

National Cancer Institute's recommendation for high fiber/low fat diets. Prunes, tho ugly & long the brunt of jokes, are high in fiber.

Kits aim to stimulate doctors to show prunes in a new light: "By having doctors distribute samples, prunes get a well-earned third-party endorsement. The family doctor is the best spokesperson we could have," says Mesick, Ketchum Public Relations (SF).

Survey of doctors showed need for educational materials on fiber. Mailing explained the value of fiber, included a 1 oz. sample of prunes and a bounce-back card offering more samples. 2,500 doctors, well over 30%, requested more samples. Mesick credits the high response to doctors' 1) need for patient-directed nutritional info and 2) willingness to encourage natural sources of fiber rather than dietary supplements.

2. Would you use a soap opera to influence medical practice? 30 million viewers saw the CNS-16 monitor a comotase patient for one month on the soap opera, "Santa Barbara." 2 neurologists developed the device which monitors brainwave activity, detects strokes & other malfunctions that cut off oxygen to the brain. They wanted to create a "pull" effect by informing the public about the dangers of open-heart surgery without brainwave monitoring. But it had to be done on a limited budget.

Since women are the primary buyers of healthcare products & services and the main audience for soap operas -- a primary source of women's health info, studies show -- Carol Morgan Assocs (Mpls) sent media kits to 13 soap opera producers. Within a couple days, "Santa Barbara" responded. Only costs were for transportation & pr services.

"It's difficult to reach physicians. We intend this placement to accomplish 2 things: 1) reach those who work with physicians & influence their perception of products, and 2) inform potential patients of the monitor's existence," explains Morgan.

NEW NETWORK FORMS Rocky Mountain Public Relations Group. 9 independent firms from 6 states will join together to provide client services. Gwin Johnston, Johnston Group (Denver), main force behind group's formation, serves as director. Her firm will be group's central office. Other 8 firms are:
1) Larry Cobb & Assocs (Grand Junction); 2) Fraiser Advertising & Public Relations (Fort Collins); 3) Fred Sindt Advertising & Public Relations (Colorado Springs)
4) Zabriskie & Assocs (Salt Lake City); 5) The Hirst Company (Albuquerque);
6) Sage Advertising/Billings; 7) W.R. Drake & Company (Boise); 8) Bryan, Bryan & Black (Cheyenne).

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

RETIRES. J. Marshall Doswell Jr. vp-corp comms, Springs Industries (Fort Mill, S.C.). Well-known practitioner was former sec'y PRSA.

chrm, Wilma Mathews (media rels mgr, AT&T, Morristown, NJ); 2nd vice-chrm, Carolyn Cline (ass't prof, UTexas, Austin); treas, Howard Charbeneau, (mpr, Monsanto Research Corp, Miamisburg, Ohio); sec'y, Kay Felkins (org'nal comms, Loyola U, Chi).

ELECTED. IABC Foundation 1986-87 ofcrs: chrm, Louis Williams (pres, L.C. Williams & Assocs, Chi); 1st vice-

pr reporter

The Weekly Newsletter of Public Relations,
Public Affairs & Communication

Vol.29 No.33
August 25, 1986

603 / 778 - 0514

DECADE OF CHANGE PROVIDES VIEW OF UNSETTLING TRENDS

Last month marked the 10th anniversary of our editorship of the newsletter. A brief look at the changes in public relations within that decade may offer a vantage point for charting the coming one.

From Publicity To Policy This major strategic shift moved the function securely into top management. In the late 70s, prr's Annual Survey began picking up 2 trends: 1) increasing time spent by CEOs on relationships with key publics, 2) decline in the percentage of time devoted by practitioners to chasing the media. A contradictory trend was the all-hype, total-publicity approach of the hi-tech industry & consulting firms that specialize there. But the shakeout occurring as the industry matures suggests this was the familiar pre-adolescent phase booms go thru.

¶Landmark events like the breakup of AT&T and the resurgence of Chrysler indicate that management now has responsibility not just for profit/bottomline but also for public policy. This assures public relations a place in the boardroom.

The Challenge Of Professionalizing But instead of bringing joy, this emergence is giving the field heartburn. In the mid-70s, practitioners lamented "not being understood by the boss" or "not being involved in decisions." Today the complaint is that non-professionals are getting some top pr jobs. One clear trend has been -- and is -- the search by dedicated practitioners & the professional societies for uniformity in understanding & applying the body of knowledge. This is seen as a means of institutionalizing practice a la other professions. Two barriers are coming into sharper focus:

¶The communications cum journalism base of pre-professional education seems outdated (in contrast to the scholarly public relationship research starting to come from the professors who teach the old curriculum). Professional training may have to be relegated to graduate schools, as with other professions.

