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PUBLIC RELATIONS ONE OF TOP 10 FIELDS FOR STRESS;
ADMONISHING ARTICLES, SEMINARS & SPEECHES ARE ALL OVER THE PLACE
BUT WHAT ARE YOU DOING ABOUT IT? HERE'S HOW, SIMPLY

"Stress is a fact of life. It is how the body & mind cope with change. It affects everybody & does not just go away." But there are ways to deal with it, counsels Thomas Backer, LA psychologist. He told PRSA's Association section that few can succeed to any degree in public relations without a high degree of stress-handling ability. Some stress factors unique to or predominant in the field are:

Negative leverage: A mistake made by a pr pro is highly visible so its stressfulness is greatly multiplied.

Intangible results: "It's not easy to say that X dollars invested in a campaign resulted in Y dollars in sales."

Multiple bosses: Supervisors, committee chairmen, board members are all sources for job-related stress.

Lack of respect: Everybody thinks they can do public relations.

Time pressure: Almost all major responsibilities are on tight deadlines.

Values conflict: Questioning "whether what you're selling is what you'd care to endorse."

Lack of understanding: Profession suffers from a credibility gap and negative labeling -- e.g., "flack."

Multiple emergencies: Crises tend to "gang up."

3 Techniques to Manage Stress
1) Anticipate & prevent stress by asking yourself, "If I go down path A rather than path B, what's going to happen?" Sometimes the best way to avoid stress, suggests Backer, is walk away from it, e.g., get a divorce, change jobs, move, etc.

2) Stress resistance by mental preparation. Tell yourself you can manage stress. Have contact with "whatever is creative for you" to reduce your stress. Your source of creativity can be a place, a person or an activity. Whatever will give you a "creative boost" and heighten your ability to deal with stress.

3) Reduce stress through "cognitive restructuring." Backer calls this the "sweet lemon" response (vs sour grapes). "There's a lot of psychological evidence that

Some companies have even learned to handle stress, says NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw. He calls Johnson & Johnson's handling of the Telenol scare "the most brilliant piece of public relations" he's ever seen. "They made their people immediately available to the press. They kept them informed right up to the minute, so that they could keep the media and the public informed."

Does Effors' cable quiz have you stumped? (See pr 1/10) If it does, read on:

MDS - multipoint distribution service - Private service utilizing a very high frequency to transmit one tv signal. Most common use is to bring pay tv to hotels, but can in some cases be beamed to private homes.

STV - subscription tv - Pay tv services delivered over the air or by MDS. Signals are scrambled & subscriber gets a decoder to unscramble them.

SMATV - satellite master antenna television - A system that serves a concentration of tv sets such as an apartment building or hotel utilizing one central antenna to pick up broadcast signals.

DBS - direct broadcast satellite - a system still in the works in which signals are transmitted directly from a satellite to a dish on rooftop. Eliminates the middleman.

LPTV - low power tv - new service that serves a limited area, no more than 10 to 20 miles.

The trick is that these are not cable at all, but alternate distribution systems.

ITEMS OF PROFESSIONAL INTEREST

31st edition of Bacon's Publicity Checker reports 5,000 magazine & newspaper editors changed jobs last year -- more than any previous edition. 50% increase in number of computer & electronic media is also reported. '83 version contains over 50,000 media contacts for US & Canada in 2 volumes. Vol. 1 lists 5,041 biz, trade, farm, industrial, consumer mags & newsletters. Each listing includes pub'n name, editor, editorial address, frequency, issuance date, circulation, phone, publishing company, types of publicity used and whether pub'n uses photos &/or charges for illustrations (some still do). Volume 2 includes 1,804 daily newspapers, 7,389 weeklies and more than 650 weekly multiple publisher listings. Gives complete mailing into & 22 departmental editors. 3 new editorial contacts were added this year -- entertainment, medical & health, and outdoor. Also lists news services, syndicates, daily & weekly black press, dailies covering the 100 top ADI's, 100,000-and-over newspapers, other circulation breakdowns. (\$120 for 2-volume edition plus 3 revision supplements from Bacon's Publishing Co, 332 So. Michigan Ave, Chi 60604)

Where you survey is important. The movie industry uses pre-testing extensively in planning & marketing its films. From sampling to discover interest in plots, or plot variations, to sneak previews, studios have become expert at employing research in every phase of their work. For instance, they've learned that testing or previews in San Francisco will be different from those in neighboring San Jose -- because of the differing demographics. Sophisticated, intellectual filmgoers can be tested in the city of St. Francis, while more average audiences can be researched in the city of St. Joseph.



says the better you become at establishing habits to reinterpret reality to fit a positive interpretation of life, the better you will be at reducing your own stress." This is "bootstrapping yourself up into a better view of the world" where less time will be spent feeling sorry for yourself -- especially useful in pr where the stress of those we serve can heighten our own stress.

