



Professionalism & Excellence.
Nigerian Institute of Public Relations

THE
**PROFESSIONAL
STANDARDS GUIDE
(PSG)**

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INTRODUCTION

Why the Professional Standards Guide? The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) established by Decree 16 of 1990 (now an Act of the National Assembly) is charged with the responsibility of regulating Public Relations Practices and Standards as well as directing the development of the profession in Nigeria. Getting this law enacted, was a major gain for the Institute. It provides legal teeth to protect the profession from abuse through gate crashing, unethical practices or unprofessional performance masquerading as "years of experience"

The achievement of charter status and the emphatic pointer on "Professionalism and Excellence in the NIPR corporate symbol, are weighty. They remain part of the legacies for which past leaders of the Institute and the committed teams they worked with respectively, can count on the enduring respect of all of us. Beyond our respect for those who helped to achieve those milestones, is the heavy task to fulfil both the law and the declaration. As stated in Part 1 Section 1(a) of the law. NIPR has the duty of

"determining what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered members of the Public Relations profession and reviewing those standards from time to time as circumstances may permit."

The Professional Standards Guide (PSG) is designed to help move the spirit of the law and the claim of "Professionalism and Excellence more into daylight. In our country where corporate memory of PR standards does not exist, it is difficult to prove the genuine PR man.

The PSG would assist in different ways. Both the public and private sectors can now get help in defining the right calibre of PR professional to give high value at appropriate levels of their organisations. Also practitioners who have themselves been yearning for such a document to guide their everyday competence and career development, can utilise the PSG effectively. Beyond helping PR people to get placed at appropriate levels with clarity on what each job level should demand of them professionally, there is something more fundamental. It is the carefully structured process for constant grooming of every NIPR member and demonstration of competence, no matter the category of membership. Constant learning is at the heart of the true professional's claim of excellence!

With this document, the NIPR has boldly accepted the challenge to guide the PR professional in Nigeria into life-long learning. It also contains a shared understanding of what the profession can deliver by way of standard or some common "ground" on job positions, and ethical practice. These elements are the hallmark of the PR community in the Global Alliance and the NIPR cannot afford to be left behind. The job to deliver on this vision, was pioneered by the Governing Council of May 2001 - August 2003 under the indefatigable Education And Professional Standards Board led by Professor Ikechukwu E. Nwosu, Dr. Eme Ekekwe as deputy and Mallam Ahmed Mohammed Tanko as Secretary. The Board garnered support from a broad range of experience in both the Public and Private sectors. Over several meetings the Board reached out to Frank Tamuno Koko, Peter Ademu-Ette, Dr. Lai Oso, Prince Ako Njemanze, Terremun Tyokaha, Dr. Alice Ajeh and Rotimi Oladele among a host of NIPR resource persons on the assignment. It was my job to watch them sweat through it all. A draft document was

delivered after about 6 months' work. The document was circulated to all Chapters and categories of members in the Institute in 2002 for comments.

A new Governing Council was inaugurated on August 29, 2003. The Education and Professional Standards' Board under the same leadership, went back to work on the PSG with our blessing. This time the team engaged fresh minds across an equally impressive professional spectrum: His Royal Highness Sir Bokumo Orukari, Ngozi Okoye, Sam Uko, Andee Theme, Bayo Ajagbe, Chief Uche Udedibia, Mrs. Bina Nengi. Ilagha, Dr. Dennis Ekemezie, and Nnenna Ezuma joined the old hands as part of the hit team at different stages of the final work. Again I was there to sing them along,

Thanks to them and many others unlisted, we now have the PSG by the NIPR. The Governing Council trusts that you will find the document useful. It is the only way to urge Frank Tamuno Koko, Ike Nwosu, Eme Ekekwe and my humble self among others, to turn to the next stage of the task of bringing "Professionalism and Excellence" home to every NIPR member.

