

The Committee for Economic Development's Productivity Policy: Key to the Nation's Economic Future assesses the nation's productivity problem similarly. Its policy recommendations focus on 6 issues: 1) removal of impediments to saving & investment in business; 2) federal support for research; 3) reduction of regulatory constraints; 4) free movement of capital, labor & other resources; 5) encouragement of the entrepreneurial spirit; 6) increased cooperation between labor & management. While all these issues are important to the long-term goal, too little emphasis is given to the human factor. This leaves the end result vulnerable. Humans can sabotage the best systems or machines if disgruntled. Champions for emphasizing the importance of the human factor is the opportunity of public relations professionals.

¶pr's special report, Improving Productivity: A Public Relations Opportunity emphasizes the role of people in achieving increased productivity. Productivity is "a matter of attitude -- toward one's work, but more importantly toward one's fellow workers. It involves morale, pride, motivation, relationships. Therefore, it is the purview of public relations professionals." (\$20 from prr, P.O. Box 600, Exeter, NH 03833)

PSYCHOGRAPHICS MADE EASY AT LAST:
NEW BOOK DETAILS VALS' FINDINGS

Psychographics is a research tool that helps to target publics by understanding the personality profile of their members. One of the best known studies is VALS -- values, attitudes, lifestyles (see prr 9/20/82). Previously available only to clients of its creator, SRI International (Menlo Park, Calif.), VALS is now detailed in a book, The Nine American Lifestyles: Who We Are & Where We Are Going. Author Arnold Mitchell is founder & director of the VALS program.

Although statistical weightings & other secrets of the research are withheld, the book makes psychographics useable for practitioners. For instance, a chart lists percentages of the population falling in each of the 9 lifestyle categories for 1980. A chapter on "Using the Typology" applies VALS to workplace, consumer & other situations. A section on "Societal Patterns & the Future" is valuable for the research direction it provides in anticipating issues. Another chart relates VALS to 19 human development theories ranging from Maslow & McClelland to Erikson & Riesman. (McMillan, 302 pgs, \$19.95)

School principals are becoming cheerleaders to motivate success among students:

¶Students chant "beat the test" at an academic pep rally and the principal promises to paint himself blue if test scores are high.

¶Students are armed with toy guns and put before computer terminals in a room decorated to look like a bunker. All to sharpen their test-taking ability.

"We support anything you can do to remove anxiety about the test and make students think positively about the experience," comments Tom Fisher, Florida's testing director. It works. In 1977, when the state's literacy test was introduced, only 49% of Jefferson County High School's students passed the math section. Last spring, the school's rate of passing was 94%, tied for 2nd in the state.

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PR IS A LEADING FORCE IN CHANGING OUR HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS;
BROADENED RESPONSIBILITIES, MARKETING EMPHASIS, PRODUCT-TYPE ADVERTISING
NARROW THE GAP BETWEEN HOSPITAL & BUSINESS PR CHALLENGES

By the latter half of the 1980s, "healthcare will be the local, state & national issue education is today," predicts John Evans, a former gov't official, pr pro & long-time tv commentator. John Naisbitt, who's organization predicts trends by quantifying newspaper articles on a subject, finds healthcare is receiving the frequency of references that education did 3 or 4 years ago. It's a popular topic that the public wants to know more & more about. It's of special interest to business whose insurance & related health costs are often their single largest non-wage expenditure.

Much of the info being promulgated is detrimental: healthcare in America cost \$287 billion in 1982; employee health insurance for the nation's largest organizations soared 25% this year; hospital charges & associated doctors' fees account for 70% of the nation's medical bill; stocks of HCA, Humana, National Medical Enterprises and American Medical International each rose an average of 30% during the 70s and over 100% in 1980. Controversy & competition are on the horizon -- if not already here.

One of the more competitive healthcare scenes is Florida. Hospitals are increasingly paying more attention to their bottom lines. One out of 7 hospitals will go under, predicts American Hospital Ass'n, so attention & competition are growing.

Even public relations activities have stepped up. Dep'ts are finding budgets, activities & people power at levels wished for years ago.

¶"Our department was organized to cope with what was coming down the pike in healthcare. We're geared to a competitive atmosphere. Public relations is used to raise the visibility of the Center. We have a medical news line that issues press releases, created a new graphic design system, redid all our publications with the new logo. We have a media center with a media manager who is a professional photographer, 3 graphic artists, 2 photographers & a tv studio with an engineer & production assistant. We do all our brochures in-house. We do everything but typesetting & printing.

them so they can support people who come in or call. We want the public to feel comfortable about the care that is available here." Ina Albert, dpa, Orlando Regional Medical Center

¶"People do have a choice of what hospital to go to. We have to be able to meet their needs. We're building a new hospital with private beds because that's what people want. We're getting into guest relations programs. People don't want to go to a large, impersonal hospital. They want to be treated well in a pleasant environment by pleasant people." Virginia Hunt, dpr, Shands Hospital, Gainesville

¶"We also administrate the switchboard & front desk. We're working with

(continued....)



