corresponds to public relations research on legitimacy gaps that suggests public relations professionals should know the public’s expectations of the organization, continually monitor the organization’s ability to meet these expectations, and identify and reduce the gaps that arise between organization and public expectations. For example, the public expects organizations to not pollute the environment. The public relations professional would monitor the organization’s behaviors to ensure that the public’s expectations were met. If not, the public relations professional would work with the public and the organization to reduce the legitimacy gaps. The difficulty, as Page noted, is that public expectations change quickly, so public relations professionals must continually monitor public expectations.
 - Note: Users can encourage students to brainstorm public expectations of organizations, and discuss how organizations meet or don’t meet these expectations.
6. Why is CSR important in sport?
- Sport holds a prominent place in American society. Smith and Westerbeek (2007) argue that a number of unique factors, including mass media distribution and communication power, youth appeal, positive health impacts/association, social interaction, and sustainability awareness make sports ideal for CSR efforts. From a communication perspective, the mass media distribution and communication power creates the public stage sport organizations need to not only do good, but to share the news of that good with others. Wenner (1998) characterizes this relationship as mediasport, a symbiotic relationships where sport and media each need the other to survive. This relationship creates a unique opportunity for sport organizations to not only benefit others but to also reap public benefit for doing good. It is this unique public nature of the sport industry that

has led researchers to suggest sport actually has a higher perceived responsibility to benefit the community (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007). As a result, corporate social responsibility has a central role in sport. The public expects sport organizations and its athletes to “give back” to the community.

- Note: Users can ask students if they agree with Smith and Westerbeek (2007). Do sport organizations have a higher responsibility to “give back” than other organizations?
7. How do sport organizations “give back” to the community, and in your opinion, do these activities meet public expectations?
- Sheth and Babiak (2010) found sport organizations are most concerned with ethical issues and philanthropic contributions. They also note a strategic connection between these areas, as sport organizations often increase philanthropic contributions in an effort to reduce negativity. Sport corporate social responsibility activities are also typically focused on the core competencies of sport teams, including a focus on youth, education, health, and the local community.
 - Note: Users can brainstorm the specific expectations of the local sport community and how/if the sport organization meets those expectations.

Objective 1 Assignment for the Comprehensive Module and Objective 1 Unit

Based on the readings and class discussion, students are asked to develop their own definition of CSR in sport public relations and provide a current example that fits their definition. Note: If users are following the comprehensive module, this assignment can be used to open class discussion for the next unit.

Objective 1 References

- Debreceeny, P. (2009, September 12). *Interview*. Interview on Trust and Credibility. Retrieved from Page Center website: <http://pagecenter.comm.psu.edu/index.php/oral-history-collection/finding-index/357-oral-history-with-peter-debreceeny>
- Lenseen, G. (2007). Foreword. In S. May, G. Cheney, & J. Roper (Eds), *The debate over corporate social responsibility*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Page promoted social responsibility in the 1920s*. Retrieved from Page Center website:

<http://pagecenter.comm.psu.edu/index.php/component/content/article/1-latest-news/373-page-promoted-social-responsibility-in-the-1920s>.

Page, A. W. (1951, March 26). *Speech 36 - Continental Oil Company*. Retrieved from Page Center website: <http://pagecenter.comm.psu.edu/index.php/research-resources/page-speeches/390-speech36>

Sheth, H. & Babiak, K. M. (2010). Beyond the game: Perceptions and practices of corporate social responsibility in the professional sport industry. *Journal of Business Ethics, 91*, 433-450.

Smith, A. C. T., & Westerbeek, H. M. (2007). Sport as a vehicle for deploying corporate social responsibility. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship, Spring*, 43-25.

Wenner, L. A. (1998). *Mediasport*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Module Activity: Objective 2 Unit

This assignment portion of the module is based on the second objective: To understand the practice of CSR in sport public relations.