NIPR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS GUIDE (PSG)

SECTION 1

CAREER LADDER & JOB TITLES

- A. ENTRY CADRE (1-3 Years in Service post qualification: Awareness level of profession requiring supervision)
 - 1. Public Relations Assistant
 - 2. Assistant Public Relations Executive
 - 3. Public Relations Executive
- B. INTERMEDIATE CADRE (3-6 Years post-qualification practice: Performance level, with no supervision on routines)
 - 4. Senior Public Relations Executive
 - 5. Principal Public Relations Executive
- C. SENIOR CADRE (6-11 Years post-qualification practice: High competence level and ability to supervise others)
 - 6. Assistant Chief Public Relations Executive
 - 7. Deputy Chief Public Relations Executive
- D. ADVANCED CADRE/MANAGEMENT (11-17 Years:
Mastery of some specializations in PR, demonstrating authoritative response to challenges and integrity of NIPR codes of practice)
 - 8. Chief Public Relations Executive
 - 9. Asst. Director Public Relations
- E. FACULTY LEADERSHIP (17 Years and above: Excellence through cost-effective initiatives to advance PR knowledge and profession.).
 - 10. Deputy Director Public Relations
 - 11. Director Public Relations

SECTION 2
COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS ELEMENTS

1. **PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSISTANT**

a) **Academic Qualifications:**

Professional Certificate in Public Relations or its equivalent as recognized by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR)

b) **Professional experience:** None required

c) **Knowledge and Skill:**

- (i) Aware of basic Public Relations concepts and functions
- (ii) Identifies key elements of professionalism in Public Relations practice.
- (iii) Know key requirements of Public Relations practice in a developing country like Nigeria.
- (iv) Identifies elements of work place ethics, Corporate Culture and environment; also know protocols of public and private sector establishments as well as community structures and processes.
- (v) Awareness of local media structure; processes and operations, also media awareness of key relations tools such as Press Releases, Press Conference, photography, documentaries, desktop publishing and printing, newsletters and bill boards, etc. In addition, know, the inter relationships between Public Relations, Advertising, Marketing and Journalism.
- (vi) Ability to work with computers.
- (vii) Awareness of basic business principles and customer relations tools
- (viii) Awareness of Government structures at local, state and federal levels as well as identifies Government Relations tools;
- (ix) Knows research tools deployed in the organization
- (x) Understands and upholds NIPR code of ethics/code of conduct and PSG as they apply to everyday practice.

NIPR Membership: Must at least be a student member of the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations.

2. **ASSISTANT PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE**

a) **Academic Qualifications:** Professional Certificate in Public Relations or its equivalent as recognized by the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR).

b) **Professional experience:** At least 3 years cognate experience as a Public Relations Assistant

c) **Knowledge and skill:** Awareness and supervised application of basic PR skills and processes covering PR functions such as media relations,

government relations, protocols, Events management etc. Also shows working knowledge of NIPR code of ethics, code of conduct and PSG applicable to each situation of professional practice.

NIPR Membership: Same as is required for Public Relations Assistant

3. PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE

- a) Academic Qualifications: NIPR Diploma, Degree or HND or its equivalent in Public Relations or any other qualification recognized by NIPR.
- b) Professional experience: At least 1 year prior experience in Public Relations is required.
- c) Knowledge and Skills: Requires an accumulation of at least 3 CECP (Continuing Education Credit Points). In addition to knowledge and application of basic PR skills and processes in the PR schedules earlier enumerated for Asst. Public Relations executive, he is required to work under supervision in the following areas:
 - i) Contribution to short and long term PR plans.
 - ii) Contributes to PR programmes for specific projects or events
 - iii) Regular application of 5 step PR process of: identification of problems, research/analysis, plan, implementation and evaluation of performance process and stated goals.
 - iv) Contribute to setting clear, measurable objectives for different Public Relations programmes and projects.
 - v) Demonstrate knowledge of basic Public Relations strategies in routine PR functions.
 - vi) Identify PR implications of Vision and Mission Statements for different organizations.
 - vii) List and monitor activities that indicate the interface of Public Relations with other departments/functions in the organization.
 - viii) State and uphold the NIPR Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct and PSG as well as identify where these regulations are different or similar to those of other foreign PR associations

NIPR Membership: Must be at least a Graduate Member of NIPR.

4. SENIOR PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE

- a) Academic Qualifications: Same as applicable to Public Relations Executive
- b) Professional Experience: At least 3 years post qualification experience.
- c) Knowledge and skills: Requires at least 4 CECP cumulative. He should demonstrate ability to handle the following PR activities with minimum supervision basic aspects of:
 - i) Corporate Communications programmes, including Press Release/Press Conference, Speech writing, design documentaries, intranet and internet channels evaluation; presentation skills etc.

- ii) Events Management e.g. Exhibition. Seminars Conferences, Receptions, facility visits.
- iii) Research & Implementation.
- iv) Employee Relations programmes.
- v) Audience segmentation, analysis and monitoring of publics
- vi) Identification of Issues Management processes and Trends.
- vii) Corporate Identity and Brand Management process analysis.

