

Reference to technology is mainly about the "difficulty in keeping up with the electronic age of computers, pay tv, cable & satellite tv." A sr vp of a Savannah, Ga. conglomerate talks about a "new social order coming out of telecommunications change." And a pr firm pres. says: "Electronic media are creating faster opinion development, [thus] causing corporate executives and corporations to react or plan faster than previously." A dpr at an ad agency fears "that as the electronic media knock off the print media in acceptance by the masses, manipulation of public opinion will become very possible -- and it will be led by the FCC."

NON-COLLEGE-EDUCATED PRACTITIONERS ARE FADING OUT; INCREASE IN HIGHER DEGREES

Of our 599 respondents, 86.6% have bachelor's degrees or better. Exactly a fourth hold master's degrees and

2.7% hold PhD's in such fields as Communications, Administration, Philosophy and Education. "Some college" is reported by 11.7% and "high school or less" by 1.7%. Only 15% of respondents without college degrees are under 40 yrs. of age. Most of the practitioners without college degrees are "old-timers," some over 70.

Over half (53.6%) of bachelor's degree holders majored in Journalism/Media/Communications, and an additional 12.6% in English. Only 3.1% of degree holders say they have a specialized degree in Public Relations. In total, about 7 out of 10 practitioners with bachelor's degrees majored in some aspect of the broad field of communications.

Of other bachelor degree holders, most fall into four fields: Social Sciences (with Political Science predominating), Business/Management, Physical Sciences and Fine Arts.

On the master's degree level, 52.8% majored in some aspect of communications, with about half in Journalism and 28% in Public Relations. English and language majors account for 13% of master's degree holders, the social sciences (again with Political Science & History the favorite) for 17.9%, and other fields such as Public Administration and Education for 16.3%.

While communications majors on all degree levels predominate, it's clear that a career in public relations is open to a wide variety of other specialties.

ABOUT HALF OF RESPONDENTS IN 40-59 AGE BRACKET

As shown in Table 6 below, 25.7% of our sample of public relations practitioners are between 40-49 years old and another 25.4% between 50-59. Almost a third (32.4%) are below the age of 40.

Age	No.	%	Age	No.	%
20-24	4	7.8%	50-59	152	25.4%
25-29	43		60-64	41	6.8
30-34	76	12.7%	65+	8	1.3
35-39	71	11.9%	Unspecified	50	8.3
40-49	154	25.7%	Total	599	99.9

SIXTEENTH ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE PROFESSION, PART II

PR SALARY RISES IN 1980 BARELY KEEP UP WITH INFLATION; PRACTITIONERS SEE MORE PROBLEMS THAN OPPORTUNITIES

With the 1980 median salary at \$35,000, up \$4,000 from \$31,000 in 1979, public relations practitioners are just about keeping pace with last year's 13% rate of inflation. In Canada, where the 1980 median salary rose to \$33,000 from \$31,000, the situation is much the same. Salaries are highest in the Northeast (\$38,000 median) and lowest in the South (\$31,500 median), as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF 1980 AND 1979 MEDIAN SALARIES OF TOP LEVEL PUBLIC RELATIONS/PUBLIC AFFAIRS PRACTITIONERS IN U.S. AND CANADA, AND BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Type Organization	Median Salary		1980 Salary Range	Median Change*
	1980	1979		
All U.S. Organizations	\$35,000	\$31,000	\$10,000 - 120,000	
All Canadian Organizations	33,000	30,000	19,200 - 70,000	
PR Firms	45,000	41,000	10,000 - 120,000	+\$4,000
Advertising Agencies	36,500	----	13,000 - 72,000	+ 4,000
Other Consulting	38,000	----	28,000 - 100,000	+ 5,500
Banks	34,000	} 27,800	15,000 - 110,000	+ 3,000
Insurance Companies	29,500			
Consumer Product Companies	37,500	35,100	15,000 - 120,000	+ 3,550
Industrials	36,000	} 35,000	18,000 - 117,000	+ 4,000
Conglomerates	42,000			
Transportation	33,800	----	16,000 - 63,000	+ 3,600
Utilities	36,500	38,000	18,000 - 86,000	+ 3,250
Hospitals	23,650	22,300	13,850 - 57,000	+ 2,800
Educational	27,700	25,500	12,500 - 60,000	+ 2,500
Trade/Professional Associations	36,000	30,000	18,450 - 72,000	+ 3,500
Other Nonprofits	30,000	25,000	12,200 - 50,000	+ 2,900
Government	29,000	----	14,400 - 50,000	+ 2,000

* Calculated on the difference between 1980 and 1979 salaries as reported by each respondent.