Opening Activity for the Comprehensive Module and the Objective 2 Unit

Note: Users can begin this unit with the following story about the mosaics in [Ravenna, Italy](#). To begin, users can show an outside picture of the structure followed by a black slide. When the story describes a visitor glimpsing the mosaics, the user can flash a picture of a mosaic on the screen followed by a black screen. This process can be repeated several times using different pictures of the ceiling mosaics in order to recreate the visitors' experience to the tomb. Users can then make the application between the mosaics and CSR. See the story and application below.

Story: In Ravenna Italy is the [Mausoleum of Galla Placidia](#), known for its vaulted ceilings covered in beautiful mosaics. The site has been called “the earliest and best preserved of all mosaic monuments,” but visitors are often disappointed when they travel to see its beauty (Jethani, 2011). Tiny windows let only small amounts of light into the room, leaving visitors staring at a ceiling shrouded in shadows. Yet, unexpectedly, spotlights near the ceiling turn on to reveal the beautiful tiles, illuminating the swirls of color for only a few seconds before plunging

the visitors again in darkness. The process is repeated a number of times. One visitor described the experience, “The lights come on. For a brief moment, the briefest of moments – the eye doesn’t have time to take it all in, the eye casts about – the dull, hot darkness overhead becomes a starry sky, a dark-blue cupola with huge shimmering stars that seem startlingly close, ‘Ahhhhh! Comes the sound from below, and then the lights goes out, and again there’s darkness, darker even than before” (Tolstaya, 2007).

Application: Page defined CSR as being a good corporate citizen to an organization’s stakeholders. While researchers and professionals agree that CSR is important, it is less clear what CSR “looks like.” It’s much like the mosaics in the Ravenna mausoleum. We know it exists; we see wonderful glimpses of it, but the total picture remains shrouded in shadows. Today’s lesson seeks to turn on the spotlight and see sport CSR in action in order to understand its practice in sport public relations.

Opening Activity for the Comprehensive Module

Have students share their definition of CSR and the current example they identified in the first unit. Discuss the similarities and differences between the CSR definition and the current example.

Opening Activity for Objective 2 Unit

Have students develop their own definition of CSR in sport public relations and provide a current example of CSR in sports that fits this definition.

Note: Users can ask students what was more difficult, to define CSR in sport public relations or find an example of it. Students will often say defining CSR was more difficult because CSR incorporates a variety of activities. Users can relate this discussion to the opening story of the mosaics and how the students’ examples provide brief spotlights on aspects of CSR.

Discussion Questions

CSR researchers have provided a variety of models of CSR. (For a broad overview, see Walter’s (2009) research on the community trust model, Wood’s (1991) model of corporate social

performance, and Clark's (2000) discussion of the communication management model. These references are provided in the additional readings at the end of the comprehensive module.) This unit will not consider these models, but will build from these to examine three broad approaches to CSR in sport public relations: philosophy approach, publicity approach, and partnership approach. The discussion questions are organized to examine each of these approaches.

Directions for the Comprehensive Module: Philosophy CSR Approach

Students will read [Dave Copeland's article NCAA Takes Pressure Off Schools to Monitor Social Media](#) and watch the [oral interview with Bob Ehinger](#), particularly the segment where he discusses values and ethical decision making (approximately the eight minute mark). Students will also review Sheth and Babiak's (2010) article on perceptions and practices of CSR in sport and the [interview with Peter Debreceeny](#) on an organization's code of ethics. Then the students will answer the following questions on the philosophy CSR approach.

Directions for the Objective 2 Unit: Philosophy CSR Approach

Students will read Sheth and Babiak's (2010) article on perceptions and practices of CSR in sport and [Dave Copeland's article NCAA Takes Pressure Off Schools to Monitor Social Media](#). Students will also watch the [interview with Peter Debreceeny](#) on an organization's code of ethics and the [oral interview with Bob Ehinger](#), particularly the segment where he discusses values and ethical decision making (approximately the eight minute mark). Then students will answer the following questions on the philosophy CSR approach.

