

- **The power of the employee.** The public of first concern is the employee group.
- **The power of grassroots belonging & relating.** The currents of society which affect your enterprise cannot be detected if you are not a participating part of society.

Rarely has anyone said it so succinctly. Today's "trends" in practice are all covered -- from putting internal publics first, to constituency relations, to emphasis on opinion leaders, to social responsibility networks.

IMPORTANT ITEMS FOR PRACTITIONERS

¶ **"Raising Money And Cultivating Donors Through Special Events"** covers a) role of special events in development, b) choosing a fundraising event, c) funding it, d) using volunteers, e) tickets & publicity, f) action follow-ups. (\$24 mbrs, \$32 nonmbrs; from CASE Publications Order Dep't, 2700 Prosperity Ave, Fairfax, VA 22031-4307; 800/336-4776.)

¶ **Now There's A Japan VALS.** Psychographic segmentation system, similar to its US counterpart, is reshaped to reflect the values of the Japanese people. Identifies 10 standard segments (v. US' 9) with regard to self expression, motivation for achievement, tradition: Integrators, Sustainers, Self Innovators, Ryoshiki Innovators, Tradition Innovators, Ryoshiki Adapters, Self Adapters, Tradition Adapters, High Pragmatics, Low Pragmatics. "Our goal is not to explain social change after the fact, nor to model change as purely a demographic process -- but to give unique insight to help businesses design & market products & services that appeal to Japanese consumers," explains Bruce MacEvoy, VALS res dir. (Info from SRI Int'l, 333 Ravenswood Av, Menlo Park, Calif 94025; 415/859-2983)

¶ **The Willie Smith Trial** -- which one columnist notes is "more about readers & ratings than about rape or justice" -- shows once again that news media is now an oxymoron. At least if the word "news" implies, as journalists insist, information necessary to be a good citizen. The more thoughtful columnists & analysts seem to be saying the trial's incredible coverage shows the imbecility of the public. Would it be closer to truth to say it reveals the imbecility of editors' & news directors' understanding of that public, and of the supposed role of journalism in society?

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

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| AWARDS. PRSA's Excellence in Multi-cultural Communications Awards to <u>Ham & Company</u> (Los Angeles); <u>Crawley, Haskins & Rodgers</u> (Phila); <u>Patricia Bario Assocs</u> (DC). <u>Inez Kaiser</u> (pres of her own firm, Kansas City, Missouri) receives the D. Parke Gibson Pioneer Award for dis- | tinguished personal leadership & contributions to the profession. <u>Liz Cawood</u> (Cawood Communications, Eugene, Ore) receives the William Marsh Award for lifetime achievement from Portland Metro Chapter, PRSA. |
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STUDY PROFILES PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF THE IDEAL ORGANIZATION; KEY FACTORS ARE QUALITY, ENVIRO SENSITIVITY, EMPLOYEE POLICIES

The ideal company provides quality products & services, spends more to protect the environment **rather than contributing to charities**, is more involved in **public affairs** & government policy, offers better employee **training** & pension benefits, according to a survey of 750 individuals across Canada. Developed by National Public Relations in collaboration with Gallup Canada, survey "highlights the 'gap' between public expectations of responsible corporate practices and the actual behavior of Canadian companies," says Luc Beauregard, pres. Findings appear applicable to US & probably worldwide:

EXPECTATIONS ● Over 1/3 believe providing quality products & services is business' primary responsibility -- more important than job creation or profits. (But the old misperception continues: On average, Canadians think 35 cents of every sales dollar is profit.)

● Criteria for good corporate citizenship are quality products & services (91%), abiding by laws & regs (89%), taking care of employees (87%), being environmentally responsible (85%). Only 36% said investing in charity.

● 48% say business needs to be more involved in public affairs & gov't policies. Only 15% think businesses are currently very involved.

● Spontaneously mentioned as "good corporate citizens" are Bell Canada (12%), GM (7%), IBM (6%), McDonald's (4%).

● 35% believe unions & employees have the most influence in causing a company to change its policies. Gov't is second most influential (23%).

● 45% say company's image has a great deal of influence on their buying decisions.

ENVIRONMENT ● 30% ranked this as a higher priority than alternatives such as global competition, R&D, financial stability.