Looking at industry groups (see Table 1) salaries in pr firms and conglomerates are highest. As usual, hospitals and educational institutions fare worst. But individ-



ual situations vary widely. Among pr firms, a third of practitioners report no salary increases against 17% with increases of \$10,000 or more. Among industrials, only 4% received no increase and the same percentage received increases of \$10,000 or more. Only one hospital dpr increased his salary by over \$10,000, and that was because he changed jobs. Of other hospital dpr's, 26% received increases of \$5,000 or over. Switching employers is the way a 35-yr. old vp-corp info of a consumer products co. with 12 yrs. of experience increased his salary by \$19,000 to a current salary of \$65,000.

TABLE 2: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN MEDIAN SALARIES

Region	Median	Range
Northeast	\$38,000	\$14,800 - 120,000
West	34,500	12,500 - 80,000
North Central	32,000	12,500 - 120,000
South	31,500	10,000 - 75,000

TABLE 3: PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNITIES FACING PR PRACTITIONERS IN THE 80s

Problems	Practitioners Mentioning	Problems	Practitioners Mentioning
1. Status with mgmt	31%	4. Economic & competitive pressures on pr	12%
- Credibility of public relations (16%)		5. Professional ethics of public relations	6%
- Need for input into top mgmt (10%)		6. Keeping up with forces of change	5%
- Need for mgmt education on uses of pr (5%)		7. Miscellaneous	5%
2. Status with public	16%	<u>Opportunities</u>	
- Credibility of pr (10%)		1. New fields of specialization	9%
- Loss of public confidence in institutions (6%)		2. Increased status with mgmt	6%
3. Professional competence of pr practitioners	16%	3. Growing need to educate the public	5%
- Need for professional development (6%)		4. Technology creating new opportunities	3%
- Ability to measure results of pr (6%)		5. Miscellaneous	3%
- Need for better educational background (4%)			

MORE CONCERN WITH PROBLEMS THAN OPPORTUNITIES; STATUS WITH MANAGEMENT IS MOST WORRISOME; PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE QUESTIONED

By a 3 to 1 ratio, practitioners worry more about problems facing them than exalt over opportunities opening up to them. As shown in Table 3, they worry about their tenuous status with mgmt and the public, their professional competence and ethics, economic and competitive pressures on public relations and keeping up with forces of change. Where most see problems, some see opportunities. They see new fields of specialization opening up along with new media technology.

TABLE 5: RECENT CHANGES IN THE FUNCTION OF PR DEPARTMENTS

Type of Org'n	More attention given to monitoring public issues	More effort going into grassroots lobbying	Greater pressure for MBO	Higher budget for advocacy advertising
PR Firms	49%	24%	44%	14%
Ad Agencies	30	6	30	12
Other Consulting	33	0	27	0
Banks	51	25	51	12
Insurance Cos.	46	23	54	8
Consumer Prod.	76	54	50	12
Industrials	62	32	46	6
Conglomerates	56	10	15	3
Transportation	23	31	54	0
Utilities	63	53	41	10
Hospitals	65	30	50	22
Educational	47	30	45	0
Trade/Prof'l Ass'n	69	42	40	20
Other Nonprofit	36	29	51	9
Gov't	71	18	6	12
Average	56	29	43	9

KEEPING UP WITH FORCES OF CHANGE; FOCUS IS ON SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

Another guide to the prof'l devel needs of practitioners is to look at forces of change, commented upon by about 5% of respondents. The aim of pr practitioners, as stated by a pr firm vp from Wash., D.C., is "establishing their role as more than pure messengers, but winning acceptance as the best informed managers of issues and interpreters of trends." A Toronto, Ont. utility dpr noted that the "opportunity now is for the pr function to prove itself capable of doing the social monitoring required."

Besides learning about the monitoring process, practitioners are alerted to the need to cope with two forces: changes in social structure and technology. Society is seen as breaking up. References are made to a "panoply of special interest groups" that are "diverse" and "factionalized." And the American public is seen as becoming both more "sophisticated" and "cynical." Thoughts like these lead others, like a pr coord. for a Lansing, Mich. ass'n, to recommend that pr people "become catalysts for social understanding in countering society's fragmentation." A mgr of pr & empl rels sees an opportunity for public education: "Emphasis of pr talent should be on educating the American public of need, dire need, for return to moral and economic solvency." A Chicago dpr at a university warns that unless society's problems are solved "the end of western civilization as we know it is rapidly at hand."

Main concern of practitioners is status with management. Most refer to public relations' credibility with management (16%). Their more specific focus, however, is on the long-standing demand to be included in top management policy-making. As the pres. of a NYC public relations firm notes, "Continued management resistance to policy impact of pr considerations must be overcome to move the craft off its current plateau." A vp-pub comms from a So. Calif. industrial company states this endeavor:

"To become closer members of the top policy-making management structure. Too often pr people have to reflect policies made by others in management (accountants, lawyers, engineers). The time is here for public relations to assume a stronger role in shaping policy. They can only do so by winning a seat at the top level."

