

organizations to chart their own course, rather than being coerced by fear of journalists' criticism.

But as Reston's colleague Anthony Lewis notes, Time Magazine's attitude following the Ariel Sharon libel case bodes ill for those who are fearful of media. Time won the case on legal technicalities but "suffered a defeat that does injury to all the press" on the facts. In short, what they printed was not true. "And there is no sign that the people at Time understand that -- no sign of genuine regret."

When the jury found false the charge that Sharon had "consciously intended" the massacre of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, Time said it was "a relatively minor inaccuracy." As usual, the reporter's source for the charges was anonymous.

#### USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS

¶List your organization & topic of concern, free, in The Broadcast Interview Source Directory. Used by radio & tv talk shows to locate people who can talk on particular subjects. Directory has 3 sections: 1) White pages list the org'n name, address & phone, in-house media contact & topic of primary interest. No charge for one listing. Additional topic lines, \$9 each. 2) Yellow pages showcase the org'n more fully -- for a fee. 3) Index provides alphabetical listing of topics & group name. (Send listings before March 29 to Broadcast Interview Source, 2500 Wisconsin Ave NW, Ste.930, Wash DC 20007; 202/333-4904)

¶One of the better senior management practitioners of public relations, Pope John Paul II, follows a formal (i.e., written) plan that exhibits profound understanding of public relations principles. It reportedly includes 3 phases:

1. Integrity...of the organization's message (values & a unified briefing book);
2. Identity...of the priests & nuns who officially deliver it (spokesperson policy);
3. Clarity...to let everyone know what the organization stands for (One Clear Voice).

#### WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

HONORS. Sanky Trimble receives 1984 Dan Burrows Award for outstanding contribution to journalism in New Mexico.

ELECTED. International Public Relations Ass'n pres, Amelia Lobsenz (chrm, Lobsenz-Stevens, NYC) -- IPRA's 1st woman & 5th American pres in its 30 year history.

#### EVERY 6-8 YEARS, HUMAN KNOWLEDGE DOUBLES!

The supply of scientific information grows at about 13% each year, reports The Futurist. With anticipated increases in information systems technology, the rate could jump above 30% by the end of the century. This explains why public education & communication projects are continually required -- and difficult. Also why dealing with peoples' values & perceptions is the key to gaining their confidence, since they are probably finding it hard to keep up with the body of knowledge. Public relationships alone can build trust.

# pr reporter

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WITH THE HARDEST AUDIENCE TO REACH & INVOLVE -- OPINION LEADERS -- PARTICIPATIVE ISSUES ANTICIPATION IS A POWERFUL VEHICLE FOR COMMUNICATING, BUILDING FRIENDSHIPS & INDUCING OWNERSHIP

Texas Christian University's "1990s Project" has application to almost any organization. It is not a planning commission but a communications project that seeks input to planning. "Our objective was 1) to identify opinion leaders who would help shape TCU's future and 2) to communicate more effectively with them," Larry Lauer, dir univ rels, told pr.

In order to use face-to-face communication, Commission's size was limited to 130. Divided into 4 committees, Commission met on the Fort Worth campus over a 7 month period last year. Members came from as far as Mass, Indiana, DC, NY, Okla, tho bulk are from Texas.

Because Commission was instructed to provide "input to planning, not the burden of coming up with the final plan," members were free to brainstorm, recognizing their own limitations within the total planning process. Final report produced some "very relevant suggestions that TCU is taking seriously." For example, feasibility studies are being done on 1) getting tougher on core curriculum, 2) developing an engineering program. Recommendations made by cmte on admissions have been used in marketing materials. Programs for student alcohol problems have been developed as a result of the Commission's work.

#### Phase 2, "1990s Roundtables"

After completing their discussions, members "care more about us as a consequence, feeling closer to us & better informed." As a result, TCU is creating similar experiences for more opinion leaders. Cities were identified where TCU has concentrations of friends -- alumni, ministers of related churches, business people, parents of students. 15-30 "friends" in each city are invited to an extended luncheon meeting. They're told about the Commission's suggestions and asked to wrestle with those ideas plus contribute some of their own. A report is compiled which goes to the Chancellor and copies go back to Roundtable members. "We held 4 meetings last fall and will do 15 more in the spring and early summer."

If you ask your publics for suggestions, do they then hold you accountable for accepting them? "We didn't find that to be so. Suggestions were almost always made with the attitude, 'You are the professionals and only you can decide if this can be done. But we think you ought to take a serious look and determine the feasibility of doing it.' Which we're doing. They aren't holding us accountable to do what they suggest. Mostly they're flattered to be asked and pleased to tell us what they think."



Process will result in 300-400 opinion leaders who "will be our closest friends. They will know us better than anyone else and, because they were selected as opinion leaders, they'll be people who will influence what we do. We've created a face-to-face form of communication with the people who are most important to shaping our future and we want to continue close contact with them." How that will be done is still in the brainstorming stage. An "insider's newsletter" is being considered.