NIPR Membership: Attain Associate Member category in NIPR.

5. PRINCIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE/ASST. MANAGER/ASST. HEAD.

- a) Academic Qualifications: same as required for Public Relations Executive.
- b) Professional Experience: At least 6 years post-qualification experience and a minimum of 6 Continuing Education Credit Points.
- c) Knowledge and Skill: In addition to the skill base required of Senior Public Relations Executive, must demonstrate ability to:
 - i) Supervise of younger professionals in the application of NIPR codes of practice.
 - ii) Participate in the design and execution of PR research projects.
 - iii) Participate in setting targets for PR programmes.
 - iv) Plan and make fit-for-purpose presentations.
 - v) Implement Quality Management processes in PR programmes.

NIPR Membership: Must be in the Associate Member category in NIPR as a minimum

6. ASSISTANT CHIEF PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE/DEPUTY MANAGER/DEPUTY HEAD

- a) Academic Qualifications: Same as required for PPR Executive.
- b) Professional Experience: 8-10 years post-qualification experience with at least 8 CECP cumulative.
- c) Knowledge and skills
 - i) PR budget performance analysis
 - ii) Initiates and designs PR programmes
 - iii) Handles internal or external stakeholder relations issues and benchmarking
 - iv) Analyse, monitor and report on evaluation of corporate goals.
 - v) Specialisation in some of the following areas of PR - Community Relations, Corporate communications, Employee Relations, Publications, audio-Visual productions, Research and Evaluation, Media Relations, Government Relations, Stakeholder Relations, Events Management, Marketing Communications, International

Public Relations, Corporate Promotions and Corporate ID Management, Investor Relations, issues Management, Crisis Management etc.

NIPR MEMBERSHIP: Attain Associate Member category in NIPR as a minimum.

7. DEPUTY CHIEF PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE/HEAD PR

- a) Academic Qualification: Same as in Public Relations Executive. A relevant higher degree will be an advantage.
- b) Professional Experience: 10-12 years post-qualification experience and 10 CECP cumulative.
- c) Knowledge & Skills: Increasingly apply specific specialisations in PR to show relevance to the business. In addition:
 - i) Provide PR research and data base management initiatives
 - ii) Handles team proposals for corporate strategy or reputation programmes.
 - iii) Initiates and conducts evaluation of perception management and relationship programmes.
 - iv) Supports review of corporate reputation goals.

NIPR Membership: Must be a Full Member of NIPR

8. CHIEF PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE/MANAGER PR

- a) Academic Qualification: Same as for Deputy Chief Public Relations Executive.
- b) Professional Experience: More than 12 years post-qualification practice.
- c) Knowledge & Skills: Must have 12 CECP cumulative and with responsibility to encourage initiatives in PR practice. Demonstrates expertise in chosen areas of specializations in PR to benefit the organisation's activities. In addition:
 - i) Provide Skills leadership and direction of PR function
 - ii) Handles "Change Management "processes/dealing with communications and relationships among the internal/external stakeholders.
 - iii) Management of material and human resources in PR function.
 - iv) Initiating PR components of Corporate Planning Strategies in the organization.
 - v) Management of Corporate reputation issues and targets.

NIPR Membership: Must be a Full Member of NIPR

9 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PUBLIC RELATIONS/PRINCIPAL MANAGER/ASST. GENERAL MANAGER

Academic Qualification:

Must have proven contributions in some specialisations in PR with a minimum of 15 years post qualification.

Experience: Requires at least 12 CECP cumulative.

Knowledge & Skills:

He provides/develops:

- i) Initiatives for PR policy and policy reviews.
- ii) PR Strategic plan and plan evaluation
- iii) Co-ordination of relevant structures in plan implementation
- iv) Co-ordination of PR budget process and reviews
- v) Management of PR processes in organisation's Corporate Plan

NIPR Membership: Must be a Full Member of NIPR

10. DEPUTY DIRECTOR PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER PR

Academic Qualification/Experience: Same as with Asst. Director,

Knowledge & Skills: Leadership of some specialisations in PR with 18 years post qualification practise. Requires a minimum of 12 CECP cumulative. In addition:

- i) Initiate/manage scope and content of strategic elements of Corporate Policy.
- ii) Co-ordinate business environment analysis and Issues Management process
- iii) Monitor strategies for organisational growth and development in relation to Corporate reputation goals.

11. DIRECTOR PUBLIC RELATIONS GENERAL MANAGER PR

Academic Qualification/Experience: Same as with Deputy Director but with 20 years of professional experience.