Discussion Questions on the Philosophy CSR Approach

1. Sheth and Babiak (2010) found sport organizations are most concerned with ethical issues in CSR, primarily maintaining rules and code of ethics. This approach could be termed a philosophy approach to CSR. Organizations often develop their philosophy of CSR by developing codes of ethics and abiding by the law. What are the advantages of a philosophy approach to CSR in sport public relations?
 - The public expects organizations not only to obey the law, but to also go beyond it. Sheth and Babiak (2010) found some organizations believed CSR required organizations to

function at a higher level and “set standards for behavior” (p. 446). They suggest that ethical guidelines may be more prominent in sports due to seemingly continuous allegations of unethical behavior by sport organizations and its athletes. Thus, organizations that develop a clear philosophy of CSR seem more cognizant of not simply obeying rules, but to serve as a role model to others on how to conduct operations.

2. How do Debrecey and Ehinger view the value of a code of ethics?
 - Debrecey makes the point that a code of ethics is meaningless until it translates into daily organizational behavior. Debrecey and Ehinger also suggest that a code of ethics must resonate with the values of the organization, values that consistently guide behavior and decision making. Ehinger argues that an organization can not have values on its own. Rather, it is the people’s values within the organization that determine organizational values and ensuing behavior. Thus, a code of ethics becomes meaningful only when it aligns with employee values and when those values translate into consistent behavior.
 - Note: An example of this concept: An organization had recently updated its values and code of behavior and wanted to display these guidelines in each of their 85 facilities. Management sent an employee to each facility to first remove the old values and codes of behavior posters and second to display the new guidelines. The employee, however, couldn’t find the old posters.. They were not displayed on the wall as management had said. Instead, the employee found the posters in the back of storage closets, behind book cases, and one in the trunk of a supervisor’s car. The point is that the posters were simply posters. The printed words didn’t impact the daily operations of the facilities. This response to a code of ethics is what Debrecey terms meaningless because the words do not translate into action.
3. Based on the readings and discussion, what do you consider a potential disadvantage of a philosophy approach to CSR in sport public relations?
 - The philosophy approach is ill-suited to guide CSR when it doesn’t translate into consistent organizational action. Guiding values and a code of ethics are important, but only if they are connected to daily organizational existence.
 - However, if the philosophy approach is considered a continuum, a lack of behavior is only one side of the approach. Too much consideration of a CSR philosophy can be

equally ineffective. People are creatures of habit. If something has worked in the past, they will usually try it again in the future. It worked once; it will probably work again. Certainly a “tried and true” perspective has validity, but sometimes people miss unique attributes of a situation as they routinely follow the “tried and true” process. While this may bring short-term results, it often sacrifices long-term gain.

- Note: An example of this concept: In Old Testament writings, the Israelites wandered in the desert with hopes of entering the Promise Land. At one point, they were very thirsty and complained to their leader Moses about their conditions. Previously, when they had been thirsty, Moses had struck a rock, and fresh water had poured out. In this instance, God told Moses to hold out his staff in order to receive water. Moses, however, refuses. Holding out his staff had never brought fresh water before, so Moses opted for the “tried and true” method and struck a rock instead. Out of the rock poured fresh water, and the Israelites were satisfied. The Old Testament records, however, that God was displeased with Moses’ choice and did not allow him to enter the Promise Land. Yes, the “tried and true” method brought short-term results. Following the principles regardless of the current situation did solve the immediate problem, but it diminished the long-term gain. According to the Old Testament, the Israelites continued to wander in the desert until Moses’ death. Israel’s leader who freed them from Egyptian slavery never accomplished his task of bringing the Israelites to the Promise Land (Jethani, 2011).
4. Discuss Dave Copeland’s article on NCAA monitoring of social media from a philosophy CSR approach.
- The NCAA through its member institutions seeks to maintain the highest level of integrity and sportsmanship in athletes and academics. (For more information, see [NCAA Core Values](#).) In doing so, NCAA often assumes an investigative function to ensure its members are following prescribed behavioral guidelines, such as Copeland’s article (2012) on social media monitoring. Monitoring athletic behavior is certainly not new. It is a “tried and true” method that has been successful in the past. Yet, in this particular instance, the monitoring led to phony Facebook and Twitter accounts as school officials tried to get behind the privacy settings. The effort to enforce rules created violations of privacy rights.

