

Public Relations Specialist

You decide what an organization says in public and who it says it to. No license, so your work samples are the whole interview.

TYPICAL PAY

\$74,750

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$44k to \$135k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 5 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Agencies, in-house
communications teams, nonprofit...**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Write for the school paper, run a club's social accounts, help a local campaign. Anything where you produced something public.
- 2 Bachelor's degree** 4 years
Public relations, communications, journalism, marketing or English. The major matters less than the writing samples you leave with.
- 3 Internships** Summers during the degree
Two or three, at an agency, a nonprofit and a company if you can. This is where the job offers come from.
- 4 First role** 1 to 2 years
Account coordinator or communications assistant. Media lists, monitoring, drafting, event logistics, and a lot of proofreading.
- 5 Own your accounts** Year 3 onward
You pitch reporters yourself, write the plan, and answer for what happens when a story goes wrong.

Pros and cons

- + Four years of school, no licensing exam, no debt beyond a normal degree
- + Every industry needs it, so you can work on what interests you
- + Remote and hybrid work is normal
- Agency hours are long and the client is always right
- You defend decisions you did not make and sometimes disagree with
- Bad news does not wait for business hours

Optional boosts

Crisis communication. Healthcare and pharmaceutical. Investor relations. Public affairs and lobbying support.

Good to know

Most of the job is being ignored

A reporter can get hundreds of pitches a day and answer a handful. Good practitioners measure success in the small number that land, not in how many emails went out.

There are more of them than reporters

The number of public relations people in the United States has outgrown the number of working journalists by a wide margin as newsrooms shrank. It is one reason pitching is harder than it used to...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Public Relations Specialists (27-3031.00)

Public Relations Society of America

Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia

USAJOBS, the federal government hiring site

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/public-relations-specialist>



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