

Group (Elkhart) told attendees. Message simplicity that puts the receiver first "cuts like a knife through all of that media and ultimately wins the battle for a share of minds."

"Tis A Joy To Be Simple" -- Shaker Theme Now Secular Message "Today's message about simplicity really is coming from the secular world," says theologian Doris Donnelly. Concerns for such things as health, finances, fuel economy, ecology have prompted people to turn thermostats down, drive smaller cars, review diet, question excess in their lives. Along with simplicity, she advocates 5 other values to be considered in the context of technological advance, profitability, efficiency & competition:

1. Solitude: "In a climate of efficiency, solitude is neglected. But paradoxically, productivity increases with withdrawal & reflection which recharges us."
2. Dignity: The individual's sense of self worth. "This is not worth in terms of what I own or drink, where I work or went to school, but of who I am."
3. Justice: Asks us to examine profitability in terms of human cost.
4. Forgiveness: It helps us deal with the hurt created by relationships. "It is often overlooked. It can be confrontive. It isn't easy; it takes time & strength. But it is freeing & restorative."
5. Praise: The authentic honoring of another person that is "unbidden, honest, sincere." Despite trivialization in a world of superlatives, Donnelly lauds authentic praise. One outcome: it eases destructive competition between people.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS

¶Supertargeter Philip Morris USA pinpointed 400,000 selected taxpayers, known smokers likely to oppose an excise-tax plan (pr 4/21). How does the company do it? "Primarily thru planned promotions," comms mgr Mary Taylor told pr. For example, if someone buys a carton of cigarettes they can send in their name & address and get a free pack. "So we know they're regular purchasers of cigarettes." And customer has to sign saying he or she is 21 or older. Company also has a general interest pub'n called Philip Morris Magazine sent to 1.3 million readers -- known smokers. Mag also goes to opinion leaders. It has a section in it called PM Notebook which covers smoking issues. Subscription list is therefore a tightly targeted interest group. Understandably, company felt additional info is too proprietary to share with pr readers.

¶Joint US/Canadian issues is the topic of Issues Management Assn's first international conference -- June 4-6 in Toronto. Speakers, panel discussions & break-out sessions will cover social, economic, environmental & governmental relations matters which link the 2 countries. Some topics include: a) "Managing Issues From The Executive Suite: A North American Business Perspective," b) "Demographic Patterns & Social Trends In North America: What The Future Holds," c) "Personal Privacy & Technological Efficiency: Issue Challenges For The Information Age." More info from IMA, 1110 Vermont Ave NW, Ste.1150, Wash DC 20005; 202/296-9200.

¶New grammar hotline is offered by Editorial Services of New England (Cambridge). Free -- all you pay for is the call: 617/494-5242, 9am-4pm weekdays. Another that has been around for a while now (pr 8/2/82) is Illinois State U's, 309/438-2345. Students answer your questions from 8am-4:30pm, Mon-Fri. "We'll be in operation thruout the summer, too," a student told pr.

Vol.29 No.20  
May 19, 1986

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON OPINION LEADERS & HOW TO TREAT THEM;  
SEPARATE "BANDITS," "GOSSIPS," "ACTIVISTS" & "CHEERLEADERS,"  
USE D.E.N.I.M. SYSTEM TO STIMULATE WORD OF MOUTH

There's nothing opinion leaders dislike more than learning about something second hand -- especially from public sources like the media. That is an affront to their leadership -- and egos. As audience targeting becomes increasingly the essential strategy in a mass, overcommunicated society, new techniques for identifying & working thru opinion leaders are necessary. This includes ways to avoid the problem mentioned above.

Opinion leaders can supply 3 desired behaviors: 1) transmittal (beaconing) of messages, positions, etc; 2) social verification of positions & rationale when discussion of the topic comes up; 3) feedback.

<u>6 Types Of Opinion Leaders</u>		<u>Characteristics Of Real Opinion Leaders</u>
1. <u>Formal</u>	Official or situational power.	¶Have a demonstrable following.
2. <u>Informal</u>	Not in power structure but the trusted, popular catalyst.	¶Have credibility on many topics (expertise plus trustworthiness in the eyes of their following).
3. <u>Activists</u>	May or may not have much following but will act, therefore must be dealt with.	¶Positive approach (except bandits). ¶Activist tendency, doers not just talkers.
4. <u>Bandits</u>	Negative opinion leaders, critics, troublemakers -- cannot be ignored.	¶They get around.
5. <u>Gossips</u>	Pass much info, tho may not be trusted or credible.	¶Potential interest or concern for the issue or subject.
6. <u>Cheerleaders</u>	Where group turns in trouble; positive emotional balancers.	Some persons have such an abundance of any one of these qualities that they deserve to be on your opinion leader list. Usually, however, all or a solid combination are required to make an opinion leader worth including.
When persons combine more than one of these positions, they become super important.		