- Just as an inactive CSR philosophy can create meaningless codes of conduct, an overzealous CSR philosophy approach can create behavior at the expense of rules. In the overzealous approach, the public's needs and expectations are no longer central to organizational CSR activities. Rather, the organization has become central. When this occurs, the philosophy approach to CSR becomes problematic. A prudent philosophy approach to CSR is guided by a balance of rules and behavior and keeps the stakeholders central to CSR efforts.

Directions for the Comprehensive Module and Objective 2 Unit: Publicity CSR Approach

Students will read [Page's speech to the Montreal Chambre de Commerce](#) and answer the following questions on the publicity CSR approach.

1. How is publicity a CSR approach in sport public relations?
 - While CSR is what an organization does, Page notes the value of publicity. He said, "So our public relations are mostly what we do, but if what we do isn't exposed to view, we may not get the benefit for it." Thus, Page acknowledges the importance of letting others know an organization's CSR activities.
 - Sheth and Babiak (2010) also found publicity to have a central link to CSR. Organizations often initiate and then promote their philanthropic activities. They found that the publicity approach is often linked to the philosophy CSR approach in that organizations initiate and promote these activities in an effort to combat previous negative or unethical actions.
2. What is the advantage of the publicity approach in CSR?
 - Publicity is a necessary component of CSR; it cannot be omitted. Page said that the public pays attention to what it hears about an organization. "The public judges a business not only by its contact with it, but also by what it hears about it." He admits that it is difficult to get people to pay attention to an organization's message and identifies the public relations professional as administrator of these efforts. Thus, Page suggests that publicity cannot be omitted in CSR efforts. Public relations must exercise its external function and tell people about the organization's good citizen activities.
3. What is the disadvantage of the publicity approach in CSR?

- Page notes that publicity is not the sole function of CSR, but an important component. He said, “What you do for the public and how you do it is far more important than what you tell the public.” He warns against the practice of equating CSR and publicity. CSR as a public relations function is not simply telling people what you do, but also developing and managing the organization’s action. While publicity is an important component to CSR, it cannot be the most important. Page argues that regulating public relations to a publicity role limits organizational success. He said, “The public relations department is in a position to see whether performance meets intentions, and also to explain to anybody and everybody what performance and intentions are.” Public relations is about knowing the expectations of the public as well as the actions of the organization, identifying expectation gaps between the organization and its public and bridging the gap between the two. When it is successful in doing so, public relations relates this “good news,” or publicity, to the public.
- Like the philosophy approach, the publicity approach to CSR can be construed as a continuum, where one side is the absence of publicity and the other is the proliferation of publicity efforts. Page warns against the absence of publicity in CSR, but a preponderance can be a disadvantage as well. Publicity becomes problematic when it becomes a ploy to keep bad things from happening. Sheth and Babiak (2010) identified this use of CSR in the professional sport industry. They found that losing teams would increase their CSR community efforts to maintain their positive brand in the midst of a losing season. At this extreme, CSR publicity is treated like a lucky rabbit’s foot to offset potentially negativity.
- Note: An example of this concept. One sports information director, who was part of a prominent athletic tradition, said he regularly used CSR activities to offset negative press. For example, his sports team had lost to an opponent that should have been an easy victory. The loss had ranking ramifications, and the SID was concerned of public backlash. So the day following the game, he arranged for the team to visit the local children’s cancer ward and made sure all local media attended the event. The result was the team’s disappointing loss was offset by their positive community outreach.