<p>What should you do if you are feeling stressed? Backer suggests: 1) Relaxation thru meditation, yoga, bio-feedback, or whatever appeals to you. The method of relaxation is not as important as that you do it. 2) Extra sleep because you're more fatigued than usual. 3) Physical exercise is the most important stress management tool ... at least 1/2 hour per day. 4) Modeling yourself after someone you think handles stress well. 5) Have other things in your life besides work to fall back on.</p>	<p>To get in touch with your stress management needs and to develop a stress management program, Backer suggests first identifying your "stresses and boosts." In one column list the sources of stress in your life, highlighting those which are most frequent & those which can be most easily eliminated. In the other column list the things which give you a "natural high" and aid you in coping with stress. Mark the boosts which are most frequent & those most easily brought about. Then share your findings with a trusted friend. Feedback you receive can be a big help in starting a stress management program.</p>
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PROACTIVE INSTEAD OF REACTIVE APPLIES TO SPEAKERS BUREAUS, TOO

Most are set up, printed up, then wait for the invitations. Committee for Energy Awareness is proactively placing volunteers before local business, civic, social & school groups to get its message out. Engagements for the "Energy Dialog" program are solicited thru direct-mail, advertising & direct-telephone contact. Low-cost program places volunteer speakers locally. Program's national stature attracts media attention.

Success -- difficult to measure in terms of opinion change -- is formally evaluated by the quality & number of engagements. To gauge the speaker's performance & persuasiveness of the messages, host fills out a questionnaire. Speaker also records audience size & type, assesses his or her own effectiveness for each engagement.

Speakers come from energy organizations like Women for Energy or Americans for Nuclear Energy, plus electric utilities. They range from engineers to housewives -- assuring personal interaction with audiences, feels Anna West of Energy Research Group (Waltham, Mass.) who administers the program. She labels it a "grassroots speakers bureau." Unlike many which offer set speeches, topics can be tailored to the audience by Energy Dialog.

MOTIVATIONAL CAPABILITY OF FILMS UNDERRATED, SURVEY FINDS

Largest survey ever of 16 mm film audiences reveals consumers gain more from viewing films at their club or organization meetings than from watching tv commercials or reading literature. Walter J. Klein Co. (Charlotte, NC) sent questionnaires to audience leaders who requested their free-loan films.

Of 30,000 forms sent out, 4,512 were returned. Results of the survey show:

- 1. Average audience size was 76 persons.
- 2. 99.7% watched film without interruption.
- 3. 100% stayed to see entire film.
- 4. 100% reported no diversions during film showing.
- 5. 77.3% wanted additional info on film's topic if available free.
- 6. 99.2% thought film gave more info than they could get from booklet or tv commercial.
- 7. 96.8% were motivated to do something after seeing film. Responses included consumer studies of grocery prices, classroom projects & club discussions.

HOW FAST DO NEW IDEAS PERCOLATE THRU PR RANKS? ARE WE EARLY ADOPTERS? STUDY NOT ENCOURAGING -- BUT TURNS UP USEFUL DATA ABOUT "ISSUE MANAGEMENT"

How well does diffusion process -- the basic technique of public relations -- work among those who use it in their own daily practice? Are practitioners quicker to become aware of & adopt/reject new ideas because they are charged with helping others do so? Probably not, finds a study by Bill Ehling (Syracuse U.) & Mike Hesse (U. of Alabama). The new idea on which they based their survey is "issues management." They describe it as an "innovative way for an organization to manage its public policy & publicly oriented behavior."

Sample was taken from PRSA membership directory. 47% said they'd heard or read nothing about IM. Few (15%) had adopted any part of IM technology. Those familiar with the idea were at least as influenced by "oral-interpersonal" media (mention in conference programs & discussion between practitioners) as by "print-impersonal" media (articles & papers) -- thus verifying the 2-Step Flow.

What prevents practitioners from buying into IM is not lack of an "agency establishment" to promote it. Nor lack of information in the form of articles, seminars & shop talk. The problem, conclude the 2 well-known pr professors, is a familiar one: "the content & structure of the messages were not always clearly delineated nor well developed." Most respondents see IM as nothing new but something they've been doing all along. (Looking at that statement thru the lens of perception management suggests there is no factual basis for it -- only perceptual.)

Surprisingly, respondents say they don't want to learn about, or get involved in, the burgeoning area of issues. 1) "The vast majority did not indicate any need to enter into a more structured managerial role vis-a-vis the identification, analysis & prioritizing of issues; 2) nor did they indicate that they were in need of more advanced analytical & research techniques in dealing with issues. 3) Least of all was there a need to advance in status since none reported the desire or administrative necessity to move into full participation in public policy or strategic planning." Apparently Howard Chase & Ray Ewing were prescient in forming the Issues Management Ass'n for those who are interested in the topic.

Because of the subject, this is high interest reading. The authors' questions about defining IM are thought-provoking to anyone concerned with the role of public relations in organizations -- and in working on "issues." (Copy from prr; 32 pgs.)