

Public Information Officer Duties and Responsibilities

While a public information officer's day-to-day duties and responsibilities are determined by where they work, there are many core tasks associated with the role. Based on our analysis of job listings, these include:

Prepare Media Communications

The major role of a public information officer is writing and editing press releases, company brochures, public service announcements, speeches, articles, and social media posts and communicate critical information effectively to the public. These materials can report on new product launches or company news, respond to inquiries, or make general announcements. Public information officers might also contribute to annual reports and company newsletters.

Develop Public Relations Procedures

Public information officers constantly review media sources and determine the best ways to announce news, handle crises, or release information. They design communication programs and strategies relating to media relations, maintain and update media databases, and coordinate special public relations events. Be the face of government organization in the absence of an elected leader or city manager.

Maintain Media Relationships

It's up to public information officers to form and maintain relationships with reporters and other media personnel. To this end, they attend community and media events, arrange interviews, respond to media requests, and speak at press conferences, civic events, and even schools. They also build relationships with community leaders, editors, educators, and legislators. Help maintain and uphold a certain image and identity for government officials or organizations.

Assist with Marketing Efforts

Public information officers often work closely with marketing directors and advertising managers to create promotional materials and develop marketing strategies. They contribute to the development of marketing campaigns and assist with creating print and video materials. Respond to requests for information from media outlets.

Public Information Officer Skills and Qualifications

Successful public information officers are usually outgoing, speak easily to large groups, understand social media technologies, and can think and react quickly in crisis situations. Preference will be given to candidates with five plus years of experience in public relations or another public information officer role. Years of experience may be substituted for education.

- **Education:** A bachelor's degree from an accredited college is required in journalism, communications, public relations, English or business. is preferred.

- **Internships:** Completing internships at public relation firms or government agencies can be helpful in landing a job as government public information officer.
- **Computer skills** - public information officers should be keenly aware of and understand various social media avenues and be proficient in Microsoft Office applications and desktop publishing software
- **Publication knowledge** - familiarity with page layout, color selection, illustration, and even paper selection for brochures, newsletters, flyers, and other promotional materials is important for public information officers
- **Communication skills** - speaking and writing are two skills public information officers employ on a daily basis. They must be able to write compelling, concise press releases and speeches and also effectively speak in public
- **Organizational skills** - from arranging promotional events to setting up news conferences, public information officers must consistently demonstrate strong organizational skills and effectively work on several projects at the same time
- **Interpersonal skills** - Public information officers interact with people regularly, from the media and press to the public and government officials.
- **Self-motivation** - public information officers should be self-starters who can address issues and complete assignments with little to no supervision
- **Multitasking** - the ability to prioritize various projects and handle more than one project at a time is a must for public information officers
- **Problem-solving-** Public information officers must be able to handle difficult and sensitive situations with discretion and grace