- Visiting children’s cancer wards, serving meals at homeless shelters, reading to children - these and other like-minded activities are good endeavors, and an organization should publicize these efforts. As Page mentioned, however, publicity should be the last consideration of CSR initiatives, not the first.
4. How do the philosophy approach and the publicity approaches provide a glimpse of CSR?
- Both of these approaches have elements of truth. Organizations should create a code of ethics, and they should let the public know their good deeds. However, these approaches become problematic when the organization becomes the sole focus of CSR efforts.
 - In isolation, these approaches provide only a partial view of CSR. Much like the fleeting glimpse of the mosaics in Ravenna, Italy, these approaches provide an imperfect view of CSR. The last approach to CSR in sport public relations seeks to fully illuminate the CSR mosaic.

Directions for the Comprehensive Module and Objective 2 Unit: Partnership CSR Approach

Students should reflect on the readings and interviews from the philosophy and publicity approaches and watch the [oral interview with Al Golin](#). Then students will answer the following questions on the partnership CSR approach.

1. How is partnership a CSR approach in sport public relations?
- A partnership approach is based on communication management that places the organization and its publics central. Whereas the other approaches have placed the organization central and its public on the perimeter, the partnership approach joins the organization and public centrally together. Clark (2000) said that this approach combines the most effective elements of CSR and public relations. It allows organization to identify stakeholder groups, determine its responsibility to these groups, and strengthen the relationships through effective communication. Thus, the partnership approach is based on continuous dialogue between the organization and its publics. Page asserts that this dialogue is the constant monitoring, meeting, and exceeding stakeholder expectations.
 - Public relations research suggests that the partnership approach requires professionals to work simultaneously on two levels: one that directs and communicates the organization’s activities, and one that continuously monitors stakeholder expectations and the

organization's success/failure in meeting those expectations. The dual nature of CSR can only be accomplished when both the organization and its stakeholders are centrally focused in CSR activities.

2. What is the advantage of a partnership approach in CSR?
 - The partnership approach to CSR creates long-term benefit that may not be realized in other CSR approaches. Dozier and Ehling (1992) found that symmetrical strategic communication programs can achieve cognitive effects, but long-term behavioral change is formed through highly involved activities and communication. To achieve long-term benefit, the organization must plan CSR activities through dialogue with its stakeholders. By doing so, the organization is able to keep stakeholders central to CSR and build long-term trust.
 - [Al Golin in his interview with the Arthur W. Page Center](#) provides a good example of using CSR to build long-term benefit. In his interview, Golin discusses how McDonald's became involved in the community by building the Ronald McDonald House. At the time, McDonald's was a small company, and the public didn't expect that type of business to become involved in the community. However, Golin points out that such CSR endeavors build trust, a long-term benefit he terms "trust deposits." McDonald's CSR programs have been credited for its facilities remaining unscathed in the 1992 riots in South Central Los Angeles. Many went out of their way to protect McDonald's restaurant because the Ronald McDonald House was a well-known charitable organization and because the company had strong ties to community after-school programs (Reingold, 1992).
3. What is the disadvantage of a partnership approach in CSR?
 - The partnership approach is difficult because it is counter-intuitive to traditional business. McMillan (2007) wrote that business is based on competition while CSR is based on helping those around you. He does not suggest that organizations are incapable of CSR endeavors, but contends that organizational leaders must "work that much harder to unite what seems like the incompatible interests of the two" (McMillan, 2007, p. 16).
 - Another disadvantage is the fragmented ownership of CSR. While Page notes that public relations professionals should be monitoring and meeting public expectations, he admits this rarely exists. CSR elements are often fragmented among various organizational

functions, lacking a united direction Public relations is given the publicity component of CSR; human resources is charged with the code of conduct; and senior management determines the organization's behavior. As a result, organizations agree that CSR is important, but what CSR means differs, not only from organization to organization but within the organization as well.