"Our function is a lot more pro-active. It used to be passive. Now it's more of a planning function --

paying more attention to what the public thinks than what we think they think." Jack Hardy, dpr, Halifax Hospital Medical Ctr, Daytona Beach

Indicative of the changes is the active Florida Hospital Association's PR Council. By a vote of 2 to 1 it is changing its name to PR & Marketing Council:

"Why create a schism between pr & marketing people by not bringing them into the fold of the organization that's trying to better everybody's knowledge. They're background is a little different than ours but let's learn from them. They can learn from us, too. It's better than putting our heads in the sand. This is an opportunity to get together." Jack Hardy, pres, PR & Marketing Council

"Hospitals are looking at services that aren't revenue producers. They're evaluating them; seeing what benefit they're serving toward the whole. That's why pr is getting more closely allied with marketing -- to have a benefit on the hospital financially," Judy Stanton, dpr, Mt. Sinai Medical Center, Miami Beach

"I spoke to our board about marketing 3 years ago. They used to just see red. They'd hear marketing and think of advertising and go off the wall. I formed a physicians marketing committee whose purpose was to win political favor and it worked. We just hired a marketing person." Karen Buchbaum, dir adv'g & comms, Cedars Medical Center, Miami

Predetermined medicare payments for specific services (Diagnostic Related Groups, DRGs) is making competition tougher because it is in fact price fixing by the federal government.

"DRGs could really affect pr because pr isn't a revenue producing department per se. We can't show the hospital we're making a profit for them. We may see a difference in public relations -- people looking very closely at the things we produce, concerned about the cost of them." Judy Stanton

"Marketing has been a hospital buzz word for 3 or 4 years. What hospitals expect from a marketing individual is sometimes 2 different things. One might be planning, the other out in the community selling. Some hospitals use it as a nice word for sell. The word marketing is a little easier to swallow. Hospitals are looking at new services from a marketing approach rather than as we used to from patients' or physicians' needs. Today we ask, 'can we sell it?'" Wayne Bradley, dpr, St. Vincents Hospital, Jacksonville

"Here's how one hospital positioned itself through a name change: "We changed our name from Parkway General Hospital to Parkway Regional Medical Center. We thought we were no longer just a general hospital. That our scope & geographical outreach were more than just a 3 or 5 mile radius. We did a market research study and discovered that Regional Medical Center has a high confidence rate." C.L. Conroy, pr coordinator, North Miami Beach

"Hospitals with the one big ticket item that they've been subsidizing with the other smaller items are going to get hurt from DRGs. They're not going to collect that extra money they've been getting. Often they're well run and have no fat to cut." Jack Hardy

An area that is seeing considerable change is advertising. Previously taboo, this tool is finding a niche in hospital promotion budgets.

"Advertising is becoming a lot more aggressive. It used to be strictly informational. Now it's more & more like product advertising -- close to comparison advertising. Florida Hospital Ass'n guide says to stay away from comparisons & direct negative statements about other hospitals. The bylaws will eventually have to change to face what's going on. I think the next thing we'll see here is more hard-nosed comparison-type ads ... blunt statements." Jack Hardy

"We position ourselves in terms of issues advertising. We use PSAs and back them up with print ads. We did a PSA on drunk driving that has been enormously successful. It went out 2 years ago and has given us over a million dollars of tv time. And they're still using it." Virginia Hunt

"I've noticed a lot of vague image advertising without any sale of products or particular services. Physicians find them easier to deal with if they're general. Ads talk about how many patients a hospital has a year. They say, 'we care and we're a wonderful hospital' instead of being specific. We plan to enhance our image but also promote specific services & programs." Karen Buchbaum

"Our budget has increased dramatically. We are looking at formerly taboo areas to advertise. For years the only thing we ever used was the newspaper. Now the electronic media is our next big step. We did some nurse recruitment on tv which proved to be very effective." Wayne Bradley

GRAPEVINE IS A POWERFUL MEDIUM
IF YOU KNOW HOW TO USE IT;
NEW SYSTEM ORGANIZES THE RUMOR MILL

Want to get the word out? Start a rumor. "How To Conquer The Grapevine" is Bill Banach's 3-pg system on how to do it. "The idea is to put research to work ... and this process really does. Simple too," Banach told prr. 5-step grapevine-conquering system gives 2 reasons for its success:

1. Grapevines allow you to reach others face-to-face. A message conveyed through the grapevine has high impact because it is delivered personally. It is one of the eagerly-sought personal media.

2. Grapevines automatically take your message to an existing system (network). Everyone is linked to someone else ... personally or professionally. Researchers know 9 of every 10 people who receive a personal message will tell 10 others ... and 1 of every 10 (the "professional talker") will tell more than 20 others. (\$5 from William Banach Assocs, 21969 Cimarron, Romeo, Mich. 48065)

LACK OF LEARNING PRODUCTIVITY IN SCHOOLS
PARALLELS & PRESAGES PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEMS ON THE JOB;
HUMAN & SOCIAL FACTORS OVERLOOKED IN BOTH PLACES

Just about every rock has been overturned in education's quest for quality. More money for teachers & schools, tougher curriculum, better trained teachers, "rigor without the customary mortis," quips a recent Time article. While public concern is centered on education, motivation causes worry. Time reports: "The driving force behind much of the current revolution is the desire for economic revival. Theodore Sizer worries about present motivations: 'The rhetoric of toughness is so predominant today. There isn't the idealism and compassion that has been behind significant school reform in the past.' In short, Americans still need a larger vision of their schools' educational mission." The human factor appears to be overshadowed by economics.