

IN TELEVISED OR FILMED MESSAGES  
WHAT SEEMS RIGHT MAY BE WRONG:  
GUIDELINES FROM EYE MOVEMENT

Using advanced eye movement recorder to measure effectiveness of television spots, Telcom Research (Teaneck, N.J.) has developed helpful guidelines for practitioners. Most effective psa's are those with simple demonstration and clearly stated beliefs. 10-sec spots can out-perform 30-sec counterparts if this rule is followed.

Highly entertaining spots are the most ineffective for conveying persuasive messages. Humor works only when subject "saves the day." Strong visual interest works only when identified closely with the topic. Low correlation results in high recall of spokesperson, low recall of the project or sponsor. Spokesperson becomes a "visual vampire" sucking away attention from the subject. Compare Cheryl Tiegs' well-correlated Cover Girl cosmetic commercials with Frank Sinatra's "visual vampires" for Chrysler cars.

Other Telcom suggestions: 1) Off-camera narrator vastly improves readership of words appearing on screen -- often tripling it. 2) Top-of-mind awareness increases significantly by showing sponsor & project name & materials both during and at the conclusion of spot.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR PROFESSIONALS

Innovators total unbelievable 9% in the car-buying market. Compare with the diffusion process theory which establishes this group in the 4% to 5% area. Detroit is seeking to find out who this 9% is that "snaps at anything new regardless of make." Laggards are at 7%, described as "King-Size" car-types who will continue to drive the gas-guzzling behemoths as long as they are available. Middle categories, not as easy to see in diffusion process mode, appear to be specifically motivated: Practical-Price-and-Value buyers (22%); Car-of-my-Dreams (22%); Engineering/I-Know-Cars type (15%); A-Car-is-a-Car (13%); and the Driver (11%).

Public relations and personnel work together to create employee morale-building programs at Hyatt Orlando. Wide array of recreational events and programs builds employee incentive and creates a feeling of family among work force. "At Hyatt we try to eliminate the '9 to 5' attitude by always giving our employees something to look forward to at work.... It's that intangible of morale ... without it you're dead," says Charlie Andrew, regional vp & gen mgr. Programs include Hyatt's Great Skate (roller skating party), "Gong Show," 50's party, & a take-off on tv's Family Feud called departmental feud. Biggest events of year are Family Picnic and the Annual Awards Banquet with "Charlies" given to employees who have exhibited superlative service. Program's success, a result of combining public relations & personnel, is also seen in magazine carrying article, Recreational Management, the Journal of Employee Recreation, Health & Education. Magazine's 4-person advisory board includes 2 well-known public relations professionals, co-chrm Arthur Conrad, vp-pr, Flick-Reedy Corp and John McGehee, dpr, Kiwanis International.

SIGN OF THE TIMES

Bumper sticker in politically strife-torn Massachusetts:  
  
"Don't Re-elect Anybody!"  
  
How pungent simply-worded messages can be.

O.D. (ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT) CONTINUES TO ATTRACT ATTENTION OF PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTITIONERS AS SYNTHESIZING MANAGEMENT TOOL; RELATIONSHIPS, COMMUNICATIONS ARE KEY SO IS CLEARLY PR'S TURF

Organizational development has three fit subjects, says Warren Bennis, leading writer & teacher about this technology of change agency: 1) the way leadership is structured; 2) the way information is shared, or isn't; 3) the way decisions are made. For public relations professionals who want to move behind communications to planning & decision making, learning OD is a direct path.

Basically OD is knowing how to diagnose & intervene. Two forces cause organizations to change: the environment (external, forced change) or planning & foresight (internal, managed change). OD skills applied within an organization enable it to manage change rather than being managed by it. How many public relations leaders (and CEOs) have given speeches on the need to manage change?

