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Personal public relations: identity as a public relations commodity

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Abstract

Public relations for individuals is steadily emerging as a significant area of practice, yet little research and theoretical development is currently undertaken in this area. Within this article public relations for individuals, referred to in this study as personal public relations, is examined. The research identified two approaches deployed by public relations practitioners: a formative mode and an advisory mode. The formative mode is an active constitution of a public identity, whereas the advisory mode is a communication counseling approach. The paper argues that the formative role is more closely aligned to the marketing techniques of promotion and selling, whereas the advisory role fits more closely with the public relations roles of communication counseling and relationship building. Potential guidelines for ethical personal public relations work emerged from the discussion.

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