

TABLE 6: MEDIAN SALARIES RELATED TO TITLES/LEVELS

Title/Level	Median	Range
President (of counseling firm)	\$50,200	\$ 9,700 - 125,000
Exec or senior vp	55,125	18,000 - 120,000
Vice president	55,000	22,000 - 180,000
2nd or asst vp	39,900	26,000 - 94,000
Top pr/pa position on div'l, regional or plant level	41,000	15,000 - 86,000
Director or manager	40,000	14,500 - 110,000
Coordinator/supv (of section)	35,000	14,600 - 64,000
Professional specialist	30,000	14,000 - 100,000
Account executive	23,400	14,500 - 52,000

Except for presidents of counseling firms -- where size of firms and revenues vary widely -- median salaries generally follow the normal descending hierarchical ranking. The main exception is the position of 2nd or ass't vp, where the salary is on about the same level as a director or manager. Variations are large in the latter positions, as shown by the wide range of \$14,500 to \$110,000. Similarly, the position of professional specialist means one thing in a small public relations dep't and another in a large.

PROFILES OF HIGHEST  
AND LOWEST EARNERS

Earning \$180,000, the highest earner among all survey respondents is a 58-year old former Air Force officer. He is vp of corp rels and reports to the chief operating officer of an industrial company. He has been with his current employer for 4½ years and in the public relations field for 24 years. Last year he received a \$50,000 salary increase. He heads a department of 12 persons, 9 of whom are professionals, and has a budget of \$3 million. Major issues of concern to him are regulatory affairs (he believes there's still too much gov't regulation), new products, and foreign currency fluctuations. His dep't uses word processing, an electronic mail system, computerized mailing lists, and a NEXIS data bank.

The highest earner in the hospital group is director of the division of public affairs of a university-related hospital. He earns \$100,000. He is 37 years old, has been in public relations for 15 years, and holds a master's degree. Issues of concern to him are "positioning in the face of increasing competition and systematization," retooling & training for new forms of billing & payments, and maintaining & reducing patient costs by finding new sources of support for research education. His dep't uses all computer aids.

A 38-year old president of a Minnesota public relations firm is the lowest earner, making \$9,700. She is a former high school teacher who is self-employed, has been in the field for 9 years -- 3 in her current position. Her main concerns are finding clients, raising income, and keeping current with best public relations practices. She cannot afford a computer.

## NINETEENTH ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE PROFESSION, PART I

EFFECTS OF RECESSION LINGER: ALTHO MEDIAN SALARIES GROW AT NORMAL RATE,  
14% OF RESPONDENTS REPORT NO SALARY INCREASE OR EVEN A DECREASE

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF 1983 AND 1982 MEDIAN SALARIES OF  
TOP LEVEL PUBLIC RELATIONS/PUBLIC AFFAIRS PRACTITIONERS  
IN US AND CANADA, AND BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Type of Organization	Median Salary 1983	1982	1983 Salary Range	Median Change*
All US Organizations	\$42,000	\$38,500	\$ 9,700 - 180,000	+3,000
All Canadian Organizations	42,500	36,000	18,000 - 110,000	2,600
PR Firms	50,100	48,800	9,700 - 175,000	4,100
Advertising Agencies (PR Section)	36,000	35,500	18,000 - 100,000	3,000
Other Consulting	40,000	50,000	23,000 - 90,000	4,000
Banks	40,000	35,000	24,000 - 120,000	3,800
Insurance Companies	44,000	---	20,000 - 120,000	2,900
Other Fin'l Svc Organizations	43,000	37,500	18,000 - 95,000	3,900
Consumer Product Companies	44,000	44,000		4,000
Industrials	50,000	45,600	15,000 - 180,000	3,700
Conglomerates	51,000	44,000	18,400 - 125,000	4,000
Transportation	41,700	37,000	16,500 - 98,500	3,000
Utilities	43,500	42,300	19,500 - 155,000	3,900
Hospitals	31,800	29,300	18,500 - 100,000	3,000
Educational	37,000	32,000	18,800 - 85,000	2,000
Trade/Professional Assns	40,000	40,000	18,000 - 77,000	3,400
Other Nonprofits	31,100	32,000	14,500 - 90,000	2,500
Government: Federal	37,900	37,500	19,400 - 67,200	2,000
State	34,000		22,500 - 57,000	2,000
Local	34,000		22,100 - 22,100	3,100

\* Calculated on the difference between 1983 and 1982 salaries as reported by each respondent.

Notes: 1) Total number of respondents is 1,060.

2) "Median Salary" and "Median Change" refer to the point on the scale at which -- and correspondingly below which -- 50% of the respondents fall.



