

ROGER HAYWOOD REMINDS THAT WE MUST BE GOOD GUESTS

their home to suit you." He also recommends "relax and adjust your hometown values; just because something is different doesn't mean it is wrong" & "understand the loyalties of the people you are working with."

- Haywood cites the case where a client asked an Israeli "What is your Christian name?" Luckily, the Israeli was understanding

He also recommends orgn's "trust your local people." Like Grunig & Wakefield, Haywood urges practitioners to "firmly fix the unmovables" so locals know where they *can* be flexible. These strategic details that set a framework & are not to be touched should include:

- a) Org'n philosophy & policies b) Global objectives c) Key messages

Variables that can be altered from place to place include:

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| a) Channels for communication | d) Timetable |
| b) Adapting to conventions (without hq being misled) | e) Tone |
| c) Making sure language is appropriate | f) Audience venues |

ANTI-ORG'L ACTIVISM ON THE WEB IS GRAPEVINE IN REAL TIME; MONITOR, MANAGE, BLANKET & BULLETPROOF STILL HOLDS TRUE

It's a problem worldwide. One can hyperventilate over massive number of opportunities for dissatisfied customers, employees, shareholders or troublemakers to raise issues for your org'n on the Web. To prove the point, Jim Lukaszewski & David Armon share a few among the proliferation of sites devoted to getting back at corporate America (gov't & NPOs have their own anti-sites):

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| • thirdvoice.com | • peta-online.org | • gripenet.com | • bitchaboutit.com |
| • planetfeedback.com | • vault.com | • epinions.com | • wordofmouth.com |

... plus alternative corporate sites, bookmarks (which pop onto your screen on top of a site that you've accessed) & others.

They recommend applying critical decisionmaking when determining how or whether to respond:

- **Don't panic**
- **Diagnose** – analyze how many people are talking, credibility of discussion, potential impact on business, etc.
- **Prescription** – localize response, trying not to blow up into a main stream media story
- **Treatment** – apply prescription

An e-mail & Web-use policy for employees of any org'n is also recommended (copy from [pr](#)).

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. From the Assembly floor, to be chair-elect of PRSA, counselor [Joann Killeen](#).

MANAGING GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS DONE BEST NOT BY CENTRAL MANDATE, BUT SINGLE STRATEGY CARRIED OUT LOCALLY TO EMPHASIZE CULTURAL SENSITIVITIES; IS ALL PR THEN SIMILAR?

"World class practice of public relations is done through application of *strategic consistencies* with *cultural sensitivities*," found Rob Wakefield (Wakefield Com'ns, Provo, Ut) in his research with 18 multinational companies (t&t 10/18/99). Joint PRSA/IPRA conference last week brought practitioners from 73 nations together to sort out the differences – if any – when working globally, nationally, regionally or locally.

- **Question:** is it any different addressing stakeholders in eastern US or Canada, say, from those in Calgary or Sacramento? In the upper income sections of town from the inner city? Seniors from young marrieds or teenagers?

SPEAKERS & PANELS ADDRESS THE ISSUE FROM SEVERAL VANTAGE POINTS

Most looked at global org'ns & what they must do in today's int'l issue climate & marketplace. But

apply their advice to your situation to see if there really are differences – or not. Some conclusions:

- There's no one best way to structure int'l pr but it must contain certain minimum elements
- Management & org'l mindset must recognize global nature of the enterprise
- It works when pr is positioned at exec levels in every unit, not just HQ
- Coordinated communication efforts are essential – integrated relationship mgmt
- Properly trained, full-time pr officers are needed in every business unit
- Frequent, proactive interaction among international pr officers
- Global pr manager is an international team facilitator

Jim & Lauri Grunig's Generic Principles for practicing int'l pr – or any pr – agree & more:

- Involvement of pr in strategic mgmt
- Empowerment of pr in the dominant coalition or a direct reporting relationship to senior mgmt
- Integrated pr function
- PR is a management function separate from other functions
- PR is headed by a manager rather than a technician
- Works best longterm when 2-way symmetrical model of pr is practiced (see [pr](#) 9/6/93)
- Symmetrical system of internal communication
- PR department has the knowledge needed to practice the managerial role & symmetric pr
- Diversity embodied in all roles
- Ethics & social responsibility are guiding values



PIONEER IN REACHING OUT GLOBALLY ADDS ADDITIONAL POINTS OF SIMILARITY

“Communication between all communicators must be strong from the start” says Joe Epley. He

recommends practitioners take pains to make sure others fully grasp what is required of them – “it takes patience, tact & tolerance.” And it sounds as much like an office in Atlanta trying to work with the same orgn’s site in Oregon as it does practitioners in 2 nations!

