

According to Cantor, trend among both firms and companies is to hire generalists, particularly those who also have a specialty. "This is a reflection of the fact that they're expected to do more work & pull up the slack," he says. Media, community & financial relations are three hottest specialty areas.

¶Frank Liguori, pres., Field Enterprises (Chi.), reports that forthcoming recession has had little impact yet on the number of openings he handles. He notes, however, that sophisticated middle and top management job-seekers have best chance for employment. Also reports activity is split between firms and corporations, with requests for financial specialists frequent from both.

¶"I would like to think that public relations would thrive in the '80s, but the situation is unpredictable," says Cleo Phillips of Henry Schapper (NYC). She doubts, however, possible repeat of nosedive public relations suffered in early '70s simply because "companies haven't yet restaffed to pre-1971 levels." Firms used to "make places for people who 'looked interesting.' Now they hire on an 'as needed' basis."

¶IABC's research dir., Irene Periano, reports that the job market is best in Midwest and South, tightest on East & West coasts. Recent IABC innovation is 24-hr. hotline which lists job openings at all levels -- editors, writers, counselors, instructors, middle & top mgmt.

According to gov't estimates, field will add 7,500 new positions in '80. But despite continued expansion, new entries into market -- and sheer number of job changers -- outstrip available positions. PRSA's referral service received 400 resumes in '79 for 256 jobs. IABC's hotline has had 15,000 calls for 155 listings.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ACCOUNT SUPERVISORS. Paul D. Feldman, Harshe-Rotman & Druck, Inc. (NYC)... Karen Kelly, Public Communications (Chi)... John Cates, Juhl Associates (Elkhart, Ind.)... Jordan Goldman, Greenstone & Rabasca Assocs (Melville, NY)... Warren Vollmar, Bozell & Jacobs (Milwaukee)... Nancy F. Elmont, Creamer Dickson Basford/New England (Providence, R.I.)... Bill Robertson, Bruce Rubin Assocs (Miami)...

George P. Lohman, acct mgr, adv & pr, Koppers Co (Pittsburgh)... Judy Modell, Grey & Davis (NYC)... Stephen F. Barnhill, Bozell & Jacobs (Houston)... Peter R. Schuddekopf, Makovsky & Co (NYC)... Jane Cornell, Sweet & Co (NYC)... Ann Nally, acct adm, Creamer Dickson Basford/New England (Providence, R.I.)

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES. Nancy Blatt and Phillip Carroll, Ketchum New York (NYC)... Clark Wilson, Cochrane Chase, Livingston & Co (Irvine, Calif.)... Roger W. Hawley, Valentine-Radford (Kansas City,

Mo.)... F. Lawrence Sennett, Harshe-Rotman & Druck (NYC)... David W. Russ, Bozell & Jacobs (Milwaukee)... Ben L. Williams, Jr., Bozell & Jacobs (Union, N.J.)... Suzanne Lowery, Henry J. Kaufman & Assocs (D.C.)... Alan Anastos, Nigberg Corp (Framingham, Mass.)... Aaron Medlock, Newsome & Co (Boston)... Stephen G. Crews, Bernard E. Ury Assocs (Chi)... Claude M. Gruener, Harshe-Rotman & Druck (Houston).

Bonnie L. Eidson, Daniel J. Edelman, Inc. (Chi)... Susan Gustafson, Cheryl Rogusta, and Ruth Ross, Juhl Assocs (Elkhart, Ind.)... Cherry Dumauual, Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy (NYC)... Michael F. Hill, E. Bruce Harrison Co (D.C.)... Bruce Marsh, Lisa Pacelli and Pam Grant, Aaron D. Cushman & Assocs (Chi)... Robert H. Roll, Richardson, Myers & Donofrio (Baltimore)... Joseph M. Russo, Harshe-Rotman & Druck (NYC)... Rebecca J. Fanning, Braman/Doremus (NYC)... Nancy Hamilton, Edward Howard & Co (Toledo)... Thomas L. Farley, sr acct exec, Aitkin-Kynett (Philadelphia).

