

REPORT ON HIGH SCHOOLS SHOWS INTERNAL RELATIONS THERE SAME AS IN ALL ORGANIZATIONS

Public relations practitioners can learn from the schools in more ways than one. Ford Foundation's report, "City High Schools: A Recognition of Progress," finds they are changing for the better. Educators who studied the schools found the reasons to be the very ones corporations, hospitals, nonprofits & other organizations are using:

1. Task teams. Staffs that act more like teams than separate departments are better able to cope with problems and carry out improvements.
2. Training. Systematic professional development programs for teachers result in better instruction and achievements in student learning.
3. Clear Rules. Clear, simple standards and rules for students applied consistently & fairly lead to fewer discipline problems. (108-pg report is \$4.50 from the Ford Foundation, P.O. Box 559, Naugatuck, Ct. 06770)

COMPUTER NETS COME TO PR BUT DON'T GET 'EM CONFUSED

Is anyone else confused by the differences (or similarities) between PRSIG & PRLink -- 2 pr computer based networks? Here's the scoop. PRSIG, now called

PR & Marketing Forum, is a public forum on CompuServe. It began operating in January '84 and is open to anyone who is a CompuServe subscriber. PRLink, on the other hand, is a private forum originating at PRSA but offered thru CompuServe. It began operating about 2 months ago.

"PRSIG was such a good medium for having monthly Task Force meetings and for communicating with other PRSA members that PRSA & the Task Force decided to get into electronic communications, to begin computerizing its files and making them available to members. PRSIG is limited in that sense because it's for everybody & anybody. PRLink is specifically for PRSA to use as it sees fit and to store its materials, educational programs and to do what PRSA needs," Ron Solberg, Communications Technology Task Force chrm, told pr.

"The service will provide a convenient means of brainstorming with colleagues in the US & Canada and will bring experts in public relations directly to subscribers via educational seminars." On July 2, Edward L. Bernays transmitted his thoughts on the changing evolution of public relations. On July 24, 9pm, Pat Jackson will share his view that "Managing Issues Means Stopping The 90% That Are Self Inflicted." Tune in! (Contact PRSA for info on subscribing to PRLink)

National School Public Relations Ass'n suffered some confusion when its computer network was introduced 5 years ago. Its name, ED-NET, was being used by someone else so network had to undergo a name change -- to ED-LINE. "Ours is the first electronic school news & info network and the largest," Laura Bono, mktg mgr, told pr. It presently has 17 data bases.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. NSPRA officers for 1985-86: pres, J. William Jones (dpa, Phila School Dist); pres elect, Lew Armistead (dpi, Nat'l Ass'n of Secondary School Principals), vp at large, W.O.P. Dorsey Jr (dir pub svc, UTenn-Chattanooga), SE vp, Nan Buchanan (cabinet aide to comr of ed), Mideast vp, John Butterfield (ass't to supt, Worthington

School Dist), NE vp, Joseph Flannery (dir field svcs, NJ School Boards Ass'n), NW vp, Harry Gamble (coord-pub info, Alaska Dep't of Ed), SW vp, Pamela Gardner (pio, Rowland Unified School Dist), So Central vp, Frances Powell (ass't to supt, comms & media, Tulsa Public Schools), No Central vp, Mike Torkelson (ass't exec sec'y, Minn School Boards Ass'n).

pr reporter

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DO PRESS KITS SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF GETTING EDITORS' ATTENTION EVEN WHILE THEY ARE DROWNING IN A SEA OF PRESS RELEASES?

"An editor probably spends 6-8 seconds opening an envelope, glancing at a release, then pitching it -- coming in contact with the message & name only 1 or 2 times," believes Fred Lowell, pr acct exec with Valentine-Radford (Kansas City). To combat this, Lowell came up with a press kit to introduce a new rodenticide for CEVA Laboratories. Rat poison is not the sexiest subject, may even be repulsive to some, so the challenge was great.

His presskit requires editors to spend 6-8 minutes and brings them in contact with the message, company or product name from 60-85 times in the process. Question is: Will they do it, or toss it along with the rest?

Kit Design 300 key editors received a distinctive mailing carton displaying rodent graphics. Inside the carton is a simulated-leather portfolio with compartments. These are sealed with a strip and a big red wax seal. "You can't get to what's inside until you first break the seal. On it is written, 'For a breakthrough in rodenticides, break thru this seal.' So the editors are teased along, a compartment at a time." Graphics are carried thru on the contents -- product info folder, news release, photo, 60-pg writing tablet.

Second Use Scaled down version was sent to 5,000 county agents & extension workers. They also receive tons of promotional mail from organizations hopeful they'll push their product or idea & give 3rd party endorsement. Unique feature was a mini quiz about rodents. Recipients were asked to study the literature, take the quiz & return it. Their response cards constituted an entry form for 1 of 50 prize knives with leather cases -- an appropriate item for this audience.

Results 891 county agents (17.8%) responded. "Even more impressive to me was the 30.3% direct response from the editor mailing of 300. Normally we're satisfied with a 5-10% response. 91 editors were moved to make an immediate response which told us we got our message across to these key people. Once we get that accomplished, the accompanying publicity will follow -- either later in their own features or in the use of the release itself."

