

- & illustrates:
- A Chinese-language brochure for San Francisco's large Asian population was developed when a customer said, "If you want my business, give me something in my language to read." 10,000 copies have been printed.
 - Houston diversity team was driving force behind idea of local meetings with customers of various ethnic backgrounds. One was held for the Pakistani community. In Pakistan, insurance isn't required, or even allowed by religion. Meeting helped bridge the cultures, increased the Pakistanis' comfort level & built credibility. Since that meeting, business has increased 10-15% for the neighborhood office agent.
 - Capital Region employees translated a 2-pg what-to-do-if-you-have-an-accident brochure into Spanish & Chinese; they're working on Vietnamese, Korean & Russian.
 - Allstate claim service centers subscribe to AT&T's Language Line that provides interpreters. When a customer & a claim employee cannot communicate in a common language, the employee dials AT&T & completes the claim report in a 3-way conversation.
 - A full-time team is charged with "making diversity actionable & improving customer & employee interaction to impact business performance."
 - A regional vp is focusing on two dimensions of diversity: 1) managing each employee differently based on individual make-up; 2) working to set appropriate performance-measurement criteria. Both are critical to achieving optimum performance & are backed by tying compensation to the ability to manage diversity, notes the brochure. "It's paying off in the community, in the schools & in new respect."

(Allstate, 2775 Sanders Rd, Suite F4, Northbrook, Ill. 60062-6127)

Of Related Interest: *Guide to Multicultural Resources, 1995-1996*, edited by Alex Boyd, is organized into 5 major sections (African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, Native American & Multicultural). Each section is introduced by an authority on that ethnic group & supplemented by graphics summarizing critical trends. Entries include: arts & cultural org's, ass'ns, bookstores, civil rights groups, colleges & universities, federal agencies, festivals, fraternities & sororities, libraries, media, museums, religious org's, social services org's, special academic programs & women's org's. Indexes are provided for org'n name, executives, geographic locations, print resources & video. (546 pgs; \$49. Highsmith Press, P.O. Box 800, Fort Atkinson, Wis. 53538-0800)

PR IS TARGET OF LETTER-BOMBER; HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

"Unabomber" is out to kill those working in "certain areas of applied psychology, such as behavior modification," which he considers a "technical field" -- and pr a key component. Of 3 killed in his 17 years of terrorism, 2 have pr ties & were targeted for professional work unacceptable to Unabomber. 22 others have been injured.

His motivation against pr as stated in a letter to the NYTimes:

"We blew up Thomas Mosser last December because he was a Burston (sic)-Marsteller executive. Among other misdeeds, (B-M) helped Exxon clean up its public image after the Exxon Valdez incident. But we attacked (B-M) less for its specific misdeeds than on general principles. (B-M) is about the biggest organization in the public relations field. This means that its business is the development of techniques for manipulating people's attitudes. It was for this more than for its actions in specific cases that we sent a bomb to an executive of this company."

Practitioners working on behalf of any organization or idea he opposes could be targeted, like Mosser. Latest victim, Gilbert Murray, was lobbyist for the timber industry as pres., California Forestry Ass'n.

Authorities told AP the letters -- 3 former victims also got one -- had words crossed out & other indications he is "unraveling." They believe Unabomber is now "off the deep end."

PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE AGAINST LETTER BOMBS

1. Unabomber himself gives rule no. 1 in letter to victim: don't be "dumb enough to open an unexpected package from an unknown source."
2. Peter Ginieres, media consultant, FBI (Boston) adds: "Be mindful that there are people out there like the Unabomber who are intent on creating chaos by use of package bombs."
3. Suspect larger packages -- the size of a cassette tape, or as in the most recent case, the size of a shoebox.
4. In all cases, the Unabomber has not put a return address or has used a fictitious return address.



- 5. The Unabomber is very meticulous, sends packages **neatly wrapped**.
- 6. If you receive a package or letter that seems strange, has a strange or no return address & you didn't solicit or expect it, **don't open it**. Call your local law enforcement agency. Generally the local police will take it to the station where many have scanners or x-ray machines.
- 7. Larger organizations could go to the expense of **getting an x-ray machine**; or many post offices have them, as do gov't bldgs in major cities. These are options worth exploring.
- 8. "It's a very difficult situation. But, the fewer who handle a package, the better we will be **able to get evidence from it**."

