

## ETHICS AND PR: CHALLENGES AND IMPORTANCE IN MODERN SOCIETY

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**Abstract:** This thesis explores the critical role of ethics in public relations (PR) and the challenges professionals face in maintaining transparency, honesty, and accountability. In an era of rapid information dissemination, PR practices are scrutinized more than ever. The discussion highlights key ethical principles, the impact of misinformation, and the role of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in fostering trust. By examining international ethical codes and professional standards, this work underscores the strategic importance of ethics in building long-term audience trust and industry credibility.

**Keywords:** Ethics Public Relations (PR), transparency, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), crisis management , professional standards, misinformation

Ethics in PR is based on principles such as honesty, transparency, and respect for the audience. "Transparency is considered a fundamental principle for building trust" [1]. However, in practice, companies often manipulate facts, which can harm their reputation.

One of the major issues is the use of covert PR and fake news. These methods raise questions about the accountability of PR professionals. "The spread of misinformation damages not only brands but the entire PR industry" [2].

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is another important aspect. Companies that actively demonstrate their commitment to social and environmental issues tend to gain more trust. "CSR is an effective way to build a positive image, but only with a sincere approach"[3]. However, when CSR is used solely for PR purposes, audiences quickly notice the insincerity. During crises, many organizations face a dilemma: protect their image or reveal the truth. "Openness and accountability should be the foundation of crisis PR" [4].

International codes of ethics, such as those by the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), emphasize the importance of honesty, transparency, and respect for the audience. "Ethical principles help PR professionals make the right decisions in complex situations"[5].

Adhering to ethics helps strengthen trust between brands and their audiences, prevent reputational crises, and enhance the professionalism of the industry. "Ethics is not just a set of rules but a tool for long-term success" [6].

Ethics in PR plays a crucial role in building trust with audiences. The more open and honest companies are, the higher their chances of sustainable success. In a world where reputations are easily undermined, adhering to ethical standards is essential for any PR activity.

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