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CASE STUDY: RESPONDING TO ACTIVIST MEDIA EVENTS; PRO-BUSINESS STRATEGIES COUNTER, DEFLECT & IGNORE NADER GROUP'S "BIG BUSINESS DAY"

When an activist group sponsors event like "Big Business Day" -- expected to draw wide media attention -- what should be strategy of pro-business groups? Does countering allegations & discrediting source work? Or add fuel to fire by indirectly legitimizing activists' claims? Can a positive message be timed to compete? pr reporter's poll of businesses, other groups shows no single response to BBD tho some strategies more likely to succeed (see prr 2/4/).

U.S. Chamber of Commerce has relabeled event "Anti-Business Day" to clear possible confusion. Background booklet advises members to size up local opposition, respond but not overreact. "The vast majority of Americans is not anti-business," pamphlet reminds readers. Position papers provide arsenal of facts, figures to counter arguments of BBD proponents.

Thrust, however, is on long-range strategy: stepping up or initiating ongoing public relations programs to educate public about business. Tho day may pose small threat, in long run CofC believes "there will be a need to defeat the legislative program being sponsored by the 'Anti-Business Day' coalition."

Deflecting attention is strategy of The Heritage Foundation, non-profit D.C. policy research firm. It will sponsor competing "Growth Day" also to be held on April 17. Supporters include over 100 businesses, academic leaders, consumer groups. Charles Heatherly, dir. spec. projects told prr, "Growth Day is a catalyst to get businesses and the public to take cognizance of the fact that we can't sit back and let them (BBD proponents) spread lies." Goal also to present "alternative philosophy" to "elitist zero-growth, anti-business attitude which concentrates on the negatives of business rather than the real issue -- the state of the economy."

Union Carbide has surveyed 1000 Americans on related issues, found "except for the media, Big Business Day has virtually no constituency," says Marshall Lewis, dir. corp. comms. "Overwhelmingly the public wants growth and views business as the prime generator of economic growth. It also views gov't as one of the major inhibitors."

Consequently, company is incorporating research into on-going op-ed campaign (see prr 2/25). Ads which will appear before, on & after BBD, will not counter claims directly. Instead "reasoned approach" discusses "need and public desire for economic growth," offers survey.

As part of its op-ed advertising program, United Technologies ran ad tackling BBD in state newspapers, "thought leader" magazines like Atlantic Monthly, Harpers. Copy has emotional pitch, tinged with sarcasm: "Sorry, but we won't be able to take part in Big Business Day. We'll be too busy competing for sales, making products, providing

jobs, meeting payrolls, paying taxes, and doing all the other things people expect of business, big and small."

Raymond D'Argenio, sr. vp, told prr, "Everybody's moaning & groaning but no one is doing anything." He feels emotional appeal more likely to be read. Company has just mailed ad to Fortune 500 firms, offered to let them place using own corporate signature. United Technologies is taking prepared "wait & see" approach to April 17. "If we're picketed, we'll be right there on the street beside them passing out handbills. If tv comes, we'll be there, too, to have our say."

Business Roundtable (NYC) is ignoring event entirely. James Keough, dpr, explains: "We do not want to dignify their media event by engaging in any kind of diatribe with them." He believes the people and Congress will "recognize the folly of the Corporate Democracy Act, which would have the gov't prescribe who should be put in charge of America's corporations."

What do Big Business Day advocates think of corporate response? Andy Buxbaum, dir., says "It disturbs us that the business community can't really deal with the issues of corporate responsibility we've been raising." He also acknowledges that "the business backlash" has helped "focus media attention." "We are now approached by the media more often than we have to approach them," he told prr. "They're wondering what kind of group, what kind of activities would provoke that kind of response."

LATEST APPROACH TO ECON ED:
BIG BUSINESS, OTHERS SPONSOR
DISNEY-LIKE EXHIBIT BUILDING

Making economics understandable & palatable for public consumption has been bane of numerous economic education programs. "Enterprise Square, USA," \$15 million educational facility being built at Oklahoma

Christian College, intends to bring economics to the public on its own terms -- it will be the "Disney of Economics," according to pr counsel Jim Stafford (Ada, Okla.).