Public relations professionals "look for more direct channels of communication. We know that without feedback, there's always some breakdown. When we work with mass media, brochures, direct mail or any of the other tactics we use, we yearn for something more direct that involves feedback and approaches genuine communication. Participative issues anticipation is a very specific & manageable tool to achieve that.

SHOULD "CHAIRPERSON" OR "CHAIR" BE USED RATHER THAN "CHAIRMAN"?

They are in Academic Leader, newsletter for academic dep't chairpersons, deans & vice presidents. Reasoning is explained in its maiden issue:

"In opting for the new, we've opted for what many regard as an abominable illiteracy. Of the 150 newspapers & 40 magazines 'Communications Concepts' polled on the subject, 70% rejected the use of 'chairperson.' Many of those polled echoed the San Francisco Chronicle in saying that, 'Chairperson,' while non-sexist, just isn't a real word.' The NYTimes replied, 'Chairperson' is a conspicuous coinage that distracts the reader's attention from the content of the story.'

"Why have we decided to use 'chairperson'? After we'd lived with it a while, it felt right. It didn't seem conspicuous; 'chairman' seemed conspicuous -- and exclusionary. As for being a real word, it is because we, users of the language, consciously embrace it." James Rhem, editor of Academic Leader, holds a Ph.D. in English.

(Sample copy of Academic Leader free from them at 607 North Sherman Ave, Madison, Wis. 53704-4410)

CAN WRITING BE DONE SCIENTIFICALLY?

The science of public relations is growing, marking a maturing profession. But it's the art together with the science that differentiates practitioners. Knowing when to break the rules is the artist's 6th sense, tempering the science with the art.

John Nance of The Speaker's Counsel (Arvada, Colo.) takes issue with Frank Grazian's Verb Power Index (see prr 7/9/84). Grazian's formula calculates the percentage of verbs, gauges their reading ease and computes the energy & punch they deliver. Writes Nance:

"Perhaps you would be interested, as I was, in applying the formula to some of the world's great literature. Take The Gettysburg Address, for example. You will learn that Lincoln has borderline moderate verb power. I'm sure Prof. Grazian gets to read a lot of punchy themes. Hmmm...I'll bet the verbs read just like a lot of advertising copy: strong, misused, poor choices, or wrong choices. Perhaps writers would rather, as I suspect Lincoln did, choose the right verb and its form on the merits of word choice -- rather than vitalizing writing but at the expense of clarity and meaning."

AS WITH ALL PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS, GETTING THAT DUE-YESTERDAY PRINTING DONE DEPENDS ON RAPPORT: HERE'S HOW

Enormous energy goes into planning, copy, layout, typing, proofing, correcting. By the time the piece is ready for the printer, it should have

been done last week -- and that's the message that gets passed along.

No wonder building rapport with your printer is important. All the books on printing say so. But how & when? Here are some tips to help build a good working relationship -- from a printer:

1. Work out your specification & requirements well in advance to save shock when the bill is presented. "Without the buyer's detailed input on quantity, colors, paper stock, typesetting, artwork and deadline, a printer is forced to make educated guesses. In too many cases, the guesswork will be much, much lower than the project's final cost," explains Richard Joutras, exec vp, Bradley Printing (Des Plaines, Ill.). A small change in size can mean a large boost in cost.

2. Printers who have worked with you over the years are apt to give you a truer -- tho perhaps higher -- bid. They know from experience where your hidden costs are likely to appear. "The printer who is unfamiliar with the client's habits & expectations will often make assumptions that result in a lower initial estimate. If the client relies on the estimate alone and goes with the new printer's lower bid, he may wind up with a rude awakening when the final bill arrives."

3. Know the printer's capabilities. "For example, if you need 2 million copies of a brochure, ask for estimates from printers with web-fed equipment. Printers with only sheet-fed equipment would have to charge more because their equipment is not as well-suited to high-volume work."

4. Since most printers get busier as the year progresses, projects produced in the 1st & 2nd quarters are likely to be less expensive.

5. Jobs that can be spread out over several days or weeks will often cost less than ones that must be rushed to meet a too-tight deadline.

6. Specify the kind of paper you want or you may get the "house stock." Make sure you know the kind and price of paper each printer is using to make his estimate.

7. Determine what elements of your project are open for compromise. Then discuss them openly. A knowledgeable printer may be able to save you money by suggesting that the size, quantity or design be modified.

OPPORTUNITY: EXECES AGAIN MAJOR NEWS SOURCE, DANGER: MEDIA ARROGANCE & INACCURACY REMAIN

"I can't remember a time in the last 50 years when officials dominated the news as much as they do today. They determine the wording and timing of official information, with a keen eye on when to dramatize good news and when to minimize bad news."

NYTimes columnist James Reston is speaking of gov't officials. But it also applies to those corporate & other execs who have learned that media are not gods. Nor as powerful in influencing opinion as outdated execs (& public relations practitioners) think they are. New realism about the true power of news media releases