Media Rel

*Graphics
Publicity*

*Media
Rels.*

Is it bad manners to ask the media to inform you if they use your news release? One arrived in pr's office with a message stapled to it: "If the enclosed is usable, please let us know by sending us a tear-sheet. A mailing label is attached. Thank you." At least the message could say: "We know this is bad manners, but we'd really like to know if...." Maybe then it would be excusable. Otherwise, it stiffens editors' already sizable resistance to the news release method of communicating with them.

*Books/Pubs
Educ.*

*Tech.
Computers*

PRSA

Educ.

Who's who

"A good part of our effort is not only getting the media to run our releases -- naturally we want that if we can get it -- but to make them aware of the message itself. We want to educate them."

Comm
Info Kits Work Internally, Too Northwestern Mutual Life (Milwaukee) puts out a Super Bowl Party Kit to "get our agents around the country excited about our national tv advertising and make sure they're aware our commercials are going to be on the Super Bowl," John Caspari, adv'g & corp info ofcr, told prr.

Blog
Kits, costing the company \$1 each, contain balloons, logo-imprinted scorecard designed to be placed on top of the tv set so commercial message will literally be "on" tv throuth the telecast, whistle for bringing party action to a halt when commercials appear, popcorn, and a survival kit of aspirin, antacid, antiseptic, band-aid & a moist towelette.

5,000 kits are sent to company's 115 insurance agencies throuth the country, along with ideas on how to use them to host Super Bowl viewing parties. "That's a potential of 5,000 parties to create a high awareness of our commercials. But the real point is in getting our agents excited about it. And these have been enormously successful in doing that." Kits have been used for the past 2 years and are planned for future Super Bowl games.

WILL NEW TECH HELP US COMMUNICATE BETTER OR BRING REVULSION DUE TO WORK OVERLOAD?

Is work overload becoming more common? So many messages touting the new technologies -- cordless phones in cars

Tech
(& now planes) that can change commuting into worktime; portable lap-size computers that make work easy to do anywhere -- also feed into an exec's fear of getting overshadowed by another exec or competitor who does more.

Emp. byce lala
"Using time productively is one thing. But making every traffic jam, every plane trip, every weekend count, is another. As new technology increasingly allows certain kinds of work to be portable, it threatens to blur the important distinction between work and nonwork, office and home," writes Marilyn Gardner in Christian Science Monitor commentary, "Wanted: A Zoning Law To Keep Work In Its Place."

This obsession has become the topic of a new book, Leaving the Office Behind, by Barbara Mackoff. "It would be ironic if the same sophisticated equipment that has the potential to free us from spending 8 hours a day tied to a certain desk in a certain office ended up shackling us in different, unexpected ways -- imprisoning us in hi-tech sweatshops of our own making."

Two indicators show this trend is looming: 1) Study by Runzheimer finds employees who work at home with a computer hookup to the office spend more hours on the job than their co-workers back at the office. 2) Sales of briefcases have risen 25% in the last 2 years. "No one knows exactly what secrets might be tucked inside -- but the outward message is meant to be obvious: My work is much too important to be finished at the office."

JOB SECURITY NOW KEY CORPORATE CULTURE VALUE; BOOK TELLS HOW COMPANIES USE 6 STRATEGIES

Free of job-loss fears, workers are easier to manage. They are free to maximize their skills &

creativity, explains Jocelyn Gutchess in Employment Security in Action: Strategies That Work (\$25 from Pergamon Press, Elmsford, NY). 175-pg book examines policies that benefit both workers & employers in more than 30 corporations, including IBM, Honeywell, Advanced Micro Devices, Dana, Motorola, Hewlett-Packard. *Emp. Rel.*

These strategies are especially important today because of the many changes requiring employees to adjust: 1) Third-World industrialization, 2) technological revolution, 3) unpredictable economic swings. Job security has become a special concern of workers and is vital to their productivity. *O.D.*

There are 6 job security methods: 1) no-layoff policies, 2) employment buffering, 3) voluntary work force reductions, 4) worker-oriented adjustment, 5) easing technological change, 6) job replacement. The first chapter explains the methods, each subsequent chapter details actual plans used by companies in the US & Western Europe. Up to 10 pages describe each case study, like the following:

<p>Employment buffers protect employees against fluctuations in the market and give workers a high degree of employment stability. Book uses IBM's typewriter plant in Lexington, Ky. to illustrate how this works:</p>	<p><u>Principles:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Place accountability & responsibility where the work is. 2. Tie pay & promotion directly & exclusively to productivity & ideas. 3. Be committed to employee job security.
<p><u>Plant mgr's beliefs:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Best ideas for improvements come from the workers; they know the work best. 2. Workers will not work better or faster if their jobs or those of co-workers will be jeopardized. 3. No one works at top capacity. 	<p><u>Strategies:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff lean -- 85%. 2. Make overtime a condition of employment. 3. Hire temporary workers. 4. Review & revise plans monthly.
<p><u>Decisions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concentrate on productivity rather than on cost reduction. 2. Build trust in the workers to get their ideas. 	<p><u>Results</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Production time cut 65%. 2. Costs cut 45%, despite wage increases. 3. Service calls declined 50%. 4. No workers laid off in 20 yrs.

Books/Pubs

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