How many have the OD skills to achieve it? According to the membership list of the OD Network, the national organization of OD specialists, very few. prr's count shows 7 pr pros in the list. Most members are management consultants or personnel (human resource) executives. Yet the skills required to practice OD sound very much like those used daily in public relations:

SKILLS OF THE OD CONSULTANT	OPERATIVE ASSUMPTIONS OF OD
1. Awareness of self & relationships.	1. Organizational "growth" (in learning & functioning, not necessarily in size) is inherently healthy.
2. Ability to assess group behavior.	2. There are several problems which impede such growth: people, goals, environment, structure, ineffectiveness.
3. Sense of timing: when to intervene.	3. <u>The quality of personal interactions</u> is apt to be symptomatic of the problem and/or may be used to diagnose it.
4. Tact & diplomacy.	4. Ability of people to define the problem will be a guide to the complexity of the problem.
5. Awareness of others & their needs.	5. But the problem is probably not as complex as people's conceptions of it.
6. Ability to objectively diagnose the situation within an organization.	
7. Knowledge of methods: planning, procedures, strategies, structure, programming.	
8. Interpersonal communication skills.	
9. Contractual skills: can manage time & budgets to do job, satisfy "client."	

Consulting skills can be greatly sharpened by use of OD tools, report practitioners who employ them. For instance, OD offers insights into the 4 systems that exist within every organization: 1) political, 2) economic, 3) technical, 4) social. Also the phases thru which counsel-client relations naturally proceed, from a) dependence to b) counterdependence (when the client temporarily rejects or doubts the counselor), on to c) independence (when the client wants to show himself & counsel that he can go it alone), then d) interdependence (the effective, mature relationship).

Opportunity to learn OD. PRSA's premier educational seminar, the Annual Institute, is devoted this year to OD. It takes place at Columbia's Arden House conference site in Harriman, NY, from Sept. 21-24. "Strategies for Communicating, Influencing & Managing Change" is the title. Five OD "names" will interact with pr leaders like Edward L. Bernays & communication theorists like Gerry Goldhaber to apply these techniques to a pr setting. Lynn Hill, chrm, says last minute reservations are available from Diane Stillerman, PRSA prof's dev'l coord, 212/826-1763. One fascinating topic to be explored is called "Managing Up" -- how to manage one's boss.

PR FUTURISTS WILL HAVE TO CHANGE SEVERAL TREND VIEWS IF NEW STUDY OF AMERICANS' HOPES & FEARS IS RIGHT: RELIGION, HEALTH, CRIME, COMMUNISM NOT VERY IMPORTANT

"Change is now taken for granted. It may be the only permanent feature of life in America today."

Thus finds a major study of people's hopes & fears for themselves & society conducted for Psychology Today magazine. Maintaining the status quo has "disappeared as a national aspiration," says William Watts, pres, Potomac Associates, who did the study. "In 1964, maintaining the status quo in one's own life was mentioned as a hope by 12% of Americans, 7% cited it as a hope for the nation. This year less than 2% think of it in personal terms, and holding on to the status quo has disappeared."

Similar studies conducted in '64 & '74 show unusual shifts in public concerns. General economic issues far surpass earlier concerns about family aspirations, crime, religion or war. Open-ended questions asked of 1,596 Americans showed only 8% concerned with aspirations for their children, down from 35% in '64 & 24% in '74. Researchers interpret decline not as lack of love but that children are no longer considered "wards whose future lives they must plan and orchestrate."

Hopes & fears study suggests support for religious pressure groups (e.g. Moral Majority) is "smaller than commonly believed" (see prr 8/10). '81 research finds religious/ethical issues below the 5% cut-off for mentions. (Down from 6% in '64, 5% in '74.) Explanation by Watts: "Many followers may be drawn along by the very publicity and glamour such movements generate, particularly in an age of rapid communications."

Crime and religion, two areas heralded continuously by the media, also saw declines. Crime as a personal consideration fell below the 5% cut-off, a shift from 10% in '74. It moves into the 10% category only when discussed as a national issue. (See article on pg 4 & 5.)

Though anti-communism is a big issue for the Reagan administration, fear of communist aggression "continues to decline, from 29% in '64, to 13% in '74, to 8% in '81."