4. How do the philosophy approach and the publicity approaches provide a glimpse of CSR?
- A partnership approach is a long-term commitment to dialogue between the organization and its public. Its central component is communion between the organization and the public. This communion does not constitute constant agreement between the two entities, but requires a continual awareness and movement toward an understanding of the needs and expectations of the other.
 - Both the philosophy and partnership approaches are essential components to CSR partnership. The philosophy is a necessary first step that allows the organization to identify its values and code of conduct. This philosophy must then translate into action that benefits the organization and its stakeholders. The CSR partnership approach culminates with publicity about the CSR endeavors.
 - The CSR partnership approach is based on a long-term relational commitment toward its stakeholders. Because of this long-term commitment, an organization may falter in its CSR initiatives, but it will not fail. Page said, "I take great comfort in the fact that with the public an honest desire to do well by them and an unfailing courtesy and frankness cover a multitude of sins, and the public will forgive much if they get these." Both [Page in his speech to Montreal Chambre de Commerce](#) and [Al Golin](#) suggest building relationships or goodwill with the public help an organization withstand the inevitable organizational storms.
 - Note: Users can ask students to think of an example of an organization or athlete who has "failed," but continues to receive public good will. Brainstorm on why this occurs in some cases and not others.
 - Finally, CSR endeavors, even from an inappropriate approach, can still accomplish good things, and the organization can enjoy a short-term benefit. However, a look-back often

reveals the CSR motive, and when this motive misaligns with previously perceived goodwill, the original gains are not only sacrificed, but the partnership may be broken.

Objective 2 Assignment for the Comprehensive Module and Objective 2 Unit

Case Studies: Students will consider the following case studies and identify which CSR approach is most apparent while explaining their conclusion. Note: Users can scan the latest developing sport stories to identify appropriate case studies or utilize the examples students provided at the beginning of the lesson. Below are a few additional case study ideas and questions for students:

- The Chief Illiniwek Tradition: Read the background of [The Chief Illiniwek Tradition](#), and watch the video [Chief Illiniwek Last Dance, Tribute](#). In your opinion, which CSR approach is most evident in this example? Explain your answer.
 - Students often identify this example as a philosophy approach, as two sides with opposing viewpoints collide. The point of this case study is that when an organization's philosophy is central, it may ignore differing philosophies. This example highlights the importance of monitoring public expectations and developing dialogue when differences arise.
- Read the following articles that tell the story of baseball shortstop Tony Stevens: [Local Player Surrenders Baseball for Marines](#), [Marines Tale of Survival](#), [Minnesota Twins news release \(see Sunday, April 10\)](#), and [Here's A Hero for You](#). The Minnesota Twins baseball organization has honored Stevens with ceremonial pitches and bobble heads. In your opinion, which CSR approach is most evident in this example? Explain your answer.
 - Students typically identify this example as a partnership approach simply because personal interest was not central to the decision. This baseball player did not serve in the military to gain publicity, but he gained publicity because of his decision to leave his baseball career and join the military. Thus, this example highlights the proper order of CSR endeavors, illustrating the importance of publicity as a final CSR step.
- Josh Hamilton is one of baseball's elite players, but is also plagued with off-field issues. Read [Josh Hamilton: 'Weak moment' led to drinking incident](#) and [Josh Hamilton's History Should Overshadow 2012 Heroics](#). In your opinion, which CSR approach is most evident in this example? Explain your answer.

