

Realizing that economic life and lifestyles have limits, today's depressed workforce can become dangerous. Managers must have the courage to look at themselves through the humanities glass so they can develop their characters and become capable of more ethical exchanges with other individuals.

DISTANCE, STYLE, BREAKFAST MEETINGS
INGREDIENTS IN "PRESIDENTIAL RECIPE";
SHOULD BROADCAST CONFLICTING DEMANDS

Jim Fisher's recipe for leadership -- especially the presidential variety -- stresses three qualities: 1) distance (don't try to be one of the boys/girls), 2) style and 3) perceived self-confidence (have presence and enough sense of self to be oneself). He is pres. of CASE, former pres. of Towson State Univ (Md.).

What else would help? For starters: high visibility, vigor, drive for responsibility, persistence, abundance of energy, willingness to take a chance, initiative in social situations, sense of identity, capacity to organize, ability to absorb others' stress, tolerance of frustration and delay, self-deprecating sense of humor, imagination, and Brooks Brothers suits (his and hers, as appropriate). Another plus for those persons who aspire to top positions is a competent and loyal staff with enough courage to be candid.

He defines the most important types of power as 1) reference or charismatic power (capacity for attracting people physically and emotionally) and 2) expert power (knowing more than other people about the business at hand). One of the best environments in which to lay all of this talent & charm on the target individual (opinion maker, benefactor, customer, influence wielder) is the breakfast meeting -- preferably one prepared by the host -- or some other informal setting where one-on-one contact is most effective.

Responding to Fisher, dean & author Scott Cutlip (Univ of Ga.) finds high visibility serves some leaders better than others. One of the most distinguished presidents he has known was a terrible public speaker and, recognizing this limitation, declined as many speaking engagements as possible.

Cutlip offered the thought that a president is a person in the center of a vortex of conflicting forces -- for colleges these are faculty, students, staff, benefactors, alumni, members of the community. It is his or her responsibility to make each of these publics aware of the others' conflicting demands.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. Patrick Jackson (sr. counsel, Jackson Jackson & Wagner, Epping, N.H.) to board of trustees, Antioch Univ.

PEOPLE. James Bay Energy Corp (Quebec) names Francois Aubin mpr.

Taking issue with Fisher's advice on keeping one's distance by "not joining a country club," Cutlip cited another successful pres. who makes it a point to belong to one. Why? There's nowhere else in the small town to entertain. Conclusion: mix the ingredients of the "presidential recipe" according to taste and common sense.

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THO OTHER SKILLS ON ASCENDANCY IN "NEW PUBLIC RELATIONS,"
PRACTITIONERS MUST BE MEDIA RELATIONS EXPERTS --
& REMIND EMPLOYERS MEDIA ARE PUBLIC'S INVESTIGATIVE AGENTS

"CEO's are ultimately responsible for press relations because they determine how open the organization is." Lewis Young, Business Week ed-in-chief, told PRSA's Corporate Section "no matter how effective public relations staff is, you cannot have good media relations if top management doesn't care about the press."

Also speaking at the Nat'l Conf. in Atlanta, Rob't Chandler, CBS vp in charge of 60 Minutes & other public affairs programming, said the most common complaint from pr people is that their CEO was interviewed for 1½ hours, and only 3 minutes appeared on tv. He points out that print interviewers do 1 hr of interviewing and only 3 paragraphs of direct quote appear in print. Chandler says, "We're paid to synthesize material. We're reporters. We're not common carriers." And he added: "Corporate decisions affect a wide number of people, and it's our job to go after those stories."

Three tips from Hugh Newton, D.C. counselor, to PD seminar: 1) To get attention for material mailed to media, use personally addressed first class mail. 2) Go after media opinion leaders -- syndicated columnists, editorial page eds, cartoonists (often forgotten), think mags, op-ed eds, capitol press corps. 3) Get to know not only biz ed but publisher, writers, other editors -- "and so should your boss or client."

What's The Best Way To Avoid Bad News? Young advises companies to do their job well by putting out good products at a fair price. He finds companies have lost sight of their need to serve customers, and customers are developing a dangerous feeling of frustration. Smoldering public frustration is also a result of high interest rates and the economy. He predicts the public will be increasingly willing to trade real solutions to these problems for gov't regulation.

"Companies have a real problem. Journalists have no idea why industry makes decisions and companies don't talk in a fashion that educates journalists."

-- Howard Banks,
Pacific Bureau ed,
The Economist

"Our business isn't to make judgments on things. Our business is to present the information so the public can understand it."

-- Robert Chandler,
vp, CBS

"Business has to learn to play the media the way gov't and special interest groups play the media. They give the media what we want: good stories. And, like gov't people do, get our view into the story. Sen. Proxmire plays the media like a violin."

