

SELF - FULFILLING PROPHECY

"So while to some the year 2000 may be just another year, millions of others believe that the millennium is something more. And because they believe it is different -- beyond the normal -- they will behave differently & by doing so make it different."

What he sees: "Today, the millennium's approach is encouraging the growth of new forms of millenarianism. Combined with the revolutionary social, economic & technological changes the world is experiencing, this new millenarian thinking is compounding the massive uncertainties in business, politics & life. It is changing how we organize companies & motivate staff; it is changing how we market our products & how we communicate with each other; it is changing national & global political structures & priorities; and, it is changing our vision of what is valuable to us as individuals -- with all the lifestyle implications such a change creates." (Published by Allen & Unwin, available in bookstores after Nov 8; \$16.95)

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

Study Shows Again How Few Are Paying Attention. Diffusion studies and many others have been finding that 80 - 90% of stakeholders -- people who ought to care because they can be affected -- are just not plugged in today. There are many reasons including overbusyness, overcommunication, fatigue, fear etc. A Polk study on the 2 World Series cities, reported in USA Today, confirmed the phenomenon. While 35% of New Yorkers & 38% of Atlantans say they watch tv sports, 22% of New Yorkers travel outside the US, and 27% of Atlantans read the Bible or other devotional materials, **only 18% of New Yorkers & 17% of Atlantans follow current affairs or politics.** This is why worrying about bad media coverage & trusting in good coverage or traditional publications to do the job are fantasies. Also why knowing the opinion leaders on your topic & working everlastingly with them has become the key.

Just Spell My Name Right... Once again, an example of how name recognition far outweighs bad publicity in most cases. Who ever heard of the Lippo Group until the Indonesian conglomerate was accused of making allegedly illegal campaign contributions. Since that news broke, stories outlining the extent of the group's companies & holdings have been everywhere -- especially in biz media where awareness (which they obviously did not have) can be useful. Best thing that's happened to them in a pr sense!

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. Public Affairs Council's ofcers: chrm, Mack Hogans (svp corp afrs, Weyerhaeuser); chrm-elect, Stephen Chaudet (vp state & local afrs, Lockheed Martin); 2 new vice chrm, R. Michael Jones (vp-pa, Carolina Power & Light) & David Wright (vp gov't afrs, PepsiCo);

2 returning vice chrm, S.M. Henry Brown Jr (vp gov't afrs, Entergy) & Woody Madden (mgr gov't afrs, Exxon); continuing as treasurer Charlotte Rush (svp com'ns, MasterCard). Ray Hoewing was re-elected pres to serve until April '97 when he will retire.

A PROCESS FOR PRACTICING BEHAVIORAL PUBLIC RELATIONS

Motivating stakeholder behavior is increasingly accepted by organizations & practitioners as the value-adding role of public relations -- as opposed to just communicating messages. The question of precisely how to accomplish this becomes a critical issue. Then, the follow-on question is how to evaluate & measure it. A brief review:

YOU HAVE TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT BEHAVIOR TO MOTIVATE

1. The process begins with a concrete list of desired behaviors. This is the antithesis of "messages" or "communications" or "reaching publics" -- tho they may play a tactical role, of course.
 - Exactly what do key stakeholders have to do, not do, or let you do in order for your organization's vision or strategy to succeed?
2. Beginning every project by making a desired behaviors list **gives you a specific guide for what you are trying to accomplish.** This is the most important step toward engendering those behaviors -- instead of thinking right away about messages, media or activities.

A BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL CAN BE USEFUL

Here's one that includes the major elements:

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| 1. What <i>behaviors</i> must be motivated, reinforced or modified to achieve the goals? |
| 2. Precisely <i>which stakeholder group or segments</i> must give these behaviors; or could keep you from achieving the goals by withholding the behaviors or by overt opposition? |
| 3. Since people don't often go straight to the ultimate desired behaviors, what <i>intermediate behaviors</i> might you have to lead them through as way stations? |
| 4. Since groups/publics don't usually act spontaneously, who are the <i>opinion leaders</i> in these groups & what special behaviors must be sought from them to stimulate group behavior? |

