The Board takes complaints **from media & the public as well as members**. For example, "when there are allegations of unethical conduct in the trade press, we investigate. But we don't give it any publicity.

"Altho some people don't think so, we are very active." Little & Board's other 8 members receive calls "every week" from professionals asking whether something is ethical. "We all take calls. We are active, alive & we take ethics problems very seriously. But we don't make allegations without substance."

TIPS ON SETTING UP & LEADING A BRAINSTORMING SESSION

Booklet by Floyd Hurt -- a speaker & workshop leader on the subject -- includes these tips:

- **Choose a neutral room.** It's better to hold the session in the hall than in someone's office; territoriality always hampers effectiveness. Choose a large location with plenty of wall space to "paper" the room with written ideas. You do not want your group to feel cramped; claustrophobia crowds the mind, as well.
- **There should be no less than 5 members.** Smaller groups turn into "get-togethers" & also provide less anonymity which can be inhibiting to the participants.
- **Construct a detailed purpose statement** that will encourage participation & yield a specific result.
- **Hand this statement out a few days in advance** to start them thinking creatively before the session. Don't send it out more than a week in advance or enthusiasm will wane & people will forget their initial insights.

($5 from Floyd Hurt, Dep't 100, 1004 E. Jefferson St, Charlottesville, Va. 22902; 804/971-6905)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

HONORS. Jim Blackmore (Blackmore & Co, Grand Prairie) receives Norman P. Teich Award for Community Service from PRSA/North Texas. He challenges others to get involved in comty svcs -- "It's one of the most rewarding things we can do, & it's the best thing for our profession."

RETIRES. Steve Seekins (vp corp & consumer afrs, AMA, Chi). In '91, named 1 of 5 most admired healthcare pr practitioners based on prr's annual survey. Current PRSA director.

Happy Holidays from all of us at pr reporter. This is the last issue for 1994, giving staff & printer a much needed rest. You can still call us; we'll be monitoring our messages. Look for the trend-setting First-Of-The-Year Issue on January 2.

pr reporter

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EVALUATION OF PR VITAL, BUT NOT BEING DONE: PAPER TELLS HOW

To evaluate the effectiveness, the worth, of pr programs, management by objectives is necessary. This was unanimously agreed by the panel which developed IPRA's Gold Paper 11, *Public Relations Evaluation: Professional Accountability*. Without measurable objectives, "no evaluation/measurement can take place."

"Other than media evaluation, **there appears to be very little ongoing & systematic evaluation done in public relations circles anywhere in the world,"** reports Jim Pritchitt (Sydney, Australia), IPRA past pres & initiator of the just-released paper. Survey of IPRA members -- by Walt Lindenmann in '88 -- reveals "there is still more talk than action":

	USA	**AUST**	**Southern Africa**	**IPRA Mbrs**
Agree that evaluation is more talked about than done	94%	95%	98%	95%
Is recognized as necessary	76	90	89	90
Frequently undertake research aimed at evaluating	**16**	**14**	**25**	**19**
Feel that trying to measure precisely is next to impossible	43	51	44	31

PAPER OFFERS INSIGHTS ON MAKING A PRACTICAL START

"While there is no panacea in evaluation, & the approach needed depends on the project itself & the circumstances, there are a number of consistent issues that should be considered & a variety of techniques that can be used." Key ingredients in proposed evaluation model:

1. **MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES** (supporting organization's goals):

   (a) Establish a clear starting position -- current opinions, behavior & knowledge of distinctly defined target audiences;

   (b) Establish what the desired position, actions & behavior of these targets would be;

   (c) Decide whether this position can be achieved &, if so, over what time span & at what cost -- is it worth it?

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2. INPUT (Cutlip, Center & Broom's text calls it "Preparation"):

(a) Set objectives for quality, cost & time. This is the planning & production phase.

(b) Establish benchmarks for setting objectives.

(c) Select best medium/activities. Establish message content.

3. OUTPUT ("Implementation"): This is where the objectives of program components are met. These objectives generally relate to:

(a) Quantity (eg, number of people in target group affected by communication)

(b) Quality (eg, acceptance of the message by that group)

(c) Performance (were the planned activities undertaken in a satisfactory way?). Number of messages sent & received. Number who responded to messages & how.

4. OUTCOME ("Impact"): Here the success of the program is assessed against objectives. These objectives are usually set in one or more of the following areas which demonstrate the results of implementing the program:

(a) Action is taken by key target groups;

(b) Behavioral change is achieved;

(c) Opinions & attitudes are changed;

(d) Knowledge is acquired & applied;

(e) Problems are solved.

(Copy from IPRA Secretariat, Case postale 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland; fax +41 22 788-0336; cost is CHF 25 -- that's about $20 US funds)

WHY DO PRACTITIONERS DUCK EVALUATION?

- Is it that they (1) "do not spend the time to develop the professional skills they need to do this job well, or (2) do not wish to have discipline applied to the activities they undertake?"
- It may be a lack of professional skill that causes a 'fear' of evaluation. Cutlip, Center & Broom (1994) refer to a study of Chicago practitioners where more than half of the respondents reported that *'most practitioners fear measurement,'* because it can reveal unsatisfactory results & can challenge their logic (& presumably job security)."
- But, note the authors, "without evaluation, proving worth is difficult, accountability is missing, & professional & personal rewards will inevitably be constrained."

UNION CARBIDE'S RULES FOR HANDLING LONGTERM BAD NEWS

10 years ago this month, a nightmare began for Union Carbide: in Bhopal, India, a tank ruptured, the safety system was not working, & 40 tons of deadly gas escaped into neighboring communities killing & injuring thousands of people. While 10 yrs have elapsed, present-day news items relating to this accident are instantaneously covered around the world.

How does Union Carbide's public relations dep't deal with this? Bob Berzok, dir corp comns, responds to prr's query:

1. **Make Emotional Connections** -- "Establish the facts. Then develop a plan so you can get those facts out in the most credible fashion making the *emotional connections* to the audiences to whom the facts are of interest. This is what we've been doing for 10 years.
2. **"Establish Who The Audiences Are & Where They Are Around The World** and do what's necessary to communicate as 1) quickly, 2) candidly & 3) as credibly as possible.
3. **Persistence is Vital** -- "And don't stop. Keep doing it as long as the questions are raised. Anticipate how long those questions will be raised. Bhopal will continue to be raised for a long, long time.
4. **Facts Should Not Deny Human Loss** -- "One has to understand that communications about what happened, why it happened cannot & should not attempt to diminish the enormity of the tragedy. That's critical."

DOES WORKING WITH PR-WATCHDOG MEDIA VIOLATE ETHICS CODE?

"Would compliance with PR Watch's request for pr whistleblowers place a PRSA member in violation of Code #14?" asks a reader.

It would if the allegation had no substance, Jim Little of PRSA's Board of Ethics & Professional Standards, told prr. *"I don't think it's a good idea to send accusations to a newsletter which has been set up to be critical of the profession."* (See prr 10/25/93)

> Code 14 reads: A member shall not intentionally damage the professional reputation or practice of another practitioner.

Instead, Little recommends allegations be brought to the attention of the Board. Its function is to 1) protect the reputation of someone who might be falsely accused & 2) discipline someone who is guilty of unethical conduct.

HOW ETHICS BOARD PROCESS WORKS "Our process is confidential. We check to see if there's any validity to the charge. I've found there are at least 2, sometimes 3 or 4 sides to a story. We go thru a process before there's any publicity. In a lot of cases where there are allegations, there isn't any substance."