-- Lew Young, ed, Business Week

Young advises practitioners to do three things:

1. Give us real news. Poor press relations is a symptom of something more ... bad management. Young advised practitioners to expose managers to the press so they quit being "nervous Nellies."
2. Get to know us. Let managers being interviewed know who the reporter is. Does he/she know your business? If not, make sure the manager explains it. It's better to take time to do the interview correctly than take time later to rebut.
3. Be thoroughly prepared. Give executives needed materials, particularly facts & figures. Young says most glaring errors in print are direct quotes from executives who didn't know what they were talking about.

What Should You Do If Called By 60 Minutes?

Chandler urges you to get the best representative available ... somebody who doesn't "ramble." You could be contacted by a researcher just beginning to explore a story, a producer or correspondent. The 60 Minutes rep might want background material, an off-camera chat, film of the site, or an interview with someone in authority. If they do want to talk to someone in authority, 60 Minutes' reps may not tell you much about the subject matter. Chandler says "You'll know what it's about."

Most stories run about 13 minutes, and are divided into 3 parts: establishing a controversy, showing both sides, drawing conclusions & opinions. Chandler points out that your representative will be on camera no more than 3 to 4 minutes in the final version, so it's best to get someone who can talk concisely, relevantly, pointedly, saying in strongest terms what your organization has to say.

Allot a half day for the interview because camera crew & directors are perfectionists. If it's a 1-camera shoot, correspondent will initially ask questions with the camera facing the interviewee. Be prepared for the crew to then drag the camera around behind the interviewee, and the correspondent will ask his questions all over again. Chandler urges practitioners to watch during the camera reversal and speak up if the meaning, subject & delivery of the question is not identical to the first time.

"Can you record the interview? "Be our guest," says Chandler, "audio or video." Because of correspondents' contracts use of such tapes may be restricted.

"Chandler says 60 Minutes correspondents will ask hard questions, and you'd better have answers. "If you don't know, we're going to show it."

"What if 60 Minutes broadcasts incorrect information? Chandler says CBS is committed to correct the error during a subsequent 60 Minutes broadcast. "And we've done it."

prr ASKS 60 MINUTES

A 60 MINUTES QUESTION

prr asked the CBS exec in charge why no women or minorities are correspondents on 60 Minutes. Robert Chandler replied, "We got the best four people we could get." He pointed to the average age and experience of the correspondents in defense of their superior abilities.

DEBATE AT CONFERENCE: DO CEOs
REALLY SEE PR AS ONE-WAY ADVOCACY?

do the occupants understand it, really? That was main topic of informal discussion at PRSA conf. Bifurcation was touched off by GM's Roger Smith. Most loved his support for pr function (see last week's issue). Many disliked his definition of its objective: "to change people's minds for the better about the corporation."

Many from all sectors including large corps. faulted Smith's failure to even hint at making accommodations with publics, at improving products, at seeking feedback. It seemed to them he expected practitioners to make the public like the company on its terms, for better or worse. Some attendees, again from all sectors including non-profits, liked this approach.

In the daily conf. newsletter -- new this year -- Georgia-Pacific CEO R.E. Floweree made public relations sound like an adjunct of business or the chamber of commerce, rather than a profession that represents all sectors, all viewpoints. Clicking off problems of business like adverse legislation, regulation, "environmental overkill" & the economy, he concluded "I feel strongly that changing these trends is the greatest challenge for public relations as a profession" (emphasis added).

Synfuels Corp. chrm John Sawhill criticized poor planning & public relations of the oil industry. Then said his outfit was going to do the impossible -- apparently with better public relations at least a factor. While it has taken offshore drilling 30 yrs to achieve 1.3 million barrels/day, and nuclear 25 yrs to reach the equivalent of 1.5 million, synfuels are expected to supply 2 million b/d in just 12 yrs.

His pr strategy: 1) Stop talking about energy crisis in terms of economic statistics. 2) Start viewing it as a matter of national survival & personal economic survival. 3) Liken synfuels program to space race with a required crash element.

MANAGERS MUST DEVELOP THEIR CHARACTERS
TO COPE WITH TODAY'S DEPRESSIVE WORKFORCE,
MOTIVATION EXPERT HERZBERG TELLS PRSA

Humanistic wisdom, instead of human relations gimmicks, will be needed by management to deal with the "depressive workforce" of the 80s, advises motivation expert Frederick Herzberg (Univ of Utah). Today's workers reflect a passive hostility toward their employers with an attitude of "I prefer not to." They devote their time to personal concerns. A hopeful sign is that in their quest for survival, they will ask themselves, "What inner resources do I have?"

From many years of research into motivation, Herzberg finds effective leadership must adjust to 4 different waves of what he calls "immigrants into the U.S. workforce":

1. External Immigrant of pre-WWII who accepted authority, inequality, and physical pain or discomfort on the job.
2. "Organization Man" of the 50s who entered business & other organizations assisted by GI Bill of Rights and accepted the organization's morality.
3. Internal Immigrants of the 60s -- led by blacks, children of the affluent, Indians, Chicanos and women. They demanded what they believed were their stolen rights, blamed the system for their plight.
4. Confused Mixture of the 70s who masked their depression with consumption & entertainment, cried that "Life is unfair."