Stafford told pr reporter educators have been turned off by educational materials contributed by corporations because they were either "too complex, self-serving or both." Also notes that "passive educational programs, however objective, just do not have lasting impact." Enterprise Square uses "participatory and entertaining" approach to learning. Difficult economic concepts will be conveyed thru dimensional displays. Over half are "hands-on." Designers from Disney, Sesame Street, Captain Kangaroo, worked with economic experts, educators, mass communicators to translate concepts.

Square will present "objective view of the economic system," Stafford claims. "It would be counterproductive to present Enterprise Square as the 'voice of business,'" he said. 50% of project's funding came from individuals. Corporate sponsors include such giants as American Can, Western Electric and Getty Oil. Sponsors expect "no massive attitudinal shift," Stafford says. "We do expect that public confidence in the free enterprise system may increase when people understand it -- and can change their own lives."

Although Enterprise Square won't be completed until '81, plans for spinoffs have already germinated, including another square on West Coast. Audio-visual materials will eventually be disseminated to "every classroom in America." Enterprise Square will be marketed as "major attraction in competition with other parks such as the Disneys and 6 Flags," Stafford says. He expects 300,000 visitors yearly.

FORGET COSTLY "STATISTICAL CALISTHENICS";
USE JUDGMENT, CHUNK, QUOTA SAMPLING,
ADVISES OLD PRO RESEARCH HERETIC

Research is a must in public relations but "it exists for the solution of problems, not the magnification of research." No matter how accurate, it can only provide guides, not answers. Therefore, says John Scott Davenport, trustworthy research for public relations need not rely on probability samples.

Practitioner's expertise in field being researched, plus expertise of the client or employer, are more valuable than "objective" statistical readings for making decisions based on findings. This is difference between academic research and practical research. "Exotic sampling doesn't necessarily produce more useful information." Is often simply mathematical "calisthenics."

Davenport feels practitioners are well served in many cases by: 1) judgment samples, where knowledge of universe being studied suggests who should be surveyed; 2) quota samples, where set number of people are questioned for thoroughness, but no attempt at randomness is made; 3) chunk sampling, where researcher bites off chunk of universe to test preconceptions against reality. Reporters use chunk samples in getting reactions to news event. Shopping center intercept polls are usually quota samples. Walking into plant and questioning key supervisors would be judgment sample, where "representative" or "typical" subjects are queried.

Probability (random) samples are needed to survey an unknown universe, where the researcher has few or no benchmarks (i.e. nothing to compare to). Informal research studies known universes (e.g. customers, employees, shareholders) for which there are benchmarks of observable reality. But, expertise in field of study is crucial ingredient for saving time & money in public relations research.

Davenport labels his approach "heretic" because academics & polling firms insist "the only good sample is a random sample." Pollsters do so because it costs more & requires their services. Academics do so to achieve replicability -- opportunity for another academic to duplicate survey to check findings. Always remember, says Davenport, that academics don't have to make decisions on their research, so it is a theoretical game for them.

Is Davenport credible? For 35 years he headed E. W. Scripps Co's research dep't, which served prominent outside clients as well as the newspaper chain. His title was ass't to chrmm. & dir. of res. He has doctorate in behavioral science, is now professor of comms. at Brigham Young Univ. (Provo, Utah).

JOB MARKET FOR '80
BRIGHTEST FOR TOP MGMT;
FIRMS, CORPS. WANT GENERALISTS

With predicted recession -- & much uncertainty -- looming over nation's economic horizon, few placement specialists are willing to predict how severe impact may be on public relations job market. Outlook in '80 is brightest for generalists & top-level mgmt. Entry level -- traditionally toughest spot -- is constricting further -- which one expert sees as indication the economy is slowing up. Rundown of predictions from prr's poll:

"Public relations firms will get more work as companies let go of mgmt. personnel and redirect work to firms. This should result in more hiring in firms," says Bill Cantor, pres., Cantor Concern (NYC). He predicts that within corps. "middle mgmt. practitioners will be the losers" as companies turn to more top & junior (but not entry) level personnel.