Requires System Make a specific list of opinion leaders by audience -- like media or mailing lists. Compile dossiers. Get scientific about it. Update the list because opinion leaders do rise & fall. Everybody has a media list. But how many keep book on this all-important 2nd step of the 2 Step Flow of information & influence.

Media Is Final Step Basically, practitioners must beware of turning opinion leaders off (or against you) by rushing to news media & other mass communications as the point of first resort. In moving beyond the discredited notion that publicity (or communication, or information) can by itself motivate behavior, public relations must ask the true role & timing of media. One model, particularly applicable to publics with whom an organization has continuing relations, is known as DENIM -- so called because it works, & when we think of work we often think of the cloth from which work clothes are made:

D = First comes Direct communication to opinion leaders by letter, phone, in person or tightly targeted controlled media.

E = Then, Events, to bring opinion leaders & members of the target public into face-to-face contact with representatives of the organization; and simultaneously facilitate interaction within the public but in a controlled environment. Often you will use a pre-existing meeting or activity, or even someone else's event. This step gives opinion leaders a chance to do their work.

N = Next is Networking which naturally & effectively follows the steps above. It gives you an opportunity to monitor the actual flow.

I = Internal communication, & feedback sharing, to be sure everyone inside the organization knows what's happening.

M = Media, whether news media or in-house, as reinforcer, reminder & 3rd party verifier.

Media is the final step because to publicize before the internal & target publics get involved may turn off many who pride themselves on being in-the-know or part of the family: "Why didn't I learn about this before the public?" This is especially true of those most-important-people-of-all, opinion leaders. But once they're in the loop, seeing it in the media enhances their sense of leadership.

PANCAKES GO BETTER WITH PUBLIC RELATIONS . . . THAN WITH ADVERTISING

Doctors, dentists use newsletters; now comes the pancake maker. Franchisee International House of Pancakes (South

Portland, Me.) issues a quarterly to build relationships with both customers & employees.

Typeset black on white glossy paper with brown & blue masthead gives classy appearance. Copy is chatty & personal. Includes stories about employees. Insert of photos shows customers enjoying themselves. Captions tell who they are, where they're from. Captures a feeling of small town warmth.

Newsletter is primarily for employees, owner Paul LaChance told prr. It's a way to communicate with his 30-40 employees beyond the monthly staff meeting. But it's also handed out to customers and mailed to friends & businesses as a marketing tool.

6-pg newsletter is produced for LaChance by Ron Palmquist Public Relations (Cape Elizabeth, Me.). "It gives him an opportunity to recognize some employees & special people in the community," Palmquist told prr. Essential to program: automatic camera that anyone can operate is kept at the restaurant to take pictures of employees & customers.

Advertising wasn't working so LaChance's IHOP uses other public relations techniques. 1) Unique feature of LaChance's restaurant is plate collection decorating restaurant's cathedral ceiling. Take-away 4-color brochure highlights "The LaChance Collection" for interested customers.

2. New appetizer & dessert menu for non-breakfast items gained visibility with special menu. Thrifty Yankee touch: menu cover used extra color separations from plate brochure.

3. To build community awareness that IHOP doesn't just serve pancakes, invitations to free tasting parties went to 100 church groups. A former high school teacher turned cook at IHOP does commentary at tasting. Special take-home menus -- "a kind of guidebook" -- reinforces tasting experience and serves as \$1 incentive for next meal.

Personal touch is important to LaChance. IHOP has asked him to open more of its restaurants in Maine. He refuses for fear of losing one-on-one relationship with employees & customers.

Pay-off: minimal staff turnover in a traditionally high turnover industry. LaChance's restaurant is in top 25% of IHOP's Northeast region and still climbing.

REACHING OTHER RELIGIONS, ACCREDITATION, SIMPLICITY: AIMS OF 57-YR-OLD RELIGIOUS PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNCIL

A "sleeping giant" with great potential for the future in its international,

interfaith arenas, is how Anne Reimel describes RPRC -- one of the oldest pr org'ns. Reimel, organization's first-ever woman exec sec'y, succeeds Marvin Wilbur who held the volunteer post for 27 years.

"Our lifestyle is influenced by all the negative input from the media. As religious communicators, by all pulling together & continuing to let media know we appreciate positive communication, RPRC could make an impact in today's world," Reimel told prr.

The org'n historically has a "Christian bias," RPRC wants to reach professionals from other religious traditions. "We're going to be very intentional about that," newly elected pres Paula Kadel told prr. Its membership extends beyond the US to Canada, Africa, Europe & Australia.

Annual Conference America has  
Stresses Simplicity 9,500 newspapers,  
9,600 radio stations,

1,200 tv stations, 6,600 cable tv stations, 14,700 libraries & 16,500 magazines. Each day 350 million pieces of mail are delivered, "25% of which is perceived as junk," Barth Hague of The Troyer

Accreditation is another goal. "We've been exploring the issue for a year or 2 and want to come up with our own program. Whether we call it accreditation or certification, we don't know yet. I think accreditation is the better word because certification is often used as a legal term. We're still playing around with the terminology," explains Kadel.