Industrial relations include four types of relations:

(i) Labour relations i.e., relations between union- management (also known as labour management relations);

(ii) Group relations i.e., relations between various groups of workmen i.e., workmen, supervisors, technical persons, etc.

(iii) Employer-employee relations i.e., relations between the management and employees. It denotes all management employer relations except the union- management relations;

(iv) Community or Public relations i.e., relations between the industry and the society.

**Characteristics of industrial relations**

1. **Parties in the Industrial Relations Activities:**

   Basically, two parties - workers and management are involved in the process of establishing relations. However, the government agencies regulate /maintain industrial relations.

2. **Interactive Process:**

   Industrial relations arise out interactions between different persons/parties. They are supervisors, workers trade unions, employers’ associations. So, interactive process takes place between –
   
   i. Supervisors and industrial workers
   
   ii. Supervisors and group/team members
   
   iii. Management and trade union leaders
   
   iv. Employers’ federations and workers’ unions.

3. **Two-Way Communication:**

   IRs is a two-way communication process. One party gives stimuli, other party responds to the stimuli. So, the transaction occurring through such mechanism is either complementary or cross. More the complementary transactions, better will be the industrial relations situations.

4. **Approaches to IRs:**

   Various approaches contribute to shape IRs pattern in industrial organizations. These approaches include sociological, psychological, socio-ethical, human relations, Gandhian, system approaches etc.

5. **State Intervention:**

   State plays a vital role to influence industrial relations situations through its activities as facilitator, guide, counsellor for both the parties in the industry.

6. **Organizational Climate:**

   If, congenial and conducive organizational climate prevails, workers feel homely, interact spontaneously, communicate boss about their problems, difficulties directly and come close to him to exchange/share the views each other in respect of work, change of job design, introduction of any operative system, process etc. Under such situation, possibility of establishing healthy human relations develops and these relations influence industrial relations pattern of organization.

7. **Dispute Settlement Process:**

   If, the management personnel believe on the philosophy of settling workers’ grievances/ disputes through bi-lateral negotiation process, they give much more emphasis on mutual talk, sharing responsibility, collaboration, partnership dealing and mutual trust. In the process changes in workers’ attitudes, behaviour and thought pattern are likely to occur which effect industrial relations.