- Students identify this case study as an example of the long-term benefit resulting from a partnership approach. The example highlights that athletes can retain public goodwill if they have built trust with the public.
- Watch the video of a [football visiting a children's hospital](#). Although the video highlights a particular team, this practice is common throughout sports. In your opinion, which CSR approach is most evident in this example?
 - Students will offer a variety of answers to this case study: a publicity approach, a partnership approach, and often undecided. This example illustrates that a public cannot always determine the CSR approach. Some students believe this example is positive, a partnership approach between the football team and the children. Other students believe this is a publicity approach, a ploy to shift attention away from either poor athletic performance or wrongdoing. The most important item to point out is that PR professionals should be aware of the expectations (and perhaps cynicism) of the public and manage CSR efforts for long-term benefit.

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Module Activity: Objective 3 Unit

This assignment portion of the module is based on the third objective: To examine the current practice of CSR in sport public relations.

Case Study Assignment for the Comprehensive Module and Objective 3 Unit

Students will choose a sport organization and examine its CSR practices by doing at least three of the following: (1) attend a sport organization event; (2) read/watch the mass media news story regarding the sport organization over the last two weeks; (3) review the team's website; or (4) monitor the sport organization's social media posts on Facebook and Twitter for the last two weeks. Based on class readings and discussion, they should describe this organization's approach to CSR. Students will answer the questions: In your opinion, what is the greatest advantage of their CSR program? In your opinion, what is the greatest area for CSR improvement?

Note: Users can conduct the above assignment in class. Users can choose a local sport organization, such as a university sport program, and as a class, attend a sporting event. At the event, students should take notes on CSR activities they observe.

To expedite the assignment to a single class session, users can divide the class in groups and ask each group to identify the CSR activities of a single sport organization based on their examination of one specific area (mass media, website, social media, etc.). Based on their findings, groups can identify the CSR approach they believe this organization is using as well as the advantages and areas for improvement in the CSR program. Each group will present their findings to the class. The presentations can lead to a class discussion on the similarities and differences of current CSR practice to the class readings/discussions.

Module Activity: Objective 4 Unit

This assignment portion of the module is based on the fourth and final objective: To create a CSR program in sport public relations.

Directions for the Comprehensive Module

Students will read [Page's speech to the Membership of the Institute of Life Insurance](#) and review [Page's speech to the Continental Oil Company](#). Then they will answer the following questions.

Directions for the Objective 4 Unit: Students will read [Page's speech to the Membership of the Institute of Life Insurance](#) and [Page's speech to the Continental Oil Company](#). Then they will answer the following questions.

Discussion Questions

1. According to Page, what are the components of a CSR program?
 - Page identified five main components of a CSR program:
 - Statement of policy: This policy identifies the organization's responsibility to the public. It begins with top management who have analyzed the organization's relation to the public and are constantly monitoring public expectations. Page said

that as an organization develops a statement of policy, the organization must strive to “see itself as nearly as is possible as the public sees it.” A strong statement of policy creates understanding between the organization and its public as well as a common sense of purpose within the organization. Page believed doing so would develop better public relations as well as better employees.

- Informing employees of policy and employee attitudes: The second and third components focus on the centrality of employees in the CSR program. Page said that an organization should not only inform employees of policy and procedures, but also ensure employees understand the reasons behind company policy and practice. By doing so, Page believed employees are empowered to put CSR policies into action. CSR policy without action is meaningless, and employees represent the first-line of that action.
- Public attitudes transmitted through employees: In this component, Page advocates for an open transmission of information from management – employees – public and back. This open transmission allows environmental monitoring of needs, expectations, and perceptions of the organization.
- Informing the public: The last step in a CSR program, Page advocates that organizations should not only tell the public about its good deeds, but be open and honest about company practices and policies. He urges organizations to “tell the public how it serves the public,” but cautions against empty publicity. “Publicity is an important part of public relations, but in business, as in most human affairs, what you do is more important than what you say,” said Page. Consequently, informing the public is an important step, but certainly not the only step.