Despite the sharp upturn in the economy, public relations has not yet recovered from the recession. On the surface, the 1983 US median salary of \$42,000 shows a 9% increase of \$3,500 over the 1982 median of \$38,500. For Canadians the median salary and increase are even larger -- \$42,500, a \$6,500 increase over 1982 -- but the value of the Canadian dollar has depreciated.

The recession is affecting different types of organizations unevenly, as the changes in median salary between 1983 and 1982 indicate. Some show hefty increases: conglomerates lead with a \$7,000 increase; other financial service org'ns follow with a \$5,500 increase, and banks with \$5,000. But the nonprofit group shows great variations. Although educational org'ns record a \$5,000 increase, hospitals show only a \$2,500 increase, and other nonprofits a decline of \$900. Cost containment and competitive pressures help explain the low hospital figure, and budget cuts the decline in the nonprofit median salary. But those financial pressures can, at least in part, be traced back to the recession.

Salaries Of Some PR Practitioners Cut Or Not Increased

A major sign that public relations is not out of the recession is that 151 practitioners -- about 14% of all respondents -- did not get

salary increases. Worse, 26 of these report salary cuts, ranging from \$1,500 to \$50,000. The large cuts are mainly drops in revenue experienced by owners, partners and heads of public relations firms. For example, a 65-year old senior consultant in NYC saw his salary drop from \$150,000 to \$100,000. Half of the salary drops are reported by public relations firms. Some are hardship cases. A 50-year old president of a Florida firm making only \$18,000 in 1982 saw his income drop to \$12,000 in 1983. The worst case is a female practitioner in British Columbia whose income dropped from \$45,000 to nothing.

Some practitioners in industrials and government also fared poorly. One fifth of the former did not get salary increases. Some gave such explanations as "there's a freeze throughout the company," and "depression in industry ... lucky to have a job." As described below, there were more reported drops in budgets of industrials than other types of organizations. Practitioners in government were affected by budget cuts or freezes.

TABLE 2: CHANGES IN BUDGET AND NO. OF PROFESSIONALS EMPLOYED FROM LAST YEAR

	Greater	Same	Smaller
	(Percentages)		
<u>PR Budget</u>			
1983	48.1	32.4	19.5
1982	48.6	30.3	21.1
<u>No. of Prof'ls</u>			
1983	20.6	65.6	13.8

Budgets & Employment Still Hurt

The recession's lingering effect is reflected in Table 2. The percentage reporting budget increases in 1983 is about half -- same as in 1982 -- while those reporting smaller budgets is slightly higher. The drop in the "greater" column is much more pronounced in employment of professionals. The 1983 figure of 20.6 is 8.4 percentage points lower than in 1982, and the percentage reporting a "smaller" number of professionals is 4.7 percentage points lower.

DETAILS ON SALARIES -- BY SALARY GROUPINGS, REGION, EDUCATION & TITLE/LEVEL

Over the entire range of salaries, the largest number of practitioners have salaries that fall in the

\$40,000 - \$44,999 range, mostly at the \$40,000 level. (See Table 3.) The next largest cluster is at the \$30,000 - \$34,999 range, with a little over half falling on the \$30,000 mark. The third largest cluster is at the \$50,000 - \$54,999 range, with almost 90% at the \$50,000 mark.

TABLE 3: SALARY GROUPINGS

Salary	Number of Practitioners	No.
Below \$20,000	██████████	32
\$20,000 - 24,999	██████████████	62
\$25,000 - 29,999	██████████████	58
30,000 - 34,999	████████████████████	104
35,000 - 39,999	██████████████████	95
40,000 - 44,999	████████████████████████████	133
45,000 - 49,999	██████████████████	66
50,000 - 54,999	████████████████████████	91
55,555 - 59,999	██████████████████	55
60,000 - 64,999	██████████████████	45
65,000 - 69,999	██████████	25
70,000 - 74,999	██████████	26
75,000 - 99,999	██████████████	47
100,000 & over	██████████	34

TABLE 4: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES IN MEDIAN SALARIES

Region	Median Salary
West	\$44,000
Northeast	43,900
North Central	42,000
South	40,000

TABLE 5: SALARIES RELATED TO EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

Level	Median Salary
High school	\$28,250
Some college	40,000
Bachelor's degree	40,000
Master's degree	42,000
Ph.D.	41,150

Regional differences exist, but are not pronounced. The difference between the highest median salary in the West and the lowest in the South is only \$4,000. In 1976 the spread between the South and the West was \$6,500. The North Central region was \$9,000. And the Northeast, a huge \$14,500. (See Table 4.)

Differences in levels of education only moderately affect salaries, except for the high school level. It does seem to pay to have a master's degree, but a Ph.D. has no monetary value. (See Table 5.)