¶The questions being raised -- recently you hear them everywhere -- by the big ad-agency-owned firms. At base, the issue is whether a human relations profession can be practiced by large hierarchical organizations... whose first concern is contributing profits to their owners' next quarterly report to shareholders. Undoubtedly information/publicity/outbound communications can be effectively handled that way...but, as stated earlier, the thrust of public relations is away from this emphasis. So the highly visible, well placed, hard driving big firms now seem counterintuitive. Perhaps the end product of the Hill & Knowlton-Gray-Strayton-Byoir megamerger will provide a solution -- or spotlight the problem.



From Process To Outcome Whether carried out by trained pr professionals, non-professional interlopers, big publicly held firms or whomever, new tactics are in demand. Battling troublesome issues in public is passe. Anticipating them in order to avoid battles is the goal. This is eliciting a rapid increase in monitoring operations, where most pr issues arise. And in training, which is as integral to jobs today as the coffee break. Also in programs to let organizations speak with One Clear Voice. (In an era where loyalty is in decline, they are a real challenge.)

"10 years ago everyone was talking about "the management of change." Today this is even more vital -- and increasingly seen as an aspect of public relationships. But adding 2 pages to the newsletter or writing better will not do the job. Public relations is being asked to motivate behavior. That is the measurable bottomline of public relationships. Accomplishing it requires a uniform body of knowledge applied by a trained group of practitioners who know where they are heading.

-- Pat Jackson

COMMUNICATION CLIMATE DETERMINES HOW EMPLOYEES VIEW THEIR JOBS SO THEY WANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION FROM TOP MANAGEMENT

"Employees want a relationship with their corporate leaders that is separate and distinct from that with their immediate supervisors. They want to receive information about their organization -- information they believe can affect their future -- directly from the organization's decisionmakers," write Bob Rayfield & David Pincus, Cal State - Fullerton, in "The Emerging Role of Top Management Communication: 'Turning On' Employee Commitment."

Today's workforce is 1) more educated, 2) more independent, 3) more worldly & knowledgable, 4) less awed by authority. Such people want information about their organization's "big picture" from the people at the top. Key elements of effective top management communication include:

1. Setting the tone. Commitment to open communication must be expressed publicly & frequently. But then it must be reinforced behaviorally by organizational decisions, policies & budgets.
2. Building trust. Without it, messages will be rejected. So it's the most critical element in internal communication.
3. Two-way communication. Too often, executives view their roles as strictly sending edicts and announcing policies. They rarely see themselves on the receiving end, responding to employees' ideas & concerns. Remember that participative programs such as quality circles, flextime, quality of worklife are bringing employees into the mainstream. They are accustomed to being heard.
4. Selecting the "right" communication channels. Top managers should emphasize

the media they feel most comfortable using -- but also fight the urge to ignore media with which they feel insecure. They need encouragement from practitioners to practice & seek training.

TOP MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION TABLE

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>Approach</u>	<u>Channels</u>
Top management trust & credibility.	Communicate frequently, candidly & in personal manner.	MBWA ("management by walking around"); regular business & social meetings with groups of employees; publish responses to employee questions/complaints; share bad as well as good news; employee surveys & other feedback mechanisms.
Employee security.	Personal involvement in communicating significant organization actions/policies affecting employees' security concerns (e.g., wages, benefits, layoffs).	Live speeches/meetings with employees; public address system or telephone hotline; personal letters (e.g., mailgrams); videotaped remarks.
Employee recognition.	Personally & publicly involved in recognizing key employee contributions.	Personal presentation of awards; personal letters or notes; internal media coverage.
Employee knowledge.	Provide key organization-wide information on timely basis.	Organization publications or news vehicles; videotaped announcements; external media.
Employee safety.	During crisis, appropriate top managers serve as spokespersons in initiating distribution of accurate, timely information for internal & external audiences.	Personal communication (e.g., telephone) with people most affected; personal (e.g., speech) or media delivery (e.g., memo, videotape) of key messages to employees, shareholders, customers, etc; news conferences, interviews with media.

(Rayfield, Assoc Prof, Dep't of Comms, Cal State - Fullerton 92634)

PRUNES & CEREBRAL TRACERS HAVE SOMETHING IN COMMON -- STRATEGIC PUBLIC AWARENESS

1. By using a tactic common for pharmaceuticals but rarely used by commodities, Susan Mesick hopes to improve the prune's image. Patient education kits on dietary fiber -- complete with sample prunes -- were sent to 7,000 doctors. Intent was to tie into public's health concerns and