American lifestyles and daily living patterns. For example about 1/4 of respondents to The Figgie Report replied they no longer participate in community activities. Young people, although not generally fearful as others, are afraid of specific acts of victimization -- murder, sexual assault, knifing assault, or armed robbery. Crime statistics do indeed show that young citizens in their 20s suffer the highest incidence of homicide of any age group.

Daily mass media reports of crime, reinforced by personally knowing someone who is a victim of crime, raise fear levels. About 20% of respondents say they know someone who has been held up by an armed robber in the past 2 years. To offset the impact of information exposure on fear of crime, Pollock says a sense of community must be built up. A good way to begin is to examine communication networks at the neighborhood level.

TOUGH ON PRACTITIONERS  
What are practitioners to do when faced with contradictory research -- like Watts' & Yankelovich's? How can organizations plan policies in a climate of confusion on basic issues affecting the nation's psychological health? The answer seems clear: local or intra-organizational studies must be conducted. Their specific, targeted findings are trustworthy. National polls are not. This is another example of the rising need for keen understanding of research by practitioners.

Community Regeneration: Balanced  
The "Bubble-up" Strategy community regeneration, as first priority, with legal & criminal justice reform, a second, is the policy response to violent crime recommended by Lynn Curtis (pres, Eisenhower Foundation for the Prevention of Violence, DC). "Bubble-up" -- the opposite of "trickle-down" -- is a means of facilitating neighborhood residents to take control of and achieve a stake in their environment, in this case to reduce fear and increase safety.

One of the Foundation's aims is to encourage the establishment of block watches, patrols, escort services and related ways to increase social cohesion and a sense of territory. Another is to develop programs, such as rehab housing, in which neighborhood youth are employed as doers, rather than as recipients of help from outsiders.

Curtis plans to experiment with mutual self-interest programs between neighborhood organizations and local businesses. The former will promise to reduce fear, instability and violence in return for financial support from merchant ass'ns and individual businesses. Another plan -- also based on quid pro quo -- is to develop partnerships with large national corporations such as insurance companies. He said: "We will facilitate formation of mutual security insurance corporations as subsidiaries of reliable neighborhood organizations. A specific geographic area will be designated. Working through the neighborhood organization, an established insurance company will issue policies for person & property at reasonable rates -- if a high percentage of all households & businesses agree to buy the designated insurance company's package."

A Communications Approach To Crime Prevention Individuals, neighborhoods & businesses must accept responsibility to prevent crime. That's the message of the Crime Prevention Coalition's 2-yr old "Take a Bite Out of Crime" advertising campaign. It was designed by Dancer Fitzgerald Sample, Inc. (NYC) and is distributed by The Advertising Council. B.M. Gray, campaign dir, says it helps people overcome the feeling of helplessness by offering brief practical crime prevention tips. A trench-coated, floppy-eared character named McGruff serves as "spokesdog" for the campaign. The Coalition also provides booklets for general public education purposes, e.g., "How to Protect Your Neighborhood."

Health concerns have also declined: self-health from 29% in '64, to 28% in '74, to 22% in '81; concern for family health from 25% in '64, to 11% in '74, to 6% in '81.

PERSONAL HOPES	PERSONAL FEARS	HOPES FOR NATION	FEARS FOR NATION
Better or decent standard of living 39%	Lower standard of living 32%	Economic stability; no inflation 37%	War 41%
Good health for self 22%	Ill health for self 18%	Peace 28%	Economic instability; inflation; recession 33%
Economic stability in general; no inflation 13%	War 16%	Employment; jobs for all 26%	Unemployment 15%
Happy family life 11%	Economic instability in general; inflation 15%	Improved standard of living in general; greater national prosperity 18%	Lack of law and order 11%
Peace of mind; emotional maturity 11%	Unemployment 14%	Law and order 10%	Threat of communism or aggression by communist power 8%
Own a house or live in a better one 9%	Ill health of family 6%	Better world; brotherhood 6%	No improvement in, or inadequate, standard of living; decreased national prosperity 7%
Peace; no wars 8%	Crime 5%	Resolution of the energy crisis 6%	National disunity or political instability (unrest, tensions, antagonisms, chaos) 5%
Aspirations for children 8%		National unity & political stability; internal peace & order; absence of unrest, tensions, antagonisms 5%	Energy crisis 5%
Good job; congenial work 8%		Friendly relations with countries 5%	
Wealth 7%			
Employment 7%			
Good health for family 6%			
Be a normal, decent person 5%			