51% feel it is more important to protect the environment than create jobs (41%).

45% say the single most important duty of the CEO is to create a positive work environment. 39% believe the image of the company depends on the image of the CEO.



- 50% believe firms should spend more on cleaning up plants & reducing pollution. Next highest priority is investing in R&D (19%).
- Canadians are uncertain whether companies are making genuine efforts on the environment (50% say yes, 42% no).

COMMUNITY ● Sponsorship of professional sports (38%) is most likely to be remembered. Amateur sports sponsorships, education & scientific sponsorships ranked second at 30%.

- 65% believe pressure groups are only "sometimes right" (vs. "always" or "usually right"). 70% believe interest groups & environmental activists are only "sometimes right" in the tactics they use to make their claims (vs. "always" or "usually").

42% believe direct contact with their bosses is the most effective way to communicate. Small meetings were the next favored means (33%). Electronic tools such as **e-mail & videos were favored by only 1%.**

THE WORKPLACE ● Only 59% feel they get the right amount of info about their organizations.

- 54% want employers to spend more on training, development & education of employees.
- Given a choice, 43% would prefer a better pension plan, followed by flexible hours (22%).
- 79% believe businesses treat their employees "well" or "very well." 85% say **they** are treated "well" or "very well."
- News about their organizations' environmental efforts (59%), products & services (56%) and company mission & future development (55%) are the most important news items they want to hear about. (More info from NPR, 2 Berkeley St, Suite 402, Toronto, Ont M5A 4J5)

WORLD FUTURE SOCIETY'S ANNUAL FORECAST CAN SENSITIZE TO TRENDS, LATENT ISSUES

It looks too far out to be a practical guide for anticipating issues, but

"Outlook '92" offers 65 forecasts made by scientists, researchers, business experts, consumer analysts. For example:

- **Downsizing** will create a new business culture in which most people, as well as having more than one career, will have been laid off at least once, can expect to be laid off again, are likely to behave as if their current jobs are fleeting.
- **Computers** will increasingly be used for group decisionmaking. They allow more members to participate -- rather than just a few aggressive talkers who dominate discussion, as often occurs in meetings.

- **Traffic congestion** will continue to worsen, making commuting a nightmare & affecting a range of issues from work schedules to property values.
- **Philanthropic organizations** will increasingly be expected to provide a social safety net to address unmet human needs, but the demand for such services will far outstrip the resources of private agencies.
- **Quebec will secede from Canada**, probably in '96. The 4 eastern Canadian provinces will be absorbed into the US by 2004, and the other Canadian provinces will follow suit by 2010.

(\$3 from WFS, 4916 Saint Elmo Ave, Bethesda, Md. 20814)

IS BUSINESS ITSELF TALKING THE NATION INTO A DEPRESSION?

Even economists increasingly recognize, albeit reluctantly, that the state of the economy is far more about psychology & information flow than about numbers. **It is influenced by public relations, not accounting.** A new historical study from Rutgers shows it has been ever thus.

Profs. Farrokh Langdana & Richard Burdekin constructed a "confidence variable" linking Confederate military fortunes in the Civil War to inflationary price rises. Next, budget imbalances (deficits) were factored in. They found inflation rose 47% of the time when there were deficits; but 72% of the time when there were military reversals. In short, consumer confidence plays the larger role, not balance sheets.

Who is served? Why do it? Are they that publicity-driven? Have they "always done it"? Does anyone stop to think of the outcome, not just the process?

What is the goal, then, of so many businesses, & of organizations like the Conference Board & others, in repeatedly releasing research or opinions reportedly showing confidence is low? This act fuels low confidence, becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, and hurts the business climate on which all depend for success, even survival.

FDR was right: "We have nothing to fear but fear itself." What can be the possible value of a strategy that amounts to fearmongering -- and by business groups, no less?!

SOLID PR ADVICE GETS BETTER OVER TIME: HALE NELSON'S EXAMPLE

One of the superb pr pros produced by the Bell System, Nelson died recently (last week's issue). When he retired in '68, this was his advice to practitioners after 40 working years:

- **The power of the few.** Never underestimate a minority.
- **The power of face-to-face communication.** The interpersonal message is the medium for the crucial matter & the crucial moment.