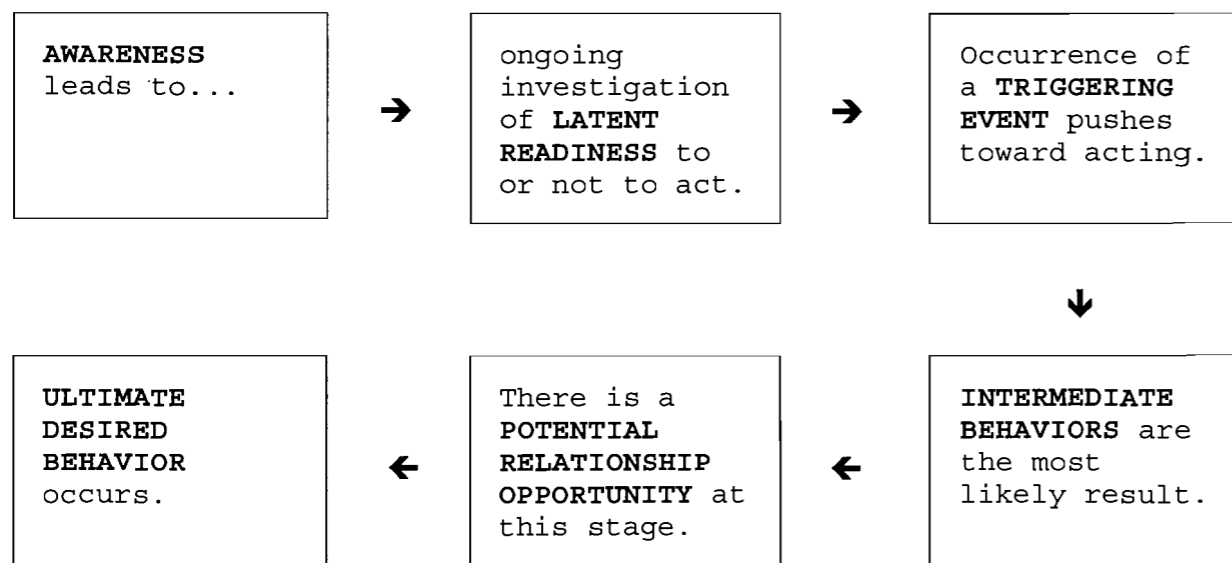


UNDERSTANDING TRIGGERING EVENTS IS THE LINCHPIN

People are available to do, even ready to do, a lot more than they actually do. Lack of time or funds, other priorities, lassitude & a thousand other barriers inhibit them from enacting the behaviors your organization needs to motivate. Overcoming the barriers means:

1. **Constructing a triggering event** that pushes the behavior into priority position.
 - *Example:* Retailers hold sales to lure shoppers who would like to buy the goods but are reluctant to spend or are otherwise engaged.
2. **Usurping naturally occurring triggering events** in the lives of your stakeholders.
 - *Example:* 40th birthdays start us thinking about our health future.
3. **Capitalizing on those triggering events that randomly come along** in the social environment.
 - *Example:* The Thomas Supreme Court hearings unleashed intense latent readiness against sexual harassment.
4. It also means, defensively, **being able to fend off triggering events launched by competitors & opponents**, or occurring in the environment.

THE BEHAVIORAL PUBLIC RELATIONS MODEL EXPLAINS THE PROCESS



INTERMEDIATE BEHAVIORS ARE THE TACTICAL FOCUS

Appealing to people to go straight to the ultimate behavior is usually futile. There are intermediate behaviors most of us work thru, on most decisions, before proceeding to the ultimate behavior.

1. **This provides a focus for pr efforts:** leading people to the intermediate behavior by concentrating our appeals there. Asking right off for the ultimate behavior is usually resisted anyway.
2. If the intermediate activity puts the organization in direct contact with people -- say a celebration, meeting or event is held -- this is **prime time to build relationships** with stakeholders face-to-face.
3. The combination of attracting them to an intermediate event, then building a relationship, provides entree for them to **act the ultimate behavior**.
 - *Example:* Hospitals hold educational seminars & affinity groups, building relationships between staff & attenders during the events, as a means of stimulating attenders to make the hospital their healthcare center.

MILLENARIANISM, PERCEPTION AT THE EXTREME, CAN IMPACT ORG'NS

In *The Millennium Edge*, Noel Turnbull makes predictions about the shape of 21st century society & how business needs to respond to the new realities of a new millennium. He explains that following the turn of the last millennium -- a thousand years ago -- there were centuries of massive social & religious upheaval.

- People believed the world was ending &, in preparation put on sack-cloth, covered themselves in ashes, whipped themselves with flails & looked to changes in the weather & unusual or inexplicable events as portents of the apocalypse. Historians call this millenarianism.

NOT JUST FOOLISHNESS

People's fascination with significant dates & numbers makes the stroke of midnight on Friday, Dec 31, 1999 one of those significant dates. "From a strictly rational viewpoint it will be just another New Year's Eve. Yet already..."

- The British Government has established a Millennium Commission to plan for the years after it.
- Thousands of religious groups are preparing for the end of the world.
- The exclusive Rainbow Room in New York is booked out for the night.
- Political & environmental groups are anticipating the apocalypse.
- The Pope is warning Rome's gov't that more than 30 million worshippers will descend on the Vatican creating traffic & accommodation havoc."