FIRST AMENDMENT ATTACKED  
ASJA MOBILIZES RESISTANCE

American Society of Journalists and Authors begins campaign to alert public to the current banning of books. The group cites "small bands of zealots" as responsible for pressures on local authorities to ban such books as Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl, Doctor Doolittle, and Mary Poppins. Small red buttons carrying slogan, "I read banned books," add to spirit as Sept. 10 NYC convention kicks off campaign. ASJA is calling for organizations of writers, publishers, educators and librarians to join in the anti-censorship drive. (Further info from ASJA, 1501 Broadway, Ste. 1907, NYC 10036; Dorothy Stearn, exec dir, 212/997-0947.)

YANKELOVICH ET AL SEE CRIME FAR DIFFERENTLY --  
AS DEEP MANIFESTATION OF FEAR & UNREST;  
COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION, NOT EMOTION, IS SOLUTION

Crime (and the fear of crime) has almost caught up with inflation as top concern of the American public (compare box on pg. 3). It is one of several issues that gives people the desperate feeling things are out of control and there's nothing they or anyone else can do about it. Their cynicism and rage leads them to favor certain emotionally-based solutions, said Dan Yankelovich (chrm, Yankelovich Skelly & White, NYC). This kind of solution must: 1) be clear & simple, 2) lead to action ... now, and 3) be intuitively appealing. A "crack-down" approach to crime, such as building more prisons, thus sounds appealing to a distressed public.

But that's not how decisions should be made in a democracy. A public debate on issues with a high impact on people's lives is needed, said Yankelovich. It must help citizens identify the real choices open to them. The purpose of The Public Agenda Foundation, of which he is president, is to discover new options and detect new ways to communicate them simply & vividly, so average Americans can come to grips with them.

The day-long forum on "Preventing Violence in America" held at Kennedy Library (Boston) followed The Public Agenda model. As stated by moderator Dan Fenn Jr., the Library's dir, "If you get together a group of concerned people something useful will come out of it." Objective of the seminar is to get local groups -- such as PRSA chapters, public interest org'ns, businesses -- to hold local forums across country. Facts must be presented and solutions found that fit reality and not simply reflect what people intuitively think the solution is.

— MASS MEDIA CONTRIBUTE TO VIOLENCE —  
By age 16 a youth has witnessed 18,000 murders on tv says Richard McCarthy (Wash. Bureau chf, Buffalo Evening News). John McDermott (ed & publisher, The Chicago Reporter) feels the tv industry has no clear concept of its responsibility because it sees itself as a business, not a public trust. The fundamental cause of violence, he believes, is that as a people we are coming apart: We're a lonely crowd pursuing our own self-interest. The "moral glue" based on the Judeo-Christian tradition is drying up. It's the media's responsibility to help develop a sense of community, but he is pessimistic the media will accept that role.

A Public Health Approach Homocide is  
To Crime Uncovers Facts the fifth

cause of death among young people up to age 44. For black youth between the ages of 15 and 25, it is the number one killer reported Horace Ogden (dir, Ctr for Health Promotion & Educ, Ctrs for Disease Control, Atlanta). The US has 10 times more homocides than Europe. Victims are family members or acquaintances of the killer in 59% of cases.

Guns are predominant instrument of death among middle-aged people. In citing these facts, Ogden stressed the value of the epidemiological approach. Always ask questions first: Who's getting killed and who isn't? How are they getting killed? Answers will indicate a spot in a chain of events where intervention can have an impact.

What The "Figgie Report On  
Fear Of Crime" Says

"Fear of crime far outstrips the incidence of crime in America," reported Dr. John Pollock (dir, Research and Forecasts, NYC). About 40% of all Americans are highly fearful they will become victims of violent crime. This fear has affected