UNABOMBER'S TARGETS

Tho in the letters he professes to hate the system and also "techno-nerds" & geneticists,

Unabomber's 2 pr-related victims were selected because they worked in the environmental arena. This is consistent: worldwide, the most prolific users have been animal rights activists in UK & Australia.

Key question: how did he get their names, or know of their work? One professor horribly injured by an earlier bomb had written a book Unabomber disagreed with. But the pr-related victims were just doing their jobs, more or less behind the scenes. And in both cases, his info was wrong:

- Neither Mosser nor B-M had worked on the Valdez case, B-M said;
- The bomb that killed Murray was addressed to his predecessor, who had been a vocal participant on behalf of the timber industry in contentious West Coast forestry issues; Murray is described as more low key.

COULD YOU BE TARGETED UNDER THIS DESCRIPTION?

"Thru our bombings we hope to promote social instability in industrial society, propagate anti-industrial ideas & give encouragement to those who hate the industrial system." Recalls the Sacco & Vanzetti case and anarchists of the 20s. Which means just about any practitioner working within the system could qualify.

PR CAN HELP CHANGE ENVIRONMENT THAT LED TO OKLAHOMA CITY

Its role is creating hospitable environments -- so marketing, policy debate & other activities can occur. Similarly, pr can help change the hateful environment rapidly surfacing in the US & long prevalent elsewhere. The bombing in Oklahoma made 3 recent prr articles -- which may have seemed innocuous on first sight -- totally relevant:

- 1) 3/6 -- Tom Preston's warning to be prepared for workplace violence
- 2) 2/1 -- review of Haynes Johnson's book, *Divided We Fall*, in which he finds US democracy could disintegrate in today's climate

- 3) 4/24 -- Fran Hunter's case study of deflecting violence by bringing people together in a sense of community, even when their views are strongly divergent

BE SURE NOT TO ENGAGE IN STEREOTYPING ANYTIME

Whether in the increasingly heated policy debates, or in any arena, practitioners must role model respect for others & their viewpoints. Of course, this is basic persuasive technique. The reverse always backfires. Yet violations of the rule are frequent, especially when practitioners move into the political realm.

Society's penchant for prejudicial stereotyping is seen in the Oklahoma case. A Muslim resident of the city, traveling abroad, was detained & publicly humiliated, shipped back home, & found his family had to flee their home -- suspect in the matter all because he was Muslim & from the city. And he is a US citizen.

The militia & other anti-gov't groups possibly connected to the tragedy have themselves been stereotyped in the media coverage & public outrage. But they are, some of them, masters at this. Southern Poverty Law Center, an anti-hate group activist, cites letters & books that call minorities "subhumans" who "should be killed" in large numbers.

PR professionals, of all people, should be motivated here -- since their field is a major victim of stereotyping.

MAKE CIVIL COMMUNITIES A COMMUNITY RELATIONS PRIORITY

Someone has to start teaching basic democratic political science -- and become its unequivocal champion. Organizational community relations programs are natural opportunities.

This may mean speaking out against hate groups. But we need to face the fact that modern Nazis & fascists exist. Pulling together, or supporting existing, coalition organizations that work for inclusion & against divisiveness is needed.

WHAT PR DOES IN THE WORKPLACE MOVES BEYOND THE WORKPLACE

Since today everyone works, culture established on the job quickly can move into broader social context. Diversity at work can create understanding of diversity in communities, for instance. One success story:

Allstate approaches diversity practically. Its diversity brochure, *Making a World of Difference...*

explains: "Diversity is Allstate's strategy for leveraging differences for competitive advantage. In the workplace, managing diversity means creating a supportive environment where all employees contribute their full potential to meeting business objectives. In the marketplace, managing diversity means creating growth & outperforming the competition by capitalizing on demographic trends."