ONLY HALF OF PR HEADS REPORT DIRECTLY TO CEO

As Table 4 shows, only a little over half (55%) of pr dep't heads say they report to the CEO or equivalent. All business firm dpr's fall below this average. Among corporations, consumer product co. dep't heads do best, with 52% reporting to the top, and industrials the worst, with only 38% reporting to the top. Besides ad agencies with 83% of pr heads reporting to the top, hospitals and other non-profits (except education) do best, with 82% and 79% respectively reporting to the top. The organizational status of pr heads in trade & professional organizations and government is also high.

Both an opportunity and a worry is that more CEOs are being pushed into the public arena. While their need for public relations rises, they don't always appreciate that pr practitioners can help them. A supvr of pub comms at a Reno, Nevada utility expresses this concern:

"As more CEOs begin to move actively into the pr arena, there appears to be an increasing feeling that public relations is just common sense and can be handled by anyone, i.e., professionally trained pr people are not necessary. It appears that some of our efforts to get management out of the ivory tower have created CEOs who are pr neophytes operating with communications matches in the tinder-dry forest of public relations."

TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE OF PR DEP'T HEADS WHO REPORT TO CEO OR EQUIVALENT -- BY INDUSTRY GROUP

<u>Industry Group</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Ad Agencies	83%
Hospitals	82
Other Nonprofits	79
Trade or Prof'l Org'ns	65
Government	61
Consumer Product Cos.	52
Transportation	50
Utilities	50
Conglomerates	44
Banks	43
Insurance Cos.	43
Education	41
Other Consulting Firms	40
Industrial Cos.	38

Note: Pr firms omitted because most respondents are principals or owners.

EDUCATING MANAGEMENT VS. EDUCATING OURSELVES

How is public relations' status with mgmt to be enhanced? Some (5%) say the job is to educate mgmt: "convincing them of the need to involve pr at all levels of decision making." But many more (16%) point to improving the professional competence of pr practitioners, a competence which some lack. A Kentucky head of a pr firm talks

about "eliminating the untrained, uneducated flacks who call themselves 'pr professionals' and who create a breakdown in credibility for public relations." Another practitioner writes:

"Public relations still enjoys a terrible public reputation. Unfortunately, some of this is justly deserved because of the extremely questionable practices of some -- albeit a minority -- of practitioners. This is a major problem for the profession. To me, however, the major problem of the entire profession -- and the major opportunity -- is to become a recognized part of mgmt. The accomplishment of this will do much to eliminate the first problem cited."

Professional development and better education of entrants are seen by about 1 out of 10 practitioners as the way to improve their status. In positive terms, a Philadelphia head of a pr firm with 29 years of experience exclaimed: "This is the greatest era of public relations opportunity I've encountered in my career. However, it's now up to us to deliver on mgmt's expectations." A hospital dir of comty aftrs from Tucson, Ariz. hurls this challenge to practitioners:

"Over the past two years I have spoken before 32 public relations groups nationwide. Based on that experience I am convinced that professional development will be the key problem/opportunity; at least in hospitals. We have been discovered and mgmt is hot on everything related to us... advertising, marketing, promotion, publicity, issues mgmt, etc. Some of us were caught napping and now non-pr people are being brought in to be the marketers, planners, community relaters and legislative liaison people. We are going to have to hustle or be left in the dust, and we will have to keep hustling faster than before."

RECENT CHANGES IN Professional development needs of practitioners are suggested
PR DEP'T FUNCTIONS; by recent changes in the function of public relations dep'ts.
PROF'L DEVEL NEEDS In response to a question on this subject (see Table 5),
 over half (56%) of practitioners report that more attention
 is being given to monitoring public issues. The industry groups most active are
 consumer product cos. (76%), gov't (71%), trade & prof'l ass'ns (69%), hospitals (65%)
 and utilities (63%). A common denominator of these groups is their high involvement
 with gov't regulation.

Greater pressure for management by objectives is reported by 43%. The MBO movement is most pronounced in insurance cos., transportation, banks and misc. nonprofits. Knowing how to measure the impact of pr activities on the achievement of mgmt goals is the key MBO requirement. Practitioners are advised to "produce measurable, cost-effective results" and to "learn more about business." We should "become managers rather than staff," says a Dallas, Tex. head of a pr firm, and we should "learn as much about industries/organizations we serve as we think we know about pr." Others talk about the need for marketing skills and learning to "integrate with marketing strategies." Opportunities in international marketing are also noted. Perhaps these pressures were behind the comment of an Iowa consultant who urges educators to "continue to push public relations courses into the graduate schools of management & business and out of journalism schools."

Learning more about public relations contributions to grassroots lobbying is less important. Still, almost 3 out of 10 practitioners (29%) report that more effort is going into this activity. Consumer product cos., utilities and ass'ns are most heavily involved. Advocacy advertising is a part of this effort but only 9% of respondents report higher budgets for it. Hospitals have apparently become more bold; 22% report increased advocacy advertising budgets. Ass'ns also remain active.