Epley – who as PRSA pres launched an initiative with Russia & other overseas practitioners – emphasizes that tho other nationalities understand English (according to futurist Watts Wacker there are more English speaking people in China than in the US), we must question whether they *understand* English the way we do – do we/they get the meaning, the nuances of what is being said? Don’t rely on e-mail or fax – you’ve got to talk! The current *Atlantic Monthly* has an article emphasizing this point.

- But do Iowans or Idahoans get the nuances of NY or LA lingo & clichés any better? It’s local!

“WORLD CLASS MULTINATIONAL ORG’N” EXPLAINS ITS METHODS

Dow Corning is cited as only 1 of 3 multinationals studied – only one in US – to be classified as “complete evolution” or “world class” when it comes to structuring the pr function to meet int’l needs.

Amy Rosborough, Environment, Health & Safety mgr, explained their methods:

1. There is no central mandate
2. Strategy is worked thru global meetings – face-to-face & teleconferences
3. Goal is to speak with one voice with one message
4. Have in place global communication tools – e.g. global IT
5. Adhere to graphic standards manuals

“Expatriates returning to headquarters said we had to start speaking globally with ‘one voice’” was a main reason company focused on integrated system. “Crisis (breast implants) was the other.”

Structure includes:

- Corporate communications officer reporting to CEO
- Global pr director for internal and external rels
- Operations managers reporting to global pr director

Early success attributed to 1) multidisciplinary teams, 2) weekly meetings for 2 years via teleconferences, preceded by e-mail updates, 3) discussion of upcoming events, media triggers, strategy implementation. Other critical pieces useful for building a ‘one voice’ team include:

- Formal face-to-face meetings biannually
- Formal staff meeting via teleconferences weekly
- Informal meetings via teleconferences for managers
- Global media clip distribution
- Personnel & professional development – specifically to create awareness of cultural sensitivities
- “RACIS” model used on projects designating person as *Responsible, *Accountable, *Consulted, *Informed, *Support – & getting agreement on each

Global employee publication is done by one editor, is on-line – & *approvals, worldwide, are ensured within 48 hours of receipt*. Unless it is a legal issue, translations are left to locals. For legal issues, translations often go from English to foreign language & back again to assure clear translation.

EXAMPLES FROM SLOVENIA, INDIA, ASIA & BEYOND SHOW HOW – & HOW NOT – TO DO INTERNATIONAL (OR ANYWHERE) PR

A global pharmaceutical org’n from US did the research necessary to avoid catastrophe in drug introduction in Slovenia, reports that nation’s Dejan Vercic (partner, Pristop Com’ns). “They came into the country with a canned, concrete plan on rolling out their products,” says Vercic, “but research recommended locally found that consumers consider local drug products many times superior to non-Slovenia companies. Strategy for introduction was changed dramatically.” It took 2 years but became very successful. Vercic recommends:

1. **Sending quality people to every country.** “If you wouldn’t put them next to top people in your own country, don’t send them to ours!”
2. **Make decisions where your publics are** – not in the country you are coming from. “Local decisions understand local nuances & culture”
3. **When using pr firms, make sure they are local & have their best people locally** – “not some green-behind-the-ears person who doesn’t understand the local culture”
4. **Remember, top people need to talk to top people** – public’s top people are usually local

K. Sriramesh (U Fla) cites generic principles that have proven themselves in India, echo those of Grunig, Wakefield, Vercic:

- Empowerment of pr in dominant coalition
- PR as a management function separate from other functions
- Symmetrical system of communication

“Indian political ideology began a market orientation as early as ’91,” notes Sriramesh, “has 350 million people in upper middle class with disposable income.” Still, the possibility of cultural imperialism abounds – e.g. selling sneakers by having Michael Jordan sign shoes, when in India shoes are considered dirt-filled, not worn indoors.

RELIGION & ETHNICITY PLAY A BIG ROLE IN WAY ASIANS COMMUNICATE

Edith Sola (Chair Worldcom’s Asia Pacific region) warns that int’l communicators must be cognizant

of dos & don’ts of all cultures. “What may be customary for some may be taboo elsewhere. Colors play a symbolic role as well as a subliminal message.” Sola’s own experience suggests that, in Asia, it can be a mistake to assume one Asian nationality understands another.

Sola, from Philippines, was visiting Thailand & got in trouble for posing on a reclining elephant statute. Elephants are sacred in Thailand as cows are in India. With so many Asians coming into N.America, this is sound advice.