2. What is an employee’s role in an organization’s CSR efforts?

- Page believed that employees were key to a successful CSR program. In [Arthur W. Page’s speech to the Continental Oil Company](#), he said, “If our people are on our side, the more they know about the company the more pride they will have in it and the more good they will do us. Remember, they talk all the time, and in their own circles they are pretty nearly the final authority. If we advertise that we are good and they say we are bad, our reputation will be bad in their circles. In this discussion when I say “employees” I

mean everybody on the payroll or on contract.” As a result, employees are the vehicles of organizational CSR. They either help the program or hinder the program, but they always do one or the other.

- Note: Users can ask students how sport organizations incorporate employees into CSR programs. For example, most athletes engage in CSR activities. The National Basketball Association has [NBA Cares](#), and individual NBA teams, such as the [Atlanta Hawks](#), have their own CSR programs. Discuss why these programs are important to the sport team and the larger sport organization.
3. Who is responsible for CSR in an organization?
- Page notes that CSR is not an isolated program. It is not an activity that one can accept or reject. Rather, every individual within an organization has this responsibility, whether they know it or accept it. Page said, “There is no way of escaping this responsibility.”
4. According to Page, why is CSR important to business success?
- A developed CSR program allows businesses to monitor public opinion and meet changing needs and expectations. Page believed that a business exists by public approval, making constant monitoring necessary. “The job of business is to guess what practices the public is really going to want to change and change them before the public gets around to the trial for treason,” Page said. A key asset in this practice is a fully developed corporate social responsibility program that is built on policy, transmitted into action by all employees, and relayed to the public.

Objective 4 Activity: Fantasy Public Relations Scenario

Directions for the Comprehensive Module and Objective 4 Unit

Students are given a scenario (but not necessarily the same scenario for each student) and then asked to address the issue/problem in their scenario through the development of a CSR program. The scenarios are a combination of routine sport issues and sport issues currently in the news. Students will bring their responses to the following class and share them with one another. Their responses provide an opportunity to review the CSR material and apply it in a safe environment.

Note: Users can use “fantasy sport teams” as the focus of this activity. Fantasy sport teams are imaginary teams that students develop at the beginning of the semester and use as the focus of various public relations scenarios throughout the semester. At the end of each sport public relations unit, students draw a fantasy public relations scenario that their fantasy sport team has encountered. Students must then use class readings/discussions to develop an appropriate public relations response for their fantasy team. The fantasy sport team assignment has been successful in giving students a “safe” environment to apply their sport public relations knowledge.

Sample Fantasy Public Relations Scenarios

1. Your team is on a significant losing streak, and fan support is dwindling. The athletic director has told you to “fix” the fan-support problem. Using CSR, how would you respond? In your response, please address the following:
 - a. Your definition of CSR
 - b. Your CSR response
 - c. The potential advantages/disadvantages of your response
2. The athletes of your professional sport team are in the midst of a lockout, delaying the start of the sport season. Although the lockout is about many issues, the most publicized is the athletes’ push for higher salaries, which the public believes are already too high. You fear this event will negatively impact your sport organization. Using CSR, how would you respond? In your response, please address the following:
 - a. Your definition of CSR
 - b. Your CSR response
 - c. The potential advantages/disadvantages of your response
3. Your sport organization wants to expand its fanbase into a new community. In preliminary research, you learn that not only is your organization relatively unknown in the community, but your organization’s sport is not well understood. You want to help fans understand your sport, and increase your organization’s fanbase. Using CSR, how would you respond? In your response, please address the following:
 - a. Your definition of CSR
 - b. Your CSR response

- c. The potential advantages/disadvantages of your response
4. Your community has been ravaged in recent storms. Families have lost homes and possessions, and schools have been closed due to the storm's effects. The storms come at a horrible time. Your sport team is headed to its national tournament and is on a tight schedule. Using CSR, how would you respond? In your response, make please address the following:
 - a. Your definition of CSR
 - b. Your CSR response
 - c. The potential advantages/disadvantages of your response

Objective 4 References

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