Knowledge & Skills: Leadership role to advance some specialisation in PR with a minimum of 12 CECP cumulative. In addition is responsible for:

- i) Providing leadership of the PR function and its development in the organisation
- ii) Body of Standards and quality indices of PR services within the establishment
- iii) Strategic PR initiatives in organisational development.
- iv) Career mapping and developing skill areas for the PR function in the organisation.

- v) Directing Integrated Communications Strategies in the organisation.
- vi) Setting, interpreting and advising on corporate reputation goals as well as corresponding resource targets.
- vii) Custodian of NIPR Codes of practice and performance benchmarking in the organisation.

NIPR Membership: At least a Full Member of NIPR.

SECTION 3:
PERFORMANCE GUIDE

1-2 **PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSISTANT/ASSISTANT PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE**

- a) Achieves at least 70 per cent participation in NIPR activities and shows compliance with the Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct and the PSG in daily practise.
- b) Achieves punctuality, regularity and promptness in official schedule.
- c) Maintains and updates a quarterly table of media relations structures and processes, showing Press contacts, Media channels, events as well as advertising marketing activities. Also maintains and updates a quarterly list of structures policies, portfolios and programmes at local, State and Federal levels of governments. In addition shows awareness in updating list of traditional structures, titles and processes between communities.
- d) Maintains a monthly record of data collection and analysis as well as distribution of reports of Corporate activities to relevant stakeholders.
- e) Keeps record of data collected periodically regarding births, birthdays, weddings, promotions, burials and other events of high personal or group value to members of the organisation.

3. **PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE**

- a) Achieves at least 70 per cent participation in NIPR activities and shows compliance with the Code of ethics, Code of Conduct and the PSG in everyday professional engagements.
- b) Records monthly media content analysis, also reviews of Press Releases, Publications, Speeches and Events' programmes etc for target stakeholders.
- c) Keeps monthly record of materials in distribution list to target stakeholders.
- d) Conducts quarterly review of operational data with Chapter Mentor or evaluation panel.

4. **SENIOR PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE**

- a) Achieves 70 percent participation in NIPR activities and shows compliance with the Code of Ethics, Code of Conducts and the PSG in regular practise.
- b) Maintains a quarterly record of data collection, monitoring and analysis of audience segments.
- c) Updates quarterly, data on issues tracking, analysis and response programmes.
- d) Conducts quarterly review with Chapter Evaluation panel or Mentor.

5. PRINCIPAL PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE ASST. MANAGER/ASSISTANT HEAD OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

- a) Collates and updates monthly data or research activities, PR programme targets and presentation materials.
- b) Keeps quarterly record of participation in Chapters evaluation panel
- c) Achieves 70 percent participation in NIPR activities and compliance with CODES of practice.

6. ASSISTANT CHIEF PUBLICRELATIONS EXECUTIVE DEPUTY MANAGER/DEPUTY HEAD

- a) Documents quarterly evaluation report of budget/programmes' performance of the PR team and distributes copies to key stakeholders.
- b) Provides monthly record of programme proposals and implementation reports by PR team with emphasis on contributions of different specialisations of the PR discipline
- c) Achieves at least 50 percent participation in NIPR activities.
- d) Documents quarterly compliance status of the PR team regarding NIPR Code of Ethics, Code of Conduct and the PSG

7. DEPUTY CHIEF PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVE

- a) Conducts and records quarterly reviews of compliance with NIPR Codes of Practice by the PR team.
- b) Maintains quarterly data of PR teams proposals for Corporate reputation goals and programmes, especially on relationship and perception management.
- c) Documents responses from distribution of proposals by the team and shares them with relevant stakeholders.
- d) Achieves at least 50 percent participation in NIPR activities.

8. CHIEF PUBLIC RELATIONS EXECUTIVES/MANAGER PUBLIC RELATIONS

- a) Records and updates quarterly, reviews of PR Skills I development programmes in relation to the competence status/profile of the team.
- b) Distributes to key stakeholders report of periodic PR competence profile update.
- c) Provides for target stakeholders a quarterly analysis of "outcomes from communications and relationship programmes in response to key corporate goals and their internal processes. Also proposals for responding to gaps between "input" and "outcomes".
- d) Achieves at least 50 percent participation in NIPR activities and compliance with the Codes of practice.

9. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL MANAGER/ ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER PUBLIC RELATIONS

- a) Regular updates of quarterly record of policy initiatives by the PR team and their outcomes
- b) Twice-a-year report on progress of organisation's strategic plan from internal/external stakeholder data process

10 DEPUTY DIRECTOR PUBLIC RELATIONS/ DEPUTY GENERALMANAGER PR:

- a) Half-yearly review of team's competence development activities, ensuring compliance with PSG
- b) Quarterly review/analysis of organisation's business environment, as a measurable input to corporate planning process.
- c) Review and keep record of team's budget performance, including remedial action where necessary, twice yearly.

11. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS/GENERAL MANAGER PR

- a) Annual evaluation of team's impact on organisation's reputation management goals.
- b) Annual review of PR team's professional profile.
- c) Annual review of percentage growth of PR budget and corporate impact profile.

SECTION 4:

INDUCTION AND EVALUATION WORKSHOPS

A. PRE-INDUCTION ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

Session (1) An Overview of the PR Profession (global/Nigeria)

- a) History and development of Public Relations (PR)
- b) Areas of Specialisations in PR and impact on corporate business advantage
- c) Other PR associations, key goals, structure, membership and operations
- d) Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR): Vision, Mission, structure, key goals and operations.

Session (2) Challenges of PR practice in Nigeria

- a) A Historical Analysis of PR (in capitalist versus developing economics)
- b) Identification and analysis of challenges in Nigeria (military and post military business environments)
- c) Codes of Conduct, Ethics, NIPR Law/Bye-Laws
- d) Application of PR process and the PSG.

Session (3) Practice session (tests and case studies)

B. PRE-ASSOCIATE MEMBER EVALUATION WORKSHOP (For any member seeking to be upgraded or admitted as Associate Member)

Session (1): Candidates presentation of own work in:

- a) Crisis Communications
- b) PR Research
- c) Media Relations strategy
- d) PR Programme planning
- e) Presentation Skill
- f) Application of PR Strategies and Tactics

Session (2): Presentations from candidates work situations on:

- a) Contemporary Trends & Issues in PR and application to Nigerian business environment
- b) Events Management challenges

Session (3): Practice Session (tests and Case studies)

C. MEMBER CATEGORY EVALUATION WORKSHOP (For those seeking upgrade to Member category or admission in NIPR at that level)

Session (1): Presentations of own works by candidates in the following areas:

- a) Budget Analysis & Business plan design
- b) Design of a PR programme; or PR Campaign
- c) Marketing Communications plan
- d) Identification, categorisation and management of internal or external stakeholder relations issues.
- e) Integrated communications programme options
- f) Crisis Management
- g) Corporate Identity/Brand Campaign process evaluation.

Session (2): Presentations of own works by candidates in:

- a) Trends analysis and benchmarking
- b) Issues Management challenges
- c) PA data management and Corporate business planning.

Session (3): Practice Session (tests and case studies)

D. PRE-FELLOWSHIP CATEGORY EVALUATION WORKSHOP (For any member seeking upgrade to Fellowship of NIPR)

Session (1): Presentations of own works, showing critical issues or application of new thinking in any specializations in PR, for example:

- a) Strategic PR Plan
- b) Integrated Communications
- c) Crisis Management
- d) Media Relations
- e) Corporate Communications
- f) Stakeholder Relations strategies
- g) Corporate Identity and Brand management
- h) Issues and Trends Management
- i) Government Relations
- j) Community Relations
- k) Investor Relations

Session (2): Comparative analysis of Codes of Ethics, Conduct and Standards of different PR associations and their competing business environments, by candidates.

SECTION 5:

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION PANEL GUIDE

A Five-step process for evaluating presentations to the Performance Panel by members of each chapter.

Step 1: Identification of problem or purpose; its PR implications

- Nature of problem (origin, character)
- Scope of problem (immediate and potential impact; those at risk)

Step 2: Research & Analysis of problem

- History of problem and past manifestations/solutions
- Experience from other sources.

Step 3: Plan of Action

- Specific goals of plan (output versus outcome, and inputs required; immediate, medium term and long term)
- Target stakeholder groups (primary & secondary categories, etc.)
- PR Strategies and Tactics to market proposal and achieve set goals.
- Resources required (time, costs, contacts, facilitators, anchors, messages, e.t,c)
- Risk elements (critical path analysis, internal and external blockers, damage potential).

Step 4: Implementation

- Phases and Momentum building
- Interfaces: internal & external
- Monitoring: goals, strategies, resources and risks.

Step 5: Evaluation (at every step)

- Relevance factor (goals versus problems, purpose or project)
- Coherence of plan & consistency
- Responsiveness